Article

No 17

Subject -
The Georgia Campaign of 1864
III Resaca

11.-RESACA.

~~Sometimes~~ At times during the war it was difficult for certain journals to keep their correspondents with the army. If anything improper or calculated to give undue information crept into print and into circulation, the commanding general held the newspaper man nearest at hand accountable. Often he was banished from the front, or so treated that he could not successfully report. Latterly in the war, correspondents obtained positions as additional aides, or some enterprising junior staff-officer undertook to write regularly to a public journal, thus doing double duty. For example, Captain D. P. Conyngham, an Irish officer who published a book after the war, was in the Twenty-third Corps on General Judah's staff. He also corresponded regularly with the New York Herald. I mention him particularly because he was present at the battle of Resaca, and gives some characteristic pen sketches of some of the prominent actors in that battle. That General Sherman, Who had often been misrepresented by ~~the~~ correspondents, was not at this time very friendly to them appears in Conyngham's sketch of him. The evening of the 13th, of May, with but one staff-officer, General Sherman joined McPHerson in Sugar Valley. Conyngham says, "He was anxious and nervous, as was evident from the fierce manner he pulled at his unlit cigar, and twitched that strange rough face of his". In another place he says, "He has little reserve in concealing his opinions of other officers". He had worked hard all night after his arrival near Resaca. Sherman was then greatly disappointed. With his intense confidence in McPherson and his Army of the Tennessee, he had believed that Confederate Johnston's force would now be driven into a broken and disastrous retreat; but by McPherson's pulling back to Sugar Valleythe whole programme was changed. Now a big battle must be fought against an intrenched position.

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I will give the scene just west of Resaca as the correspondent presents it. "Next day (the 14th, of May, 1864), wearied and sleepy, he sat on a log, beside a shady tree, to rest himself, and soon fell asleep. He had but a single orderly with him; some man in passing made an insinuating comment, for example, 'A pretty way we are commanded'. Sherman awakened by the noise of passing men overheard the remark: 'Stop, my man,. . . while you were sleeping last night I was planning for you, sir: and now I am taking a nap'".

A little later, when several generals had gathered around him, he was told that Johnston had evacuated the Rocky Face Ridge and Dalton, and that Kilpatrick had been wounded. I had the night before brought the first item of this news, so that Sherman already knew it that Dalton had fallen. Now reflecting upon the situation at Resaca, he said, "Well, we must get them out of this too. McPherson, had you held this position when you first occupied it, they(the Confederates) would find themselves in a nice trap". "General", replied McPherson, "I found my flank exposed and open to them by goods roads, whilst I had not a single road by which reinforcements could come up, if attacked; so I fell back to a stronger position". "Oh, pshaw!"said Sherman. "It can't be helped now, though".

General Thomas was with Sherman that morning. The lively captain lookedupon ~~his~~ Thomas' sturdy face and wrote, "Major-General Thomas is quite the reverse of Sherman, both in manner and appearance. He is tall, stout, with brawny frame and shoulders. His head is slightly bent forward, as if drooping with care and thought". (This was temporary, for habitually Thomas's head was erect.) "His hair and beard, which he wears cut pretty short, are rather dark, and slightly sprinkled with gray. He is about fifty years of age and looks his age fully. . . As a general, Thomas is calm and cautious; does everything by rule; leaves nothing to chance.

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He makes his arrangements for a battle with caution and foresight, and is sure to have every column and division move with clock-work regularity, and strike at the proper time and place. Nothing disturbs or unnerves him".

I regard this as a fair picture of General Thomas as I saw him that morning when we were bringing our corps into position before Resaca, except the idea conveyed that he was a mere machine-man. His intellect was active enough while devising or planning, but firm and steady when a decision had been arrived at. He was thoroughly subordinate. He earnestly seconded General Sherman in all his undertakings, whether just in accordance with his judgment or not.

While these sketches were being offered and taken on ~~the most~~ a prominent point of observation between Resaca and Taylor's Ridge, the troops were struggling through the ravines and thickets into a position encircling Johnston's lines, which were already firmly established.

Joseph E. Johnston speaking of Resaca says, "The two armies (Sherman's and his own) were formed in front of Resaca nearly at the same time; so that the Federal army could give battle on equal terms, except as to numbers, by attacking promptly,-the difference being about ten to four".

There is evidently a mistake in this statement. In all Confederate writings this claim of disparity of numbers is noticeable.

As General Polk had arrived, and the Confederate army at this place is admitted by Hood to have been then about seventy-five thousand, and as General Sherman's force was at first ninety-eight thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, then being diminished by a thousand casualties at Rocky Face and vicinity, and increased by Stoneman's cavalry, which did not exceed four thousand, giving a new aggregate of about one hundred and one thousand seven hundred

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While these activities were being offered and taken on the most prominent point of observation between Nashville and Taylor's Ridge, the troops were struggling through the ravines and thickets into a position encircling Johnston's Lines, which were already firmly established.

Joseph E. Johnston speaking of Nashville says, "The two armies (Sherman's and his own) were formed in Nashville nearly at the same time; so that the Federal army could give battle on equal terms, except as to number, by attacking promptly,-the difference being about ten to one".

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and ninety-seven, it is difficult to understand how Johnston can make it anywhere near two to one against himself. It is well, however, to remember, what we have before frequently noticed, that our opponents used the word "effectives", probably counting the actual number of men carrying rifles and carbines, plus the enlisted artillerymen actually with their guns; whereas our officers counted in all present multitudinous and varied the duties might be. It is, therefore, plain that the disparity between the armies was not very great at the battle of Resaca. We ~~probably~~ could not possibly put into line of battle, counting actual fighting elements, more than four men to Johnston's three.

With regard to "attacking promptly", that is easily said; but to attack at once on arrival at a new place is seldom practicable. To do so it should require an immediate and thorough knowledge of the strength and position of your opposing forces. On the 14th, of May, 1864, Polk with the new corps had already come up from below and formed to the right of the two Confederate brigades which had been for some time at Resaca, and completely intrenched. For the defensive, in two hours' time that new line could have been extended to the Connasauga, making a beautiful front from the Oostanaula along behind Camp Creek. For defense, the position between these three streams-from the rugged nature of the ground, the materials at hand for obstructions, and the grand places for locating all his artillery- was to the Confederate commander as good as the Fredericksburg Heights to Lee.

Next to Polk's corps came Hardee's, and on Hardee's right the corps of Hood, which was faced west and north, near Huey's house, in a strong double line. Hood covered the railway and effectually closed every other approach from that quarter.

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it was easily reinforced from one part to another and from its reserves. As always in this campaign, this Confederate army was promptly marched into position and thoroughly intrenched.

On the other hand, our forces approaching Resaca through the Gap on the one side, and from Dalton on the other, had to feel for the enemy's picket lines and for each other in that blind, rough, broken, wild, tangled, unknown region. It was near twelve o'clock of the 14th, of May, before we had formed solid junction, and then the lines had to be changed as we worried forward through troublesome ravines, wooded valleys, hills obstructed by crags, steep rocks, old logs, and undrebrush. Sometimes long gaps between brigades troubled the division commanders, and sometimes an astonishing overlapping of forces displaced regiments as they were advanced.

The 14th of May, then, was mainly spent in placing McPherson on our right near the Oostanaula, Schofield next, and Thomas on the left. My corps, the Fourth belonging to Thomas, reached the railroad and formed the flank, Sherman's extreme left, and was faced against the strong position of Hood. As the Connasauga bended off far to the east, it was quite impossible for my left regiments to reach that river, so that I was again forced to have the left of my line "in the air". But Stanley's excellent division stationed here, by refusing (drawing back) its left brigade and nicely posting its artillery, formed as good an artificial obstacle against Hood as was possible.

Let us now go to Sherman's southernmost troops, and for a time confine our attention to the operations of the Army of the Tennessee.

It will be remembered that General McPherson, its commander, fell near Atlanta, before the end of this campaign, so that, being his successor, his dispatches and records fell to me. In making up my report, I said for the 9th, of May, "The command on the lead

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On the other hand, our forces approaching Jonesboro through the gap on the one side, and from Dalton on the other, had to feel for the enemy's picket lines and for each other in that blind, rough broken, wild, tangled, unknown region. It was near twelve o'clock of the 14th, of May, before we had formed solid junction, and then the lines had to be changed as we marched forward through troublesome ravines, wooded valleys, hills obstructed by crags, steep rocks, old logs, and underbrush. Sometimes long gaps between brigades troubled the division commander, and sometimes an astonishing overlapping of forces displaced regiments as they were advanced.

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(General Dodge's Sixteenth Corps) pushed on, the cavalry in advance, till within about eight and a half miles of the town (Resaca), when Kilpatrick encountered considerable infantry force, in charging which he was wounded and obliged to leave the field." The date was an error. This wounding occured in the manner and at the place described, but near noon of the 12th, instead of the 9th of May.

Kilpatrick sustained his usual reputation for boldness and activity in scouting, and for success in promptly clearing away the enemy's outposts. This wound, though severe, did not long detain him from the field.

The forward movement from the Snake Creek Gap was taken up and completed on the 13th, of May. One Corps, Logan's Fifteenth, was deployed, and General Veatch's division, of the Sixteenth, brought up in support. The resistance of the enemy's skirmishers became greater and greater as Logan's lines neared Camp Creek Resaca. Coming to an open field, he discovered beyond the field a north and south ridge of land not more than a thousand yards distant. This ridge was occupied by Confederate artillery, and supported by Confederate infantry, moderately intrenched. Quickly Logan had a battery well placed and put into action, and in a short time succeeded in silencing the opposing cannon; then his brave men , in line, sprang forward to clear the ridge and possess it. At this point, crossing the Resaca wagon-road, General Logan's entire corps took permanent position; and one division of the Sixteenth, under brave General Dodge, formed line on its right, and the whole front was speedily covered by breast-works and ditches. Resaca was now in plain sight, so that the town and the railway bridge near it were exposed to Logan's perpetual artillery firing.

General Sherman had instructed McPherson, just before the remainder of the army joined him, to work towards his left and forward,

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and make an effort to seize the railroad north of Resaca. To this end, during the 14th, of May, several demonstrations were made by McPherson's Army of the Tennessee to carry out Sherman's instructions, or at least to keep Confederate Polk's men so busy that they could not reinforce Hardee and Hood farther north, where, judging by the sound, hard fighting was going on against Thomas and Schofield. Logan says, "General Osterhaus (one of his division commanders) took advantage of the feints to attack the enemy's skirmishers in the heavily-wooded valley near the road. This was done in the most gallant manner. The bridge over Camp Creek (the stream which separated us from the enemy) was carried, and the Twelfth Missouri Infantry thrown forward into the woods previously occupied by the enemy, thus forming a living tete-de-pont, which (operation), in the ensuing movements, proved of great value." From this bridge-head the Fifteenth Corps, supported by the Sixteenth, both belonging to McPherson's command, made a further move, driving in Polk's advance from the high ground east of Camp Creek. The brigades most hotly engaged were those of General Charles R. Wood's and Giles A. Smith.

THe new position was taken by them. It was most important, and Polk hotly contested the ground; yet McPherson's men held it under a hot fire, while their pioneers brought up the intrenching tools, which they, assisted by many willing hands in the infantry line, used so effectively that in a short time every exposed place was under the cover of fair intrenchments.

In the early evening, about 7.30, the Confederates made an organized and vigorous assault upon this new line, but they were quickly repulsed. In anticipation of this assaulting business, Lightburn's brigade had been sent to the right of Giles A. Smith's brigade, and other troops to the support of the brigade of General

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C. R. Woods.

These troops were in time to participate in the repulse already described, and Lightburn, for his promptitude and energy, received high commendation. A hundred prisoners were taken and some thirteen hundred Confederates were killed and wounded on that front in the skirmishers and in this combat.

The importance of McPherson's capture of the heights referred to, situated between Camp Creek and the Oostanaula, cannot be doubted, for the high ground spoiled both the railway and the wagon-road bridges, and caused the Confederates to lay a new bridge of boats farther up the river.

On this point , General Johnston says, "General Sherman was misinformed as to the taking of an important ridge by the advance of McPherson 's whole line, and bloody repulses of Confederate attempts to retake it (this on the 15th); there were no such occurrences. But on the 14th, about dusk, the left of our line of skirmishers-forty or fifty men- was driven from a slight elevation in front of our left, but no attempt was made to retake it". General Johnston was certainly mistaken, for there is no conflict in the reports. The number of the prisoners taken by McPherson, and the number of killed and wounded on his front, are too specific to make an error probable.

Besides the official reports, I have the words of a reliable correspondent of the New York Herald, who was present. He writes respecting McPherson's movement of the 14th: "He(McPherson) had thrown Logan's Corps across the creek and occupied the heights on the east bank of the stream overlooking the town. This movement had not been accomplished without hard fighting. The rebel batteries along the heights poured a dreadful storm of shot and shell upon Logan's advance. McPherson, in order to neutralize this,

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had placed batteries on the heights on the west bank of the stream, annoying the rebel batteries and thus giving a chance to Logan to charge across the stream and take possession of the ridge of hills commanding the rebel position around Resaca".

Surely General Johnston must have been misinformed.

True, these heights were not within his continuous intrenched line, but they were important outworks, eminently so, when we notice that they so thoroughly endangered his railway communication with Resaca.

Before undertaking to detail the important part borne by General Thomas in the battle of Resaca, we will next follow the movements of General Schofield's command. It was usually called the "Army of the Ohio", but when, as now, separated from its cavalry it had but one army corps, the Twenty-third.

When McPherson, under his orders, was pushing straight for Resaca, the two Corps, the Twentieth(Hooker) and Fourteenth (Palmer), of Thomas's army, were to keep abreast of him on ~~the~~ his left, ~~of him~~ As soon as these two corps were in line the whole north and south front of Johnston was covered. But Camp Creek, the dividing line between us and our foe, at Palmer's left, made an abrupt up-stream bend towards the west, and the Confederate lines bent off in the opposite direction towards the Oostanaula. Schofield's columns swept in at this point, General Judah's division turning by a sort of right wheel on a pivot at the bend, and the energetic Cox's division, trying to keep up the right wheel, swept off leftward while continually changing front to the right.

Judah's men came up boldly, but were exposed to a double fire; every step forward brought them under the fire from Confederate batteries in elevated salients, which swept their line. Captain Conyngham gives a graphic account of Judah's advance. He says that before Judah reached an open space which divided him from

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the enemy " his first line was broken and fell back on his second. This rallied under the fierce storm of shot and shell and advanced, but was also broken". Judah then retired to the woods in his rear. Conyngham futher says,"I was then acting aide on General Judah's staff. My horse was lamed by a piece of rock, splintered by a round shell stricking him in the leg, and I was leading him to the rear when I met Major (now Colonel) Wherry of Schofield's staff". The two held here quite a parley. Wherry wanted to know where were Judah's other aides. The captain pointed them out near a sheltering rock. "He (Wherry) rode over to them; they refused to go in (that is, on to Judah's front), and he turned to me exclaiming, 'What will I do'? 'Well, major, my horse is lame; dismount an orderly, and I will go in'. . . I went in (under fire to Judah's lines), accompanied by the brave, dashing Major Wherry. We succeeded in reaching Judah's position between the contending batteries, though shot and shell were all the time plowing through the ranks and mowing down the columns and trees around us".

The gallant captain was hurt and stunned for a time in carrying Judah's orders, but succeeded at last in leading up Hovey's division - that is, Schofield reserve-to Judah's relief and support. Meanwhile Cox's division, somehow separated in the woods from Judah's, met the enemy boldly on his own front, seized his intrenchments, as he says in his book, "driving the enemy from them at a charge after a fierce struggle".

By the help of other troops General Cox's division was enabled to, hold its ground. His soldiers did as McPherson's men did later at Atlanta, aligned themselves on the outside of the enemy's trenches and sheltered their front by the small embankment till help came.

I remember that swinging movement of General Cox, for I had a

the enemy " his first line was broken and fell back on his second. This rallied under the fierce storm of shot and shell and advanced, but was also broken". Judah then retired to the woods in his rear. Conyngham further says,"I was then acting aide on General Judah's staff. My horse was lamed by a piece of rock, splintered by a round shot, striking him in the leg, and I was leading him to the rear when I met Major (now Colonel) Sherry of Schofield's staff". The two held here quite a parley. Sherry wanted to know where were Judah's other aides. The captain pointed them out near a shattering rock. "He (Sherry) rode over somehow; they refused to go in (that is, on to Judah's front), and he turned to me exclaiming, 'What will I do?' 'Well, major, my horse is lame; dismount an orderly and I will go in'. . . . I went in (under fire to Judah's lines), accompanied by the brave, dashing Major Sherry. We succeeded in reaching Judah's position between the contending batteries, though shot and shell were all the time plowing through the ranks and mowing down the columns and trees around us".

The gallant captain was hurt and stunned for a time in carrying Judah's orders, but succeeded in last in leading up Hovey's division - that is, Schofield reserve-to Judah's relief and support. Meanwhile Cox's division, somehow separated in the woods from Judah's, met the enemy boldly on his own front, seized his intrenchments, as he says in his book, "driving the enemy from them at a charge after a fierce charge struggle".

By the help of other troops General Cox's division was enabled to hold its ground. His soldiers did as McPherson's men did later at Atlanta, aligned themselves on the outside of the enemy's trenches and sheltered their front by the small embankment till help came.

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HEADQUARTERS DIVISION OF THE PACIFIC,

Presidio of San Francisco, Cal., March 11th, 188 7.

At the first Bull Run my brigade was detained for several hours within hearing of the battle field. On an order coming suddenly my command was hurried from behind a screen of thick trees out into the opening. The sound of the cannon the screaming of the shells, bursting here and there in the air and the great heat of the day affected me as never before. I experienced the same effect again at this point while beholding from a high ground Genl Cox's & Genl Wood's divisions going into battle.

The noise was deafening the missiles carried the idea of extreme danger to all within their ranges. And the air appeared for the time twice heated.

The effect was like that of a startling panorama of which one forms a part. Of a sense of danger, deep and strong, relieved by a magnificent spectacle & the excitement of the contest. The oppression of rarefied air greatly heated relieved by a quickened brain and nerves wrought up to a steady tension, Who can describe it? At any rate moments like those are extraordinary glimpses of an extraordinary world, which leave impressions of interest and memory not easily explained.

good place for observation. It was the first time that my attention had been especially called to this handsome, gallant officer and able man. He was following his troops, and appeared full of spirit and energy as he rode past the group of officers who were with me. I was then watching to find where his lines would finally rest, so as to deploy and support his left. This part of our work was exciting, for the air was already full of bursting shells and other hissing missiles of death.

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11. Resaca.
1st Corps.

Article

No 17

See next No for Continuation

Subject

The Georgia Campaign of 1864

III Research

3,500 words
Estimated

11. - RESACA.

At times during the war it was difficult for certain journals to keep their correspondents with the army. If anything improper or calculated to give undue information crept into print and into circulation, the commanding general held the newspaper man nearest at hand accountable. Often he was peremptorily banished from the front, or so treated that he could not successfully report. Latterly in the war, the difficulties were lessened. Correspondents obtained positions as additional aides, or some enterprising junior staff-officer undertook to write regularly to a public journal,—thus doing double duty. For example Captain D. P. Conyngham, an Irish officer who published a book after the war, was in the Twenty-third Corps on General Judah's staff. He also corresponded regularly with the New York Herald. I mention him particularly because he was present at the battle of Resaca, and has given some characteristic pen-sketches of ~~some of the~~ many prominent actors in that battle. That General Sherman, who had often been misrepresented by correspondents, and because impatient on it, was not at this time very friendly to ~~them~~ newspaper men appears in Conyngham's sketch of him. The evening of the 13th, of May, with but one staff-officer, General Sherman joined McPherson in Sugar Valley. Conyngham says," He was anxious and nervous, as was evident from the fierce manner he pulled at his unlit cigar, and twitched that strange rough face of his ". In another place he says, "He has little reserve in concealing his opinions of other officers". He had worked hard all night after his arrival near Resaca. Sherman was then greatly disappointed. With his intense confidence in McPherson and his Army of the Tennessee, he had believed that Confederate Johnston's force would now be driven into a broken and disasterous retreat; but by McPherson 's

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pulling back to Sugar Valley the whole programme was changed. Now a big battle must be fought against an intrenched position. I will give the scene just west of Resaca as the correspondent presents it. "Next day (the 14th, of May,1864), wearied and sleepy, he sat on a log, beside a shady tree, to rest himself, and soon fell asleep. He had but a single orderly with him; some man in passing made an insinuating comment, for example, 'A pretty way we are commanded'. Sherman awakened by the noise of passing men overheard the remark: 'Stop, my man,. . . while you were sleep ing last night I was planning for you, sir: and now I am taking a nap'".

A little later when several generals had gathered around him, he was told that Johnston had evacuated the Rocky Face Ridge and Dalton, and that Kilpatrick had been wounded. I had the night before brought the first item of this news, so that Sherman already knew it that Dalton had fallen. Now reflecting upon the situation at Resaca, he said, "Well, we must get them out of this too. McPherson, had you held this position when you first occupied it, they(the Confederates) would find themselves in a nice trap". "Yes, General", replied McPherson, "I found my flank exposed and open to them by good roads, whilst I had not a single road by which reinforcements could come up,if attacked; so I fell back to a stronger position". "Oh,pshaw!" said Sherman. "It can't be helped now, though".

General Thomas was with Sherman that morning. The lively Captain looked upon Thomas's sturdy face and wrote, "Major-General Thomas is quite the reverse of Sherman, both in manner and appearance. He is tall,stout, with brawny frame and shoulders. His head is slightly bent forward, as if drooping with care and thought". (This was temporary, for habitually Thomas's head was erect.)

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"His hair and beard, which he wears cut pretty short, are rather dark, and slightly sprinkled with gray. He is about fifty years of age and looks his age fully. . . As a general, Thomas is calm and cautious; does everything by rule; leaves nothing to chance. He makes his arrangements for a battle with caution and foresight, and is sure to have every column and division move with clock-work regularity, and strike at the proper time and place. Nothing disturbs or unnerves him".

I regard this as a fair picture of General Thomas as I saw him that morning when we were bringing our corps in to position before Resaca, except the idea conveyed that he was a mere machine-man. His intellect was active enough while devising or planning, but firm and steady when a decision had been arrived at. However, He was always thoroughly subordinate. He earnestly seconded General Sherman in all his undertakings, whether just in accordance with his own judgment or not.

While these sketches were being offered and taken on a prominent point of observation between Resaca and Taylor's Ridge, the troops were struggling through the ravines and thickets into a position encircling Johnston's lines, lines which before my arrival were already firmly established.

Joseph E. Johnston speaking of Resaca says, "The two armies (Sherman's and his own) were formed in front of Resaca nearly at the same time; so that the Federal army could give battle on equal terms, except as to numbers, by attacking promptly,-the difference being about ten to four".

There is evidently a large mistake in this statement. In all Confederate writings this claim of disparity of numbers is noticeable and difficult to be accounted for. ~~As~~ General Polk had arrived, and the Confederate army at this

"His hair and beard, which he wears cut pretty short, are rather dark, and slightly sprinkled with gray. He is about fifty years of age and looks his age fully. . . As a general, Thomas is calm and cautious; does everything by rule; leaves nothing to chance. He makes his arrangements for a battle with caution and foresight, and is sure to have every column and division move with clock-work regularity, and strike at the proper time and place. Nothing disturbs or unnerves him".

I regard this as a fair picture of General Thomas as I saw him that morning when we were bringing our corps in to position before Nashville, except the idea conveyed that he was a mere machine-man. His intellect was active enough while devising or planning, but firm and steady when a decision had been arrived at. He was thoroughly subordinate. He correctly recorded General Sherman in all his undertakings, whether just in accordance with his judgment or not.

While these sketches were being offered and taken on a prominent point of observation between Nashville and Taylor's Ridge, the troops were struggling through the ravines and thickets into a position overlapping Johnston's lines, lines which were already firmly established.

Joseph E. Johnston speaking of Nashville says, "The two armies (Sherman's and his own) were formed in front of Nashville nearly at the same time; so that the Federal army could give battle on equal terms, except as to numbers, by attacking promptly,-the difference being about ten to four".

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place ~~is~~ was admitted by Hood to have been then about seventy-five thousand, ~~and as~~ General Sherman's force was at first as we have seen ninety-eight thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven; then ~~being~~ diminished by a thousand casualties at Rocky Face and vicinity, and increased by Stoneman's cavalry, which did not exceed four thousand, ~~giving~~ we had a new aggregate of about one hundred and one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven. It is difficult to understand how Johnston can make it anywhere near ten to four or even two to one against him! It is well, however, to remember, what we have before frequently noticed, that our opponents used the word "effectives", probably counting the actual number of men carrying rifles and carbines, plus the enlisted artillerymen actually with their guns; whereas our officers counted in all present for duty, officers and men, no matter how multitudinous and varied the duties and details might be. It is ~~therefore~~, however we come to our estimates, plain that the disparity between the armies was actual not very great at the battle of Resaca. We could not possibly put into line of battle, counting actual fighting elements, more than four men to Johnston's three.

With regard to "attacking promptly", that is easily said; but to attack at once on arrival at a new place with which no officers are familiar is seldom practicable. To do so it should require an immediate and thorough knowledge of the strength and position of your opposing forces as well as of the approaches. On the 14th, of May, 1864, Polk with the new corps had already come up from below and formed to the right of the two Confederate brigades which had been for some time at Resaca, and completely intrenched. For the defensive, in two hours' time that new line could have been extended to the Connasauga, making a beautiful front from the Oostanaula along behind Camp Creek. For defense, the position between these three streams - from the rugged nature of the ground,

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the materials at hand for making obstructions, and the grand ~~places~~ positions for locating all of his artillery - was to the Confederate commander as good a field as the Fredericksburg Heights to Lee.

Next to Polk's ~~corps~~ came Hardee's corps and on Hardee's right the corps of Hood, which was faced west and north, near Huey's house, drawn up in a strong double line. Hood covered the railway and effectually closed every other possible approach from that quarter.

Johnston line was now three miles in extent, and curved-something like ours at Gettysburg - more in the shape of a horseshoe than a fish-hook, so that it was easily reinforced from one part to another and from its reserves. As always in this campaign, this Confederate army was promptly marched into position and without delay thoroughly intrenched.

On the other hand, our forces approaching Resaca through the Gap on the one side, and from Dalton on the other, had to work slowly & carefully to feel for the enemy's picket lines and for each other in that blind, rough, broken, wild, tangled, unknown region. It was near twelve o'clock of the 14th, of May, before we had formed solid junction with each other, and ~~then~~ after that the lines had to be changed ~~as~~ while we worried forward through troublesome ravines, wooded valleys, hills obstructed by crags, steep rocks, old logs, and underbrush. Sometimes long gaps between brigades troubled the division commanders; and sometimes an astonishing overlapping of forces displaced regiments as they were advanced. The 14th, then, was mainly spent in placing McPherson on our right near the Oostanaula, Schofield next, and Thomas on the left. My corps, the Fourth, belonging to Thomas, reached the railroad and formed the outer flank, Sherman's extreme left, and was faced against the strong position of Hood. As the Connasauga bended beyond Hood off far to the east, it was quite impossible for my left regiments to reach that river, so that I was again forced to have the left

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On the other hand, our forces approaching Kennesaw through the gap on the one side, and from Dalton on the other, had to feel for the enemy's picket lines and for each other in that blind, rough, broken, wild, tangled, unknown region. It was near twelve o'clock of the 16th, of May, before we had formed solid junction, and then the lines had to be changed as we worried forward through trouble-some ravines, wooded valleys, hills obstructed by crags, steep rocks, old logs, and underbrush. Sometimes long gaps between brigades troubled the division commanders, and sometimes an unusual-lyoverlapping of forces displaced regiments as they were advanced.

The 16th, then, was mainly spent in placing Hooker on our right near the Dallas road, Schofield next, and Thomas on the left. My corps, the Fourth, belonging to Thomas, reached the railroad and formed the flank, Thomas's extreme left, and was faced against the strong position of Hood. As the Commanders bored off far to the east, it was quite impossible for my left regiments to reach that river, so that I was again forced to have the left

of my line "in the air". But Stanley's excellent division stationed there, by refusing (drawing back) its left brigade and nicely posting its artillery, formed as good an artificial obstacle against Hood as was possible.

Let us now go to Sherman's southernmost troops, and for a time confine our attention to the operations of the Army of the Tennessee.

It will be remembered that General McPherson, ~~its commander~~ the commander, fell near Atlanta, before the end of this campaign, so that, ~~being~~ as I was his successor, his dispatches and records naturally fell to me. In making up my ~~report~~ statement, I said for the 9th, of May, "The command on the lead (General Dodge's Sixteenth Corps) pushed on, the cavalry in advance, till within about eight and a-half miles of the town (Resaca), when Kilpatrick encountered considerable infantry force, in the charging of which he was severely wounded and obliged to leave the field". That date was an error. This wounding occured in the manner and at the place described, but near noon ~~of~~ on the 12th, of May, instead of the 9th of May.

Kilpatrick sustained his usual reputation for boldness and activity in scouting, and for success in promptly clearing away the enemy's outposts. ~~This~~ His wound, ~~though severe,~~ did not long detain him from the field. He was too ambitious to stay long in the rear.

The forward movement from the Snake Creek Gap was taken up and completed ~~on~~ during the 13th, of May. One Corps, Logan's Fifteenth, was deployed, and General Veatch's division, of the Sixteenth, brought up ~~in~~ to its support. The firing on the front was noisy. The resistance of the enemy's skirmishers became greater and greater as Logan's lines neared Camp Creek and Resaca. Coming to ~~an open~~ a tree-less field, he discovered beyond the ~~field~~ open stretch a north and south ridge ~~of land~~ not more than a thousand yards ~~distant~~. This ~~ridge~~ high land was already occupied by Confederate artillery, and ~~supported~~ held

of my line"in the air". But Stanley's cavalry division stationed there, by retreating(drawing back) its left brigade and nicely posting its artillery, formed as good an artificial obstacle against Hood as was possible.

Let us now go to Sherman's northernmost troops, and for a time confine our attention to the operations of the Army of the Tennessee.

It will be remembered that General McPherson, Sherman's, fell near Atlanta, before the end of this campaign, so that,being his successor, his dispatches and reports fell to me. In making up my report, I said for the 20th, of May, "The command on the Lead (General Dodge's Sixteenth Corps) pushed on, the cavalry in advance, still within about eight and a-half miles of the town (Tocoa), when Kilpatrick encountered considerable infantry force, in charging which he was wounded and obliged to leave the field. The date was an error. This wounding occured in the manner and at the place described, but near noon of the 19th, instead of the 20th of May.

Kilpatrick sustained his usual reputation for boldness and activity in scouting, and for success in promptly clearing away the enemy's outposts. This wound, though severe, did not long detain him from the field.

The forward movement from the Dallas Creek Gap was taken up and completed on the 19th, of May. One Corps, Logan's Fifteenth, was deployed, and General Vandeb's division, of the Sixteenth, brought up in support. The resistance of the enemy's skirmishers became greater and greater as Logan's lines neared Pump Creek and Noses. Coming to an open field, he discovered beyond the field a north and south ridge of land not more than a thousand yards distant. This ridge was occupied by Confederate artillery, and supported

by Confederate infantry, moderately intrenched. Quickly Logan had a battery well placed and put into action, and in a brief time succeeded in silencing the opposing cannon; then his brave men, in line, sprang forward determined to clear the ridge and possess it. In that neighborhood, crossing the Resaca wagon-road, General Logan's entire corps took permanent position; and one division of the Sixteenth, under the brave General G. M. Dodge, formed line on its right, and the whole front was speedily covered with breast-works and ditches. The town Resaca was now in plain sight; and the buildings and railway bridge were exposed to Logan's ceaseless artillery firing.

After his arrival General Sherman had instructed McPherson, just before the remainder of the army joined him, to work towards his left and forward, and make an effort to seize Johnston's railroad line north of Resaca. To this end, during the 14th, of May, several fierce demonstrations were made by McPherson's Army to carry out Sherman's instructions, or at least so much of them as would keep Confederate Polk's men so busy that they could not reinforce Hardee and Hood farther north. There should we judge by the sound, hard fighting was going on against Thomas and Schofield. Logan, writing of this affair says: "General Osterhaus(one of his division commanders) took advantage of the feints to attack the enemy's skirmishers in the heavily-wooded valley near the road. This was done in the most gallant manner. The bridge over Camp Creek(the stream which separated us from the enemy) was carried, and the Twelfth Missouri Infantry thrown forward into the woods previously occupied by the enemy, thus forming a living tete-de-pont, which(operation), in the ensuing movements, proved of great value". From this bridge-head the Fifteenth Corps, supported by the Sixteenth, both belonging to McPherson's command, made a further move, driving in Polk's advance from the high

by Confederate infantry, moderately instructed. Quickly Logan had a battery well placed and put into action, and in a short time succeeded in silencing the opposing cannon; then his brave men, in line, sprang forward to clear the ridge and possess it. At this point, crossing the Dessen wagon-road, General Logan's entire corps took permanent position; and one division of the Sixteenth, under brave General Dodge, formed line on its right, and the whole front was speedily covered by breast-works and ditches. Dessen was now in plain sight, so that the town and the railway bridge near it were exposed to Logan's perpetual artillery firing.

General Sherman had instructed McPherson, just before the remainder of the army joined him, to work towards his left and forward, and make an effort to seize the railroad north of Dessen. To this end, during the 14th, of May, several demonstrations were made by McPherson's Army of the Tennessee to carry out Sherman's instructions, or at least to keep Confederate Polk's men so busy that they could not reinforce Hardee and Hood farther north. Judging by the sound, hard fighting was going on against Thomas and Schofield. Logan says, "General Osterhaus(one of his division commanders) took advantage of the feints to attack the enemy's skirmishers in the heavily-wooded valley near the road. This was done in the most gallant manner. The bridge over Camp Creek(the stream which separated us from the enemy) was carried, and the Twelfth Missouri Infantry thrown forward into the woods previously occupied by the enemy, thus forming a living <u>fore-de-pont</u>, which(operation), in the ensuing movements, proved of great value". From this bridge-head the Fifteenth Corps, supported by the Sixteenth, both belonging to McPherson's command, made a further move, driving in Polk's advance from the high

ground east of Camp Creek. The brigades most hotly engaged were those of Generals Charles R. Woods and Giles A. Smith.

The new position was beyon the bridge taken by them. It was most important, and the enemy so believed; for, Polk hotly contested the this coveted ground; yet McPherson's men held kept it under against a hot fearfully fire, while their pioneers brought up were bring up the intrenching tools. which they, Assisted by many willing hands from the infantry line, those implements were used so effectively that in a short time every exposed place was under the cover shelter of fair intrenchments.

In the early evening, about 7.30, the Confederates made an organized and vigorous assault upon this new line, but they were quickly repulsed. In anticipation of this assaulting business evening entertainment, Lightburn's brigade had been sent to the right of Giles A.Smith's brigade, and other troops ran to the support help of the brigade troops of General Charles R.Woods.

These troops were in time to participate in the repulse action already described, and Lightburn, himself for his promtitude and energy, received from his seniors high commendation. A hundred prisoners odd were taken and some thirteen hundred Confederates were reported killed and wounded on that front in the skirmishes and in this the combat. The importance of McPherson's capture of the heights referred to, as they were situated between Camp Creek and the Oostanaula, cannot be doubted, for the high ground manned without guns spoiled for confederate transit both the railway and the wagon-road bridges, and caused the Confederates to lay a new bridge of boats farther up the river.

On this point, General Johnston says, to our surprise remarks: "General Sherman was misinformed as to the taking of an important ridge by the advance of McPherson's whole line, and bloody repulses of Confederate attempts to retake it (this on the 15th); there was no such occurrence. But on the 14th, about dusk, the left of our line of skirmishers - forty or fifty men - was driven from a slight

ground east of Camp Creek. The brigades most hotly engaged were those of General Charles T. Wood's and Giles A. Smith's.

The new position was taken by them. It was most important, and fully hotly contested the ground; yet Jefferson's men held it under a hot fire, while their pioneers brought up the intrenching tools which they, assisted by many willing hands in the infantry line, used so effectively that in a short time every exposed place was under the cover of fair intrenchments.

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These troops were in time to participate in the repulse already described, and Lightburn, for his promptness and energy, received high commendation. A hundred prisoners were taken and some thirteen hundred Confederates were killed and wounded on that front in the skirmishes and in this combat. The importance of Jefferson's capture of the heights referred to, situated between Camp Creek and the Oostanaula, cannot be doubted, for the high ground commanded both the railway and the wagon-road bridges, and caused the Confederates to lay a new bridge of boats farther up the river. On this point, General Johnston says,"GeneralSherman was misinformed as to the taking of an important ridge by the advance of Jefferson's whole line, and bloody repulses of Confederates attempts to retake it (this on the 15th); there was no such occurrence . But on the 14th, about dusk, the left of our line of skirmishers - forty or fifty men - was driven from a slight

elevation in front of our left, but no attempt was made to retake it". General Johnston was certainly mistaken, for there is no conflict in the reports. The number of the prisoners taken by McPherson, and the number of killed and wounded on his front, are too specific to make an error probable.

Besides the official reports, I have ~~the~~ testimony of a reliable correspondent of the New York Herald, who was present. He ~~writes~~ wrote respecting McPherson's movement of the 14th: "He (McPherson) had thrown Logan's Corps across the creek and occupied the heights on the east bank of the stream overlooking the town.

This movement had not been accomplished without hard fighting. The rebel batteries along the heights poured a dreadful storm of shot and shell upon Logan's advance. McPherson, in order to neutralize this, had placed batteries on the heights on the west bank of the stream, annoying the rebel batterries and thus giving a chance to Logan to charge across the stream and take possession of the ridge of hills commanding the rebel position around Resaca."

Surely ~~General~~ Johnston must have been misinformed.

True, these heights were not within ~~his~~ Johnston's continuous intrenched line, but they were important outworks, eminently so, when we notice that they so thoroughly commanded in our possession endangered his railway communication with Resaca.

Before undertaking to detail the important part borne by General Geo. H Thomas in the battle of Resaca, we will next follow the movements of General Schofield ~~command~~ he being next in location. ~~It~~ His was usually called the "Army of the Ohio", but when, as now, separated from its cavalry it had but one army corps, the Twenty-third. ¶ To go back a little, when McPherson ~~after his broken~~ after his first backward movement was pushing again straight for Resaca, the two Corps, the Twentieth(Hooker) and Fourteenth (Palmer), of Thomas's army, were to keep abreast of him on his left.

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Besides the official reports, I have the reliable correspondent of the New York Herald, who was present. He writes respecting McPherson's movement of the 16th: "He (McPherson) had thrown Logan's corps across the creek and occupied the heights on the east bank of the stream overlooking the town.

This movement had not been accomplished without hard fighting. The rebel batteries along the heights poured a dreadful storm of shot and shell upon Logan's advance. McPherson, in order to neutralize this, had placed batteries on the heights on the west bank of the stream, annoying the rebel batteries and thus giving a chance to Logan to charge across the stream and take possession of the ridge of hills commanding the rebel position around Resaca."

Surely General Johnston must have been misinformed.

True, these heights were not within his continuous intrenched line, but they were important outworks, eminently so, when we notice that they so thoroughly endangered his railway communication with Resaca.

Before undertaking to detail the important part borne by General Thomas in the battle of Resaca, we will next follow the movements of General Schofield command. It was usually called the "Army of the Ohio", but when, as now, separated from its cavalry it had but one army corps, the Twenty-third.

When McPherson under his orders, was pushing straight for Resaca, the two Corps, the Twentieth(Hooker) and Fourteenth (Palmer), of Thomas's army, were to keep abreast of him on his left.

McPherson &

As soon as these two corps were in line the whole north and south front of Johnston was pretty well covered. But Camp Creek, the dividing ~~line~~ stream between us and our foe, ~~as~~ near Palmer's left, made an abrupt up-stream bend towards the west, and the Confederate lines bent off in the opposite direction towards the Oostanaula. Schofield's ~~columns~~ troops, as I saw them in motion, ~~swept~~ hastened in at this point, General Judah's division turning by a sort of right wheel on a pivot at the bend, and the energetic Cox's division, trying to keep up the right wheel, swept off leftward while continually changing front to the right.

Judah's men came up boldly, but were exposed to a double fire; every step forward brought them under the ~~fire from~~ Confederate batteries situated in elevated salients, ~~which swept their line.~~ It was worse & worse for Judah as he pressed forward. Captain Conyngham in his book gives a graphic account of Judah's advance. He says that before Judah reached an open space which divided him from the enemy "his first line was broken and fell back on his second. This rallied under the fierce storm of shot and shell and advanced, but was also broken". Judah then retired to the woods in his rear. Conyngham further says, "I was then acting aide on General Judah's staff. My horse was lamed by a piece of rock, splintered by a round shot, stricking him in the leg, and I was leading him to the rear when I met Major(now Colonel)Wherry of Schofield's staff." The two held here quite a parley. Wherry wanted to know where were Judah's other aides. The captain pointed them out near a sheltering rock. "He(Wherry)rode over to them; they refused to go in (that is, on to Judah's front), and he turned to me exclaiming, 'What will I do'? 'Well, major, my horse is lame; dismount an orderly, and I will go in'. . I went in (that is under fire up to Judah's lines), accompanied by the brave, dashing Major Wherry. We succeeded in reaching Judah's position

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between the contending batteries, though shot and shell were all the time plowing the ranks and mowing down the columns and trees around us". The gallant captain was hurt and stunned for a time in carrying Judah's orders, but succeeded at last in leading up Hovey's division - that is, Schofield's reserve - to Judah's relief and support. Meanwhile Cox's division, somehow separated in the woods from Judah's, met the enemy boldly on his front, seized his intrenchments, as he says in his book, "driving the enemy from them at a charge after a fierce struggle".

By the help of other troops General Cox's division was enabled to,hold its ground. His soldiers ~~did~~ acted as McPherson's ~~did~~ did later at Atlanta, aligned themselves on the outside of the enemy's trenches and sheltered their front by the small embankment till help came.

I remember that swinging movement of General Cox, for I had a good place for observation. It was the first time that my attention had been especially called to this handsome, gallant young officer and able man. He was following his troops, and appeared full of spirit and energy as he rode past the group of officers who were with me. I was then watching the movement so as to find where his lines would finally rest, ~~so as~~ and in order to deploy and support his left. This part of our work was exciting, for the air was already full of bursting shells and other hissing missiles of death.

At the first Bull Run my brigade was detained for several hours within hearing of the battle field. On an order coming suddenly my command was hurried from behind a screen of thick trees out into the opening. The sound of the cannon, the screeching of the shells, bursting here and there in the air and the great heat of the day effected me men as never before. I experienced the same effect again ~~at this point~~ here at Resaca while beholding from a high ground

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General Cox's and General Wood's divisions going rapidly forward into battle. The noise was deafening, the missiles carried the idea of extreme danger to all within range; and the air appeared for the time as if doubly ~~twice~~ heated. The effect was somewhat like that of a startling panorama of which one forms a part; Of a sense of danger, deep and strong, relieved by a magnificient spectacle and the excitements of the contest. The oppression of rarefied air greatly heated ~~relieved by~~ exerted upon a quickened brain and nerves wrought up to a high steady tension! Who can describe it? At any rate moments like those afford unusual ~~are extra-ordinary~~ glimpses of an extraordinary world which leave impressions of interest and memory not easily explained.

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11. Resaca.
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