Address,
at Cincinnati Ohio, 1895.

Vol. 6, No. 9.

Subject.
Battle of Griswoldville.
Griswold is a station on the railroad that runs from Macon to Savannah and is ten miles from Macon. The village proper, named Griswoldville, is a few hundred yards from the station.

To map out the battle of Griswoldville, one may do so more easily by making first a slight sketch of our general operations. Remember, Atlanta has been won; then saved; then depopulated almost, and its ashes abandoned. Sherman's right wing, i.e., the Army of the Tennessee, about 33,000 strong under my command, had left Whitehall near Atlanta, the 15th of November, 1864.

Kilpatrick's cavalry, about 5,000 horsemen, had reported to me and were sent to clear my front and watch my right flank as we wandered southward.

Till November, the 19th, to all appearances, we were sweeping on toward Macon; then first infantry by a turn to the left crossed to the East of the Ocmulgee by pontoon bridges. The steep and muddy banks were bothersome. The cavalry followed and as soon as over the river again turned down the first roads with difficulty toward East Macon. The army after clambering up the east bank of the river, made straight for a station on the Macon and Savannah R. R. called Gordon. Our trains, including Kilpatrick's, stretched out were thirty-seven miles long. To get these wagons
"parked" at Gordon without accident was our problem.

Osterhaus, commanding 15th corps, was on the right. He struck the Macon and Savannah R. R. early the 22nd of November. Then, turning back a little toward East Macon, he told Gen. Chas. R. Woods to watch out that way with his division and help Kilpatrick, for much Confederate force, perhaps 5,000. strong of infantry and cavalry and artillery was reported as already over the Ocmulgee in East Macon and proposing to attack something! They might at least catch our long, snaky trains and cut them assunder. Gen. Woods obeyed his orders from Osterhaus, taking back, took up a strong position near a church; then he sent thither one brigade, his second, Brig. Gen. C. C. Walcutt, commanding, with total present for duty, 1,513 men. Walcutt had also two cannon of the 1st Michigan. Just then, at the start, the Confederates were driving off a part of Kilpatrick's cavalry. Wood, thereupon, sent Walcutt that way past the station of Griswold.

Cavalry and infantry kept skirmishing in a lively manner till Osterhaus naturally thought Walcutt had gone far enough. He instructed Woods to draw him back to Duncan's farm nearer to his supporting division. Here they found abundant trees and some very convenient swamps, impassable, except at a few points. Here Walcutt chose the edge of a wood with open
"Dear [Name],

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to inform you of the recent developments in our project. As you know, we were working on a new system that is expected to revolutionize our field. However, during the last meeting, we encountered some technical issues that delayed our progress.

The team is working hard to resolve these problems and we anticipate that we will be able to resume normal operations soon. We are committed to delivering the best possible solution to our customers and we appreciate your patience during this time.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]"
ground in front of him: and throwing up the usual cover of rails and logs, while some of Kilpatrick's men guarded the more distant sweeps beyond the swamps, he made a long and extraordinary barrier for his foes, should they dare to venture into his dangerous region. Those 1518 men behind that barrier with two cannon to cover the approaches by using iron hail were more than equal to 10,000. opponents however determined they might be.

As near as I can work out the detail of order from the report, the regiments went into position from left to right as follows: (Second Brigade)

6th Iowa, 177 " " Maj. W. H. Clune "
103rd Ill, 219 " " Maj. A. Willison "
97th Ind, 396 " " Col. R. F. Catterson "
100th Ind, 327 " " Maj. R. M. Johnson "
40th Ill, 206 " " Lieut Col. N. W. Hall "

(2nd Brigade) reinforce.

12th Ind. enlisted men Maj. Elbert D. Baldwin "

A section of artillery, battery "B" Ist Mich, Capt.

Albert F. R. Arndt, commanding. The two pieces (
tion) were located on the east side of the field near the road and near the middle of the line, probably but partially covered by an 

 early in the action they had to be withdrawn on account of the enemies' fire becoming very destructive to men and horses.

Gen. Woods says: "I also applied to Col. Murray for some cavalry to cover the flanks; he kindly sent a regiment to each flank, covered and watched the crossing of the swamp."

This was during the battle. That, then, was the preparation on our side preliminary to the battle called "Griswoldville," sometimes Duncan's farm. Before finishing the story from our points of observation, let us look at the other side.

General Gustavus W. Smith was an assistant professor in engineering at West Point the last year of my cadet term, (1853 & 4) and taught our class. He, though quite a young officer, had been before that time twice brevetted for gallantry and merit in the Mexican War. He was a self-respecting dignified man of marked ability. He had left the army and was trying his skill in civil pursuits, holding just before the War the office of street commissioner in New York City, when the secession took him south. General Smith was in the neighborhood of Macon.
the 15th of November, 1864, when set out from Atlanta toward Savannah. His story, dated Dec. 4th, 1864 at Savannah, addressed to Gen. Hardee, has interested me greatly, and I think that part of it touching Griswoldville will be of value to the veterans of Wood's division, especially of Waltz's brigade. Here is his record:

"General:"

On the 12th of October last, I received at Macon a telegram from General Hood directing me to assemble as rapidly as possible all our available forces in that vicinity and make a demonstration on Atlanta as soon as the necessary transportation could be procured. Under this order, I in a short time had at Lovejoy's Station a force numbering about 2,800 effective muskets, three batteries of Confederate artillery and between 200 and 300 local reserve cavalry. The whole force was under my command, much the larger portion of infantry belonging to the First Division of Georgia Militia. Finding this force inadequate to make a direct assault upon Atlanta, garrisoned as it then was, General Hood suggested that I should, if practicable, cross the Chattahoochee and destroy the line of railroad between that river and Etowah. For various reasons which were submitted to Generals Beauregard and Hood (and by them approved), it was deemed neither practicable nor expedient to make a direct attack.
upon Atlanta, or upon the railroad line, as suggested; so my
command continued in observation near Atlanta, preventing the
enemy from foraging and keeping them in their line of works;
supporting Brigadier-General Iverson, who had just in advance
of us, two brigades of cavalry.

On the night of the 12th of November, Major-General Wheeler,
of the cavalry, reached my headquarters, and, soon after, the
advance of his forces from Alabama began to arrive. On the 15th
of November the enemy moved out from Atlanta and advanced upon
us with his whole force, viz., the Fifteenth, Seventeenth, and
Twentieth Corps, with artillery and cavalry, which was soon
after, joined by the Fourteenth. Our cavalry were driven that
afternoon from Jonesburgh to Lovejoy's, and at dark I moved
my force back to Griffin, at which place we had fortifications,
and I felt we could there check the enemy should he advance
directly upon us.

On the afternoon of the 16th it was ascertained that the
great mass of the enemy's forces had moved through McDonough, on
the direct road from Atlanta to Macon, at which latter place
there was at that time no garrison. At dark on the same day I
left Griffin and marched my command to Forsyth, a distance of
thirty-five miles in twenty-four hours. Learning that the enemy
were crossing to the east bank of the Ocmulgee River, I moved
the command to Macon, and about that time received orders from
Gen. Beauregard to report by letter to Lieutenant-General Taylor.
A copy of that letter is here 1th transmitted.

All of my command except the Georgia militia and two
regiments of State Line troops, which reported to me just before
leaving Lovejoy's were at this time turned over to Major-General
Cobb. The defense of a portion of the line around Macon, on the
west bank of the Ocmulgee, was assigned to the force still left
in my command. Before the troops were fairly in position, orders
were received to cross the river and occupy a position covering
East Macon. This movement occupied the whole night. Soon after
daylight next morning my five brigades were in the respective
positions assigned them, no two being in the same part of the
field.

During the morning of Monday, the 21st, the First Brigade,
under your personal instructions, given direct to the colonel
commanding, were sent along the line of the Central Railroad
with orders to move as rapidly as possible, either by rail or
otherwise, to the city of Augusta. In the afternoon of the
same day, Anderson's battery of artillery was assigned to the
militia, and you directed me to move as soon as possible with
this battery, the Second, Third and Fourth Brigades of militia,
and the two regiments of the State Line, to Augusta. They moved
Tuesday morning in the direction of Griswoldville, with orders
the commission to mean the report of the Superior Court

A result or such letter to me, or to your

If it be, in my opinion, a clear and certain action on your part, you should notify me without delay of the time when you expect to leave your

You cannot look upon the action of the Superior Court

You will be notified, but I shall not take upon

I will advise you at once of the time I

I shall give you all necessary information on or before the

I shall be glad to give you all the information, but it will be difficult for me to be present

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to halt there and await further instructions from me."

The second battery in the battle was probably from the Confederate Cavalry.

"Arrangements for transportation of ammunition and supplies detained me a few hours in Macon, which place you had left off the evening previous. Lieutenant-General Taylor arrived there on the morning of the 22nd. Information having been received showing very clearly that a much larger force of the enemy was near the city than was supposed when you gave the orders for my troops to move, he (Taylor) authorized me to direct them to return. My orders reached them on the eve of an engagement with what was supposed to be a small force of the enemy. Notwithstanding my order to avoid an engagement at that place and time, a collision occurred, we being the attacking party; and though the officers and men behaved with great gallantry, they failed to carry the works of the enemy, but held a position within 150 yards of our line until after dark, when they were withdrawn to Macon by my order. The First Brigade of militia were not engaged, having passed that point in the execution of orders given by yourself. Major Cook, commanding the Athens and Augusta battalions, moving under orders direct from yourself, was upon the ground and engaged in this action.

Our loss was a little over 600, being more than one-fourth of the effective muskets we had in the engagement. Several of the best field officers of the command were killed or wounded.
It is evident now that our men were opposed by the larger portion of one corps of the enemy, while another was marching from Clinton in their rear; and I consider the troops were very fortunate in being withdrawn without disaster. Lieutenant-General Taylor, having become satisfied that the enemy were leaving the vicinity of Macon, directed me to move my command on Friday morning by rail to Albany; thence march to Thomasville; thence by rail to Savannah.

In his report to Lieutenant-General Taylor, who arrived at Macon the day of the battle, General Smith has given his command, to wit:

- Effective muskets (sent from Jonesboro) 1900
- Reserves of all kinds 1200
- Two batteries (a "battalion" probably 200) 200
- State line troops 400

Actual fighting men with rifles and muskets 3700

Allowing 700 for the first brigade which left for Augusta the 21st of November we have 3000 "effectives," including two batteries of artillery; besides the force Wheeler left back, namely, Col. Chas. C. Crew's cavalry brigade, whose cavalry was without doubt that which participated in the engagements in the vicinity of Griswoldville. At any rate my conclusion is
(Confidential)

To: [Name]

We are aware of your concerns regarding the recent developments in the [specific issue].

We have been in contact with the relevant authorities and are keeping a close eye on the situation.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,

[Name]
from their own accounts compared with ours, that there were, on the ground, or within supporting distance, an aggregate of Confederates, at least 4000 strong against our aggregate of all arms on the field of 2500.

We can now furnish the story of the battle: Catterson's account is the most graphic as follows: "He" (the word he standing for a host) was soon discovered emerging from the woods about 800 yards from our position, and rapidly moving across an open field toward us in three lines of battle, either of which covered our brigade front. Wadsworth just then caused Arnott to fire his two cannon. He was quickly replied to by four Napoleons from the front and right not more than 300 yards away. Their first shot struck and damaged a caisson; musketry could reach our men and horses so that Wadsworth soon retired his artillery. Catterson proceeds: "On came the enemy, endeavoring to gain possession of a ravine running parallel to and about 100 yards from our front; but the fire was so terrible that, ere he reached it, many of his number were stretched upon the plain. It was at this moment that Gen. Wadsworth received a severe wound and was compelled to leave the field." Catterson soon called for help for fear that his right flank might be turned. Baldwin's 12th Ind. and Murray's squadron of cavalry came at call. But the battle was nearly over, one man wounded and Adjutant Park's
horse shot under him were all of Baldwin's casualties.
Catterson winds up his account thus: "The battle commenced at
2:30 p.m. and lasted until sunset. During the engagement the
enemy made three separate charges, and were as often repulsed
with terrible slaughter."

Gen. Woods foots up his losses "13 killed, 79 wounded and
two missing ' total 93.

Of the enemy's loss, he says ' as near as could be ascer-
tained without actual count" 300 killed and over 700 wounded.
Gen. G. W. Smith puts his loss as a little over 600. This is as
near as the Union and Confederate, opposed in battle, ever came
together in estimating losses. That battle was a chance affair.
It is difficult to ascertain who was in command of the four
Confederate brigades. It might have been Major-General P. J.
Phillips who was reported by prisoners as slain on that field, =
and it might have been Brigadier-General Robert H. Anderson, who
was there and wounded. Gen. Smith was delayed in Macon while
his command was hastening on toward Augusta. How Taylor, Wheeler,
Cobb or himself could have imagined that their brigades could
have gone on to Augusta after their experiences of the 20th and
21st of November between Macon and Clinton, or Gordon is a mystery.
Surely they knew before the 22nd that two Corps of our Army of
the Tennessee were across all their roads of egress toward Atlanta, Milledgeville, Augusta and Savannah.

When sent forward, Gen Wood's report, I put this endorsement: The within was received subsequent to making my report. The engagement was of a more severe character, and our loss a little greater than the information led me to suppose; but fortunately the enemy attacked us at the very point where we were prepared, so that with a force only about one-third as large as that of the enemy he was so completely defeated that he has troubled (us) no more in that quarter. I renew my commendations of the brigade commander and others engaged on that day.

Respectfully,

O. O. Howard,
Major-General.

This story would not be quite complete without my letter of the 23rd of November to Major-General Osterhaus, commanding the 15th Army Corps:

General:

I take pleasure in congratulating the brigade of General Walcutt, of General Wood's division of the Fifteenth Corps, on its complete success in the action of yesterday.
Officers from other commands who were looking on say that there
never was a better brigade of soldiers. I am exceedingly sorry
that any of our brave men should fall, and for the sufferings of
those that are wounded. The thanks of the army are doubly due
to them. I tender my sympathy through you to the brave and
excellent commander of the brigade, Brigadier-General Walcutt.
It is hoped that his wound may not disable him.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

O. O. Howard,

Major-General.

We marched over rough places and jolted along roads, yet all
our wounded from this battle were transported to Savannah without
any loss of life en route.