

MANASSAS EVACUATED.

The Retreat of the Rebels from Centreville, Occoquan, Fairfax Court House, Winchester and Manassas.

The Rebel Stronghold Occupied by Union Troops.

March of the Advance Corps of Our Army.

Abandonment by the Rebels of Forts, Guns and Provisions.

Slight Skirmishing en Route.

The Rebels Reported to be Falling Back on the Rappahannock.

Affairs at Centreville, Leesburg and Winchester.

INTERESTING DETAILS.

WASHINGTON, March 11, 1862.

The advance of a portion of the grand army of the Potomac on Monday produced in the city and throughout the country scenes of indescribable excitement. At two o'clock A. M. the reveille was sounded and preparations for the march began. The morning was rainy, but the prospect of active life imparted a cheerfulness to the soldierly that defied the gloom of the weather. Few, even among the officers, knew whether they were going, for what purpose, or for how long a time. But the fact that they were to go forward was sufficient to excite the liveliest emotions in the ranks of soldiers who had been for months anxious to have an opportunity to meet the enemy and prove their prowess in defence of the constitution and the Union with their blood, and, if need be, with their lives. There was no shrinking, no hesitation, no skulking. Many who were on the sick report sprang from their beds and took their places in the ranks, although some of them were unable to sustain the fatigue of the march and were subsequently placed in the baggage wagons. The movement was not attended with the noisy demonstrations which characterized the advance to Centreville last summer, but it was marked with an expression of cool determination and confidence which were manifested quietly, but forcibly, in the step and bearing and perfect discipline of the men who were marching to the battle field.

The advance was really begun several days ago. The movement of General Banks, the occupation of Leesburg by Colonel Gary, and the preparations for an attack upon the rebel batteries along the Potomac, were preliminaries of a general advance towards the seat of the bogus government, set up by the adventurers who are leading and trying to maintain the death-stricken rebellion. In front, since Friday last, regular approaches have been made daily towards Centreville by portions of General Franklin's and General McDowell's divisions. On Sunday the Second and Third New Jersey regiments, and a squadron of the Lincoln Cavalry, occupied Sangster's Station, on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. On arriving at this point a detachment of rebel cavalry were surprised. In the skirmish that occurred, Lieutenant Hidden, of the Lincoln Cavalry, was killed at the first fire of the rebels, and a sergeant wounded. Three of the rebels were killed and a lieutenant and eleven men taken prisoners. On Monday at noon a detachment of the First New Jersey regiment, under Major Halford and Captain Vansickle entered Centreville. They were followed by a company of the Lincoln Cavalry, under Lieutenant Alexander. The enemy's pickets had retired before this advance of our forces along the whole route. At Centreville it was ascertained that the rebels had evacuated the place late on Sunday night, and retired, it was said, to Gordonsville. Extensive earthworks were found here, but all the guns had been removed. A large quantity of beef and four had been left behind by the retreating rebels. It was reported at Centreville by contrabands who came into our lines, that the rebel army had been leaving Manassas Junction for several days, and that the forces remaining behind were only a rear guard to cover the retreat.

The position in the advance has been assigned to General McDowell, as an act of justice, to afford him an opportunity to retrieve the errors and misfortune of the battle of the 21st of July. He bore himself proudly on re-entering the place whence the retreat of his army on a previous occasion had been ordered after the disaster at Bull Run. During the whole day every road leading from the vicinity of Washington towards the rebel stronghold was thronged with masses of well trained soldiers moving silently, but firmly forward to a field of glorious triumph or death. It was a grand sight, as the long and seemingly endless lines of glittering bayonets gleamed like a jeweled serpent gliding among the hills, followed by the heavy tramping cavalry, and the loud rumbling artillery and countless trains of wagons.

In the city the departure of the reserve brought the whole population to the thoroughfare leading towards the various bridges. From an early hour in the morning the good population was astir, and numerous blessings and good wishes were shouted by the watchers as regiment after regiment and battery after battery marched steadily and steadily towards the bridges. About noon Gen. McClellan, attended by only a few of his staff, went across, and from his headquarters at the Long Bridge he greeted by cheer upon cheer by the crowds gathered to witness his advance to Richmond.

When General McClellan's staff were getting in readiness at the headquarters on the avenue, the fact seemed to be known intuitively or instinctively throughout the neighborhood of the quarters of the General-in-Chief, and the mansion of the President and Commander-in-Chief. A crowd collected at General McClellan's quarters, growing larger each minute; and even the patients in the wagoner's hospital, contiguous to Riggs & Co.'s Bank, had their heads protruded from the windows to watch the movements of the officers and body guard who were to accompany the General.

The greatest perplexity prevailed among the news paper correspondents. Many of them had been sent forward unprepared for the practical work of chronicling the exciting events of the battle field. While they were crowded with the importance of their mission, they had scarce ideas respecting its fulfillment. They managed to get mounted upon animals which will figure upon the bills as horses, but which were no more serviceable than the famous Roanoke of the Knight of La Mancha. By dint of spurring and whipping they got off in the direction of the sacred soil of Virginia, leaving behind them a doubt in the minds of those who witnessed their departure, whether they would ever return complete in all their parts after the rough joltings to which they were subjected. Some of the representatives of poorer newspapers begged army horses, and were accommodated through the influence of political friends; and these gentlemen were pretty well provided for—quite as well, in fact, as they deserved.

Gen. McClellan has set up his quarters at Fairfax Court House.

THE LATEST DETAILS.

WASHINGTON, March 11, 1862. The whole rebel fortifications at Manassas were abandoned and everything possible burned. Our troops occupy the place.

Before dark last night, Colonel Averill, with a large body of cavalry, entered the far famed rebel works at Manassas Junction, and bivouacked for the night amidst the ruins of the rebel stronghold, with the Stars and Stripes glittering in the brilliant moonlight. In their march from Centreville no signs of the rebels were discovered. The fields that were a few months ago engaged with the blood of contending armies and resound with the sound of booming cannon and rolling musketry, the shouts of marshalled hosts and the groans of the dying, was silent and deserted. The fortifications which so lately bristled with the threatening artillery and gleaming bayonets of the rebel force, were bare and blackened. The retreating rebels had swept it with the beam of destruction that had everywhere marked their departure. They were all gone—horses, foot and dragoons. They had left their tents with their swords, and set fire to all that was inflammable. Nothing was left except the bare and blackened walls and the smouldering ashes of the bonfires made of their tents, baggage, equipments and stores, for which they could find no transportation.

The evacuation of Manassas was evidently less hurried than that of the batteries on the Potomac. It had been done deliberately, and manifestly with no expectation of ever returning.

The absence of the enemy robbed the occupation of these works by the Union forces of all romance and starting sensation. The fact that the enemy was gone was ascertained, and that was all. The works were found in a state of complete abandonment. The only signs of their occupation were the remains of granaries, sheds of hay and grain stacks, fences, &c. He found the bridge over Goose creek had been burned after our occupation here on Saturday. The enemy had completely fallen back. The command continues to make captures of rank and file.

The local feeling is growing, and many persons come forward to take the oath of allegiance daily. Colonel Gary, with some of his officers and a detachment of the First Michigan Cavalry, rode to Ball's Bluff today and buried the whitened bones of the brave Union soldiers who fell upon that field in October last. Impressive remarks preceded this humane act, and a monument of gross rebel neglect was hidden from human sight.

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The soldiers rushed into the Court House and brought away some of the records, but this being discovered the officers directed their return. When our troops learned that Manassas had been evacuated their spirits suddenly became depressed, as they had anticipated a spirited conflict with the enemy. About six miles and a half before reaching Centreville a number of graves were discovered, principally of Alabama troops. The graves were marked with head and foot boards, with the names of the deceased thereon. A guard was placed near them, as if to shield them from mutilation, although it was not to be supposed such an act could be committed.

Most of the contrabands above alluded to were happy in their liberty, and remarkably communicative to the extent of their limited knowledge. THE ADVANCE FROM CENTREVILLE TO MANASSAS. CENTREVILLE, March 11, 1862. Yesterday morning our forces, amounting to upwards of two thousand, proceeded to Centreville, and occupied the village about four o'clock in the afternoon. It was altogether deserted. The entire command thence proceeded to Manassas, arriving there in the evening. The rebels had destroyed as much of their property as they could not carry away, by fire and otherwise. The bridges, railroad track and depot in that vicinity were extensively damaged, and nothing but wreck and desolation was apparent.

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Will make their last stand before being swept into the Gulf of Mexico by an old woman's broom, as old Butler predicted Baltimore, replied yet another. "Gone! Where are the rebels from Manassas gone? Do you ask, gentlemen? I don't know where they are, but I know that, by my part, I wish they were gone, but the devil long ago, before they were destroyed by our men, boys and girls. He said 'baggar.' This was from an old merchant who had been largely engaged in the Southern trade, but on account of bad debts and hard times had almost reached the verge of ruin. "The iron-clad war ships will introduce a new era in naval warfare," remarked an astute observer of passing events. "The navy of Great Britain will become comparatively worthless against those mailed vessels of war."

"But can't England build them, and can't they be sent across the Atlantic to our coast?" "I don't know," said the observer. "The iron-clad steamers are not calculated for rough weather at sea. With a fleet of iron-clad war steamers for coast defence we may defy the navies of the world. The government could not do better than to raise many of our wooden war vessels and sink them in the invulnerable armor of the Monitor. Our fortifications are completely secured against the attacks of an iron-clad fleet. There is a greater revolution going on now in naval warfare than when steam was first introduced into the service of man. The iron-clad war ships will introduce a new era in naval warfare," remarked an astute observer of passing events. "The navy of Great Britain will become comparatively worthless against those mailed vessels of war."

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