

# GEN. SHERMAN.

HIS OFFICIAL REPORT.

FROM ATLANTA TO SAVANNAH.

A Valuable Contribution to the History of the War.

From Our Special Correspondent.

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, June 20, 1865.

The following official report has been furnished for publication:

HQRS. MIL. DIV. OF THE MISSISSIPPI, }  
IN THE FIELD, SAVANNAH, GA., January 1, 1865. }  
Major-Gen. H. W. HALLECK, Chief of Staff, Washington City, D. C.

**GENERAL:** I have the honor to offer my report of the operations of the armies under my command since the occupation of Atlanta in the early part of September last, up to the present date.

As heretofore reported, in the month of September the Army of the Cumberland, Major-Gen. Thomas commanding, held the City of Atlanta; the Army of the Tennessee, Major-Gen. Howard commanding, was grouped about East Point; and the Army of the Ohio, Major-Gen. Schofield commanding, held Decatur. Many changes occurred in the composition of those armies, in consequence of the expiration of the time of service of many of the regiments. The opportunity was given to us to consolidate the fragments, reequip and equip the men, and make preparations for the future campaign. I also availed myself of the occasion to strengthen the garrisons to our rear, to make our communications more secure, and sent Wagner's Division of the Fourth Corps, and Morgan's Division of the Fourteenth Corps back to Chattanooga, and Corse's Division of the Fifteenth Corps to Rome. Also a thorough reconnaissance was made of Atlanta, and a new line of works begun, which required a small garrison to hold.

During this month, the enemy, whom we had left at Lovejoy's Station, moved westward toward the Chattanooga, taking position facing us and covering the West Point Railroad, about Palmetto Station. He also threw a pontoon bridge across the Chattanooga, and sent cavalry detachments to the west, in the direction of Carrollton and Powder Springs. About the same time President Davis visited Macon, and his army at Palmetto, and made harangues referring to an active campaign against us. Hood still remained in command of the Confederate forces, with Cheatham, S. D. Lee and Stewart, commanding his three corps, and Wheeler in command of his cavalry, which had been largely reinforced.

My cavalry consisted of two divisions. One was stationed at Decatur, under command of Brig.-Gen. Garrard; the other, commanded by Brig.-Gen. Kilpatrick, was posted near Sandtown, with a pontoon bridge over the Chattanooga, from which he could watch any movement of the enemy toward the west.

As soon as I became convinced that the enemy intended to assume the offensive, namely, September 23, I sent Major-Gen. Thomas, second in command, to Nashville, to organize the new troops expected to arrive, and to make preliminary preparations to meet such an event.

About the 1st of October some of the enemy's cavalry made their appearance on the west of the Chattanooga, and one of his infantry corps was reported near Powder Springs; and I received authentic intelligence that the rest of his infantry was crossing to the west of the Chattanooga. I at once made my orders that Atlanta and the Chattanooga Railroad bridge should be held by the Twentieth Corps, Major-Gen. Elocum, and on the 4th of October put in motion the Fifteenth and Seventeenth Corps, and the Fourth, Fourteenth, and Twenty-third Corps, to Smyrna camp-ground, and on the 5th moved to the strong position about Kenesaw. The enemy's cavalry had, by a rapid movement, got upon our railroad at Big Shanty and broken the line of telegraph and railroad, and with a division of infantry (French's) had moved against Allatoona, where were stored about a million of rations. Its flanks were garrisoned by three small regiments under Col. Tourtellotte, 4th Minnesota.

I had anticipated this movement, and had by signal and telegraph ordered Gen. Corse to reinforce that post from Rome. Gen. Corse had reached Allatoona with a brigade during the night of the 4th, just in time to meet the attack by French's Division on the morning of the 5th. In person I reached Kenesaw mountain about 10 a. m. of the 5th, and could see the smoke of battle and hear the faint sounds of artillery. The distance, 18 miles, was too great for me to make in time to share in the battle, but I directed the Twenty-third Corps, Brigadier-General Cox commanding, to move rapidly from the base of Kenesaw due west, aiming to reach the road from Allatoona to Dallas, threatening the rear of the forces attacking Allatoona. I succeeded in getting a signal message to Gen. Corse during his fight, notifying him of my presence. The defense of Allatoona by Gen. Corse was admirably conducted, and the enemy repulsed with heavy slaughter. His description of the defense is so graphic that it leaves nothing for me to add; and the movement of Gen. Cox had the desired effect of causing the withdrawal of French's Division rapidly in the direction of Dallas.

On the 6th and 7th I pushed the cavalry well toward Burnt Hickory and Dallas, and discovered that the enemy had moved westward, and inferred that he would attempt to break our railroad again in the neighborhood of Kingston. Accordingly, on the morning of the 8th, I put the army in motion through Allatoona Pass to Kingston, reaching that point on the 10th. There I learned that the enemy had feigned on Rome, and was passing the Coosa River on a pontoon bridge about eleven miles below Rome. I therefore on the 11th moved to Rome, and pushed Garrard's cavalry and the Twenty-third Corps, under Gen. Cox, across the Oostenauala, to threaten the flanks of the enemy passing north. Garrard's cavalry drove a cavalry brigade of the enemy to and beyond the Narrows, leading into the valley of the Chattooga, capturing two field pieces. The enemy had moved with great rapidity, and made his appearance at Resaca, and Hood had in person demanded its surrender.

I had from Kingston reinforced Resaca by two regiments of the Army of the Tennessee. I at first intended to move the army into the Chattooga Valley to interpose between the enemy and his line of retreat down the Coosa, but feared that Gen. Hood would in that event turn eastward by Spring Place, and down the Federal road, and therefore moved against him at Resaca. Col. Weaver at Resaca, afterward reinforced by Gen. Raum's brigade, had repulsed the enemy from Resaca, but he had succeeded in breaking the railroad from Filton to Dalton, and as far north as the tunnel. Arriving at Resaca on the evening of the 14th, I determined to strike Hood in flank, or force him to battle, and directed the Army of the Tennessee, Gen. Howard, to move to Snake Creek Gap, which was held by the enemy, while Gen. Stanley, with the Fourth and Fourteenth Corps, moved by Tilton across the mountains to the rear of Snake Creek Gap in the neighborhood of Villanow.

The Army of the Tennessee found the enemy occupying our old lines in Snake Creek Gap, and on the 15th skirmished for the purpose of holding him there until Stanley could get to his rear. But the enemy gave way about noon, and was followed through the Gap, escaping before Gen. Stanley had reached the further end of the Pass. The next day (the 16th) the armies moved directly toward Lafayette, with a view to cut off Hood's retreat. We found him intrenched in Ship's Gap, but the leading division (Wood's) of the Fifteenth Corps rapidly carried the advanced posts held by two companies of a South Carolina Regiment, making them prisoners. The remaining eight companies escaped to the main body near Lafayette. The next morning we passed over into the valley of the Chattooga, the Army of the Tennessee moving in pursuit by Lafayette and Alpine, toward Blue Pond; the Army of the Cumberland by Summerville and Melville Post-Office to Gaylesville, and the Army of the Ohio and Garrard's Cavalry from Villanow, Dirttown, and Gover's Gap to Gaylesville. Hood, however, was little incumbered with trains, and marched with great rapidity, and had succeeded in getting into the narrow gorge formed by the Lookout Range abutting against the Coosa River in the neighborhood of Gadsden. He evidently wanted to avoid a fight.

On the 19th all the armies were grouped about Gaylesville, in the rich valley of the Chattooga, abounding in corn and meat, and I determined to pause in my pursuit of the enemy, to watch his movements and live on the country. I hoped that Hood would turn toward Guntersville and Bridgeport. The Army of the Tennessee was posted near Little River, with instructions to feel forward in support of the cavalry, which was ordered to watch Hood in the neighborhood of Will's Valley, and to give me the earliest notice possible of his turning northward. The Army of the Ohio was posted at Cedar Bluff, with orders to lay a pontoon across the Coosa, and to feel forward to Center and down in the direction of Blue Mountain. The Army of the Cumberland was held in reserve at Gaylesville; and all the troops were instructed to draw heavily for supplies from the surrounding country. In the meantime

communications were opened to Rome, and a heavy force set to work in repairing the damages done to our railroads. Atlanta was abundantly supplied with provisions, but forage was scarce, and Gen. Slocum was instructed to send strong foraging parties out in the direction of South River and collect all the corn and fodder possible, and to put his own trains in good condition for further service.

Hood's movements and strategy had demonstrated that he had an army capable of endangering at all times my communications, but unable to meet me in open fight. To follow him would simply amount to being decoyed away from Georgia, with little prospect of overtaking and overwhelming him. To remain on the defensive would have been bad policy for an army of so great value as the one I then commanded, and I was determined to adopt a course more fruitful in results than

the naked one of following him to the South-West. I had previously submitted to the Commander-in-Chief a general plan, which amounted substantially to the destruction of Atlanta and the railroad back to Chattanooga, and sailing forth from Atlanta, through the heart of Georgia, to capture one or more of the great Atlantic seaports. This I renewed from Gaylesville, modified somewhat by the change of events.

On the 26th of October, satisfied that Hood had moved westward from Gadsden across Sand Mountain, I detached the Fourth Corps, Major-Gen. Stanley, and ordered him to proceed to Chattanooga and report to Major-Gen. Thomas at Nashville. Subsequently, on the 30th of October, I also detached the Twenty-third Corps, Major-Gen. Schofield, with the same destination; and delegated to Major-Gen. Thomas full power over all the troops subject to my command, except the four corps with which I designed to move into Georgia. This gave him the two divisions under A. J. Smith, then in Missouri, but en route for Tennessee, the two corps named, and all the garrisons in Tennessee, as also all the cavalry of my Military Division, except one division under Brig.-Gen. Kilpatrick, which was ordered to rendezvous at Marietta. Brevet-Major-Gen. Wilson had arrived from the Army of the Potomac, to assume command of the cavalry of my army, and I dispatched him back to Nashville with all dismounted detachments, and orders as rapidly as possible to collect the cavalry serving in Kentucky and Tennessee, to mount, organize and equip them, and report to Major-Gen. Thomas for duty. These forces I judged would enable Gen. Thomas to defend the railroad from Chattanooga back, including Nashville and Decatur, and give him an army with which he could successfully cope with Hood, should the latter cross the Tennessee northward.

By the 1st of November Hood's army had moved from Gadsden, and made its appearance in the neighborhood of Decatur, where a feint was made; he then passed on to Tusculum and laid a pontoon bridge opposite Florence. I then began my preparations for the march through Georgia, having received the sanction of the Commander-in-Chief for carrying into effect my plan, the details of which were explained to all my corps commanders and heads of staff departments, with strict injunctions of secrecy. I had also communicated full details to Gen. Thomas, and had informed him I would not leave the neighborhood of Kingston until he felt perfectly confident that he was entirely prepared to cope with Hood, should he carry into effect his threatened invasion of Tennessee and Kentucky. I estimated Hood's force at 35,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry.

I moved the Army of the Tennessee by slow and easy marches on the south of the Coosa back to the neighborhood of Smyrna camp ground, and the Fourteenth Corps, Gen. Jeff. C. Davis, to Kingston, whither I repaired in person on the 2d of November. From that point I directed all surplus artillery, all baggage not needed for my contemplated march, all the sick and wounded, refugees, &c., to be sent back to Chattanooga; and the four corps above-mentioned, with Kilpatrick's Cavalry, were put in the most efficient condition possible for a long and difficult march. This operation consumed the time until the 11th of November, when, everything being ready, I ordered Gen. Corse, who still remained at Rome, to destroy the bridges there, all foundries, mills, shops, warehouses, or other property that could be useful to an enemy, and to move to Kingston. At the same time the railroad in and about Atlanta, and between the Etowah and the Chattanooga, was ordered to be utterly destroyed.

The garrisons from Kingston northward were also ordered to draw back to Chattanooga, taking with them all public property and all railroad stock, and to take up the rails from Resaca back, saving them, ready to be replaced whenever future interests should demand. The railroad between the Etowah and the Oostenauala was left untouched, because I thought it more than probable we would find it necessary to recapture the country as far forward as the line of the Etowah. Atlanta itself is only of strategic value as long as it is a railroad center; and as all the railroads leading to it are destroyed, as well as all its foundries, machine-shops, warehouses, depots, &c., it is of no more value than any other point in North Georgia; whereas the line of the Etowah, by reason of its rivers and natural



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features, possesses an importance which will always continue. From it all parts of Georgia and Alabama can be reached by armies marching with trains down the Coosa or the Chattahoochee valleys.

On the 12th of November my army stood detached and cut off from all communication with the rear. It was composed of four corps, the Fifteenth and Seventeenth, constituting the right wing, under Major-Gen. O. O. Howard; the Fourteenth and Twentieth Corps, constituting the left wing, under Major-Gen. H. W. Slocum; of an aggregate strength of 60,000 infantry; one cavalry division, in aggregate strength 5,500, under Brig.-Gen. Judson Kilpatrick; and the artillery reduced to the minimum, one gun per thousand men.

The whole force moved rapidly and grouped about Atlanta on the 14th November. In the mean time Capt. O. M. Poe had thoroughly destroyed Atlanta, save its mere dwelling-houses and churches, and the right wing, with Gen. Kilpatrick's cavalry, was put in motion in the direction of Jonesborough and McDonough, with orders to make a strong feint on Macon, to cross the Ocmulgee about Planters' Mills, and rendezvous in the neighborhood of Gordon in seven days, exclusive of the day of march. On the same day Gen. Slocum moved with the Twentieth Corps by Decatur and Stone Mountain, with orders to tear up the railroad from Social Circle to Madison, to burn the large and important railroad bridge across the Oconee, east of Madison, and turn south and reach Milledgeville on the seventh day, exclusive of the day of march.

In person I left Atlanta on the 16th, in company with the Fourteenth Corps, Brevet-Major-Gen. Jeff. C. Davis, with Lithonia, Covington, and Shady Dale, directly on Milledgeville. All the troops were provided with good wagon trains, loaded with ammunition, and supplies approximating 20 days' bread, 40 days' sugar and coffee, a double allowance of salt for 40 days, and beef cattle equal to 40 days' supplies. The wagons were also supplied with about three days' forage, in grain. All were instructed, by a judicious system of foraging, to maintain this order of things as long as possible, living chiefly, if not solely, upon the country, which I knew to abound in corn, sweet potatoes and meats.

My first object was, of course, to place my army in the very heart of Georgia, interposing between Macon and Augusta, and obliging the enemy to divide his forces to defend not only those points, but Millen, Savannah and Charleston. All my calculations were fully realized. During the 22d Gen. Kilpatrick made a good feint on Macon, driving the enemy within his intrenchments, and then drew back to Griswoldville, where Walcott's brigade of infantry joined him to cover that flank, while Howard's trains were closing up and his men scattered, breaking up railroads. The enemy came out of Macon and attacked Walcott in position, but was so roughly handled that he never repeated the experiment. On the eighth day after leaving Atlanta, namely, on the 23d, Gen. Slocum occupied Milledgeville and the important bridge across the Oconee there, and Gens. Howard and Kilpatrick were in and about Gordon.

Gen. Howard was then ordered to move eastward, destroying the railroad thoroughly in his progress as far as Tennille station, opposite Sandersville, and Gen. Slocum to move to Sandersville by two roads. Gen. Kilpatrick was ordered to Milledgeville, and thence move rapidly eastward, to break the railroad which leads from Millen to Augusta, then to turn upon Millen and rescue our prisoners of war supposed to be confined at that place. I accompanied the Twentieth Corps from Milledgeville to Sandersville, approaching which place, on the 25th, we found the bridges across Buffalo creek burned, which delayed us three hours. The next day we entered Sandersville, skirmishing with Wheeler's cavalry, which offered little opposition to the advance of the Twentieth and Fourteenth Corps, entering the place almost at the same moment.

Gen. Slocum was then ordered to tear up and destroy the Georgia Central Railroad, from Station No. 13 (Ten mile) to Station No. 10, near the crossing of Ogeechee; one of his Corps substantially following the railroad, the other by way of Louisville, in support of Kilpatrick's cavalry. In person I shifted to the right wing, and accompanied the Seventeenth Corps, Gen. Blair, on the south of the railroad, till abreast of Station No. 9d, (Barton.) General Howard, in person, with the Fifteenth Corps, keeping further to the right, and about one day's march ahead, ready to turn against the flank of any enemy who should oppose our progress.

At Barton I learned that Kilpatrick's Cavalry had reached the Augusta railroad about Waynesborough, where he ascertained that our prisoners had been removed from Millen, and therefore the purpose of rescuing them, upon which we had set our hearts, was an impossibility. But as Wheeler's Cavalry had hung around him, and as he had retired to Louisville to meet our infantry, in pursuance of my instructions not to risk a battle unless at great advantage, I ordered him to leave his wagons and all incumbrances with the left wing, and moving in the direction of Augusta, if Wheeler gave him the opportunity, to indulge him with all the fighting he wanted. Gen. Kilpatrick, supported by Baird's Division of infantry of the Fourteenth Corps, again moved in the direction of Waynesborough, and encountering Wheeler in the neighborhood of Thomas's station, attacked him in position, driving him from three successive lines of barricades handsomely through

Waynesborough and across Brier Creek, the bridge over which he burned; and then, with Baird's Division, rejoined the left wing, which in the meantime had been marching by easy stages of 10 miles a day in the direction of Lumpkin's Station and Jacksonborough.

The Seventeenth Corps took up the destruction of the railroad at the Ogeechee, near Station No. 10, and continued it to Millen; the enemy offering little or no opposition, although preparation had seemingly been made at Millen.

On the 31d of December the Seventeenth Corps, which I accompanied, was at Millen; the Fifteenth Corps, Gen. Howard, was south of the Ogeechee, opposite Station No. 7, (Scarboro,) the Twentieth Corps, Gen. Slocum, on the Augusta Railroad, about four miles north of Millen, near Buckhead Church, and the Fourteenth Corps, Gen. Jeff. C. Davis, in the neighborhood of Lumpkin's Station, on the Augusta Railroad. All were ordered to march in the direction of Savannah—the Fifteenth Corps to continue south of the Ogeechee, the Seventeenth to destroy the railroad as far as Ogeechee Church—and four days were allowed to reach the line from Ogeechee Church to the neighborhood of Halley's Ferry, on the Savannah River. All the columns reached their destinations in time, and continued to march on their several roads—Gen. Davis following the Savannah River road, Gen. Slocum the middle road by way of Springfield, Gen. Blair the railroad, and Gen. Howard still south and west of the Ogeechee, with orders to cross to the east bank opposite "Eden Station," or Station No. 2.

As we approached Savannah the country became more marshy and difficult, and more obstructions were met, in the way of felled trees, where the roads crossed the creek swamps or narrow causeways; but our pioneer companies were well organized, and removed the obstructions in an incredibly short time. No opposition from the enemy worth speaking of was encountered until the heads of columns were within 15 miles of Savannah, where all the roads leading to the city were obstructed more or less by felled timber, with earthworks and artillery. But these were easily turned and the enemy driven away, so that by the 10th of December the enemy was driven within his lines at Savannah. These followed substantially a swampy creek which empties into the Savannah River about three miles above the city, across to the head of a corresponding stream, which empties into the Little Ogeechee. These streams were singularly favorable to the enemy as a cover, being very marshy, and bordered by rice-fields, which were flooded either by the tide-water or by inland ponds, the gates to which were controlled and covered by his heavy artillery.

The only approaches to the city were by five narrow causeways, namely, the two railroads, and the Augusta, the Louisville, and the Ogeechee dirt roads; all of which were commanded by heavy ordnance, too strong for us to fight with our light field guns. To assault an enemy of unknown strength at such a disadvantage appeared to me unwise, especially as I had so successfully brought my army, almost unscathed, so great a distance, and could surely attain the same result by the operation of time. I therefore instructed my army commanders to closely invest the city from the north and west, and to reconnoiter well the ground in their fronts, respectively, while I gave my personal attention to opening communications with our fleet, which I knew was waiting for us in Tybee, Warsaw, and Ossabaw Sounds.

In approaching Savannah, Gen. Slocum struck the Charleston Railroad near the bridge, and occupied the river bank as his left flank, where he had captured two of the enemy's river boats, and had prevented two others (gunboats) from coming down the river to communicate with the city; while Gen. Howard, by his right flank, had broken the Gulf Railroad at Fleming's and way stations, and occupied the railroad itself down to the little Ogeechee, near "Station No. 1;" so that no supplies could reach Savannah by any of its accustomed channels. We, on the contrary, possessed large herds of cattle, which we had brought along or gathered in the country, and our wagons still contained a reasonable amount of breadstuffs and other necessaries, and the fine rice crops of the Savannah and Ogeechee Rivers furnished to our men and animals a large amount of rice and rice straw. We also held the country to the south and west of the Ogeechee as foraging ground. Still, communication with the fleet was of vital importance, and I directed Gen. Kilpatrick to cross the Ogeechee by a pontoon bridge, to reconnoiter Fort McAllister, and to proceed to Catherine's Sound, in the direction of Sunbury or Kilkenny Bluff, and open communication with the fleet. Gen. Howard had previously by my direction, sent one of his best scouts down the Ogeechee in a canoe for a like purpose. But more than this was necessary. We wanted the vessels and their contents, and the Ogeechee River, a navigable stream, close to the rear of our camps, was the proper avenue of supply.

The enemy had burned the road-bridge across the Ogeechee, just below the mouth of the Canoochee, known as "King's bridge." This was reconstructed in an incredibly short time, in the most substantial manner, by the 58th Indiana, Col. Buel, under the direction of Capt. Reese, of the Engineers Corps, and on the 13th of December the Second Division of the Fifteenth Corps, under command of Brigadier-Gen. Hazen,

crossed the bridge to the west bank of the Ogeechee and marched down with orders to carry by assault Fort McAllister, a strong inclosed redoubt, manned by two companies of artillery and three of infantry, in all about two hundred men, and mounting 23 guns *en barbette*, and one mortar. Gen. Hazen reached the vicinity of Fort McAllister about 1 p. m., deployed his division about that place, with both flanks resting upon the river, posted his skirmishers judiciously behind the trunks of trees whose branches had been used for *abatis*, and about 5 p. m. assaulted the place with nine regiments at three points; all of them successfully. I witnessed the assault from a rice-mill on the opposite bank of the river, and can bear testimony to the handsome manner in which it was accomplished.

Up to this time we had not communicated with our fleet. From the signal-station at the rice-mill our officers had looked for two days over the rice-fields and salt marsh in the direction of Ossabaw Sound, but could see nothing off it. But while watching the preparations for the assault on Fort McAllister we discovered in the distance what seemed to be the smoke-stack of a steamer, which became more and more distinct. Until about the very moment of the assault she was plainly visible below the fort, and our signal was answered. As soon as I saw our colors fairly planted upon the walls of McAllister, in company with Gen. Howard I went in a small boat down to the fort and met Gen. Hazen, who had not yet communicated with the gun-boat below, as it was shut out to him by a point of timber. Determined to communicate that night, I got another small boat and a crew and pulled down the river till I found the tug Dandelion, Capt. Williamson, U. S. N., who informed me that Capt. Duncan, who had been sent by Gen. Howard, had succeeded in reaching Admiral Dahlgren and Gen. Foster, and that he was expecting them hourly in Ossabaw Sound. After making communications to those officers, and a short communication to the War Department, I returned to Fort McAllister that night, and before daylight was overtaken by Major Strong of Gen. Foster's staff, advising me that Gen. Foster had arrived in the Ogeechee, near Fort McAllister, and was very anxious to meet me on board his boat. I accordingly returned with him, and met Gen. Foster on board the steamer Nemaha; and after consultation determined to proceed with him down the sound in hopes to meet Admiral Dahlgren. But we did not meet him until we reached Wassaw Sound about noon. I there went on board the Admiral's flag-ship, the Harvest Moon, after having arranged with Gen. Foster to send us from Hilton Head some siege ordnance and some boats suitable for navigating the Ogeechee River. Admiral Dahlgren very kindly furnished me with all the data concerning his fleet and the numerous forts that guarded the inland channels between the sea and Savannah. I explained to him how completely Savannah was invested at all points, save only the plank road on the South Carolina shore known as the "Union Causeway," which I thought I could reach from my left flank across the Savannah River. I explained to him that if he would simply engage the attention of the forts along Wilmington Channel, at Beaulieu and Rosedew, I thought I could carry the defenses of Savannah by assault as soon as the heavy ordnance arrived from Hilton Head. On the 15th the Admiral carried me back to Fort McAllister, whence I returned to our lines in the rear of Savannah.

Having received and carefully considered all the reports of division commanders, I determined to assault the lines of the enemy as soon as my heavy ordnance came from Port Royal, first making a formal demand for surrender. On the 17th, a number of thirty-pounder Parrott guns having reached King's Bridge, I proceeded in person to the headquarters of Major-Gen. Slocum, on the Augusta Road, and dispatched thence into Savannah, by flag of truce, a formal demand for the surrender of the place; and on the following day received an answer from Gen. Hardee refusing to surrender.

In the mean time further reconnoissances from our left flank had demonstrated that it was impracticable or unwise to push any considerable force across the Savannah River, for the enemy held the river opposite the city with iron-clad gunboats, and could destroy any pontoons laid down by us between Hutchinson's Island and the South Carolina shore, which would isolate any force sent over from that flank. I therefore ordered Gen. Slocum to get into position the siege guns and make all the preparations necessary to assault, and report to me the earliest moment when he could be ready, while I should proceed rapidly round by the right and make arrangements to occupy the Union Causeway from the direction of Port Royal. Gen. Foster had already established a division of troops on the peninsula or neck between the Coosawatchie and Tullfinney rivers, at the Lead of Broad River, from which position he could reach the railroad with his artillery.

I went to Port Royal in person, and made arrangements to reinforce that command by one or more divisions, under a proper officer, to assault and carry the railroad, and thence turn toward Savannah until it occupied the causeway in question. I went on board the Admiral's flag-ship, the Harvest Moon, which put out to sea the night of the 20th. But the wind was high, and increased during the night, so that the pilot judged Ossabaw bar impassable, and ran into the Tybee,



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whence we proceeded through the inland channels into Wassaw Sound, and thence through Romney Marsh. But the ebb tide caught the Harvest Moon and she was unable to make the passage. Admiral Dahlgren took me in his barge, and pulling in the direction of Vernon River we met the Army tug Red Legs, bearing a message from my Adjutant, Capt. Dayton, of that morning, the 21st to the effect that our troops were in possession of the enemy's lines, and were advancing without opposition into Savannah, the enemy having evacuated the place during the previous night.

Admiral Dahlgren proceeded up the Vernon River in his barge, while I transferred to the tug, in which I proceeded to Fort McAllister, and thence to the rice mill; and on the morning of the 22d rode into the city of Savannah, already occupied by our troops.

I was very much disappointed that Hardee had escaped with his garrison, and had to content myself with the material fruits of victory without the cost of life which would have attended a general assault. The substantial results will be more clearly set forth in the tabular statements of heavy ordnance and other public property acquired, and it will suffice here to state that the important city of Savannah, with its valuable harbor and river, was the chief object of the campaign. With it we acquire all the forts and heavy ordnance in its vicinity, with large stores of ammunition, shot and shells, cotton, rice, and other valuable products of the country. We also gain locomotives and cars, which, though of little use to us in the present condition of the railroads, are a serious loss to the enemy; as well as four steamboats gained, and the loss to the enemy of the iron-clad Savannah, one ram, and three transports, blown up or burned by them the night before.

Formal demand having been made for the surrender, and having been refused, I contend that everything within the line of intrenchments belongs to the United States; and I shall not hesitate to use it, if necessary, for public purposes. But inasmuch as the inhabitants generally have manifested a friendly disposition, I shall disturb them as little as possible consistently with the military rights of present and future military commanders, without remitting in the least our just rights as captors.

After having made the necessary orders for the disposition of the troops in and about Savannah, I ordered Capt. O. M. Poe, Chief Engineer, to make a thorough examination of the enemy's works in and about Savannah, with a view to making it conform to our future uses. New lines of defenses will be built, embracing the city proper, Forts Jackson, Thunderbolt and Pulaski retained, with slight modifications in their armament and rear defenses. All the rest of the enemy's forts will be dismantled and destroyed, and their heavy ordnance transferred to Hilton Head, where it can be more easily guarded. Our base of supplies will be established in Savannah, as soon as the very difficult obstructions placed in the river can be partially removed. These obstructions at present offer a very serious impediment to the commerce of Savannah, consisting of crib-work of logs and timber heavily bolted together, and filled with the cobble-stones which formerly paved the streets of Savannah. All the channels below the city were found more or less filled with torpedoes, which have been removed by order of Admiral Dahlgren, so that Savannah already fulfills the important part it was designed in our plans for the future.

In thus sketching the course of events connected with this campaign, I have purposely passed lightly over the march from Atlanta to the sea shore, because it was made in four or more columns, sometimes at a distance of fifteen or twenty miles from each other, and it was impossible for me to attend but one. Therefore I have left it to the army and corps commanders to describe in their own language the events which attended the march of their respective columns. These reports are herewith submitted, and I beg to refer to them for further details. I would merely sum up the advantages which I conceive have accrued to us by this march.

Our former labors in north Georgia had demonstrated the truth that no large army, carrying with it the necessary stores and baggage, can overtake and capture an inferior force of the enemy in his own country. Therefore no alternative was left me but the one I adopted, namely, to divide my forces, and with one part act offensively against the enemy's resources, while with the other I should act defensively, and invite the enemy to attack, risking the chances of battle. In this conclusion I have been singularly sustained by the results. Gen. Hood, who, as I have heretofore described, had moved to the westward near Tusculum, with a view to decoy me away from Georgia, finding himself mistaken, was forced to choose, either to pursue

me or to act offensively against the other part left in Tennessee. He adopted the latter course; and Gen. Thomas has wisely and well fulfilled his part in the grand scheme in drawing Hood well up into Tennessee until he could concentrate all his own troops and then turn upon Hood as he has done, and destroy or fatally cripple his army. That part of my army is so far removed from me that I leave, with perfect confidence, its management and history to Gen. Thomas.

I was thereby left with a well-appointed army to sever the enemy's only remaining railroad communications eastward and westward, for over 100 miles, namely, the Georgia State Railroad, which is broken up from Fairburn Station to Madison and the Oconee, and the Central Railroad from Gordon clear to Savannah, with numerous breaks on the latter road from Gordon to Eatonton, and from Millen to Augusta, and the Savannah and Gulf Railroad. We have also consumed the corn and fodder in the region of country 30 miles on either side of a line from Atlanta to Savannah, as also the sweet potatoes, cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry, and have carried away more than 10,000 horses and mules, as well as a countless number of their slaves. I estimate the damage done to the State of Georgia and its military resources at \$100,000,000; at least \$20,000,000 of which has inured to our advantage, and the remainder is simple waste and destruction. This may seem a hard species of warfare, but it brings the sad realities of war home to those who have been directly or indirectly instrumental in involving us in its attendant calamities.

This campaign has also placed this branch of my army in a position from which other great military results may be attempted, beside leaving in Tennessee and North Alabama a force which is amply sufficient to meet all the chances of war in that region of our country.

Since the capture of Atlanta my staff is unchanged, save that Gen. Barry, Chief of Artillery, has been absent, sick, since our leaving Kingston. Surgeon Moore, United States Army, is Chief Medical Director, in place of Surgeon Kittoe, relieved to resume his proper duties as a Medical Inspector. Major Hitchcock, A. A. G., has also been added to my staff, and has been of great assistance in the field and office. Capt. Dayton still remains as my Adjutant-General. All have, as formerly, fulfilled their parts to my entire satisfaction.

In the body of my army I feel a just pride. Gens. Howard and Slocum are gentlemen of singular capacity and intelligence, thorough soldiers and patriots, working day and night, not for themselves, but for their country and their men. Gen. Kilpatrick, who commanded the cavalry of this army, has handled it with spirit and dash to my entire satisfaction, and kept a superior force of the enemy's cavalry from even approaching our infantry columns or wagon trains. His report is full and graphic. All the division and brigade commanders merit my personal and official thanks, and I shall spare no efforts to secure them commissions equal to the rank they have exercised so well. As to the rank and file, they seem so full of confidence in themselves, that I doubt if they want a compliment from me; but I must do them the justice to say that whether called on to fight, to march, to wade streams, to make roads, clear out obstructions, build bridges, make "corduroy," or tear up railroads, they have done it with alacrity and a degree of cheerfulness unsurpassed. A little loose in foraging, they "did some things they ought not to have done," yet on the whole they have supplied the wants of the army with as little violence as could be expected, and as little loss as I calculated. Some of these foraging parties had encounters with the enemy which would in ordinary times rank as respectable battles. The behavior of our troops in Savannah has been so manly, so quiet, so perfect, that I take it as the best evidence of discipline and true courage. Never was a hostile city, filled with women and children, occupied by a large army with less disorder, or more system, order, and good government. The same general and generous spirit of confidence and good feeling pervades the army which it has ever afforded me especial pleasure to report on former occasions.

I avail myself of this occasion to express my heartfelt thanks to Admiral Dahlgren and the officers and men of his fleet, as also to Gen. Foster and his command, for the hearty welcome given us on our arrival at the coast, and for their steady and prompt cooperation in all measures tending to the result accomplished.

I send herewith a map of the country through which we have passed; reports from Gen. Howard, Gen. Slocum, and Gen. Kilpatrick, and their subordinates respectively, with the usual lists of captured property, killed, wounded and missing, prisoners of war taken and rescued, as also copies of all papers illustrating the campaign, all of which are respectfully submitted by

Your obedient servant,  
 W. T. SHERMAN, Major-General.