

it is, I think, certain that Rosecrans was stronger in infantry and artillery than Bragg by at least four thousand men."

It is difficult to make a correct estimate of the casualties on the Confederate side, as so many official papers were never published. My corps had "present for duty" 8884 men the morning of the 19th. The casualties were: killed, 370; wounded, 2448; missing, 172,—total, 2990. Among the killed were two brigadier-generals. Proportionally, this would give a loss in Bragg's army of 18,000 men. [The official estimate, War Records office, is 17,804.—ED.] But the right wing suffered very much more than the left, because it fought all the time against a foe under cover. (The only general officers killed were in the right wing.) For the same reason the right wing inflicted much less injury upon the enemy than did the left—hardly half as much. It would be a high estimate to put our casualties at 15,000 in artillery and infantry.

The Federal estimate of their loss (revised official returns) is: killed, 1656; wounded, 9749; captured or missing, 4774,—total, 16,179. The estimate of "missing" is below the mark by one thousand, if the Confederate claim of the capture of 6500 prisoners is correct. The Confederates also claim to have taken 51 pieces of artillery, 15,000 stand of arms, and a large amount of ordnance stores, camp equipage, etc.

But whatever blunders each of us in authority committed before the battles of the 19th and 20th, and during their progress, the great blunder of all was that of not pursuing the enemy on the 21st. The day was spent in

burying the dead and gathering up captured stores. Forrest, with his usual promptness, was early in the saddle, and saw that the retreat was a rout. Disorganized masses of men were hurrying to the rear; batteries of artillery were inextricably mixed with trains of wagons; disorder and confusion pervaded the broken ranks struggling to get on. Forrest sent back word to Bragg that "every hour was worth a thousand men." But the commander-in-chief did not know of the victory until the morning of the 21st, and then he did not order a pursuit. Rosecrans spent the day and the night of the 21st in hurrying his trains out of town. A breathing space was allowed him; the panic among his troops subsided, and Chattanooga—the objective point of the campaign—was held. There was no more splendid fighting in '61, when the flower of the Southern youth was in the field, than was displayed in those bloody days of September, '63. But it seems to me that the *elan* of the Southern soldier was never seen after Chickamauga—that brilliant dash which had distinguished him on a hundred fields was gone forever. He was too intelligent not to know that the cutting in two of Georgia meant death to all his hopes. He knew that Longstreet's absence was imperiling Lee's safety, and that what had to be done must be done quickly. The delay to strike was exasperating to him; the failure to strike after the success was crushing to all his longings for an independent South. He fought stoutly to the last, but, after Chickamauga, with the sullenness of despair and without the enthusiasm of hope. That "barren victory" sealed the fate of the Southern Confederacy.

D. H. Hill.

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

The Reserve Corps at Chickamauga.

BY GENERAL GORDON GRANGER'S CHIEF OF STAFF.

ON the 19th day of September, 1863, the Reserve Corps of the Army of the Cumberland, General Gordon Granger in command, was distributed over a long stretch of country, its rear at Murfreesboro' and its van on the battle-field of Chickamauga. Here were W. C. Whitaker's and J. G. Mitchell's brigades, and the Twenty-second Michigan and Eighty-ninth Ohio regiments, all of the First Division, under immediate command of Brigadier-General James B. Steedman; Colonel Daniel McCook's brigade of infantry, and Colonel Minty's brigade of cavalry, the whole being under command of Major-General Gordon Granger, the corps commander. These troops had been posted to cover the rear and left flank of the army. During September 19th, the first day of the battle, they were engaged in some skirmishing and stood at arms expecting an attack. On the evening of the 19th every indication pointed to a renewal of the battle early the

next day. The night was cold for that time of year. Tell-tale fires were prohibited. The men slept on their arms. All was quiet save in the field-hospitals in the rear. The bright moon lighted up the fields and woods. Along the greater part of a front of eight miles the ground was strewn with the intermingled dead of friend and foe. The morning of Sunday, the 20th, opened with a cloudless sky, but a fog had come up from the warm water of the Chickamauga and hung over the battle-field until nine o'clock. The expected attack on Granger was not made. A silence of desertion was in the front. This quiet continued till nearly ten o'clock; then, as the peaceful tones of church bells, rolling over the land from the East, reached the meridian of Chickamauga, they were made dissonant by the murderous roar of the artillery of Bishop Polk, who was opening the battle on Thomas's front. Granger, who had been ordered, at all hazards, to hold fast where he was to protect the left flank and rear of the army, listened and grew impatient. Shortly before ten o'clock, calling my attention to a great column of

dust moving from our front towards the point from which came the sound of battle, he said, "They are concentrating over there. That is where we ought to be." The corps flag marked his headquarters in an open field near the Ringgold road. He walked up and down in front of his flag, nervously pulling his beard. Once stopping, he said, "Why, the —— does Rosecrans keep me here? There is nothing in front of us now. There is the battle" — pointing in the direction of Thomas.

Every moment the sounds of battle grew louder, while the many columns of dust rolling together here mingled with the smoke that hung over the scene.

At eleven o'clock, with Granger, I climbed a high hayrick near by. We sat there for ten minutes listening and watching. Then Granger jumped to his feet, thrust his glass into its case, and exclaimed with an oath:

"I am going over to Thomas, orders or no orders."

"And if you go," I replied, "it may bring disaster to the army and you to a court-martial."

"There's nothing in our front now but ragtag, bob-tail cavalry," he replied. "Don't you see Bragg is piling his whole army on Thomas! I am going to his assistance."

We quickly climbed down the rick, and, going to Steedman, Granger ordered him to move his command "over there," pointing towards the place from which came the sounds of battle. Colonel Dan McCook was directed to hold fast at McAfee Church, where his brigade covered the Ringgold road. Before half-past eleven o'clock Steedman's command was in motion. Granger, with his staff and escort, rode in advance. Steedman, after accompanying them a short distance, rode back to the head of his column.

Thomas was nearly four miles away. The day had now grown very warm, yet the troops marched rapidly over the narrow road, which was covered ankle-deep with dust that rose in suffocating clouds. Completely enveloped in it, the moving column swept along like a desert sandstorm. Two miles from the point of starting, and three-quarters of a mile to the left of the road, the enemy's skirmishers and a section of artillery opened fire on us from an open wood. This force had worked round Thomas's left, and was then partly in his rear. Granger halted to feel them. Soon becoming convinced that it was only a large party of observation, he again started his column and pushed rapidly forward. I was then sent to bring up Colonel McCook's brigade, and put it in position to watch the movements of the enemy; to keep open the Lafayette road, and to cover the open fields between that point and the position held by Thomas. This brigade remained there the rest of the day. Our skirmishers had not gone far when they came upon Thomas's field-hospital, at Cloud's house, then swarming with the enemy, who were helping themselves to everything portable. They came from the same body of Forrest's cavalry that had fired on us from the wood. They were quickly driven out, and our men were warmly welcomed with cheers from hundreds of dying and wounded men.

A little farther on, we were met by a staff-officer sent by General Thomas to discover whether we were friends or enemies; he did not know whence friends were coming — the enemy appeared to be approaching

from all directions. Bragg's whole army was rolling up against the heroic troops of this grand soldier. All of the shattered Army of the Cumberland left on the field was with Thomas; but not more than one-fourth of the men of the army who went into battle at the opening were there. Thomas's loss in killed and wounded during the two days had been dreadful. As his men dropped out his line was contracted. It was hardly half as long as it had been. Now its flanks were bent back, conforming to ridges shaped like a horseshoe.

On the part of Thomas and his men there was no thought but that of fighting. He was a soldier who had never retreated, who had never been defeated. He stood immovable, the "Rock of Chickamauga." Where he was, timid men became brave. Never had soldiers greater love for a commander. He imbued them with his spirit, and their confidence in him was sublime.

To the right of Thomas's line — his extreme right being composed of Brannan's fragments on the Snodgrass hill — was a gorge, then a high ridge, nearly at right angles thereto, running east and west. Confederates under Kershaw (McLaws's division of Hood's corps) were passing through the gorge, together with Bushrod Johnson's division, which Longstreet was strengthening with Hindman's division; divisions were forming on this ridge for an assault; to their left the guns of a battery were being unlimbered for an enfilading fire. There was not a man to send against the force on the ridge, none to oppose this impending assault. The enemy saw the approaching colors of the Reserve Corps and hesitated.

At one o'clock Granger shook hands with Thomas. Something was said about forming to fight to the right and rear.

"Those men must be driven back," said Granger, pointing to the gorge and ridge. "Can you do it?"

"Yes," was the reply. "My men are fresh, and they are just the fellows for that work. They are raw troops, and they don't know any better than to charge up there."

Granger quickly sent Aleshire's battery of three-inch rifle guns which he brought up to Thomas's left to assist in repelling another assault about to be made on the Kelly farm front. Whitaker's and Mitchell's brigades under Steedman were whirled into position and projected against the enemy in the gorge and on the ridge. With ringing cheers they advanced in two lines by double-quick. Over open fields, through weeds waist-high, through a little valley, then up the ridge. The enemy opened on them first with artillery, then with a murderous musketry fire. When well up the ridge the men, almost exhausted, were halted for breath. They lay on the ground two or three minutes, then came the command "Forward." Brave, bluff old Steedman, with a regimental flag in his hand, led the way. On went the lines, firing as they ran and bravely receiving a deadly and continuous fire from the enemy on the summit. The horrible din from muskets and the scarcely intermittent roar of the artillery drowned the voice of command. The Confederates began to break, and in another minute they were flying down the southern slope of the ridge. In twenty minutes from the beginning of the charge the ridge had been carried.

Granger's hat had been torn by a fragment of shell; Steedman had been wounded; Whitaker had been wounded, and four of his five staff-officers killed or mortally wounded. Twenty per cent. of Steedman's

two brigades, numbering 3500 muskets, had been killed and wounded in that twenty minutes; and the end was not yet.

The enemy massed a force to retake the ridge. They came before our men had rested; twice they assaulted and were driven back. During one assault, as the first line came within range of our muskets, it halted, apparently hesitating, when we saw a colonel seize a flag, wave it over his head, and rush forward. The whole line instantly caught his enthusiasm, and with a wild cheer followed, only to be hurled back again. Our men ran down the ridge in pursuit. In the midst of a group of Confederate dead and wounded they found the brave colonel dead, the flag he carried spread over him where he fell.

Soon after five o'clock Thomas rode to the left of his line, leaving Granger, the ranking officer, at the center. The ammunition of both Thomas's and Granger's commands was now about exhausted. When Granger had come up he had given ammunition to Brannan and Wood, and that had exhausted his supply. The cartridge-boxes of both our own and the enemy's dead within reach had been emptied by our men. When it was not yet six o'clock, and Thomas was still on the left of his line, Brannan rushed up to Granger, saying, "The enemy are forming for another assault; we have not another round of ammunition—what shall we do?" "Fix bayonets and go for them," was the reply. Along the whole line ran the order, "Fix bayonets." On came the enemy—our men were lying down. "Forward" was sounded. In one instant they were on their feet. Forward they went to meet the charge. When bayonet meets bayonet, one side gives way. The enemy fled. So impetuous was this counter-charge that one regiment of the Reserve Corps, with empty muskets and empty cartridge-boxes, broke through the enemy's line, which, closing up in their rear, carried it off as in the undertow.

One more feeble assault was made by the enemy; then the day closed, and the battle of Chickamauga was over. Of the 3700 men of the Reserve Corps who went into the battle that afternoon, 1175 were killed and wounded, 613 were missing, all prisoners, many of whom were of the regiment that broke through the lines. Our total loss, 1788, nearly fifty per cent. lost in one afternoon.

Gordon Granger was rough in manner, but he had a tender heart. He was not a respecter of persons. He was rather inclined to insubordination. This was especially so when he knew his superior officer to be wrong. Otherwise he was a splendid soldier. Rosecrans named him well when he wrote of him, "Granger, great in battle."

J. S. Fullerton.

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 20, 1887.

General Polk at Chickamauga.

BY HIS SON, CAPTAIN POLK, OF HIS STAFF.

IN response to your request for the reasons given by General Polk for the delay in attack on the morning of Sept. 20, 1863, let me say that it was because General Hill's corps was not ready for the assault. General Polk sent General Hill an order at midnight to attack at daylight, but General Hill could not be found (either on his line of battle or at Tedford's Ford, where

his headquarters were reported to be). Upon learning this fact General Polk issued an order, dated 5:30 A. M., direct to Hill's division commanders to attack as soon as they could get into position. This second order was delivered in the presence of General Hill by Captain Wheless soon after sunrise, about 6:15. To this General Hill replied that his men were getting rations and that he would not be ready to move for an hour or more. General Polk reported this reply to General Bragg, in a note dated seven A. M., and stated that the attack would be made as soon as General Hill was ready. This, of course, conflicts with the time given by General Hill for the reception of the second order, viz., 7:25 A. M. These facts are derived from the official statements of General Polk, Captain Wheless, and of John H. Fisher, on file in the War Records office.

As to the whereabouts of General Polk on the morning of the 20th, General Polk left his camp at Alexander's Bridge, 1200 yards in rear of his line, between daylight and sunrise, and, as is shown by the statement of General Cheatham (Official Records), was on the line of battle at sunrise, where he remained and where he first met General Bragg (Captain Wheless, Official Records). These facts I state from my personal knowledge.

General Bragg's statement that General Polk was away from his line of battle at this time was not derived from his own knowledge, but from a statement of one of his staff-officers, as is shown in the following extract from an unpublished private letter from General Bragg, dated Mobile, February 8, 1873.

"The staff-officer sent to General Polk (Major Lee, A. I. G.) to urge his compliance with the orders of the previous night, reported to me that he found him at a farmhouse, three miles from the line of his troops, about one hour after sunrise, sitting on the gallery reading a newspaper, and waiting, as he (the general) said, for his breakfast."

The facts of the records above quoted are a sufficient answer to this absurd statement. But I can add further that I saw Major Lee when he delivered General Bragg's message to General Polk, at his (Polk's) camp in the woods, at Alexander's Bridge, 1200 yards from his line, before sunrise. General Polk was then preparing to mount his horse.

I will also add of my own knowledge that General Polk had ridden from one end of his line to the other, and had met General Hill and each of the division commanders before General Bragg came upon his line of battle. They met on the line about 7:45 A. M.

You inquire also about "the attack on the 13th." The object of Polk's movement was to intercept Crittenden before he should cross to the west side of the Chickamauga, and unite with other portions of Rosecrans's army. Polk was told that he would find Crittenden east of the creek about Pea Vine Church on the Graysville road, and was directed to attack him there at daylight of the 13th. He moved as ordered and found no enemy, Crittenden having crossed to the west of the creek the evening before. General Bragg in his report neglects to take this fact into account, and thus leaves the impression that Crittenden's escape was due to Polk's tardiness in moving rather than to his own tardiness in ordering the movement. It should have been ordered for the morning of the 12th.

W. M. Polk.