

ketry fire, in an open field between their picket line and mine one brigade picked up about five thousand pounds of lead balls that had been fired on the lines. The ground was literally covered with them—oxidized white like hailstones. Trees three and four inches in diameter in front of my line were cut down by balls. The lead was sold to the ordnance officers, and the weight was thus known.

29th, 30th. Our troops are moving to the left. Six of our men crossed the river and captured nine men and two wagons.

31st. Featherston and Walthall have been withdrawn from the city. My division and some State troops under the charge of Gen. G. W. Smith alone are in the city to-day. Some cavalry scouts followed my scouts nearly into the city. Firing is heard on our left. The railroad to Macon was cut to-day. This is unpleasant news.

September 1. This morning the news is that Hardee had failed to dislodge Sherman from his position. Everything indicates that Atlanta is to be abandoned, and before noon the order came. I became the rear guard. There is confusion in the city, and some of the soldiers in the town are drunk. Common sense is wanted. The five heavy guns that I had ordered to be spiked by the rear guard at 11 P.M. were burned by order of the chief of ordnance at 5 P.M., a proclamation to the enemy in my front that we were evacuating the place. As soon as I started to leave the works some of Hood's officers fired the ordnance trains. This should have been done the last of all, when the rear guard or pickets were withdrawn. Who would extinguish an ordnance train of bursting shells? So lighted by the glare of fires, flashes of powder, and bursting shells, I slowly left Atlanta, and at daylight on the morning of the 2d we were not five miles out of the city. I started soon after for Lovejoy's Station.

3d. Featherston took the advance. Last evening artillery was heard at Lovejoy's Station. Hardee was holding in check all of Sherman's army except the Twentieth Corps, and we are marching to his assistance. I passed S. D. Lee's Corps on the road. It was yesterday at Rough and Ready. This is attacking *in detail* as usual. On arrival my division was ordered to relieve Gen. Brown's. After dark I was ordered to move to my left and Gen. Guist to his right to exchange positions. This was a deliberately planned *trick* of Hardee's to put me in one side of a salient angle that was subject to a reverse fire of artillery from the enemy.

4th. This morning cannonading was not so rapid.

5th. Last night I made a change of position. Firing as usual. While I was on the line Capt. Kennerly (Mrs. Bowen's brother) and four others were killed and five wounded. During the day I lost forty men.

6th. It was now discovered that the enemy were falling back to take possession of Atlanta, now abandoned. Gave Cockrell permission to pursue them, and he skirmished with their rear guard and killed many of them and returned with over twenty prisoners.

7th, 8th, and 9th. [Diary records no important events.]

10th. A communication from Sherman to Hood was received stating that the citizens of Atlanta must leave. Those who so elect will be sent to the North. The remainder will be sent South. The work is to commence on Monday. There are about eighteen thousand people in the city. I am told that he also offers to exchange prisoners, provided he should receive only men who have yet two years to serve in the United States army. Prisoners who have served out the period of their enlistment, or have only a short time to serve, will not be received. Gen. Loring returned to-day.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE BATTLE OF ALLATOONA.

From Lovejoy's to Lost Mountain—Big Shanty—Acworth—Destroying Railroad—In the Rear of Sherman—Situation of the Two Armies—Orders to Destroy the Etowah River Bridge—To Fill Up the Railroad Cut at Allatoona—Hood Not Aware that Allatoona Was Fortified and Garrisoned—March to Allatoona—Summons to Surrender—No Answer—Gen. Corse's Report Erroneous—The Fortifications—Strength of Forces—Equalization of Forces—Some Federal Dispatches—The Battle—Corse's Account—Col. Ludlow's Description—Desperate Fighting—The Main Line Captured—Enemy Driven into an Interior Fort—Dispatches from Gen. Armstrong Respecting Movements of the Enemy at Big Shanty—Withdraw to Avoid Being Surrounded by Converging Forces—Corse's Dispatch to Sherman—Provisions—Confederates Three Days and Nights without Rest or Sleep—Pass by the Enemy—Evangelist P. P. Bliss Writes the (Gospel) Hymn, "Hold the Fort"—Hood and His Erroneous Publications in His Book—His Admiration for Corse—My Admiration for the Confederates—The Soldier's Grave—The Lone Grave—Lieut. Gen. A. P. Stewart's Note in Regard to This Account of the Battle.

September 29. This morning Loring's, Walthall's, and my divisions moved on the Pumpkinton road and *crossed the Chattahoochee river* and encamped beyond Villa Rica. The following day we marched to near Brownsville Post Office.

Saturday, October 1. I remained in camp. At 10 A.M. all the division commanders were invited to Gen. Hood's headquarters, and the object of the move was discussed. I found in the room on my arrival Gens. Stewart, S. D. Lee, Loring, Walthall, Stevenson, and Clayton. As soon as I entered the room Hood said to me: "Gen. French, what do you think Gen. Sherman will do now?" I replied: "I suppose he will turn southwest and move on to Mobile; or he may go to Augusta to destroy our powder mills, and then make for Charleston or Savannah." "In that event do you believe he can sustain his troops on the march if our cavalry lay waste the country before him?" I answered: "He will find all he wants as he moves on." To this Hood replied: "Well, I have nothing to do with that, as the President has promised to attend to that matter." Every officer present disagreed with me save Gen. S. D. Lee. He thought all would have difficulty to subsist except the cavalry.

On the subject of destroying Sherman's communications my diary says:

I was in favor of an immediate move on the railroad above Kennesaw with the *whole army*, and expressed my regrets at the delay.

I received orders to move to-morrow. We were requested to inform

the brigade commanders of the object of moving in the rear of Sherman's army, and they were to inform the regimental and company officers.

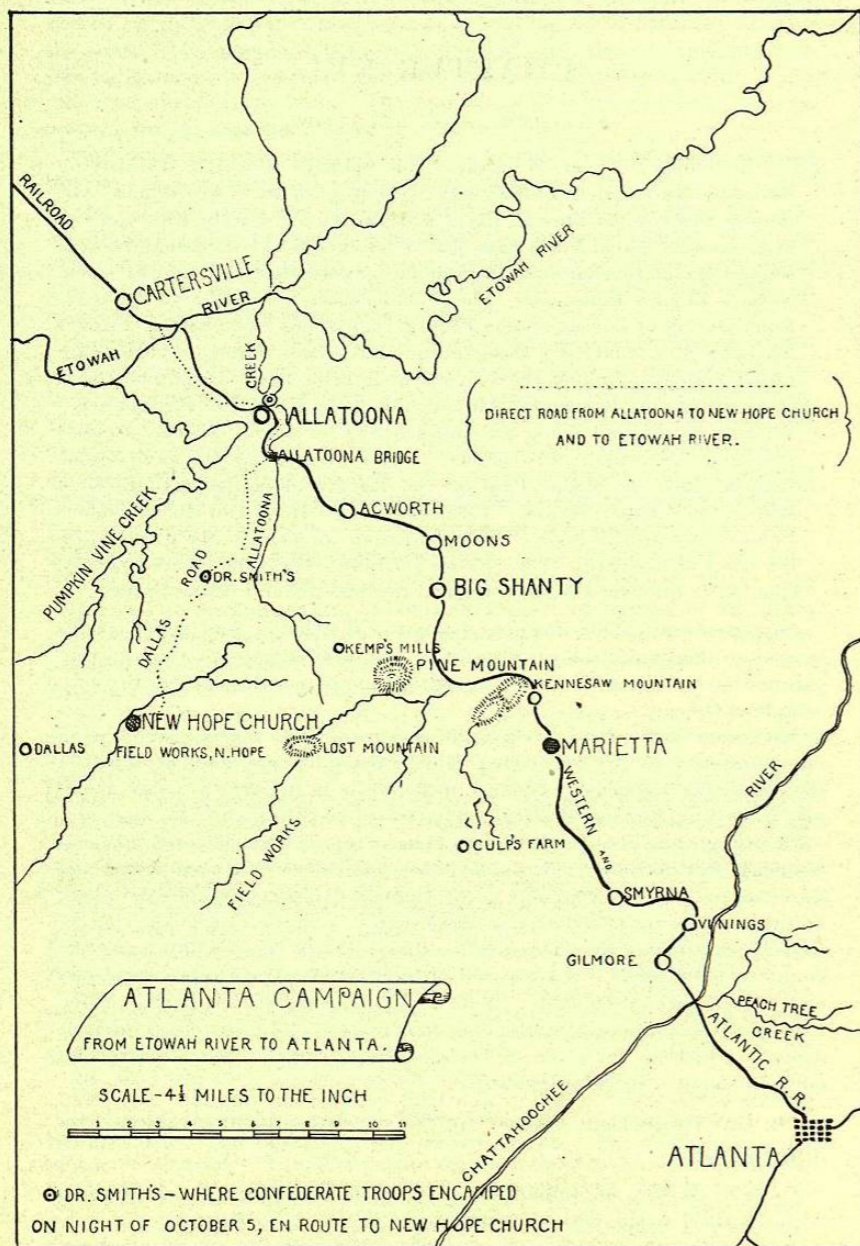
2d. I left camp and marched to Moon's, and this brought us to the same ground we occupied on the 24th of May.

3d. When Sherman discovered that Hood had crossed the Chattahoochee and was marching to obtain possession of his line of communication, he immediately adopted measures to defeat Hood's plans and give him battle.

The general situation of the two armies to-day is: Sherman's main body of troops is at Atlanta, with garrisons at the Chattahoochee, Vining's, Marietta, Kennesaw, Big Shanty, Moon's, Acworth, Allatoona Creek, Allatoona fortifications garrisoned by just about one thousand men, Gen. Elliott, chief of cavalry, with his command at Kennesaw, Gen. J. E. Smith, with his division, at Cartersville, Gen. J. M. Corse at Rome with a division, and the garrisons at important places on up to Chattanooga, as disclosed by the movements of troops, dispatches sent directing their movements, and subsequent information.

Hood's army marched to Lost Mountain, where he remained with two corps, while Stewart's Corps went thence in the rear of the enemy's line of fortifications to Big Shanty. Gen. Featherston captured some forty prisoners at Big Shanty, and commenced destroying the railroad. Loring, sent to Acworth (near Allatoona), captured about two hundred prisoners, and Walthall took seventy prisoners at Moon Station. All night every one was hard at work destroying the railroad, and the next day by noon we had about eight miles of the track taken up and the rails twisted.

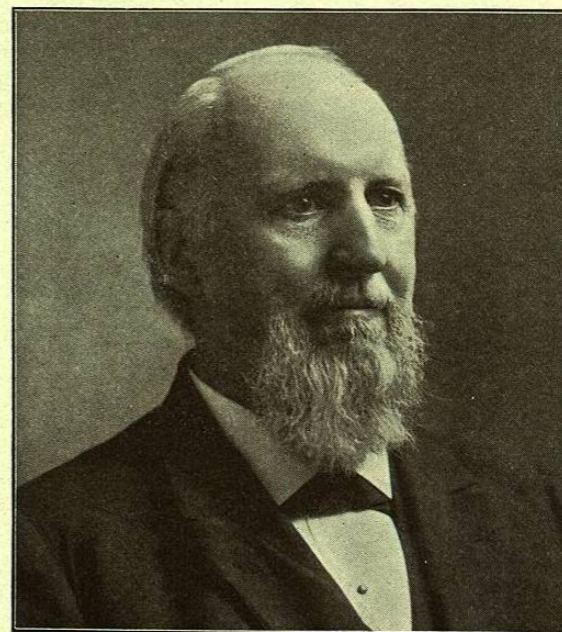
4th. At noon, when filling up the railroad cuts at Big Shanty, I received orders to fill up the deep cut of the railroad at Allatoona, and then, if possible, destroy the railroad bridge over the Etowah river. About this time some one living near by told us that the enemy had fortifications at Allatoona, well garrisoned and commissary stores there. Under these peculiar orders (which will be given in full hereafter in my report) I left Big Shanty with my division at 3 P.M. for Acworth and thence to Allatoona, while Loring and Walthall were ordered in the direction of New Hope Church. I was now entering the zone of active movements of the Federals, and away from all support, and all support from me, and the enemy converging on Allatoona from all directions. I reached Acworth about dark, and was detained there till 11 P.M., awaiting rations and getting some one for a guide. I saw camp fires of the enemy east of the railroad and north of Kennesaw, and night signals from Allatoona to Kennesaw. From two young ladies, who to-day had visited Allatoona, I obtained the name of the commander there, and the probable strength of the enemy in the several works. I also succeeded, through some of the citizens, in getting a boy for a guide. I moved from Acworth about 11 P.M., and on arriving at Allatoona Creek I left there the Fourth Mississippi Regiment and one piece of artillery, with instructions to burn the bridge and capture the garrison of one hundred men in the blockhouse. When at Acworth I sent fifteen men from a Capt. Taylor's company of cavalry, Pinson's Regiment, to strike the railroad near the Etowah river and



tear up the track to prevent reënforcements from reaching Allatoona. I moved on then from the creek, and arrived before Allatoona about 3 A.M. All was darkness; nothing could be seen except occasional lights flitting about the place. I put the artillery, eleven guns, in position, or rather left them in what the guide said was a good place, and also left two regiments of Ector's Brigade under Col. Andrews as a support to them. With the guide directing, I moved the division to gain the flank and rear of the line of works. There were five detached works on the high ridge through which the Western and Atlantic railroad runs. No road leads to this ridge except the Cartersville road, that ascends the ridge by a winding ascent, and enters the works, passing within a few feet of the main redoubt, under its guns, and then runs on the crest of the ridge for two hundred and fifty yards to where it passes out through the fortifications. So the guide directed us through the dark *woods* and up the steep, rugged, rocky *hills*, and down into deep *valleys* until we were lost, and the guide acknowledged that he could not find the way. This determined me to stop and rest till daylight. The pickets had been driven in, and now and then shots were exchanged. Starting again at dawn, I reached the high ridge on which the redoubts were at 7:30 A.M. with the leading brigade. I halted Cockrell's and Ector's Brigades on the ridge, and sent Gen. Sears to gain the rear of the works. The artillery opened fire on the forts (one on either side of the railroad) about 7 A.M., and when we gained the ridge appeared to keep the enemy quiet.

These dispositions being made, about 8 A.M. I summoned the commander to surrender the place. I then supposed the garrison consisted of only about nine hundred men, as reported to me at Acworth. Maj. D. W. Sanders was instructed to allow about twenty minutes for the officer to whom he delivered the message to go and return with the reply. After waiting longer than the specified time, he returned without an answer. Believing Sears was now well around on the north side, and having waited to hear his attack so long, I put Cockrell's Brigade in motion, supported by Ector's Brigade (of four regiments), to make the attack, as it was now 10:20 A.M.

The three companies of the Ninety-Third Illinois that were in the two extreme west redoubts abandoned them without making much resistance, and fell back to a very strong line of defense protected by all the entanglements of modern warfare. Through the center of this work ran the Cartersville road. This part of the defensive work was occupied by the Thirty-Ninth Iowa, Seventh Illinois, and seven companies of the Ninety-Third Illinois, making, in officers and men, a total of just about nine hundred. Against this force, placed in carefully constructed works, I could send only the Missouri brigade and four regiments of the Texas brigade, in all one thousand three hundred and fifty. I had been informed by Gen. Armstrong that the enemy's cavalry was moving up east of the railroad. Then again I received from him a second dispatch informing me that the Federal infantry was passing through Big Shanty and moving up the railroad. This dispatch was dated 9 A.M. Knowing that this column could reach the junction of the Sandtown and Dallas roads before I could, I determined to withdraw, trasting to arrive there first.



F. M. COCKRELL.

But as all these matters are more fully referred to in my report, I will here quit, for the present, further extracts from my diary, and give the report.

In Volume 39, Series 1, page 814, will be found in the "War Records" the following report:

HEADQUARTERS FRENCH'S DIVISION, }  
TUSCUMBIA, ALA., November 5, 1864. }

*General:* Sometime since I had the honor to submit to you a brief preliminary report of the battle of Allatoona. As the report of the brigade commanders are now in, I have the honor to forward one embracing some of the details of the battle.

About noon on the 4th of October, when at Big Shanty, the following order was handed me by Lieut. Gen. Stewart, it being a copy of one to him:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF TENNESSEE, October 4, 1864, 7:30 A.M.  
Lieut. Gen. A. P. Stewart, Commanding Corps.

*General:* Gen. Hood directs that later in the evening you move Stevenson back to Davis's Cross Roads, and that you bring two of your divisions back to Adams's and between Adams's and Davis's Cross Roads, placing them in such a way as to cover the position at Adams's now occupied by Stevenson, and that your third division (say French) shall move up the railroad and fill up the deep cut at Allatoona with logs, brush, rails, dirt, etc. To-morrow morning at daylight he desires Stevenson to be moved to Lieut. Gen. Lee's actual left, that two of your divisions at that time at Adams's shall draw back, with your left in the neighborhood of Davis's Cross Roads, and your right in the neighborhood of Lost Mountain, and the division that will have gone to Allatoona to march thence to New Hope Church and on the position occupied by your other troops—that is, that the division shall rejoin your command by making this march out from the railroad and via New Hope. Gen. Hood thinks that it is probable that the guard at the railroad bridge on Etowah is small, and when French goes to Allatoona, if he can get such information as would justify him, if possible move to that bridge and destroy it. Gen. Hood considers its destruction would be a great advantage to the army and the country. Should he be able to destroy the bridge, in coming out he could move, as has been heretofore indicated, via New Hope.

Yours respectfully,

A. P. MASON,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

Soon after an order, of which the following is a copy, was sent me:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF TENNESSEE, }  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF, October 4, 1864, 11:30 A.M. }  
Lieut. Gen. Stewart, Commanding.

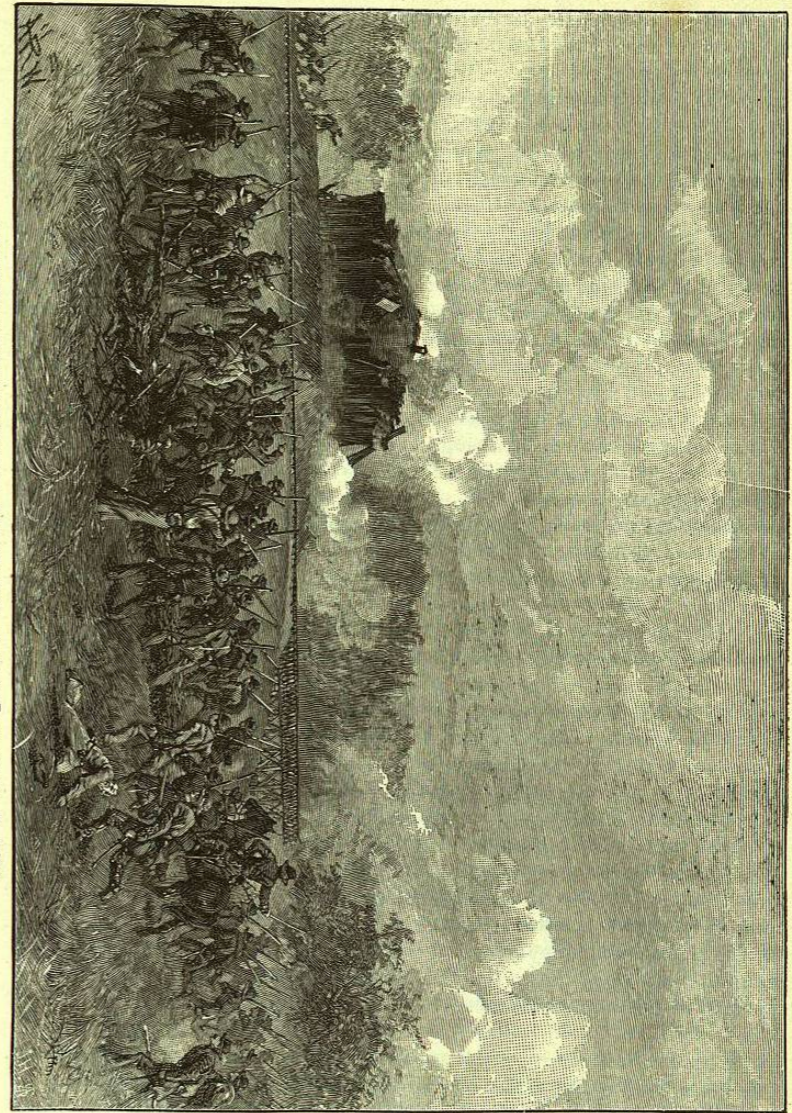
*General:* Gen. Hood directs me to say that it is of the greatest importance to destroy the Etowah railroad bridge, if such a thing is possible. From the best information we have now he thinks the enemy cannot disturb us before *to-morrow*, and by *that time* your main body will be near the remainder of our army. He suggests that if it be considered practicable to destroy the bridge when the division goes there and the artillery is placed in position the commanding officer shall call for volunteers to go to the bridge with lightwood and other combustible material that can be obtained, and set fire to it.

Yours respectfully,

A. P. MASON,  
*Major and Assistant Adjutant General.*

Gen. Stewart's Corps had struck the railroad at Big Shanty on the evening of the 3d, and all three of his divisions had worked all night destroying the railroad from near Kennesaw up to Acworth Station. As we had been informed at Big Shanty that the Allatoona pass or cut was fortified, and that the enemy had a garrison there of three regiments, and had accumulated a considerable amount of provisions, it was considered a matter of importance that the place should be captured, and after the orders were handed me, at my request, Gen. Stewart sent me (with Maj. Myrick) four additional pieces of artillery. *It would appear, however, from these orders that the general in chief was not aware that the pass was fortified and garrisoned that I was sent to have filled up.* Under these orders I left Big Shanty about 3:30 P.M., and marched to Acworth, a distance of six miles, arriving there before sunset. There I was detained, awaiting the arrival of rations and cooking them, until 11 P.M.

As I knew nothing of the roads, the enemy's works or position, it was important to procure a guide, and at last a young man, or rather boy, was found who knew the roads, and had seen the position of the fortifications at Allatoona, he being a member of a cavalry company. At Acworth Capt. Taylor, of Pinson's Regiment of cavalry, with twenty-five men, reported to me for duty. He was immediately directed to send fifteen men under a trusty officer to strike the railroad as near the Etowah railroad bridge as possible, and take up the rails and hide or destroy them, to prevent trains from reaching Allatoona with reinforcements, as well as to prevent any trains that might be there from escaping. From an eminence near Acworth the enemy could be seen communicating messages by their night signals from Allatoona with the station on Kennesaw; and to the east of us were the fires of a large encampment of the Federals and apparently opposite Moon's Station. Citizens residing here informed me that there was a blockhouse with a garrison of about one hundred men at the Allatoona bridge; that at Allatoona there were two small redoubts with outworks, defended with four pieces of artillery and garrisoned with three and a half regiments of infantry. About 11 P.M. the march was resumed. The night was very dark, and the roads bad. After crossing Allatoona creek, Col. Adaire, with his Fourth Regiment, Mississippi Volunteers, and one piece of artillery, was left near the blockhouse with instructions to surround it, capture the garrison, and destroy the bridge over the creek. Continuing the march, the division arrived before Allatoona about 3 A.M. Nothing could be seen but one or two twinkling lights on the opposite heights, and nothing was heard except the occasional interchange of shots between our advanced guards and the pickets of the garrison in the valley below. All was darkness. I had no knowledge of the place, and it was important to attack at the break of day. Taking the guide and lights, I placed the artillery in position on the hills south and east of the railroad, and the Thirty-Ninth North Carolina Regiment, under Col. Coleman, and the Thirty-Second Texas were left as a supporting force, both under command of Col. J. A. Andrews, commanding the latter regiment. This being done, I proceeded with the guide to gain the heights, or ridge, crowned by the works of the enemy. Without roads or paths the head of the line



CAPTURE OF BLOCKHOUSE, ALLATOONA CREEK, OCTOBER 5, 1864.