

tinct break. If you please you may telegraph to Mr. Chase simply that I have come to Washington on Taylor's call, but I cannot wait long, and if the Administration don't want my services, to say so at once emphatically.

Yours affectionately,

W. T. SHERMAN.

WASHINGTON, June 20, 1861.

Dear Brother: At last the order is out and I am Colonel 13 Infantry. I have been asking for orders and am this moment informed for the present, that inasmuch as Lt. Col. Burbank may enlist my Regiment, and as my personal services here are needed, I will forthwith consider myself on duty here attached to Gen. Scott's staff as Inspector General. I did not dream of this, but it really does well accord with my inclinations and peculiar nature. My duty will be to keep myself advised of the character and kind of men who are in Military service here near Washington and to report to General Scott in person. Porter can tell you what these duties will amount to. . . . I suppose you will soon be here, for from Col. Burnside I hear all of Patterson's army is on the Maryland side of the Potomac, and no possible movement will be attempted before Congress meets. . . .

In haste,

Your Brother,

W. T. SHERMAN.

IV

In command of a brigade of McDowell's army — Bull Run — At Fort Corcoran — Ordered West with General Anderson — At Cincinnati — John Sherman engaged in recruiting — Difficulties of saving Kentucky to the Union — Sherman succeeds Anderson on the latter's resignation — Weakness of his position at Louisville — Reports to General Halleck at St. Louis — At Benton Barracks — Halleck's difficulties — Ordered to Paducah — Different opinions of the brothers regarding McClellan — John Sherman on the Congressional Session of 1861-62 — The battle of Shiloh — Indignation of General Sherman at false newspaper reports — Promoted to major-general — Division order after occupation of Corinth

GENERAL SHERMAN remained on duty with General Scott only ten days (June 20-30), and then was given command of one brigade of McDowell's army, which was to move from the defences of Washington. He assumed command June 30, and went to work at once to prepare his brigade for the general advance.

CAMP OPPOSITE GEORGETOWN,
July 16, 1861.

Dear Brother: We start forth to-day, camp to-night at or near Vienna, to-morrow early we attack the enemy at or near Fairfax C.H., Germantown and Centerville, thereabouts we will probably be till about Thursday, when movement of the whole force, some 35,000 men on Manassas, turning the position by a wide circuit. You may expect to hear of us about Aquia Creek or Fredericksburg (secret absolute). . . .

If anything befall me, my pay is drawn to embrace June 30, and Ellen has full charge of all other interests. Good bye.

Your Brother,

W. T. SHERMAN.

After Bull Run,¹ Sherman's brigade remained encamped at Fort Corcoran, a part of the Washington defences. He was made a brigadier-general of volunteers, and in his next letters explains his transfer to the West.

He was relieved in his command by General Fitz-John Porter, and started for Cincinnati on one of the last days in August to meet General Anderson.

At this time John Sherman was in Ohio, and his letters from there to his brother require no explanation.

FORT CORCORAN, Aug. 19, 1861.

My Dear Brother: I have been here ever since you left, hardly taking off my clothes at night. McClellan is so confident that Beauregard will attack that I try to be prepared at all times. Our forts are in pretty good condition, but whether the volunteers can serve the guns or not is to be tested. It does seem to me strange that when all know that if Beauregard get Washington, the Southern Confederacy will be an established fact that they should leave volunteers to hold the most important point in the world. Out of my seven regiments three are in a state of mutiny, and I have been compelled to put about 100 men as prisoners on board a man-of-war. And yesterday I had my Regulars all ready with shotted guns to fire on our own troops, some of whom not only claim their discharge, but threaten to spike our guns. They claim to be only 3 months men, whereas the War Department claims their services for 3 years. Even some of the 3 years men say the President had no right to call for 3 years men and that the subsequent legislation of Congress was ex-post facto. . . .

¹ Bull Run is a small stream about thirty miles southwest from Washington, and here the first great battle of the war was won by the rebel army of about 32,000 men under Generals Beauregard and J. E. Johnston, on July 21, 1861.

General McDowell commanded the Union army of about 28,000 men, and Sherman, then a colonel, commanded a brigade in this army.

A few days since Gen. Robert Anderson sent for me to meet him at Willard's. I found him with Senator Johnson, a Mr. Maynard, and several other members from Kentucky and Tennessee. They told me the President had resolved to send assistance to the Union men of Kentucky and Tennessee, that Anderson being a Kentuckian to him was given the lead, and that he was allowed to select three Brigadiers, that he had chosen me first and Burnside and Thomas next. The President agreed, but McClellan would not spare me till the danger in his front was lessened. It was then agreed to wait a week, when if nothing happens here I am to be ordered into Kentucky. As I understand we are to go there in person, mingle with the people, satisfy ourselves of their purpose to oppose the Southern Confederacy and then to assist in the organization there of a force adequate to the end in view, that when Kentucky is assured in her allegiance that we then push into East Tennessee. I feel well satisfied that unless Kentucky and Tennessee remain in our Union it is a doubtful question whether the Federal Government can restore the old Union. . . .

There is no time to be lost and I will not spare my individual efforts, though I still feel as one groping in the dark. Slowly but surely the public is realizing what I knew all the time, the strong vindictive feeling of the whole South.

Your Brother,

W. T. SHERMAN.

CINCINNATI, Sept. 9, 1861.

Dear Brother: I am still here. Gen. A. went quietly over to Frankfort last Thursday, and I hear from him that things are progressing favorably. The time seems to have passed in this country when the voice of the

People is considered the voice of God. Notwithstanding the large vote for the Union and the controlled majority in the Legislature, there is still a doubt whether that state will go for the Union. . . .

I think it of vast importance and that Ohio, Indiana and Illinois must sooner or later arm every inhabitant, and the sooner the better. I hardly apprehend that Beauregard can succeed in getting Washington, but should he, it will be worse to us than Manassas; but supposing he falls back, he will first try to overwhelm Rosecrans in Western Virginia and then look to Tennessee. We ought to have here a well appointed Army of a hundred thousand men. I don't see where they are to come from, but this is the great centre. I still think that Mississippi will be the grand field of operations. Memphis ought to be taken in all October, even if we have to fortify and hold it a year. I think it of more importance than Richmond. It may be that the Southern leaders have made such tremendous calls upon their people and resources, that if we remain on the defence they will exhaust themselves, but upon the first manifest symptoms of such a result we should follow it up. Here we have no means of offence and but little of defence, and if you are full of zeal you could not do better than to raise your voice to call the young and middle-aged men of Ohio to arms. If they can't get muskets then let them get such arms as can be gathered together, or if not that, then let them organize in companies in every township and be ready to collect together and move on short notice. I am amazed to see here and everywhere such apparent indifference when all know that Rebels threaten the Capital and are creeping around us in Missouri and Kansas. If they are united, and we disunited or indifferent, they will succeed. I knew this reaction was

natural and to be expected, but it is none the less to be deplored. . . .

Affectionately,

W. T. SHERMAN.

MANSFIELD, OHIO, Sept. 12, 1861.

My Dear Brother: Enlistments in this part of the State now go on rapidly. Dickey's regiment is nearly full, and companies have formed for cavalry and artillery regiments organizing in other parts of the State. It is also manifest a better feeling prevails among the people, a more hopeful and hearty support of the War and a readiness to bear its burdens. When you remember that all these regiments are formed by voluntary enlistments, and for the war and under the shadow of defeat, it is wonderful so large a force is raised. As winter approaches more will enlist, for employment in civil pursuits will be out of the question. Want is as good a recruiting sergeant as patriotism. If, however, voluntary enlistments fail, then drafting must be resorted to. It is the fairest and best mode, for it makes all classes contribute alike. I have been at a loss what to do with myself this fall.

I dislike the idea of being idle in these stirring times. My relations with Gov. Dennison are not such as will justify me in asking the organization of a regiment, and I will not undertake it without *carte blanche* as to officers. I notice from the papers that he has adopted somewhat such a plan of enlistment as I suggested to him. If he asks me to assist to execute it, I will do so at once and actively, but I presume he will not do so. As to making speeches through the State, it is very irksome. And this is not all. Speeches from me unless I enlist or am in the service myself will not come with a good grace. My speeches would be regarded as political. There is no

disposition this fall to gather in mass meetings to hear speeches. It is probable I will take some part in the canvass for the Union Ticket, but after the election I will go to Washington and seek some active employment until after Congress meets. The delay in Kentucky appears ominous. The whole character of the State is reversed in this contest. The Kentuckians have always had the reputation of being ready fighters, and as Kentucky has taken position for the Union I should think they would at once take arms. Eastern Kentucky is the loyal part. All the counties between Ohio and East Tennessee have been considered thoroughly loyal. If civil war does break out in Kentucky, it seems to me that it must be in the Western part of the State, and then Paducah, Madison, Ind., and Louisville will be the place for you. . . .

Affectionately Yours,

JOHN SHERMAN.

MANSFIELD, OHIO, Sept. 28, 1861.

Dear Brother: I am at last engaged in recruiting. I have received an order from Gov. Dennison to raise two regiments of Infantry, one squadron of Cavalry, and a battery of artillery, and I am now hard at work executing the order. I want a good Colonel, an educated, brave, reliable officer. I must have him. The orders of the Governor give me the utmost latitude in the selection of the officers of this force and I am determined it shall be well commanded if proper officers can be obtained. Can you name me one as Major, and one as Lieutenant Colonel? They will receive promotion upon the meeting of Congress, when I shall resign the nominal place of Colonel. In the multiplicity of your important duties I trust you can name such officers as I wish. I would

like it all the better if one at least of them may be a Kentuckian, as this force is intended for Kentucky.

Affy. Your Brother,

J. S.

General Sherman found Generals Anderson and Thomas at Cincinnati, and Anderson decided to send him to Indianapolis and Springfield to confer with the governors of Indiana and Illinois, and to General Fremont, who was in command at St. Louis, to get help to resist the threatened invasion of Kentucky. While at St. Louis General Sherman was summoned hastily back to Louisville, and on his arrival was sent by General Anderson with such troops as were available, to secure a position on Muldraugh's Hill, before General Buckner with his invading force could get there. The next letter is written from there.

MULDRAUGH'S HILL,
40 miles from Louisville,
Oct. 5, 1861.

Dear Brother: . . . I'm afraid you are too late to save Kentucky. The young active element is all secession, the older stay-at-homes are for Union and Peace. But they will not take part. In the meantime the Southern Confederacy looking forward to this very condition of things has armies organized, equipped, &c., and have the Railroads so disposed that by concentration they can overwhelm any part. There was one Camp south and East of Lexington formed by Lt. Nelson, U. S. Navy, now commanded by Brig. Gen. Thomas, and an army under Zollicoffer of Tennessee is advancing on it. Gen. Anderson at Louisville, Ky., has sent in that direction all the regiments from Ohio. Here the secessionists secured several trains of cars and locomotives, moved them South and broke up the bridges so that they are safe. We came out here hastily to secure Muldraugh's Hill, a

kind of chain which separates the waters of Salt Creek from Green River. We are at one part of this chain where the Railroad from Louisville to Nashville crosses it, but it is by no means a strong point. I have examined the country all around, but every strong defensible position is devoid of water, and our absolute dependence on that element forces me into a position which upon being surrounded by vastly superior forces will be a complete ambush. The people are all unfriendly. Their trade and relations have been with the South, and there their feelings lie, so that when Buckner sees fit he can come up from Green River where he now is with from 8,000 to 15,000 men. We have 5,000, and the Railroad behind is guarded by three more, but this road can be cut at a hundred different points which would starve us out or force me to strike out and live on a country which produces only beef and corn. I have Col. Gibson's Ohio Regt., 3 Indiana Regts. and 2 of Kentucky, but I must say that these latter were made up in Louisville and over in Indiana and [are] composed most of strangers to Kentucky. It will require near one hundred thousand men in Kentucky, and where they are to come from I don't know.

If I am reinforced as promised I will advance to a place called Moline where the ground is better for a desperate fight. . . .

I see they are falling back from Washington. I hope McClellan will press forward and keep them all engaged; in like manner the forces in Missouri should be employed without a minute's delay, and for that reason I am sorry to see a change of plans. . . .

If the Confederates take St. Louis and get Kentucky this Winter you will be far more embarrassed than if

Washington had fallen into their possession, as whatever nation gets the control of the Ohio, Mississippi and Missouri Rivers will control the Continent. This they know and for this they will labor. You of the North never fully appreciated the energy of the South. My health is good, but as you perceive I am far from easy about the fate of Kentucky.

Affectionately,

W. T. SHERMAN, Brig. Gen'l.

On the 8th of October, 1861, General Anderson, worn out by the cares of his position, resigned, and Sherman naturally was forced into the command until he could be relieved. He continued so until the middle of November, when General Buell was sent to relieve him, and Sherman was ordered to report to General Halleck, then in command in Missouri.

In a letter to Adjutant-General Thomas, dated Louisville, October 22, General Sherman wrote:—

You know my views, that this great centre of our field was too weak, far too weak, and I have begged and implored till I dare not say more.

The two following letters show clearly how weak Sherman considered his position, and how hard he tried to better it by acquiring more men and better arms:—

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND,
LOUISVILLE, KEN., Oct. 26, 1861.

Dear Brother: I am just in receipt of your letter and am glad the Secretary remembered my remark, that to accomplish the only purposes for which Kentucky can be used there should be a force here of 200,000 men. My force is ridiculously small and I think to [augment] it by dribblets. Look at the fact—we know the South is all arms and prepared and must have Kentucky; for it they

will struggle. They see us under-valuing their force. They have already invaded the state with five times my forces and are gradually preparing for an onset. I know their leaders and their designs, and feel that I am to be sacrificed. The Western part of the state is now in their possession. They have about 6000 men in the Valley of the Big Sandy, 6000 or 7000 at Cumberland Gap and Ford, and I doubt not at least 35,000 in front of me, with nothing between us but Green River, now fordable, and about 23 miles of intervening country. Indiana is devoid of arms, so is Ohio and the North-West, and to my crying demand for arms they send me a few hundreds of condemned European muskets, whilst the people ask for rifles. We have called on the Kentuckians to form regiments and they are responding slowly to be sure but when they come for arms I can only answer I have none, or such as they won't touch. I tell you, and warn you of the danger so far as my power goes. I cannot promise to prevent the enemy reaching the Ohio river at a hundred different points. Our camps are full of their spies and the people here all prefer their Southern connections. . . . I am compelled to distribute them [troops] on three weak lines all dependent on railroads which may at any moment be interrupted, also on telegraphs which are daily cut. A reverse to any one of these might be fatal to all, yet I cannot do otherwise. The forces up Sandy must be driven or threatened from the direction of Paris. Those at Cumberland Gap from Dick Robinson, and those over Green River from here; this is the most important point and the most in danger. The Southern army wants it with its mills, foundries, shops, and all the affairs of a city, besides the control of the river. . . .

Yours,

W. T. SHERMAN.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSOURI,
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY, NOV. 21, 1861.

Dear Brother: Your letter was received yesterday. I know that others than yourself think I take a gloomy view of affairs without cause. I hope to God 'tis so. All I know is the fact that all over Kentucky the people are allied by birth, interest, and preference to the South. Their trade points that way and in spite of all efforts letters pass to and fro daily. Applications come by hundreds asking protection which cannot be granted, and all know the fact that we have not the power to prevent it. Again the men who have come here by regiments are exposed to not only the chances of war but of interruption to the railroad which I have guarded thus far successfully, but a child or man with a crowbar may destroy it. Now that Buell is in command I might divest myself of all care on this score. We have been out to camp inspecting the troops and he has entered upon his duties and I have delayed here simply to give him information. I have not been instrumental in bringing troops here, and I will give no advice on the subject. . . .

They have sent here old condemned European [muskets], and have sent no arms for Cavalry, and when I bought pistols wherewith to arm some scouts the accounts have been disallowed at Washington because I had not procured authority beforehand. Troops come from Wisconsin and Minnesota without arms and receive such as we have here for the first time, and I cannot but look upon it as absolutely sacrificing them. I see no hope for them in their present raw and undisciplined condition, and some terrible disaster is inevitable. . . .

For myself I will blindly obey my orders and report to Gen. Halleck in Missouri, but till I can see daylight ahead I will never allow myself to be in command.

Affectionately, W. T. SHERMAN.

It is interesting to remember how completely the future carried out Sherman's prediction with regard to Kentucky. Later, Burnside was cornered there as Sherman always believed his successors must be, and he (Sherman) was sent to his relief.

After being relieved of his command in Kentucky and reporting to Halleck in St. Louis, Sherman went to his old home in Lancaster, Ohio, for a short leave, and on his return was sent to take command of the camp of instruction at Benton Barracks near St. Louis and to get the troops there into condition for immediate use.

On December 24 he writes from Benton Barracks:—

. . . In Missouri I find things black enough. All my old friends are now against us, not openly but really. We have possession of St. Louis and the railroads but the Secessionists have possession of the country. They have destroyed the North Missouri railroad and will in time the others. These railroads are the weakest things in war; a single man with a match can destroy a bridge and cut off communications, and no one seems to apprehend the danger by laying in supplies accordingly. . . .

And two weeks later he wrote:—

I have received your letter and will give you what you ask: the reason why I ordered Gen. Thomas to fall back from London towards Danville or Kentucky River. Thomas had his advance in front of London, Shoenpf's brigade at London and he was at Crab Orchard. All the stores for the command had to be hauled from Nicholasville. The country was very barren of forage and roads beyond Crab Orchard were very bad. Thomas reported that General Zollicoffer had obstructed the roads to East Tennessee, and had moved westward as far as Jacksboro, and I knew he would make his appearance in front of Somerset which he did, uniting his force of

about 5,000 to Stanton's of about 2,500, giving him a column of 7,500 men on a good road leading north to Lexington. It was necessary to move Thomas to check this. Had Zollicoffer alone to have been watched the movement would have been directed to Somerset, but at the same time I had information that Gen. Hardee had left Bowling Green with his division of 3000 men, with a full supply of country wagons to the East toward Columbia from which point there is a good road to Lexington. I inferred their plan to be, as I doubt not it was, to join these two columns on the Lexington road, and therefore Thomas' force was required at some point common to the two roads, viz.: about Stamford, Danville or the Kentucky River Bridge, where he could act on the defense or offense as the case might be. The lines of operation from Nicholasville were long and weak, and there was at all times danger that a superior force would interpose between Thomas and his base, and I was satisfied that our enemies had at Bowling Green enough to send such a force, and we had not enough to make detachments from the Louisville line. The fact was our force in Kentucky was ridiculously weak for such an extent of country. My orders to Thomas pointed out the danger of this force getting between him and Lexington and for him to fall back to some point near Danville, and afterwards I notified him of my information that the anticipated movement had been reported from Columbia.

The distance was not great, but it so happened that the weather was very bad and the retrograde was made too rapidly. Of course I do not wish to throw on Thomas any blame but must bear it myself. That this movement on Lexington was contemplated then, I am well satisfied, and that some cause interposed I am also well satisfied. . . .

By giving up command in Kentucky I acknowledged my inability to manage the case, and I do think Buell can manage better than I could, and if he succeeds he will deserve all honor, but I do think it is wrong to push him on that line, whilst the army at Washington remain comparatively inert. . . .

Now Halleck has in Missouri about 80,000 men on paper and there are not in organized shape more than 10,000 or 20,000 opposed to him, yet the country is full of Secessionists, and it takes all his command to watch them. This is an element which politicians have never given full credit to. These local Secessionists are really more dangerous than if assembled in one or more bodies, for then they could be traced out and found, whereas now they are scattered about on farms and are very peaceable, but when a bridge is to be burned they are about. . . .

I wish I could take another view of this war, but I cannot. It thrusts itself upon me from every side, and yet I hope I am mistaken. . . .

Halleck has been successful thus far and I hope may continue, but he cannot by mere written papers cope with Price who is in the field bothered by no papers or accounts, taking what he can lay his hands on. I think he has orders to move down the river, but the moment he moves a man from the interior to go to Cairo, Price will return. That is his game. And in that way with a comparatively small force he holds in check five times his number. . . .

Affectionately,

W. T. SHERMAN.

HEADQUARTERS, CAMP OF INSTRUCTION,
BENTON BARRACKS (near St. Louis, Mo.),
Feb. 3, 1862.

Dear Brother :

I am still here at the Barracks doing my best to organize, equip, and prepare regiments for the coming Spring. . . .

I believe an attempt will be made on the Forts on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers in co-operation with Buell who finds with his 120,000 men he still needs help. I rather think they will come up to my figures yet. Halleck is expected to send them from 30,000 to 50,000 men. Had this been done early and promptly, the Confederates could not have made Bowling Green and Columbia next to impregnable. Until these places are reduced it will not do to advance far into Tennessee and I doubt if it will be done. East Tennessee cannot exercise much influence on the final result. West Tennessee is more important, as without the navigation of the Mississippi all commercial interests will lean to the Southern cause. If the Southern Confederacy can control the navigation of the lower Mississippi, and European nations from the mouths of the Mississippi, what can Missouri and Kentucky do? These are, however, questions for the future. . . .

Affectionately,

W. T. SHERMAN.

While General Sherman was in command of the camp of instruction at Benton Barracks, the movement up the Tennessee began. Grant and Foote took Fort Henry. Before Fort Donelson was taken Sherman was ordered to go at once to Paducah, Ky., to take command of that post and expedite the operations up the Tennessee and Cumberland. The day after his arrival (February 16), there came the news of the capture of Fort Donelson.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15, 1862.

Dear Brother:

I was infinitely rejoiced to see in this morning's paper the announcement that you were to command at Cairo. I sincerely hope it is true. If so, you will have a noble opportunity to answer those who have belied you. Take my advice, be hopeful, cheerful, polite to everybody, even a newspaper reporter. They are in the main, clever, intelligent men, a little too pressing in their vocation.

Above all things, be hopeful and push ahead. Active, bold, prompt, vigorous action is now demanded. McClellan is dead in the estimation of even military men. . . .

Do not the cheers with which our gun-boats were received in Tennessee and Alabama show you what I have always contended, that this rebellion is a political one, managed by "Southern gentlemen" and not grounded in the universal assent of the people? Johnson has now more adherents in Tennessee than Jeff. Davis. Let our leading army officers who have been educated to defend the nation catch the spirit of our people, a generous, hopeful, self-sacrificing spirit. Let them go ahead and you will find the Union restored and strengthened by its trials. . . .

Affectionately yours,

JOHN SHERMAN.

On Feb. 23, 1862, General Sherman wrote from Paducah, Kentucky:—

Don't get to war with McClellan. You mistake him if you underrate him. He must begin to move soon and I think he will. If he can threaten Richmond and cause Johnston to fall back from Manassas, he will relieve the Capital, which is the reason why foreign Governments talk of acknowledging the Southern Independence.

On March 10th Sherman, under orders from Halleck, embarked his division at Paducah, steamed up the river beyond Fort Henry, met General C. F. Smith three days later, and was ordered by him to push on and break up the Memphis and Charleston R.R. between Tusculum and Corinth. March 19th found Sherman encamped about three miles from Corinth, where he remained until the battle of Shiloh, April 6th and 7th. The following letters from General Sherman are devoted chiefly to explaining the series of events at Shiloh, and to defending the army from the unjust charges which were circulated throughout the country before the official reports of the battle were made public.

[DICTATED.]

CAMP SHILOH NEAR PITTSBURGH, TENN.,
April 16, 1862.

HON. JOHN SHERMAN, Washington, D.C.

Dear Brother:

My division is made up mostly of new regiments, some of which behaved well and others badly, but I hope by patience to make it as good as any other division in the Army.

Since the battle I have been up to Chickasaw, from which point I caused the destruction of the Charleston and Memphis Railroad at its crossing over Bear Creek, a valuable piece of service.

My right hand is temporarily disabled by inflammation from a wound, but with good luck will be all right in a week.

I believe that our hardest fighting is yet to be done, but I have absolute faith in Generals Halleck, Buell, and Grant.

Affectionately your Brother,

W. T. SHERMAN.