

Granbury's Texas Brigade, C.S.A.:
The Color Brigade of the Army

by

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For Mom and Dad
Whose Love and Support Made Everything Possible

“Most truly honored and as truly dear,
If worth in me or ought I do appear,
Who can of right better demand the same
Than may your worthy self from whom it came?”

-Anne Bradstreet

To My Father With Some Verses

“And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.”

-Walt Whitman

Song of Myself

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Introduction

Loyalty to the Confederacy that transcended local circumstances failed to materialize among most Confederate soldiers, including those of Granbury's Texas Brigade. Despite this failure, some Texans proved more willing to stay with the cause than others, provided that they retained effective local leadership. Those who then stayed in the ranks to the end did so because of the stellar leadership they enjoyed at the regimental, brigade and division level. In this way, a unit history of Granbury's Texas Brigade can serve as a microcosm of the Confederate war effort from the perspective of the common soldier.

For the purpose of this study, the term "local circumstances" is used in perhaps a different fashion than in other works. Here, local circumstances is meant to denote the situation in which the men of Granbury's Brigade found themselves at the moment, whether they "locally" experienced poor leadership (as opposed to other units or locations at that moment), or good leadership (again, in contrast to other places and or units.) "Locally" in this sense does not refer to a particular geographic locale, but rather to the time, place and circumstances being described. Local circumstances in terms of this work also covers the concept of unit cohesion, in that the men in the immediate area provided the "local circumstances" that kept other men in the ranks. This definition should add clarity to the work.

This thesis of local circumstance runs contrary to that found in many established works on Confederate soldier motivation in the Civil War. Most notably, Gary Gallagher in his work *The Confederate War* maintains that "Far from being a loosely knit group of individuals whose primary allegiance lay with their states, a substantial portion of the

Confederate people identified strongly with their southern republic.” A study of Granbury’s Brigade directly contradicts this assertion, showing that Confederate nationalism and loyalty to the Southern nation could not overcome local circumstances. Gallagher correctly, asserts, however, that military events took center stage in the defeat of the Confederacy. If this latter assertion is true, a history of Granbury’s Brigade can go a long way toward explaining Confederate defeat through a lack of commitment on the part of Confederate soldiers. Furthermore, James McPherson in his work *For Cause and Comrades* maintains that ideology kept many Confederates in the ranks well into the latter stages of the war. In part, McPherson maintains that “For many Confederate soldiers in 1864-65 the motive of upholding honor blended with the persistence of their ideological commitment to liberty, independence and self government. . .” to keep them in the ranks. In this sense, a history of Granbury’s Brigade also contradicts McPherson in that there is little evidence that ideological considerations came into play at all for the vast majority of Granbury’s Texans.¹

This history of Granbury’s Brigade reopens many of the questions Gallagher, McPherson, and others have raised about the Confederate war effort. Did desertion sound the death knell the Confederacy’s bid for independence? Why did the soldiers who remained stay in the ranks until the bitter end? Could those who remained have staved off defeat? A history of Granbury’s Texas Brigade, to the extent that it serves as a microcosm of the Confederate armies, can give answers to these questions.

Previous histories of Granbury’s Brigade have lacked such context. Three previous studies of the brigade have appeared. The first is the edited journal and diary of

¹ Gary Gallagher, *The Confederate War: How Popular Will, Nationalism, and Military Strategy Could not Stave off Defeat*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 7; James McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 170.

Capt. Samuel T. Foster, edited by Norman Brown and published the University of Texas Press in 1980. Although not a history of the brigade per se, Brown's footnotes are substantial enough to be considered a rough history of the unit, especially the 24th Texas Dismounted Cavalry of which Foster was a member. Because of the inherent gaps in any unit history centered on one primary source, Brown's account leaves much to be desired as a full history of Granbury's Brigade. The second work is an actual history of the brigade entitled *This Band of Heroes: Granbury's Texas Brigade, C.S.A.*, by James McCaffrey, which appeared through Texas A&M Press in 1984. Covering the entire history of the brigade in a mere eighty pages, Dr. McCaffrey's work is really a sketch, or outline, of the history of the brigade. It lacks an overarching thesis, socioeconomic context, or a bottom-up approach to Granbury's men, but it does have an extensive bibliography. The third history of Granbury's Brigade is the doctoral dissertation of Dr. Danny Sessums, titled "A Force to be Reckoned With: Granbury's Texas Brigade, C.S.A.," which has never been published. Sessums's work contains some valuable information but lacks organization, clarity, and a consistently firm basis in factual evidence. Clearly a new, detailed, concise, relevant history of this important fighting unit is needed.²

Granbury's Texans, served as the "Color Brigade," the shock troops of the Confederate Army of Tennessee for roughly a year, from their formation in November 1863 to November 1864, but the story of how these regiments developed from 1861-1863 is just as important a story to understanding the unit as their decline following the Battle

² Norman Brown ed., *One of Cleburne's Command: The Diary and Reminiscences of Captain Samuel T. Foster, Granbury's Texas Brigade, C.S.A.*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980); James McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes: Granbury's Texas Brigade, C.S.A.* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1984); Danny Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With: Granbury's Texas Brigade, C.S.A.," (Unpublished manuscript in possession of the author.)

of Franklin in November 1864.³ Because Granbury's Texas Brigade as a unit did not coalesce in its final form until after the Battle of Chickamauga in late 1863, much of the history of these men centers on the history of the individual regiments that later made up the brigade before they came together as a single unit. Because the histories of these regiments prior to the formation of the brigade largely defined the later history of the brigade, it is necessary to spend the first part of the manuscript discussing these histories.

About half of the brigade was comprised of cavalry units converted into infantry, or "dismounted cavalry regiments." In addition, the brigade contained three infantry regiments, making a total of eight original regiments consolidated into five; the 6th & 15th Texas, (Infantry and Dismounted Cavalry) the 7th Texas (Infantry), the 10th Texas (Infantry), the 17th & 18th Texas (Dismounted Cavalry) and the 24th & 25th Texas (Dismounted Cavalry.)

Paradoxically, desertion helped shape the history of Granbury's Brigade and allowed the "summer soldiers" to escape, leaving the more committed men to carry on through the war. The negative phenomenon of desertion thus winnowed the ranks, especially of the dismounted cavalry regiments, and left a hard core of devoted men in these units. These men then formed the backbone of what became Granbury's Brigade. The fact that the men of the dismounted cavalry regiments averaged six years older than the average Civil War soldier and hence tended to be married with children and property led to high desertion rates after the dismounting of their regiments in 1862 and the subsequent surrender at Arkansas Post in January 1863. In fact, in several of these dismounted cavalry regiments, sixty percent of the men deserted at one point or another

³ Here the term "Color Brigade" is used as an honorific title to describe a unit that metaphorically carried the colors of an army, such as Napoleon's Grenadier Guard.

during the war. The high desertion rates left core of soldiers that remained committed to each other, their regiments, and their field officers throughout the rest of the war.

The three infantry regiments that later became part of Granbury's Brigade had much lower desertion rates, and tended to be younger than their counterparts in the dismounted cavalry regiments, but their shared time in prison winnowed the ranks just as effectively as desertion because many took the Oath of Allegiance to the United States and many more perished in Camps Butler, Douglas, and Chase. By the time desertion and prison had taken their toll on the eight regiments, the men who emerged from these experiences became the Color Brigade of the Army of Tennessee. The time in prison also gave all the Texans something in common, a chip on their collective shoulders, that made them fight harder to prove themselves.

The history of the brigade can be broken down into four distinct phases. Phase one began in 1861 with the formation of the various regiments and ended with the capture of the 7th Texas at Fort Donelson and of the other regiments at Arkansas Post. The experiences in this first phase served to shrink the ranks of the brigade into the hard core of veterans that later emerged as Granbury's Brigade. The second phase extended from the bloodletting of the 7th Texas at the Battle of Raymond, Mississippi, May 12, 1863, to the intense combat experience all the regiments experienced at Chickamauga in September of that year. The third phase in the history of the brigade began during the siege of Chattanooga when the Confederate high command united the 7th Texas with the other regiments into a single brigade under Brig. Gen. James Smith. In its first true engagement as a brigade, at Tunnel Hill on November 25, what became Granbury's Brigade hit its stride as Smith went down wounded and Granbury took command of the

brigade for the first time. In the aftermath of this battle Patrick Cleburne first referred to the Texans as a “band of heroes.” All through the Atlanta Campaign Granbury’s men made a name for themselves—at Pickett’s Mill, Bald Hill, the Battle of Atlanta, and Jonesboro as one of the finest combat units in the army. Finally, at Franklin on November 30, 1864 the brigade reached its zenith, suffering sixty percent casualties as well as the deaths of Cleburne and Granbury. After Franklin the fourth and final phase of the history of the brigade began as the unit rapidly declined due to a lack of leadership and greatly reduced numbers. They fought only one major battle after Franklin—at Nashville—but their behavior in the last days of the war clearly shows the decline of the effectiveness of the brigade. This last phase ended in the surrender of the Army of Tennessee at Greensboro, North Carolina, on April 28, 1865.

The history of Granbury’s Brigade illuminates the Confederate war effort from the perspective of the common soldier. Even though roughly sixty percent of the brigade deserted, the forty percent who stayed with their regiments went on to become a crack fighting unit. Would those who deserted have added substantially to the brigade? It is impossible to answer this question with certainty, but it seems likely they would. What is clear is that those who remained, like other Confederate soldiers, fought hard enough to make their presence felt and keep the war effort going for longer than it probably would have otherwise.

Chapter 1

Off to War

As the various regiments that became Granbury's Brigade came together and headed for the front, their very organization and demographics demonstrated both the early strengths and weaknesses of the Confederate war effort. The infantry regiments tended to contain younger, more unattached men, increasing their propensity toward loyal service, while the cavalry regiments tended to contain older, married men of more substantial means, which seemingly decreased their loyalty to the Confederacy. The fact that many of the cavalymen also signed up to avoid conscription tended to indicate that they possessed less attachment to the Confederacy than their younger counterparts in the infantry. The demographics of the various regiments and the chronology in which they came into Confederate service laid the groundwork for their later contributions, or lack thereof, to the Confederate cause.

Within the Civil War armies, the company was the basic unit of a regiment. Each company, ideally consisting of about a hundred men, formed gradually as volunteers congregated at a common mustering point, usually the nearest county seat. Prominent local citizens generally provided the impetus for forming these companies. In the case of Granbury's Brigade, lawyers, judges, and planters made up this group, in short the wealthier and more educated individuals of the community. From the mustering points, the leaders loosely organized these companies and shuttled them to camps of instruction where the regiments began to take shape. Ten companies formed a regiment, organized by a prominent citizen armed with a commission from the governor or the Confederate

government. The government then eventually ordered these regiments to the front where generals organized them into brigades of three to five regiments.

Leading citizens organized all the regiments of Granbury's Brigade before the passage of the Confederate Conscription Act in April 1862. Because of this, the state considered them volunteer regiments. Infantry provided the core of nineteenth century armies based on the Napoleonic model. Texan leaders soon found it extremely difficult, though, to persuade men to volunteer as foot soldiers. In 1863 British observer Lt. Col. Arthur Fremantle noted, after watching a cavalry regiment in Galveston, "At the outbreak of the war it was found very difficult to raise infantry in Texas, as no Texan walks a yard if he can help it. Many mounted regiments were therefore organized, and afterwards dismounted."¹ While trying to raise a company of infantry in 1862, Oran Roberts of Hopkins County noted, "If it was cavalry I could succeed better as Texans dislike to walk." James H. Jones of the same regiment wrote, "We have some good material for the service yet in our country—men of position and good moral characters—who are willing to go as infantry. We will have some prejudices to remove against walking."² Because infantry formed the backbone of nineteenth century armies, the Confederate government sought to raise foot soldiers in any manner possible, and their zeal in this endeavor ultimately led to problems among the Texas cavalrymen when the authorities dismounted these regiments. The transformation of cavalry to infantry led to a great deal of dissatisfaction that dealt a mortal wound to any enthusiasm the Texans felt when enlisting.

¹ Arthur James Lyon Fremantle, *Three Months in the Southern States: April-June, 1863*, ed. Walter Lord, (Short Hills, N.J.: Burford Books, 2001), 75.

² Richard Lowe, *Walker's Texas Division C.S.A.: Greyhounds of the Trans-Mississippi*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 8-9.

For the most part, each company of Granbury's Brigade hailed from a single county. This shared locality often provided a name for the company. For example, the "Travis Rifles" of Travis County became Company G, 6th Texas Infantry. In this company, 71 percent of the members came from Travis County. The other 29 percent hailed from Hays, Burnett, Bastrop or Williamson Counties, all contiguous with Travis. Only one member of the company came from a county not contiguous with Travis County.³ The companies in the other regiments of Granbury's Brigade had similar patterns of residency.

Robert Collins, a clerk in a dry goods store in Decatur, Texas, wrote that in February 1862, "the idea of the Yankees heading for Texas soil to despoil our fair homes, insult our women and eat up the substance of the people was just a little more than we proposed to submit to." Wise County, which Decatur served as seat, had only about two hundred voters and all those not teachers or clerks, according to Collins, occupied themselves as "cowboys." George Sweet commissioned George Pickett to raise a company for his regiment then assembling near McKinney, north of Dallas. Collins wrote that once Pickett received his commission,

"then commenced the rushing to and fro getting things in shape to enlist, go to the wars and get honor, glory and some immortality. The day was set Saturday for the enrolling of names and organization of the company, and in they came on their little fingertail, frosty-necked, calico Spanish ponies, all clamorous to get into the cavalry service. . . . After the organization of our company until the order to march was received all hands were busy getting things in shape to take the field, and the people either from pure patriotism, or fear of the consequences of resistance, opened their doors to the boys. Merchants piled out their clothing, hats, boots and shoes, and men owning herds of horses were willing to give them up, so that it was only a few days before all the boys were mounted."

³ The 1860 Texas Census at www.heritagequest.com (accessed January 26, 2007); Of the 93 members of this company, the residency of 45 (48.3%) could not be determined and were excluded from these numbers.

Members of Pickett's new company fashioned themselves the "Wise Yankee Catchers." Collins reported that patriotic sentiment predominated, and all the women of the town went about their business humming "Dixie" or "The Bonnie Blue Flag." The Texans armed themselves with whatever firearms they could get. Most had shotguns, double barreled and single barreled, used for hunting in the days before the war.⁴

The concerns of Robert Collins in enlisting illustrate the feelings of many of the Texans. He initially hesitated to volunteer. He worked in the local post office and had access to newspapers from all over the country. Becoming convinced that a big fight would happen, he did not want to lay his life on the altar of the new Confederacy just yet. But the thought that one of the ladies of the town might present him with a hoop skirt if he did not join up frightened him into enlisting. Around the first of March, Pickett, whom the company had elected captain, received orders to report his company immediately to Dallas.⁵

The presentation of a flag by the ladies of the town and accompanying patriotic fanfare became a common feature of these companies that enlisted in the early days of the war. Pvt. Jim Turner of the Travis Rifles recounted the experience of his company in Austin. "During the forenoon of Saturday, November 2, 1861 the company assembled at the Armory and loaded our baggage and tents into the wagons. . .," he wrote. "We were then marched up Congress Avenue to the corner of Ninth Street where the company was presented by the ladies with a beautiful silk flag, the Stars and Bars of the Confederacy, in the presence of a large crowd of people. Patriotic speeches of presentation and

⁴ Robert M. Collins, *Chapters from the Unwritten History of the War Between the States: Or, The Incidents in the Life of a Confederate Soldier in Camp, On the March, In the Great Battles, And in Prison*, (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Press, 1988), 9-13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

acceptance were made, and after giving three hearty cheers, the company marched down the street amidst cheers and waving of handkerchiefs by the people who thronged the sidewalks. At noon we crossed the Colorado River at the ferry which was then near the foot of Colorado Street, just above the old Glasscock Mill, and proceeded on our way to the war.”⁶ Turner’s description certainly did not stand alone. Most, if not all, companies had a flag presentation of some sort. Later the regiments put away these individual company flags in favor of one regimental flag.

These volunteers soon took part in another ritual, the election of company and regimental officers. At an early hour on April 19, 1861, the “‘neigh of the war horse’ and the assembling of the Cavalry. . .” disturbed the quiet of Marshall wrote William Heartsill. The best men from Harrison, Panola and Marion Counties assembled in the Marshall town square. The new cavalrymen possessed everything necessary for service except weapons, which they expected to get from the arsenal at Austin. Heartsill recounted, “At 3 o’clock we proceeded to the organization of the company; which was consummated as follows; tickets had been previously prepared with the names of aspirants, and in some instances unauthorized; but as all are willing to serve in any capacity that their friends may desire; consequently there was a full ticket, and considerable stir among the friends of the respective candidates. The ballots were deposited in a ballot box, and while the officers of the election were counting out the vote—the Company was called together in the Courthouse, and the oath administered by Judge Frazer. . . .” The soldiers elected Samuel J. Richardson captain of the company,

⁶ Jim Turner, “Jim Turner Co. G, 6th Texas Infantry, C.S.A. From 1861-1865,” *Texana*, 12 no. 1: 150-151.

which styled itself the “W.P. Lane Rangers.”⁷ After their organization the Rangers served as an independent company of cavalry until captured at the Arkansas Post. Thereafter most of the company served in Granbury’s Brigade as dismounted cavalry.

The demographics of these various companies reveal something of the type of men who served in Granbury’s Brigade. Eight companies will serve as a representative sample, one from each regiment in the brigade. These particular eight had diverse geographic origins within Texas and give a good cross-sample of differences based on locality. In some companies heads of households in their twenties and thirties predominated, while in others dependents between the ages of fourteen and nineteen made up almost the whole command.

Taking the results from the several companies together, a picture emerges of an average member of Granbury’s Brigade in 1860. The average soldier tended to be nearly twenty-five years old, six years older than the average Civil War soldier, and a little less likely (sixty-nine percent) than the average Texan to be a farmer. A relatively high percentage (thirty-eight percent) had married before the war, with most of the married men claiming children as dependents. Roughly thirty-five percent of the brigade hailed from the Upper South, forty-five percent came from the Lower South, while about one in five men came from the North or Europe. About thirty-seven percent of the brigade reported net assets on the 1860 census, with a holding of about \$3,518 apiece.⁸

⁷ W.W. Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-One Days in the Confederate Army: A Journal Kept by W.W. Heartsill For Four Years, One Month and One Day or Camp Life; Day by Day, of the W.P. Lane Rangers From April 19, 1861 to May 20, 1865*, ed. Bell Wiley, (Jackson, Ten.: McCowat-Mercer Press, 1953), 2-3.

⁸ *Ibid.*

Table 1: Socioeconomic Profile of Granbury's Brigade

Company	Age (Mean)	Married/Unmarried	Percentage Reporting Personal Assets/Amount	Counties	Majority Occupation	Slave Owners	Upper South/Lower South
Company G, 6 th Texas Infantry	21	6%/94%	6%/\$5,262	Travis	Farmer (68%)	4.4%	53%/22%
Company A, 7 th Texas Infantry	21	17%/83%	17%/\$3,156	McLennan	Farmer (64%)	7.5%	31%/39%
Company H, 10 th Texas Infantry	22	33%/77%	50%/\$1,600	Bosque, Coryell	Farmer (75%)	5.1%	35%/55%
Company G, 15 th Texas Cavalry	24	38%/62%	50%/\$2,600	Collin, Denton	Farmer (64%)	8.3%	38%/10%
Company A, 17 th Texas Cavalry	27	55%/45%	72%/\$5,234	Nacogdoches	Farmer (62%)	12.8%	35%/52%
Company K, 18 th Texas Cavalry	25	55%/45%	64%/\$2,506	Henderson, Anderson	Farmer (76%)	7.8%	31%/58%
Company I, 24 th Texas Cavalry	25	45%/55%	55%\$6,531	Fayette, Karnes	Farmer (62%)	9.4%	34%/49%
Company G, 25 th Texas Cavalry	27	70%/30%	75%/\$1,256	Liberty, Tyler	Farmer (82%)	5%	23%/73%
Average:	25.5	38%/62%	49%/\$3,518		Farmer (69.1%)	7.5%	35%/45%

Table 2 demonstrates how Granbury's Brigade compared with other similar groups and with Texans as a whole. Based on the results from this comparison, an average member of Granbury's Brigade owned only about half the total wealth of the average Texas head of household in 1860, but proved almost exactly as wealthy as the average member of Walker's Texas Division.⁹ As for age, Granbury's men were comparable, if not a bit younger, than Walker's or the members of the 13th Texas Cavalry, which mustered at about the same time. In terms of occupations, the percentage of Granbury's men who were farmers coincided almost exactly with the percentage of farmers in Texas as a whole, while the states of origin for the men of Granbury's Brigade also coincide almost exactly with Texas as a whole.

⁹ The slight difference in wealth between Granbury's Brigade and Walker's Division could merely be the result of sampling

Table 2: A Comparison of Granbury's Brigade With Other Similar Groups.

Group	Age (Mean)	Amount of Wealth (Mean)	Majority Occupation	Upper South vs. Lower South
Texas Heads of Household (1860) ¹⁰	NA	\$6,393	Farmers (69.7%)	39%/45%
Confederate Soldiers ¹¹	NA	NA	Farmers (61.5%)	NA
The 13 th Texas Cavalry ¹²	27.4	NA	NA	NA
Walker's Texas Division ¹³	26.9	\$3,484	Farmers (78.1%)	NA
The 3 rd Texas Cavalry ¹⁴	NA	\$12,812	NA	NA
The 28 th Texas Cavalry ¹⁵	26.3	\$4,532	Farmers (75.3%)	29.7%/68.4%
Granbury's Brigade	25.5	\$3,518	Farmers (69.1%)	35%/45%

After the raising and organizing of the companies, the governor ordered them to come together at a designated camp of instruction for their regiment. The 6th Texas Infantry became one of the first regiments to organize. On June 12, 1861 Inspector Gen. of the Confederacy Samuel Cooper ordered Brig. Gen. Earl Van Dorn, commander of the Confederacy's Department of Texas, to raise twenty companies of infantry for Confederate service. Van Dorn instructed the volunteers to organize themselves, electing their own officers, and report to two camps of instruction designated by the governor of Texas. Less than three weeks later Confederate Secretary of War Leroy Pope Walker instructed Governor Edward Clark to establish three camps of instruction. Meanwhile

¹⁰ Lowe, *Walker's Texas Division*, 19-23.

¹¹ James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 614.

¹² Thomas Reid, *Spartan Band: Burnett's 13th Texas Cavalry in the Civil War*, (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2005), 29.

¹³ Lowe, *Walker's Texas Division*, 19-23.

¹⁴ Douglas Hale, *The Third Texas Cavalry in the Civil War*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 40.

¹⁵ M. Jane Johansson, *Peculiar Honor: A History of the 28th Texas Cavalry 1862-1865*, (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1998), 12-23.

Col. Henry McCulloch had replaced Van Dorn as Confederate commander of the Department of Texas. McCulloch suggested to Clark that he select Victoria as one of the sites. Clark agreed, and designated Millican, Texas, as the second camp of instruction.¹⁶

In September 1861 Maj. Alexander Haskell chose Nunner's Mott, four miles north of Victoria as the specific site for the first camp of instruction. The location was central and punctuated by large oak trees, but some complained that insects infested the site and made it an unhealthy environment. Nevertheless, Nunner's Mott became the staging area for what would become the 6th Texas Infantry. The volunteers named the encampment Camp Henry E. McCulloch in honor of the commander of the Department of Texas.¹⁷

The Lavaca Guards, a company from Calhoun County became the first men to arrive at Nunner's Mott. Alexander Hamilton Phillips Jr., a Port Lavaca attorney, led the company. On September 27, 1861 Confederate officials mustered Phillips and his men into service as Company A. Three days later the Lone Star Rifles from Victoria County, led by James Rupley, arrived and became Company B. Rupley had previously served in the Mexican War and proved one of the more experienced company commanders in the newly forming regiment. The third group of men, under Capt. Alonzo Bass, hailed from Gonzales County. They took the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy on October 3, 1861, and became Company C. The next day Dr. A.E. Pearson oversaw the mustering in of his Matagorda Coast Guards as Company D.¹⁸

¹⁶ Charles Spurlin ed., *The Civil War Diary of Charles A. Leuschner*, (Austin, Tex.: Eakin Press, 1992), 1.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

The next three companies moved a little slower in arriving at Camp McCulloch. On October 30 a company from Guadalupe County arrived under the command of Seguin lawyer John P. White, and officials mustered the group in as Company E. Four days later Capt. Henry E. Bradford's company from Bell County, the "Bell County Invincibles," mustered in as Company F. On November 12, 1861 Capt. Rhoads Fisher, Austin attorney and son of Texas pioneer Samuel Fisher, arrived at the head of his Travis Rifles, who became Company G.¹⁹

In contrast to its treatment of most of the other volunteer regiments that flocked to the colors in 1861, the Confederate Congress authorized President Jefferson Davis to appoint the field officers of the 6th Texas. For colonel of the new regiment, Davis selected Capt. Robert R. Garland. Garland had served in the old army as a captain in the 7th United States Infantry Regiment before the war. Prior to secession Garland found himself stationed at Fort Fillmore, New Mexico. He hailed from Virginia and considered his loyalty to the Old Dominion more important than his loyalty to the United States. When Garland resigned from the U.S. Army, Davis appointed him to an equal rank in the Confederate Army as Inspector Gen. to the Department of Texas. When Davis chose him to command the 6th Texas, he elevated Garland to colonel, effective as of December 12, 1861, and instructed him to proceed to Nunner's Mott. Davis chose Thomas S. Anderson, a former Texas Secretary of State and practicing attorney in Austin, as the regiment's lieutenant colonel. Davis selected Alexander Haskell, the man who had selected Nunner's

¹⁹ The Compiled Service Records of the 6th Texas Infantry. Every company commander in a Confederate regiment was required to file bi-monthly reports on all the men under his command. These reports have been compiled for each man and organized alphabetically by regiment. These manuscripts were then microfilmed by the National Archives (Series M323.) The Compiled Service Records for the 6th Texas Infantry are contained on microfilm rolls 308-314.

Mott, as major, and Samuel J. Garland, nephew of Col. Garland, as adjutant. The next month Walker reassigned Haskell and promoted Capt. Alexander Phillips in his stead.²⁰

Table 3: The 6th Texas Infantry

Company	Commander	County(ies)	Nicknames
A	Captain Alexander Hamilton Phillips Jr.	Calhoun	The Lavaca Guards
B	Captain James Rupley	Victoria	The Lone Star Rifles
C	Captain Alonzo Bass	Gonzales	
D	Captain A.E. Pearson	Matagorda	Matagorda Coast Guards
E	Captain John P. White	Guadalupe	
F	Captain Henry Bedford	Bell	The Bell County Invincibles
G	Captain Rhoads Fisher	Travis	The Travis Rifles
H	Captain George P. Finley	Calhoun and Lavaca	
I	Captain C.P. Nannheim	Dewitt	
K	Captain Samuel McCallister	Bexar	The Alamo Rifles

The steady stream of volunteers for the infantry service began to dry up by the end of 1861. Things had become so critical that in February 1862 Governor Francis Lubbock made an impassioned plea to the citizens of Texas to volunteer for Confederate service. The impetus from this appeal allowed Garland to fill out his regiment with the last three companies. On March 27, 1862 a company-sized group of volunteers from Calhoun and Lavaca Counties arrived at Camp McCulloch under George P. Finley, and Garland swore them in as Company H of the new regiment. Four days later a group of volunteers under Samuel McCallister arrived from Bexar County calling themselves the “Alamo Rifles,” and Garland designated them Company K. Finally, Garland received a

²⁰ Spurlin, *Leuschner*, 3-4.

company from Dewitt County under Capt. C.P. Nanuheim. It became Company I on April 11, 1862.²¹

Even though the 6th Texas had a full contingent of recruits, the weapons and clothing of most of the companies proved far from satisfactory. The Lavaca Guards arrived in full uniform, attired in linen jeans with a narrow red stripe, blue flannel frock coats trimmed with red braid and blue caps with leather visors and the silver letters “LG” stitched on the crown of the cap. The Travis Rifles were the other best-dressed company at Nunner’s Mott. The women of the capital city had provided the Austinites with salt and pepper gray uniforms trimmed in green that created “quite a war-like appearance” according to Jim Turner. The men of the other eight companies arrived primarily dressed in whatever clothing they brought from home. The State of Texas eventually solved the problem of clothing when the legislature homogenously outfitted the troops in butternut, or light brown, uniforms sewn from cloth made at the State Penitentiary in Huntsville.²²

The weapons that the Texans brought with them varied even more than their uniforms. Most individuals carried their weapons from home, usually shotguns or old flintlock rifles that lacked any uniformity whatsoever. Company A arrived armed with percussion rifles while Company B came with Minnie rifles purchased by the county officials at Brownsville and loaned to the company. Other counties such as Matagorda and Guadalupe loaned the heads of the companies from those localities money to purchase weapons for their companies. Rhodes Fisher armed his Travis Rifles with flintlock rifles converted to percussion by an Austin gunsmith. Before they departed from Camp McCulloch, the state government provided the Rifles with new Springfield

²¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

²² *Ibid.*, 4-5.

percussion muskets. Later in the year several other companies in the regiment acquired Enfield Rifles, making them some of the best-armed Confederates in the Trans-Mississippi.²³

The drill that transformed the raw volunteer into a seasoned soldier commanded the first order of business in camp. Garland assigned each company in the regiment a location in the camp where its men erected tents and commenced drilling from one of the standard drill manuals of the day such as *Hardee's Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*. Its author, William J. Hardee, would one day become their corps commander in the Army of Tennessee. In the morning the companies worked on the company-level drilling in their camps, and in the afternoon they focused on battalion drills under the watchful eye of Col. Garland. Because of Garland's experience in the old United States Army the 6th Texas became one of the better drilled and disciplined regiments in Texas. William J. Oliphant of the Travis Rifles wrote that Garland was, "a perfect martinet and a very fine drill officer. . .," he, "kept us hard at work drilling until he converted the regiment into a regular machine which would move on the drill ground with clock-like precision."²⁴

Soon after the drilling began, several distractions punctuated the monotony of camp life. In December 1861 Confederate officials ordered four companies of the regiment, A, B, D and G, to Matagorda Island under Col. Garland. Capt. Daniel Shea, who commanded an artillery battery at Saluria, sighted a Federal vessel and called on Garland for reinforcements. Taking the four companies with him, Garland accompanied them to survey the situation. He ordered Lt. Col. Anderson to take the men and proceed to Indianola where they arrived about midnight. Garland dispatched Capt. Rupley and his

²³ *Ibid.*, 5.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

Company B to Saluria to guard the ferry across the main bayou. The feared attack never materialized, but the four companies of the 6th Texas under Anderson greatly enjoyed their time at Indianola, where they feasted on the abundant seafood available there. The detachment remained for nine days before returning to Camp McCulloch.²⁵

In February 1862 Garland dispatched companies A and D under Maj. Phillips to Fort Esparanza near Saluria as a second threat of Union incursion developed. Again, the threat never materialized, and the two companies returned to Nunner's Mott.²⁶ Aside from these small distractions Garland's regiment remained at Camp McCulloch through the beginning of March 1862, training and preparing for war.

About the same time that the first four companies of the 6th Texas began to drill on the prairie near Victoria, another regiment began to assemble near Marshall, Texas. In late January 1861 the Texas Secession Convention met at Austin to discuss the possibility of seceding from the Union. John Gregg, a lawyer from Fairfield, served as one of the delegates. An Alabaman by birth, Gregg had immigrated to Texas in 1854. The Texas Secession Convention chose the Alabama native as one of the representatives to the newly forming Confederate States of America at Montgomery, Alabama. Gregg traveled to Montgomery, where he obtained permission from newly appointed Secretary of War, Leroy Pope Walker, to raise a regiment of infantry for Confederate service. Gregg communicated his intentions to personal friends in Texas, including Jeremiah Clough of Marshall, who began to assemble the regiment in Gregg's absence. In September 1861 Gregg returned to Texas and began to gather ten companies of volunteers to Marshall. In

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

the first few days of October Gregg mustered the companies into Confederate service for a period of three years or the war.²⁷

Table 4: The 7th Texas Infantry²⁸

Company	Commander	County(ies)	Nickname
A	Captain Hiram Granbury	McLennan	The Waco Guards
B	Captain R.S. Camp	Upshur	
C	Captain Edward T. Broughton	Kaufman	
D	Captain Khleber Van Zandt	Harrison	The Bass Greys
E	Captain Jack Davis	Cherokee	
F	Captain William H. Smith	Smith	The Lone Star Rebels
G	Captain William L. Moody	Freestone	The Freestone Freemen
H	Captain William B. Hill	Harrison	The Texas Invincibles
I	Captain James W. Brown	Rusk	The Sabine Greys

Gregg organized his regiment and rushed it to the front with amazing speed. With only six companies ready at Marshall, Gregg received a dispatch from Secretary of War Walker, dated October 4, directing him to report with whatever companies he had available to Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston at Memphis. Gregg started out immediately with his six companies. Two days later the seventh company started out, and five days later the eighth and ninth companies began their journey.²⁹

²⁷ Khleber M. Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare: The Autobiography of K.M. Van Zandt*, (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1968), 78-79.

²⁸ There were originally ten companies but because the companies of S.T. Bridges and E.T. Broughton were both under-strength they were consolidated into one command that became Company C. On February 10, 1863 a tenth company, Company K, was organized from new recruits. However, on May 25, 1863, Company F was disbanded, again making it a nine company regiment. *Ibid.*, 79. Compiled Service Records of the 7th Texas Infantry, National Archives Series M323, Rolls 315-320.

²⁹ Gregg to Mackall, "Hopkinsville, Kentucky November 7, 1861" in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1882), Series I, Vol. 4, 524-525. (Hereafter referred to as the O.R.)

The first six companies started out from Marshall on October 10 and marched overland to Monroe, Louisiana. Thence they took the railroad to Vicksburg, Mississippi, before traveling by steamboat north to Memphis. There Gregg informed the garrison commandant of the presence of his companies despite their limited arms. At Memphis Gregg received instructions from Asst. Adj. Gen. W.W. Mackall to move immediately to Clarksville, Tennessee, northwest of Nashville. Gregg inquired as to whether or not he should take the men then available at Memphis or wait for the entire regiment. Mackall replied that he should proceed at once to Hopkinsville, Kentucky in support of Gen. Lloyd Tilghman. With these instructions Gregg and his Texans set out via railroad and steamboat. According to Gregg his men remained three whole nights in open cars and steamboats. Once they reached Clarksville incessant rain kept the entire regiment in wet clothes for several days.³⁰

The exposure and fatigue of their rapid journey induced sickness in many of the Texans. On November 7 Gregg sent a dispatch to Mackall stating, "Except for a number of sick men on the road our nine companies are all here. The number is 749. Five of our number died on the way. From exposure to cold and wet on our journey we have more coughs and colds than I ever saw among the same number of men."³¹

Along with illness, other impediments also hampered the Texans in Kentucky. Like that of the 6th Texas, the weaponry of the 7th Texas left much to be desired. In his dispatch to Mackall on November 7, Gregg enumerated in detail the pitiful armament of his nine companies. Van Zandt's company had thirteen double-barreled shotguns and sixteen rifles in good order. The men also had nine double-barreled shotguns and twenty-

³⁰ O.R. Series I, Vol. 4, 524-525; Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare*, 79.

³¹ O.R. Series I, Vol. 4, 525.

five rifles in disrepair. Hiram Granbury's Waco Guards had no firearms that they brought with them. W.B. Hill's company had nineteen double-barreled shotguns and eight rifles in good order. The company also had fourteen double-barreled shotguns and twenty rifles in disrepair. Smith's company possessed sixty-nine muskets without any other equipment. Apparently, the State of Louisiana had loaned these muskets to the State of Texas. Jack Davis' company had thirteen rifles in good order and three in disrepair. It also had fourteen double-barreled shotguns in good order and two that needed work. R.S. Camp's men had one musket, twenty-seven double-barreled shotguns and eleven rifles, all in good order. Camp's men also had thirty-one firearms that were left behind at Clarksville. E.T. Broughton's company possessed thirty-one muskets from Louisiana similar to Smith's men. William L. Moody's men could muster only three muskets, thirteen double-barreled shotguns, and twenty-six rifles along with twelve other firearms left at Clarksville. Finally John W. Brown's company found itself equipped with thirty-two rifles, twelve double-barreled shotguns, three Mississippi Rifles, and two Jaegers, a German-made rifle. All of the weapons left behind at Clarksville proved unfit for immediate use.³² It would take a lot of work before the 7th Texas became armed well enough to go into battle.

Despite these shortcomings, Gregg went ahead with organizing the regiment two days later, on November 9. The election of officers was the first order of business. The men elected John Gregg colonel of the regiment, Jeremiah Clough lieutenant colonel and Hiram Granbury of the Waco Guards major. Col. Gregg then appointed his staff from adjutant to sergeant major, after which the companies officially elected their officers and

³² O.R. Series I, Vol. 4, 525.

drew lots for their alphabetic designation within the regiment.³³ With the final organization the Texans made camp at Hopkinsville to wait out the winter. It would be a long winter indeed.

This began the war service of Hiram Bronson Granbury, the man destined to lead the Texas Brigade. Born in Copiah County, Mississippi on March 1, 1831 to Baptist minister Norvell Granberry and his wife Nancy (McLaurin) Granbury, Hiram spent his early years growing up in Copiah County and later Palestine, Mississippi. Throughout his formative years, Hiram's father remained one of the most important Baptist ministers in Mississippi, one of the leaders who broke with the National Baptist Convention over the issue of slavery. In 1845 Hiram entered Oakland College near Rodney, Mississippi, a Presbyterian school.³⁴ While at Oakland College, Hiram's professors and peers noted his natural leadership ability. Not only did Hiram possess a booming voice and commanding deportment, his height (6'5") also made him a natural leader. In 1850 Hiram graduated from Oakland College, the same year that both his parents died on consumption. In 1850 Hiram moved to Seguin, Texas, where he began working in construction, building cement houses. In Seguin for the first time he began to spell his name Granbury, instead of the Granberry used by his father. From this point on, Hiram Granberry became Hiram Granbury. Exactly why he changed the spelling of his name remains a mystery. In March, 1853 Granbury moved to Waco, Texas and began writing for the *Waco Era*, the first newspaper in Waco history. In this capacity his higher education served him well, further setting him apart as a leader. Granbury began to study law and passed the bar in 1856,

³³ Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare*, 80-81. Gregg's staff was as follows: Adjutant W.D. Douglas, Sergeant Major Thomas J. Beall, Commissary S.T. Bridges, Quartermaster William Bradford and Surgeon John L. Alston.

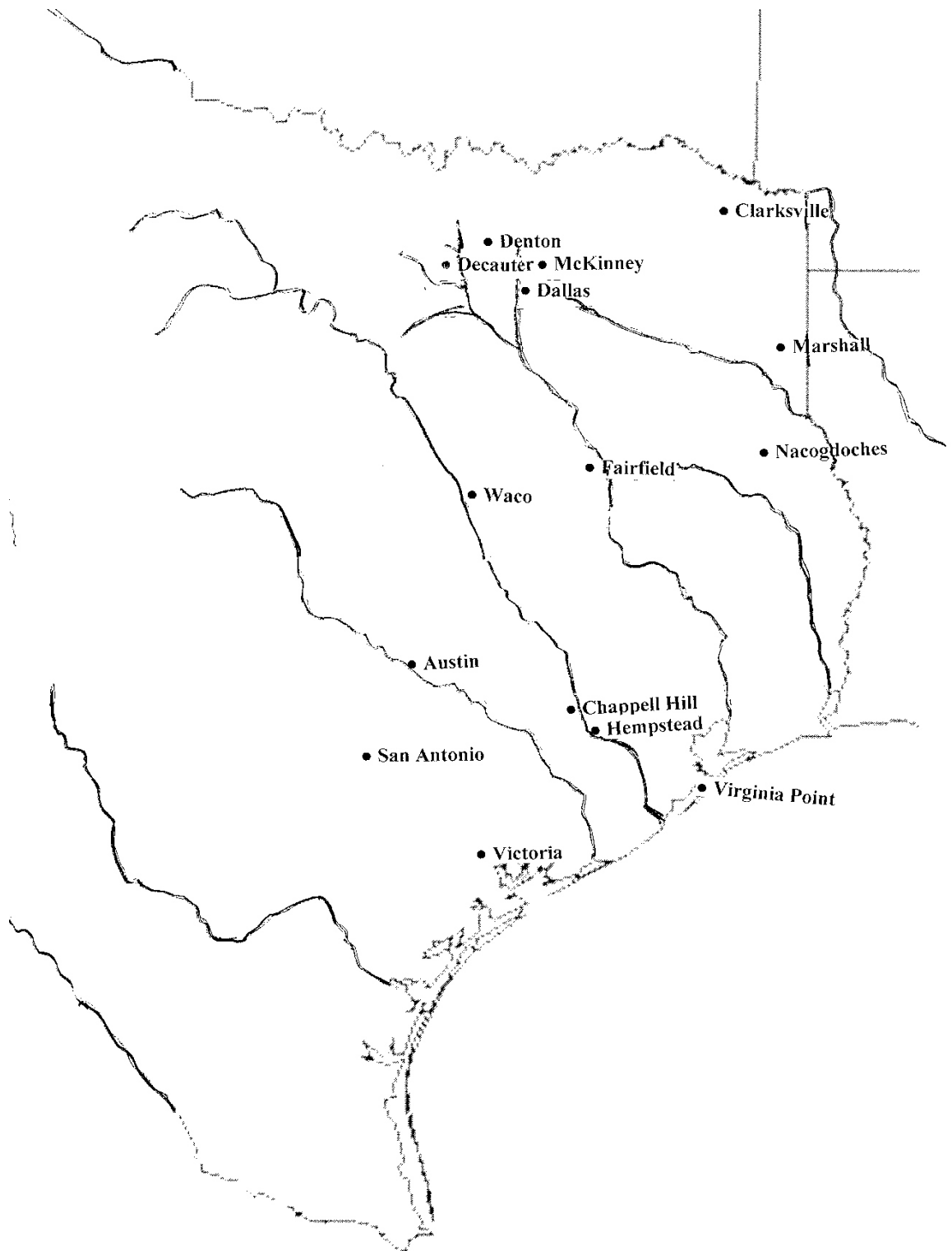
³⁴ Ironically, today Oakland College is known as Alcorn State University, an historically African American college.

beginning his legal practice in Waco. He was also elected Chief Justice of McLennan County, serving from 1856-1858. On March 31, 1858 twenty-seven year old Hiram Granbury married twenty year old Fannie Sims, a petite native of Alabama. By 1860 Granbury had amassed \$4,000 worth of property, including two slaves. Immediately after McLennan County voted for secession, Granbury began organizing the Waco Guards.³⁵

Another regiment of Texas infantry began to take shape in late 1861 and early 1862 under the guidance of a prominent Wacoan, Allison Nelson. Born in Fulton County, Georgia, Nelson had an active pre-Civil War career. After enlisting in the Georgia militia during the Mexican War, he went on to filibuster in Cuba and served as an officer in Gen. Francisco López's army in the early 1850s. When he returned to the United States, Nelson, an advocate of the expansion of slavery, took an active part in the struggle over "Bleeding Kansas" in 1854. The next year he returned to Atlanta, Georgia and entered politics. The voters elected him mayor of Atlanta and after only a short time in that office he opted to go west, to the Texas frontier.³⁶

³⁵ Rebecca Drake and Thomas Holder, *Lone Star General: Hiram B. Granbury*, (Raymond, Miss.: Drake Publishing, 2004); Ezra Warner, *Generals in Gray: Lives of the Confederate Commanders*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), 114.

³⁶ Mike Polston, "Allison Nelson: Atlanta Mayor, Texas Hero, Confederate General," *The Atlanta Historical Journal*, 29 no. 3: 19-25.



Nelson settled in Bosque County, northwest of Waco, serving for a brief time as the state of Texas's Indian agent. Joining the Texas Rangers, he took part in Lawrence S. "Sul" Ross's excursions against Indians on the Texas frontier. Nelson entered the legal profession and soon found it necessary to move his offices to Waco due to the size of his practice. Wacoans elected him to the Texas House of Representatives, and he took an active part in the secession of the state in 1861. Due to his advocacy of slavery, Nelson became a secessionist, and his constituents elected him to the secession convention where he voted with the majority to sever ties with the Union.³⁷

Always more interested in military affairs than in politics, Nelson applied to Gen. Paul Hebert, then commander of the Military District of Texas, for permission to raise a regiment of infantry for coastal defense. Nelson instructed the various volunteer companies to rendezvous at Galveston as soon as possible.³⁸ Thus began the nucleus of the 10th Texas Infantry.

In October Nelson organized his regiment. He began by enrolling eight volunteer companies of infantry, which he designated Companies A-H of the new regiment. Then, in late October, Nelson completed his organization by electing officers. The men elected Robert B. Young, a Georgia native and stock raiser from Bosque County, major, and Roger Q. Mills, a Corsicana politician, lieutenant colonel, while they chose Allison Nelson as colonel. On January 16, 1862 the Stockton Cavalry under Capt. John Formwalt arrived from Johnson County, and Nelson designated the men Company I. Twelve days later a company from Bosque and Coryell Counties under Capt. Byron Bassell arrived,

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 24.

³⁸ *Galveston Daily News*, October 17, 1861.

and Nelson designated them Company K, giving the 10th Texas Infantry its full complement of ten companies.³⁹

Table 5: The 10th Texas Infantry

Company	Commander	County(ies)	Nicknames
A	Captain John A. Kennard	Anderson	The Grimes Boys
B	Captain David Pendergast	Limestone	
C	Captain William Shannon	Johnson	The Rock Creek Guards
D	Captain William Wilson	Freestone	
E	Captain William McKamy	Harris	
F	Captain Semore Brasher	Harris	
G	Captain John Laudersdale	Galveston and Washington	The Labadie Rifles
H	Captain Bruce Hartgrave	Coryell	
I	Captain John Formwalt	Johnson	The Stockton Cavalry
K	Captain Byron Bassell	Bosque and Coryell	

While the original eight companies waited for the last two to arrive, military life commenced uneventfully on the Texas coast. Col. Nelson stationed his new regiment at Virginia Point, located on the mainland side of the West Bay in Galveston County at the west end of the old Galveston Causeway. In 1857 residents built a bridge from Virginia Point to Galveston Island and in 1861 locals fortified the point due to the blockade.⁴⁰ Everything continued quietly at the point until November 10 when the *U.S.S. Santee* appeared off the coast and fired a few shells in the direction of the Texas volunteers. Pvt. Benjamin M. Seaton of the Labadie Rifles reported that the men of the 10th Texas

³⁹Compiled Service Records of the 10th Texas Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 337-343; Harold B. Simpson, ed., *The Bugle Softly Blows: The Confederate Diary of Benjamin M. Seaton*, (Waco, Tex.: The Texian Press, 1965), ix. (Seaton was a member of Company G, the Labadie Rifles.)

⁴⁰ Simpson, *The Bugle Softly Blows*, 71.

received news of the war from the east, “almost every day,” so that they could follow operations in Virginia.

The day after the *Santee* appeared, Seaton reported that his company officers placed him on regimental guard duty for the first time. He didn’t seem to mind it much then, but by December 1 he reported that guard duty had become, “vary hard for one that is not used to it and confining.” Also while on guard duty a few days later he scribbled in his diary, “som excitement in camp about a fleet of Yankeys coming to take Galveston and we are expecting a battle to be fought her this month.”

Though the threat never materialized, martial discipline did, and the volunteers began to take the rough shape of soldiers. Seaton reported that they drilled six to eight hours a day. “We think,” Seaton wrote, “that it is very hard to do to be commanded by a set of white men to have the command of another one but never the less it is so.”⁴¹

As the drill and abnormality of being commanded by another white man took hold, so did sickness. Pvt. Elijah Hull of the Stockton Cavalry wrote to his parents that he had contracted a severe cold that settled in his breast and back. He wrote that more bad colds had developed in camp than he had ever seen before. Many of them could not get to sleep until ten or eleven at night because of the heaviness of the air. “This is the lowest place that ever was,” he concluded. In any event, Hull reported that some time would pass before he could return to guard duty. In December Pvt. Seaton also took sick and could not resume duty until January 25, 1862.⁴² The sickness in the low-lying area along the Texas coast claimed many men before they ever saw battle.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

⁴² Private Elijah Hull to his parents in Johnson County, Texas February 23, 1862 at <http://members.aol.com/SMckay1234/Letters/Hull.htm> (Accessed August 12, 2004); Simpson, *The Bugle Softly Blows*, 2.

Shortages and hardships also plagued the new soldiers. The new volunteers had received neither arms nor clothing as of late November 1861. Clothes proved particularly short for Pvt. Isaiah Harlan also of the Labadie Rifles. He wrote that someone stole his clothing on the way to Virginia Point, leaving him ill-clad. Though the commissary proved tardy in providing them with clothes, they did issue the men large tents apparently capable of holding up to half a dozen men. In the midst of these hardships, Confederate officials issued rations of fresh bread, beef and bacon with occasional coffee. After the U.S.S. *Santee* appeared, the amount of drilling increased. “We drill more than we did,” wrote Harlan, “a great deal more than we did.” This increased drilling did nothing to endear the enlisted men to their officers, whom they already disliked due to the strict discipline and lack of supplies.⁴³

In mid-February 1862 another scare gripped the city of Galveston. At that time six to eight blockading vessels lay off the coast of Galveston, and Benjamin Seaton reported that the local officials busied themselves transferring everything they could transport to Houston post-haste. Apparently the increased number of vessels spooked the local officials, who anticipated an invasion of the island. Again the invasion never materialized and the volunteers of the 10th Texas spent the remainder of February and the majority of March doing guard duty along the Texas coast.⁴⁴

In November 1861, as Allison Nelson organized his regiment, another prominent Texan, Middleton T. Johnson, received authority from the Confederate Department of War to raise a brigade of cavalry for twelve months’ service. Johnson sent out a call for

⁴³ Isaiah Harlan letters of November 10 and December 17, 1861 to his mother. Letters of Isaiah Harlan, (Vertical file of the 10th Texas Infantry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.)

⁴⁴ Simpson, *The Bugle Softly Blows*, 2-3.

volunteers, and community leaders raised fifty companies of cavalry in response. These fifty companies eventually became the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th Regiments of Texas Cavalry. George H. Sweet of San Antonio guided one of the first regiments to take shape, the 15th Texas Cavalry.⁴⁵

Sweet, a San Antonio politician before the war, proceeded to Dallas in late 1861 armed with his commission from Johnson to raise a regiment of cavalry. Johnson gave Sweet to believe that the state intended his regiment for service in the Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, and chose Dallas as his rendezvous point. From Dallas he sent out a call for volunteers. As his headquarters Sweet chose the fairgrounds southeast of Dallas, known as Fair Park. He instructed his volunteers to provide their own horses, weapons and equipments for service as “ranging companies.” Most of the companies for the new regiment arrived at the fair grounds in December, while some did not arrive until early 1862.⁴⁶

Table 6: The 15th Texas Cavalry⁴⁷

Co.	Commander	County(ies)	Nicknames
A	Captain William Bishop	Dallas, Bexar	
B	Captain George Pickett	Wise	The Wise Yankee Catchers
C	Captain George Masten	Dallas	
D	Captain A.J. Frizzell	Johnson	
E	Captain M.D. Kennedy	Tarrant	
F	Captain Benjamin Tyus	Limestone	
G	Captain G. Harker	Red River	
H	Captain William English	Hopkins	
I	Captain James Moore	Van Zandt	
K	Captain William Cathey	Johnson	

⁴⁵ Norman D. Brown ed., *One of Cleburne's Command: The Civil War Diary and Reminiscences of Captain Samuel T. Foster, Granbury's Texas Brigade C.S.A.*, (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1980), xxviii.

⁴⁶ Harold B. Simpson ed., *Texas in the War 1861-1865*, (Hillsboro, Tex.: Hill Junior College Press, 1965), 26, 116.

⁴⁷ Compiled Service Records of the 15th Texas Cavalry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 85-89.

In early January 1862 the new regiment elected officers. The men selected George Sweet, colonel; William Masten of Company C, lieutenant colonel; and George Pickett of the Wise Yankee Catchers, major. Before Sweet could complete the organization of his new regiment an outbreak of measles forced him to relocate the regiment to McKinney, north of Dallas. As the 15th Texas began to take shape the regiment relocated again, this time north to Camp McKnight near Clarksville. At Clarksville on April 1, 1862 Sweet officially mustered the 15th Texas Cavalry into Confederate service.⁴⁸

Life at Camp McKnight continued uneventfully for the Texan recruits amidst the adoring fanfare of the local citizenry. Rain often interrupted the routine, but when it stopped raining military drill ruled the day. Robert Collins reported that the officers varied the drill, with some company and some regimental maneuvers. In addition to this drilling, the soldiers received a dose of religion from the Reverend J.W.P. McKinzie, who preached patriotism in addition to Christianity. In early April the ladies of Clarksville ventured out the fifteen miles to Camp McKnight to present Company G with a flag. Miss Ida De Morse led the delegation and addressed the company before the presentation of the silk flag. Capt. A. Faulkner, commander of the company, replied, thanking the women for the flag.⁴⁹

While the 15th Texas lay encamped at Clarksville the other regiments of Johnson's Brigade began to arrive. When six regiments had arrived they held a review of the men, "And when these six regiments, six thousand in all, were strung out in line of

⁴⁸ Letter of William C. Young to his sister March 22, 1862 in the Letters and Diary of William C. Young, Vertical file of the 15th Texas Cavalry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.

⁴⁹ Collins, *Chapters*, 15-22.

battle on the prairie, it just appeared,” Robert Collins recalled, “. . .that we had men enough to whip the United States, with Canada and Mexico thrown in for good count, and we were really uneasy for fear the rebels would clean up the Yankees before we got a taste of the war. Us boys were all puffed up as to our numbers, and it was no uncommon thing to hear some of them in camps giving such commands as ‘Attention, World! By nations right wheel into line m-a-r-c-h!’” Collins observed that “At the beginning of the war young Texas in the saddle was regarded as a whole set put together in thirds, one-third man and bell spurs, one-third gun, pistol and knife, and one-third pony.”⁵⁰

The 17th Texas Cavalry under Col. George F. Moore became one of the regiments that marched into Camp McKnight in March, 1862. Moore, a prominent resident of Nacogdoches, decided to put out a call for volunteers for a regiment to serve in Johnson’s Brigade. From north and east Texas ten companies responded to the call. The regiment rendezvoused at Jamestown in March and elected its field officers. The men elected Moore colonel, Sterling Hendricks of Company C lieutenant colonel, and John McClarty of Company F major. Soon after their organization Col. Moore put his troopers on the road to Camp McKnight.⁵¹

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

⁵¹ The Compiled Service Records of the 17th Texas Cavalry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 93-96.

Table 7: The 17th Texas Cavalry

Company	Commander	County(ies)	Nicknames
A	Captain S.M. Noble	Nacogdoches	
B	Captain O.C. Taylor	Cherokee	
C	Captain William Thompson	Cherokee	
D	Captain Bryan Marsh	Smith	The Texas Mounted Volunteers
E	Captain T.F. Tucker	Harrison	
F	Captain J.G. McKnight	Harrison	
G	Captain J.J. Wynn	Rusk	
H	Captain William Simpson	Upshur	
I	Captain I.J. Watkins	Red River	
K	Captain Gil McKay	Harrison	The Clough Rangers ⁵²

Later in March Nicholas H. Darnell, a fire-eating member of the Texas House of Representatives, led yet another regiment into Camp McKnight. Darnell moved to Texas in the 1830s, where citizens elected him to the Texas House of Representatives. By 1842 he had risen to the post of Speaker of the House and in 1858 moved to Dallas while continuing to occupy his House seat. Darnell became a fire eater in the sectional crisis of the 1850s, and stressed to his constituents the inability of the federal government to defend the frontier against Indian attacks. He also stressed the expediency of using military force to leave the Union.⁵³ After Texas seceded, Darnell put out a call for volunteers, specifically a cavalry regiment, to rendezvous at Fair Park southeast of Dallas, the same place that George Sweet had assembled his regiment. In his call for volunteers, Darnell assumed that state officials would assign his regiment to frontier service. He passed on this impression to those commissioned to raise and organize the individual companies, but interestingly enough only a handful of the companies came

⁵² This company had learned of the death of Lieutenant Colonel Jeremiah Clough of the 7th Texas at Fort Donelson in February, and named their company after the slain officer.

⁵³ *Handbook of Texas Online*, s.v., <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/DD/fda16.html> (accessed March 15, 2007).

from areas affected by Indian depredations. Darnell soon detached an eleventh company under Capt. Wade Witt, never to rejoin the regiment. The men confirmed Darnell as colonel in the regimental elections; they chose John T. Coit of Company E lieutenant colonel and Charles C. Morgan major.⁵⁴

Table 8: The 18th Texas Cavalry

Company	Commander	County(ies)	Nicknames
A	Captain Hiram Childress	Johnson	
B	Captain Hiram Morgan	Bastrop	The Morgan Rangers
C	Captain Ed Crowder	Dallas	
D	Captain William Damron	Bell	
E	Captain John Coit	Dallas	
F	Captain R.W. Calhoun	Williamson	The Williamson County Blues
G	Captain Felix McKittrick	Denton	The Denton County Rebels
H	Captain F.L. Farrar	Ellis	
I	Captain Middleton Perry	Dallas	
K	Captain George Manion	Henderson, Anderson	

Only one company of Darnell's new regiment arrived at the rendezvous in any sort of uniforms. The Morgan Rangers caused quite a stir when they arrived at Fair Park dressed in, "yellow-grey tunic and pantaloons made of penitentiary 'jeans' with two rows of brass buttons down the front coat and a stripe down. . .the pantaloons." The men had these uniforms made from cloth acquired from the Lone Star Mill, and they presented a more war-like appearance than many of the other volunteers in the regiment.⁵⁵ Soon after the 18th Texas completed its organization it too headed for Camp McKnight near

⁵⁴ The Compiled Service Records of the 18th Texas Cavalry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 99-103.

⁵⁵ *The Dallas Herald*, January 22, 1862. The other regiments besides the 15th, 17th and 18th Texas Cavalry that were present at Camp McKnight were the 12th, 14th and 16th Texas Cavalry. However, these regiments did not become a part of Granbury's Brigade; Collins, *Chapters*, 22.

Clarksville. As Middleton Johnson reviewed and trained his men at Camp McKnight, he had no way of knowing that his brigade would soon be split up and ordered north.

In late 1861 a series of events occurred that resulted in the organization of the last two regiments to see service in Granbury's Brigade. At Soule University in Chappell Hill, a Methodist school in Washington County, the Reverend George Washington Carter hit upon the idea of raising a regiment of Texas lancers for service in the war. In May 1861 he resigned and secured permission from the Confederate War Department to issue a call for volunteers and appoint two other Methodist ministers, Frank C. Wilkes and Clayton C. Gillespie, lieutenant colonel and major respectively. Carter, Wilkes, and Gillespie issued a call "To the Chivalry of Texas!" from Chappell Hill on November 1, 1861, to enlist for cavalry service. They instructed the recruits to provide their own mounts and equipment and rendezvous at Chappell Hill.⁵⁶

Carter informed his potential recruits that the state would manufacture lances for them at Chappell Hill and that they should come to the rendezvous with the best horses they could procure. Carter also instructed the men to bring two suits of winter clothing, blankets, a bowie knife and the best firearms they could get, "if possible a double-barrel shot gun, and six shooter. . . .We call upon our friends," editorialized Carter, "and the friends of Southern independence throughout the State, to assist our men in arming and equipping themselves. . . .This will be the only Regiment of Lancers in the service, and Lancers are the most formidable cavalry in the world. We have chosen this arm at the

⁵⁶ These lancer regiments never actually used lances in battle. The only account of lances used in battle in the Civil War was at the Battle of Val Verde New Mexico in 1862; Dennis L. Potter, "Desperate Courage: An Account of the Texas Lancer Charge at the Battle of Val Verde, New Mexico," *Military History of the West*, 36 no. 1: 1-33.

earnest solicitation of Gen. Twiggs. The lance simply takes the place of the sword in a charge, and is much the most terrible weapon. Brave men of Texas, the South is invaded; everything dear to us as men is at stake; there will be nothing to live for if we are conquered; this is the grandest contest in the world; who will not be emulous of the privilege of taking a part in the glorious strife!" Soon after the issuance of this ringing call to arms, Carter authorized those raising the men to recruit enough companies for an entire brigade. He enlisted the recruits for three years or the war and instructed them to meet at Hempstead on April 1, 1862. Carter's efforts proved very successful, and thirty companies of cavalry assembled.⁵⁷

Governor Francis Lubbock caught wind of Carter's actions and complained bitterly to Confederate Secretary of War George W. Randolph. On March 15, 1862, Lubbock fired off an epistle to Randolph inquiring as to whether or not Carter had authorization from the War Department to expand his command to brigade size. He then went on to reiterate his difficulty in filling the state's quota of fifteen infantry regiments, and complained that endeavors such as Carter's made it even more difficult. "I cannot understand why," whined Lubbock, "individuals should be placed on a more favorable footing in the raising of men than the State authorities. If cavalry is wanted," he wrote, "I could fill your requisition in twenty days. . . . I am exerting every influence and power to comply with the requisition made upon me, and were I left untrammelled and permitted to act independently of gentlemen having roving commissions my efforts would be successful." On April 8, Randolph replied that the Confederates had issued no authority

⁵⁷ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, xxxviii-xl. General Twiggs is a reference to Major General David Twiggs, commander of the United State Military District of Texas before he surrendered his command and was commissioned by the Confederate government as a major general. It should be noted that perhaps the reason the call for lancers was so successful resulted from the fact that the Confederate Conscription Act of 1862 was to go into effect in April 1862. Many of these men signed up to escape conscription.

to Col. Carter, that the extra regiments remained an independent enterprise. Randolph went on to state that he had no power other than to discourage such undertakings by private individuals in the future.⁵⁸

With the companies already raised, Carter received permission to reorganize his recruits into three regiments; the First Texas Lancers (designated the 21st Texas Cavalry) under Carter, the Second Texas Lancers (24th Texas Cavalry) under Frank Wilkes, and the Third Texas Lancers (25th Texas Cavalry) under Clayton Gillespie. Carter assigned the commanders of the ten companies in each regiment their alphabetic designation by lot, and the regiments moved into a camp on Clear Creek a few miles southeast of Hempstead. They dubbed this encampment Camp Hebert in honor of Department of Texas commander Paul O. Hebert.⁵⁹ In the 24th Texas, the soldiers elected Frank Wilkes of Waco colonel, with Robert R. Neyland of Nacogdoches lieutenant colonel and Phillip Swearingen major.

Table 9: The 24th Texas Cavalry⁶⁰

Company	Commander	County(ies)	Nicknames
A	Captain Robert Poole	Austin, Brazos, Montgomery	
B	Captain S.A. Woolridge	Montgomery	
C	Captain William Taylor	Waller and Lampassas	
D	Captain Phillip H. Swearingen	Tyler, Angelina	
E	Captain John Morrison	Tyler, Angelina	
F	Captain Thomas W. Mitchell	Fort Bend	
G	Captain C.W. Bulloch	Smith, Jefferson	
H	Captain John Connor	Tyler, Angelina	
I	Captain Benjamin Fly	Fayette, Karnes	
K	Captain Henry Woods	Lavaca	

⁵⁸ O.R. Series 4, Vol. 1, 1001-1002 and 1050-1051.

⁵⁹ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, xl.

⁶⁰ Compiled Service Records of the 24th Texas Cavalry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 119-123.

Wilkes's sister regiment, the 25th Texas under Col. Clayton Gillespie, also came from east and south Texas. The lancers chose William Neyland lieutenant colonel of the new regiment and J.N. Dark, of Company B, major. On April 15, 1862, Gillespie and Wilkes mustered the 24th and 25th Texas into Confederate service.⁶¹

Table 10: The 25th Texas Cavalry

Company	Commander	County(ies)	Nicknames
A	Captain B.F. Ross	Tyler, Galveston	
B	Captain J.N. Dark	Liberty, Galveston	
C	Captain Davis Stovall	Goliad, Refugio, Victoria	
D	Captain J.P. Montgomery	Washington	
E	Captain William Daniel	Brazos	
F	Captain Enoch Pitts	Tyler	
G	Captain W.D. Davis	Liberty	
H	Captain Gilbert LaCour	Harris, Liberty	
I	Captain E.B. Pickett	Liberty	
K	Captain M.M. Singletary	Walker	

Camp Hebert provided a central location for the new Texas cavalry recruits. Pvt. J.P. Blessington of the 16th Texas Infantry, camped across the railroad tracks from Camp Hebert, visited the camp one day and recorded his impressions. "From this position," he recalled, "there was a magnificent view of the hills that gird the place, forming a sort of natural amphitheater; looking picturesque with their waving forests of trees, and innumerable white tents. . . ." Wandering through the camp, he noted the finery of the officers' tents and finally came to:

"The modest tents of the rank and file, arranged in streets. . . The men around these are collected in groups. . . wearing their bell-spurs, while around each waist is dangling a huge knife, made by some village blacksmith, giving them the appearance of warriors, apparently ready for any emergency. Some are playing cards, pitch and toss, or a thousand other games known only in the army; others

⁶¹ Compiled Service Records of the 25th Texas Cavalry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 126-130.

are dining, and grumbling at their rations, while dining, perhaps on turkey. The cooks are busy around a huge camp-kettle, placed on the fire, in which a joint of bacon and some peas are bubbling and bubbling around, as if they were patriotic enough to enjoy being eaten for the good of the soldier . . . This is the way the cavalry lived at 'Camp Hebert.'"⁶²

Despite the complaints of nearby infantrymen the new Texan cavalrymen settled into camp to attend to training and equipping themselves for war.

The initial organization of the regiments that became Granbury's Brigade demonstrated both the promise and the inherent weakness of devotion to the Confederacy among these men. Although the infantry regiments joined enthusiastically and early in the war, the cavalry regiments did not, and their reticence provided a harbinger of things to come. It is clear from the timeline of formation that most of the men in the cavalry regiments joined to avoid conscription. Other men like Robert Collins enlisted to avoid humiliation, a motivation that would only stand up only so long against the hardships and carnage of war.⁶³

The demographics also pointed toward future problems. The three infantry companies had a mean age of twenty-one and only eighteen percent had wives and families. In contrast, the five cavalry companies had a mean age of thirty-one, and fifty three percent had wives and families. Young, unattached men proved more likely to take idealism seriously and had much less to worry about at home than those who had families. In contrast, the cavalrymen averaged almost five years older than the infantrymen and more than half of them had families to worry about. It stands to reason

⁶² J.P. Blessington, *The Campaigns of Walker's Texas Division*, (New York: Lang, Little & Co., 1875), 21-23.

⁶³ Although the Confederate Congress did not pass the Conscription Act until April, 1862, Texans were aware of the possibility of a draft. A state draft was already in place, and according to some sources, Texans had been talking about a potential draft since late 1861. For a further discussion of the timing of the conscription act, see Francelle Pruitt, "We've Got to Fight or Die: Early Texas Reaction to the Confederate Draft, 1862," *The East Texas Historical Journal*, 36 no. 1, 3-17.

that the cavalrymen would desert willingly and quickly if they felt their families faced danger, or if the Confederate government stationed them too far from their homes. These factors pointed toward trends that on the one hand would produce dedicated soldiers and on the other would produce soldiers who had much more to worry about at home.

Chapter 2

Fort Donelson and Camp Douglas

The experiences of the 7th Texas Infantry in the Fort Donelson Campaign demonstrated the strength of dedication to the Confederacy among the soldiers that later became Granbury's Brigade. Unlike other regiments that later became a part of the brigade, the 7th Texas acquitted themselves well in their first major campaign, and provided an indication of their steadfastness that would later add so much to Granbury's Brigade and the Confederate war effort.

The struggle over Fort Donelson marked the first real campaign for any of the regiments that would one day become Granbury's Brigade. Only one of them, 7th Texas Infantry, hastily thrown together and rushed to the front, took part in this first great campaign of the Western Theater. The fall of Donelson and her sister stronghold, Fort Henry, in February 1862 marked a significant turning point in the war in the West. In fact, some historians regard the capture of Forts Henry and Donelson as the episode where the South lost the Civil War.¹

As constructed, Fort Donelson was a low, earthen embankment on the Cumberland River in Tennessee south of the Kentucky state line; Confederate engineers built Fort Henry as a similar structure scarcely a day's march to the west on the Tennessee River. In early 1862 Forts Henry and Donelson remained ill-prepared for a Federal campaign against them. Unfortunately for the Confederacy, they also occupied the most crucial points necessary to a defense of Tennessee up the main waterways from

¹ For a good analysis of the reasoning of these historians see Kendall D. Gott, *Where the South Lost the War: An Analysis of the Fort Henry-Fort Donelson Campaign, February 1862*, (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 2003)

Kentucky. Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk, initially placed in charge of constructing Tennessee's defenses, largely ignored these important fortifications in lieu of building strong defenses along the Mississippi River. Polk served only as temporary commander of the forces in Tennessee pending the arrival of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston, but he did more than enough damage in the interim.²

When Johnston finally arrived in late 1861 he immediately set about constructing a line of defense across southern Kentucky and northwestern Tennessee. Henry and Donelson anchored this line, even though they remained inadequate. Such was the situation when the 7th Texas arrived in November.

Johnston initially assigned Gregg's regiment to Gen. John B. Floyd's brigade. As soon as the regiment completed its organization it began drilling at Camp Alcorn near Hopkinsville in central Kentucky. Floyd assigned the Texans a drill instructor named David Hirsch, a recent immigrant from Prussia. Gregg chose Capt. Khebler Van Zandt as the second drill instructor. Hirsch, though trained as a soldier of the old school, succeeded in embarrassing himself several times in front of the Texans. Sink holes pock marked the ground in Kentucky over which the new infantrymen drilled. One day as Hirsch galloped back and forth, Capt. Van Zandt lost sight of him. "The boys, with a look of astonishment on their faces, were pointing in one direction. In a moment," recalled Van Zandt, "a horse came scrambling out of a large sinkhole. Close behind the horse came the rider, unhurt but much crestfallen. When the boys realized that Mr. Hirsch was not hurt, they all started laughing. He turned to me and said, 'You are all dismissed for

² Thomas L. Connelly, *Army of the Heartland: The Army of Tennessee 1861-1862*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 52.

the day.’”³ Despite this accident, Hirsch and Van Zandt succeeded in beginning to mold the Texans into soldiers on the plains of Kentucky.

Sickness served as the main enemy of the 7th Texas in these first few months. Measles, in particular, took their toll, “with accompanying lung and bowel troubles.” Soon after arriving, the Texans made a forced march from Hopkinsville to Princeton and back during which they experienced cold rain and slept out without any tents or food, equipped only with damp blankets. After this march the measles appeared in their ranks for the first time. This illness claimed the lives of a great many of the Texans. Lt. Col. Clough wrote that more than one hundred and thirty members of the regiment died of disease in the first few months, “a dreadful and almost unaccountable mortality.” Clough explained that “from the beginning without agency of anyone, our men started from home predisposed to disease, that from a combination of unfortunate circumstances that could and should have been controlled, they arrived here well prepared to take all the diseases which hover over an army and to contract them with little prospect of getting well.” Clough complained that the men took no care of themselves in camp. “They lie down with impunity on wet blankets and damp straw. They eat their food half-cooked. They are careless and unconcerned about the cleanliness of their persons or their clothing—they are irregular about their sleep and in fact wholly and injudiciously ignore all the sanitary and wholesome laws which in their comfortable houses they would not have dared to disregard.” By late January the sick outnumbered the well and the hospitals overflowed with the first casualties of war.⁴

³ Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare*, 81-82.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 83-85. In actuality 153 members of the 7th Texas died of disease from November to February.

Soon the measles were not the only enemy the Texans had to grapple with. In late January, Brig. Gen. U.S. Grant assembled a column of infantry and a fleet of ironclads at Cairo, Illinois, to move against Henry and Donelson. Grant made his first move against Fort Henry. On February 4 the ironclads appeared opposite Henry and began shelling the Confederate fortification that was already partially submerged due to poor construction. Two days later the Confederate commander, Brig. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman, surrendered the fort. In ironic witness to the fort's poor engineering, the Federal party accepting the surrender rowed past the outer wall of the fort, which was submerged beneath the Tennessee River. Tilghman sent all but eighty men of his command overland east toward Fort Donelson while he remained to surrender the fort. With the capture of Fort Henry, Grant opened the Tennessee River all the way into the interior of Alabama.⁵

The attack on Fort Henry caught Johnston unawares. Since October he had concentrated on one thing—the Federal army of Don Carlos Buell along the Green River in central Kentucky. Johnston became convinced that any movement against his line would come from Buell. The fall of Fort Henry changed his calculations.

Johnston ordered Brig. Gen. Gideon Pillow at Clarksville, north of Fort Donelson, to gather all available forces at the fort. He also ordered Simon Buckner and John Floyd to Donelson with their brigades. Johnston then turned his attention to evacuating his remaining forces from Kentucky, leaving Floyd in command of Fort Donelson. On February 8 Johnston sent Floyd a note stating, “I cannot give you specific instructions and place under your command the entire force.”⁶

⁵ Connelly, *Army of the Heartland*, 106-108.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 109-112.

In the first week of February, Col. Gregg led his men south toward Fort Donelson. The Texans marched overland to Clarksville where they boarded boats bound for Dover, a small hamlet within the fortifications of Donelson. The Confederates transported all the sick who could move south from Hopkinsville to Clarksville. Many Texans who could not continue remained behind in the homes of patriotic citizens in Clarksville.⁷ After they disembarked at Dover, Gregg led his regiment on a lengthy march to their camp near Fort Donelson, where they arrived on the morning of Tuesday, February 11. Floyd assigned the Texans a position in the center of the Confederate left wing, overlooking a branch of Indian Creek, as part of Brig. Gen. Charles Clark's Brigade, temporarily under the command of Col. T.J. Davidson. They began digging in the next day. The entrenchments at Fort Donelson formed a rough semi-circle protecting the land side of the fort. "They consisted," as one Confederate officer reported, "of small saplings, with which that country abounds, thrown lengthwise along the outside margin of ditches, dug some 5 feet wide and 2 feet deep, the dirt having been thrown upon the saplings, and giving us a protection of about 5 feet."⁸ Without proper entrenching tools the Texans clawed at the earth, trying desperately to erect adequate defenses.

The Confederate situation at Donelson remained critical, due to the fact that the two officers whom Johnston had left at the fort proved incompetent.⁹ To try to head off the advance toward Donelson Johnston ordered Gideon Pillow to take his brigade out and

⁷ Captain Van Zandt recounted the story of two privates in his company, Johnny Cave and Thomas Jennings, who were left behind at Clarksville due to illness. As soon as the 7th Texas reached their encampment the two reappeared, stating that they did not want to miss the fighting that was obviously imminent. During the battle for Donelson on February 15 both of them were killed in action. Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare*, 86.

⁸ O.R. Series I, Vol. 7, 407.

⁹ Gideon Pillow's prior claim to fame was that during the Mexican War he at one time commanded his troops to build their breastworks backward, leaving them open to bayonet charges by the Mexican troops. John B. Floyd served as Secretary of War under President Franklin Buchanan and was accused of having misappropriated \$870,000. The charges were later dropped for lack of evidence.

strike the Union column in flank. Pillow moved slowly and then refused to carry through with the idea altogether. John Floyd, overall commander of the troops in the area, had no idea what Johnston wanted him to do. Floyd, a relative newcomer to the area, leaned wholly on his subordinates. These vacillating performances doomed Donelson from the outset.

Grant's forces appeared opposite the fort on February 13. As the Federal infantry moved into place, gunboats demonstrated in the river to attract the attention of the Confederate garrison. The next day a fierce duel ensued between the gunboats and the shore batteries in which Confederate cannon severely damaged some of the vessels. Meanwhile, the Confederate infantry remained idle. Because Floyd focused on the gunboats, he never attempted to keep a route of escape open for the 21,000 Confederates of the garrison. The Federals began shelling the position of Gregg's regiment at 9 a.m. on February 13 and continued until 4 p.m. In this bombardment the first battle casualties of the regiment occurred with the death of Lt. E.B. Rosson of Company A and the wounding of Pvt. Thomas Jordan of Company G.¹⁰ After two days of inaction, Floyd received a telegram from Johnston instructing him to evacuate the fort if "untenable." Suddenly Floyd realized that Fort Donelson had become a trap and that he should evacuate. On the evening of February 14 he called a council of war and decided to try to break out the next day, down the Wynn's Ferry Road toward Nashville.¹¹ Ignorance of Grant's dispositions and the weather, which had suddenly turned bitterly cold, hampered the Confederate movements.

¹⁰ O.R. Series I, Vol. 7, 376.

¹¹ Connelly, *Army of the Heartland*, 120-121.

Floyd scheduled the assault on the Union right for dawn, February 15. The plan called for Davidson's Brigade, including the 7th Texas, to march from the center to the far left and spearhead the assault. If they succeeded, Davidson's men would pivot and force the Federals back across the Wynn's Ferry Road to open up a route of escape. Shortly after midnight Gregg put his men on the move south to join Floyd's Brigade to coordinate their attack. The dark night contrasted sharply with the white, swirling snow as the Texans marched toward their first real battle of the war. Davidson's men reached their positions before dawn and formed their line barely a quarter-mile in front of Col. Richard Ogelsby's brigade of John McClelland's division.¹²

As dawn broke, Gregg ordered his regiment to right-face toward the hill to their front where Ogelsby's Federals waited. With the early-morning mists rising off the snow-covered ground the Texans rushed up the hill into the face of the defenders' fire. Just before they reached the crest of the hill, the fire increased, causing many casualties among the Texans. As they rushed forward Lt. Col. Jeremiah Clough shouted, "Look ahead men, never look back. Our mothers, our wives, and our sisters are behind us and our enemies are in front of us." As he uttered these words a ball struck Clough in the head, killing him instantly, and he fell from his mount onto the frozen ground. Lt. Arch Adams rushed over to the body amidst a hail of bullets and secured Clough's watch, memorandum book and purse. Federal fire also killed Capt. William B. Hill of Company H and Lt. J.W. Nowlin of Company A just below the crest of the hill along with several other Texans. After half an hour, the 8th Illinois Infantry, directly in front of the Texans, fell back.¹³

¹² O.R. Series I, Vol. 7, 376.

¹³ Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare*, 89; O.R. Series I, Vol. 7, 376.

Gregg continued the pursuit and broke a second line, capturing a six-pound cannon complete with ammunition and horses. The Texans kept going until they spotted a third line drawn up in a clearing. This, too they routed, inflicting many casualties on the enemy in the pursuit. In the confusion Pvt. George Blaine of Company G brought in Maj. John P. Post of the 8th Illinois, whom he had captured. Gregg reported that the fighting left twenty Texans killed on the field and thirty-four more disabled with wounds. Nevertheless, with the unexpected success of the Confederate assault, the Wynn's Ferry Road lay open.¹⁴

At this critical moment Gideon Pillow ordered his men to retreat to their entrenchments. Brig. Gen. Simon Buckner, third in command of the garrison, protested vehemently. Buckner rode off to find Floyd, who refused to do anything before he conferred with Pillow. Floyd made the mistake of listening to his second-in-command and ordered the troops back to their previous positions. Grant quickly repaired the holes in his line and re-encircled the garrison.¹⁵

That night Floyd held a conference of his subordinates at the Dover Hotel. There, they decided to surrender the garrison. Floyd abdicated responsibility, stating that the old charges of corruption brought against him when he had served as U.S. Secretary of War would make it even harder for him as a prisoner. Pillow declared that he too did not want to be the first Confederate general fall into Federal hands. Floyd and Pillow both opted to escape. Only Buckner remained willing to stay and officially surrender the garrison.

¹⁴ O.R. Series I, Vol. 7, 376. According to the Compiled Service Records of the 7th Texas 19 were killed on the field, closely coinciding with the number given by Gregg. However, only 21 are listed as wounded. The remaining 13 wounded were most likely only slightly wounded, not badly enough to permanently disable them. The Compiled Service Records of the 7th Texas Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 315-320.

¹⁵ Pillow's odd decision to order his men back to their entrenchments has never been fully explained. However, considering his previous undistinguished military record, to say the least, it is not all that surprising.

Numerous others escaped the trap, including Nathan Bedford Forrest, who with his entire command rode through the icy waters of a backwater of the Cumberland, and Capt. Jack Davis, of Company E, 7th Texas, who got away on in a flat boat.¹⁶

In the early morning hours of February 16 Buckner surrendered Fort Donelson and its remaining 15,000-man garrison. In the surrender 379 members of the 7th Texas were captured, including Col. Gregg and Maj. Granbury. Capt. Van Zandt, Lieut. Col. Clough's brother-in-law, realized that the Federals would ship them north to prison camps, and he wanted to see to a proper burial for Clough. Maj. Granbury, whose wife Fannie remained at Clarksville, also wanted to see to her proper disposition before he departed. Therefore Van Zandt and Granbury went together to seek out help and found Col. John A. Rawlins of Grant's staff, who advised them to petition Grant regarding their circumstances. The two Texans did so and Grant allowed Clough's body, accompanied by Granbury, to go to Clarksville under a special guard. Granbury saw to his wife, delivered Clough's body to friends in Clarksville who interred him, and returned to the regiment at Fort Donelson.¹⁷

Grant shipped the 15,000 prisoners from Fort Donelson north to prisoner of war camps, primarily Camp Douglas in Chicago. Illinois officials had originally established Camp Douglas, a sixty-acre tract of land in the middle of Chicago, for the training of Illinois state militia troops in 1861. The camp received its name because the land originally belonged to Senator Stephen A. Douglas, the "Little Giant," who had taken such a prominent role in the politics that led up to the Civil War. The eastern edge of the camp ran along Cottage Grove, and its southern side bordered on the University of

¹⁶ O.R. Series I, Vol. 7, 407.

¹⁷ Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare*, 90-91.

Chicago. With the surrender of Fort Donelson, the United States government needed a place to house the prisoners and appropriated Camp Douglas. The first of the prisoners arrived in Chicago in the third week of February, 1862 to begin what would become a very long and for many a very lethal winter.¹⁸

The facilities at Camp Douglas had become abysmal to say the least. Long rows of shacks housed the thousands of prisoners. Shelter proved scarce, and sanitary conditions remained terrible throughout the winter. The guards did not allow the prisoners to pass beyond a marked line around the edge of the stockade. The men called this line the dead line, because the guards would shoot any man who crossed it. The massive numbers of prisoners from Donelson also created overcrowded conditions that added to the misery.

After only a few days, Federal officials separated the officers of the 7th Texas from the enlisted men and shipped the former to Camp Chase, Ohio, west of Columbus. They arrived at Camp Chase on February 27, 1862, and remained there for about six weeks. Again at Camp Chase the conditions proved overcrowded. Ohio Gov. David Tod issued an executive order liberating the Negro servants the Texan officers had brought with them from home.¹⁹

Federal authorities forwarded the field-grade officers from Fort Donelson on to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor. Col. Gregg and Maj. Granbury found themselves among this number. John Gregg's wife Mary arranged transportation home after the surrender of Donelson, but Hiram Granbury's wife Fannie opted to accompany her husband to Boston.

¹⁸ Mark M. Boatner, *The Civil War Dictionary*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1959), 117; George Levy, *To Die in Chicago: Confederate Prisoners at Camp Douglas 1862-1865*, (Gretna, La.: Pelican Press, 1999), 31.

¹⁹ Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare*, 92.

Gregg, Granbury, and Fannie boarded the train in Chicago for their journey to Massachusetts. At noon on March 4 the prisoners departed for Boston. That night they passed through Cleveland and reached Buffalo, New York, early the next morning. In New York the snow lay thick on the ground, presenting a dreary appearance for the Confederates. "We found crowds of Yankee people full of their kind of curiosity, at every town," Gregg wrote. "They gave us the hard and half-cooked meat and rye-o-coffee, which the government deals out to rebel, in care. Hard words were to be heard at all our receptions; but there were many everywhere, who seemed disposed to argue 'the question' with us, and talked kindly enough."²⁰

The officers reached Albany late in the afternoon and crossed the Hudson on the ice. Col. Randall McGavock, one of the officers traveling with the party, remembered that "Maj. Granberry [sic] of Texas had his wife with him, a small and delicate woman, but she waded through the shock on the ice like a heroine, and seemed determined to cling to the fortunes of her husband." The officers reached Boston about 2 a.m. on March 6 and waited for six hours before being escorted to Boston Harbor. At the wharf the guards loaded them into the *Charles Fremont* and took them out to Fort Warren, on an island in the middle of the harbor. At the dock Hiram Granbury and his wife parted when the guards would not allow her to accompany him to the fort. Gregg and Granbury found Fort Warren a pentagonal-shaped brick edifice on George's Island, a twenty-eight-acre spit of land near the entrance to the harbor. The guards placed Gen. Lloyd Tilghman, Col. Heiman, Gregg, and Lt. Col. Jackson in the same room. They furnished the quarters at Fort Warren with iron cots with mattresses and blankets. An anthracite fire in the stove

²⁰ Gregg to William L. Moody in Rebecca Blackwell Drake and Thomas D. Holder, *Lone Star General: Hiram B. Granbury*, (Raymond, Miss.: Drake Publishing, 2004), 26.

kept them very warm. Sickness also affected the officers at Fort Warren, though in a different way. On April 22, Gregg wrote Capt. Moody that Granbury had become badly afflicted with jaundice and, “was moving about quite badly,” but that he was getting better “I think.” Due to a cold he had contracted, Gregg himself suffered from an attack of bilious fever.²¹

The Federals placed Granbury in a room at Fort Warren with Dr. Charles MacGill, a physician from Hagerstown, Maryland, imprisoned for remaining a Southern sympathizer. MacGill befriended Granbury and offered to let Fannie to stay at his home in Hagerstown until she could proceed farther south. Granbury accepted and Fannie proceeded to Maryland. While at Fort Warren, Granbury wrote to Capt. William L. Moody in late March that only a want of postage stamps and envelopes had prevented him from writing sooner. “We spend an hour of every day (Sundays excepted) playing football and pitching quoit. These are our principal outdoor activities. Chess, cards and whiskey occasionally vary the monotony of our indoor life, and upon the whole we get along as well as would be expected under the circumstances.” Though in prison, life at Fort Warren proved better than at Camp Douglas for the Confederate officers.²²

On April 9, 1862, the authorities separated out a group of one hundred officers, including Capt. Van Zandt, and took them to Johnson’s Island in Lake Erie near Sanduski, Ohio. The conditions at Johnson’s Island, a prison almost exclusively reserved for officers, proved not nearly as severe as those at Camp Douglas or Chase. They quartered the officers ten to a room and the rebels spent most of their time outdoors. Many of the prisoners had small knives and spent their time carving trinkets out of small

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Drake, *Lone Star General.*, 26; Lonnie Speer, *Portals to Hell: Military Prisons of the Civil War*, (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1997)

pieces of bone and rubber buttons. The guards also allowed them to swim occasionally in Lake Erie.²³ It indeed seemed an idyllic life compared to the hell endured by the enlisted men at Camp Douglas.

Conditions at Camp Douglas only worsened as the winter dragged on. The cold northern winds took a heavy toll on the health of the men in the 7th Texas. Sixty-two enlisted men of the regiment perished from illness in the harsh Illinois winter while a handful more escaped from prison never to rejoin the regiment.²⁴ Finally in July 1862 Federal authorities organized a prisoner exchange, known as the Dix-Hill Cartel, for the officers at Johnson's Island and many of the enlisted men at Camp Douglas.

In the west the terms of the Dix-Hill Cartel called for an exchange of the Confederate prisoners at Vicksburg, Mississippi. They put both the officers at Johnson's Island and the enlisted men at Camp Douglas aboard trains and transported them to Cairo, Illinois. At Cairo guards placed them aboard boats bound for Vicksburg. At Vicksburg from September 12-14, 1862 approximately 1,300 officers and 2,600 enlisted men received exchanges.²⁵ The Federals exchanged all the members of the 7th Texas captured at Fort Donelson, and the Confederates began to reform their regiment at Port Hudson, Louisiana.

The experiences of the 7th Texas at Fort Donelson indicated early devotion to the Confederacy among the Texan infantry. Despite an uncertain future, they stayed with their regiment and accepted capture and imprisonment. Disease, though, took its toll, and decimated the regiment. The Fort Donelson fiasco also highlighted a constant theme,

²³ Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare*, 93-94.

²⁴ Compiled Service Records of the 7th Texas Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 315-320.

²⁵ O.R. Series II, Vol. 4, 265-268.

inept Confederate leadership, which tried the spirits of even those most devoted to the war effort, but with regard to the 7th Texas, Fort Donelson and the prison experience that followed highlighted one the most promising strengths of the Confederacy in the determination and endurance of many of its common soldiers.

Chapter 3

Sojourn in Arkansas

Even in the early stages of the war for the Texan regiments, local circumstances in Arkansas served to demoralize them to the point that desertion became epidemic. The dismounting of the cavalry regiments and the boredom of camp life put the patriotism of these Texans to the test, and found many of them lacking. During the sojourn in Arkansas, the desertion that would plague these regiments for most of the war began to take hold and cripple the Confederate war effort. This desertion, though it did not completely erase the effectiveness of these regiments to the Confederate war effort, certainly damaged it beyond repair. Perhaps more than anything, the events in Arkansas demonstrated the preeminence of local circumstances that would dominate the history of Granbury's Brigade.

The fall of Forts Henry and Donelson greatly changed the complexion of the war in the West. The Confederate heartland now lay open all the way into northern Alabama where the Tennessee River remained undefended. Albert Sidney Johnston abandoned Nashville after Donelson and retreated southward to Corinth, Mississippi, where he hoped to marshal enough forces for a counterstroke against Grant. In the meantime Richmond scrambled to find more troops to bolster the front lines.

On February 24, Secretary of War Judah Benjamin wired Brig. Gen. Hebert at Galveston to impress upon him the dire nature of the situation. Davis and Benjamin considered an imminent invasion of the Texas coast improbable, and therefore ordered Hebert to forward all units not needed for coastal defense to Arkansas. Benjamin ordered

the Texas regiments to Little Rock, to report to Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn, commander of Confederate forces in Arkansas. The “men,” concluded Benjamin, “are to be pushed forward with all possible rapidity to Little Rock by such route as you deem best.”¹

Hebert instructed both the 6th Texas and 10th Texas to proceed immediately to Arkansas. In early March he instructed Col. Garland to move his regiment as soon as it reached the full complement of companies. By May 22 Garland had his regiment ready to move, and the companies of the 6th Texas formed into marching columns to head off to war. After departing Victoria the regiment passed through Hallettsville and reached Eagle Lake after eight days of marching. At Eagle Lake Garland left his supply wagons behind and boarded his infantrymen on trains headed to Richmond and Houston.²

A disturbing incident involving larceny engaged the attention of the regiment during a stop at Navasota. One of the members of Company I stole a revolver belonging to his captain, C.F. Naunheim. The thief attempted to sell the revolver the same day he stole it and authorities apprehended him. Garland assembled a court martial which tried and convicted the man. The regiment then drummed him out of the service, and two African American men paraded him through the streets with his head half-shaved riding a fence rail.³

Garland’s men continued on through east Texas before crossing into Arkansas and receiving their regimental colors. The Texans remained three days at Navasota before marching toward Tyler via Rusk. Garland kept his men at Tyler for a week before they resumed their march. In mid-July the regiment had crossed the Red River at Texarkana and moved into Arkansas. By that time the regimental banner had caught up with them. A

¹ O.R. Series I, Vol. 9, 700.

² Spurlin, *Leuschner*, 7.

³ *Ibid.*

Mrs. Owens from Victoria had sewn the flag of red merino with a white silk fringe. In the center of the red field was a 28" by 36" blue shield with twelve white silk stars in a circle around a large white star representing Texas. She had stitched the letters "Sixth Texas Infantry Regiment," in white on the red flag.⁴

The piney woods of east Texas and southern Arkansas offered inhospitable terrain to the soldiers of the 6th Texas. "I like the people much better than I do the country," wrote Capt. William Phillips of Company A. "The latter is too broken and sandy, and not enough of prairie." Pvt. Franz Coller of Company H added, "Day after day we march in the woods and God only knows if we will ever come out again. I have never seen such a poor region as we see out here in east Texas and Arkansas." Pvt. Benjamin Robertson came away unimpressed with either the terrain or people of Arkansas. "A person cannot form any idea until they travel through the piney wood and rural district [of Arkansas] as I have seen one thousand women I think and I have not seen one that would wear less than a number eight pair of shoes."⁵

Garland's men moved through Washington and Antwine before reaching Rockport. There an outbreak of measles incapacitated many in the regiment before Garland elected to press on to Camp Holmes, ten miles from Pine Bluff. They stopped at Camp Holmes for several weeks to allow those left at Rockport to rejoin the regiment.⁶ Thus by the middle of summer the men of the 6th Texas found themselves sweltering in the unappealing countryside of central Arkansas.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

On March 23, Allison Nelson received orders from Hebert to move the 10th Texas to Little Rock. Nelson did not have his regiment ready to move until April 17. On that day the Texas infantrymen fell into line and began their march north. For the next two days the regiment marched first through Booneville and then Wheelock before making camp five miles beyond the latter place. By Wednesday April 23 Nelson had reached Tehuacana where he received orders to march through Alexandria, Louisiana, rather than through Dallas. The next day a great many ladies came out to visit the Texans' camp and encourage the soldiers on their way. By May 7 the regiment had passed through Rusk, and Nelson received orders again to change his route of march through Shreveport. On May 12 they passed through Elysian Fields and crossed the Sabine River into Louisiana the next day. On the fourteenth they reached Shreveport and laid up ten days' provisions before continuing due north for the Arkansas line. Three days later the regiment crossed into Arkansas, and by June 6 had reached Camp Texas and camped near a spring atop a ridge. On June 8 Nelson held an inspection of the regiment's equipment to see how it had passed the march, and the next day the Texans resumed the manual of drill. While here rumors circulated through the camp that the Federals had taken Memphis, the Texans continued feeling anxious for news from Corinth, Mississippi, where Henry W. Halleck and his Union army bore down on the town.⁷

Meanwhile Union Gen. Samuel Curtis initiated a Federal threat closer to home. With his offensive stalled in northwest Arkansas, Curtis called on Secretary of War Edwin Stanton to engage the navy in his aide. Stanton ordered several gunboats to enter

⁷ Harold B. Simpson, *The Bugle Softly Blows*, 3-10.

and move up the White River in order to position themselves to assist and resupply Curtis.⁸

Soon after reaching Camp Texas Col. Nelson received orders to move his regiment north to Devall's Bluff, on the White River, to counter the Federal threat. On June 11 the regiment again took up the march and passed through Little Rock the next day. On June 17 the Texans reached Devall's Bluff and made camp. On the night of the eighteenth Nelson received orders to have his men ready the next morning to intercept the Union gunboats. The enemy failed to appear the next day and Nelson ordered his men to sleep on their arms. Finally on the twentieth the Federals made their appearance and the Texans gave them a warm reception, killing several of the sailors and pilots. The gunboats soon turned around and headed back upriver. This skirmish served as an introduction to combat for the men of the 10th Texas. For the last ten days of June the Texans remained in camp amid swirling rumors of Union threats that never materialized.

Even though the 10th Texas had barely left home and seen little combat, the regiment already showed signs of attrition. In a regimental muster dated June 30 it could count only 802 effectives with the size of the companies varying widely from sixty present in Company K to 104 in Company E. Thirty members of the regiment had died from disease in Arkansas while the other hundred and fifty received discharges due to illness and disability, or simply deserted.⁹ Even in the infantry regiments dissatisfaction began to manifest itself early in the war in the form of desertion. The sources of dissatisfaction varied, from the poor Arkansas country to the first experiences of combat,

⁸ James M. McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes: Granbury's Texas Brigade, C.S.A.*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1996), 11.

⁹ Compiled Service Records of the 10th Texas Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 337-343.

but it became very clear early on that loyalty to the Confederacy never took hold for many men.

In early July an outbreak of measles gripped the 10th Texas and many of the men became sick and died. From the beginning of July to the beginning of September 1862 regimental muster rolls indicate that 104 members of the regiment died of disease, a stiff toll for a regiment already reduced to eighty percent of its original strength. Railroad cars removed most of the sick to Little Rock to convalesce and recover—or perish in the stifling Arkansas summer.¹⁰

In the third week of July Col. Allison Nelson took command of his own brigade, and battled a mutiny among his own men. The unit Nelson took command of contained his 10th Texas, plus the now dismounted 15th, 17th and 18th Texas Cavalry Regiments. Confederate authorities expected the lone infantry regiment to serve as an example to the cavalry, but at least in the beginning the Texan foot soldiers did a poor job. That same week a mutiny of sorts broke out among the Texans. On July 17 and 18 seven entire companies of the regiment threatened to mutiny and desert, complaining of hard discipline and inactivity. Lt. Col. Roger Q. Mills made them a speech and most of the men returned to duty, but anywhere from forty to fifty held out to the last. Confederate authorities arrested these hold outs and took them to Little Rock where Maj. Gen. Thomas Hindman, newly appointed commander of Confederate troops in Arkansas, threatened to have every tenth man shot if they did not return to duty. This seemed to work, and the Texans returned to their commands the next day. Pvt. Isaiah Harlan of Company G attributed the mutiny to the fact that they remained camped among

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

“Arkansas troops, most of whom are said to be dissatisfied.” Whatever the motive, the infantrymen returned to duty and averted a showdown.¹¹

Despite the quelling of his first mutiny, desertion became more and more of a problem. On August 1 Nelson ordered the execution of four soldiers convicted of repeated desertion. The execution served as a stark awakening to the members of the 10th Texas. Ten days later Nelson had another five men executed. A week later Nelson’s brigade relocated to a camp near Austin, Arkansas, known as Camp Hope. Here at Camp Hope the 10th Texas whiled away the rest of the summer and early fall.¹² This early dissatisfaction makes it abundantly clear that local circumstances almost entirely dictated whether or not a soldier chose to desert. Confederate nationalism appears to have had little to no resonance with these soldiers early in the war.

Back in Texas Col. Middleton Johnson also received orders on April 10 to move his brigade from Clarksville to Little Rock. By the third week in April the six cavalry regiments had reached Pine Bluff, Arkansas, after a rain-soaked march.

When they reached Pine Bluff the sun finally reemerged, drying the cavalrymen along with their horses and equipment. One of the things the sun also dried proved to be the leather scabbards containing the large Bowie knives they had brought from home. The Texans soon decided they could live without the knives and tossed them into the Arkansas River. After a few more days in camp the Texans moved on to Little Rock

¹¹ Simpson, *The Bugle Softly Blows*, 18; Isaiah Harlan to his brother dated, “Little Rock July 18, 1862,” Vertical file of the 10th Texas Infantry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.

¹² Simpson, *The Bugle Softly Blows*, 19.

where they went into camp on the grounds of St. John's College. Measles also broke out in the camp of Johnson's Brigade, incapacitating and killing many of the Texans.

While they were at Little Rock the Confederate Conscription Act of April 16, 1862, necessitated reorganization of the regiments. The law discharged all soldiers over thirty-five and under eighteen years of age, or those who owned twenty or more slaves. It also required the election of new officers. Approximately fifty members of the 15th Texas received discharges in May, most in compliance with the new law. Additionally, around thirty officers lost their bids for reelection to their previous positions. The story in the 17th Texas proved essentially the same; in the reorganization 137 men received discharges, while half a dozen officers lost reelection. The 18th Texas suffered similar attrition during this time, losing fifty men and a dozen officers.¹³

Sickness also overtook the Texan horsemen. On May 13 Lt. Flavius W. Perry of the 17th Texas wrote his father, "We are getting along rather badly. Nearly half our company has the measles. We leave from four to six every day." The horses also suffered, as Perry related. "This is one of the poorest countries I ever saw. . . . Forage for our horses is very scarce and has been since we got in this state. . . ."¹⁴

The Texans remained at Little Rock until the middle of June when Hindman placed Brig. Gen. Thomas Rust in command of the six cavalry regiments. Rust immediately set his new brigade in motion toward Batesville, Arkansas, to counter the thrust of Curtis's Federals, but after some fruitless maneuvers Rust returned with his brigade to Little Rock, leaving behind about 150 members of the 15th Texas to keep an

¹³ Compiled Service Records of the 15th, 17th and 18th Texas Cavalry Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 85-89, 93-96 and 99-103.

¹⁴ Joe R. Wise ed., "The Letters of Flavius W. Perry, 17th Texas Cavalry 1862-1863," *Military History of Texas and the Southwest*, 12 no. 3: 12.

eye on Federal movements. Among this detachment, newly elected Lt. Robert Collins, of Company B, noted that he and his comrades “put in all the bird-singing month of June in rollicking around over them high mountains, living high and making love to them pretty, honest Arkansaw girls.”¹⁵

On July 8 the 15th Texas first tasted combat. A portion of the 5th Kansas Cavalry launched a foray south toward Batesville, and Col. George Sweet decided to move out and capture the two hundred Yankees. The Texans engaged the Kansans, but soon fled the field, taking with them their first taste of defeat. In this skirmish they lost seven killed and seven wounded, including Capt. Thomas Johnson, shot through the head and instantly killed.¹⁶

A few weeks later Hindman reorganized his forces. He folded the 15th, 17th, and 18th Texas Cavalry Regiments into a brigade with the 10th Texas Infantry under Col. Nelson. His order also dismounted the Texas cavalry regiments. Protests long and loud accompanied this order, as the soldiers felt that since they had joined up as cavalymen, they should serve out the war as such, an opinion apparently not shared by Hindman. Rather, the Texans became dismounted cavalymen, destined to serve out the war essentially as infantry.

Mass desertions and resignations from the dismounted cavalry regiments followed this action. In the 15th Texas, approximately eighty men deserted, while another dozen volunteered to take the horses back to Texas, never to return. Sweet discharged another fifty-six men, while half a dozen officers resigned their commissions. In all it appears that the 15th Texas lost roughly 160 men due to the dismounting of the regiment. In the 17th

¹⁵ Collins, *Chapters*, 30.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 60.

Texas, 140 men deserted in July, with another sixty-two discharged the same month. Additionally, twenty-five members of the regiment died of disease in June and July. It appears that the 17th Texas lost close to 230 men during its reorganization and dismounting. In Col. Nicholas Darnell's 18th Texas, a staggering 180 deserted shortly after the dismounting of the regiment. Another ten officers resigned their commissions, and Darnell lost a half dozen to sickness. Of the 3,697 men carried at one time or another on the muster rolls of these three regiments, 590, or sixteen percent, deserted or resigned rather than serve in dismounted cavalry regiments.¹⁷

Perhaps more than any other single factor, the dismounting of these cavalry regiments demoralized the Texans almost beyond repair. Apart from the obvious dismay of having to walk instead of ride, many of the horsemen brought their own mounts with them from home, and many of them shared strong emotional bonds with their animals, which now became the property of the Confederate government. The dismounting of these regiments drew a stark line between those who felt they could remain faithful to a government they felt had betrayed them, and those who simply went home. The dismounting destroyed any loyalty most of these Texans had ever felt for the Confederacy or the Confederate cause.

The Texans' frustration also spilled over into pranks played at the expense of their officers. Col. George Sweet of the 15th Texas "had a hard time breaking five thousand wild Texans into the infantry harness," remembered Lt. Robert Collins. "Fact is, we were all mad because we had been dismounted, having had our hearts set on doing our soldiering on horseback, and the boys very unjustly charged all this misfortune and hard

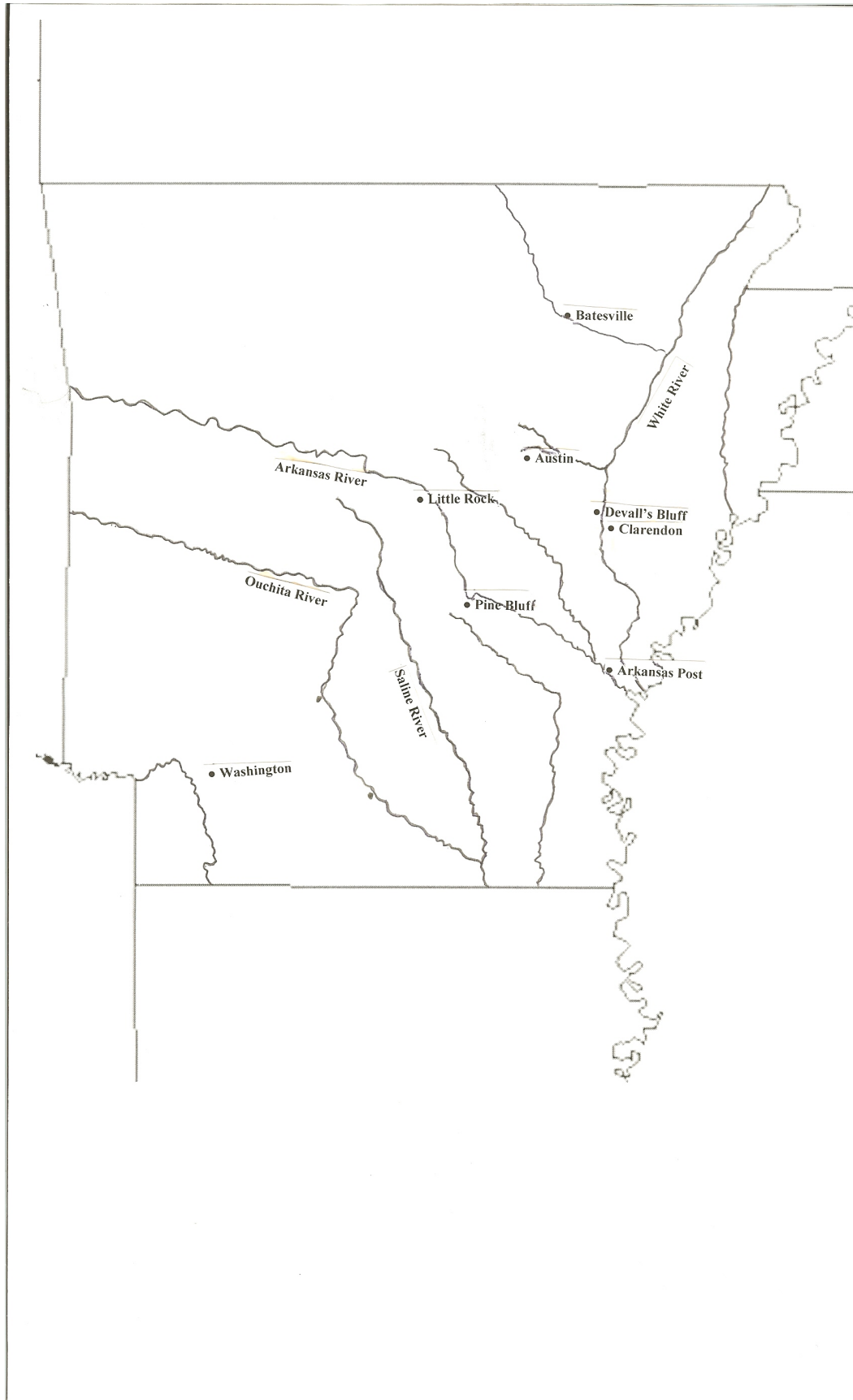
¹⁷ Compiled Service Records of the 15th, 17th and 18th Texas Cavalry Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 85-89, 93-96 and 99-103.

camp duty, drilling, strict guard duty, etc., to Col. Sweet.” One night some members of the 18th Texas stole over to Sweet’s headquarters and shaved off the mane and tail of his horse “Bay Bob.” After that, according to Collins, whenever Sweet would ride into sight of the command, “the boys would commence hallooing ‘Whoa, Bob,’ at the top of their voices. This annoyed the colonel very much, as he was a proud, vain and very sensitive man.”¹⁸ This prank and other acts continued occur as the Texans fought their new role as infantry.

While the disgruntled Texan cavalymen of the 15th, 17th and 18th Texas acted out, Col. George Carter received orders to march his three cavalry regiments north to Arkansas. Carter furloughed all of the men except thirty whom he left behind to care for the wagons and supplies. He issued orders for the regiments to reassemble at Crockett in early May before proceeding to Arkansas. Apparently abandoning the idea of cavalymen as lancers, the Texans left their long weapons behind. The regiments reassembled on the appointed day and proceeded northeast to Alto in Cherokee County, where they awaited Carter, who had stayed behind in Hempstead to take care of logistics. The men soon grew restless when Carter caught up with them but proved unable to provide their fifty dollar enlistment bounty. Inactivity also began to bother the Texans, who had enlisted expecting to have already seen combat.¹⁹

¹⁸ Collins, *Chapters*, 62.

¹⁹ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, xlii.



With no supplies or money to buy them, Carter's horsemen began to appropriate the needed items along the way, making a nuisance of themselves to the locals. On May 15 a resident of Alto wrote Confederate Postmaster Gen. John H. Reagan of the "notorious outrages. . .at this time being practiced in the way of plundering . . . from good citizens by an armed party of the citizens of Texas, professing to be Confederate soldiers and under the command of one Colonel Carter." The Texans remained in each neighborhood "just long enough to ravage the corn cribs and smoke-houses of the defenseless surrounding country. . . ." According to this citizen the Texans had become the "hourly dread" of the locals. From Alto, Texas Carter's Brigade marched to Rusk and then Mount Vernon. At this latter place measles broke out among the Texans, greatly adding to the sick rolls and causing several deaths.

Soon after this, Carter returned to Hempstead, leaving the brigade to dissolve in his absence. Carter had dispatched Col. Wilkes to Richmond to requisition the enlistment bounties for the brigade, but upon arriving in Richmond, Wilkes informed the Confederate authorities that there existed no such entity as Carter's Cavalry Brigade. Wilkes then appropriated the brigade's money for his own regiment, the 24th Texas, and returned with orders stating that his and Col. Gillespie's 25th Texas now made up independent commands from Carter's 21st Texas. Despite these orders, for the moment the three regiments remained together in Carter's absence.²⁰

Meanwhile the bad behavior continued. On June 24 a party of cavalymen led by Capt. William A. Taylor of the 24th Texas arrived in Alexandria, Louisiana, from Shreveport under the pretext of gathering supplies for the Confederate army. Gov. Thomas O. Moore of Louisiana wrote Confederate Secretary of War Randolph of the

²⁰ *Ibid.*, xliv.

outrages committed by Taylor and his men in ransacking the houses of private citizens and stealing property. Moore asked Randolph to remove both Taylor and his commander Wilkes, and warned that if they returned he would have them shot. Randolph forwarded these complaints to Hebert, who promptly issued General Order No. 11, ordering the arrest and court martial of any and all soldiers engaged in the stealing of private property. Hebert forward this order to Randolph and informed him of the impossibility of controlling the independent commands raised with orders directly from Richmond bound for posts outside the Department of Texas.²¹

Despite these “outrages,” none of the department commanders ever charged any of the Texan officers but ended up punishing the cavalrymen in a far worse manner. Gen. Holmes issued orders that reached the three cavalry regiments at Pine Bluff, Arkansas, ordering that they dismount. Holmes had copies of the order posted at every street corner ordering every officer to dismount his men and turn the horses over to the local quartermaster. In addition to the ignominy of dismounting, the Texans had provided their own mounts, making the horses private property that the Confederate government now wished to confiscate. Wilkes and Gillespie complied in dismounting the 24th and 25th, but Lt. Col. DeWitt Giddings, commanding the 21st Texas, refused to do so, instead requesting that Col. William H. Parsons incorporate Carter’s regiment into his brigade. Holmes relented, allowing the 21st Texas to remain mounted and join Parsons. Meanwhile, Wilkes and Gillespie began drilling their dismounted cavalrymen as infantrymen.²² Soon orders arrived for the 24th and 25th Texas Dismounted Cavalry to

²¹ O.R. Series I, Vol. 15, 822-825.

²² Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, xlvi.

join the 6th Texas Infantry at Camp Holmes ten miles from Pine Bluff. Here the three regiments formed a brigade under Col. Garland.

A surprisingly small number of cavalymen from Wilkes's and Gillespie's regiments deserted after being dismounted. In the 24th Texas forty-one soldiers died of disease in the summer of 1862, while the Confederate Conscription Act forced the discharge of several dozen more men, but only a handful of horsemen appear to have deserted from Wilkes's regiment in July or after. In Gillespie's 25th Texas anywhere from fifty to seventy-five men deserted shortly after dismounting, while a handful of officers resigned their commissions around this time. In addition, less than half a dozen cavalymen died of disease. In all, it appears that the two regiments lost in the neighborhood of only 150 men due to the Confederate Conscription Act, dismounting and disease.²³ The dismounting of these regiments apparently had little initial effect, but there remains nothing to suggest that in the long run they took it any easier than the other cavalry regiments. If anything, they quietly resented the dismounting and simply waited for a better opportunity to desert. Patriotism toward the Confederacy could never take the place of their beloved mounts or the prestige afforded cavalry over infantry.

By July, 1862 seven of the eight regiments that later made up Granbury's Brigade had made their way to Arkansas and into two brigades under Allison Nelson and Robert Garland. The five regiments that had started out as cavalry now found themselves on foot as dismounted cavalry, while the infantry regiment in each brigade served as an example in the drill and manual of arms. Garland and the 6th, 24th, and 25th Texas settled down at

²³ Compiled Service Records of the 24th and 25th Texas Cavalry Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 119-123 and 126-130.

Camp Holmes to spend the rest of the summer in boredom, while to the south Nelson and the 10th, 15th, 17th, and 18th Texas did the same at Camp Hope.

In early September Gen. Holmes received intelligence that Union forces intended to attack Arkansas Post, a fortification on the Arkansas River upstream from the Mississippi. Accordingly, he dispatched Garland's Brigade to the Post. The 6th and 24th Texas began marching down the Arkansas River with the 25th Texas a day's march behind. On September 18 the leading elements reached the Jourdan Plantation, eighteen miles above the Post and the next day they reached Arkansas Post.²⁴

A few weeks later Nelson's Brigade at Camp Hope experienced the first of their trying ordeals during the war. On the morning of October 1, Holmes dispatched Nelson's men north toward Clarendon on the White River to counter a perceived threat by Curtis, whom Holmes intended to confront. At midnight it began to rain, drenching the infantry and dismounted cavalry who struggled through the mud for three days before reaching Clarendon on October 4. Here the sun finally reappeared just in time for the Texans to turn around and head back to Camp Hope. The weather on the march back to camp proved even worse. Icy sleet and hail rained down on the hapless soldiers for days at a time. Mules and men alike dropped by the roadside from exhaustion and their comrades left them there out of necessity. Finally on October 11, the three regiments arrived back at Camp Hope.²⁵

Even greater tragedy awaited them in the piney woods near Austin. Nelson, who had been promoted brigadier general to date from September 12, fell ill with fever on September 27. The day after Nelson became sick, Holmes placed him in command of a

²⁴ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, xlvii.

²⁵ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 25-26.

division consisting of his own and Flournoy's Brigade, but it became a moot point. On October 7, Nelson died of fever at Camp Hope and received a burial in Little Rock. Four days later his 10th Texas and the other dismounted cavalry units arrived back in camp to find their leader dead. Lt. Col. Mills took command of the 10th Texas and the men renamed Camp Hope Camp Nelson in honor of their fallen commander.²⁶

To replace Nelson, Holmes appointed his chief of artillery, Col. James Deshler. At twenty-nine years old, Deshler was a West Point graduate who had fought against Indians before the war. In 1861 he found himself stationed at Fort Wise, Colorado, and left to join the Confederacy without ever officially resigning his commission. Appointed a captain of artillery, Deshler served as the brigade adjutant to Gen. Henry Jackson's Brigade in the Cheat Mountain Campaign. In a skirmish on December 13, 1861, a Union bullet pierced Deshler through both thighs, temporarily putting him out of action. He received an appointment as colonel of artillery and Confederate authorities assigned him to the staff of Gen. Holmes in North Carolina. He served as Holmes's chief of artillery in the Seven Days Campaign and accompanied his commander to the Trans Mississippi Department. As a professional soldier, Deshler did not at first have the affection of the Texans under his command, but at length they reached an understanding and even formed a strong bond of friendship with the young, charismatic colonel.²⁷

Deshler and his command remained at Camp Nelson until mid-November. At that time Holmes ordered him to take his brigade to Arkansas Post to reinforce Garland's Brigade and two regiments of Arkansas infantry already there. On November 21, Deshler's men broke camp and reached Little Rock the next day. From the capital they

²⁶ Ezra Warner, *Generals in Gray*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 223-224.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 71-72.

boarded steamers to head downriver to the Post. Each night the soldiers disembarked and camped on the riverbank before reaching their destination on November 28.²⁸ Like Garland's men, they had no idea what awaited them.

Even in these early stages of the war, desertion from the infantry and dismounted cavalry regiments undermined Confederate strength. The infantrymen took the circumstances of Arkansas better than their dismounted counterparts, but they too suffered from low morale as witnessed by the problems in the 10th Texas. Morale could hardly have reached a lower level among Confederate troops than among the dismounted Texan cavalymen in the summer and fall of 1862. Desertion winnowed the ranks in this season of discontent, hurting morale and the number of men in the ranks. More than anything else, the experiences in Arkansas exemplify the fact that no overarching sense of patriotism could overcome local circumstances, particularly in reference to the horses these Texans held so dear.

²⁸ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 33.

Chapter 4

Arkansas Post

Arkansas Post constituted a crucial turning point in shaping the regiments that became Granbury's Brigade. The capture of the garrison and accompanying desertion reinforced the trends already set in motion in Arkansas. The Arkansas Post episode effectively winnowed the ranks of the Texas regiments, as most of the men who would have otherwise deserted did so to escape capture, leaving behind those most committed to the Confederacy. Arkansas Post severely damaged the Confederate war effort through desertion, but also served to separate out those most committed to the cause.

The fall of Forts Henry and Donelson had opened the Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland Rivers to Federal incursion. In early March Union forces overran New Madrid and Island No. 10, leaving the Father of Waters vulnerable all the way to Memphis. After the fall of New Orleans in April and Memphis in June, only two Confederate strongholds remained on the Mississippi: Vicksburg and Port Hudson. In late 1862 when Gen. U.S. Grant first moved against Vicksburg, the Confederate authorities in Arkansas fortified the White and Arkansas Rivers to establish a base along Grant's line of communications and defend the interior of Arkansas.

On September 28, Holmes dispatched Col. John Dunnington, lately commander of the Confederate ram *Ponchartrain*, to command the Arkansas River defenses. Holmes provided Dunnington with two engineers and a company of sappers and miners to assist in constructing fortifications along the river. He also dispatched the 19th Arkansas Infantry under Col. Charles Dawson and the 24th Arkansas Infantry Battalion under Lt.

Col. William A. Crawford. Simultaneously Holmes ordered Garland's Brigade to the defenses.¹

On the Arkansas River twenty-five miles from where it flows into the Mississippi the engineers selected favorably high ground to construct an earthen fort. They situated it near the village of Arkansas Post, the seat of Arkansas County and former territorial capital. Dunnington and his men began constructing the fort along the north side of the river at the head of a horseshoe bend that commanded the waterway for a mile in either direction. All through October and November the engineers and other troops assigned to the post continued construction on the fort which eventually formed a square measuring one hundred yards on each side. The earthworks sloped up eighteen feet, fronting a ditch eight feet deep and twenty feet across.²

To equip the fort, Dunnington unloaded the armaments of his former ship, the *Ponchartrain*. He positioned the four heavy naval guns facing south along the river, two 10-inch Columbiads. The fort, named Fort Hindman, also contained four 10-pounder parrot rifles and four 6-pounder smoothbore field guns mounted on artillery platforms. Three different layers of oak protected the artillery casemates at the corners of the fort, making Fort Hindman an imposing obstacle to any Federal ships proceeding up the Arkansas River. Dunnington and his men also constructed 720 yards of earthworks stretching in a westerly direction from the fort.³

By mid-November Col. Deshler had arrived at the head of Nelson's Brigade, bringing the effective force at Arkansas Post to approximately six thousand men. To

¹ Edwin C. Bearss, "The Battle of Arkansas Post," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, 18 no. 3: 237.

² *Ibid.*, 239. The Confederates named the position the Post of Arkansas while the Federals referred to it as Fort Hindman.

³ O.R. Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 1, 705.

command the garrison, Holmes appointed Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Churchill. The garrison now consisted of Dunnington's Brigade with the 19th and 24th Arkansas Infantry and the river defenses, Garland's Brigade with the 6th, 24th and 25th Texas and finally Deshler's Brigade with the 10th, 15th, 17th and 18th Texas Regiments.

The Federal authorities at Helena soon took notice of Confederate activity to the south at Arkansas Post. Brig. Gen. Alvin Hovey sent a memorandum to Department of Missouri commander Samuel R. Curtis on November 3 notifying him of the Confederate threat. Curtis declined to authorize an expedition, but his orders did not reach Hovey before he launched an excursion. On November 16 Hovey loaded his six thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry onto thirteen transports and headed for Arkansas Post. The transports had difficulty entering the mouth of the White River due to the low water level. The expedition eventually made it into the river and headed northwest toward the cut between the White and Arkansas Rivers, which at that time was the only way to enter the Arkansas from the Mississippi. Farther up the river Hovey encountered an unmapped sandbar that allowed only thirty inches of clearance. He began preparing for an overland excursion against the Post, but before he could carry out this plan, a courier arrived with Curtis's instructions not to proceed. Hovey then turned his soldiers and transports around and headed back to Helena. At least for the moment, Arkansas Post remained in Confederate hands.⁴

On December 20, 1862, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman set sail from Memphis bound for Vicksburg with four divisions of infantry. Nine days later Sherman attacked the Vicksburg defenses at Chickasaw Bayou, and was handily repulsed. On January 2, Sherman, now under the command of Maj. Gen. John A. McClernand, who had been then

⁴ Bearss, "The Battle of Arkansas Post," 247.

arrived, reembarked his men on their transports and returned to the mouth of the Yazoo River. Meanwhile on December 28 a part of Capt. L.M. Nutt's Louisiana Cavalry Company from Arkansas Post sallied forth and captured the Union supply steamer *Blue Wing* as it made its way down the Mississippi from Memphis to Milliken's Bend. The Confederates then sent the captured ship up the Arkansas River toward Little Rock. On January 2, Sherman met with McClernand and discussed the capture of the *Blue Wing*. They agreed that the Confederate garrison at Arkansas Post could not be left in the rear astride their line of communications. After meeting with Admiral David Dixon Porter two days later, McClernand set out with his four divisions to reduce and capture Arkansas Post. Porter dispatched the ironclads *De Kalb*, *Louisville* and *Cincinnati* to accompany the expedition, which set sail from Milliken's Bend on January 5.⁵

On the morning of January 9 Churchill's pickets informed him that McClernand's men and three ironclads had just reached the cut between the Arkansas and White Rivers. At this point Churchill had roughly 2,800 men fit for duty out of the 4,000 present at the Post. Anticipating the Federal movements, Churchill placed his troops in a line of breastworks a mile and a quarter below the fort. He formed Deshler's Brigade on the right with Dunnington's 19th and 24th Arkansas occupying the left. He dispatched three cavalry companies under Capt. Denson, Nutt and Richardson to watch the Federal movements and placed Garland's Brigade in reserve. Churchill also took five companies from the 6th and 24th Texas under Lt. Col. Phillip Swearingen of the 24th Texas and Maj.

⁵ *Ibid.*; Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-One Days*, 88. The Confederates captured quite a bit of Federal mail aboard the *Blue Wing*, and distributed it among themselves for amusement. Turner, "Jim Turner," 155.

A.H. Phillips of the 6th Texas and placed them in front of the works as skirmishers. Late in the afternoon the Union infantrymen disembarked several miles below Fort Hindman.⁶

At 9 a.m. on January 10 the Union gunboats advanced up the Arkansas River and opened fire on the fort. Churchill expected the heavy guns in the fort to return fire, but because of a defect in the powder, they proved barely able to throw a shell beyond their own trenches, much less hit the Union fleet. Meanwhile, McClernand sent Gen. Frederick Steele's Division around the Confederate flank to force them out of their entrenchments. Around 2 p.m. Churchill discovered the maneuver and decided to pull his infantry back to the line of entrenchments directly adjacent to Fort Hindman.

As the Federals maneuvered, preparing to assault, Churchill and his brigade commanders made effective use of their time throughout the rest of the day. Churchill placed Dunnington's Brigade inside the fort itself, Garland's Brigade in the center of the entrenchments running inland from the fort, and Deshler's Brigade on the left, where the entrenchments stopped near the edge of a swamp. Garland placed the 6th Texas closest to the fort, with the 24th and 25th Texas to its left. Deshler placed the 18th Texas on his right, followed by the 17th, 10th, and 15th Texas anchoring the left flank. Deshler realized that a two-hundred-yard gap existed between his left and Post Bayou, an impassable swamp that protected the Confederate left. He informed Churchill of this weakness on the night of the tenth but Churchill did nothing. Additionally, several log cabins that had served as the winter quarters of the 19th Arkansas sat directly in front of Deshler's position. Recognizing that these could be used by any attacking infantry for cover, Deshler ordered

⁶ O.R. Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 1, 780, 783 and 790. McClernand had approximately 32,000 men.

them razed and the logs used for breastworks. At dusk the Federal gunboats opened fire for a brief time on the Confederate entrenchments, effectively halting work for the night.⁷

That night Churchill tried desperately to augment his outnumbered garrison. He dismounted Denson's, Nutt's and Richardson's Cavalry Companies for temporary infantry service in the trenches, and called on all available troops to rush to the Post. Later in the evening Capt. Alfred Johnson's Texas Cavalry Company arrived along with part of the 24th Arkansas Infantry. Learning of the threat, Gen. Holmes telegraphed Churchill on the night of the tenth to, "hold out till help arrived or until all dead." As soon as he received this dire message, Churchill transmitted it to his brigade commanders.⁸

The next morning the Confederates continued to improve their position while McClernand prepared to attack. Meanwhile, Deshler still worried about his left flank. He had his regiments construct traverses at intervals and ordered Maj. V.P. Sanders, commanding the 15th Texas, to refuse his left flank. At daybreak McClernand ordered Hovey to take his brigade forward on the right and ascertain the position of the Confederate left. Deshler observed these movements and sent eight companies, two from each of his regiments, to act as skirmishers in securing the gap between his left and Post Bayou. Seeing the skirmishers, Hovey halted his brigade and sent forward the 3rd and 17th Missouri to feel out the vulnerable flank. The skirmishers opened up and a fierce firefight developed. Churchill soon ordered Johnson's, Denson's and Nutt's Cavalry Companies to cover the crossings over Post Bayou beyond Deshler's left flank. Sam Richardson's company remained dismounted in the front line with the rest of Deshler's Brigade.

⁷ Bearss, "The Battle of Arkansas Post," 257-258.

⁸ O.R. Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 1, 781.

Churchill also dispatched the 19th Arkansas to take position between Deshler's left and the bayou. To cover the gap, the 6th Texas shifted its line to the right, covering the space between its right and Fort Hindman.

While Churchill shifted his men, McClernand massed his infantry beyond the open field in front of the breastworks and Admiral Porter prepared to renew his bombardment. At 1 p.m. the three gunboats opened fire. Soon, Porter's fleet had knocked out all the fort's guns.

McClernand issued orders to his infantry commanders to launch their assault as soon as they heard the sound of Porter's bombardment. At 1 p.m. the blue coats swept forward. On the right the regiments of Hovey's brigade advanced, only to be checked by fire from the Confederate snipers in Post Bayou on their flank and the 15th Texas in their front. To Hovey's left Brig. Gen. John Thayer's Brigade advanced toward the center of Deshler's line. The regiments went forward in column until they approached the enemy breastworks, where Thayer formed them in line of battle with the 26th and 30th Iowa in front. The Iowans closed to within one hundred yards of the 10th Texas before the Texans opened fire, driving them back with heavy losses.⁹

As Hovey observed Thayer's men being repulsed, he ordered two of his regiments, the 3rd Missouri and 31st Iowa, to charge the 15th Texas. The Texans allowed the Missourians and Iowans to advance within one hundred yards of their works before they opened fire. The Federals moved to the right, attempting to turn Deshler's flank. In response, Deshler moved six companies of the 19th Arkansas into the gap between the left

⁹ Edwin Bearss, *The Campaign for Vicksburg 1: Vicksburg is the Key*, (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Press, 1985), 381.

flank of the 15th Texas and Post Bayou. The Arkansans took cover behind the trees and brush, repulsing Hovey's men.¹⁰

In the center, Sherman ordered the brigades of Giles Smith and Kilby Smith to attack. The two brigades moved forward until canister from Hart's Arkansas Battery checked their advance, forcing them to ground. Several Union companies worked their way forward until they could pick off the cannoneers. After a few minutes of sniping Hart's guns fell silent, and the Federals held themselves in position to storm the works held by the 17th and 18th Texas.¹¹

Meanwhile, Deshler called for reinforcements to shore up his left flank. He sent a message to Garland, requesting reinforcements. The Federals had not made a serious demonstration on his front, so Garland ordered every other company in the 24th and 25th Texas and two companies from the 6th Texas to go to Deshler's aid. As the Texans worked their way to the left, they were exposed to a heavy fire, making it necessary to crawl on all fours until reaching their destinations.¹²

On the Federal left, the advance of Thayer's brigade served as the predetermined signal for the advance of Brig. Gen. Stephen Burbridge's brigade. Burbridge's men moved forward until Confederate snipers arrested their advance. After emerging into a clearing in front of the works, Burbridge ordered his men to charge a small cluster of huts housing Confederate snipers. The 23rd Wisconsin swept forward, driving the snipers from their cover. The brigade attempted to advance farther, but rebel fire checked it, causing heavy casualties and driving back Burbridge's men.¹³

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 382.

¹² *Ibid.*, 383.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 401.

By 4 p.m. the Confederate position had deteriorated. Porter's gunboats had silenced all of the guns in Fort Hindman, and Dunnington called on Garland for reinforcements. Even though Garland had already detached over half his brigade to Deshler's aid, he now ordered Lt. Col, Thomas Anderson of the 6th Texas to take two of his companies to the fort. For the next half-hour Porter's ships hammered the Confederate infantry with a saturation bombardment. At 4:30 Dunnington surrendered himself and thirty-six men of his Marine Brigade to Porter. At this point the Federal infantry prepared themselves for one final assault.¹⁴

Just at that moment perhaps the most inexplicable incident in the history of the Texas regiments took place. As he watched the approaching Federals, Col. Garland heard the cry, "Raise the white flag, by order of Gen. Churchill; pass the order up the line." Glancing to his left, Garland saw quite a few white flags displayed in the ranks of the 24th Texas, extending from the right company as far as he could see to the left.¹⁵ No orders had reached Garland through official channels, and he hesitated about what to do next. Before he knew what was happening the Federal infantrymen to his front took advantage of the confusion and crossed into the breastworks to accept the surrender. Seeing the white flags, Sherman rode with his staff up to the Confederate works and demanded to know who commanded, "at this point." Garland stepped up and Sherman instructed him to muster his brigade, have his men stack their rifles and hang their belts on the stacked weapons.

Burbridge also spied the white flags and rode up to Fort Hindman, followed by McClelland. After initially being stopped by the sentries, Burbridge convinced them that

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 402.

¹⁵ At this point Garland had posted himself on the left flank of the 6th Texas, also the right of the 24th Texas. O.R. Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 1, 781-785.

their comrades had surrendered and instructed them to ground their arms. They complied and took him to Churchill's headquarters inside the fort. McClelland soon arrived and accepted the surrender of Arkansas Post from Churchill.

On the Confederate left Deshler remained in the dark and initially refused to surrender. Steele rode forward to confer with Deshler, and upon his approach, the Confederate colonel demanded to know what the white flags meant. Steele informed him that it meant he had surrendered, pointing him to the United States flag now flying over the fort. Deshler still refused to believe it, stating that he had been instructed to hold out until the last man was dead. While the two continued to confer, Union infantrymen advanced until within pistol shot of the breastworks. Seeing this, Deshler stated, "If you do not command 'Halt,' I will command 'Fire.'" Steele halted his men and continued to talk with Deshler for the next ten minutes. Finally he asked, "Will you surrender if I will bring General Churchill and he will command you to do so?" Deshler retorted, "I will obey Churchill's orders." When word reached Sherman of Deshler's refusal, he rushed with Churchill to the left to avoid a confrontation. When the two generals reached Deshler, they found the Confederates still crouching behind their breastworks. When Sherman inquired what this meant, Deshler said "he had received no order to surrender." Churchill then interjected, "You see, sir, that we are in their power, and you may surrender." Upon hearing this, Deshler turned to his officers and commanded them to have their men stack arms.¹⁶

In Garland's Brigade where the white flags originated, the Confederates slowly got out of the ditch, staring around them as things became as quiet "as a meeting-house." Soon they spotted a long line of blue coats that approached within forty feet of the works.

¹⁶ Bearss, *Vicksburg is the Key*, 404-405.

In one instance, a colonel approached Capt. Samuel Foster of Company F, 24th Texas and inquired, ““where are your men,”” to which Foster replied, ““Sir, from where you are, you can see them all.”” The Texans then began sticking their bowie knives in the works and hiding their six-shooters in the dirt. The Federals ordered them to stack arms; some of them complied while others simply threw their shotguns on the ground. Their captors then herded them down toward the river where they posted guards in a semicircle.¹⁷

When the Federals reviewed the results of the battle, they found that they had captured 4,791 Confederates, along with numerous other spoils of war. When it became obvious that a surrender would take place, many of the Texans escaped into the swamps and bayous rather than submit to capture. Lt. Col. Thomas Anderson surrendered 589 members of the 6th Texas Infantry, while others escaped into the bayous. Col. Frank Wilkes of the 24th Texas surrendered 652 members of his regiment, while another 130 or so slipped away at the time of the surrender. In Clayton Gillespie’s 25th Texas, 555 members of the regiment surrendered while a little over 100 escaped into the woods. This brought the total number of men surrendered in Garland’s Brigade to 1,796, while probably anywhere from 350 to 400 escaped capture. Additionally, the 6th Texas lost eight killed and twenty-four wounded, the 24th Texas suffered twelve killed and seventeen wounded and the 25th Texas had two killed and eight wounded for a total of twenty-two killed and forty-nine wounded.¹⁸

Deshler’s Brigade suffered similar losses in the fighting and surrender. Mills of the 10th Texas surrendered 715 of his regiment, while about ninety either escaped capture

¹⁷ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 23.

¹⁸ Compiled Service Records of the 6th, 24th and 25th Texas Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 308-314, 119-123 and 126-130; Bearss, *Vicksburg is the Key*, 418-419. In Garland’s Brigade, Hart’s Arkansas Battery had three killed, thirteen wounded and twenty-two missing, while Denson’s Louisiana Cavalry Company had two wounded.

or were left behind in Arkansas hospitals. In the 15th Texas only 478 men surrendered while another ninety escaped capture. The 17th Texas offered up 390 prisoners, while another 200 abandoned their comrades for the swamps. Finally, in the 18th Texas 533 became prisoners of war, while another 250 escaped into the backcountry. Thus, it appears that in Deshler's Brigade 2,116 surrendered while another 630 escaped capture in the Arkansas swamps and woods. The regiments in Deshler's Brigade failed to file individual casualty reports, but subtracting Garland's losses from the total yields a result of thirty-five killed and nine wounded in the four Texan regiments. Thus, of the 4,791 Confederates captured at Arkansas Post, 3,912, or eighty-two percent, belonged to regiments that would later make up Granbury's Brigade. Meanwhile, a little over 1,000 Texans escaped capture at the surrender.¹⁹ Those who had escaped capture, had, in their own minds, escaped the war as well. Few of them would fight again, and their departure thus also amounted to desertion. The mass desertion at Arkansas Post hurt the Confederate war effort and the future of the Texan regiments even as it whittled down the ranks to a hard core of devoted men.

The Federal authorities should have sent the Confederate prisoners to Vicksburg for exchange under the terms of the Dix-Hill Cartel of July 22, 1862, but U.S. Grant

¹⁹ Compiled Service Records of the 10th, 15th, 17th and 18th Texas Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 337-343, 85-89, 93-96 and 99-103. Included in the number who escaped are those left behind sick in various hospitals at the time of the surrender. Bearss, *Vicksburg is the Key*, 418-419. For an example of a Texan who escaped, see Norman C. Delaney ed. "Diary and Memoirs of Marshall Samuel Pierson Company C, 17th Regt., Texas Cavalry 1862-1865," *Military History of Texas and the Southwest*, 13 no. 3: 23-38. In the spring of 1863 Confederate authorities ordered that the Arkansas Post refugees from all seven regiments gather at Elysian Fields where they formed them into a regiment designated the 17th Texas Dismounted Cavalry (Consolidated). 777 refugees from Arkansas Post signed up for service in the regiment, organized on July 1, 1863, under Colonel James R. Taylor who had been displaced from command. The regiment subsequently saw action at the Battle of Mansfield in April, 1864 in Polignac's Brigade where Taylor and Lt. Col. Sebron M. Noble were killed and the regiment suffered a total of 21 killed and 45 wounded. Major (later colonel) Thomas Tucker took command and the regiment disbanded in the summer of 1865. Compiled Service Records of the 17th Texas Texas Dismounted Cavalry (Consolidated), National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 97-98.

intervened. He argued that it would be criminal to send the prisoners to Vicksburg where they could reinforce the garrison there even as Grant endeavored to capture the city. Instead, the day after the surrender, McClelland herded the almost five thousand prisoners into three steamers, the *Sam Gatey*, *John J. Rowe*, and *Nebraska*, for transportation to northern prisoner of war camps.²⁰ Like their brethren in the 7th Texas, the rest of what would become Granbury's Brigade now found themselves prisoners of war.

The question of who was responsible for the surrender at Arkansas Post has remained the subject of debate among participants and historians since January 1863. In mid-July 1863, while the Texans were encamped near Tyner's Station, Tennessee, Garland called for a court of inquiry to investigate the matter. Despite this plea, the Richmond authorities denied his request, stating that "the exigencies of the service will not admit of assembling a court of inquiry at this time." Despite this rebuff, Garland apparently assembled an informal court of inquiry, and summoned every officer who had been with the brigade at Arkansas Post to testify. They determined that the raising of the white flags and call to surrender started in the ranks of the 24th Texas, but as Capt. Samuel Foster noted in his diary "They came very near finding *where* it started; but not *who* started it. *Nor will it ever be known in this world.*" [emphasis original] The call to surrender obviously began with one or more frightened enlisted men and/or lower echelon officers, but exactly who started the panic will probably never be known.²¹

Historians have taken different stances on the Arkansas Post fiasco. For his part, historian Ed Bearss blames Col. Garland for the surrender. Even though Garland did not

²⁰ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 23.

²¹ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 49. The documents relevant to Garland's petition can be found in the O.R. Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 1, 780-796.

issue the orders Bearss maintains that because the order reached him from the left, and Churchill's headquarters stood to his right, Garland should have known that the order did not come from his commander. Furthermore, Bearss chastises Garland for his hesitation in allowing the Federals to cross into his works "with impunity" before he had determined the true state of affairs.²² This analysis, while accurate as far as it goes, is probably not completely fair to Garland. In the chaos of battle it often becomes almost impossible to make snap decisions of such magnitude. On the other hand, Garland did receive formal military training and should have acted more decisively in time of crisis. If any one officer can be blamed for the surrender, it is most likely Robert Garland. Regardless of who was to blame, Arkansas Post set in motion a chain of events that would result in the formation of Granbury's Texas Brigade.

Arkansas Post provided a crucial turning point in shaping what Granbury's Brigade became. The Arkansas Post episode also epitomized the Confederate war effort. As soon as it looked as if they might face capture, many of the Texans escaped into the swamps. This mass desertion ultimately hurt the future of the Texan regiments by reducing their manpower. The low morale that even allowed the white flags to appear in the first place indicated something very lacking in the dedication of the dismounted cavalry regiments. If these Texans had stayed with their regiments, they would have provided a valuable addition to the Confederate armies east of the Mississippi, but the combination of dismounting, infantry service in Arkansas, and the prospect of capture combined to produce a mass exodus from the colors. This desertion also left a hard core of devoted men in place, the men who would become Granbury's Brigade. The Texas regiments, like the Confederate army as a whole, suffered mass desertions that ultimately

²² Bearss, *Vicksburg is the Key*, 402-403.

hurt their cause, but those who remained with the colors formed a hard core that allowed the Confederacy to carry on for some time in the face of serious reverses.

Chapter 5

Fighting for Vicksburg

Like the campaign for Fort Donelson, the campaign for Vicksburg put the dedication of the 7th Texas Infantry to the test, and its men again showed their devotion to the Confederacy by performing well under extremely adverse circumstances, putting themselves in the minority of the regiments that later made up Granbury's Brigade.

Vicksburg held the key to the western Confederacy. By 1863 the hill city alone blocked Union control of the Mississippi. One other Confederate garrison at Port Hudson also remained, but Vicksburg remained the key; as Vicksburg went, Port Hudson would follow. Since December 1862, U.S. Grant and his Federal forces had attempted to capture the city, with the first foray at Chickasaw Bluffs on December 29, where Sherman met with a bloody repulse. In January, McClernand succeeded in diverting a good portion of Grant's forces to Arkansas Post, but by the beginning of spring Grant again prepared to take the "Gibraltar of the Confederacy."

In the spring of 1863 the 7th Texas once again found itself at the center of action in the Western Theater. After the exchange of the officers and men, the regiment began to reform at Port Gibson. Maj. Granbury received promotion to colonel on August 29, 1862, to replace John Gregg who had been placed in command of a brigade in Mississippi. The 7th Texas was assigned to the brigade of Gen. Lloyd Tilghman. Cpts. K.M. Van Zandt and William L. Moody were the two senior captains in the regiment, and Tilghman decided that they should draw lots to determine who would become lieutenant colonel and major of the regiment. Moody drew the lot for lieutenant colonel, while Van Zandt

became major. Gregg received a promotion to brigadier general on September 27, placing him in permanent command of a brigade. Later in the year Maj. Gen. Frank Gardner transferred the 7th Texas to the brigade of Brig. Gen. Samuel Maxey.

While the Texans remained at Port Gibson, their officers turned their attention to recruiting to fill out the thinning ranks. On October 11 Gregg placed an advertisement in the *Marshall Texas Republican*. “The recruiting officers of the 7th Texas Infantry are among you,” it read, “to fill the thinned ranks of the veterans. . .we call upon you to join us, as you expect to enlist in maintaining our liberties.” In mid-October Granbury, Van Zandt, and captains E.T. Broughton and C.N. Alexander¹ all departed for Texas to recruit. From October through January they busied themselves enrolling volunteers and conscripting those who did not enlist willingly. The recruiting paid off, with 216 men added to the regiment from October 1862 to March 1863. This number included eighty-seven conscripts and volunteers that Van Zandt formed into Company K.²

While the officers recruited, they left the 7th Texas almost leaderless. On October 23, Lt. Col. Moody fell ill at Holly Springs, Mississippi. Van Zandt and Granbury remained in Texas, leaving Capt. W.H. Smith of Company F in command. Finally in January, Van Zandt and Broughton returned to Port Gibson while Granbury elected to stay in Texas a little longer, placing the major in temporary command of the regiment.

In early January Gardner ordered the brigades of Sam Maxey and John Gregg to defend Port Hudson. On the evening of January 5 the 7th Texas boarded the steamer

¹ Alexander, commander of Company A, apparently never returned to the regiment from Texas. He is listed as “absent on recruiting mission” and dropped from the rolls on December 22, 1863.

² For the formation of the 7th Texas companies, see Chapter 1, n.28. Company B gained twenty-three recruits, Company C ten, Company D, twenty-four, Company E, ten, Company F, one, Company G, four, Company H, thirty-eight, Company I, twenty and Company K, eighty-seven. Compiled Service Records of the 7th Texas Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 315-320.

Charm in Vicksburg for the trip downriver to Port Hudson. By the next morning the Texans had reached Natchez, Mississippi, where they stopped for a few hours. From there they moved down the river, passing the mouth of the Red River and arriving at Port Hudson around 10 p.m. At Port Hudson, Gardner placed the 7th Texas in the entrenchments to await any possible Federal threat.³

In Louisiana the Texans spent the spring months, gathering strength and enduring constant rain. On February 15, Van Zandt wrote his wife, “We are surprised that Col. Granbury has not reached here before this. . . . We have had a great deal of rainy weather within the last week or so, in fact, it rains a great deal of the time here. We have had but very little weather that is suitable for drilling.” Van Zandt went on to complain about the quality of water available to the regiment and suggested that as soon as Granbury arrived they should move the camp closer to the Mississippi to utilize the river water.⁴ While at Port Hudson the Texans again received a brigade transfer, this time to the command of John Gregg.

Granbury rejoined his regiment in time to celebrate his thirty-second birthday on March 1. On March 3 Van Zandt held a birthday party for his commanding officer, serving the cake Mrs. Van Zandt had baked for the occasion. Capt. Charles Talley’s wife had also sent some preserves and a jelly cake which the officers consumed along with sausage, biscuits and real coffee. Gregg, Moody and several other officers also attended the gathering. At the end of his letter, Van Zandt hinted at a developing tragedy in the life

³ Drake, *Lone Star General*, 35.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

of Hiram Granbury when he said, “Colonel Granbury is trying to get off to go see his wife, but I don’t hardly think he will succeed.”⁵

With Granbury away recruiting in Texas, his wife Fannie fell very ill with ovarian cancer. Soon after his arrival in Port Hudson, Granbury again departed the regiment for Mobile where doctors were attempting to treat Mrs. Granbury. With her husband at her side, Fannie passed away on March 20 and was interred in Mobile. Eight days later a depressed Granbury rejoined his regiment at Port Hudson.⁶ From that point on, Hiram Granbury focused his energy and attention solely on the men of his regiment and the prosecution of the war.

Back home, the wives of men in the 7th Texas continued to express concern in their letters. On March 26, 1863 Minerva again wrote her husband Maj. Van Zandt, “Oh my Darling how could I stand it I never felt half as uneasy about you at Donelson as I do today....But Dear, how could I content my mind if we hear of anything happening to you[?]”⁷

While the 7th Texas remained idle at Port Hudson and Hiram Granbury mourned his wife, U.S. Grant concocted a plan to capture Vicksburg. Grant intended a bold flanking maneuver; instead of attempting to fight his way through the strong Confederate fortifications along the Yazoo River north of the city, he intended to bypass the defenders and attack from the south. By marching along the west bank of the Mississippi, Grant could re-cross the river at Grand Gulf and strike north toward the city.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 39-40.

⁷ Minerva to Khleber Van Zandt, March 26, 1863 (letter in the possession of Mr. E.P. Cranz of Fort Worth, Texas)

To take the attention off of his plans, Grant dispatched Col. Benjamin Grierson with several thousand cavalymen to distract Pemberton and the other defenders. On April 17 Grierson and his troopers left La Grange in northern Mississippi and struck south. The plan worked perfectly, and Pemberton shifted many of his units north to deal with the raiders. In late April Pemberton ordered Gardner to send some of his units toward Woodville, Mississippi, to prevent Grierson reaching the command of Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks in Louisiana, his presumed destination. Gardner ordered Granbury's regiment and a section of Bledsoe's Battery toward Woodville on April 28.⁸

On May 1 Grant crossed the Mississippi at Grand Gulf and immediately drove away the Confederate defenders of Port Gibson. Learning of the crossing, Pemberton ordered Gardner to send Gregg's Brigade to Jackson. Gardner complied and that same day the Texans were startled with their new orders to rejoin the rest of the brigade at Osyka before proceeding to Jackson. The march took Granbury and his men through a part of Mississippi untouched by the war, and after eight days and 160 miles they reunited with Gregg's command and arrived in Jackson on Saturday, May 9.⁹

By May 11, Pemberton had recovered somewhat from his shock at Grant's river crossing and began issuing orders to defend central Mississippi. Grant intended to strike first towards Jackson, but Pemberton mistakenly assumed his goal was the Big Black River Bridge west of the city. Therefore on the eleventh Pemberton instructed Gregg to take his brigade southwest toward Raymond and strike the Federals in flank as soon as they turned north toward the Big Black. Pemberton decided that Grant intended the move toward Jackson merely as a feint, and informed Gregg of his suspicions. He also

⁸ Van Zandt, *Force Without Fanfare*, 98.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 99.

dispatched Brig. Gen. W.H.T. Walker's brigade to aid Gregg in this assignment. John Gregg and his small brigade marched into Raymond on the afternoon of May 11, raising a cloud of dust. The locals hailed them as heroes because rumors of Grant's approach via the Utica Road had also reached the small Mississippi hamlet.¹⁰

Near dawn on May 12 a courier awakened Gen. Gregg to give him news of the approach of a Federal column. Gregg naturally assumed the column a small force intended to carry out the feint toward Jackson. A short time later another courier reached Gregg and informed him that the Union force consisted of no more than 2,500 to 3,000, and Gregg naturally assumed he faced only a brigade. In fact, it proved to be the van of Maj. Gen. James McPherson's XVII Corps of Grant's army.¹¹

Gregg immediately decided to confront the Federals as they advanced up the Utica Road, and at 9 a.m. he began deploying his brigade. To anchor the position he placed Hiram Granbury and the 7th Texas in the center, at the junction of the Port Gibson-Utica Roads a mile southwest of Raymond. Granbury deployed his men on the forward slope of a hill to the right of the Utica Road 100 yards south of the intersection. To the left of the Texans, Gregg placed the 3rd Tennessee Infantry with a gap of about one thousand yards between their right and Granbury's left. To the left of the Tennesseans, Gregg placed the 10th & 30th and finally the 50th Tennessee straddling the Gallatin Road. In reserve Gregg held the 1st Tennessee Battalion and 41st Tennessee to serve wherever needed. Finally, he placed Hiram Bledsoe's battery atop a knoll in the rear of the Texans.¹²

¹⁰ Bearss, *The Vicksburg Campaign 2: Grant Strikes a Fatal Blow*, (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Press, 1987), 485.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 486.

When the 7th Texas reached its position, Granbury detached Capt. Thomas B. Camp to gather volunteers from Companies A and B to serve as skirmishers at the Fourteenmile Creek Bridge. Camp and his skirmishers crossed the dry creek bed and took position in some brush at the northern edge of a wide field that stretched south for another three hundred yards. Soon Federal skirmishers appeared at the other end of the field and at one hundred yards Camp ordered his men to open fire. The Yankee skirmishers went to ground and Bledsoe opened fire on the opposing Union artillery.¹³

In front of the Confederate position, Fourteenmile Creek forms an oxbow curving toward Gregg's position. Gregg realized that Bledsoe couldn't stand up long against McPherson's artillery, and he decided to take the initiative and attack. He hoped to pin down the Yankees with a frontal assault while the Tennesseans on the left swung around the Federal right. The bold Texan hoped that this could result in the capture of the entire enemy force.¹⁴

At noon Gregg set his left into motion, with the Tennessee regiments moving diagonally southwest toward Fourteenmile Creek. Once they were in place, Gregg personally led the 7th Texas forward, ordering the attack to commence from right to left. Brandishing his sword, Gregg led the Texans toward the dry creek bed. Granbury pulled back Camp's skirmishers to cover his right flank and sent out another line of skirmishers under Capt. W.H. Smith and J.H. Collett 100 yards in advance of the main line.¹⁵ To their front the Texans faced the Second Brigade, Third Division of the XVII Corps under Brig. Gen. Elias Dennis. The Texans surprised Dennis's men, and at the approach of the gray line the men of the 20th Ohio, in Dennis's center, grabbed their muskets and rushed

¹³ *Ibid.*, 487.

¹⁴ At this time Gregg still believed that he was facing only a single brigade or at most a division.

¹⁵ O.R. Series I, Vol. 24, pt. 1, 747.

into line along the dry creek bed which they utilized as a trench. From here they opened fire on Granbury's men, only to discover that the 68th Ohio, instead of taking position in the creek on their right, had run the other direction. Nothing stood between the left flank of the 7th Texas and the rear of the Ohioans' position.¹⁶

Dennis had placed his skirmishers at the base of the hill north of the creek, and as the Texans approached they opened fire. Granbury ordered his men forward at the double quick and when they neared the creek, they rushed forward "with a shout."¹⁷

To the right of Dennis's brigade, its division commander, Maj. Gen. John A. Logan, had placed his First Brigade under Brig. Gen. John E. Smith. In response to the Confederate advance, Smith tried to lead his brigade forward to come into line beside Dennis. A dense belt of thickets intervened, though, breaking up formations and badly delaying all of Smith's regiments except the 23rd Indiana, which was thus left to fend for itself. Soon the 3rd Tennessee popped out of the woods to the Hoosiers' front, and drove them back. Van Zandt encountered some of the Indianans as he led the left wing of the 7th Texas. Capt. Alonzo Tubbs of the 23rd Indiana took a swing at Van Zandt with his sword before being disarmed and captured by Sgt. J.M.C. Duncan of Company K. To the left, the 20th Ohio witnessed the Hoosiers' plight, and their line began to waver as the Texans lapped around their flanks. At that moment Logan himself rode up and began rallying the Ohioans with his presence, riding up and down the line, shouting encouragement. Some of Granbury's men succeeded in crossing the creek, but the thin blue line held against repeated assaults. One Union soldier remembered how the Texans tried to advance "just as you may see a lot of dead leaves in a gale of wind, eddying to and fro under the bank,

¹⁶ Bearss, *Grant Strikes A Fatal Blow*, 495.

¹⁷ O.R. Series I, Vol. 24, pt. 1, 747.

often rising up to fly away, but never able to advance.” The Federal also noticed a Texas officer who stood no more than ten yards away, calmly smoking a meerschaum pipe and emptying his revolver into the blue lines.

The left-flank companies of the 7th Texas fought their way across the creek, only to be driven back in a counterattack by the 20th Illinois of Smith’s brigade, which had finally beaten its way through the thickets. By this time the 3rd Tennessee and 7th Texas had nearly fought themselves into exhaustion, and Gregg puzzled over the lack of fire from his left, indicating that something had gone awry with the assault.¹⁸

On the left, the commanders of the Tennessee regiments had realized the true nature of their enemy. From atop a rise they could plainly see at least an entire Federal division on the field, marshalling against the lone Confederate brigade. In light of this discovery the Tennesseans halted where they were and sought further instructions from Gregg. To get the attack moving again, Gregg ordered up his reserves.¹⁹

Meanwhile Col. Manning Force of the 20th Ohio urged his regiment forward and counterattacked the 7th Texas and 3rd Tennessee. The Tennesseans retreated across the creek first while Hiram Granbury tried desperately to hold his regiment in place. Col. J.C. Clack of the 3rd Tennessee sent word to Granbury that his left was in trouble.

Accordingly, Granbury ordered Moody to take the three rightmost companies of the regiment out of line to aid the Tennesseans. Upon investigating the situation for himself, Granbury decided the left could be held and sent a runner to Moody ordering him to hold his position. An errant ball killed the runner en route and Moody withdrew anyway.

¹⁸ Bearss, *Grant Strikes A Fatal Blow*, 495-498; O.R. Series I, Vol. 24, pt. 1, 747-748; Steven Woodworth, *Nothing But Victory: The Army of the Tennessee 1861-1865*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 358-359. Later, when this same Union soldier advanced, he saw the meerschaum pipe lying on the ground. It is unclear who the officer in question was.

¹⁹ Bearss, *Grant Strikes A Fatal Blow*, 498.

Reaching the field they had earlier charged across, Moody and the three companies glanced around for where they might be needed most. They spotted a Confederate line of battle to the east and began marching to join it. The Confederates turned out to be Col. Randall McGavock's 10th & 30th Tennessee which had just arrived in position.²⁰

Granbury and the remaining companies of the 7th Texas found themselves assailed in front and both flanks and at approximately 1:30 p.m. fell back to the cover of Bledsoe's Battery.²¹ The battle continued to rage as the Federals pushed their advantage and McGavock's Regiment, plus the three Texan companies, attempted to stem the tide.²² At length Gregg realized that he in fact faced McPherson's entire corps and ordered a retreat through Raymond, ending the battle.

That night Granbury attempted to reorganize his regiment as the Texans licked their wounds. The 7th took 306 men into the fight and Granbury reported his losses as twenty-two killed, seventy-three wounded, and sixty-three missing for a total of 158. The Compiled Service Records of the 7th Texas indicate that the regiment lost 29 killed, 86 wounded and 40 captured for a total of 155. Raymond proved a bloody lesson for John Gregg and his brigade, who reported a total of 73 killed, 252 wounded and 190 missing for an aggregate of 515 casualties. McPherson reported his losses at 68 killed, 341 wounded and 37 missing for a total of 446. Interestingly enough, 154 of those casualties, or thirty-four percent, occurred in the 20th Ohio and 20th Illinois, the two regiments primarily engaged with the 7th Texas during the battle. This means that the Texans

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 500-501; O.R. Series I, Vol. 24, pt. 1, 748

²¹ O.R. Series I, Vol. 24, pt. 1, 501.

²² Colonel McGavock was killed in the fighting and ironically many casualties of the 7th Texas and the rest of Granbury's Brigade, along with the body of Hiram Granbury, were taken to McGavock's plantation house near Franklin, Tennessee in the aftermath of the battle there on November 30, 1864.

inflicted almost equal losses on their opponents, an unusual feat for a Civil War regiment on the attack.²³

In the aftermath of the battle Gregg withdrew his brigade into Jackson to await orders. Grant decided to concentrate his forces in Jackson before turning west toward Vicksburg, and beginning with McPherson's XVII Corps, Grant's entire army marched on the Mississippi capital. The day after Raymond, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, whom Jefferson Davis had dispatched to central Mississippi, arrived in Jackson to take command of the defense of the city. Davis had also admonished Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard to send troops from the east coast to aid Johnston. On May 6 Beauregard dispatched the brigades of W.H.T. Walker and the improbably named States Rights Gist to Jackson. Johnston could also expect Samuel Maxey's Brigade from Port Hudson the next day.

After conferring with Gregg, Johnston decided he could not defend Jackson against Grant's army—probably the only time during the war when Johnston justifiably abandoned an important military target—and ordered Gregg to take charge of the defenses until the withdrawal could be effected. While his own brigade retreated north toward Canton on the morning of May 14, Gregg placed Gist's and Walker's men west and south of Jackson to fight a delaying action. The overwhelming blue columns overpowered the outnumbered Confederate defenders, and by 3:30 p.m. Gregg and the rearguard had begun their retreat north toward Canton.

From Jackson Grant turned west toward Vicksburg, bludgeoning Pemberton's forces back into the fortifications of the city by means of victories at Champions Hill and the Big Black Bridge. By the third week in May Grant had laid siege to the Gibraltar of

²³ Bearss, *Grant Strikes A Fatal Blow*, 515-517; O.R. Series I, Vol. 24, pt. 1, 748; Compiled Service Records of the 7th Texas Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 315-320.

the Confederacy, and it fell to Joseph Johnston and his small force near Canton to find a way to raise the siege.

If Jefferson Davis and John Pemberton expected quick, decisive, aggressive movements from Joseph Johnston, they placed their hopes in the wrong man. Obsessed with caution and his reputation as a strategist, Johnston proved unwilling during the course of the Civil War to risk his army where any doubt existed as to the outcome of the battle. On the Virginia Peninsula in the spring of 1862 Johnston retreated almost all the way to Richmond before finally being forced to fight at Seven Pines. Had he not been wounded and replaced by Robert E. Lee, Richmond might have fallen in June 1862 instead of April 1865. At Atlanta in the spring of 1864 Johnston abandoned more than one hundred miles of territory into the interior of Georgia without launching counterattack. Had Davis not replaced Johnston that July, Atlanta would have fallen then rather than six weeks later. Finally, in central Mississippi in the summer of 1863 Johnston proved unwilling or unable to do anything in relief of Vicksburg.

Though he would not take decisive action, Johnston kept his 23,000 men busy marching and countermarching along the Big Black River during the siege of Vicksburg. While thus marching back and forth, Granbury passed through many of the haunts of his childhood. Proceeding first toward Calhoun, Gregg led his brigade west toward the Big Black, passing near Adelle and the farm where Hiram Granbury had grown up. By May 29 the Texans arrived back in Canton, and then proceeded north to Yazoo City by May 31. They spent the first twelve days in June in the vicinity of the Yazoo before heading south to cross the Big Black again on June 13. The next day the brigade made camp very near the old brick church where Hiram Granbury's father had served as a minister. They

stopped for six days near the old Granberry farm and by July 4 had reached a point again very near the Big Black.²⁴

Many of the Texans fell ill during the march from the unhealthy conditions and Mississippi summer heat. Van Zandt began to suffer from the sun and by July 4 wrote his wife from the home of a Mr. Davis from Brownsville, Mississippi where he was recuperating. Davis proved to be Hiram Granbury's brother-in-law (his first wife had been Granbury's sister), and so he was more than glad to host any of the ailing soldiers from the 7th Texas. Meanwhile the march continued. Moody wrote his wife that he and Granbury had procured a cart in which to carry their baggage and that at the moment they were getting enough to eat.²⁵

On the Fourth of July Johnston's soldiers received word of the fall of Vicksburg. The men in the ranks were stunned; not only that the Gibraltar of the Confederacy fell on Independence Day, but that they had done nothing to relieve the siege. Disheartened by their losses at Raymond and Vicksburg, Gregg and his weary brigade prepared to march wherever their next orders might take them.

After accepting the surrender of Vicksburg, Grant dispatched William T. Sherman to capture Jackson and defeat Johnston's army. Johnston rushed his men into the trenches outside the Mississippi capital, and on July 9 Sherman arrived and laid siege to the city. During the siege of Jackson the 7th Texas saw relatively little action, while snipers made their position sometimes unbearable. During this time the regiment lost a half-dozen men to the sun and snipers' bullets. On July 12 a sniper struck Moody in the small of the back

²⁴ Hiram Granbury was born Hiram Granberry, but decided to change the spelling of his name upon reaching adulthood. His father continued to spell his name Granberry, hence the discrepancy in spelling. Granbury's parents and sister had passed away before the war and remained buried on their farm in Hinds County. Drake, *Lone Star General*, 51.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

near his hip, putting him temporarily out of the war and sending him back to Texas. At length Van Zandt recovered from his sun-related illness and rejoined the regiment, where in Moody's absence he was second to Granbury in command of the regiment. Finally on July 16 Johnston ordered a cautious retreat out of Jackson, once again leaving the city to the Federals.²⁶

For forty-eight grueling hours the Confederates marched east along the railroad until they reached Morton Station, Mississippi. Here Johnston elected to rest his troops and conferred with Lt. Gen. William J. Hardee, who ordered Gregg's Brigade to detach from the army and march north to Enterprise, Mississippi. south of Meridian.²⁷

The Texans were only too happy to get out from under Johnston, and on July 29 they reached Enterprise. There Granbury situated his regiment near the Chickasawhay River, affording plenty of clear, pure water. The men's health began to improve, and they began constructing temporary shelters from pine poles covered with pine boughs.²⁸ For the moment Granbury and his regiment found time to rest and recuperate after their adventures in Mississippi.

The exploits of the 7th Texas in trying to rescue Vicksburg exemplified both the positives and negatives of the Confederate war effort. In one sense, the Texans did all they could, paying a particularly heavy price at Raymond, and they did all this after the horrible experiences of capture at Fort Donelson and imprisonment at Camp Douglas. In a larger sense, though, all of their sacrifices in this case amounted to little strategic gain because of the failure of Confederate leadership, particularly Joseph Johnston, in not doing enough to save Vicksburg. In most cases, it becomes apparent that the 7th Texas as

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 55.

a regiment did the most of any regiment that became part of Granbury's Brigade to sustain the Confederate war effort. In terms of morale, desertion rate and regimental leadership, the 7th Texas became the bedrock, the core of Granbury's Brigade, helping to hold the other regiments together, and to a higher standard.

Chapter 6

Prison

Prison established several things for the Arkansas Post prisoners regarding the Confederate war effort. First, it winnowed the ranks through disease and desertion, damaging the Confederate cause. It also strengthened the resolve of those who survived it, because they found themselves the toughest of the dismounted cavalry and infantry regiments. Desertion did not completely cease following the release of the Arkansas Post prisoners, but it certainly declined a great deal, allowing the hard core of Texas soldiers to reach their fighting prime despite their losses.

While the 7th Texas fought to save Vicksburg, the Arkansas Post garrison made its way toward Northern prison camps. On the morning of January 12, 1863, the Texans and Arkansans awoke to the reality that they had become prisoners of war. Many of the men had not eaten anything for two days, and Sgt. William Heartsill reported that he had a breakfast made entirely of river water. Finally, in the evening, the Federals transferred Heartsill's men to the *Sam Gatey*, and issued the Texans "a good supply" of pork and hardtack. After dark the Federals began bringing other prisoners aboard, until at last over eight hundred men, all Arkansans except the W.P. Lane Rangers, had boarded.¹

The Federals loaded the *John J. Roe* and the *Nebraska* in similar fashion. As Capt. Samuel Foster walked up the gang plank of the *John J. Roe*, a sentinel stopped him at bayonet point at the top and demanded his name, rank, company and regiment. As the Texans boarded the boat, rumors circulated among them that they would be exchanged at Vicksburg.² While Dunnington's Arkansans and the W.P. Lane Rangers boarded the *Sam*

¹ Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-One Days*, 98-99.

² Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 22-23. Of course, this was a false hope. See Chapter 4.

Gatey, Deshler's Texans climbed aboard the *Nebraska*, and Garland's Texans made their way onto the *John J. Roe*.³

After they had boarded the *Nebraska*, the captain of the boat invited the Texas officers to dine with him and the other Union officers aboard while the enlisted men occupied the lower decks. To the chagrin of the Union captain, the officers and men of the Texas regiments dressed alike, and before the dinner was over the captain began cursing, shouting that he didn't know all of the men aboard were officers or he wouldn't have offered to feed them. After this prank, the captain of the *Nebraska* never again offered to feed the Texas officers.⁴

All day on January 12 the three boats stood still, completing preparations for the voyage, and several men took the opportunity to escape over the gunwales and into the river. Of these, the guards shot a few and the others drowned. Finally at 1 p.m. on January 14 the lead vessel gave the signal, and the three transports started down the Arkansas. After three hours the steamers passed into the White River, and by 9 p.m. had entered the Mississippi. "And to our surprise," wrote Sgt. Heartsill, "we head up stream, so the Vicksburg exchange business has 'played out' and many are sorely disappointed, for we did not have any idea of being taken North." Capt. Foster wrote, "Now what's what—Vicksburg is down the river and we are going up the river. All speculation and

³ The ships were apparently segregated by brigade. Heartsill notes that except for his company, all of the troops aboard the *Sam Gatey* were Arkansans, with Dunnington's Brigade the only command that fits that description. This is further corroborated by the fact that Lieutenant Robert Collins of the 15th Texas in Deshler's Brigade boarded the *Nebraska* and Captain Samuel Foster of the 24th Texas in Garland's Brigade boarded the *John J. Roe*. Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-One Days*, 98; Collins, *Chapters*, 72; Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 22.

⁴ Collins, *Chapters*, 72-73.

calculation is guess work, as to where we are going. We are going north and that is about all we do know.”⁵

A blinding snow storm met them as they traveled up the Father of Waters. In these deplorable conditions, pneumonia broke out among the soldiers, and soon sick men covered the floor in every room, “two rows of them with their heads toward the center and their feet toward the state room doors.” On January 16 the transports reached Memphis, and anchored opposite the city on the Arkansas shore. On the morning of the seventeenth the ships remained in place while rumors of exchange at Memphis floated about the decks and holds of the ships. On the *Sam Gatey*, Lt. Heartsill wrote, “we are all very anxious to get out of this filthy hulk, for there is a great danger of it going down at any moment.” Apparently the captain of the ship promised Heartsill and his compatriots that he would procure a new vessel at Helena, but this never materialized, and the lieutenant hinted darkly that perhaps the Yankees intended a more sinister fate for the prisoners. While at Memphis sixteen Confederates slipped over the side and escaped. William Oliphant of the 6th Texas wrote of their stop at Memphis: “Of food, there was plenty to spare, and no unkindness was shown by the guards, but the cold was intense. . . . The kind citizens of Memphis were not permitted to give the clothing they so generously offered to keep us warm, notwithstanding a frozen Confederate had been that day carried to the wharf; and, as the men were not allowed to enter the cabins, the scarcity of overcoats and blankets caused great suffering.”⁶

On January 21 the three boats passed Cairo, Illinois, on their way north. The next day the paddle wheel on the *Sam Gatey* broke, for the second time during the voyage, and

⁵ Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-One Days*, 101; Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 23.

⁶ *Ibid.*; William Oliphant, “Arkansas Post,” *The Southern Bivouac*, 1: 738-739.

on January 23 the *Nebraska* ran aground. The *John J. Roe* and the *Sam Gatey* unloaded their prisoners under guard, and ferried the prisoners of the *Nebraska* off the ship. By 11 p.m. the crew had freed the *Nebraska*, and the journey proceeded. On Saturday, January 24, the Texans and Arkansans reached St. Louis and the guards put them ashore on Arsenal Island south of the city. There, a home-guard unit, the 37th Iowa, policed the prisoners for the next few days. After this interlude the prisoners continued to Alton, Illinois, just above St. Louis, where they boarded trains for P.O.W. camps.⁷ The Federals sent the enlisted men of the 6th, 24th, and 25th Texas regiments to Camp Butler near Springfield, Illinois. The enlisted men of the 10th, 15th, 17th, and 18th Texas went to Camp Douglas in Chicago and the officers of all the regiments shipped out for Camp Chase, near Columbus, Ohio.⁸

Established in August 1861 six miles east of Springfield, Camp Butler originally served as a depot for soldiers from Illinois. Located on the Great Western Railroad half a mile from the Sangamon River, the camp provided an ideal location for housing enemy prisoners. A wooden fence surrounded the camp's fifteen acres and enclosed the wooden shacks with tar paper roofs that served as barracks. In late February 1862 several thousand captured Confederates from the Donelson garrison arrived, and throughout the rest of the war Camp Butler served as a P.O.W. camp.⁹

As at other camps, the men at Camp Butler spent much of their time plotting to escape. Some bribed guards while others dug tunnels. Joseph Hinkle of the 30th Tennessee Infantry served time in Camp Butler after his capture at Donelson. He wrote:

⁷ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 46-47.

⁸ Compiled Service Records of the 6th, 10th, 15th, 17th, 18th, 24th, and 25th Texas Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 308-314, 337-343, 85-89, 93-96, 99-103, 119-123 and 126-130.

⁹ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 46-47.

“We didn’t go to that prison to stay if we could get away, we agreed among ourselves [to] use one of the large outhouses, back of the barracks. The idea was to dig out under the high fence back of this building, which was guarded. This we began to do not long after we got there. We had men in the outbuilding digging, & pulling the dirt back, & in order to keep back suspicion we would play marbles & engage in other amusements, around the building. . . .” Ultimately, though, the guards discovered the tunnel and put an end to it. Some prisoners managed to escape in coffins meant for their dead comrades. The guards would take the “dead” man in the coffin to an outbuilding a short distance outside the walls, where they would deposit the coffin, unguarded. After a while, the live man would emerge from the coffin at night and make his escape. In this way many of the Tennesseans escaped, and of course the Texans tried the same things.¹⁰

In their letters, Texans expressed contentment with the treatment they received. Pvt. Franz Collier of the 6th Texas wrote that the provisions issued him at Camp Butler exceeded those he had received in the Confederate service. William Oliphant of Company G remembered the, “barracks were comfortable. . . . Stoves were set up for us and we were furnished with plenty of fuel.” Despite these statements, hygiene remained poor in the camps and measles, coupled with smallpox and pneumonia, made their appearances in the camps soon after the Texans arrived. By the end of February 1863, 103 deaths had occurred among the Texans at Camp Butler.¹¹

Boredom also stalked the prisoners, and the men reacted in different ways. Some bought rubber buttons and carved them into rings, while others whittled whistles and pipes from wood, which they sold to guards and visitors. The Texans also played

¹⁰ Joseph Hinkle, “The Odyssey of Private Hinkle,” *Civil War Times Illustrated*, 8, no. 8: 27.

¹¹ Collier and Oliphant as quoted in Spurlin, *Leuschner*, 14-15.

marbles, chess, cards, wrote letters, sang songs, and in Gen. whiled away their time as best they could. Seventeen-year-old Austinite William Oliphant of Company G, 6th Texas found himself lying outside his barracks one day when a Federal surgeon passed. Oliphant paid him no attention, and the officer demanded to know why he had not saluted. At this, Oliphant suggested that the surgeon “emigrate to a country where the climate was much warmer than any to be found in America.” The enraged surgeon returned with some guards, and threw Oliphant into the smallpox ward to serve as a nurse in the hope that he would catch the disease. Unbeknownst to the surgeon, Oliphant had already suffered through and acquired immunity to the disease, and he cared for the sick as best he could for ten days. After this period the surgeon, disgusted that Oliphant had not contracted the illness, ordered him back to his barracks.¹²

Taking the Oath of Allegiance to the United States became the only way to escape from Camp Butler with the blessing of the commandant. Petitions outlining the process constantly circulated through the ranks, reminding the men of this alternative. In all, seventy-three members of the 6th Texas took the oath at Camp Butler, including thirty-seven from Company I alone. After the exchange, Company I, 6th Texas ceased to exist because of this massive desertion. Thirty-eight members of the 24th Texas took the oath, as did twenty-six men of the 25th, bringing the total amount at Camp Butler to 137, approximately eight percent of the men from these regiments captured at Arkansas Post. The Federals used the Oath of Allegiance to encourage Confederate desertion. They enticed those with the weakest ties to the Confederacy, and the strongest ties to home, to take “the Oath,” and this weakened the resolve of the other prisoners. In all, taking the

¹² Oliphant, “Memoirs of William J. Oliphant,” (hand-written manuscript in the Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Austin, Texas.)

Oath of Allegiance became an attractive way to avoid further Confederate service and thus significantly weakened the Confederacy's armies.¹³

To an even greater degree sickness ravaged the ranks at Camp Butler. Of the 1,693 enlisted men in the three regiments captured at Arkansas Post, approximately 57 members of the 6th Texas, 112 members of the 24th Texas and 137 members of the 25th Texas died of disease at Camp Butler, bringing the total to 306, roughly 18 percent of those imprisoned. Thus, the three Texas regiments near Springfield lost 443 to disease or desertion in just four months imprisonment, 26 percent of their total number.¹⁴

The Texans at Camp Douglas had a decidedly worse experience than those at Camp Butler. Located in Chicago, the camp lay barely three hundred yards from Lake Michigan. A fourteen-foot-high fence surrounded the compound, which contained wood-framed barracks situated on peeps due to the low, marshy nature of the ground. Because of the low elevation, whenever it rained the streets turned into quagmires. This factor, along with the harsh Chicago winter, made Camp Douglas a very unhealthy environment for the Arkansas Post prisoners. The camp contained a hospital within the walls and another outside the walls for smallpox patients. Camp Douglas also contained all of the customary guard towers and a "dead line" that ran all the way around the camp inside the walls. The sentries also had orders to shoot any prisoner who passed the dead line.¹⁵

¹³ For other places in which the Union forces used the Oath of Allegiance, see Mark A. Weitz, *More Damning than Slaughter: Desertion in the Confederate Army*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 58-59.

¹⁴ Compiled Service Records of the 6th, 24th and 25th Texas, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 308-314, 119-123 and 126-130. The number of 1,693 enlisted men excludes the approximately 103 officers from these regiments who were imprisoned at Camp Chase. It is impossible to determine how many men escaped from the *John J. Roe* or Camp Chase during the incarceration. These escapees added to the total number of casualties, doubtlessly pushing the percentage over 25%.

¹⁵ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 51; *Confederate Soldiers, Sailors and Civilians Who Died as Prisoners of War at Camp Douglas, Chicago, Ill., 1862-1865*, (Kalamazoo, MI: Edgar Gray Publications, 1912) There is some confusion as to the exact location of Camp Douglas. James McCaffrey in *This Band of*

The enlisted men of the 10th, 15th, 17th, and 18th Texas boarded the Chicago, Alton and St. Louis Railroad in Alton when they disembarked from the *Nebraska* in January 1863. Along the way they passed through places like Springfield and Joliet before reaching Chicago near the end of January. Roughly 1,939 enlisted men from the four Texas regiments entered Camp Douglas, minus the few men who died on the way or escaped off the *Nebraska*.¹⁶

Hundreds of these Texans had already fallen ill by the time the regiments reached Camp Douglas. Dr. George Park, regimental surgeon of the 65th Illinois, took care of the sick, while several Texan medical officers assisted him. This group included D.F. Stewart and Thomas C. Foster, Surgeon and Assistant Surgeon of the 10th Texas, and Assistant Surgeon of the 17th Texas James W. Motley. With almost no protection from the bitter winds and snow off Lake Michigan, hundreds of Texans died within the first month of incarceration. In that first month the temperature dipped to forty degrees below zero and in one night, forty prisoners froze to death. Food also proved scarce; rats, cats, and even dogs disappeared from the camp and into the stomachs of the hungry Confederates. To while away the boredom, the prisoners composed a song called “Camp Douglas by the Lake,” set to the tune of *Cottage by the Sea*. One Texan who escaped, Pvt. Niles Beeler

Heroes states that the site of Camp Douglas is now bounded by Cottage Grove Avenue, South Parkway, Thirty-First Street and Thirty-Sixth Street. However, George Levy, in his book *To Die in Chicago: Confederate Prisoners at Camp Douglas 1862-65*, (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Company, 1999), 31, states that Camp Douglas ran four blocks west from Cottage Grove Avenue to MLK Boulevard and was bounded on the south by East 33rd Place and on the north by East 31st Street. This description agrees with the author of *Confederate Soldiers, Sailors and Civilians*, who states that a monument over the tomb of Stephen A. Douglas, just west of the Illinois Central Rail Road at 34th Street marks the camp’s location. (This would have been near the southeast corner.) But Levy contradicts himself by stating that Camp Douglas lay, “just across the street,” from the University of Chicago. The present day University of Chicago is located approximately 4,800 yards south of the above-described location.

¹⁶ 656 Members of the 10th Texas infantry who surrendered at Arkansas Post departed for Camp Douglas, as did 439 members of the 15th Texas, 351 of the 17th Texas and 493 of the 18th Texas. Approximately 177 officers from these regiments were sent to Camp Chase. Compiled Service Records of the 10th, 15th, 17th and 18th Texas Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 337-343, 85-89, 93-96 and 99-103.

of Company E, 18th Texas, made it over the walls and traveled back to Texas disguised as a civilian.¹⁷

As at Camp Butler, taking the Oath of Allegiance offered an attractive way out. Seventeen members of the 10th Texas took the Oath, forty-two members of the 15th Texas deserted in this way, as did two members of the 17th Texas, while eighteen members of the 18th Texas did the same. This brought the number of Texans at Camp Douglas who took the Oath of Allegiance to seventy-nine, four percent of the total. As at Camp Butler, the Union officials at Camp Douglas used the Oath to pull on the heartstrings of the homesick Texans, imprisoned far from home. These desertions also helped weaken the Confederate war effort and the resolve of those left behind.

Death from freezing, pneumonia, smallpox, and other illnesses took a much higher toll at Camp Douglas than at Camp Butler. Eighty-five members of the 10th Texas died, as did ninety-five soldiers of the 15th Texas. One hundred and three men of the 17th Texas also expired in the harsh winter, as did 105 soldiers of the 18th Texas. This brought the death toll at Camp Douglas to a staggering 388, 20 percent of those imprisoned. Added to those who took the Oath of Allegiance, this brought the attrition rate to 24 percent.¹⁸

While the enlisted men suffered and died at camps Douglas and Butler, railroads transported the 308 officers of the seven Texas regiments from Alton, Illinois, to Camp Chase, near Columbus, Ohio. From Alton the Federals loaded the officers on common stock cars for shipment to Cincinnati, where they experienced a bitterly cold night aboard

¹⁷ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 52-53.

¹⁸ Compiled Service Records of the 10th, 15th, 17th and 18th Texas Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 337-343, 85-89, 93-96 and 99-103. These totals do not include those who escaped, or whose death went unrecorded. These numbers would undoubtedly push the total much closer to a 25% death rate.

the cars. That night, Lt. William F. Rogers of Company F, 15th Texas froze to death. At Cincinnati, they changed cars for Columbus and on the way, the Texans had to endure the constant singing of, “We will hang Jeff Davis on a sour apple tree,” by the guards. At midnight on January 30 the officers reached Columbus, exited the cars and “were formed into two ranks on a broad street in front of a hotel. The ground was frozen stiff and the north wind bit ‘shrewdly,’ the skies were as clear as a bell, and the bright fires in the hotel, and well-dressed people moving around was quite in contrast with the condition of the 300 rebel officers standing out and shivering in the cold.” While they stood in line, some ladies of Columbus went through the ranks distributing food, which the famished Confederates gladly accepted. At 1 a.m. the guards ushered their captives out onto the National Pike, and at 3:30 they reached Camp Chase in the midst of “a blinding snow storm.”¹⁹

At Camp Chase the first order of business became registering and searching the prisoners. The sentries led each officer into “a kind of ante room” one at a time, where a clerk recorded his name, rank, regiment and state, and then a big Federal soldier would search him, “in order to be sure that we had no gunboats, torpedoes, shotguns, or mountain howitzers in our old clothes.” By the time this process reached completion, the “snow was coming down in full-grown flakes.” The Confederates found two rows of buildings within the walls of the camp, with a street between them. Each building measured about three hundred feet by fifteen feet, divided up into rooms approximately twelve feet by fifteen feet. The Federals had furnished each room with a stove, cooking

¹⁹ Collins, *Chapters*, 83-86; Compiled Service Records of the 15th Texas Cavalry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 85-89.

utensils and blankets, with bunks “something like the shelving in a store with room for two.”²⁰

About fourteen men lived in each room, and life soon became monotonous for the officers. Capt. Foster complained of no reading material, “no books—no newspaper except one little negro loving paper published at Cin. O. blackest of the black.” In Foster’s mess, they began to carve out chess pieces from carrots, and someone got hold of a deck of cards from which they played euchre. Foster noted that they led a lazy life; cooking, eating, sleeping, playing chess and euchre, and carving out small rings. One of the Texas officers, Lt. James Selkirk of the 6th Texas had relatives living in New York State, and they furnished him liberally with money and clothing, which he generously shared with his compatriots.²¹

Theological debates, discussions, and sermons also occupied the time of the officers. Lt. Collins remembered:

“We had two Methodist preachers with us, Rev. [Clayton] Gillespie, Colonel of the 24th Texas, and Rev. [Frank] Wilkes, Colonel of the 25th Texas. They would preach for us on Sunday when not hushed up by the officer of the day. We remember one nice, bright Sunday morning we were all on the ground in rows like chickens on a bean pole, and the Rev. Gillespie was dishing out some good gospel from a text, where some lecherous, broken down king was making war on some one who was leading a rebellion against him. Col. Gillespie was lifting the king’s scalp in an artistic manner, and the lines of comparison he was running seemed to point in the direction of Washington City. We were drinking it down like good medicine. The Federal officer soon got enough of it and ordered us to disband and go to our quarters.”²²

²⁰ Collins, *Chapters*, 85-89.

²¹ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 29; Collins, *Chapters*, 90.

²² Collins, *Chapters*, 91-92. Captain Foster also recorded the sermon preached by Colonel Wilkes. It occurred on March 27, 1863, the day that President Jefferson Davis had set aside for prayer and fasting. Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 32.

The officers, like the enlisted men, also turned their attention to escape. Beneath the barracks they began a tunnel that had reached forty feet in length before a lieutenant from Arkansas reported the attempt to Capt. Edwin Webber, commandant of the camp. Capt. Foster reported of the Arkansan, “if they had not took him out as quick as they did we would have hung him. . . . There were about 150 of us going out, and our plans were to capture all the arms here at this place, then open the prison, turn all the balance out, and arm the whole lot—make our way as fast as we could to the Ohio river and cross over into Ky. and get with Gen’l Morgan.”²³

One day in March, three visiting dignitaries paid a visit to Camp Chase to see the prisoners, especially the highest ranking officer, Gen. Churchill. Military Governor Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, Governor David Tod of Ohio, and Senator Jesse Bright of Indiana composed the triumvirate who intended to call on Churchill. While Webber welcomed the three governors, a group of Confederate officers gathered outside Churchill’s quarters. When the three dignitaries gathered, Webber conversed with the Rebel commander, who refused to see them. A cheer erupted from the prisoners, and according to Lt. Collins, “Andy Johnson turned around and gave us a look of contempt and withering scorn that would have made ordinary mortals quake in their boots.” After this incident, Johnson, Tod and Bright departed.²⁴

To pass the time, the officers regularly discussed the subjects of politics and religion. Around Col. John T. Coit’s mess, theological debates took center stage, while around Roger Q. Mills’s politics became the subject of the day. Even literary discussion found a place at Camp Chase in Deshler’s mess. The theological discussions proved

²³ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 32-33.

²⁴ Collins, *Chapters*, 94.

particularly heated, with Coit a devoted Presbyterian. To counter this view, Capt. Sebron Sneed of the 6th Texas had once studied for the Catholic priesthood. Collins remembered spending many enjoyable hours listening to these discussions.²⁵

In contrast to the attrition rates at Camps Douglas and Butler, very few fatalities occurred at Camp Chase. There is also no record of any of the officers taking the Oath of Allegiance to the United States. Many of the officers hoarded clothing and blankets, despite orders not to do so, and several of the prisoners at Camp Chase even gained weight during their incarceration.²⁶

As winter thawed into spring in the Midwest, the enlisted men and officers of the Arkansas Post garrison whiled away their time, making the best of their circumstances. The time would soon come, however, when they would be reunited and again fighting for the Confederacy, this time east of the Mississippi in the decisive theater of conflict between that river and the Appalachians.

The time in prison established several things for the Arkansas Post prisoners. First, it winnowed the ranks through disease and desertion, damaging the Confederate cause. It apparently also strengthened the resolve of those who survived it, because they found themselves the toughest of those still alive. They had their opportunities to desert and had not taken them, indicating that those who came out of prison would ultimately prove the most devoted to the Confederate cause. Desertion also dropped off noticeably after their exchange. Adverse circumstances would continue to dog these Texans, but

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ There are only 6 Texan officers who are recorded as having died at Camp Chase. Lieutenant Rogers of Company F, 15th Texas (1-27-63), 1st Lt. E.R. Allen, Company E, 10th Texas, (2-11-63), 2nd Lt. James Weatherly of Company H, 17th Texas, (2-11-63), 2nd Lt. William Malone, Company E, 6th Texas (3-11-63), Captain Joseph L. Lindsey, Company C, 24th Texas, (2-6-63) and Jr. 2nd Lt. John Thomas, Company K, 25th Texas, (2-7-63). Compiled Service Records of the 6th, 10th, 15th, 17th, 18th, 24th and 25th Texas Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 308-314, 337-343, 85-89, 93-96, 99-103, 119-123 and 126-130.

those who made it out of prison alive found themselves destined to become Granbury's Texas Brigade, a unit that would have benefited tremendously from all the men who had deserted, but a unit that none the less carried on the fight and reached its prime despite the attrition.

Chapter 7

A New Start

Following the exchange of the Arkansas Post prisoners, the Confederate war effort continued to fare badly with the Tullahoma Campaign. The regiments captured at the Arkansas Post also suffered the ignominious fate of consolidation with each other, destroying their original regimental identities and further disheartening them. After their exchange, the Arkansas Post prisoners suffered a steady stream of desertion from men weakened and dispirited by prison and by the loss of Chattanooga. They also complained bitterly about their new consolidations and commanders, adding to the dissatisfaction in the ranks. These setbacks depressed morale, but most Texans stayed with their regiments, sustained through faith in themselves and their cause, prolonging the Confederate cause.

By spring Federal officials had arranged an exchange of the Arkansas Post prisoners. Normally the exchange would have taken place at Vicksburg, but because of the ongoing efforts of Grant to capture the city, Quartermaster Gen. Montgomery Meigs decided to send the Arkansas Post regiments to Virginia. Around the first of April the Federals loaded the first contingent of five hundred prisoners onto trains for their journey east. The westerners first traveled by train to Indianapolis and Columbus. All along the way, hostile crowds hurled rocks, insults and beer bottles at the passing Confederates, forcing their Yankee guards to protect them from harm. In several shipments of five hundred each, they sent the prisoners to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Elmira, New York, before reaching the Susquehanna River. Here the guards loaded them aboard steamers, and sent them down river into Chesapeake Bay and thus to Fort Monroe, on the tip of the Virginia Peninsula. At Fort Monroe the Federal authorities arranged an exchange for the

prisoners with the Confederate War Department. After their exchange, the former prisoners sailed upriver to City Point, Virginia, where they again set foot on dry land and continued by rail to Model Barracks near Petersburg, Virginia. At Model Barracks they awaited the rest of the prisoners and their officers.¹ The Texans and Arkansans spent their time quietly at Model Barracks as the Confederate War Department tried to decide what to do with them. Despite this tranquility, events in northern Virginia soon interrupted their repose.

On May 5, Confederate officials suddenly shipped the former prisoners north to Richmond to act as a part of the city's home guard during the Battle of Chancellorsville. After arriving, the former prisoners merely marched to the city square to await further orders. There they spent the night in a church on Canal Street, and the next morning moved out onto the Ashland Road to picket the roads leading into the Confederate capital. That morning as they moved northeast out of the city, "a young lady came to the window to ask what soldiers we were, and we told her Texans, and she screamed to her mother not to be uneasy, that the Texans were there."² A little later on, the Texans encountered Hood's Texas Brigade, a part of James Longstreet's Corps, hurrying to the front to rejoin Lee. An emotional reunion ensued in which friends and relatives enquired about one another.

After the emergency of defending Richmond passed, Confederate officials transported the Texans and Arkansans back to Petersburg and from there to Tennessee. From Model Barracks on May 9, Col. Robert R. Garland placed his brigade on cars bound for the Army of Tennessee, followed some days later by the rest of the Arkansas

¹ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 349-353.

² Mamie Yeary, *Reminiscences of the Boys in Gray*, (Dayton, Ohio: Morning House, Inc., 1986), 746.

Post garrison, the brigade of Col. James Deshler. On May 12, While Deshler's men awaited transportation, Sgt. Andrew Murphey of Company H, 17th Texas Cavalry marched as a part of the honor guard accompanying the body of Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson as it lay in state in the Confederate capitol. "His countenance was lovely to look upon," commented Murphy, "although asleep in death."³ The former prisoners traveled by rail to Knoxville and then on to Chattanooga, where they boarded trains for Tullahoma and finally marched from there to Wartrace to join the Army of Tennessee.

Months before the Arkansas Post prisoners arrived, the high command of the Army of Tennessee had degenerated into chaos. The year 1863 had not begun well for the army commander, Braxton Bragg. Following his retreat from Kentucky and defeat at Murfreesboro in December 1862, events began to spin out of control. Almost immediately after Murfreesboro the Confederate press and some of his subordinates began to criticize Bragg for his retreat. A number of his subordinates, including Maj. Gens. Leonidas Polk and John Breckenridge, became his chief detractors. In addition, the Confederate government began stripping the Army of Tennessee to reinforce the more threatened parts of the country. In April, Bragg could count nearly 50,000 effectives. The following month Davis redirected John McCown's and Breckenridge's infantry divisions to reinforce Joseph Johnston in Mississippi. At that time Johnston had the task of raising the siege of Vicksburg. This, coupled with the detachment of much of his cavalry, left

³ *Ibid.*, 552.

Bragg with barely 30,000 men. Consequently, he took up a defensive stance behind the Highland Rim in middle Tennessee.⁴

Adding to his problems, at this juncture Bragg had to deal with the question of what to do with the Arkansas Post garrison. When they arrived at Wartrace, the Texans and Arkansans promptly caught “*fits*” according to Capt. Samuel Foster of the 24th Texas. “These old soldiers came into our camp,” he explained, “and want to know all about that surrender over in Ark. Want to know why we did’n’t fight &c and as we pass their camp or any of them pass us they hollow at us ‘Who raised the white flag in Ark.’ ‘*We don’t want you here if you can’t see a Yank without holding up your shirt to him*’ – ‘*Lie down I am going to pop a cap—don’t pull off your shirt it won’t hurt you*’—and more—it was constant. We could never get out of some old fool making fun of us about that fight at Ark. Post.”⁵ Rumor had it that only one division commander, Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne, stood willing to “try” the Texans and Arkansans, and so Churchill’s Brigade became a part of Cleburne’s Division in Lt. Gen. William J. Hardee’s Corps.⁶

Next to Hiram Granbury, Patrick Cleburne would have the biggest influence on Granbury’s Texas Brigade from the time they joined the Army of Tennessee until his death at Franklin. Born on March 17, 1828 in County Cork, Ireland, Cleburne gained his first military experience during a three-year stint in Her Majesty’s 41st Regiment of Foot. After purchasing his discharge, Cleburne came to the United States via New Orleans in 1849. Using his education, Cleburne worked as an apothecary in Cincinnati, Ohio but

⁴ Thomas L. Connelly, *Autumn of Glory: The Army of Tennessee 1862-1865*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 110. For more on Braxton Bragg, see Grady McWhiney, *Braxton Bragg and Confederate Defeat, Vol. I*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1969), and *Vol. II* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1991).

⁵ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 43.

⁶ *Ibid.*

later moved to Helena, Arkansas. In Helena, he became a partner in a drugstore and studied law. By the time of the Civil War, Cleburne had become a prosperous attorney and was elected colonel of the 15th Arkansas Infantry in 1861. In March, 1862 he received a promotion to brigadier general, and led a brigade at Shiloh. At the Battle of Perryville in October, 1862 he received a minor wound and was again wounded at the Battle of Richmond, where he commanded a division. On December 13, 1862 Cleburne received a promotion to major general, putting him in position to “take on” the Texans and Arkansans in Tennessee into his division in the summer of 1863.⁷

When they arrived in Tennessee, Bragg ordered Churchill to consolidate the Texans and Arkansans from three brigades into one, due to the loss of men during incarceration. Churchill formed the seven Texas regiments into two and the two Arkansas regiments into one. He consolidated the 6th and 10th Texas Infantry Regiments along with the 15th Texas Dismounted Cavalry into the 6th 10th & 15th Texas under Col. Roger Q. Mills of the 10th Texas. Churchill formed the second Texas regiment from the 17th, 18th, 24th, and 25th Texas Dismounted Cavalry Regiments into the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas under Col. Clayton C. Gillespie of the 25th Texas. Finally, he consolidated the 19th and 24th Arkansas Infantry Regiments into the 19th & 24th Arkansas under the command of Col. A.S. Hutchinson. At first Churchill attempted to organize the regiments according to company designation, but the men universally protested this method. Instead he organized each of the original regiments into separate battalions, composed of three or four companies apiece, to act together in the field as a regiment. The Texans sorely resented these consolidations and longed for a return to their original regiments. Col.

⁷ Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 53-54.

Mills wrote his wife, “I have now a very fine command, but it is not my old tenth . . . I had rather command my old one, though small, than a half-dozen blended . . . it makes me sorrowful, every time I think of my old Rgmt. having lost its identity.”⁸ Similarly, Capt. Bryan Marsh of the 17th Texas wrote, “The old 17th regiment is no more. She was buried at Tullahoma on the 23rd of last month [May] by Parson C.C. Gillespie of the 25.”⁹ Because of these new consolidations, Churchill found many of his officers supernumeraries and reassigned them west of the Mississippi, adding to the dissatisfaction of the men in the ranks. These command assignments also temporarily excluded the ranking officer of the brigade, Col. Robert R. Garland, whom Bragg reassigned pending a court-martial hearing into his role in the surrender at Arkansas Post.

⁸ R.Q. Mills to his wife, June 13, 1863 Box 2F42, University of Texas Archives. When the 6th 10th & 15th Texas Regiments were consolidated, the three original company As became Company A in the new regiment, etc. The Company consolidations in the 17th, 18th, 24th & 25th Texas were as follows in the new regiment:

Original Regiment	Co. A	Co. B	Co. C	Co. D	Co. E	Co. F	Co. G	Co. H	Co. I	Co. K
17 th Texas Cavalry	Co. A, E, F, G			Co. D			Co. B	Co. H	Co. C, I	Co. K
18 th Texas Cavalry	Co. A	Co. B	Co. C	Co. D	Co. E	Co. F	Co. G	Co. H	Co. I	Co. K
24 th Texas Cavalry	Co. A	Co. B	Co. I, K	Co. D	Co. E	Co. F	Co. G	Co. H	Co. C	
25 th Texas Cavalry	Co. A	Co. B		Co. D	Co. E	Co. F	Co. G	Co. C, H	Co. I	Co. K

⁹ Bryan Marsh, “The Confederate Letters of Bryan Marsh,” *Chronicles of Smith County*, 14 no. 2: 24.

On June 1 Cleburne decided to assemble his division in the vicinity of Wartrace. Accordingly, Churchill moved his brigade to the designated rendezvous spot, meeting with the other units of the division on June 3. As soon as the division had assembled, Cleburne began whipping the Arkansas Post brigade into shape. "We are under the most stricked disspling that I ever saw; we drill seven hours evry day," wrote Pvt. A.L. Orr of the 18th Texas. "Gen. Clayborn is our drill officer and the tites one you ever saw." Similarly his brother, Pvt. J.N. Orr, wrote, "Gen. Claybourn (our Division Commander) drilles us very hard; we will soon be as well drilled as any troops in the servis."¹⁰ Capt. Bryan Marsh of the 17th Texas wrote his wife, "it used to make me mad to hear the Trans Miss Army called the ragamuffin army but I am compell now to acknowledge it to be so. We ner knew what soldiering ment until since we have bin hear."¹¹

For the Confederacy, Vicksburg remained the preeminent point of interest in gauging the progress of the war in this summer of 1863. Lincoln knew it; Davis knew it, and perhaps as significantly the men in the ranks knew it. On June 20, Marsh wrote his wife from Wartrace, "The too armys are lying hear fasing each other waiting the result of affairs at Vicksburg. It is generally believed hear that if Vicksburg surrenders that Bragg will fall back but if Grant should be whiped that Rosecrans will either have to fight or fall back."¹² Pvt. J.N. Orr of the 18th Texas wrote home on June 13, "It is generally thought here that thare wont be any engagement here untill the battle is decided at VixBurg."¹³ Despite these uncertainties the morale of the Texans in Deshler's Brigade remained high.

¹⁰ John Q. Anderson ed., *Campaigning With Parson's Texas Cavalry Brigade, C.S.A.: The War Journal and Letters of the Four Orr Brothers, 12th Texas Cavalry*, (Hillsboro, Tex.: Hill Junior College Press, 1967), 108.

¹¹ Marsh, "The Confederate Letters of Bryan Marsh," 24.

¹² *Ibid.*, 25.

¹³ Anderson, *Campaigning With Parson's Texas Cavalry Brigade*, 108.

Sgt. William Heartsill of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas wrote on June 15 that at night, “when the bands strike up ‘Dixie’ or the ‘Bonnie Blue Flag’ the boys make these Tennessee Beech groves ring with their Texas yells, all as happy and as merry as if on a pic-nic excursion. . . .”¹⁴

The general perception among the Texans that nothing would happen in their front until the fall of Vicksburg turned into a false hope. Because of its focus on Vicksburg, the Lincoln administration began prodding and pushing Rosecrans to make an advance with his Army of the Cumberland before Bragg could reinforce Johnston in Mississippi. For several months Lincoln put a great deal of pressure on Rosecrans to move forward. Finally, on June 23, Rosecrans prepared to move.¹⁵

That day Brig. Gen. David Stanley and his Federal troopers rode out against Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk’s Confederates around Shelbyville, initiating the Tullahoma Campaign. Early the next morning Maj. Gen. George Thomas moved his Federal corps against Hoover’s Gap and soon captured the pass. With Hoover’s Gap secured, Thomas possessed an almost uncontested avenue to the railroad bridge over the Elk River, Bragg’s only line of retreat to Chattanooga.¹⁶

The increased activity soon affected Churchill’s Texans and Arkansans. On the afternoon of June 25, the 19th & 24th Arkansas and the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas

¹⁴ Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-One Days*, 131. Sergeant William W. Heartsill was a member of Company F, 2nd Texas Cavalry Regiment under Colonel John S. Ford. This company titled themselves the “W.P. Lane Rangers” under Captain Samuel J. Richardson. Richardson and his company were initially stationed on the Texas frontier guarding the settlers against Indian attacks. However, Heartsill and his comrades wanted to fight Yankees and at length were ordered to Arkansas, arriving in November, 1862. They were immediately ordered to the Arkansas Post where they were captured with the rest of the garrison on January 11, 1863. After their exchange the officers and many of the enlisted men were reassigned west of the Mississippi while Heartsill and a little less than twenty of his comrades were folded in with Captain L.M. Nutt’s company of Louisiana Cavalry which was designated Company L 10th Texas Infantry. Heartsill and his comrades thus became a part of Mills’ 6th 10th & 15th Texas.

¹⁵ Peter Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound: The Battle of Chickamauga*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 14-17.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

departed their camp near Wartrace for Liberty Gap, in the center of the Confederate position. Early the next morning Mills, with his 6th 10th & 15th Texas, followed the rest of the brigade and overtook them just south of the town of Bell Buckle below Liberty Gap. When Churchill and his men arrived that morning he ordered Mills' 6th 10th & 15th Texas, along with Douglas' Texas Battery, to relieve two regiments of Brig. Gen. S.A.M. Wood's Brigade posted in the gap.¹⁷ Churchill kept back the rest of his brigade as a reserve.¹⁸

When Mills' regiment replaced two of Wood's regiments posted in the gap, the Texans decided to play a prank on the unsuspecting Mississippians. The men of Wood's Brigade had become some of the most vociferous detractors of the Texans when the Arkansas Post brigade first joined Cleburne's Division, and the Texans determined to exact some revenge. The "mud-heads," as the Texans referred to them, had taken up positions a bit further down the hill in the rear of the Texans on ground which, according to Lt. Robert Collins, was covered "sort of iron ore pebbles." As Collins described it, "the Texans would flip these pebbles right over the heads of the Mississippians in such a manner as to make them sing like a minnie ball, and they stuck their heads so close to the ground that their mustaches took root and commenced to grow. We had fun enough for all until they caught us in the trick."¹⁹ Instead of becoming angry, however, the Mississippians simply laughed along with the Texans and grudgingly acknowledged the rectification of past injustices. After replacing Wood's regiments, Mills's men skirmished for most of the rest of the day with the advancing Federals.

¹⁷ Lucia R. Douglas ed., *Douglas' Texas Battery, CSA*, (Tyler, Tex.: Smith County Historical Society, 1966), 69.

¹⁸ O.R. Series I, Vol. 23, pt. 1, 587.

¹⁹ Collins, *Chapters*, 135.

With the bulk of the Yankee infantry moving down almost upon the rear of the Army of Tennessee, and with Bragg still unaware of Rosecrans's intentions, it appeared as if the Federals might cut off the Army of Tennessee from Chattanooga and destroy it. At that moment, nature intervened on behalf of the Confederates. Early on June 25, a heavy rain commenced in Middle Tennessee, turning the roads into nearly impassable quagmires. This substantially slowed the advance of Rosecrans's infantry. The rain continued for three straight days, allowing Bragg to react. By June 27, Bragg had started withdrawing his men toward Tullahoma by rail.

Hardee chose Cleburne's Division to serve as rear-guard, and Cleburne placed Churchill's Brigade in the rear, personally accompanying the Texans and Arkansans. Hardee ordered the westerners to protect the rear of the division as well as valuable military supplies. The veterans of Arkansas Post, accompanied by Cleburne, withdrew slowly, crossing the Duck River on the afternoon of June 27. They then continued several more miles into the night before dropping, exhausted, on both sides of the road for some rest. That night the rain came down like a "mill tail" as Churchill ordered his men into an old field to sleep on their arms.

At Tullahoma Bragg planned to make a stand against Rosecrans, but the rapidity of the Federal advance completely unnerved the Confederate commander, and added to his enfeebled physical condition, convinced him that he could not hold Tullahoma. Two days later Bragg learned that Rosecrans had started concentrating the entire Army of the Cumberland at Manchester, and he decided to withdraw to the south bank of the Elk River.²⁰ South from Tullahoma the Texans of Churchill's Brigade slogged along. "Hour after hour we marched through the mud," complained Heartsill, "so tired we can scarcely

²⁰ Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 19-20.

put one foot before the other, every few hundred yards may be seen one, two or half a dozen men by the road side sick or too tired to go further without rest.”²¹

On July 1 Churchill’s Brigade, still acting as the rear-guard of the army, crossed the Elk near Allisonia over the Bethpage Bridge. No sooner had the Texans and Arkansans sat down to rest on the south side of the river than Churchill ordered them to double-quick back across to fend off the pursuing Federals. The infantrymen went for two miles at a run before halting and forming a line of battle. By this time the rain had ceased, and Churchill’s men stood in the hot sun for several hours during sporadic skirmishing with the enemy.

With the 8th and 11th Texas Cavalry Regiments on either flank of Douglas’s Texas Battery, Col. Mills halted to give his men a rousing speech. “Texas cavalry on the right; Texas cavalry on the left; a Texas Battery in center,” he bellowed, “who dare come against us.”²² Despite this bravado nothing happened, and in the evening the rear-guard re-crossed the Elk. Again at Cowan, Tennessee, ten miles south of Tullahoma, Bragg halted to oppose Rosecrans. As at Tullahoma, the Confederate commander, pressured by Polk and Hardee, ordered a retreat, this time all the way across the Tennessee River to Chattanooga. As the men of Churchill’s Brigade began to scale the northern face of the Cumberland Mountains, men began dropping from the ranks due to exhaustion. Though the pursuing Federals remained close on their heels, many simply could not go any further and fell by the wayside. Expressing his discomfort, Heartsill, one of the “dismounted” cavalymen, wrote on July 3, “never in my life. . .was I as completely worn

²¹ Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-one Days*, 134.

²² Collins, *Chapters*, 136.

out, I cannot make anything out of this infantry business; it beats me decidedly,” he continued, “my feet are almost one solid blister and my shoulders are worn out.”²³

As the Confederate cavalry fended off their pursuers, Churchill’s men continued marching south, crossing the Tennessee at Kelly’s Ford, five miles west of Chattanooga. Here, on July 6 along the banks of the river, a humorous event occurred between a Texan in Churchill’s Brigade and Gen. Hardee. Lt. Robert Collins of the 15th Texas had fallen ill and become separated from his command. When Collins approached the Tennessee River, the brigade had not come up yet, but several men from different commands, some of them Texans, had already arrived. On the banks of the river the Confederate provost guard refused to allow anyone to cross the pontoons until their respective commands caught up with them. Collins remembered, “Our Corps commander Gen. Hardee was there; a long keen Texas soldier said he was going over anyhow; when he started, Gen. Hardee drew his sword and made a dive for him. The fellow jumped into the river and the General plunged in after him on horseback. This created some excitement and no little amusement for the boys.”²⁴ With this diversion, Collins simply walked across the bridge. The rest of the Texans and Arkansans crossed the river a short time later, and went into camp on the slope of Raccoon Mountain. As a precaution, Churchill ordered Gillespie’s 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas back to Kelly’s Ford to perform guard duty all night. Three days later Churchill’s Brigade moved by rail to Tyner’s Station, twelve miles east of Chattanooga, to join the rest of Cleburne’s Division.

In a matter of less than two weeks Rosecrans had forced Bragg to evacuate all of Middle Tennessee, and at the same time even greater events had transpired in

²³ Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-one Days*, 136-37.

²⁴ Collins, *Chapters*, 140.

Pennsylvania and Mississippi. Capt. Samuel Foster wrote in early July, “We hear that Vicksburg has fallen and on the 10th Jackson Miss was attacked and Charleston S c also, by land and by water and that Lee has fallen back, and the Yanks are advancing on this place with a view to going into Georgia and Alabama.”²⁵ The terrible truth about Confederate reverses began to circulate through the ranks of the Army of Tennessee. On July 4 Pemberton surrendered Vicksburg to Grant. Five days later Port Hudson, also surrendered, giving the Federals full control of the Mississippi. Following Vicksburg, Grant and Sherman turned part of their forces on Johnston at Jackson. On July 1-3 Robert E. Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia fought George Meade and the Army of the Potomac to a bloody standstill in southern Pennsylvania around Gettysburg. Meade gained a slight advantage, and after the loss of 28,000 casualties Lee withdrew back into Virginia on July 4, ending his invasion of Pennsylvania. Charleston, South Carolina also remained under siege by Federal land and naval forces, but continued to hold out.

From Vicksburg to Chattanooga to Gettysburg the fortunes of the Confederacy waned, depressing the morale of the men in the ranks, and focusing the attention of both governments on the armies in Tennessee. The reverses further tested the commitment of the men in the ranks to the idea of a Confederate nation. For Braxton Bragg the Tullahoma Campaign nearly undid him. Sick and suffering from an attack of boils, the Confederate commander checked himself into a hospital in Ringgold, Georgia, south of Chattanooga to recover. With Bragg once again at a loss, initiative passed to Rosecrans.

In the camp of the Arkansas Post Brigade changes controversy followed closely on the heels of their arrival at Tyner’s Station. On July 9 Churchill requested a transfer to

²⁵ Brown, *One of Cleburnes’s Command*, 48-49.

the Trans Mississippi Department. A few days later, on July 14, Col. Garland requested a court of inquiry because the report about Arkansas Post submitted by Churchill had “seriously impeached” his reputation as a soldier. William Mackall, the Chief of Staff of the Army of Tennessee, respectfully forwarded the request to Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper in Richmond. Cooper replied, “The exigencies of the service will not admit of assembling a court of inquiry at this time.”²⁶ To satisfy Garland, Churchill called for an informal court in the camp of the brigade at Tyner’s Station. “All the investigation could not ascertain who gave the order to raise the white Flag on the Fort, at Ark. Post,” wrote Capt. Foster. “They came very near finding *where* it started but not *who* started it. *Nor will it ever be known in this world.*”²⁷

In addition to these disruptions in brigade leadership, on July 14 Bragg transferred Hardee, at his own request, to serve under Johnston in Mississippi. Hardee felt that after the dismal Tullahoma Campaign he could no longer serve under Bragg. In his stead, Davis appointed Maj. Gen. Daniel Harvey Hill to the rank of lieutenant general and ordered him to take command of Hardee’s Corps around Chattanooga.²⁸

The poor weather and retreat from Wartrace seriously damaged the condition of Churchill’s men, but with their semi-permanent encampment around Tyner’s Station, Cleburne managed to return a measure of discipline and morale to the westerners. The men spent the last of July and the first few days of August constructing brush arbors for shelter from the Tennessee summer sun. This type of shelter became necessary because

²⁶ O.R. Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 1, 780-796. The surrender of the garrison at Arkansas Post was indeed very suspicious. Secretary of War James A. Seddson himself wrote on May 9 1863, “The strange circumstances causing the capture of Arkansas Post demand investigation. I recommend a court of inquiry.” O.R. Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 1, 782.

²⁷ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 49.

²⁸ Daniel Harvey Hill, “Chickamauga-The Great Battle of the West,” *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. III, (Secaucus, N.J.: Book Sales Inc.), 638.

before leaving Tullahoma they had burned their tents as impediments to their withdrawal.²⁹ The regularized discipline implemented at Tyner's Station helped to revive the morale of the men, but the arrival of bad news on other fronts counteracted these trends. On July 22 the westerners learned that Johnston had abandoned Jackson, Lee had fallen back into Virginia, and Charleston remained under siege. Sgt. Heartsill wrote, "take it all in all, these are the 'dark days' of the Confederacy, but all will come out right in the end, we WILL succeed in this strife for independence."³⁰ During this period the Texans also fared well in foraging the surrounding countryside. On July 28 Heartsill noted ruefully in his diary, "Col. Mills is trying to guard all the corn fields in this County, one hundred from this Regiment on guard today, I am thinking," he mused, "the remedy will prove more fatal than the disease; for the guards will bring an armful into camp every time they come and will manage to have considerable business on hand that will require their presence quite often."³¹

On July 31 Cleburne paraded Churchill's men in front of their new corps commander, D.H. Hill, who had arrived two weeks earlier. Richmond granted Churchill's request for a transfer, and on August 18, Col. James Deshler arrived to take command of the Arkansas Post brigade.³² Deshler came with the recommendation of none other than Robert E. Lee, and the appointment of this professional soldier suited most of the westerners well.

Col. Roger Q. Mills, commanding the 6th 10th & 15th Texas, was not so sure. On August 16 he wrote his wife, "Garland has applied for the place I now hold on the ground

²⁹ Turner, "Jim Turner," 162.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-one Days*, 139.

³² *Ibid.*

that he is my senior. . . . General Churchill refused to permit him to command and stated in writing to General Bragg that I was the best officer.” Mills’ concern centered on the fact that Deshler favored Garland for command of the regiment, and Mills felt that if Garland applied under this new commander Deshler “will give it to him.” Despite the ruminations of Mills, and regardless of Deshler’s preference for Garland, events in late August precluded such a change in command. Despite Mills’s claims that he remained the best officer, some of the men of his regiment did not think highly of him. On the night of August 14 a Texan in Mills’s command raised a hearty yell, which others took up and echoed along the whole regiment. Soon afterwards, Mills issued orders as one soldier remembered, “for every man to be quiet or suffer severe punishment . . . the men cannot engage in a little merriment occasionally without displeasing our RULER, petty tyranny now reigns over this Regiment. . . .” Despite their displeasure with Mills, the Texans also knew that Col. Garland had a propensity for stricter discipline, and thus they indulged the occasional “petty tyrannies” of “King Roger.”³³

On August 15, after six weeks of inaction, William Rosecrans prepared to strike. Impressed with his own success, he planned to cross the river west of Chattanooga and flank the Confederates out of the city. The next day he set his army in motion. In conjunction with the movement by the Army of the Cumberland, Rosecrans instructed Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside with his IX Corps in East Tennessee to hold Confederate Lt. Gen. Simon Buckner and his divisions in place, keeping them from reinforcing Bragg.

³³ R.Q. Mills to his Wife, August 16, 1863, Box 2F42, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin; Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-one Days*, 141. Heartsill’s comments in this case must be taken with a grain of salt. It must be remembered that this disaffected Confederate sergeant was separated from the rest of his company, forced to serve under unfamiliar officers and disgruntled from having to serve as an infantryman instead of his usual role in the cavalry.

The plan got off to a good start, and it appeared as if Rosecrans would again dupe Bragg.³⁴

Though Bragg did not know the location of the Army of the Cumberland, he began pushing Richmond to send him reinforcements. He also appealed for aid directly to Joseph Johnston, who had 18,000 Confederates in Mississippi. Johnston agreed to send two divisions to the Army of Tennessee. On August 23, Maj. Gen. W.H.T. Walker with his three brigades of infantry departed for Chattanooga by rail. Two days later, Maj. Gen. John Breckenridge departed Mississippi with his three brigades. Though Breckenridge became an outspoken Bragg detractor, for the moment Bragg welcomed the help of he and his men.³⁵

Meanwhile, his ignorance regarding Rosecrans's movements held Bragg inactive. On August 21 the Confederate commander ordered all non-combatants to leave Chattanooga while he remained purely reactionary in his plans. By the morning of August 29 the first of the Federals set foot on the east bank of the Tennessee, and by the night of September 2 all but Thomas Crittenden's XXI Corps had gotten across the river. Early the next morning Rosecrans issued orders for his troops to start crossing the mountains into the Confederate rear. Meanwhile a lack of intelligence coupled with the effective demonstrations by Col. John Wilder's Union brigade north of Chattanooga kept Bragg and the Army of Tennessee in place. Not only did Wilder begin lobbing shells into the city, he also had his musicians mimic the bugle calls and drum beats of an entire

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

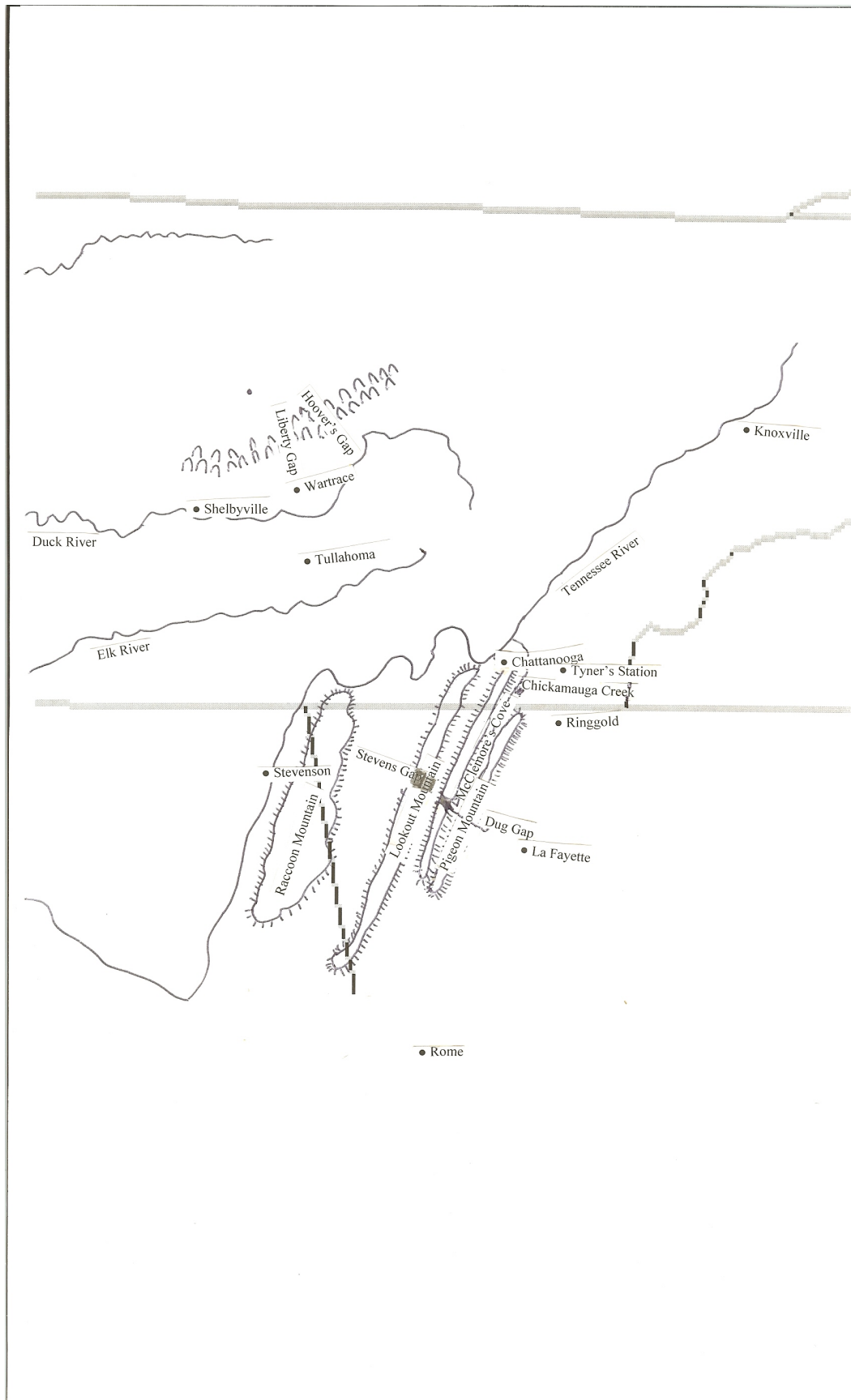
corps. Amazingly, a single brigade on the north bank of the Tennessee held the entire Confederate army in place.³⁶

Finally, on August 30, Bragg's fortunes began to turn. On that day a Confederate sympathizer from Stevenson, Alabama, near where the Federals crossed the Tennessee, arrived at Bragg's headquarters in Chattanooga. He reported the Federal movements, and Bragg responded by ordering his cavalry to protect the mountain gaps. Confederate cavalry commander Joseph Wheeler ignored his orders, however, and Bragg still lacked the information needed to act.

Then on September 5, a copy of the *Chicago Times* made its way to the headquarters of the Army of Tennessee. The paper detailed Rosecrans's plan of action, including the diversions north of Chattanooga and the crossing of Crittenden's corps. The Confederate commander immediately decided to abandon Chattanooga and march south toward Rome to catch Rosecrans crossing Lookout Mountain. On the night of September 6 Bragg pulled out of Chattanooga and headed south after the Army of the Cumberland.³⁷

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 38-48.

³⁷ Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 55-57.



The withdrawal from Chattanooga did not sit well with the Texans of Deshler's Brigade. Lt. Collins expressed his dismay at the abandonment of the town because the idea "of our army giving up the city of Chattanooga, the gate to the center of the Confederacy, was trying on our confidence in General Bragg and all others in authority over us," and as the Texans marched along they despaired among themselves with the reflection that "If we can't check them and whip them with the advantages of the river and the mountain-locked passes on the right and left of Chattanooga, where is the place we can?"³⁸ Sgt. Heartsill similarly noted, "This may not be a retreat, but it looks very much like one; but if General Johnston (as reported) is in command; then we have no fears, if however Bragg is maneuvering, then we will not be surprised to wake up one of these September mornings and find the entire army at or near Atlanta. . . ."³⁹

Rosecrans believed that Bragg was leading a badly demoralized retreat toward Atlanta. Based on this assumption, he planned to push his three corps as rapidly as possible over the mountains and catch the Army of Tennessee in the flank as it retreated southward. His principal subordinate, George Thomas, advised against such a plan. Rather, he suggested that the army move to Chattanooga to regroup before heading south in pursuit. Rosecrans, flushed with his recent successes, decided to push ahead.⁴⁰

In the early morning of September 8, Maj. Gen. William Negley's division of Thomas's XIV Corps pushed across Stevens Gap in Lookout Mountain into McClemore's Cove, a semi-enclosed valley formed by Lookout Mountain to the west and Pigeon Mountain to the east. At the southern end of the cove, the two mountains converged, while a single sluggish stream, Chickamauga Creek, ran through the valley.

³⁸ Collins, *Chapters*, 145.

³⁹ Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-one Days*, 147.

⁴⁰ Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 63.

Ten miles further north up this creek Bragg had established his headquarters at a place called Lee and Gordon's Mill. On the afternoon of the next day, September 9, Brig. Gen. William Martin, whose cavalry brigade Wheeler had reluctantly assigned to guard the gaps in Pigeon Mountain, reported to Bragg that a part of Thomas's corps had descended into McClemore's Cove and remained there, vulnerable to defeat in detail.⁴¹

Negley's isolation in McClemore's Cove presented just the opportunity Bragg had waited for to crush a part of the Army of the Cumberland. He immediately sent orders to Maj. Gen. Thomas Hindman to move his division into place at Davis's Crossroads in the north end of the cove. Meanwhile, he ordered D.H. Hill to send Cleburne's Division to Dug Gap in Pigeon Mountain, south of Negley's right flank. At the sound of Hindman's attack from the north, Bragg instructed, Cleburne was to attack from the south, catching Negley in a pincer movement and destroying him. Hindman received his orders shortly after midnight on September 10, and moved his men quickly toward Davis's Crossroads. Meanwhile Hill did not receive Bragg's orders until 4:30 a.m. on the tenth, and when he did get them, fired off a list of reasons to his commander why he could not spare Cleburne. When he received Hill's reply, Bragg ordered Simon Buckner to move up two of his divisions to compensate for the absence of Cleburne. By daylight Hindman began to grow cautious. As his men stood poised within striking distance of McClemore's Cove, he convinced himself to do nothing until he heard from Bragg or Hill. Meanwhile, Hill had changed his mind about sending Cleburne, and the Irishman had his men on the road by 1:30 p.m. on September 10. By dusk Bragg had moved his headquarters to LaFayette, closer to the front, and shortly after midnight on September 11 he ordered

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 65.

Hindman to attack, “at the earliest hour that you can see...in the morning. Cleburne will attack in front as soon as your guns are heard.”⁴²

The Georgia sun rose on September 11 with Negley still in McClemore’s Cove and the Confederates in a perfect position to crush him. By dawn the lead elements of S.A.M. Wood’s Brigade of Cleburne’s Division began picking their way through Dug Gap, closely followed by Deshler’s Texans and Arkansans. At the top of the gap Cleburne posted Wood’s Alabamans and Mississippians on the left, Deshler’s Brigade on the right and Lucius Polk’s Tennesseans in reserve. Meanwhile, to the north, Hindman received his orders from Bragg at 4 a.m. but did nothing. He sent a courier to headquarters, and though Bragg explained his plan to the courier, Hindman later claimed that he understood his orders as discretionary. At 11 a.m. one of his staff members pointed out that it appeared as if Negley’s supply wagons remained in a compromised position at the foot of Stevens Gap and could not escape. This spurred Hindman into action, and he quickly moved toward Davis’s Crossroads until his men arrived just a few hundred yards north of Negley’s left flank. At that moment he received instructions from Bragg indicating that if he found the enemy, “in such force so as to make an attack imprudent” he could fall back to LaFayette.⁴³ Hindman sent a courier to Bragg to find out whether his orders required him to attack. Finally at 4 p.m. as the sun began to set behind Lookout Mountain, Bragg’s reply came, “The attack which was ordered at daybreak must be made at once or it will be too late.” Hindman then advanced Brig. Gen. Patton Anderson’s brigade into the cove, only to find Negley and his Federals gone. Wood’s Brigade simultaneously advanced and met Anderson’s men near Chickamauga Creek.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 71.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 72.

Earlier in the morning when the Federal skirmishers encountered Wood's men coming through Dug Gap, Negley grew wary and withdrew his division back through Stevens Gap onto Lookout Mountain. The opportunity had passed. When Bragg met Hindman in the cove the Arkansan received a severe public tongue lashing from his commander. Though Bragg had the perfect opportunity to crush a part of the Federal army in detail, his plan had failed because Hill and Hindman failed to carry out his orders.⁴⁴

Bragg then spotted another opportunity. Crittenden had allowed his Union XXI Corps to become dangerously spread out along the Lafayette Road, and Bragg decided to strike him in front and flank on September 12. Bragg ordered Polk to spearhead the assault, but Polk whined about not having enough reinforcements and refused to carry out his orders. While Polk hesitated, Rosecrans realized Crittenden's danger and began concentrating his forces.⁴⁵

Then on September 15 Bragg received intelligence that reinforcements had started his way. Evander McNair's Brigade had just arrived from Mississippi, and Bragg expected Brig. Gen. John Gregg's Brigade, including the 7th Texas, to arrive momentarily from the same quarter. In addition, Lee had detached two divisions of his army under James Longstreet, whom Bragg expected to arrive within forty-eight hours. These reinforcements would bring the total Confederate strength on the field to 68,000 to face Rosecrans's 63,000 Federals. Bolstered by this intelligence, the Confederate commander decided to resume the attack.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 72-74; Steven Woodworth, *A Deep Steady Thunder: The Battle of Chickamauga*, (Abilene, Tex.: The McWhiney Foundation Press, 1998), 26.

⁴⁵ Woodworth, *A Deep Steady Thunder*, 26-27.

⁴⁶ Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 89.

On the morning of the fifteenth, Bragg called his corps commanders together and informed them of his decision to assume the initiative once again. He intended to push his divisions across the Chickamauga and cut Rosecrans to pieces. He had to postpone the attack two days, but before 1 a.m. on September 18, his orders went out for Walker and Buckner to cross Chickamauga Creek at 6:30 a.m. while Polk continued to divert Crittenden around Lee and Gordon's Mill.⁴⁷

That night the temperatures in northern Georgia fell to near freezing, and after the scorching weather of the past month, soldiers on both sides sought blankets to keep warm. "If I am not greatly mistaken," wrote William Heartsill on the night of September 17, "this time tomorrow will see many a lifeless form strewed over these valleys, whose hearts now pulsate with life and great expectations for the future. We know not our future and would not if possible, but leave all to the great I AM; who governs the life of one man as carefully as he rules the destinies of a World. It is true that when I reflect that this may possibly be the last days entry in my journal; I feel a strange and inexpressible dread of the morrow."⁴⁸

The experiences of the Texans in the Tullahoma Campaign mirrored those of the Confederate war effort as a whole. After their exchange, the Arkansas Post prisoners suffered a steady stream of desertion from men weakened by prison and disheartened by the loss of Chattanooga. They also complained bitterly about their new consolidations and commanders, adding to the dissatisfaction in the ranks. These setbacks, like those of the Confederacy at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, depressed morale, but many Texans stayed with their regiments through sheer determination and loyalty to one another. The

⁴⁷ Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 97.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-one Days*, 150.

unit cohesion that would later become a hallmark of Granbury's Brigade, though it remained weak at this point, began to emerge in the wake of the Tullahoma Campaign.

Chapter 8

The River of Death

The Battle of Chickamauga offered the Arkansas Post prisoners their first taste of combat since their exchange, and once again put the 7th Texas through a crucible of fire. From the perspective of the Texas regiments, though, Chickamauga turned into a pyrrhic victory as desertion continued due to a vacuum in leadership and lack of activity.

At dawn on September 18 Brig. Gen. Bushrod R. Johnson's Division, including Gregg's Brigade and the 7th Texas, initiated the Battle of Chickamauga when they began pushing toward Chickamauga Creek. They encountered stiff resistance from the Federal cavalry posted there but by mid-afternoon had gained a foothold on the west bank of the Chickamauga.⁴⁹ John Bell Hood soon arrived on the field, taking command from Johnson, and in the gathering darkness pushed ahead with Gregg's and Jerome Robertson's Brigades until they reached the Vinyard House on the La Fayette Road.

On the morning of September 19 a firefight developed around the Vinyard House, and soon the 7th Texas found itself engaged. Rosecrans ordered the improbably named Brig. Gen. Jefferson C. Davis to turn the Confederate left around the Vinyard Farm, and Davis in turn sent the brigade of Col. Hans Heg across the La Fayette Road into the dense forest. Moving without skirmishers, the Yankees soon ran into the Confederate skirmishers of Gregg's Brigade, who had not been engaged since the day before. Heg's men loosed a volley into the Confederate ranks, but Gregg soon had his brigade advancing.⁵⁰ The 7th Texas Infantry, under Granbury, marched on the left flank of the

⁴⁹ Harold B. Simpson, *Hood's Texas Brigade: Lee's Grenadier Guard*, (Waco, Tex.: Texian Press, 1970), 308; Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 104-108.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 196-200.

brigade. Gregg and his men drove back Heg before running into Federal reinforcements along the La Fayette Road, and there the Confederates halted.⁵¹

Brig. Gen. William Carlin's brigade of Davis's division joined Heg in a counterattack that drove back Gregg's Brigade.⁵² During this period the 7th Texas suffered heavily. Granbury took a hit when a ball struck him in the lower abdomen, not penetrating the skin, but leaving extensive bruising that produced a painful wound.⁵³ Maj. Khebler M. Van Zandt replaced his fallen colonel as commander of the regiment.

To the north, fighting around the Brotherton Farm in the middle of Rosecrans's line gradually spread south toward the northern end of the forces engaged around the Viniard Farm. Near dusk Col. Emerson Opdycke, leading the 64th and 125th Ohio Infantry Regiments, ran into the battered Tennesseans of Gregg's Brigade amid the tangle of woods east of the La Fayette Road. The Tennesseans repulsed the attack, and as a silence fell over the field, Gregg himself rode out to reconnoiter in front of his brigade.

Advancing too far, he ran into the skirmish line of the 64th Ohio, which ordered him to surrender. Refusing, Gregg instead turned his horse to ride for safety before a ball struck him in the neck, knocking him from his saddle. The Ohioans gathered around the fallen Texan and divested him of his spurs and sword. Suddenly, from out of the woods, a group of Texans from Robertson's Brigade charged forward and recovered the unconscious officer and his horse. Col. Syrus Sugg of the 50th Tennessee took command of Gregg's Brigade.⁵⁴

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 200.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 201-202.

⁵³ O.R. Vol. 30, pt. 2, 455; Van Zandt to his wife "In the field before Chattanooga, Tenn., Sept., 28, 1863," Vertical File of the 7th Texas Infantry, Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 259-260; Simpson, *Hood's Texas Brigade*, 320. Ironically, the man that Robertson's Texans saved at Chickamauga would become their commander when he replaced Jerome Robertson in late 1863. Gregg

While Gregg's Brigade saw heavy action, Deshler's Texans had not yet engaged the enemy. The morning of September 19 found Cleburne and his division still at Pigeon Mountain, several miles south of the main action north of Lee and Gordon's Mill. At noon, Cleburne received orders to move his men north toward Bragg's headquarters near Thedford's Ford over the Chickamauga. The Irishman started his troops northwards, and they marched at the "quick" and the "double quick" for six miles before they reached Thedford's Ford around 4 p.m. Here the soldiers had the "pleasure" of wading the Chickamauga. Cleburne immediately reported to Polk, who ordered him to move his division toward the battle, and form a line behind Brig. Gen. St. John Liddell's Division near the Youngblood Farm. On the way to the front the men of Deshler's Brigade passed the 7th Texas, badly cut up from the fighting around the Viniard Farm. By 5:30 p.m. Cleburne had his division in place in the steadily darkening woods.⁵⁵

When he arrived in the rear of Liddell's Division, the latter urged Cleburne to attack immediately with his division before the Confederate offensive lost its momentum. Cleburne was understandably reluctant to try anything of the sort because of the gathering darkness and the unfamiliarity of the ground. Polk soon arrived and Liddell pled with their corps commander to order Cleburne forward. He succeeded in persuading him, and Polk ordered Cleburne to advance. The Irishman carefully aligned his brigades with Lucius Polk on the right, Wood in the center, and Deshler on the left. At 6 p.m. Cleburne ordered his men forward.⁵⁶

would also die at the head of the Texas Brigade at the Battle of Darbytown Road during the Siege of Petersburg on October 7, 1864. Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 118-119.

⁵⁵ Craig L. Symonds, *Stonewall of the West: Patrick Cleburne and the Civil War*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 143-144. William Heartsill wrote in his diary that some of the men recognized "Captain Charlie Talley" of the 7th Texas on their way to the front that night. Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-One Days*, 152; Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 263.

⁵⁶ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 144-145.

By this time night had fallen, and the Confederates could do little but aim at the muzzle flashes in the dark as they groped forward. On the right Polk's Brigade encountered and routed two Federal regiments, while in the middle Wood's Brigade did not advance with any enthusiasm, halting periodically to reform its ranks. To break the stalemate, Cleburne ordered up his artillery under Maj. T.R. Hotchkiss who opened on the Union troops with double-shotted canister. The Federals began to flee, and Cleburne ordered his men to pursue. In the darkness and confusion Federals captured the skirmishers of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas before their charging comrades coming up from behind freed them. Climbing over the improvised enemy fieldworks, Cleburne ordered his men to halt for the night around 9 p.m.⁵⁷ During the fighting the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas captured over one hundred prisoners, including many officers from the 77th Pennsylvania and 79th Illinois. Col. Wilkes and his regiment also captured the colors of these two regiments along with one hundred and fifty stands of small arms.⁵⁸ During this engagement, the Texans suffered limited casualties, including Col. Frank Wilkes of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas, who received a painful wound. Lt. Col. John T. Coit replaced Wilkes as commander of the regiment.⁵⁹

Deshler's men settled down for the night in a captured Union camp. Lt. Collins noted, "The dead and wounded were all about us all night we could hear the wounded between ours and the Federal lines calling some of their comrades by name and begging for water. The night was cold and crisp, and the dense woodland was dark and gloomy;

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 145-146.

⁵⁸ Colonel Frank C. Wilkes, commanding the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas reported that the honors for capturing the colors of the 77th Pennsylvania should go to Private Lewis Montgomery of Company B, 18th Texas and that the honors for capturing the banner of the 79th Illinois should go to Privates C.C. Martin and Benjamin G. Pippin of Company K, 18th Texas. O.R. Vol. 30, pt. 2, 194.

⁵⁹ O.R. Vol. 30, pt. 2, 194.

the bright stars above us and flickering light from some old dead pine trees that were burning in an old field on our left and in front, giving everything a weird, ghastly appearance.”⁶⁰ Adding to the unpleasant conditions, many of the Texans remained damp from crossing the Chickamauga in a hurry with their boots on. In addition, throughout the night, Cleburne shifted his lines so that his soldiers got little if any sleep. Some of the Texans collected the arms and ammunition of fallen Federal soldiers. In this miserable state Cleburne and his division passed the night of September 19.⁶¹

At long last the fighting on the first day of Chickamauga came to an end. The two armies had fought one another to a stalemate. Rosecrans still controlled the La Fayette Road, but the Confederates had come very close to breaking through at several points.

The next morning Bragg intended to renew the assault from the north with Cleburne’s Division, and move south with the left wing under Longstreet to make the final attack on the Federal right. The sun rose at 5:47 a.m. on Sunday, September 20. The morning dawned cool and frosty for the soldiers of both armies, and more than a few men reflected on the great conflict. Sgt. Heartsill wrote, “and now must another Holy Sabbath day see two mighty Armies meet in fierce and deadly strife; to measure arms of glistening steel with each other upon the aggravated issues of this once glorious country. Will this day...see the struggle end in our defeat or in our triumph, we put our trust in Him who is ever on the side of Justice, Truth and Right.”⁶²

The day began with delay and confusion on the Confederate right. Bragg listened in vain for the sound of the attack on the right. Hearing nothing, he sent a courier to find right-wing commander Leonidas Polk and order him to attack immediately. The courier

⁶⁰ Collins, *Chapters*, 151-152.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-One Days*, 153.

found Polk subordinates Hill, Cleburne, and Breckinridge a few hundred yards behind the front line a little after 6 a.m. Earlier in the morning, Polk had instructed Hill to attack as soon as he was “in position,” and Hill did not consider his men yet in position because of an angle that existed between Cleburne’s left and the right of Maj. Gen. Frank Cheatham’s division. He decided that he should correct the alignment before he could advance. In light of these circumstances, he declined to advance. By the time the courier found Polk, Bragg had almost reached him as well, impatient at the delays. Polk, seeing the situation, rode off in search of Hill. Finding his recalcitrant subordinate, he ordered him to attack immediately. Meanwhile, Bragg, having corrected the alignment of Cheatham’s Division, also found Hill at 8 a.m. and demanded that he attack at once. Finally, Cleburne’s and Breckinridge’s men began to file into place for the assault.⁶³

By 9 a.m. the sun was well up, ending any possibility of catching the Federals off guard.⁶⁴ The assault, planned to proceed from left to right, began with Breckinridge’s three brigades on the north flank. The former vice president’s men charged, but Union troops repulsed them with heavy losses. Breckinridge’s assault ground to a halt due to a lack of support.

Meanwhile, Cleburne prepared his division to advance. For many of the men in Deshler’s Brigade, breakfast that morning consisted only of blue, or raw, beef, cornbread and cold water, and as the sound of the fighting reached them, they grew anxious to join the fray.⁶⁵

⁶³ Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 305-309.

⁶⁴ The Confederates could have no way of knowing just how costly the delays had been. On the front of Hazen’s Brigade where Deshler’s men attacked, the Federals did not begin constructing earthworks until dawn, and the fortifications played a large role in allowing Thomas’ men to hold their position. For further details see O.R. Series I, Vol. 30, pt. 1, 763.

⁶⁵ Collins, *Unwritten Chapters*, 154.

At 9:30, Cleburne's men started forward. The division advanced with Lucius Polk's Brigade on the right, Deshler's in the middle and S.A.M. Wood's command on the left. Deshler and his men moved past Jackson's Brigade of Cheatham's Division and then ran into the rear of Alfred Vaughn's Tennessee brigade. Frustrated, Deshler awaited orders from Cleburne. Meanwhile, Wood's Brigade advanced into the fight after some hesitation on the part of its commander, for which he received an upbraiding from Cleburne. Wood's men did attack, though, before fierce musketry pushed them back out of the field in front of the Union works. As the Mississippians and Alabamans streamed back through the field, Cleburne ordered Deshler's Brigade to take their place.⁶⁶

The Texans advanced six hundred yards through the woods until emerging into an open clearing directly in front of the breastworks of George Thomas's entrenched veterans. Before emerging into the clearing, the Texans had to pass through the ranks of the broken Mississippians who had made so much fun of the Texans a few months before. Lt. Collins remembered, "The boys seemed to enjoy it as a good joke on the mud-heads." But the Texans soon found it no joking matter as they crested the ridge. As they cleared the tree line, Federal batteries opened on them with grape and canister. "The rain of lead that the Federals poured into our lines was simply terrific," wrote Collins, "our loss in officers and men for the first few minutes was alarming in the extreme. . . . We were ordered to lie flat down and hold it." On top of the ridge they took prone positions and stubbornly traded fire with the Federals.⁶⁷

As they advanced toward the top of the hill, Pvt. George Cagle of Capt. L.M. Nutt's Company in the 6th 10th & 15th Texas picked up four or five discarded muskets and

⁶⁶ Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound*, 339, 348-349.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 348-349.

carried them with him, hoping to increase his firepower. As the Texans reached the top of the ridge and lay down, Cagle kept his guns loaded and firing, giving commands to himself such as, “Attention CAGLE’S BATTERY, make ready, load, take aim, fire.”⁶⁸ Despite “Cagle’s Battery,” Brig. Gen. William Hazen’s Union brigade continued to pour a heavy fire into the ranks of the exposed Confederates.

For the next two hours Deshler’s men held their ground but then began to run low on ammunition. Capt. John Formwalt ordered Collins to inform Mills of the dwindling ammunition. Collins carried out his orders, and Mills instructed him to report the fact to Deshler. Collins headed toward the right, where he discovered Deshler on his hands and knees, as if trying to peer under the smoke. As Collins approached within ten feet of his commander, a shell ripped through the general’s chest, killing him instantly. About the same time a piece of shrapnel struck Col. Wilkes of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas in the right leg and also put him out of action. Collins reported these facts to Mills, who assumed command of the brigade as the ranking officer present.⁶⁹

Roger Mills’s first problem as commander of the brigade was the lack of ammunition. Just after he took command, the Texans and Arkansans reported their ammunition completely spent. He ordered his men to strip the cartridges off the dead and wounded and fix bayonets. Soon, Lt. Col. Thomas Anderson of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas sent Lt. Mathew Graham of Company C, 10th Texas, to inform Mills that the left companies of his regiment still had plenty of ammunition. Because they had been too far from the enemy works, these four companies had preserved almost all of their ammunition. Mills ordered the companies to the front to maintain a steady fire while he

⁶⁸ Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and Ninety-One Days*, 159.

⁶⁹ Collins, *Chapters*, 158-159.

saw to the acquisition and distribution of new cartridges for the rest of the brigade. No sooner had he accomplished this than a courier from Cleburne approached and informed him of the imperative to hold the hill at all costs. To preserve the lives of his men, Mills ordered the brigade back twenty paces beyond the crest of the ridge. He left behind sharpshooters in the trees atop the hill to maintain a steady fire on the Yankees.⁷⁰

But the fight had not quite ended. Lt. Col. John Coit, who had assumed command of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas when Wilkes fell, sent word to Mills that the Federals had moved out from behind their works and started trying to turn his right flank. Mills ordered Coit to throw out a company of flankers to check their advance. Coit soon sent word that the Federals had pushed the flankers back, and Mills ordered Lt. Col. Asa Hutchison to send a company from the 19th & 24th Arkansas to shore up the right flank. The Arkansans likewise failed to stem the advance, and Mills ordered Capt. John Kennard of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas to take his Company A and reinforce the other two companies. Kennard obeyed and succeeded in halting the enemy skirmishers. After this action, the Texans exchanged only desultory fire with the Federals for the rest of the day.⁷¹ The end of the Texans' attack marked the final act of Cleburne's assault.

Meanwhile, James Longstreet had prepared his left wing for action, arranging an assault column five brigades deep. At 10:00 a.m. the last of his units arrived and took its place in line. Longstreet had eight brigades, 11,000 men, packed into seventy acres east of the La Fayette Road. The front line, composed of Fulton's and McNair's brigades of Johnson's Division, stretched roughly five hundred yards. On the left of the first line lay

⁷⁰ O.R. Series I, Vol. 30, pt. 2, 188-189. After several of Hazen's officers were felled by these snipers, he ordered concentrated volleys aimed at them. This measure put a stop to the sniping as the Confederates began to tumble out of the trees. O.R. Series I, Vol. 30, pt. 1, 763.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 190-191.

Gregg's Brigade under Col. Cyrus Sugg. Sugg arranged his regiments with the 7th Texas, 1st Tennessee Battalion, and 50th Tennessee in the first line and the remaining regiments in second line of battle.

Meanwhile, chaos enveloped the Union position directly in front of Longstreet's massed columns. Throughout the afternoon of the nineteenth and the morning of the twentieth, Rosecrans worried most about his left flank. He promised Thomas that he would support him with the whole army if necessary. While Cleburne and his men tried desperately to dislodge Thomas's men, Rosecrans ordered Brig. Gen. William Brannan to bring his division from the right to the left. Unknown to Rosecrans, Brannan had moved up earlier that morning to fill a gap between Wood's and Reynolds's divisions. Rosecrans sent one of his staff officers, Sanford Kellog, to deliver the orders to Brannan. Kellog did so and reported back to Rosecrans that Brannan's removal had left a gap in line. Rosecrans ordered Thomas J. Wood to move his division to the left and "close up on Reynolds" to fill the supposed gap. Brannan, however, had wisely stayed put, so that Wood now interpreted Rosecrans's order as requiring him to pull out of line and march behind Brannan to join Reynolds. He did so, creating a real gap in the Union position even as Longstreet's advance units began to engage his skirmishers around the Brotherton Farm.⁷²

At 11:15 a.m. Longstreet's columns, with Johnson's Division in the lead, swept through the hole created by Wood's departure. Caught out of position, Wood's division and the units immediately around them disintegrated into a mob of panicky blue coated soldiers running for their lives with the Confederates on their heels, chasing them west and north toward Rosecrans's headquarters and the rear of Thomas's men.

⁷² Woodworth, *A Deep Steady Thunder*, 78-82.

Johnson's Division advanced through the woods for six hundred yards before they crossed the La Fayette Road. After crossing the road, the 7th Texas and the Tennessee regiments passed on either side of the Brotherton farmhouse. The Confederates drove off the Union troops around the farmhouse and outbuildings. Advancing farther, the right of Johnson's Division encountered stiff resistance from behind a makeshift line of breastworks in the woods west of the Brotherton field. Under heavy fire, they succeeded in driving the Federals from their position in the woods east of the Dyer Farm. Moving on the Confederates emerged into a vast field five hundred yards deep and fifteen hundred yards wide. "The scene that now presented itself," wrote Johnson, "was unspeakably grand. The resolute and impetuous charge, the rush of our heavy columns sweeping out from shadow and gloom of the forest into the open fields flooded with sunlight. The glitter of arms, the onward dash of artillery and mounted men...made up a battle scene of unsurpassed grandeur."⁷³

By this time the entire right and center of Rosecrans' army had started retreating. Thousands of Federals streamed back toward Chattanooga as Thomas's right wing held fast throughout the day and then slowly withdrew that evening, staving off complete disaster.

Moving into the Dyer Field, Johnson directed Sugg to charge a battery of eight cannon to his right. Sugg complied, and the 7th Texas and 1st & 50th Tennessee rejoined the brigade before they rushed forward and overran the battery, capturing the guns. Johnson then directed Sugg to charge a heavily wooded ridge to his front, which the Confederates also captured. From this eminence Sugg observed the Union wagon trains which the Federal gunners and teamsters soon abandoned. The Confederates took the

⁷³ O.R. Series I, Vol. 30, pt. 2, 457-458.

wagons and used the captured ammunition to replenish their cartridge boxes. Finding that yet another ridge commanded his brigade's position to the front, Sugg ordered his men up the slope where they drove away the defenders. No sooner had he placed a battery of artillery in position to secure the ridge than the Union troops counterattacked, contesting the ground with "obstinacy." The left wing of the brigade fell back, exposing the guns, but the 50th Tennessee and 7th Texas held their ground, protecting the cannon and allowing the other units to regroup. Sugg reformed his brigade and remained in possession of the ridge until another brigade relieved them at approximately 5 p.m.⁷⁴ This ended the fighting for the 7th Texas at Chickamauga.

On the right, Polk ordered Cleburne to advance his division at about 3:30 p.m. He instructed the Irishman to leave his left flank unit, the Texas brigade, in place, while advancing his right and center brigades. Lucius Polk's Brigade advanced, carrying several lines of breastworks before halting. By this time twilight had fallen on the field with the Federal army in full retreat, while the exhausted Confederates celebrated their first major victory in the Western Theater.

Chickamauga took a severe toll on the eight Texas regiments that would soon become Granbury's Brigade. In addition to the death of Gen. Deshler, Col. Wilkes of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas sustained a wound along with Col. Granbury of the 7th Texas. Both of the Texas regiments in Deshler's Brigade also suffered staggering losses. The 6th 10th & 15th Texas went into action on the morning of September 19 with 667 men and lost 21 killed, 94 wounded, 1 mortally wounded, 2 captured, 2 missing and 2 that deserted for a total of 122 casualties, 18 percent. Lt. Col. Thomas Anderson, commanding the regiment after the battle, reported that the roll call showed 524 present

⁷⁴ O.R. Series I, Vol. 30, pt. 2, 495-496.

on the morning of September 21.⁷⁵ Wilkes' 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas suffered even worse, carrying 767 men into battle, and losing 28 killed, 150 wounded, 7 mortally wounded, 1 captured and 2 deserted for an aggregate of 188, 25 percent. The regiment also lost four of ten company commanders. Together, the seven original regiments lost 310 men in the vicious two-day battle. In Gregg's Brigade the 7th Texas didn't fare much better. The regiment went into battle on the morning of September 19 with 177 men and lost 8 killed, 81 wounded and 1 deserted for a total of 90, 51 percent of those engaged. This brought the total loss of the eight regiments to 57 killed, 327 wounded, 8 mortally wounded, 3 captured, 2 missing and 3 deserted for a total of 400 casualties. This represented 25 percent of the 1,611 men carried into action.⁷⁶

One anomalous feature of Chickamauga that showed the ferocity of the fighting was the number of men who reported receiving wounds from multiple rounds almost simultaneously. William Oliphant of Company G, 6th 10th & 15th Texas reported three bullets striking him in quick succession, "first in the mouth, breaking my jaw...then in the right arm and then in the left hand." William Boyce of Company F, 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas wrote of the pain caused by a ball that passed through his shoulder while another pierced his skull. Finally, G.G. Gardenhire of Company B, 6th 10th & 15th Texas received seven wounds during the battle, one ball knocking out his left eye and

⁷⁵ The twenty-one casualty discrepancy between Anderson's report and the author's casualty list resulted from those who were deemed "missing" at the time having returned to the regiment in the aftermath of the battle.

⁷⁶ The casualties for the Texas regiments come from newspaper reports and the compiled service records of the regiments. The casualties of the 6th, 10th & 15th Texas can be found in the *Galveston Weekly News*, November 11, 1863. Those of the 17th, 18th, 24th & 25th Texas are reported in the *Galveston Weekly News* of November 25, 1863, and those of the 7th Texas appear in the *Memphis Daily Appeal* of October 10, 1863. The strengths of the regiments before the battle come from O.R. Series I, Vol. 30, pt. 2, 193-194.

destroying the hearing in his left ear. Despite these wounds, he remained with his regiment until the end of the war.⁷⁷

“The blood red sun has gone down over beyond the great range of mountains,” wrote Lt. Collins, “deep darkness has spread its mantle over the field of Chickamauga, and the heart sinking silence that prevailed after the great battle, is disturbed only by the groans of the wounded and the hum of many voices as the soldiers would in deep tones inquire for missing comrades, and earnestly congratulate each other upon the success of the day.” Deshler’s men moved back a little way toward Chickamauga Creek and made camp there, with “the dead in blue and gray” all around them. “Strange as it may seem. . .,” wrote Collins, “. . .we spread our home-made blankets and slept sweetly and soundly on the field of death that Sunday night.”⁷⁸

The fighting at Chickamauga provided a seemingly heartening triumph for the Confederacy, but it turned into an isolated, pyrrhic victory. The victory also damaged the morale of the Texas regiments due to the loss of their charismatic leader, James Deshler. As in almost any armed force, the Confederate army depended heavily on cohesion in the ranks produced by effective local leadership and camaraderie. With so many of their comrades gone, effective leadership compromised, and months of inactivity looming ahead, Chickamauga actually hurt the Confederate cause in the long run more than it helped. Many Texans chose to desert in the wake of the battle, further reducing the numbers in the ranks and weakening the army.

⁷⁷ Yeary, *Reminiscences of the Boys in Gray*, 575, 251.

⁷⁸ Collins, *Chapters*, 160-161.

Chapter 9

Band of Heroes

The aftermath of Chickamauga brought all of the regiments of Granbury's Brigade together. Though desertion continued in the immediate aftermath of Chickamauga, the addition of Hiram Granbury and the 7th Texas some weeks after the battle heartened the Texans with effective leadership and served to largely halt the steady flow of desertion. Ironically, while the Confederacy as a whole began to falter, Granbury's Texans began their stint as the "Color Brigade of the Army," once again emphasizing the preeminence of local circumstances.

Victory at Chickamauga nearly undid the Army of Tennessee and brought changes to the Texas brigade. After two days of brutal fighting the soldiers of the army had to rest and reorganize, especially Deshler's Brigade, which had lost close to half its men and its commander. On September 21, Bragg issued orders for his units to pursue the beaten Army of the Cumberland to Chattanooga.

Late in the afternoon of September 21 Cleburne received verbal orders to move his division north toward Chattanooga. This slight delay cost the Confederates in morale, giving the soldiers time to wander about the battlefield. Lt. Robert Collins of the 6th, 10th & 15th Texas borrowed a horse and spent five or six hours riding about, inspecting the battlefield. To his horror the lieutenant discovered a dead Confederate, still sitting against a tree with his eyes wide open. He discovered dead rabbits and birds and one man with his brains between his feet where a cannon ball had decapitated him. Capt. Samuel Foster of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas found himself part of a detail detached from the brigade

to bring in the dead and care for the wounded, and performed this duty for several days after the rest of the living had left. Benjamin Seaton of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas reported in his diary on September 21, “I went over the battlefield and found a grate many dead Yankees and a good many of ours.” The shock of their first big battle of the war certainly unnerved the Texans, who were relieved when “At dark, we took up line of march and went som 10 miles and camped for the night.”¹ Cleburne had his men back on the road by 7 a.m. on September 22 and that same afternoon the division reached Missionary Ridge outside Chattanooga. Here, with little choice, Bragg decided instead of attacking Rosecrans within the city, that he should lay siege instead in hopes of forcing the Federals’ hand.²

On Missionary Ridge the Texans went about the task of recovering from Chickamauga. The first challenge involved adjusting to a new commanding officer as they mourned their late commander’s death. “Our beloved Gen. Dashler [Deshler] was killed. . .,” lamented A.L. Orr of the 17th, 18th, 24th & 25th Texas. Similarly on October 8 H.B. Curl of the same regiment wrote, “You can imagine the gloom that has been cast on this brigade, for there was not a man who did not love him, and they are satisfied they will never get another Brigadier who will treat them so kindly.” Cleburne wrote of Deshler, “It was the first battle in which this gentleman had the honor of commanding as a general officer. He was a brave and efficient one. He brought always to the discharge of his duty a warm zeal and high conscientiousness. The army and country will long remember him.”³ In the immediate aftermath of the battle, Col. Mills of the 6th 10th & 15th

¹ Collins, *Chapters*, 163; Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 56; Simpson, *The Bugle Softly Blows*, 41.

² Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 153.

³ Anderson, *Campaigning with Parson’s Texas Cavalry*, 122; H.B. Curl to his parents, October 8, 1863; Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 328.

Texas retained command of the brigade, but Confederate authorities had other ideas. On September 30 the Confederate Congress promoted Col. James A. Smith to brigadier general and Bragg assigned him command of the Texas and Arkansas Brigade.

Like Deshler, Smith had graduated from West Point in the Class of 1853. He served only briefly on the frontier and in 1861 resigned his commission to join the Confederacy, eventually becoming colonel of the 5th Confederate Infantry. Smith fought at Perryville and subsequent engagements at the head of his regiment, assigned to Lucius Polk's Brigade of Cleburne's Division. After repeated urging, the Confederate Congress promoted him, and he officially took command of the Texas and Arkansas brigade on October 6.⁴ With Smith now in command of the brigade, Col. Mills resumed command of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas while Maj. William A. Taylor of the 24th Texas took command of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas in the absence of Col. Wilkes, wounded at Chickamauga, and Lt. Col. John T. Coit, who had fallen ill.

The siege of Chattanooga soon turned sour for the Confederates as privations and hardships played on the men in the ranks. Bragg placed his army in a wide arc with the left flank resting atop the towering prominence of Lookout Mountain, southwest of Chattanooga. From there the line curved north up Missionary Ridge to Tunnel Hill, so named because the Chattanooga and Cleveland Railroad ran through it. Though hypothetically Bragg intended to starve the Federals out of Chattanooga, it turned out that his own men had to subsist on short rations outside the city. Bragg kept Cleburne's Division in the center of the line near the crest of Missionary Ridge where they lived off a little "corn pone." By this time the fall weather had also turned cold, adding misery to the boredom of the siege.

⁴ Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 281-282; Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 57.

Many of the Texans took the opportunity of a lull to write home about Chickamauga and their current circumstances. Capt. Bryan Marsh of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas wrote his wife on October 15, “We are still at the foot of Missionary Ridge in front of Chattanooga. . . . I am on picket at the present time within 175 yards of the Yanky lines.” Fraternization often occurred in these situations of close proximity and Marsh reported, “Some of the boys are out between the lines at this time exchanging newspapers with them. We have orders not to fire at each other unless they attempt to advance. . . .” But memories of prison prompted the captain to relate that “We can talk to each other, but when I think of Camp Chase I can hardly keep from ordering the boys to fire at the Scoundrels.” He went on to write that when President Davis visited the army and passed by the Texas brigade, “The boys gave him a regular Texas yell as he pass. He made some of them a short speech congratulating them on the Battle of Chickamauga.” Furthermore, he reported, “The Army is in fine sperits and the best health I have ear [ever] seen them.”⁵

Despite the high spirits described by Marsh, vice and desertion also stalked the bored Texans. “The peculiar circumstances of a life in the field give such latitude to pillage and other wanton mischief that it is almost impossible to suppress the grossest violence even among our own people and upon our own soil,” lamented 2nd Lt. Henry V. Smith of the 17th, 18th, 24th & 25th Texas. “Several have deserted from our Regt since the fight,” he continued, “Look out for Tom Richards he is among them. . . .”⁶ Lt. Collins

⁵ Marsh to his wife Mittie dated, “Chattanooga Tenn Oct. 15/63” in “The Confederate Letters of Bryan Marsh,” *Chronicles of Smith County, Texas*, 14 no. 1: 29.

⁶ Henry V. Smith to his mother and father dated “In the field near Chattanooga Tenn Oct. 12, 1863,” Vertical File of the 25th Texas Cavalry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas. Private Thomas Richards of Company H, 24th Texas Dismounted Cavalry deserted on October 8, 1863. Compiled Service Records of the 24th Texas Cavalry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 119-123.

busied himself writing letters home, “or to two or three Georgia girls at the same time,” or going down to “Hell’s half acre. Now this was a place in front of and near the center of our main line, and just in rear of the picket line, it being some three quarters of a mile in front of our line of battle. Here the thugs, thumpers and gamblers from our army as well as from Atlanta and other cities collected to gamble, and you could get a square up and up whack at any kind of game from faro, monte, draw-poker, seven-up, down to thimble ring poker—dice and three card monte.” Collins related that he had never seen so much gambling at one time in one place anywhere since, nor any more hard-looking characters. In addition to gambling and fraternizing between the lines, the Texans also amused themselves by observing the daily artillery duel between the Confederate guns atop Lookout Mountain and the Federal cannon in Chattanooga. In this way they wore away the monotonous siege.⁷

The low morale of the Texans after Chickamauga manifested itself in the steady stream of deserters, such as Thomas Richards, who decided that the Confederate cause no longer held any charms for them. The vacuum in brigade leadership and boredom of the siege served to depress the morale of the Texans, and as in Arkansas, it seems that the members of the dismounted cavalry regiments became the first to abandon the cause. Local circumstances again dictated the desertion and lack of morale that continued to damage the Confederate cause. Despite the prevalent low morale, some glimpses of hope still shone through such as the correspondence of Capt. Bryan Marsh.

Bragg decidedly lost his advantage on October 18 when Abraham Lincoln appointed U.S. Grant commander of the newly created Military Division of the Mississippi, giving him jurisdiction over the army at Chattanooga. Five days later Grant

⁷ Collins, *Chapters*, 169-172.

arrived in the besieged city, replacing William Rosecrans, and began devising a way to break the siege. Even before Grant's appointment, Lincoln had dispatched two corps from the Army of the Potomac to reinforce Grant and the Federals established the "cracker line," by capturing Brown's Ferry on October 27, bringing supplies into Chattanooga across Raccoon Mountain. The capture of Brown's Ferry gave the Federals control of Lookout Valley, effectively breaking the siege and allowing Grant to replenish the army's food stores. Though theoretically the Confederates continued to besiege Grant and his Federals, in reality it appeared more the reverse, with the Army of Tennessee starved for provisions and warmth on the hills outside the city.⁸

In early November all of the Texas regiments of Granbury's Brigade finally came together. On November 12, Cleburne transferred the 19th & 24th Arkansas from Smith's Brigade to Daniel Govan's Arkansas Brigade, and added the 7th Texas under Col. Granbury to Smith's Brigade. Now the brigade consisted of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas under Col. Roger Q. Mills, the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas under Maj. William A. Taylor and the 7th Texas under Granbury.⁹

The standoff outside Chattanooga continued until Grant prepared to move in the third week of November. At midnight on November 22 Bragg ordered Cleburne to take his division and proceed south to Chickamauga Station, where he would take command of his own and Bushrod Johnson's divisions and proceed to East Tennessee to reinforce Gen. James Longstreet. At dawn on November 23, Cleburne moved his division south toward the rendezvous point. Learning of the movement, Grant ordered two divisions of the Army of the Cumberland forward, and they captured Orchard Knob, an isolated

⁸ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 58-59.

⁹ Cozzens, *The Shipwreck of Their Hopes: The Battles for Chattanooga*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 411.

Confederate outpost a mile in front of Missionary Ridge. In response, Bragg recalled Cleburne's Division and placed it in reserve near the center of the Confederate line.¹⁰

Once his troops captured Orchard Knob, Grant went about planning an assault on Bragg's left, atop Lookout Mountain. On November 24 he dispatched Joseph Hooker with several divisions to capture the prominence. By mid-morning the sounds of battle reached Bragg's headquarters in the valley below. A thick fog shrouded the slopes of the mountain as the Federals advanced against the entrenched Confederates to fight what became known as the "Battle above the Clouds." The unusual spectacle lasted until a little after nightfall, and as the sounds faded away, word reached Bragg that the Federals had control of the mountain. At the same time he learned that several Union divisions had begun to advance against his right around Tunnel Hill. Immediately he dispatched Cleburne with his division to the right, to shore up that flank.¹¹

With James Smith and his Texas brigade in the lead, Cleburne's Division headed for Tunnel Hill at the same time that three Federal divisions under William T. Sherman also converged on the hill. Just as Bragg dispatched Cleburne, a courier arrived from Hardee, who had recently returned from Mississippi and whom Bragg had assigned command of the right wing. Hardee's messenger indicated that Sherman's columns had arrived within striking distance of the tunnel. He indicated that Hardee's engineer, Maj. D.H. Poole, would meet Cleburne at the summit, and direct him where to place his brigades. Cleburne spurred ahead of his men and found Poole as promised. The engineer quickly explained that Hardee wished Cleburne to cover the ridge beyond Tunnel Hill, known as Billy Goat Hill, as well as Tunnel Hill itself. Cleburne protested that this was

¹⁰ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 59.

¹¹ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 163.

too much to cover with his three brigades (earlier he had temporarily detached Polk's Brigade), and that Poole should go back and tell this to Hardee. Despite his protest, events soon spun out of control as the skirmishers from Sherman's three divisions began ascending the opposite slope of Billy Goat Hill. Immediately Cleburne ordered Smith to take his men and charge the hill. The Texans rushed down into the valley and up the slope of Billy Goat Hill where the Federal skirmishers had already taken possession of the crest. Together three Union regiments, the 4th Minnesota, 30th Ohio, and 6th Iowa fired down into the ranks of the Texans. At this time Smith realized that it would be impossible to drive off the attackers with his lone brigade. Precipitously the Texans fell back to Tunnel Hill, where Cleburne placed them along the crest.¹² No sooner had they regrouped than the Union troops began toward them, up the slope of Tunnel Hill. Smith and his men easily repulsed the assault and Sherman declined to press the matter that night.

During the night, Cleburne placed his brigades in position to defend the hill. He organized his line in the shape of a fishhook, with the Texans anchoring the center of the line. On the brigade left, Mills' 6th 10th & 15th Texas faced due west, while to their right Granbury and the 7th Texas fronted north. Finally, on the right flank, the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas under Taylor faced northeast. Cleburne placed Lowrey's Brigade on the Texans' left, extending the line south. He sent Govan's and Liddell's Brigades to the right, directing Govan to occupy a low ridge on the right, north of the railroad. At 4 p.m. Hardee arrived on Tunnel Hill and directed two regiments of Lowrey's Brigade to occupy another low-lying ridge on the right, east of Govan's line. Meanwhile, he promised to send reinforcements to shore up this new extended line.¹³

¹² Cozzens, *The Shipwreck of Their Hopes*, 151-152.

¹³ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 164.

Cleburne made little effort to shore up this new line, apparently because he assumed that with the fall of Lookout Mountain, Bragg would abandon Missionary Ridge. He ordered all but two guns of his artillery to the rear, and though he directed the men to make breastworks, he left their supervision to one of his staff members. Cleburne sent his aide, Capt. Irving Buck, to Bragg's headquarters to learn the state of affairs, and Buck returned at midnight with the unsettling news that Bragg had decided to stay and fight it out. At this news, Cleburne gave orders to bring back the artillery. He personally placed Swett's Battery in Smith's line and Key's Battery so as to command the approaches from the west. He also issued axes to his men to construct breastworks.¹⁴

On top of Tunnel Hill the Texans made the best they could of the situation. "We. . . slept but little. . . having been engaged in felling trees, entrenching and erecting breastworks. . .," wrote Sgt. Albert Jernigan of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas. The Texans could not build fires and had to endure the cold night without blankets, no one speaking above a whisper. Shortly after midnight a lunar eclipse occurred, creating inky blackness atop Tunnel Hill. About 3 a.m. Maj. Taylor ordered Capt. Foster to take his company and relieve the pickets in front. "The night [was] very dark," wrote Foster, "and here along these high mountains and steep hill sides, and tall timber, and thick undergrowth of course it was very *very* dark. . . ." Foster groped his way forward until he found one end of the picket line and then proceeded along it, placing a man every ten or fifteen feet behind trees to give them more cover, and then the captain, "Stood perfectly still till day light. . . ." "We threw up temporary works, such as we could make of old logs, loose rocks, etc., from where we were," wrote Lt. Collins, "But," concluded Sgt. Jernigan, "the

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 166.

morning found our works but frail, and along portions of the line none at all, on account of the scarcity of implements with which to work.”¹⁵

November 25 dawned hazy. Sherman would attack Tunnel Hill from the north and northwest. The nature of the position allowed room to use just two of the nine brigades at his disposal. In addition, on the left he ordered one regiment of Col. Joseph Lightburn’s Brigade to support the attack. Lightburn selected the 30th Ohio, and quickly Col. Theodore Jones had his Ohioans moving toward the crest of Tunnel Hill. They quickly ran into Capt. Foster and his skirmishers. As soon as it became light enough to see, one of Foster’s men said, “Capt. I see one. Can I shoot at him.” Foster replied to wait until it got a little lighter, and then “blaze away.” That man fired the first shot of the day a minute later, and soon the entire skirmish line opened up on the Ohioans. Amazingly, the Texans lost only one man in this firefight, George Woods, who took a bullet through the neck that cut his windpipe. The Texans continued to fire from behind their trees until Foster passed the word down the line to “fall back slowly, but keep firing from tree to tree as we fall back.” The skirmishers fell back, contesting every inch of ground until they reached the main line of the brigade.¹⁶ The Ohioans continued until canister from Swett’s Battery forced them back down the ridge into some abandoned breastworks.

Furious because of the lack of support, the Ohioans fell back to John Corse’s Brigade, where they prepared for another attack. Corse arrayed his regiments and advanced with companies from the 40th and 103rd Illinois, 46th Ohio and 6th Iowa. On their left the 30th and 37th Ohio, supported by the 4th West Virginia also went forward,

¹⁵ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 59-60; Collins, *Chapters*, 176; Albert Jernigan to his Parents dated “Austin, Texas May 18, 1872,” The Albert Jernigan Papers, The Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

¹⁶ Cozzens, *The Shipwreck of Their Hopes*, 208; Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 61-62.

intent on dislodging the Texans. After his deployment as a skirmisher, Sgt. Jernigan of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas fell back on the main line as Corse's men pressed him and, "as the first rays of the morning sun look over the eastern hills, lighting up a most beautiful, picturesque, autumn landscape, long blue lines of the enemy, with bayonets gleaming in the sun light and banners floating on the breeze, are seen marshaling themselves in battle array. . . ." Soon the battle commenced in earnest and the Federals wavered and fell back, leaving the bodies of the slain in their wake. They reformed and came again, only to fall back in the face of the fierce musketry. A third time Corse's men reformed and advanced up the slope.¹⁷

Massing directly in front of Swett's Battery, the blue coats came on, clambering up the side of the rocky hill until they reached a point under the guns, from which the Mississippians could not depress the cannon enough to hit them. The Yankees advanced from behind boulders and trees, making one final rush for the Texans. "His front rank is mowed down at one fell swoop," wrote Jernigan. "Their places are filled immediately as if by the spirits of the lifeless bodies at their feet; these share a similar fate to those who have gone before. But still they come, more, and still more. In many places they are within a few feet of our line. The dead and dying lie heaped upon the ground; while their blood commingles and runs in streams down the steep hill-side."¹⁸

In desperation, Smith thought he detected the Federal lines beginning to waver and asked permission of Cleburne to launch a counter-attack. Cleburne consented, and Smith lunged forward with the right flank of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas, and the left flank of the 7th Texas. "Some fly, others surrender, while others, for a brief space continue to

¹⁷ Cozzens, *The Shipwreck of Their Hopes*, 208; Jernigan to his "Parents, Austin, Texas May 18, 1872."

¹⁸ Jernigan to his "Parents, Austin, Texas May 18, 1872."

fight, but they are soon overcome,” wrote Jernigan. “We sailed into them,” wrote Lt. Collins, “captured many prisoners, six stands of colors and many guidons.” Collins had unbuckled his sword, but as he charged, “left it, grabbed a rock and went in. A good many of the Yankees played dead that had not been touched.” Collins “captured a whole company that had taken shelter behind a big chestnut log; they were more than willing to surrender.” Mills and Smith led the charge on horseback, and bullets soon felled them from their saddles, both badly wounded. The Texans pursued their foe to the foot of the ridge before Cleburne recalled them.¹⁹

Almost all of the Confederates fell back immediately, and in good order, but some lingered to return fire. “I was torn to leave without giving them a parting salute, I fire at them, load and fire a second shot, and now I find myself all alone, my comrades having obeyed the order to fall back,” remembered Jernigan. The Union troops soon discovered him and took aim. “I step behind a pine,” he wrote, “and concluded to load, and give them one more shot before retiring. While loading, a ball grazed the tree striking my gun and splintering the stock. I am putting on a cap, a shrapnel explodes near me, my right arm falls paralyzed to my side, Am shocked by the concussion, feel dreadful pain in my elbow, my gun falls to the ground, a momentary dizziness comes over me.” Still able to walk, Jernigan stumbled back to the crest of the ridge.²⁰

Back on Tunnel Hill, Cleburne gave command of the Texas brigade to Col. Granbury. Granbury assigned command of the 7th Texas to Capt. Charles E. Talley, while Capt. John R. Kennard took charge of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas in place of the dangerously wounded Mills.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*; Collins, *Chapters*, 180.

²⁰ Jernigan survived his wound, but lost his right arm to amputation on November 29.

Corse fell back to the cover of a ravine at the base of the hill and decided to try again. The two rear regiments of his brigade had not been engaged and the fighting Iowan decided to try a little farther to the left, along the front of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas. “Here they come again for about the sixth time,” wrote Capt. Foster, “and they come like they are going to walk right over us – Now we give them fits. See how they do fall, like leaves in the fall of the year. Still they advance and still we shoot them down – and still they come. Oh this is fun to lie here and shoot them down and we not get hurt. Ark. Post was not like this.” Corse’s Federals took cover under the crest of the hill and proceeded to pick off the gunners of Swett’s Battery. The Mississippians took such heavy casualties that Granbury detached some of the infantrymen of the 7th Texas to man the guns.

Meanwhile Cleburne tried to dislodge the determined attackers by placing Douglas’s Texas Battery on Govan’s flank to enfilade them. “This is business,” remembered Foster, “when they get in about 50 yards of us they halt, commence wavering, some keep coming, others hang back, some are killed in 20 ft of our works....” Finally, without orders, the Texans jumped over the works and, “yelling like only Texans can,” charged into them, killing many and driving the others back again. “I was standing on top of the logs yelling like an Indian,” recalled Foster, when a ball caught him in the right leg, passing under the knee. Several of his men cried out, “Capt. you are hit,” as they rushed to his aid. They helped the wounded captain rip open his pants to find the wound, as litter bearers came to carry him to the brigade hospital. Meanwhile the men of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas drove Corse’s attack back to its starting point.²¹

By noon the Texans had driven back their attackers, and Sherman decided not to renew the assault, but he still pushed several of his brigades close enough to snipe at the

²¹ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 62-63.

Confederates from the bottom of the hill. Meanwhile, Cleburne called for reinforcements, receiving first the 2nd 15th & 24th Arkansas from Govan's Brigade and then Alfred Cumming's Georgia Brigade. Cumming massed his three regiments behind Granbury's Brigade, while Cleburne orchestrated a counterattack with the 2nd 15th & 24th Arkansas, the 6th 10th & 15th Texas, and two of Cumming's regiments. At 3:30 p.m., after arranging the regiments in column, Cumming led them forward down the hill. At first the attack stalled, but the Georgians, Arkansans and Texans regrouped and tried again, this time sweeping the pesky Federals from their positions. The Confederates again pursued to the bottom of the hill before returning, forcing the Union troops to give up their attack altogether. At 5 p.m. Cleburne sent out skirmishers; the Federals had withdrawn. This ended the fight for Tunnel Hill.²²

Despite the performance of Cleburne and his Texans, the rest of the Confederate army had not fared so well. To take attention off Sherman, Grant ordered several divisions of the Army of the Cumberland forward up Missionary Ridge, and the attack punched a huge hole in the middle of the Army of Tennessee. Taking advantage of poorly sited Confederate breastworks, the Federals swept all before them, putting the Rebels to flight, and forcing Bragg to abandon Missionary Ridge.

The defense of Tunnel Hill had come to naught. For over seven hours Cleburne's men defended the hill against determined attacks. The Texans particularly acquitted themselves well, participating in no less than three counterattacks and repulsing their attackers over and over, but all their fighting became moot with the rout of the rest of the army. "Soon after night," wrote Cleburne, "Gen. Hardee ordered an immediate retreat across the Chickamauga . . . and Smith's (Texas) brigade should remain in position and

²² Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 168-169.

bring up the rear.” By 9 p.m., all the wagons were across the Chickamauga, and Cleburne “ordered Smith’s brigade to move in retreat. Sadly, but not fearfully,” wrote Cleburne, “this band of heroes left the hill they had held so well and followed the army across the Chickamauga.”²³

Meanwhile, the wounded from Granbury’s Brigade languished in the brigade hospital. “Each brigade had its hospital,” remembered Sgt. Jernigan, “say half a mile in rear of the army, to which the wounded were conveyed by the litter corps.” The surgeon in charge of the hospital would give them whatever attention he thought proper and then ambulances would take them farther back to the division hospital. Jernigan did his best to describe the scene: “A cloudy night. – a pine forest, with but little undergrowth. – A long row of the blazing fires on each side of which lie a host of torn, mangled and bleeding forms in gray jackets, the features of most of whom are distorted and writhing in agony. . . . Attendants fluttering about, casting ghostly shadows on the dark forest background–Moans, groans, cries, prayers, curses, screams and wailings of anguish all commingled. . . .” Around midnight word reached the hospital that the army had suffered defeat and that the reversal would force them to withdraw as quickly as possible to Chickamauga Station.²⁴

Granbury’s Texans paid a heavy price for their steadfastness. The only definite casualty figures for the Texas Brigade come from the 6th 10th & 15th Texas, which suffered 16 killed, 59 wounded and 4 missing for a total of 79. Cleburne reported the loss of his entire division at 42 killed, 178 wounded and 2 missing for a total of 222, meaning that the losses in the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas and 7th Texas must have been much

²³ O.R. Series I, Vol. 30, pt. 2, 753.

²⁴ Jernigan to his Parents “Austin, Texas May 18, 1872.”

lighter than their counterparts. Meanwhile, it appears that Mills's regiment accounted for roughly 36 percent of the divisional casualties, a staggering proportion. The 6th 10th & 15th Texas also presented four battle flags as trophies at the end of the conflict. More importantly, the brigade lost its two senior commanders, Smith and Mills, leaving the regimental leadership to junior officers and the brigade command to Col. Granbury.²⁵

As the rearguard of Texans made its way down Tunnel Hill and south through the night, Lt. Collins and Capt. Jack Leonard tramped along at the head of the column. Collins turned to Leonard and said, "This, Captain, is the death-knell of the Confederacy, for if we cannot cope with those fellows over the way with the advantages we have on this line, there is not a line between here and the Atlantic ocean where we can stop them. Hush, Lieutenant," Leonard replied, "that is treason you are talking." With this utterance, the column fell back into abject silence. After catching up with the rest of Cleburne's Division, the Texans laid down to rest for a few hours before resuming the march. At daylight on November 26 they reached Chickamauga Station on the Western and Atlantic Railroad.²⁶

At Chickamauga Station, Cleburne ordered his men to destroy all the supplies they could not bring off, to deny their use to the Federals. Some of the division took advantage of the situation, and helped themselves to all they could before lighting the bonfires. Some filled sacks with hardtack and others slung sides of bacon over their shoulders before heading south.

At 10 p.m. Cleburne and his men reached South Chickamauga Creek, and here they halted before proceeding. Just after midnight the Irishman received orders from

²⁵ *The Galveston Tri-Weekly News*, February 3, 1864; O.R. Series I, Vol. 31, pt. 2, 752.

²⁶ Collins, *Chapters*, 186.

Bragg to position his division in Ringgold Gap until all of the army's wagons had escaped south. At 2:30 a.m. on November 27, reveille sounded for the tired soldiers, and they assembled in what one remembered as the coldest morning he had ever experienced during the war. "By this time it was cold and frosty," wrote Lt. Collins, "the moon was bright and clear, and seemed to cast an extra sheen of bright light over everything. We could even see the diamonds of frost as they fell through the cold, crispy air." Cleburne ordered his men to strip off their uniforms and wade the creek while others built large bonfires built on the south side. At this point the creek stretched about thirty yards wide, and came up to their waist as the soldiers began to cross. Some of them obeyed orders and stripped down to nothing but their shirts, while others "went in like horses, with all their rigging on . . . the former fared better, even if we did have to climb the wet frozen banks with bare feet." Once across the creek the Texans continued south through the town of Ringgold and into the gap.²⁷

Ringgold Gap was a virtual Thermopylae: the defile allowed barely enough room for a small stream, a wagon road, and the Western & Atlantic Railroad to pass through. Liddell's Brigade commanded by Govan arrived first, and Cleburne, because a single regimental front literally filled the defile, posted the four regiments one behind the other in the gap. Granbury's Texans arrived next and Cleburne sent the 6th 10th & 15th Texas to protect the right, or north, side of the gap. He then placed the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas to their right further up the side of the ridge. Finally, the Irishman sent the 7th Texas to the high ground in the rear of the other two regiments with orders to watch the right flank. Lowrey's Brigade arrived last, and Cleburne put three of his regiments behind Govan's men in the gap, sending the 16th Alabama to the left or south side of the gap to

²⁷ Collins, *Chapters*, 188-189; Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 171.

guard that flank. He also positioned two twelve-pound Napoleon cannons concealed behind brush on the left side of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas to enfilade any attackers.²⁸

No sooner had the last of Lowrey's regiments arrived than the Federal pursuers appeared on their heels. Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker, in command of the Union pursuit, decided to attack the Confederates defending the pass in the hope of breaking through and completing the destruction of the Army of Tennessee. The Confederate gunners and the Texans hidden in the brush concealed their presence until the 17th and 31st Missouri Infantry Regiments approached within a few paces. At nearly point-blank range the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas opened on its quarry a few minutes after 8 a.m., shattering the ranks of the Missourians. The Federal brigade commander, Gen. Charles Woods, sent forward another regiment, the 29th Missouri, which almost succeeded in slipping around the flank of Taylor's regiment. At the last second Taylor bent back his right flank, and posted a line of skirmishers at right angles to the line. He also dispatched two companies to occupy a swell that jutted out from the mountain due east of Ringgold. To bolster this flank, Granbury dispatched two companies from the 6th 10th & 15th Texas to bolster Taylor's two detached companies. As the 29th Missouri clambered up the slope, Taylor surprised them by leading three companies in a wild charge that swept the Missourians back down the mountainside into the valley below, capturing their colors in the process. The other two regiments also caught the panic and followed the example of the Twenty-ninth.²⁹

With the repulse of his front-line regiments, Wood ordered up the 76th Ohio, 13th Illinois, 3rd Missouri and 12th Missouri. He directed the Illinoisans to advance toward the

²⁸ O.R. Series I, Vol. 30, pt. 2, 776; Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 172-173.

²⁹ Cozzens, *The Shipwreck of Their Hopes*, 370-384.

left-center of the Confederate position and instructed the Ohioans to try to get around the Confederate right. To hold the Texans' attention, Woods pushed the 3rd and 12th Missouri toward the center of the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas. The 13th Illinois advanced straight toward the two camouflaged Napoleons. The Federals approached within a few yards before Cleburne gave the order to fire. Blasts of grape and canister ripped through the ranks of the Illinoisans as their advance rapidly came to a halt. Meanwhile, the 3rd and 12th Missouri also moved forward, even as the relentless fire from the Texans to their front pinned them down. While these Missourians held the attention of Granbury's men, the 76th Ohio slipped around their right flank. Seeing the danger, Cleburne dispatched the 1st Arkansas, which trapped the Ohioans in a defile, and checked their advance with a destructive fire.³⁰

With the failure of Woods' attack, Hooker advanced several more brigades forward, again hoping to turn Cleburne's right. Seeing the threat, Cleburne shifted most of Lowrey's and Polk's Brigades to meet the attackers. The action on Granbury's front quieted as the Texans merely added enfilade fire to aid their comrades on the right. For the next five hours the Confederates made a tough defensive stand, holding the Yankee brigades in check against repeated assaults. Around noon Cleburne received a note from Hardee that he could safely withdraw: he had secured the passage of the army's wagons. At 2 p.m. Cleburne ordered the brush camouflage resurrected in front of the cannon and cautiously withdrew his men, leaving skirmishers behind to provide warning of any new advance. Cleburne had nothing to worry about, Hooker had had enough. No attack came

³⁰ *Ibid.*

and Cleburne and his men escaped south to rendezvous with the rest of the army near Dalton, Georgia.³¹

Cleburne and his division received accolades for their important defense of Ringgold Gap, juxtaposed with a relatively slight price in casualties. The Confederate Congress passed a resolution of thanks to Cleburne and his division for saving the army's wagons and even the normally acerbic Bragg, who still harbored a grudge against Cleburne, praised the Irishman in his official report. The 6th 10th & 15th Texas lost a mere nine wounded and three missing while the 7th Texas had five wounded. The heaviest loss in the brigade came from Taylor's 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas that lost five killed, twenty wounded and twenty missing, bringing the total brigade loss to five killed, thirty-four wounded and twenty-three missing for a total of sixty-two.³²

The accomplishments of Cleburne, Granbury and their men provided a bright spot in the otherwise grim atmosphere following the defeat at Missionary Ridge. Bragg, despondent and discouraged in the wake of the disaster, tendered his resignation to Jefferson Davis on November 27, and the president readily accepted. Davis placed Hardee in temporary command of the Army of Tennessee while he looked for a permanent replacement. On December 2, Bragg departed the army for the last time, to the relief of Patrick Cleburne, Col. Granbury and some of its soldiers. North of Dalton, Cleburne and his men went into winter encampments, while Grant and his Federals did the same near Chattanooga. It proved the final act in an eventful year for Granbury's Texans. From Arkansas Post to Ringgold Gap the Texans had faced prison, exchange and several major battles where they had finally begun to find their identity as the color

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² O.R. Series I, Vol. 31, pt. 2, 773-778. The Resolution of Thanks to Cleburne and his men can be found in the same volume, page 758.

brigade of the Army of Tennessee. “The present year is about to close,” mused Benjamin Seaton of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas, “and will close leaving many a widow and orphan to moan the loss of the brave hoo have falen on the battlefields to rise no more – O[h] that this war wold end and let peace raign again.”³³

Even though desertion and defeat continued to cripple the Confederate cause in the wake of the battles for Chattanooga, paradoxically the addition of Hiram Granbury and the 7th Texas to the Texas brigade probably saved the Texans from complete destruction, bringing to an end the mass desertion and vacuum in leadership. Hiram Granbury began to fill this leadership void, and with him at the head of the Texas brigade, those who remained took new heart, despite their now doomed cause.

³³ Simpson, *The Bugle Softly Blows*, 46.

Chapter 10

Camp Life

In early 1864, the instatement of Hiram Granbury and Joseph Johnston to command the Texas brigade and the Army of Tennessee provided a major boost for the Confederate war effort. The western forces of the Confederacy might have crumbled without these charismatic leaders in command. Even though Johnston did not perform well as an army commander, the men in the ranks adored him, and that fact in itself prolonged the Confederate war effort by keeping men in the ranks. While the Confederacy crumbled around them, Granbury's Texans went forward, more heartened than ever before.

In spite of the waning fortunes of the Confederacy as a whole, New Years Day, 1864 dawned with hope for the Confederate Army of Tennessee. Their new commander, Gen. Joseph Johnston, had renewed the spirits of the weary soldiers. Despite their prospects, the end of the war remained uppermost in the minds of many of the soldiers in this western army. "In comes a new year and no prospect of peace," wrote Pvt. Benjamin Seaton of the 10th Texas Infantry on January 1, "O that peace may be made before the end of the present year may close."¹

At the highest levels of Confederate command, Jefferson Davis faced a hard task finding a new commander for the Army of Tennessee. General William Hardee made it clear that he did not want the responsibility of commanding the army permanently and circumstances forced Davis to search for another replacement.² The only suitable candidate was Gen. Joseph E. Johnston. The appointment of Johnston proved the last

¹ Simpson, *The Bugle Blows Softly*, 46.

² Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 182.

desperate option for Jefferson Davis. A bitter feud existed between Davis and Johnston that began when the Confederate Congress commissioned Johnston a full general fourth on a list of five in order of rank in the old U.S. army. Johnston believed himself entitled to the number one spot due to his staff ranking. Davis tried to remain objective and appointed him to several important assignments during the war, including army commands during the First Manassas and Peninsula Campaigns and a departmental command during the Vicksburg Campaign. In all three assignments Johnston had performed with mediocrity at best. His failures demonstrated his vanity and self-absorption coupled with his unwillingness to take risks. Johnston's failures sprang from two weaknesses. The first consisted of his unwillingness to chance his reputation as a strategist and offer battle until everything fell perfectly into place. The second weakness stemmed from Johnston's notion of preserving his army as more important than defending geographical locations. This latter weakness became a liability for the Confederacy because as long as the Army of Tennessee remained on the defensive, the inaction harmed Confederate civilian and military morale. Johnston seemed almost unaware of the political consequences of his movements and this attitude hurt the Confederate war effort. This strategy led to his inaction during the Peninsula and Vicksburg Campaigns. By the spring of 1864, his hatred of and paranoia toward Davis had taken on a nearly religious character. Nevertheless, with Davis out of choices, Johnston now commanded of the Army of Tennessee during a crucial time of the war.³

³ There are two good sources for the relationship between Davis and Johnston. The first is Craig L. Symonds, *Joseph E. Johnston: A Civil War Biography*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1992). However, Symonds treatment of Johnston, like many biographies is often too kind to his subject. For a more objective perspective, see Steven Woodworth, *Jefferson Davis and his Generals: The Failure of Confederate Command in the West*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990)

Davis wrote Johnston in December, advising him of the general condition of the Army of Tennessee prior to his arrival. He informed him that the army remained relatively well supplied and had plenty of ammunition and artillery on hand. He also mistakenly informed him that the army possessed high spirits despite the earlier defeat at Chattanooga. Under these circumstances, he expected Johnston to take the offensive at the earliest possible opportunity.

On December 27, Johnston reached Dalton and assumed command the next day, replacing Hardee. When he arrived, he encountered little that resembled what Davis had described. Instead, he found approximately 40,000 soldiers of whom only about two-thirds remained effectives. Many men still had no blankets, overcoats or shoes. In fact, two entire brigades went barefoot and could not march. Poor rations, irregular discipline, and low morale pervaded the army. Stealing from local farmers had become commonplace, and many men simply came and went as they pleased. The artillery and wagons did not have enough horses, and diseases of malnutrition such as scurvy ran throughout the disheartened veterans. Johnston quickly saw that he had his work cut out for him.⁴

As Johnston worked to make the Army of Tennessee an effective fighting force and raise its morale, just to the north of Dalton the division of Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne attended to business as usual. Bragg posted Cleburne's Division six miles north of Dalton near Tunnel Hill. This distance allowed the Irishman to keep his division somewhat separate from the decay that attended the rest of the army. Experience made Cleburne a stickler for drill, and though the rest of the army fell into poor condition, he kept his men

⁴ Stephen Davis, *Atlanta Will Fall: Sherman, Joe Johnston and the Yankee Heavy Battalions*, (Wilmington, N.C.: Scholarly Resources Inc. 2001), 28; One must also take into account Johnston's perfectionism and micromanagement in his decision not to advance.

attending to discipline regularly. He conducted classes on military matters for his brigade commanders, who in turn instructed their regimental commanders and so on down to the men in the ranks.⁵ Col. Hiram Granbury's Texas brigade made its camp on Tunnel Hill with the rest of the division.

The Texans fashioned a very elaborate camp that contained all the comforts of good winter quarters. For some, shelter consisted of ditches dug out with pine boughs for cover. For others, winter quarters consisted of log huts replete with fireplaces, bunks and shelves. Some Texans even created chimneys from barrels with the bottoms knocked out. Lt. Robert M. Collins of the 6th & 15th Texas Dismounted Cavalry noted, "in our winter quarters there was as great a variety of architecture as there is to be found in any city or town in the country."⁶ Many of the men excavated rectangular pits in the ground upon which they erected wood framing. They covered these frames with planks and finished out their winter cabins by roofing them temporarily with dog tents, which they eventually replaced with sod roofs, completing their winter quarters. The Texans made their doors from pine, creating a more homey feeling for many of the Confederates. The men dubbed the area around them pine ridge, due to the abundance of pine trees that soon disappeared in the erection of winter quarters. This left the Georgia topsoil exposed and whenever it rained, the camp of the Texas brigade turned into a quagmire.⁷

Meanwhile Joseph Johnston remained hard at work repairing the army. He improved the rate at which food reached the troops by demanding of Governor Joe Brown of Georgia and President Davis that the Western and Atlantic Railroad carry a greater burden as the sole supply line from the army into the interior of the South. He also

⁵ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 98.

⁶ Collins, *Chapters*, 192.

⁷ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 512-513.

spent time getting acquainted with the men and officers of the army. Some of the soldiers saw Johnston as the very picture of a general, while others reacted sullenly or indifferently to his arrival. Despite this disparity, in general he quickly became popular with the rank and file. On January 8, Johnston issued General Order No. 5, which stipulated the times for reveille, sick call and meals. Johnston designed this regimen to bolster the lax discipline of the troops. Johnston also continued with a system of furloughs made in implemented by Hardee in his brief stint as army commander to improve morale. Under this system Johnston granted one out of every thirty men a thirty-day leave of absence with the winners chosen by lot.⁸ In addition Johnston granted temporary amnesty to any deserters who would return voluntarily. This also improved morale and helped to fill out the thin ranks of the army.⁹ A critical issue that arose in January dealt with the inferior manpower of the Confederates. Many of the three-year enlistments had almost expired and many wanted very badly to go home. Unbeknownst to most of the army, Patrick Cleburne had been preparing a plan to remedy this paucity of manpower.

On January 2, Cleburne presented his proposal to the generals of the army at a meeting at Johnston's headquarters. Cleburne's plan involved arming the slaves and freeing those who provided good service. The merits of the plan received mixed reviews from those present at the meeting, but because of the emotional nature of giving firearms to slaves, Johnston ordered all talk of the matter to cease.

Instead of implementing anything as radical as Cleburne's proposal, Johnston merely asked the men to reenlist "for the duration." Perhaps because of the boost in

⁸ Albert Castel, *Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 33-34.

⁹ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 96.

morale that they had recently experienced, most of them complied. On Tunnel Hill Granbury's Texans faced a substantially more difficult decision about whether or not to reenlist because they harbored two main complaints against the army. The first complaint revolved around the fact that they could not be transferred or get to the Trans-Mississippi to be closer to their homes. Expressing this regret, Capt. Bryan Marsh of the 17th Texas Dismounted Cavalry wrote his wife that the troops had commenced, "reinlisting [sic] for the duration of the War—I have not yet but expect too. You need not look for me at home until the war ends"¹⁰ The second complaint they held remained the status of their consolidated units. The brigade contained the remnants of eight original regiments, consolidated into three; the 6th 10th & 15th, 17th 18th 24th & 25th, and 7th Texas. The men supposed these consolidations temporary but now they began to feel permanent and the soldiers did not like it. As Erasmus E. Marr of Company F, 10th Texas Infantry wrote his sister, "there is a strong movement here to get us to reinlist for the war as is the case with the entire army here. I presume," the Texan mused, "that we will all reinlist and be kept here as long as the war lasts for we cannot be sent across the river but," he insisted, they would "be taken out of this consolidation and be put to our selves again" He concluded, "there is considerable discontent with this brigade owing to consolidation."¹¹ Similarly, A.L. Orr of the 18th Texas Dismounted Cavalry wrote his mother on January 29, "There is a write smart of excitement over hear a bout reinlisting or going in for the war. Our boys is very much disatisfyed and says they never will reorganise on this side of the river—We have sent some 300d petitions to the War Department to come west of the river,

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹¹ Erasmus E. Marr, "Letters of E.E. Marr, 10th Texas Infantry," Unpublished letters in the Vertical File of the 10th Texas Infantry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.

boath by our officers and privates, but we have never got a hearing from them yet—There is one thing serring—we will never reorganize on this side of the river unless we are drawed out of this consolidation.”

The Texans held a meeting, related Orr, and concluded, “If we could have our camp and field officers and men which is west of the River brought to this Department and be mounted, we would bee contented over hear.”¹² Though the majority of the Texans in the brigade reenlisted for the duration of the war, their dissatisfaction with their present condition worsened as the weeks went by.

In addition to their complaints, their situation forced the Texans to endure all of the discomforts of camp life. Lt. Robert M. Collins of the 6th & 15th Texas wrote that “while on picket duty we were required to keep on all of our clothing and accoutrements, and while we were permitted to have some fires on the line, yet our suffering from cold was great.” He went on to relate that as soon as he would “sail off into a good snooze, about twenty-nine big body lice commence prizing up Hades down about” his “hips or between” his “shoulder blades, or away somewhere where” he “could not scratch without getting up and saying a great many unladylike words. . . .”¹³

In early February events disturbed Granbury’s men from their winter encampment. In command of the Army of the Tennessee in Vicksburg, Union Gen. William T. Sherman decided to advance east and capture Meridian, Mississippi, demonstrating his brand of hard war. As soon as Sherman began advancing, Gen. Leonidas Polk pleaded with Johnston to send reinforcements from the Army of

¹² Anderson, *Campaigning with Parsons’ Texas Cavalry Brigade*, 127. When the regiments were consolidated, many of their officers found themselves without commands and were reassigned to the Trans Mississippi.

¹³ Collins, *Chapters*, 193-194.

Tennessee to help counter the threat. Johnston refused, maintaining that the Federals around Chattanooga had started advancing and that if he reinforced Polk Atlanta would surely fall. Polk appealed to Davis, and the president, sensing the danger, ordered Johnston to send reinforcements. Benjamin F. “Frank” Cheatham’s Division of Hardee’s Corps departed for Mississippi first. Next, Hardee ordered Cleburne to march his division into Dalton to board trains headed west.¹⁴ Before daylight on February 22 the men of Granbury’s Brigade abandoned their log huts and cabins around Tunnel Hill and marched south to Dalton where they boarded boxcars bound for Atlanta. From Atlanta they continued to Montgomery, Alabama. Meanwhile, Sherman, finding no military stores of use, returned to Vicksburg.

Gen. George Thomas, acting in accordance with Grant’s orders to keep the Confederates on his front occupied, sent a reconnaissance in force south to probe towards Dalton.¹⁵ In their advance the Federals overran the log huts and cabins that had housed the Texas Brigade during the winter. While waiting to board another train in Alabama, word reached Cleburne to return to Dalton at once. Johnston wrote: “The enemy is advancing; is now in force at Tunnel Hill. Lose no time.”¹⁶ With no other choice Cleburne ordered his men back onto the trains for the return trip to Dalton. Several Texans enjoyed the trip back immensely. Attaching pieces of paper with their names on them to sticks and rocks they tossed them out of the train in the direction of young women who might be near the depot. In this way some of them gained pen pals with whom they corresponded for many months.¹⁷

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

¹⁵ O.R. Series I, Vol. 32, pt. 2, 414.

¹⁶ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 196-197.

¹⁷ Lieutenant Robert Collins of the 15th Texas Dismounted Cavalry had two such correspondents “on his

Upon reaching Dalton on February 25, Johnston ordered the Texans to retake Dug Gap. With the first light of dawn on February 26 they charged up into the gap, driving away a regiment of mounted infantry. The next day they marched down into the valley at the foot of Dug Gap and went into bivouac. Soon drizzling rains drenched the Confederates. Granbury's men, who had expressed discontent before, now approached a state of near mutiny.¹⁸

Hiram Granbury in early 1864 had two main rivals for command of the Texas Brigade. The first was Col. Robert R. Garland of the 6th 10th & 15th Texas. Garland outranked Granbury even though the latter had taken command of the brigade following Chattanooga. Confederate authorities had temporarily assigned Garland to the post of provost marshal in Dalton, though, removing him from the brigade. This removal placed Granbury, who held the favor of both Hardee and Cleburne, not to mention the men of the brigade, in an advantageous position to take permanent command of the brigade. The next obstacle Granbury faced came from Brig. Gen. John Gregg, at that time seeking a permanent command in the Army of Tennessee. Gregg proposed a plan whereby he would consolidate the Texas brigade with Hood's Texas Brigade in Virginia and himself be given command of the new unit. However, Maj. Sam Melton, the A.A.G. of the Army of Tennessee, stringently opposed his agenda, feeling that it would deprive Cleburne of his best brigade, and all talk of consolidation was dropped. Hardee wrote of Granbury, "among the quartet worthy of their commander [Cleburne is] the stately Granberry (sic), as great of heart as of fame, a noble type of the Texas soldier." One of the Texans in his brigade wrote that Granbury "is deservedly very popular as he is brave, daring, cool and

string, Miss Rebecca Savage, of Savage Station, Ga., and Miss Mollie E. Harris, of Auburn Alabama." Collins, *Chapters*, 198-199.

¹⁸ Turner, "Jim Turner," 167-168; Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 197.

ever-ready to meet emergencies as they arise. His sound judgment indicated, with his qualities above, secures confidence, while his gallant, gentlemanly and courteous bearing command respect.”¹⁹

Johnston appeased the Texans on March 5 when he gave Col. Granbury permanent command of the brigade and promoted him to brigadier general to rank from February 29. As his first act in command Granbury decided to rearrange the consolidation of his brigade to the satisfaction of the men. He removed the 10th Texas Infantry from the 6th & 15th Texas and allowed it to remain independent. He formed the old 6th Texas into six companies and the 15th Texas into four and designated the two regiments the 6th & 15th Texas. He did the same with the 17th & 18th Texas, removing them from the 24th & 25th Texas. Granbury also designated these latter consolidated regiments. The 7th Texas, like the Tenth, remained independent. Jim Turner of Company G, 6th Texas wrote: “Everybody was pleased with the arrangement. ‘Old Pat’ (as we called our Major General) gave every man in the brigade a big drink of whiskey and good humor once more reigned.”²⁰ Granbury’s reorganization of the brigade stands out as a prime reason his men felt such loyalty to him.

Granbury’s promotion probably also saved the brigade from complete self destruction. Desertion remained a constant theme in the history of the brigade prior to Granbury’s ascension to command, but after he took command, this desertion dropped off considerably. As a charismatic leader, Granbury helped the Confederate cause by

¹⁹ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 515-525.

²⁰ Turner, “Jim Turner,” 168; McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 99. The strength of the brigade as of March 1 was reported to be 530 men present in the 6th 10th & 15th Texas, 117 men present in the 7th Texas and 584 in the 17th 18th 24th & 25th Texas for a total of 1, 502. O.R. Series I, Vol. 31, pt. 3, 824.

stopping the hemorrhaging of men from the Texan regiments. In this small but significant way, Hiram Granbury helped stave off Southern defeat.

Instead of returning to the old encampments near Tunnel Hill, Cleburne moved his division to Mill Creek, where they entrenched along the Middle Springs Place Road three miles east of Dalton. Here the Texans spent the remainder of the winter encampment.²¹ For the first time, Brig. Gen. Hiram Granbury came into permanent command of the brigade that would bear his name.

Far away in Washington D.C. unfolding events altered the course of the war. On March 9, 1864 President Abraham Lincoln recalled Maj. Gen. U.S. Grant to Washington to assume command of all Union forces. Promoted to lieutenant general, Grant took a new approach to the war. Instead of targeting Richmond and the other industrial centers of the South, he would put pressure simultaneously on both major Confederate armies. Grant would accompany Gen. George Meade and his Army of the Potomac south from Washington to battle Robert E. Lee and his vaunted Army of Northern Virginia. Meanwhile he ordered Sherman to move with his troops from Vicksburg to Chattanooga. There, Grant ordered Sherman to take overall command of the Federal armies in the West and execute a plan to destroy Johnston and the Army of Tennessee. Lincoln hoped that this strategy would secure for him a major military victory, ensuring his reelection in November.

Granbury's Texans spent the rest of their winter encampment in peace. While camped around Dalton, Johnston detached some of the Texas Brigade for the purpose of provost duty in town. Lt. Thomas Stokes of the 10th Texas Infantry wrote his sister Missouri on March 15, "We are now in Dalton doing provost duty (our regiment), which

²¹ Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 203.

is a very unpleasant duty. It is my business,” wrote the Texan, “to examine all papers whenever the cars arrive, and it is very disagreeable to have to arrest persons who haven’t proper papers. The regulations about the town are very strict. No one under brigadier general,” he related, “can pass without approval papers. My guard arrested General Johnston himself, day before yesterday. Not knowing him” the Texans “wouldn’t take his word for it, but demanded his papers. The old General, very good-humoredly showed them some orders he had issued himself, and, being satisfied, they let him pass.”

Stokes went on to inform his sister, “There is a very interesting meeting in progress here. I get to go every other night. I have seen several baptized since I have been here. There are in attendance,” he wrote “every evening from six to seven hundred soldiers.”²² What Stokes in fact described were the massive revivals occurring in the Army of Tennessee. Pvt. Sam Watkins of the 1st Tennessee in Cheatham’s Division wrote that “At this place (Dalton) revival of religion sprang up, and there was a divine service every day and night. Soldiers became serious on the subject of their souls’ salvation.”²³ Lt. Stokes took an active role in the revival in Cleburne’s Division. On April 5 he wrote Missouri, “Sabbath night we had services again, and also last night, both well attended, and to-night, weather permitting, I will preach. God help me,” wrote the devout lieutenant, “and give me grace from on high, that I may be enabled, as an humble instrument in His hands, to speak the truth as it is in Jesus, for ‘none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good.’” He went on to relate that he:

“Preached last Sabbath—two weeks ago to a large and attentive congregation. There seemed to be. . .much seriousness, and although much embarrassed, yet I tried, under God, to feel that I was but in the discharge of my duty; and may I ever be found battling for my Savior. Yes, my sister, I had rather

²² Mary A.H. Gay, *Life in Dixie During the War*, (Atlanta: Dekalb Historical Society, 1979), 78-79.

²³ Sam R. Watkins, *Company Aytch: A Side Show of the Big Show*, (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 131.

be an humble follower of Christ than to wear the crown of a monarch. Remember me all times at a Throne of Grace that my life may be spared to become a useful minister of Christ. I have never seen such a spirit as there now is in the army. Religion is the theme. Everywhere, you hear around the campfires at night the sweet songs of Zion. This spirit pervades the whole army. God is doing a glorious work, and I believe it is but the beautiful prelude to peace—.What a change, what a change! when one year ago card playing and profane language seemed to be the order of the day.”

He concluded that the cause of this change must be “Manifestly the working of God’s spirit.”²⁴

Indeed, the Army of Tennessee underwent a profound improvement—this time from a spiritual standpoint. Gen. Mark Lowrey, commander of the Alabama Brigade in Cleburne’s Division, had been a Baptist preacher before the war, and between him and men such as Tom Stokes, Cleburne’s Division and the rest of the army got a heavy dose of Christianity and responded quite favorably to it. Many were baptized and became serious on the “subject of their souls’ salvation.” Throughout most of the month of March the Texans spent their time around Dalton staying warm as best they could and enjoying the break from campaigning. Part of the motivation for Confederate soldiers in the ranks during the Atlanta Campaign doubtless sprang from this religious revival which occurred just months before the opening of the campaign.

Religious revivals were not an uncommon occurrence in Civil War armies. In fact, in the wake of the Second Great Awakening Christianity played an important role in American life, and this spilled over into the ranks of Civil War armies. Manifestations of Christianity appear nearly everywhere in the letters and diaries of most Civil War soldiers, and the men of Granbury’s Brigade were no exception. The mass revivals such as those described in the camp of the Army of Tennessee here usually occurred during

²⁴ Gay, *Life in Dixie*, 80-81.

periods of inactivity. It is almost impossible to overestimate the importance of these revivals in maintaining the morale of soldiers on both sides of the war. Just as much if not more than camaraderie with the men in the ranks beside them, Christianity motivated Civil War soldiers to keep fighting for the cause they felt God had sanctioned.²⁵

Early on the morning of March 22 an event occurred that stuck in the minds of nearly all who witnessed it. Before daylight their officers awakened the Texans and ordered them into line. A heavy snow had fallen and amid the swirling snowflakes in the dark the men of Cleburne ordered his division to form three sides of a square. A solemn procession approached toward the open end of the square consisting of a hospital ambulance with two people in it; the driver, and a man sitting on a coffin with an armed guard marching slowly behind the wagon. The man belonged to the 1st Arkansas Infantry, and had been sentenced to death for repeated desertion.²⁶ The wagon and guard halted at the open end of the square and the condemned man descended. The guard placed the coffin in the snow and the wagon drove away. Jim Turner recorded his impressions of the scene. “The silent guard stood at attention” as the “Chaplain’s voice could be distinctly heard. . . .” The clergyman “offered up prayers for the man about to die. The guard bound the prisoner’s arms, bandaged his eyes and caused him to kneel on the snow beside his coffin. Then the officer—commanding the guard, or firing party, gave the commands, ‘Ready, Aim, Fire!’ A puff of smoke, a crashing sound, and the condemned man lay stretched out on the ground. The volley did not leave him dead, and the firing party reloaded their guns and fired another volley at the prostrate form, this time killing him

²⁵ For more on the religious life of Civil War soldiers, see Steven E. Woodworth, *While God is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001)

²⁶ Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 203. This deserter was the only such execution to occur in Cleburne’s Division during the war.

instantly.”²⁷ Lt. Robert Collins noticed the “contrast between the dark, gloomy, condemned man and the black coffin he was sitting on, and the white, whirling, whispering snow-flakes as they came from above. . . .”²⁸ According to Turner the men “marched silently back to camp, and soon had great log fires burning, around which we clustered and quietly discussed the terrible scene we had just witnessed.”²⁹

A little later in the day the mood lightened and some of the more mischievous members of the division began throwing snowballs at one another. Soon, the engagement became general, and the troops moved out in formation with battle flags waving and officers at their head to attack neighboring brigades. Polk’s Brigade attacked Daniel Govan’s Brigade in their camp. Cleburne led the brigade into battle due to Polk’s illness. The “enemy” soon captured the division commander and paroled him. Cleburne could not stand this inactivity though, and once again entered the action at the head of Polk’s men. The Arkansans soon routed the Tennesseans and chased Cleburne back to his tent with gleeful threats of a court martial and punishment by ducking him in the nearby creek. His men knew Cleburne to make offending parties in his division “carry a rail” for a mile before rejoining their unit and one of the men yelled out, “Arrest that soldier and make him carry a fence rail.” In the end, the Arkansans let their commander go on the pretense that it proved the only time “he had been known to break his word to them.”³⁰ While the other two brigades of Cleburne’s Division battled it out, Granbury’s Brigade attacked the Alabamans of Mark Lowrey in their encampments, charging “right up to their dog tents.” After battling for some time, according to Jim Turner, “one half of the

²⁷ Turner, “Jim Turner,” 169.

²⁸ Collins, *Chapters*, 201.

²⁹ Turner, “Jim Turner,” 169-170.

³⁰ Sam Watkins, “Snowball Battle at Dalton” *Confederate Veteran*, 2: 261; Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 203.

division was arrayed against the other half, and a regular battle of snowballs began, which kept up until late in the afternoon.”³¹ Despite this revelry, not all of this grand battle consisted of fun and games. Some of the men began packing snow around rocks and ice, hurling them at their opponents. A “big, red-headed freckled-face Mississippian” captured Lt. Collins and carried him quite a distance to the rear on his shoulders. When the Mississippian let go of Collins, the Texan bolted for his own line, and one of his own men hit him “in the left eye with a big half ice and half snow ball, and laid one Confederate out.” His comrades carried him to the tent of a nearby officer and he remained so blind at the end of the battle he had to be led back to his quarters. Collins reported that he could not see well out of that eye “to this day”, writing in 1892.³² Cleburne, sensing that the conflict getting out of hand, ended the snowball battle with the call of, ““Come up boys and draw your whiskey.”” According to Jim Turner, “Old Pat had sent a quantity of whiskey to each regiment, and before very long the men were standing around the fires in steaming groups, yelling at the tops of their voices. This was kept up until midnight.”³³

The month of March slipped into April as Joseph Johnston continued to build on the morale of the army. Many Texans gained furloughs to return home, and others put on displays for civilians. On Thursday, April 5, the Army of Tennessee staged a “sham fight,” to the great delight of the local crowd in attendance. Lt. Overton Davenport of Company K, 10th Texas wrote his father about the display, “On Thursday last they took us to Dalton & put us through a sham battle. . . .Our Corps was all engaged & you ought to have seen us running from the Goober grabbers. They whipped us badly. I believe

³¹ Turner, “Jim Turner,” 170.

³² Collins, *Chapters*, 200-201.

³³ Turner, “Jim Turner,” 170.

there was no blood spilled. It was a pretty representation of a real battle,” mused the Texan, “but lacked the screaming of the shells & the whistle of the balls & the nervous system was not so seriously effected.”³⁴ On April 19, Johnston held a grand review of the army, again much to the delight of the civilians. Capt. T. J. Key commanding Key’s Arkansas Battery wrote that the “whole army was out for review, Gen. J.E. Johnston was the inspector, with hundreds of ladies. The army presented itself in the best condition I have ever witnessed, and the thousands of hardy soldiers marching to the notes of the shrill fife and bass drum or the harmonious melodies of brass bands looked grand and cheering.”³⁵

Meanwhile, the revivals continued. On April 28 Tom Stokes wrote his sister Missouri, “The revival in our brigade has continued now for four weeks, nearly, and many have found peace with their Savior. If we could remain stationary a few weeks longer,” he stated, “I believe the greater portion of the army would be converted. This is all the doings of the Lord, and is surely the earnest of the great deliverance in store for us. It is the belief of many that this is the ‘beginning of the end.’”³⁶ As Stokes scribbled these words from the camp of the Texas Brigade, Sherman prepared to advance. The young lieutenant had no way of knowing how prophetic his words would prove to be.

The Confederate war effort received a major boost from the instatement of Hiram Granbury and Joseph Johnston to command the Texas brigade and the Army of Tennessee. The western forces of the Confederacy might have crumbled without these charismatic leaders in command. Even though Johnston became a terrible strategist and

³⁴ Overton Davenport to his father April 9, 1864 at: www.members.aol.com/SmcKay1234/ (accessed January 28, 2003)

³⁵ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 105-106.

³⁶ Gay, *Life in Dixie*, 85.

tactician for the Army of Tennessee, the men in the ranks adored him, and that fact in itself prolonged the Confederate war effort by retaining men who would have otherwise deserted. Specifically in the case of the Texas brigade, Hiram Granbury played the same role, and his Texans loved him so much they always would remember themselves as Granbury's Texas Brigade.

Chapter 11

From Dalton to Pickett's Mill

Even as Johnston retreated toward Atlanta and the Confederate cause grew dim, the spirits and fighting prowess of Granbury's Texans grew brighter than ever. In the fierce fighting the Texans again began losing strength, this time due to battle casualties, not desertion, but the survivors carried on in spite of their weakening cause. The Confederate war effort faltered, but continued because of effective leadership on the part of Hiram Granbury, Patrick Cleburne and others. These trends more than anything else point to the prominent place that local circumstances played in determining the morale and effectiveness of Confederate combat units.

On May 4, 1864, Grant ordered Sherman to advance. That same day George Meade and the Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan River into the Virginia Wilderness. Two days later, Sherman began moving his columns south against Johnston.

Sherman went up against approximately forty thousand men in Johnston's two corps around Dalton. Johnston placed the first corps under Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood, the vaunted former leader of Hood's Texas Brigade under Lee. Though a good combat commander, Hood still could not use his left arm, which was shattered at Gettysburg or his right leg, amputated after Chickamauga. His aggressive nature and handicapped physical condition (he had to be strapped to his horse) left open to conjecture his ability to command such a large body of men. Johnston placed his second corps under Lt. Gen. William J. Hardee, "Old Reliable." One of Johnston's most capable lieutenants, Hardee also authored *Hardee's Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*, the primary drill manual used by both sides at the beginning of the war. In addition to these two corps, Polk's 20,000 men

remained at Tuscaloosa. Though available, President Davis preferred to keep it in Alabama to guard against a possible Federal thrust south from Memphis.

Marching south from Chattanooga, Sherman had at his disposal approximately 110,000 soldiers in three armies. The first was the Army of the Ohio under Maj. Gen. John Schofield. James McPherson's command, the Army of the Tennessee, constituted Sherman's second army. Third in line came the Army of the Cumberland under Maj. Gen. George Thomas, the Rock of Chickamauga.

Johnston at first deduced Sherman's target as Rome, southwest of Dalton. If the Federals captured Rome, they could flank the Army of Tennessee out of Dalton. Johnston wired Davis, requesting that he order Polk with his command from Tuscaloosa to Rome. Davis, reluctant to remove the Army of Mississippi from Alabama, finally ordered the bishop general to move some of his forces to Rome. Polk interpreted his orders differently, and ordered all of his men there. With Sherman's advance imminent, Johnston began to draw in his scattered forces. As an added precaution, Johnston ordered all the available Confederate forces still posted in east Tennessee to report to Dalton.

Sherman, rather than striking toward Rome, devised a different plan. The Confederate infantry occupied a strong position west of Dalton. Johnston had placed them along Rocky Face Ridge and because of the natural strength of the position, Sherman opted to bypass it. He decided to send McPherson's Army of the Tennessee¹ south of Rocky Face Ridge through Snake Creek Gap to break the railroad at the town of Resaca in Johnston's rear. While McPherson marched south and east, Sherman's other two armies would "press frontally" against Rocky Face Ridge, Buzzard's Roost, and Dug

¹ James McPherson's command, the Army of the Tennessee is not to be confused with Joseph Johnston's Confederate Army of Tennessee.

Gap. When McPherson severed the Western & Atlantic, Johnston would have to withdraw and could be destroyed with his army in motion.²

On May 6, Joseph Wheeler's cavalymen reported McPherson moving south. In Johnston's mind this confirmed Rome as Sherman's target. Consequently he did nothing to secure Snake Creek Gap. Of the two gaps immediately south of Rocky Face Ridge, Snake Creek Gap lay unguarded and Dug Gap remained protected by only two regiments of dismounted Kentucky cavalymen from Col. John Grigsby's Brigade.³

On May 8 Sherman put his plan in motion. That morning, Federal infantrymen demonstrated against Rocky Face Ridge and Buzard's Roost Gap. Meanwhile, Thomas ordered Joseph Hooker, commander of the XX Corps to demonstrate against Dug Gap. Hooker chose John Geary's Division for the task and instructed him to take the position if he could. Just before 4 p.m. Geary's division approached the gap. He advanced on the dismounted Kentuckians with his forty-five hundred infantrymen only to be repulsed three times. The Confederates took cover behind rocks and logs, rolling boulders down on their attackers as they clung tenaciously to the gap. Before long it appeared that Geary would capture the defile by sheer force of numbers.⁴

Soon reinforcements began rushing to the point of danger, and they turned out to be none other than Mark Lowrey's and Hiram Granbury's Brigades of Cleburne's Division. Hardee had been holding Cleburne and his men in reserve at Dalton. At the sound of heavy firing from Dug Gap, Johnston ordered Hardee to see to its defense. As the Confederates moved swiftly south, Johnston, Hardee, and Cleburne rode ahead to reconnoiter.

² Castel, *Decision in the West*, 123.

³ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁴ Davis, *Atlanta Will Fall*, 38.

The Texans, with Granbury at their head, marched as fast as they could toward the point of danger. Upon reaching the base of the ridge, they discovered to their delight the horses of the Kentucky cavalymen that had been left in the rear. Here the Texans left their knapsacks and blanket rolls. Several of them leapt into the saddle and rode at top speed to the crest of the ridge. One Confederate wrote, "Mounted in the saddles once more, they felt war's delirium and seemed to catch the spirit of the chainless winds that swept across the prairies of their state, and shouting and yelling they galloped forward at a breakneck speed to the succor of their hard-pressed comrades on the mountain top."⁵ Hardee and Cleburne with their staffs positioned themselves at the top of the pass as a young Texan galloped up, threw himself off his mount and asked "where am I most needed?" This incident at once reduced the two generals and their staffs to laughter as the rest of the brigade, huffing and puffing, reached the crest of the ridge.⁶ When he saw the approach of Granbury's Brigade, Hardee shouted, "Here are my Fighting Texans!" He then departed, leaving Cleburne's men to hold the position. For a while the Federals shelled the gap, making their projectiles "just graze the top of the ridge." This cannonading became "frightening" according to Capt. Sebron Sneed of the 6th & 15th Texas. One shell that exploded in the midst of the regiment knocked Sneed unconscious, took off the finger of Pvt. Daniel Cryer, and momentarily stunned Lt. Collins.⁷ Despite the shells Geary did not attempt another assault. The bombardment ceased as night closed in on the first battle of the Atlanta Campaign.

⁵ Bennet H. Young, *Confederate Wizards of the Saddle: Being Reminiscences of One Who Rode With Morgan*, (Kennesaw, Ga.: Continental Book Co., 1958), 79-80.

⁶ Nathaniel C. Hughes Jr., *General William J. Hardee: Old Reliable*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 199-200.

⁷ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 549.

Still puzzled on the morning of May 9, Johnston endeavored to divine Sherman's intentions. The Federals still remained in force in front of Buzzard's Roost Gap and Rocky Face Ridge, and yet the attack at Dug Gap had shaken his confidence in his position. He ordered Cleburne to send out skirmishers to find out if the Yankees remained in his front. Upon moving forward, the Texans found only Geary's dead and wounded from the day before. Though Johnston still assumed that Rome was McPherson's target, as an added precaution he ordered Grigsby's tired cavalymen to ride south to Snake Creek Gap to reconnoiter in that direction.⁸

On the morning of May 9, Grigsby's troopers arrived at Snake Creek Gap and found to their surprise and dismay the whole Army of the Tennessee coming through the mountains. The Kentuckians fell back contesting every inch of ground as McPherson's lead units emerged from the gap around mid-morning. Finally at 2 p.m. Thomas Sweeney's XVI Corps division reached Bald Hill, a prominence less than a mile north of Resaca. With a determined assault they displaced the few Confederates on the hill who fled in panic. Sweeney's men could see before them the town nestled in a bend of the Oostanaula River where the Western & Atlantic crossed. Astride the railroad the Northerners observed an earthen fort manned by four thousand inexperienced Confederates under Brig. Gen. James Cantey. Though McPherson vastly outnumbered his opponent, the fortification gave the Federal commander reason to pause. After feeling towards Cantey's position, McPherson convinced himself that perhaps half of Johnston's army lay behind these fortifications or that perhaps Johnston waited to pounce on him from the north. Thoroughly spooked, he ordered a retreat back to Snake Creek Gap. In

⁸ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 136.

reality, merely a handful of Kentucky cavalry and inexperienced infantry lay between McPherson and cutting off the Confederate retreat.⁹

Johnston had no idea of Sherman's plan as he received conflicting messages from Cantey and others. He did not realize that McPherson's army already menaced Resaca and still assumed that the latter planned to strike toward Rome. To remain on the safe side, he ordered two divisions plus Granbury's and Lowrey's Brigades towards Resaca. There Hood, whom he had sent to reconnoiter, would command them.

Around midnight Cleburne started his men south. When they reached the foot of Dug Gap the Texans found to their disgust that the Kentucky cavalymen, before departing, had emptied the Texans' knapsacks of all food and coffee. Disgruntled, they set out on their long march. Cleburne's brigades in the lead reached Resaca after five hours of heavy marching, and there they stood at ease for a little while.¹⁰ Not realizing the danger to Resaca, at 8 a.m. on May 10, Hood telegraphed Johnston, "Resaca all right. Hold onto Dalton." With this mistaken intelligence, Johnston continued to regard Rome as Sherman's target and ordered Cleburne's Division to march back to Dug Gap. He also halted the other two divisions and ordered them to retrace their steps as well.¹¹ Capt. Samuel Foster of the 24th & 25th Texas wrote disgustedly, "After remaining here [Resaca] about half an hour, just long enough to rest we started back the road we came by night we are back at Dug Gap on top of the mountain to the left of the gap at the same place we left this morning, after having traveled 38 miles today—all hands being tired."¹²

⁹ Davis, *Atlanta Will Fall*, 40.

¹⁰ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 204.

¹¹ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 140.

¹² Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 73.

The ignorance that plagued both commanders resulted in all the marching back and forth. Believing that McPherson had accomplished his goal, Sherman loosened his pressure on Rocky Face Ridge. By nightfall on May 10 Johnston still could not figure out Sherman's intention. A short while after dark, information arrived from Grigsby about McPherson's entire army encamped at Snake Creek Gap. Finally learning the truth, Johnston changed his mind about the threat to Rome. He ordered Polk, still at Rome with Loring's Division, to march immediately on Resaca and fortify that place.¹³ Sherman's window of opportunity had closed.

That night a thunderstorm poured rain by the bucketfull on the hapless soldiers of Cleburne's Division. In fact, it rained so hard that according to Capt. Foster, "blankets were of no use at all in trying to keep ourselves dry." He remembered that "after marching all day yesterday I squatted down with my back to a tree, and a little oil cloth haversack on top of my head, and kept awake all night, and was just as wet as if I had swam a river."¹⁴

On the morning of May 11 Cantey telegraphed Johnston, and informed him that the Federals were advancing on Resaca in force. In light of this revelation Johnston prepared to move Cleburne's Division back to Resaca while he ordered Cheatham's command to slide south and take Cleburne's place at Dug Gap. He also telegraphed Polk and exhorted him to move his forces with all speed to Resaca. Later in the day Hood telegraphed Johnston from Resaca and informed him of no enemy within "four miles" of the town.¹⁵ As Polk began to arrive at Resaca, Johnston countermanded his orders to Cheatham and Cleburne. He remained hesitant to abandon Rocky Face Ridge because he

¹³ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 145.

¹⁴ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 73.

¹⁵ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 144.

feared that Sherman would pounce on his rear as soon as he did. In the meantime, learning that McPherson had failed to take Resaca, Sherman started the rest of his forces towards Snake Creek Gap to try to take the Confederates from the rear. Johnston quickly detected Sherman's advance and issued orders to his corps commanders to abandon Dalton and move south to Resaca with the entire army.¹⁶ Sherman had turned Johnston for the first time and the maneuvering for Atlanta officially got underway.

On the morning of May 13 Union skirmishers entered Buzzard's Roost Gap and Rocky Face Ridge to find the Confederates gone. Empty campfires still burned and scouts reported Johnston's wagon train heading south. Sherman believed that Johnston intended to retreat south of the Oostanaula, and he ordered his army to pursue and occupy Resaca as soon as the Confederates had crossed. Because he believed Johnston in retreat, Sherman remained in no hurry to secure the position. This assumption worked to the advantage of Johnston, who planned to make a stand at Resaca.¹⁷

As the Army of Tennessee withdrew from Dalton, Cleburne's Division served as the rear guard. At 4 a.m. on May 13, Hardee ordered the division to march to the left, toward the main body of the army. In doing so it had to cross over Chatooga Ridge. As one of the pickets thrown out by Granbury, Capt. Foster wrote that the skirmishers advanced until they could hear Federals from the cover of some blackjack bushes talking and laughing.¹⁸ This proximity with the Yankees on the ridge proved dangerous. "While we were marching by the flank to our position," wrote Lt. Collins, "the Federals fired on us. We could hear the balls strike our men." A sniper's shot killed Lt. J.N. Nash of the 6th & 15th Texas during this encounter, while Lt. William Barton of the 10th Texas Infantry

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 150.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 150-151.

¹⁸ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 74.

had his arm splintered by a ball. Other casualties in the brigade included Pvt. “Pink” Robertson of the 10th Texas, who received a leg wound that required amputation, and Pvt. J.P. Fullingham of the same regiment who lost an eye.¹⁹

When Johnston arrived at Resaca he finished deploying his forces. The right flank of the Army of Tennessee rested on the Connasauga River while he anchored the left on the Oostanaula west of the town. Here Johnston deployed Maj. Gen. W.W. Loring’s Division.²⁰ In the center he placed Hardee’s Corps. On the right, Johnston posted Hood’s Corps with its right flank resting on the south bank of the Connasauga. Hardee positioned Cleburne’s Division in the middle of his line. Cleburne in turn arranged three of his four brigades from south to north, Granbury, Lowrey and Polk, with Govan in reserve.

Johnston’s position at Resaca proved a naturally strong one, where he hoped to hold Sherman, at least for a little while. The crossing of the Oostanaula at Lay’s Ferry four miles west of Resaca near Calhoun remained the one weakness in the line. If Sherman took possession of the ferry, he would again outflank Johnston. Accordingly, he dispatched Maj. Gen. W.H.T. Walker’s Division south with orders to hold Calhoun and Lay’s Ferry to prevent a crossing.²¹

The valley at Resaca held many memories for some in Granbury’s Brigade. Tom Stokes had grown up in Georgia near Resaca, and he wrote his sister Missouri, “it grieved my very soul,” when coming through the valley, “to think of the sad fate which awaited it when the foul invader should occupy that “vale of beauty. We formed line of battle,” continued the Texan, “at the old Eads place. . . . Right here, with a thousand recollections

¹⁹ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 553-554.

²⁰ Because French’s Division was so spread out when the orders came to move east, Polk had only Loring’s Division with him at Resaca.

²¹ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 153.

of bygone days crowding my mind, in the valley of my boyhood, I felt as if I could hurl a host back.”²²

Ironically, Sherman intended to do exactly what Johnston feared: cross the Oostanaula at Lay’s Ferry. He remained sure that Johnston would retreat, and when he did Sherman wanted to be there to crush him. With some of his units crossing at Lay’s Ferry, he intended to keep pressure on Johnston in front of Resaca.

To keep Johnston pinned down, Sherman ordered two of his divisions to make a diversion in the center. On the morning of May 14 he ordered the divisions of Absalom Baird and Benjamin Judah to attack the Confederate right in the hopes of turning the Rebel flank adjacent to the Connasauga. The two divisions advanced towards the center-right of the Confederate position, and rushed down the slope into Camp Creek at the foot of the ridge under heavy fire from Cleburne’s men. Here in the marshy creek the badly coordinated frontal assault ground to a halt. The Yankees proved unable to extricate themselves from the base of the ridge, and it took another Union attack to rescue them. Subsequent to the failure of their infantry attack the Yankees began a fierce bombardment on the ridge. The shells hissed and exploded all around Cleburne’s men as they tried their best to avoid the deadly projectiles.²³

Throughout the next two days the two armies sparred back and forth with first Sherman, then Johnston launching limited sorties. Shortly after dark on May 16, Johnston assembled his corps commanders and informed them that the Army of Tennessee would retreat to the south bank of the Oostanaula that night. He explained that a strong Federal force had taken position to strike Calhoun and cut the Western & Atlantic. During the day

²² Gay, *Life in Dixie*, 87.

²³ Davis, *Atlanta Will Fall*, 47.

at Lay's Ferry, though Sweeney faced only a weak resistance from one brigade, he failed to advance on Calhoun, believing Walker's entire division present. Sweeney's hesitance, like McPherson's before him, kept the Army of Tennessee from disaster.

Beginning around midnight, Hardee's weary infantry crossed the Oostanaula on the railroad bridge, followed by Hood and Polk. Cleburne awakened his men at 10 p.m. and then told them to lie down and go back to sleep again. An hour later the officers roused them and again told them to go back to sleep with their accoutrements on. At 1:30 a.m. the Texans, "were ordered up again, told to be very quiet not to speak above a whisper" as they moved south and crossed the river. By daylight the whole army had crossed and they continued in "full retreat. About an hour before day this morning," wrote Foster, "we could see the light of the burning bridge that we had crossed. . . ." ²⁴ As the Confederates moved south the artillery on the ridges north and west of Resaca remained silent—a tribute to the fact that Sherman believed Johnston would not evacuate his position. ²⁵

By the time the Union soldiers discovered the empty trenches in their front, Johnston had already busied himself laying plans for another defensive position. Once the army crossed the Oostanaula, Johnston resupplied his troops and started them toward Adairsville, seven miles to the south. At Adairsville, according to Johnston's maps, a good place to make a defensive stand lay in a narrow valley west of town. At 1 a.m. on May 17 the Confederate columns set off for the little Georgia hamlet. Once there, Johnston discovered that the narrow valley marked on his map was much wider than

²⁴ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 77.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 179-180.

expected. This convinced him not to offer battle at Adairsville. Rather, he came up with an alternative.²⁶

His plan called for Hardee's Corps to march southwest toward Kingston while Hood and Polk withdrew southeast toward Cassville. He hoped that this maneuver would force Sherman to split his armies to pursue both columns. Once this happened, Hood and Polk could ambush and destroy the eastern column while Hardee made a forced march east from Kingston and completed the trap before the column pursuing him could come to the aide of their comrades.²⁷

For the men of Granbury's Brigade, the night of May 18 brought little rest. They had gone three days with virtually no sleep, making it hard to remain alert. Many of them dozed listlessly as they watched the stunning display of lightning off to the northwest. Rumbblings of thunder that resembled artillery rent the night air as the flashes of lightning played upon the stragglers of the army moving down the road.²⁸

The next day Johnston attempted to spring his trap, but through a series of bumbles and hesitation, Hood waited too long to attack. Johnston realized his plan to destroy Sherman had now become impracticable, and ordered Hardee to make a demonstration to his front while he established a new defensive position southeast of Cassville. As Hardee's men skirmished, Johnston aligned his other two corps along a 140 foot-high ridge east of Cassville. This position proved naturally strong and protected the Western & Atlantic at Cass Station. With his dispositions completed, Johnston ordered Hardee to withdraw and to take up a position on the left of the line. Polk's Corps held the

²⁶ Davis, *Atlanta Will Fall*, 53.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 559.

center and Hood's the right as the Confederates hunkered down and waited for Sherman's next move.²⁹

That night, Johnston and his three corps commanders met at his headquarters to discuss the situation. Hood and Polk argued stringently for withdrawal. They felt their lines badly exposed, evidenced by the damage done to the artillery of Maj. Gen. William H. French's Division by the bombardment. After three hours of discussion, Johnston ordered the Army of Tennessee to abandon its position and march south of the Etowah River, where he hoped to make a stand at Allatoona Pass. On the night of May 19 the veterans started south. In his official report, Johnston wrote of the withdrawal from Cassville as a mistake he had "regretted ever since."³⁰ As they moved out, French issued axes to his men and ordered them to fell trees, masking the noise of the retreat.³¹ This retreat marked the second time Johnston allowed Sherman to turn his flank, an alarming trend.

On May 20 the Confederates withdrew south of the Etowah on pontoon bridges. At Cartersville, Cleburne's men stopped to eat breakfast before continuing on. After lying in line of battle for two hours in the hot sun, they proceeded to cross the river. After crossing the river, they then marched three miles to the west, camping on Pumpkinvine Creek.³²

After retreating once more, Johnston positioned his army at Allatoona Pass, a narrow gorge through which the Western & Atlantic ran. This position proved the strongest that he had yet occupied, stronger even than Rocky Face Ridge. He hoped that

²⁹ Davis, *Atlanta Will Fall*, 203.

³⁰ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 206.

³¹ Samuel G. French, *Two Wars: The Autobiography of Major General Samuel G. French*, (Nashville, Ten.: Confederate Veteran, 1901), 198.

³² Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 79.

Sherman would be brash enough to attack him here south of the Etowah. In less than two weeks of the campaign Johnston had retreated more than halfway to Atlanta. On May 20 he received a message from President Davis that read, “Your dispatch of the 16th received; read with disappointment. I hope the reinforcements sent will enable you to achieve important results.” Davis, who had doubted Johnston’s capabilities from the very beginning, started to lose patience with his retreating.³³

As Sherman planned his next move, the men of Granbury’s Brigade enjoyed a break from the campaign. For the “first time since we left Resaca,” wrote Capt. Foster on May 20, “the Yanks did not shoot at us today.” The next day he recorded that after remaining in camp all night, he had a “good rest.” They were not, he continued, “disturbed last night. This morning we are ready for any thing that may turn up and expecting to move every minute; but no move.”³⁴

Before sunup on May 22, Granbury ordered his men into line and instructed them to discharge their muskets, clearing them. This respite from battle afforded the opportunity for many of the Texans to write home while others read the Atlanta papers or slept.

Having ridden through Allatoona Pass as a young officer in 1844, Sherman realized that Johnston occupied a position too strong to be assaulted. Instead, he decided to move southwest, towards the crossroads of Dallas. From there he could strike out toward Marietta, Johnston’s base of supplies. With this in mind, the Federal commander changed his supply depot to Kingston and ordered his subordinates to be ready to move

³³ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 209.

³⁴ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 79.

out on May 23. The wet weather came to an end and gave way to sweltering heat. In the heat, the muddy roads of north Georgia turned to dust, encumbering Union movements.

Johnston, divining Sherman's intention to capture Dallas, rapidly started Hardee's and Polk's corps west. Dallas lies sixteen miles south of the Chattahoochie and sixteen miles west of Allatoona Pass. Despite this head start, because no river or heavy wagon train impeded the Confederate forces, they had the advantage over Sherman's columns. At midnight on May 23 the commissary issued Granbury's Texans two days rations consisting of "corn bread and bacon," and at 3 a.m. they began west towards Dallas. They had become so tired of retreating that according to Capt. Foster they became sarcastic and began to muse that "Some say we are going to Florida and put in a pontoon bridge over to Cuba, and go over there. While others contend that some Yank would put a torpedo under it and blow it up."³⁵ Rather than heading for Florida, however, Hardee and Polk had orders to hold Dallas against the Federals, whom Johnston assumed merely intended to launch a feint. Johnston still believed that Sherman intended to oppose him at Kingston north of the Etowah. Wheeler's cavalry, busy operating in Sherman's rear, reported that they had advanced from Cartersville to Cassville and sighted no Yankees except a large wagon train. Johnston realized that Sherman had started his entire army toward Dallas, and he immediately put Hood's Corps into motion west from Allatoona.

The morning of May 24 found the Army of Tennessee in position to protect Dallas. Johnston formed Hardee's Corps, including Granbury's Brigade, on the left in front of Dallas. Polk held the center and Hood's men took up positions around New Hope Church on the right. The Confederates, who had become accustomed to entrenching and fighting, immediately began to dig breastworks and rifle pits in anticipation of an

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 80.

assault.³⁶ West of Allatoona and south of the Etowah the terrain became rough and broken with thick underbrush and forests, coupled with steep ravines and ridges that made it difficult to maneuver under ordinary circumstances, and even more so under fire. This difficult terrain would play a role in the battles ahead.

Sherman believed that Johnston would not make a stand north of the Chattahoochie. He remained convinced that the Confederates had only a small delaying force in the environs of Dallas. On May 25 he sent forward Hooker's XX Corps to overwhelm any resistance at New Hope Church and capture the crossroads there. About 5 p.m. Hooker instructed his division commanders to go forward, where the Confederates heavily engaged them. Hooker discovered Stewart's veteran division of Hood's Corps entrenched in front of the crossroads. The battle raged throughout the evening until 7:30 p.m. when a torrential downpour and the coming of darkness ended the fighting. The Confederates had bloodily repulsed Hooker's men, and as they withdrew Stewart's troops sent up victory yells.³⁷

At 10:30 p.m., in response to the action around New Hope Church, Johnston ordered Cleburne's Division to move north and bolster Hood's Corps. Clogged roads blocked Cleburne's men, who did not go into bivouac until 4 a.m. They then continued their march north where Hood placed them in rear of Thomas Hindman's Division, the extreme right of his corps.³⁸ During the march Granbury's Texans passed directly behind Ector's Texas Brigade, busy skirmishing with the Federals. Lt. Collins took the occasion to locate his old friend Capt. Sam Lusk of Company A, 14th Texas. Collins wrote that

³⁶ Davis, *Atlanta Will Fall*, 63.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 218.

when he found him, “Something had gone wrong and” Lusk “was cussing like a Norwegian sailor.”³⁹

When his division reached the right, Johnston ordered Cleburne to report directly to Hood. Cleburne placed Lucius Polk’s Brigade⁴⁰ on the right of Hindman’s Division while he positioned eight cannon under the command of Capt. Thomas J. Key on Polk’s right. Cleburne detached one Arkansas regiment from Govan’s Brigade to guard the guns. Cleburne then placed the remainder of Govan’s, Lowrey’s and Granbury’s Brigades in reserve to support Hindman’s right.⁴¹ As soon as Granbury had his men in place, some of them went forward to explore the troops in their front, “for they have no confidence in any of them but the Arkansas troops.” They “found Georgia troops to our front;” wrote Capt. Foster, “and our boys tell them that if they run that we will shoot them, and no mistake, and as soon as they find out that the Texans are in their rear, they believe we will shoot them sure enough.”⁴² Granbury sent out the 6th & 15th Texas as skirmishers to bolster the Georgians while the rest of the brigade took position in an old rutted wagon road to the rear.⁴³

All day on May 26 Johnston remained content on the defensive while Sherman brought up the rest of his troops. Sherman still did not believe Johnston’s entire army in front of him, and he ordered Thomas to try to turn the Confederate right northeast of New Hope Church. At daylight on June 27, Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard, commander of the IV Corps, ordered Gen. Thomas Wood to withdraw his division from the front and march

³⁹ Collins, *Chapters*, 210-211.

⁴⁰ Lucius Polk is not to be confused with his uncle, the bishop general Leonidas Polk.

⁴¹ Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 218.

⁴² The Texans of Granbury’s Brigade referred to the Arkansans as Joshes while the Texans were known as Chubs. Each state, during the course of the war, developed nicknames for themselves by which they were known to troops of other states. Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 81-82.

⁴³ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 567.

north to flank the Confederates. Wood, whom Howard picked to spearhead the assault, remained leery of his prospects but prepared anyway to march east in search of Hood's flank.⁴⁴

At 11 a.m. Wood's and Johnson's divisions set out, an hour behind schedule, with Howard and his staff accompanying them. During the march, because of the heavy foliage, Col. William Gibson, who commanded one of Wood's brigades, ordered his buglers to guide the troops by blowing frequent blasts on their instruments. The noise alerted the skirmishers of Cleburne's Division to the presence of Howard's column. One Federal wrote, "If we are expected to surprise the enemy, why don't they stop those damned bugles?"⁴⁵ Several hours later, after marching a mile and a half, Howard supposed himself beyond the Confederate flank. To make sure, he sent out skirmishers. When they reached the edge of a large field, the skirmishers could plainly see Polk's Brigade, entrenched and ready for battle. Howard resumed his march east. After marching another mile he again moved south to reconnoiter. In the meantime he halted his men along a tributary called Pickett's Mill Creek. Coming to a clearing, Howard observed entrenching Confederates, this time Govan's Brigade on the right of Cleburne's line. Despite this, he saw no troops to the left of these Confederates and decided to attack. He ordered Wood to place his division facing south, and instructed Johnson to do the same on the left. He next placed Gen. Nathaniel McLean's Brigade on the right to protect Wood's other flank. Howard remained busy deploying his men at 3:35 p.m. when he sent

⁴⁴ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 229-230.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 230.

a note to Thomas notifying him that “I am now turning the enemy’s right flank, I think.”⁴⁶

In the center Wood narrowly aligned his division with his three brigades situated one behind the other with William Hazen’s command in the lead. At 4:30 p.m. precisely Wood ordered Hazen to attack. Accompanying Hazen was his young topographical engineer Ambrose Bierce who would gain prominence as a writer after the war. “We moved forward,” wrote Bierce. “In less than one minute the trim battalion had become simply a swarm of men struggling through the undergrowth of the forest, pushing and crowding. The front was irregularly serrated, the strongest and bravest in advance.” For the first 200 yards or so the course of Hazen’s men, “lay along the left bank of a small creek in a deep ravine, our left battalions sweeping along its steep slope.” He remembered that the regiments became, “inextricably intermingled, rendering all military formation impossible. The color bearers kept well to the front with their flags, closely furled, aslant backwards over their shoulders. Displayed they would have been torn to rags by the boughs of the trees.” Hazen and his staff officers dismounted and sent their horses to the rear as they struggled through the dense undergrowth.⁴⁷

Meanwhile Cleburne had recognized the Federal attempt to turn his flank, and a little before 4 p.m. he sent an urgent message to Granbury to move his brigade to the right and extend Govan’s flank. At four a courier rode up to Granbury under a large oak tree, and handed him a dispatch. He did not even have time to brief his regimental commanders on the situation and immediately gave the command, “Attention Brigade!” In a few seconds the entire Texas Brigade rushed into line and Granbury gave the

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁴⁷ *Voices of the Civil War: Atlanta*, (Alexandria, Va.: Time Life Books), 60.

command “Right Face! Forward! Double quick march!” They were “off at a run” and moved the full length of the brigade to the right before the officers gave the command to place percussion caps on their weapons.⁴⁸ Granbury led his men to the west, towards a steep ravine that separated two farms. As the Texans approached the edge of the defile, Granbury sent out skirmishers from the 24th & 25th Texas. No sooner had the skirmishers disappeared into the shaded gorge than they came running back after encountering the enemy. In fact, some of them reported the whole Northern race on their heels.⁴⁹

As the Federals approached the bottom of the ravine, the Texans, lying concealed at the lip of the crevasse, suddenly stood up and delivered a point-blank volley into Hazen’s startled men. “Suddenly there came the familiar rattle of musketry,” wrote Bierce. All the spaces of the forest were immediately blue with smoke as “Hoarse, fierce yells broke out of a thousand throats . . . the edge of our swarm grew dense and clearly defined as the foremost halted, and the rest pressed forward to align themselves beside them, all firing.” The roar from the battle was incessant and “the frequent shock of the cannon was rather felt than heard, but the gusts of grape which they blew into that populous wood were audible enough, screaming among the trees and cracking their stems and branches.”⁵⁰ Seeing Granbury’s men without breastworks, many of the Yankees rushed forward shouting “Ah! Damn you, we have caught you without your logs now!”⁵¹ Lt. Stokes wrote his sister that as they mowed down their attackers you could “see a pleasant smile playing upon the countenances of many of the men, as they would cry out to the Yankees, “Come on, we are demoralized!”” During the intense fighting Maj. John

⁴⁸ Collins, *Chapters*, 211-212.

⁴⁹ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 572.

⁵⁰ *Voices of the Civil War*, 60.

⁵¹ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 237.

Kennard of the 10th Texas kept busy encouraging his men by saying, “Put your trust in God, men, for He is with us.” In spite of his initial piety, Kennard soon changed his tune and began taunting the Federals by yelling, ““Come on! We are demoralized.”” Just then a spent minnie ball struck him between the eyes. Not wounded seriously, he raised himself up, saying, “Boys, I told them a lie, and I believe that is the reason I got shot.”⁵² With Govan’s Arkansans enfilading their flank and Granbury’s Texans leveling a destructive fire into them from the front, Hazen had little choice but to withdraw the survivors of his brigade to the other side of the ravine to seek shelter. In just a few minutes of fighting Hazen’s crack brigade had lost over five hundred men.

Howard began having trouble coordinating his attack as the Texans bloodily repulsed Hazen’s brigade. Insisting that his men needed rations, McLean promptly marched his brigade to the rear in disobedience of orders. Howard did not immediately order Johnson’s division into the fight either, leaving only Wood’s men to carry out the assault. Despite Hazen’s exhortation to attack immediately, it took forty-five minutes before William Gibson had his brigade ready to go forward.

Gibson’s men rushed down into the ravine amongst the survivors and casualties of Hazen’s brigade and began up the opposite side. No sooner had they started up the slope than they met an invisible wall of iron and lead from the Texans, a barrier that Bierce described as the “dead line.” In an impetuous charge, Sgt. Ambus Norton, color bearer of the 15th Ohio, planted his flag at the line of the Texas Brigade, only to have the Confederates kill him, along with three of his comrades, in hand to hand combat.⁵³ Pvt. Andrew Gleason also of the 15th Ohio wrote of a man in his regiment, leaning against a

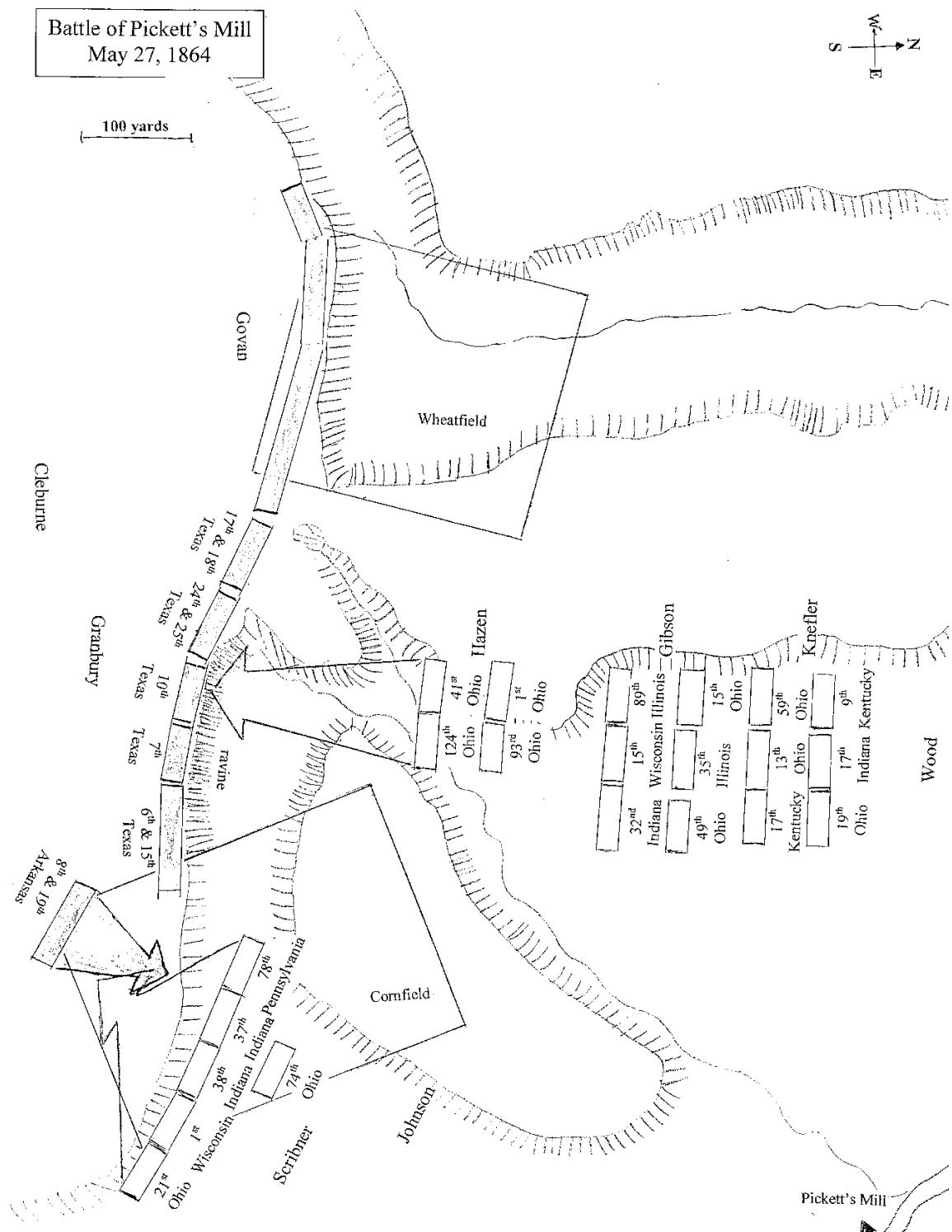
⁵² Gay, *Life in Dixie*, 89.

⁵³ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 578.

tree, who would not lie down. The Ohioan did not fire, remembered Gleason, and, “in a few minutes a ball came from the left and struck him squarely in the temple with that peculiar “‘spat’ which, once heard, is at once recognized as the passage of a bullet through flesh and bone.” The impact splattered Gleason with the blood and brains of the Ohioan as his shattered unit began to seek shelter.⁵⁴ Gibson’s veteran brigade suffered close to seven hundred casualties in the first few minutes. The survivors sought shelter behind rocks, trees, and the corpses of their comrades at the base of the ravine.

As Gibson’s men met their fate, William Johnson finally had his men ready to advance. As the division went forward, they threatened to overrun Granbury’s right, at the southern edge of a large cornfield. The men of the 6th & 15th Texas on the right began to get anxious as Johnson’s Federals pushed the skirmishers of the 24th & 25th Texas back out of the cornfield. Granbury begged Cleburne for reinforcements, and Cleburne sent the 8th & 19th Arkansas from Govan’s Brigade. Granbury’s Asst. Adj. Gen., George Hearne of the 10th Texas, personally led the 8th & 19th Arkansas and 6th & 15th Texas in a savage counterattack through the cornfield that halted the Northerners in their tracks. As he led the two regiments onto the field, several bullets struck Hearne and instantly killed him. After this counter attack Cleburne posted Lowrey’s Brigade to the right of the Texans, extending their flank east of the cornfield.

⁵⁴ *Voices of the Civil War*, 61.



At 6:30 p.m. Howard decided to send in Wood's last unit, Col. Frederick Knefler's brigade. Knefler's men advanced down into the ravine where they took cover,

not daring to advance up the opposite slope. They remained content to tend to the wounded and dying and keep the Texans occupied with their presence.

Night closed in on the gruesome scene in the ravine. Pvt. Iver O. Myhre of Company G, 15th Wisconsin wrote, “The first night after we were wounded several hundred of us lay in an open field. The night was cold and those who were strong enough started to light some fires. Then the Rebels started to shoot at us, and the atmosphere among us was depressed. Some of the men asked politely that the fires be put out, others used foul language.”⁵⁵ As the wounded suffered, Kneffler’s men remained quietly in the ravine, less than twenty yards from the Texas Brigade.

After dark Granbury realized that the Texans could not live in peace with the Yankees in such close proximity. He sent Capt. Richard English of his staff to Cleburne’s headquarters to request that he allow Granbury to order a bayonet charge to clear the ditch. Cleburne responded by saying that no one had authorized him to order a charge, but that he would inquire with Hood about it, and that in the meantime Granbury should do as he saw fit.⁵⁶ This provided enough authorization for Granbury, who aligned the 7th, 10th, and 24th & 25th Texas at the edge of the ditch and ordered them to fix bayonets. He held the 6th & 15th and 17th & 18th Texas in reserve in case the charge failed. Before the assault Capt. Foster remembered everything as so still “that the chirp of a cricket could be heard 100 feet away—all hands lying perfectly still and the enemy not 40 yards in front of us. While waiting (all this time none had spoken above a whisper) we could hear the Yanks just in front of us moving among the dead leaves on the ground, like hogs rooting for acorns; but not speaking a word above a whisper. To make this charge in the dark,” he

⁵⁵ Scott Cantwell, “15th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry: The Scandinavian Regiment,” at www.15thwisconsin.net/15story6.htm, (accessed July 16, 2003)

⁵⁶ Collins, *Chapters*, 214.

remembered, “and go in front at that; and knowing that the enemy were just in front of us, was the most trying time I experienced during the whole war.”⁵⁷

At 1 a.m. the bugles sounded and the three regiments rushed down into the pitch-black ravine screaming a “regular Texas yell, or an Indian yell, or perhaps both together” as they swooped down on the unsuspecting Federals. The Texans could not see anything at all as they plunged into the blackness until muzzle flashes lit up the darkness like flashes of lightning. Confusion reigned as the Yankees fled for their lives. One of them grabbed a member of Company F, 24th & 25th Texas and told him “to fall in quick as Co. C was gone already.”⁵⁸ At times the Texans would ask what regiment a man belonged to, and sometimes the man in question would answer the fortieth and the Texans knew they did not have a fortieth regiment in their brigade. They would then shoot the man in question.⁵⁹ The Texans charged so impetuously that many of them injured themselves in their advance. Tom Stokes exemplified this trend as he tripped and fell from a rock outcropping while charging into the blackness. Granbury’s boys rushed down to the bottom of the ravine “still Yelling like all the devils from the lower regions had been turned loose.” The Confederates found several fallen trees with fifteen or twenty Federals behind them pleading “*don’t shoot*” “*don’t shoot*.”⁶⁰ Upon reaching the base of the hill Granbury recalled the Texans to the crest of the ridge until daylight. “It needed but the brilliancy of this night attack,” Cleburne wrote, “to add luster to the achievements of Granbury and his brigade. I am deeply indebted to them both.”⁶¹

⁵⁷ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 85.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Spurlin, *The Civil War Diary of Charles Leuschner*, 35.

⁶⁰ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 86.

⁶¹ Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 355.

Dawn on May 28 revealed a gruesome sight. Capt. Foster, whom Granbury had sent out with his company as pickets on the previous night, recorded that as he returned to the main lines the next morning, "I beheld that which I cannot describe and that which I hope never to see again, dead men meet the eye in every direction." He described how the Federals lay "just as they had fallen, and it seems like they have nearly all been shot in the head, and a great number of them have their skulls bursted open and their brains running out, quite a number that way." The sight literally made the staunch captain sick to his stomach, and he stated that "if a soldier could be made to faint I do believe I would have fainted if I had not passed on and got out of that place as soon as I did." Both sides kept the fire so hot during the battle that they had shot away many of the trees and nearly all of the underbrush, and the dead lay in thick piles. That day Johnston, with Hood, Granbury and Cleburne, rode out to view the battlefield. Johnston and Hood both said that they had never seen dead lay so thick and then Johnston, turning to Granbury, said, "This shall no longer be known as Granbury's, but shall be known as Johnston's Brigade."⁶² Hood quietly remarked, "Texans did this and Texans can do it again."

The casualties revealed the ferocity of the fighting. Gibson's brigade of Wood's division suffered 687 casualties. Wood's division as a whole lost 212 killed, 927 wounded, and 318 missing. Gibson's 49th Ohio lost 203 of 400 men engaged while the 89th Ohio of the same brigade suffered 154 casualties. One company of the 41st Ohio lost 20 of 22 men engaged. The Texas Brigade suffered 32 killed and 114 wounded. Cleburne's Division as a whole suffered 85 killed and 363 wounded.⁶³

⁶² Oliver P. Bowser, "Notes on Granbury's Brigade," Dudley G. Wooten ed., *A Comprehensive History of Texas, 1685-1897*, (Dallas: W.G. Scariff, 1898), 746.

⁶³ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 585, 576; *Galveston Weekly News*, August 3, 1864.

In the aftermath of Pickett's Mill, Granbury's men re-outfitted themselves. Many of the Texans went into battle armed with Austrian-made Lorenz rifles issued to them early in the war. Taking advantage of their momentous victory, they stripped the Union dead of their Enfield Rifles, uniformly rearming the brigade.

Sherman, who omitted any mention of Pickett's Mill in his memoirs or his official report, decided to bypass the Confederates and slide back east toward the railroad. On May 28 Johnston received erroneous information about the Federals at Dallas moving north. He acted quickly to try to turn Sherman's right. That afternoon William Bate's Division of Hardee's Corps attacked, and the Yankees, still very much in place around Dallas, soundly repulsed them.⁶⁴ Both sides then settled down for a standoff as Johnston awaited Sherman's next move.

For the next several days the two armies remained in place, skirmishing and sniping at one another. On May 31, Sherman ordered McPherson to take the Army of the Tennessee northeast, and head back towards the Western & Atlantic. The Confederates remained in place as Sherman slowly shifted.

Even as Johnston retreated toward Atlanta and the Confederate cause grew dim, the spirits and fighting prowess of Granbury's Texans grew brighter than ever after Pickett's Mill. They had grown impatient, but not disheartened, over the retreating under Johnston because they felt he knew best, and their victory at Pickett's Mill convinced them that Sherman would never capture Atlanta. In the fierce fighting of the Atlanta Campaign the Texans again began hemorrhaging men, this time due to battle casualties, not desertion, but the survivors carried on in spite of their weakening cause. From a local

⁶⁴ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 245-246.

perspective, the Confederate war effort weakened, but continued because of effective leadership on the part of Hiram Granbury, Patrick Cleburne and others.

Chapter 12

Stuck in the Thickets of North Georgia

From a strategic standpoint, the marching and counter marching in north Georgia weakened the Confederate cause as Johnston retreated farther toward Atlanta, but the spirits of Granbury's Texans remained high, and desertion rates became almost nonexistent. Paradoxically, as the Confederate fortunes waned, the morale and spirit of the Texans finally became strong enough to sustain their part of the Confederate war effort.

The beginning of June found both armies still bogged down in the tangled thickets. Johnston realized that the Federals had withdrawn from Dallas, but he could not discern Sherman's intentions. At first he suspected that Sherman might be retreating. Johnston soon ruled this out, and began to suspect a turning movement toward his right. To counter this threat, he ordered Cleburne's Division to march across the rear of the Confederate army from the left to the right flank.¹

In fact, in the early days of June Sherman began to execute just such a flanking maneuver. On June 1, Federal cavalry seized Allatoona Pass and Acworth on the Western & Atlantic and Sherman began slowly shifting his forces east toward Acworth. He hoped that this flanking maneuver would force Johnston to retreat across the Chattahoochie, the last natural barrier before Atlanta.

Meanwhile on June 3 in the ranks of Granbury's Brigade, the monotony of trench life continued. The rain continued unabated, and Capt. Foster remarked, "All our dog

¹ Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 222.

tents and Oil Cloths that we picked up on the battle field are now of use to keep us dry.”²
Capt. Edward Broughton of the 7th Texas wrote his wife on June 3 and told her that from what he could ascertain, “our army seems to have the best morale possible. The soldiers are all in high spirit, buoyant and confident of success. . . .”³

On June 3 Johnston realized that Sherman had chosen Acworth as his objective. Consequently, he decided to move the Army of Tennessee east into position behind a previously prepared line of fortifications along Pine, Brush, and Lost Mountains. This line, though further south, remained north of Marietta and the Chattahoochie. That night he issued orders to his corps commanders to move out.⁴

Just as the Confederates poised to move, Hiram Granbury took leave of his brigade, complaining of ill health. In June 1864 Granbury probably suffered a bout with clinical depression. Several factors may have contributed to this. Around this time he learned of the death of his brother at the Battle of Mansfield, Louisiana. The date also fell close to the one-year anniversary of the death of his wife Fannie. Coupled with the stress from the campaign and the slight head wound he sustained at Pickett’s Mill, these circumstances combined to produce the breakdown to which the lanky Texan succumbed, and he retired to an Atlanta hospital.⁵ In the interim Col. Roger Q. Mills of the 10th Texas took command until Brig. Gen. James Smith again assumed command of the Texas Brigade. As Granbury made his way to Atlanta, Johnston set his army in motion. On the

² Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 91.

³ Mary Lee Anderson Barnes (compiler), “Letters to Mollie: The Letters of Colonel Edward T. Broughton to his wife, Mary Elizabeth Douglas Broughton and other letters,” 39. Typescript, Vertical file of the 7th Texas Infantry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.

⁴ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 258.

⁵ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 593.

evening of June 4, the Confederates quietly withdrew from their fortifications and headed southeast.⁶

Another shakeup in the command of Granbury's Brigade occurred on June 6 when Col. Robert Garland arrested Col. Frank Wilkes of the 24th & 25th Texas. Wilkes then preferred charges against Garland, and Johnston sent both officers to Atlanta. The source or outcome of the altercation is not known, but Garland forced Wilkes to resign on July 30, leaving Lt. Col. William Neyland of the 25th Texas in command of the regiment. With Garland also gone, Capt. Rhoads Fisher assumed command of the 6th & 15th Texas.⁷

Because of their position on the extreme right of the army, Cleburne's men waited all through the dark, rainy night of June 4 as the entire army passed behind their camp. Finally, at 11:30 p.m. on June 5, Granbury's Texans received their orders to move southeast. At midnight they began their mud march through the rain-soaked woods of north Georgia. "We are in the very thick of the timbered country," wrote Capt. Foster, "and thick undergrowth, makes it darker than it would be in open country, and so very thick cloudy, and raining very hard all combined, makes it the darkest night of all dark nights."⁸ The Georgia mud became so thick that it sucked men's shoes off their feet. Foster remembered that "occasionally a man would stumble and fall flat in the mud, get up, and go on again." Even these conditions could not dampen the spirits of the Texans, who remained, "all in good humor, passing their jokes as usual, as though it was noon instead of midnight and clear instead of raining and muddy."⁹ The high spirits of the

⁶ *Ibid.*, 259.

⁷ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 93.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁹ *Ibid.*

Texans revealed their changed attitudes toward the war after Granbury, Cleburne and Johnston took command and renewed their resolve.

In the dark woods and drenching rain the two armies shifted and sparred, vying for position. When Johnston ordered the Army of Tennessee south, he positioned his men on a line running from Gilgal Church, southwest to Lost Mountain. After Sherman completed his concentration at Acworth, Johnston shifted his units to a line running from Gilgal Church east to Brush Mountain, directly north of Marietta. Hardee occupied the left of the new line, Polk the center, and Hood the right. At Acworth, Sherman waited to concentrate all of his units before beginning his advance against the Confederates who remained entrenched *north* of the Chattahoochie.¹⁰

On June 10, Sherman began his advance after establishing his headquarters at Big Shanty. As his first move, he decided to push some of his units forward against the bulge in the Confederate line on Pine Mountain.

On June 13 Patrick Cleburne decided to have a look at the Federals, and rode to the crest of Pine Mountain with a staff officer. There, in place behind two redoubts, he found two Confederate batteries of artillery. The artillerymen hugged the reverse slope of the peak and warned Cleburne that they had observed a battery of Federal Parrot Rifles in place in the valley below, and that the Union gunners had the range of the crest. Cleburne sought to satisfy his own curiosity and began to peer over the logs of the redoubt. Before long a shell whistled overhead and then another, just a few feet above his head. Satisfied with his reconnaissance, Cleburne and his staff officer hurriedly withdrew from the top of the mountain.¹¹ The next day the rain stopped, and the Union artillery fire cost the Army

¹⁰ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 267-268.

¹¹ Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 223.

of Tennessee one of its corps commanders, when a solid shot killed Leonidas Polk atop Pine Mountain

With the return of sunny weather Sherman began maneuvering around the Confederate left. On June 15, John Schofield discovered that Cleburne's line around Gilgal Church formed a salient vulnerable to enfilade fire. Expecting an attack, all day on the fifteenth Granbury's men dismantled the walls of Gilgal Church to strengthen their earthworks. Soon after they finished, the Federals moved several batteries to within three hundred yards of their position and began firing canister and solid shot at them.¹² During this fight a spent ball struck Capt. Foster "just to the right of my nose," and produced a painful wound that split the skin of his face "for some distance." He soon withdrew to the rear to seek medical attention.¹³ As Schofield's artillery blasted away at the fortifications, some of his infantrymen worked their way around to Cleburne's left. There, only Ross's dismounted cavalrymen stood between them and turning the Confederate flank. Cognizant of the threat, Johnston ordered Hardee to withdraw his corps to a line running along the south bank of Mud Creek.¹⁴

As Cleburne's Division withdrew on the afternoon of June 16, a shell exploded near Lucius Polk, one of Cleburne's brigade commanders, killing his horse and inflicting a serious wound to the general. The wound necessitated the amputation of his leg, ending Polk's active field service. Cleburne divided the regiments of his brigade among the other three brigades of the division. Two of Polk's regiments, the 5th Confederate and 35th

¹² Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 95.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 281.

Tennessee, went to Granbury's Brigade. The Texans quickly became fond of the 5th Confederate and soon informally titled the Irishmen the "5th Texas."¹⁵

On the night of June 16 the rain returned. Lt. Robert Collins remembered "trying to sleep in water half side deep. The undertaking was all right until we would move and let in a lot of cold fresh water, then sleep would quit our eyes, and slumber flee from our eyelids. We had the consolation of knowing, however, that each one of us was drowning several hundred 'graybacks.'"¹⁶

That night the rain continued as the Army of Tennessee abandoned its trenches and moved three miles to the south and took position on a line that slanted from Kennesaw Mountain south to Little Kennesaw and Pigeon Hill. As before, Hood's Corps occupied the right, Polk's (now under Loring) the center, and Hardee's the left. In this new line, Cleburne posted Granbury's Texans on the right, along the Dallas-Marietta Road.

No sooner had the opposing armies taken their places than skirmishing resumed. On June 19 as Granbury's Texans kept busy constructing earthworks, a shell exploded in the midst of a pile of rails. The concussion threw several members of the brigade into the air, including Pvt. Frank Cook of the 6th & 15th Texas who came down "running." Despite this shock Cook was unhurt, and soon went back to firing in the direction of the Federals. That night his regimental commander placed Lt. Collins in command of the brigade pickets. When Lt. James McCracken came to replace him, a sniper fired a ball at Collins, singeing his mustache and knocking him to the ground. With the constant

¹⁵ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 598.

¹⁶ Collins, *Chapters*, 219. Graybacks are the derisive term given to the large body lice that followed Civil War armies in camp and on the march.

skirmishing, such narrow escapes were not uncommon. Every morning the whistling of Minnie balls overhead greeted the soldiers.¹⁷

On Tuesday June 22 the drenching rains again ceased, and the Georgia countryside began to dry. That day Sherman ordered Thomas to take Hooker's corps and move west on Marietta down the Powder Springs Road to feel out the Confederate left. Johnston realized that his lines had become too long to adequately defend, and when he received word of the Federals moving toward his left, circumstances forced him to make a decision: either order another retreat or find some way to stop Sherman. Johnston knew that if he retreated south of the Chattahoochie the military and political consequences would become unbearable. Therefore, he decided to order Hood's Corps from the right to the left. He ordered Loring to extend his right to cover the gap. Johnston had now spread Loring and Wheeler's men on the right so thin that any determined attack could easily overwhelm them. Johnston hoped and prayed Sherman merely intended to threaten his left and not his right too. On the afternoon of June 22, around Kolb's Farm, Hood launched a bold counterattack against Hooker's advancing columns along high ground west of the farm. Determined artillery fire forced the Confederates to withdraw before they even made a real effort. By nightfall, Hood had lost 1,500 men in the half-hearted attempt to halt the Federals. The Battle of Kolb's Farm accomplished little but to give Sherman pause about moving against Johnston's left.

The third week of June proved monotonous for the two armies facing each other down around Kennesaw Mountain. On June 23, Maj. Gen. Alexander P. Stewart replaced the fallen Polk as permanent commander of his corps. The next three days saw a continuation of the skirmishing that had become the constant companion of both sides for

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 220-221.

several weeks. Capt. Foster scribbled in his diary on June 25 that the musketry exchanged with the Yankees amounted to a constant, “bang bang bang, like water dropping off the eaves of a house. The bullets go zip zip over our breastworks day and night, making the men bow their heads.”¹⁸

Sherman grew increasingly frustrated in his month-long stalemate with Johnston. He decided in the last week of June to attack the center of the Confederate line. On June 25, he ordered Thomas to assail the Confederate center south and west of Kennesaw while McPherson made a feint toward the Confederate right.¹⁹ He scheduled the attack for Monday, June 27.

At 8 a.m. on June 27 McPherson’s fifty-one pieces of artillery opened fire on Kennesaw Mountain in preparation for the assault. To the south, Thomas’s artillery also opened up on Cheatham’s Hill. Simultaneously, Federal infantrymen of the IV, XIV and XV Corps began their attack on the Confederate works.

On the south end of the Confederate line Cleburne and Cheatham’s men repulsed the second prong of the attack. John Newton’s division of the IV Corps struck the left of Cleburne’s line north of Cheatham’s Hill. Nathan Kimball’s, George Wagner’s, and Charles Harker’s brigades advanced due east into the mouth of Cleburne’s guns. Govan’s and Lowrey’s brigades easily repulsed Newton’s men with heavy losses, including the death of Col. Charles Harker. Cleburne posted Granbury’s Brigade north of the assaulting columns and though no attacks fell directly on their front, the Texans kept up a withering enfilade fire into the left flank of Kimball’s Brigade. South of Newton’s failed assault, Brig. Gen. Jefferson C. Davis’s Division of the XIV Corps advanced directly on the

¹⁸ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 97.

¹⁹ Davis, *Atlanta Will Fall*, 86.

salient in the breastworks atop Cheatham's Hill held by Maney's Tennessee Brigade. Dan McCook's and Robert Mitchell's brigades surged forward only to have the Tennesseans mercilessly mow them down. The Confederates killed McCook in the fighting, and the two Union brigades grudgingly fell back after suffering horrendous losses at the "Dead Angle." Davis's repulse ended the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain. Federal losses came to nearly 3,000 killed wounded and captured while the Confederates suffered just 700 casualties.²⁰

Seeing that his frontal assault at Kennesaw Mountain had failed miserably, Sherman reverted to his old strategy of moving by the Confederate left. On June 30, McPherson's Army of the Tennessee swung around to the right flank and began advancing down the Sandtown Road to Nickajack Creek, beyond the Confederate left and closer to the Chattahoochie. Johnston realized that he dared not extend his line any farther—with his right flank already stretched to the breaking point. On the night of July 2, unwilling to do anything else, he ordered a retreat south of the Chattahoochie.

By this point the campaign had started to wear down the men in the ranks. On June 8, Lt. Sebron G. Sneed of Company G 6th & 15th Texas wrote humorously, "In this army one hole in the seat of the breeches indicates a Capt.—two holes a Lt.; and the seat of the pants all out...indicates a private."²¹ Lt. Collins wrote that the Texans, "Not having had a change of food or raiment for sixty days, we were not to say very clean, and scurvy broke out amongst us, some of the boys' legs were as black and brown as navy tobacco." To remedy this problem Johnston had tomatoes shipped in from Florida and Alabama. Another ever-present pest facing the Texans remained the huge body lice that

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 87.

²¹ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 594.

infested their clothing. They soon discovered that the lice could not stand heat or smoke and so, “Just before turning in at night each fellow would rake him up a pile of dry leaves, set fire therein and hold his shirt over the smoke and heat, and the big, fat lice would drop into the fire and pop like popcorn popping in the skillet back home.”²² Despite their discomforts, the soldiers retained implicit faith in the decisions of “Old Joe.”

For the moment “Old Joe” had changed his mind and decided not to retreat south of the Chattahoochie yet. Rather, he chose to place his army in a line of fortifications guarding the Western & Atlantic Railroad bridge on the north side of the river. Brig. Gen. Francis Shoup, who designed the fortifications, had constructed the “Shoup line” with slave labor. On the morning of July 5, the Confederates took position and began to improve Shoup’s works.

In the first week of July Hiram Granbury made an appearance in the camp of his brigade. On July 8, Pvt. F.E. Blossman of the 6th & 15th Texas wrote, “Gen. Granbury is in camp today. He has been quite sick, but says he can take command in eight or ten days. None of us like Gen. Smith . . . he is brave as a lion but mean as a hyena. I am the only private he has spoken to in the brigade. We will be glad to get rid of him. A petition is to [be] sent to ‘Old Joe’ to let us have Granbury.”²³ Blossman’s letter indicates the devotion which the Texans felt to Granbury, and this devotion encouraged them to stay in the ranks and continue the fight for Confederate independence.

The impasse along the river proved short lived. On July 8 Federal units crossed the Chattahoochie north of the railroad at Cavalry Ford, beyond the Confederate right.

²² Collins, *Chapters*, 223.

²³ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 605.

Johnston had not expected Sherman to move by his right, and fearful of being cut off from Atlanta, he ordered a retreat south of the Chattahoochie on July 9. The following day the Confederates crossed the river and moved three miles south.²⁴

In Richmond, news that Johnston had crossed the Chattahoochie reached Jefferson Davis on July 10. With the Army of Tennessee south of the river, the fate of Atlanta hung in the balance. Bragg insisted that Johnston needed offensive action to halt Sherman. Davis agreed and felt that Johnston had not done enough in this regard. When Johnston retreated across the Chattahoochie he changed his base of supplies from the Five Points in Atlanta to Macon. Davis clearly saw this as a sign that he would abandon Atlanta. Hurriedly, the president cast about for a suitable replacement. Throughout the campaign, Hood kept up a steady correspondence directly with Davis outlining Johnston's shortcomings in the conduct of the campaign. At every opportunity Hood related to Davis a "better" course of action that he supposedly favored instead of retreating. Bragg recommended Hood to replace Johnston and at length, influenced by Bragg and Hood's appraisals of the situation, Davis came to agree. When he wrote Robert E. Lee about the dilemma, he suggested that the timing was wrong to replace an army commander at so critical a juncture. Lee also intimated that his choice for command would be Hardee. Finally, Lee informed Davis that "Hood is a bold fighter. I am doubtful as to the other qualities necessary."²⁵ Whatever Davis decided, he felt that it should be done soon. Regardless of his deficient experience and temperament, Hood would at least favor offensive action to stop Sherman. In any event, Davis decided not to fall prey to

²⁴ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 340-344.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 353. For a good discussion of this matter, see Woodworth, *Jefferson Davis and His Generals*, 354-356.

haste. He concluded to await developments in the near future before making his final decision.

From a tactical standpoint, the marching and counter marching in north Georgia weakened the Confederate cause as Johnston retreated further toward Atlanta. Despite this reverse, from the local perspective of men in Granbury's Brigade, their future could not have been brighter, with trusted leaders at their head, seemingly willing to outsmart Sherman rather than get them killed in bloody combat.

Chapter 13

Hood Takes Command

The fighting around Atlanta reinforced the idea that local circumstances dictated the morale and dedication of Granbury's Texans. Even though the Confederate government made unwise decisions in their eyes, and even though the fighting took a heavy toll, they continued to remain optimistic about their chances for success because of the example set by Hiram Granbury, Patrick Cleburne, and their regimental officers.

With the two armies at the very gates of Atlanta, Davis and Johnston set the stage for a dramatic shift in the campaign. On the morning of July 12, Johnston telegraphed Davis and advised him to "distribute" the Federal prisoners from Andersonville, south of Atlanta. Davis took this as direct proof that Johnston planned to abandon the city, and the pressure on Davis to replace him mounted. In Atlanta, Bragg wired Davis and advised against appointing Hardee to army command because he would continue the same policy that Johnston had implemented. Bragg insisted that appointing Hood remained the only viable option. Davis also leaned toward Hood, but he decided to give Johnston one last chance to outline his plan for driving back Sherman. On July 16, he telegraphed Johnston and asked him for specifics. Johnston declined to give any, merely stating that he remained badly outnumbered, and that the only chance to stop Sherman lay in a defensive stance. Davis could take no more. On the afternoon of Sunday, July 17 Adj. Gen. Samuel Cooper, on instructions from Davis, sent Johnston the following telegram: "Lieut. Gen. J.B. Hood has been commissioned to the temporary rank of general under the laws of Congress. I am directed by the Secretary of War to inform you as you have failed to arrest the advance of the enemy to the vicinity of Atlanta, far into the interior of Georgia,

and express no confidence that you can defeat or repel him, you are hereby relieved from the command of the Army and Department of Tennessee, which you will immediately turn over to Gen. Hood.”¹

The appointment of Hood shocked and outraged the soldiers of the army. Capt. Samuel Foster wrote in his diary on July 18:

“In less than an hour after this fact becomes known, groups of three, five, seven, ten or fifteen men could be seen all over camp discussing the situation. Gen. Johnston has so endeared himself to his soldiers, that no man can take his place. We have never made a fight under him that we did not get the best of it. And the whole army had become so attached to him, and put such implicit faith in him, that whenever he said for us to fight at any particular place, we went in feeling like Gen. Johnston knew all about it and we were certain to whip. For the first time we hear men openly talk about going home, by tens (10) and fifties (50). They refuse to stand guard, or do any other camp duty, and talk open rebellion against all Military authority. All over camp, (not only among Texas troops) can be seen this demoralization—and at all hours of the afternoon can be heard Hurrah for Joe Johnston and God Dn Jeff Davis.”²

Lt. Collins and his company were amusing themselves by playing cards underneath a large oak tree when Adj. John Willingham of the 10th Texas Infantry arrived and read them Davis’s order replacing Johnston. “The boys all threw down their cards,” remembered Collins, “and collected in little groups discussing the new move they were all dissatisfied, but soon dismissed the whole with the remark hell will break loose in Georgia sure enough now. Hood was a bulldog fighter from away back,” concluded the Texan, “and President Davis could not have suited Gen. Sherman better, had he

¹ It is indeed probable that Johnston would have abandoned Atlanta, judging from his request to distribute the prisoners from Andersonville. Johnston remained convinced throughout the war that the army was more important than the place to be defended. (e.g., Richmond in May, 1862, Vicksburg in July, 1863 and Atlanta in July, 1864.) This lack of understanding of the political consequences of military action made it necessary to relieve Johnston and put someone in command who would actually fight—Hood. Johnston would have offered battle at Peachtree Creek on July 19 and then abandoned Atlanta. Hood’s appointment in all likelihood saved Atlanta from capture for a full six weeks. Davis, *Atlanta Will Fall*, 117.

² Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 106-107.

commissioned him to have made the appointment.”³ Pvt. William Oliphant of Company G, 6th & 15th Texas remembered that after an officer read the order announcing the instatement of Hood, “absolute silence” reigned. “Not a word was spoken for several minutes after,” wrote Oliphant, “and then one of the boys, as brave a soldier as ever lived or died shrugged his shoulders and said with a sigh ‘Well boys, we’re going to catch hell now.’”⁴

The feelings of the soldiers in his army toward Johnston are a strong parallel to those held by the Army of the Potomac for George McClellan in 1861-62. Both men proved sticklers for detail and saw to every comfort of their troops, making them very popular. But this popularity came at a price. Their personalities made both men perfectionists, with neither willing to move or sacrifice any of his men without a sure victory. In war there is no such thing as a sure victory, and such vacillation shown by McClellan and Johnston evidenced an ignorance or unwillingness to consider the political consequences of their decisions. Just as McClellan forced Lincoln to remove him after Antietam in 1862 for lack of aggressive action, Johnston forced Davis to remove him in July 1864 for a similar lack. A bold, even brash, fighter, Hood at least would fight to save Atlanta.

The removal of Johnston seems to have cast a heavy shadow over the spirit of the Texans, but they kept going just the same. Again, their loyalties lay not to the Army of Tennessee or even so much to Johnston, though he remained admittedly very popular. The soldiers felt they saw Davis making a mistake, but this did not cause them to desert the cause or give up. Cleburne, Granbury and other officers accepted the change in

³ Collins, *Chapters*, 226.

⁴ William J. Oliphant, “Memoirs of William J. Oliphant,” 38-39. (Handwritten manuscript, The Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.)

command and set an example for their men to follow by staying the course and not voicing displeasure. This leadership is what helped keep the spirits of the Texans high as they prepared to defend Atlanta.

The day he took command, Hood began to develop a strategy to save Atlanta. Thomas had his Army of the Cumberland astride Peachtree Creek north of Atlanta with McPherson's Army of the Tennessee and Schofield's Army of the Ohio moving east toward Decatur. Sherman intended to trap the Confederates in a pincer movement from the north and east, but in their current disposition, Hood saw an opportunity to strike back. While Thomas crossed Peachtree Creek, he intended to attack with Hardee's and Stewart's Corps in the hope of destroying the Army of the Cumberland before Sherman could bring up support.

While Sherman completed his dispositions on the evening of July 19, Hood met in Atlanta with his corps commanders and announced his decision to take offensive action the next day. He directed Stewart and Hardee to take their corps out of the Atlanta defenses and strike Thomas before his men had time to prepare breastworks on the south bank of Peachtree Creek. Hood scheduled the attack for 1 p.m. While they crushed the Army of the Cumberland, Cheatham's Corps supported by the Georgia militia under Gen. Gustavus Smith would hold Atlanta against Schofield and McPherson.⁵

The next day the Confederate attacks stalled against a tough defense along Peachtree Creek. Several hours of hard fighting spent the Confederates, and they lacked enough resolve to go forward again. There remained a little daylight and Gen. W.W. Loring maintained that with reinforcements, his division could make another attack. Hardee sent word back to Cleburne to move forward and align his division for an

⁵ *Ibid.*, 68.

advance.⁶ The order found Cleburne and his command near the Peachtree Road with an open field about four hundred yards wide to their front. Granbury's Texans occupied the left of the division with Govan's Arkansans in the center and Lowrey's Alabamans and Mississippians on the right. Cleburne advanced his men to the northern edge of the farm field and here they came up against a post and rail fence. The entire line took hold of the fence and "bodily lifted it from its foundation."⁷

Just at that moment, a twenty-pound parrot shell exploded in the midst of the 6th & 15th Texas. Lt. Collins wrote, "a blinding flash right in our front and a shell explodes. It seemed to be filled with powder and ounce balls. It laid a good many of the boys out and among the number was Capt. Ben Tyus, and the writer." The round wounded Capt. Tyus in the ankle while Collins "received an ounce ball in the upper third" of his left thigh.⁸ Pvt. Charles Leuschner of Company A recorded, "One 18 pound gun ball came within 3 feet of me & killed four men & cut one man's leg off. I and Mike Shivits & 4 more were be spatter with blood and flesh."⁹ Lt. Collins recalled that as he fell, he "noticed that about two inches square of our gray Georgia jean pants had gone in with the

⁶ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 378.

⁷ Collins, *Chapters*, 227-230.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Spurlin, *Leuschner*, 43.

The casualties incurred by this direct shell hit included:

Capt. Benjamin R. Tyus, Co. F, 15th Texas severely wounded in the ankle;

2nd Lt. Robert M. Collins, Co. B 15th Texas severely wounded in the thigh;

Private Michael Schweitz, Co. B, 6th Texas, wounded

Pvt. Joseph A. Pace, Co. F, 6th Texas, killed;

Pvt. Fritz Shugart, Co. E, 6th Texas, severely wounded in the leg, "since amputated";

Sgt. Alonzo Steele, Co. F, 6th Texas, wounded severely in both thighs;

Sgt. Alfred Alexander, Co. E 6th Texas, mortally wounded in the body "since dead";

Pvt. James Herod, Co. F, 15th Texas wounded slightly in the thigh;

Pvt. L.R. Pearsons, Co. F, 15th Texas, wounded severely in the arm;

Musician John A. Bates, Co. F, 15th Texas, killed;

Pvt. Ambrose Hawkins, Co. K, 6th Texas, wounded slightly;

Pvt. George Horl, Co. K 6th Texas, wounded slightly in the arm.

Total: 2 killed, 2 mortally wounded, 8 wounded. Taken from the *Galveston Daily News* March 3, 1865;

Spurlin, *Leuschner*, 61-99; *Confederate State Roster: Texas Name Roster*, Vol. I, (Wilmington, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1998).

shot; this was conclusive that a piece of the shell had passed through” his thigh and cut the femoral artery and that he would be a dead Confederate in three minutes. As the Texan understood it, that was the time allotted to bleed to death with such a wound. Four “big stout fellows” picked up Collins on a stretcher and began carrying him to the rear. At length, he summoned the courage to ask of one of his litter bearers whether or not he had lost much blood. “He was a witty Irishman and replied ‘Not a drop of the ruddy current to be seen, Lieutenant. . . .’” These words brought back hope to the young Texan for recovery and he “chuckled” in his sleeve, “when the thought occurred that maybe this wound will win a good furlough and if it does, won’t we have fun with those Georgia girls. This may all sound like a strange line of thoughts to run through one’s mind in so short a time and under such circumstances, but all this is sound common sense compared to some things we are guilty of doing during our natural lives.”¹⁰ Hardee’s position placed him within eyesight when the shell exploded and he ordered Granbury’s Brigade to charge the battery.¹¹

Just as Hardee ordered Cleburne’s men into action, he received a message from Hood directing him to send reinforcements at once to the east side of Atlanta. With Stewart and Hardee busy trying to destroy Thomas along Peachtree Creek, McPherson and Schofield advanced towards Atlanta, and began to push back Wheeler’s dismounted cavalry east of the city. Wheeler informed Hood that if he did not send infantry support soon, his dismounted troopers would not be able to hold the Federals at bay. Wheeler remained particularly concerned with the prominence known as Bald Hill. As the highest elevation on the low-lying flatlands east of the city, whoever controlled the elevation

¹⁰ Collins, *Chapters*, 229-230.

¹¹ Spurlin, *Leuschner*, 43.

would command the entire plain. Because Cleburne's Division remained unengaged, Hardee ordered the Irishman to take his command and march at the double-quick south into Atlanta and then east to bolster the cavalry on Bald Hill. "Five minutes more," wrote Capt. Irving Buck of Cleburne's staff, "would have been too late, and would have found this command heavily engaged."¹² The withdrawal of Cleburne's Division ended any hope for further offensive action at Peachtree Creek. Despite this order, the fighting had already claimed two Texans killed and eighteen wounded.¹³ Hood's first test of command had failed at a cost of nearly 5,000 Confederates killed, wounded and captured.¹⁴

Quietly withdrawing his men, Cleburne marched south down Peachtree Road into Atlanta. At 7:15 p.m. Hood advised Wheeler of the reinforcements on the way and instructed the embattled general to "communicate this to the men, and *urge them to hold on*."¹⁵ After resting in the suburbs, Cleburne's men continued south on a route parallel with the Georgia Railroad until they reached the line of breastworks east of the city occupied by Wheeler's tired horsemen. After marching south for about a mile and a half they found themselves opposite Bald Hill. They found the hill a "lozenge-shaped" prominence about a half-mile in length from north to south. The eastern, or front side of the hill angled up rather steeply while the west side and either end tapered down gradually into the surrounding woods. The promontory had little vegetative cover and any layman could see that it would become a key position in any attempt to take Atlanta from the east.¹⁶ Cleburne reported to Wheeler about midnight, and immediately deployed

¹² Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 232.

¹³ The 6th & 15th Texas lost 2 killed and 15 wounded, the 7th Texas had 1 wounded and the 17th & 18th Texas suffered 2 wounded. O.R. Series I, Vol. 38, pt. 3, 748-749, 751.

¹⁴ *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, Vol. IV, 337.

¹⁵ Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 233.

¹⁶ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 615-616. Bald Hill stood at approximately 1,050 feet in elevation compared to 1,000 feet for the surrounding ridgeline and 980 feet in the low-lying areas around

his troops. On the left of the division he placed Mark Lowrey's Brigade just south of the Georgia Railroad. On his right he placed Govan's Arkansans and last Cleburne placed the Texas Brigade under Smith just north of Bald Hill. On the far left of the brigade, Smith placed the 7th Texas. To their right he put the 6th & 15th Texas, 5th Confederate and 10th Texas. Finally, sloping up the northern end of the hill, he positioned the 17th & 18th Texas followed by the 24th & 25th Texas to hold the right flank.¹⁷ Because Smith's flank did not reach all the way to the peak of the hill, Wheeler volunteered to place the dismounted cavalry brigades of Alfred Iverson and William Allen on the right flank of the Texas Brigade. Cleburne completed these dispositions about an hour before dawn.¹⁸

The first rays of light on July 21 revealed to the Texans atop Bald Hill why their comrades had been so eager to abandon the position. Less than a mile to the east, on a parallel ridge, Capt. Francis Degress had situated his 1st Illinois Light Artillery. At 7 a.m. the battery of twenty-pound parrot guns opened up on the exposed defenders atop the hill.¹⁹ Soon the Illinoisans gained the range and began to plaster the Texan breastworks with a very accurate fire.²⁰

Degress and his gunners laid down one of the most fierce and destructive cannonades sustained by Granbury's Brigade during the war. Soon after it opened up, a shell entered an angle of the works occupied by the 17th & 18th Texas. The shrapnel ricocheted along the ditch, decapitating six Texans of the company and severely wounding twelve others. Capt. Foster wrote that the explosion, "Knocked one man into a hundred pieces—one hand and arm went over the works and his cartridge box ten feet up

the ridge.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 618.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 616-617.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 618-619.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

in a tree.”²¹ Only one member of the company escaped death or injury. Pvt. W.W. Royal of the 17th & 18th Texas recalled with horror, “a cannon ball hit the breastworks and struck a man on the head, his head struck me in the breast and knocked me down and covered me with his blood. His name was Bill Sims.”²² Capt. Foster had just finished work on the breastworks to his front when, “as I was lying down resting on my elbow and another man in about the same position with our heads about two feet apart and our feet in opposite directions, a shell (schrapnel) exploded just between us blowing me one way and him the other hurting neither one of us but killing three men about 10 ft. from us eating their breakfast.”²³ During this terrific bombardment the hapless Texans suffered forty killed and over 100 wounded.²⁴ Though the shells continued to fly fast and thick they proved only a prelude to the main thrust against Bald Hill—an infantry assault.

After the bombardment had softened up the defenses, McPherson ordered Brig. Gen. Mortimer Leggett’s Division of the XVII Corps to attack the Texans on Bald Hill. McPherson ordered Leggett to draw support from Brig. Gen. Giles Smith’s Division. Leggett’s men advanced out of the wood line a little to the south of the Texas Brigade, directly against the dismounted Confederate cavalymen. The scared horsemen of Iverson’s Brigade could not wait any longer, and rising where they stood, fired a ragged volley into the advancing Federal line. This premature fire forced the Texan skirmishers to lie down to avoid being hit from the front and rear. The Yankees then swept forward and captured the majority of these Texans. After they had discharged their weapons, the cavalymen broke and ran, exposing the right flank of the 24th & 25th Texas. After

²¹ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 108-109; Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 619.

²² Yeary, *Reminiscences of the Boys in Gray*, 656. The man who was killed was Private William Simms, Company K, 18th Texas.

²³ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 109.

²⁴ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 620.

reaching the summit of Bald Hill, Leggett halted his men, awaiting the support from Giles Smith's Division.

Soon, Col. William Hall's Iowa brigade of Smith's division emerged from the woods north of Leggett's men and hit the right flank of the Texas brigade, threatening the right flank of the 24th & 25th Texas. Lt. Col. William Neyland, commanding the regiment, quickly swung around his right wing to the rear at a right angle. Neyland led the right wing of the regiment in a fierce counter-attack against the Federals sweeping north up the breastworks. John Langley, the color-bearer of the regiment, led the charge as a bullet cut his flagstaff in two by a Minnie ball. He rescued the flag before it touched the ground and continued with it a few steps further before another round shattered his arm.²⁵ The combatants made the fighting so intense that Joe Harrison of the 24th & 25th Texas ran, "up to a Yank who was cursing a wounded Confed, put the muzzle of his gun to his back and blew him up."²⁶ A wound to the groin felled Neyland, but his men swept on, using bayonets and rifle butts to force the invaders from close to three hundred yards of entrenchments. As soon as they retook the works, geography forced the Texans to swing back north and force out the enemy, who had taken possession of their old line during the counterattack. After Giles Smith's men retired to the cover of the woods south northeast of Bald Hill, Smith placed the Texas Brigade in a single rank to hold the position vacated by the cavalymen. Though Degress and others kept up the artillery bombardment until dark, McPherson made no further attempt to advance toward Atlanta because Leggett's

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 621-623.

²⁶ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 109.

left flank remained in the air, potentially vulnerable to attack from the Texans. Nightfall put an end to the fighting around Bald Hill.²⁷

Though they held their position throughout the day on July 21, this steadfastness came at a heavy price for the Texas Brigade. The regiment most heavily engaged lost the most during the day, the 24th & 25th Texas. Neyland's regiment suffered nine killed, twenty-five wounded and nine captured during the intense fighting. The 17th & 18th Texas lost twelve killed and thirty-nine wounded, and the losses decreased further north. The 10th Texas lost eight killed and twelve wounded, while the 7th Texas lost two killed and seven wounded. On the far left of the brigade, the 6th & 15th Texas lost six killed, eighteen wounded and six captured. Smith reported the losses of his brigade on July 21 as forty-seven killed, 120 wounded and nineteen captured.²⁸ Though they had repulsed Giles Smith's men, Leggett's Federals remained atop Bald Hill, compelling the Texans to stay in their position and await further developments.

As night fell Hood already busied himself concocting another flanking maneuver. He knew from intelligence sources that McPherson had positioned his left flank unprotected south of Bald Hill, and Hood planned to have Hardee's men make a forced march around the Federals and get in their rear. To accomplish this, he instructed Hardee to go as far east as Decatur if necessary. Once he had turned McPherson's left, he planned to sweep north and attack the Federals in flank as Cheatham's men hit them from the west. Though sound in theory, in reality two days of constant fighting had exhausted Hardee's men and it would be difficult at best for them to execute a circuitous twenty—

²⁷ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 623-625; Woodworth, *Nothing But Victory*, 535-537.

²⁸ O.R. Series I, Vol. 38, pt. 3, 749-754.

plus mile march to gain McPherson's left-rear. Whatever the odds, Hood saw his strategy as that of Jackson or Lee, and set his men in motion to try.

After nightfall, the Texas Brigade abandoned its works and marched to the rear to rendezvous with the rest of Cleburne's Division. Once the Irishman had assembled his division they marched west into the city for a short respite before continuing south as the rear of Hardee's column. Hardee's exhausted men made their way back into Atlanta and then south and east in search of McPherson's rear. As they staggered along, the third night without rest began to tell on the progress of the march.

While the Confederates executed their flanking maneuver, Sherman did not remain idle. Around 3 a.m. Schofield sent him a message that the Confederates had started withdrawing from their entrenchments. Sherman ordered his units to pursue and occupy the city, assuming Hood had decided to retreat. But at first light Sherman could see that Hood did not intend to abandon Atlanta. Instead, he could clearly see the Confederates strengthening their breastworks east of the city. Hurriedly, he cancelled the pursuit order and instructed his three army commanders to invest the city from the north, east, and west. He also ordered McPherson to deploy Grenville Dodge's XVI Corps toward Decatur to destroy the railroad there. McPherson had his other two corps deployed facing west. Logan's XV Corps stretched from well north of the Georgia Railroad all the way down to the northern edge of Bald Hill, with Blair's XVII Corps to its south. Blair in turn deployed Leggett's Division atop Bald Hill and shifted Smith's command around to their left, south of the prominence.

Though Sherman remained unconcerned about the possibility of a Confederate attack, McPherson's personal reconnaissance suggested otherwise. He also observed the

Confederates strengthening and building breastworks parallel to and south of his southern flank. Hence when Sherman ordered Dodge's Corps to begin the railroad destruction, McPherson intervened and Sherman, convinced that his pioneers could do the work as well as infantry, consented. This left Thomas Sweeney's Division in place, already deployed north of Terry's Mill Pond facing south. At 1 p.m. Sherman ordered McPherson to send John Fuller's Division back toward the railroad to aid in the destruction.²⁹

Meanwhile, on the Confederate side, confusion and a lack of intelligence regarding the terrain contributed to the fact that Hardee did not have the first of his men in position to attack until almost noon. At the head of his column, Hardee designated William Bate's Division to attack farthest east. Bate fretted about a lack of knowledge of Federal deployment as his men struggled through thick undergrowth and briar patches. Because of the rough ground, straggling reduced the division to a little over a thousand effectives. West of Sugar Creek, Walker and his men floundered through a large briar patch before confronting the massive pool of water and rotting foliage known as Terry's Mill Pond. Becoming extremely irate at the prospect of the impassable morass, Walker threatened to shoot his guide before the scout informed him that the pond could be circumvented to the west. About a quarter past twelve, Walker, riding ahead of his division, emerged into a prominent clearing in front of Sweeney's Division. A Federal picket, seeing him, fired, and the outspoken Georgian fell to the ground dead, still grasping his field glasses.³⁰ Walker's and Bate's Divisions quickly moved up and assailed Sweeney's and Fuller's divisions atop the ridge to their front.

²⁹ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 389-393.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 393-394.

As the two divisions advanced, withering Federal fire beat them back, and to the west Cleburne's and Maney's Divisions emerged from the thick, entangling undergrowth directly on McPherson's left. Rather than finding an exposed flank, Hardee found Col. William Hall's Iowa Brigade bent back at a right angle to the main line, facing south. Directly in front of the Iowans lay a cleared field of fire fifty yards deep and beyond that an entangling abatis the Iowans had constructed by chopping down trees and facing their interwoven branches outward.³¹ Because of the grueling combat and marching of the past several days, as well as the heat and lack of sleep, many of the Confederates fell prey to heat stroke and exhaustion as Hardee's men neared the enemy.

While Maney's Division advanced on the left, Cleburne's Division formed on the right. Cleburne placed Govan's Arkansans on the left with the Texas Brigade on their right, supported by Lowrey's and Carter's Brigades in reserve. The advance of the Texas Brigade took them over rough ground interlaced with rivulets of brackish water and choked with underbrush until they emerged into the cleared field in front of the Iowan breastworks.³²

The Federals opened on Govan's and Smith's men with devastating effect. Scores of Confederates went down as their first line crumpled to the ground. A second line came up only to suffer the same fate, while yet a third battle line advanced to within several yards of the blazing entrenchments and there traded fire with the enemy for several minutes. Soon, incoming fire forced the attackers to go to ground, and several of them raised white flags;³³ the situation had become critical for the Arkansans and Texans. At that moment, to the right, the rest of the Texas Brigade swept around Hall's flank,

³¹ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 400.

³² Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 635.

³³ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 402.

capturing nearly the entire 16th Iowa with its colors and two guns of Battery F, 2nd U.S. Artillery. Almost completely alone, the Texans surged forward, far outdistancing the Arkansans on their left and Lowrey's Brigade to their right.³⁴

Just as the Texans surged through the gap and captured scores of prisoners, an encounter occurred that would spawn much controversy in the decades to come. James McPherson, upon hearing the first shots of the battle, rode out to the left to appraise the situation for himself. He found himself in the woods directly in front of the Texas Brigade just as they broke through. Riding toward Blair's men, Capt. Richard Beard of the 5th Confederate halted McPherson and his orderly. Beard found himself so close in fact that he could "see every feature of his face" as he raised his sword and demanded McPherson's surrender. The Federal commander merely doffed his cap, checked his horse, and turned to gallop away. Just as he did a volley from the skirmishers cut him down, mortally wounding him.³⁵ The smashed watch of one of McPherson's aides preserved the time of the encounter as 2:02 p.m. Though Beard's account is the most compelling, for years after the war, controversy existed as to exactly who fired the shot that felled James McPherson.³⁶ In any event, the men of the Texas Brigade proceeded to divest his prostrate form of valuables.

³⁴ *Ibid.* Because the left flank of the Texas Brigade struck the Union line with Govan's Brigade, the left most regiment, the 6th & 15th Texas, found themselves separated from the rest of the brigade. As such they fought alongside the Arkansans for the majority of the battle.

³⁵ Errol MacGregor Clauss, "The Atlanta Campaign 18 July-2 September 1864" (Emory University Ph.d. diss., 1965), 132.

³⁶ There are several accounts that exist as to who killed James McPherson on the afternoon of July 22. Captain Beard's account seems to be the most compelling as the 5th Confederate on the right flank of Smith's Texans would have been in the right place at the right time, to encounter McPherson. Beard claims that it was Corporal Robert Coleman of his regiment who fired the fatal shot. Captain Samuel Foster of the 24th & 25th Texas claims that a man named "Cowan" of the 24th Texas fired the shot that killed McPherson. While there is no Cowan listed on the regiment's muster rolls, there is a Sergeant Robert D. Compton of Company I, 24th Texas whom Captain Irving Buck of Cleburne's staff also credits with having killed McPherson. After the war, Private H.S. Halbert of Company I, 24th Texas also claimed that Compton was the one who killed McPherson and he was seconded by a letter written by Lieutenant P.K.

Advancing farther, the Texans captured numerous ambulances, artillery pieces and enemy battle flags in their precipitous advance. The Texans also included in these prizes of war Col. Robert Scott, commander of the Second Brigade, Third Division, XVII Corps, who was riding along the road just behind McPherson.³⁷ After overrunning a second line of breastworks and capturing several prisoners the Texans pressed on, but because of their “ungovernable enthusiasm,” the rough terrain they had passed, and exhaustion, the brigade front had become little more than a skirmish line. Their enthusiasm put the men of the 24th & 25th Texas out in advance of the rest of the brigade before they passed over a small ravine with a creek running through it, beyond which lay the line of works held by Leggett’s Division atop Bald Hill. Here the Texans captured the colors of the 3rd Iowa.³⁸

The rest of the brigade accumulated at the foot of the hill and in an ironic twist of fate, the Texans charged wildly up the hill from the same direction that the Federals had charged them the day before. The Federals, who had built their breastworks facing towards Atlanta, quickly jumped over to the other side of the works and leveled a murderous fire against the Texans. The Confederates swept up the hill and engaged them in hand to hand combat. The combatants used both rifle butts and bayonets in this fierce contest before the Federals forced the Texans back into the open field.³⁹ Caught in the

Smith of the same company. Conversely, Sergeant Major James Mathias of the 17th & 18th Texas claims that several men from his regiment fired simultaneously and killed the Federal commander while Private W.W. Royall of the 17th & 18th Texas credited McPherson’s demise to yet another man in his regiment. An interesting parallel is the names of the men who claimed to have killed McPherson, Robert Coleman (5th Confederate) and Robert Compton (24th & 25th Texas).

Clauss, “The Atlanta Campaign,” 132; Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 645-647.

³⁷ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 119.

³⁸ O.R. Series 1, Vol. 38, pt. 3, 753-754. From all available sources it appears that the 24th & 25th Texas had by this time captured the battle flags of the 3rd and 16th Iowa Regiments as well as eight pieces of artillery encountered during their advance.

³⁹ Letter of Private W.E. Smith, Company B, 7th Texas to his mother, dated “Bivouac Near Atlanta July 31,

field in the middle of a horrendous fire, the Texans began to waver as incoming fire hit many of them. Smith called desperately for reinforcements, but none came. After ordering a withdrawal, Smith himself fell with a painful wound.⁴⁰ Brigade losses for the day had remained relatively light up to this point, but now they went down by the dozens, and enemy fire killed or wounded every single regimental commander.

At this critical moment Col. John Oliver's brigade of Harrow's division, XV Corps, swung around from its position facing west and struck the Texas Brigade in the right flank. After the wounding of Smith, command of the Texas Brigade went to Col. R.Q. Mills of the 10th Texas until incoming fire wounded Mills during the counterattack. Because of difficulties in communication concerning the order to fall back, on the right flank of the brigade, the 99th Indiana and 15th Michigan cut off and captured half of the 17th & 18th Texas and the entire 5th Confederate under Maj. R.J. Persons. During the struggle the Midwesterners also captured the battle flags of the two regiments.⁴¹ Sgt. Maj. Andrew La Forge of the 15th Michigan wrote, "With revolver in hand, I jumped upon the breastworks and demanded surrender of the flag, at the same time reaching for the top of the flagstaff. In the meantime my regiment came to the rescue and captured the flag."⁴²

1864," Vertical File of the 7th Texas Infantry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.

⁴⁰ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 402.

⁴¹ Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Hutchinson of the 15th Michigan reported that when his regiment came upon the flank of the Texas Brigade and forced the surrender of the 17th & 18th Texas and 5th Confederate, his regiment captured 17 officers, 165 men and the battle flags of both regiments. Out of 92 members of the 5th Confederate who started the day, only 21 remained at the end of the battle. Similarly the 17th & 18th Texas began with 160 rifles and suffered roughly 119 casualties. The vast majority of the casualties for both regiments were captured. O.R. Series I, Vol. 38, pt. 3, 353.

⁴² Castel, *Decision in the West*, 402. There was apparently a rivalry that existed between these two Union regiments stemming from the efforts of the brigade commander, Colonel John Oliver, to obtain a commission as a brigadier general. Oliver had been the commander of the 15th Michigan and the Indianans at one point refused to sign a petition recommending him for promotion. In any event, when the 5th Confederate and 17th & 18th Texas were cut off and captured, uncertainty exists as to which regiment actually captured the battle flag of the 17th & 18th Texas. It may well have been the Indianans but because of the favoritism shown the Michiganders, the flag, to this day, bears an inscription in ink indicating that it

Several more Confederate assaults also failed to overrun Bald Hill. Sadly depleted, the remnants of the exhausted Texas Brigade under Lt. Col. R.B. Young of the 10th Texas fell back to the second line of Union works. As the Texans licked their wounds, Lowrey's men moved through their ranks and attacked the Yankees, only to be thrown back. Otho Strahl's Brigade of Maney's Division also charged, only to be pushed back as well.

As Hood watched apprehensively from his vantage point near Oakwood Cemetery on the outskirts of Atlanta, he received word at 3 p.m. that Hardee's men had failed to roll up the Federal flank. Hardee also indicated that his men desperately needed assistance. In response, Hood decided to have Cheatham's Corps advance east out of Atlanta and strike the Army of the Tennessee from the front. Because Hardee had apparently failed, Hood ordered Cheatham to do nothing more than make a "demonstration" against the Union front. As Cheatham made his preparations, Hood received word at 4 p.m. that Hardee now had his men driving the Federals in front of them. This report proved partially true in that Govan's Arkansans and Strahl's Tennesseans had renewed their attacks on Giles Smith's Division and proceeded to roll up the Federal position south of Bald Hill. Subsequently, Hood ordered Cheatham not merely to make a demonstration but to launch an all-out assault against the Yankees.⁴³

Cheatham arrayed his corps from north to south with Henry Clayton's Division on his northern or left flank, John Brown's Division in the center and Carter Stevenson's Division on the right flank, opposite Bald Hill. Cheatham designated Stevenson's Division to advance first on the right. Because the attacks of Govan and Strahl had

was captured by the 15th Michigan. McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 120.

⁴³ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 404-405.

somewhat died down by this time, Leggett's men merely jumped back over to the other side of their works and easily repulsed the Confederates who made only a half-hearted attempt before retiring. Meanwhile, Brown's Division advanced with two brigades north of the Georgia Railroad cut and two south of it against the blazing guns of Morgan L. Smith's Division of the XV Corps. The Federal commander posted the four parrot guns of Francis Degress' Battery H 1st Illinois on one side of the cut and the guns of Battery A, 1st Illinois on the other.

The Confederates took advantage of two weaknesses in the Federal line; the deep railroad cut, and a large white house known as the Troop Hurt House north of the railroad cut. From the cover of these two positions, Brown's men rained down fire on the Federals in the breastworks and broke open a huge hole in the middle of the XV Corps line. Only swift action by Logan and Brig. Gen. Charles Woods sealed off the gap in the line with massive artillery fire and a savage counterattack. Under pressure, Brown ordered a retreat. Though Clayton rushed two of his brigades to the front, the counterattack had already done enough damage. Woods' Division, urged on by "Black Jack" Logan, himself pushed forward in a counterattack, and Brown ordered a complete withdrawal. This ended the fighting in front of the Troop Hurt House.⁴⁴

As Cheatham's attack fizzled out, the savage fighting around Bald Hill continued unabated. By this time Leggett's and Smith's Union Divisions had refused their line at right angles to the first line. In one last desperate attempt, Hardee assembled Cleburne's Division on the left and two of Maney's Brigades on the right to attack the refused line.⁴⁵ At 5 p.m. Cleburne gave the order to charge and once again the survivors of his division

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 405-409.

⁴⁵ By this time the 6th & 15th Texas had rejoined the Texas Brigade after fighting with the Arkansans for the balance of the day.

swept forward toward the rail barricades hastily erected by Leggett's men. The Arkansans and Texans charged up to the very muzzles of the defenders and there ensued a bitter hand to hand fight. Ensign Hosea Garrett led the charge of the 10th Texas and got within, "10 paces of their works with the colors of the 10th Texas Regt. but could not stay there. . . ." Garrett discovered upon looking around that he could not even find a dozen of his comrades around him and hastily retreated. He blamed the lack of support on the fact that the, "men were badly scattered and many exhausted from the lack of sleep and warm weather and long marching."⁴⁶ Despite their efforts the odds were against them and Cleburne's Division slowly withdrew to its previous position south of the improvised Federal line. This ended the Battle of Atlanta. As the sun set on the evening of July 22, a lull in the action finally allowed the men of the Texas Brigade to rest after three days of non-stop marching and fighting.

Roll call the next morning for Granbury's Texas Brigade revealed the toll taken by the previous day's fighting. Smith's command had suffered 19 killed, 107 wounded, 25 missing and 160 captured for an aggregate of 311.⁴⁷ In the 6th & 15th Texas, artillery fire wounded Capt. Rhoads Fisher on the twenty-first and Capt. Mathew M. Houston replaced him before he too went down with a wound. Capt. S.E. Rice led the regiment into the Battle of Atlanta only to have the Federals capture him in the fighting. Finally the regiment fell to the command of Lt. Thomas Flynt. The regiment as a whole suffered five killed, twenty-four wounded, and fifteen missing on the day. On July 22 Capt. J.W.

⁴⁶ Letter of Ensign Hosea Garrett, Company G, 10th Texas Infantry to his uncle Hosea Garrett Sr. at Chapel Hill, Texas. Dated "Atlanta, Ga. August 1, 1864"
<http://members.aol.com/SmcKay1234/Letters/Garret.htm> (accessed October 15, 2000)

⁴⁷ Lieutenant Colonel Young who commanded the brigade after the battle reported these figures. Smith, in his report estimated the casualties as 23 killed, 100 wounded and 75 captured. Because Smith was not with the command, Young's figures are likely to be more accurate. O.R. Series I, Vol. 38, pt. 3, 747-748.

Brown commanded the 7th Texas, which numbered a mere 100 rifles. Of these, they suffered thirty killed, wounded or captured. Col. R.Q. Mills led the 10th Texas into action until he ascended to brigade command and went down wounded himself. Capt. John Formwalt took command of the small regiment and led it through the rest of the battle. The Tenth lost five killed and fifteen wounded during the day. Capt. William H. Perry led the 160 rifles of the 17th & 18th Texas into the contest. The regiment lost approximately twelve killed twenty-nine wounded and eighty-seven captured for a total of 119. Because of the wounding of Lt. Col. William Neyland the day before, Maj. William A. Taylor led the 24th & 25th Texas into combat and the regiment suffered a loss of four killed, twenty-one wounded and three captured. The 5th Confederate went into battle with ninety-two rifles under Maj. R.J. Persons. The enemy captured Persons and the regiment lost seventy-one casualties, many of them captured.⁴⁸ Though the casualties of the brigade proved high, they did not suffer completely in vain. During the fighting, the Texans captured fifteen pieces of artillery, two stands of colors, numerous ambulances and a brigade commander. They could also take credit for the demise of James McPherson at the hands of the 5th Confederate.⁴⁹

On the morning of July 23 Granbury's Brigade under Col. Young made the best they could of their situation. Capt. Foster wrote, "Our men are getting boots hats &c watches knives &c off of the dead Yanks near us in the woods, lots of them." He also wrote of the return of two of the men of his regiment who had fallen out the previous day due to being overheated. "We cook and eat," continued the captain, "talk and laugh with

⁴⁸ O.R. Series I, vol. 38, pt. 3, 730-31, 748-754.

⁴⁹ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 635-642.

the enemy's dead lying around us as though they were so many logs."⁵⁰ Pvt. Charles Leuschner of the 6th & 15th Texas wrote that after the battle, "we seen knapsak's piled up as high as a house; & all of our boys taken all the clothing they wanted; & the rest we destroyed. Nearly every one of us had 3 or 4 daguerotype's from the yankey's." The day after the battle the Texans went about burying the Federal dead by throwing them "in their own made fortification & covered them up." Meanwhile they buried their own dead "each one in a separate grave."⁵¹ Shortly after the battle, Gen. Granbury returned to resume permanent command of his brigade. On July 23 the Texans erected fortifications almost on top of where the Federals had placed their breastworks prior to the battle, and here the tired veterans remained through the night of July 26. On that summer night, Capt. Foster wrote in his diary of the shells the Yankees were throwing over their lines. "At night they can be seen like a rocket going through the air. They seem to go a mile high," he mused, "and it must be four or five miles from where they shoot into the city."⁵²

After failing to break the Federal advance either north or east of the city, Hood resigned himself to a siege, and began pulling back his men into the city's fortifications to await Sherman's next move. At 10 a.m. on the morning of July 27 Granbury's men moved off toward Atlanta. At noon they stopped at a creek in the woods to rest for about two hours. The veterans then marched closer to the city and took position in the outer line of defense. As soon as they positioned themselves, the Federals initiated a fierce bombardment of the position, though with little effect. Capt. Foster wrote defiantly,

⁵⁰ The two men who returned were Privates Alf Neil and Ogle Love. Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 115.

⁵¹ Spurlin, *Leuschner*, 44.

⁵² Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 116.

“Shelling don’t scare us as it used to and if they pass us before they burst there is no danger in them. All they do is to make men bow their heads as it passes over.”⁵³

In the wake of the Battle of Atlanta, Sherman sought another way to sever Hood’s lifeline and force him to abandon Atlanta. The Federal commander decided to send the Army of the Tennessee, now under Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard, from the far left to the far right, to strike at the Macon Railroad north of East Point and sever the Confederate supplies. Sherman erroneously assumed that Hood would not dare sally out in opposition to Howard and risk his troops in yet another engagement.

Sherman withdrew the Army of the Tennessee and sent it north and west around Atlanta. On July 28 a reconnaissance in force by Hood west of the city turned into the Battle of Ezra Church where O.O. Howard’s veterans repulsed several Confederate assaults.

It had been a bloody ten days for the Army of Tennessee. Of the 48,750 effectives available on July 18, now over 10,000 had become casualties. The losses equaled roughly a third of the 33,000 infantry available on July 17. In this harsh fighting Granbury’s Texans suffered almost 600 casualties out of a little over 1,000 men they began with. It proved a rough start for Hood.

The fighting around Atlanta both helped and hurt the Confederate cause. On the one hand, Johnston’s constant retreating harmed the Confederate war effort from a strategic standpoint. From a local standpoint, Granbury’s Texans finally began to exhibit the dedication necessary to sustain the Confederacy because of the leadership they enjoyed. As the prospects for Confederate victory grew dimmer, many of her soldiers,

⁵³ *Ibid.*

including Granbury's men, began to exude more of a willingness to sacrifice for the Confederacy. Unfortunately for the young nation, this dedication came too late.

Chapter 14

The Fall of Atlanta

Granbury's Texans clearly understood the dire circumstances facing their cause in August and September, 1864, but they stayed with their regiments anyway. From a local perspective, their steadfastness makes more sense in light of the stellar leadership they enjoyed from Hiram Granbury and Patrick Cleburne. In fact, it seems that their local perspective remained the only thing that kept the Texans going in the waning days of the war.

As the dog days of July turned into August, Granbury's men tried to fight the heat, boredom and constant barrage of bullets and shells that rained down on them day and night. On August 2 Capt. Foster recorded in his diary that he had "done a big days wash today. 2 prs Drawers 1 pr Socks 1 Shirt and 1 Pocket handkerchief, and it was all decently done."¹

During the first week of August an event occurred in the 7th Texas that further endeared its men to their division commander, Pat Cleburne. One day with a company of the regiment on picket duty, a cow belonging to a local farmer wandered near the picket line. Even though the Texans knew that it violated regulations, their hunger for beef took over and they shot and butchered the cow. Each company took a part of the meat back to camp and there began to cook it over open fires. Pvt. T.O. Moore recalled that just as the beef began to sizzle, "one of the company looked up and saw old Pat coming down the line on a tour of inspection. We had no time to hide the beef, and knew we were in for it." Thinking quickly, one Texan jumped to his feet, walked up to Cleburne, saluted, and

¹ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 118.

said, "General, we have some nice, fat beef cooking and it is about done; come and eat dinner with us." The wise commander stared for a long moment at the Texan and then replied "Well it does smell good. I believe I will." He sat down where his men handed him a piece of sizzling beef and a piece of cornbread and he "ate quite heartily." After dinner Cleburne lighted his pipe, chatted with the men and passed down the line with Granbury's boys cheering him on. Pvt. Moore later recalled, "How could we help admiring him?"²

The first two weeks in August kept the Texans busy with constant shelling, false alarms and marching back and forth behind their defenses. East of the city, Sherman began to shift his units southward to try to get at the railroad near East Point. Because of this, their commanders constantly shifted the Texans back and forth. On August 1 Capt. Foster recorded a false alarm "but, from some cause or other we did not move." Two days later Hardee moved Cleburne's Division two and a half miles to the right along the railroad in the midst of constant skirmishing. On the night of the sixth the Texans received orders to move left and support Bate's Division against whom the Federals had made a small demonstration, but they arrived too late to take part in the fighting. Two days later they moved several hundred yards to the right and the next day marched back to their previous position. From August 10-18 Foster reported at least four more separate movements of a few hundred yards apiece back and forth behind the fortifications.

Every new threat forced Hood to spread his already sparse garrison even thinner. On August 13 Capt. Foster scribbled in his diary, "Our Brigade are put in one rank about

² Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 233-234. Symonds identifies Private Moore as being a member of the 6th Texas. However, he actually belonged to Company F, 7th Texas. This evidence is further corroborated by the fact that Captain Samuel Foster stated that the 7th Texas was also posted on the picket line with the 24th & 25th Texas in the first week of August. Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 119.

3 feet apart, but I believe we can hold our position against any force that can be brought against us.” This optimism obviously sprang from the strength of the works the brigade occupied which included a line of stakes fifty yards in front of the trenches, “drove down in the ground, firmly slanting from us and made sharp at the top and so close together that a man can not get thru, and high enough to strike him little above his waist. It will be very difficult for men to get to us.”³

As Sherman shifted his forces south toward the railroad, Hood decided to take matters into his own hands. On August 10 Wheeler set out with 6,000 troopers on a raid to tear up the railroad and destroy Federal communications as far north as Marietta. Hood ordered only a few cavalry commands to remain in the vicinity of Atlanta, including Jackson’s Division. As scattered reports of Wheeler’s raid began reaching Sherman, he exhorted his garrison commanders to crush the raiders. Other than this, he remained unconcerned. His supply wagons carried enough supplies for at least two weeks. In fact, Sherman decided to launch a cavalry raid of his own. On August 15, he ordered Brig. Gen. Judson Kilpatrick to make a thrust toward Fairburn on the West Point railroad. Kilpatrick easily captured Fairburn, and his success emboldened Sherman. Rather than have his infantry make a circuitous march to get at and destroy the Macon Railroad, he planned to have his cavalry do the job. On the night of August 18 Kilpatrick set out from Sandtown toward the railroad near Jonesboro. Though he met with some initial success, Kilpatrick ultimately failed in his mission to permanently disable Hood’s supply line.

This failure forced Sherman to consider the option he had hoped to avoid. The Confederates contradicted Kilpatrick’s exaggerated claims of railroad destruction by the night of August 21, when trains again began rumbling into Atlanta from the south.

³ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 118-121.

Sherman decided that he must swing south of Atlanta with the main body of his infantry and cut Hood's lifeline. On August 23 he asked his three army commanders when they could be ready to move. His commanders replied that with some preparation they could have their men ready by the night of August 25.

On August 25 the Federals abandoned their trenches and marched south. The next day Sherman started the Army of the Tennessee south. On August 27 Capt. Foster took thirty men and ventured out "seven or eight miles" to bring in twenty head of much-needed cattle to the Confederate lines. The Texans accomplished all this before night, "and no one got hurt."⁴ Because Cleburne posted Granbury's Texans so far to the right, August 29 had dawned before the Yankees finally abandoned the trenches in their front. The next morning some Texans inspecting the abandoned works found pieces of paper tacked to trees that read, "Goodbye Johnny Rebs. . . . Don't Follow us, if you do you will catch H-ll."⁵

On August 30 Maj. Gen. "Red" Jackson informed Hood that the Federals had begun moving toward Jonesboro. A mere 2,500 dismounted Confederate cavalymen stood between the Army of the Tennessee and Jonesboro on the night of August 30. In the gathering twilight, Howard opted not to attack. Instead, he entrenched on a ridge west of the town where his artillery could dominate the railroad. Hood believed this gave him just the stroke of luck he needed. At 6 p.m., after receiving desperate messages from Brig. Gen. Frank Armstrong, one of his cavalry commanders, he ordered Lee's and Hardee's Corps to Jonesboro. As a precautionary measure, Hood ordered Stewart's Corps

⁴ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 125.

to remain northwest of Atlanta. Hood planned to have Hardee and Lee move south and drive the Federals into the Flint River the next day.⁶

In the early morning of August 31, Hardee's and Lee's men marched through Jonesboro to confront the enemy. At 10 p.m. on August 30 Granbury's Texans moved out of their entrenchments and marched south. Just after dawn they marched through town and formed a line of battle facing west.⁷ Hardee positioned his own corps, now temporarily under Cleburne, on the left, or southern flank of his attacking force. To their right he placed Lee's Corps. Hardee planned to attack *en echelon* from left to right with Lowrey, commanding Cleburne's Division, to lead off, followed by the other two divisions of his corps. When Lee heard the sounds of battle, Hardee instructed him to launch his own assault.⁸

The men whom Hardee went up against on August 31 were members of the XV Corps under John Logan. Logan had drawn his men up in a semi-circle with their right flank resting on the Flint River, and their left protected by a tributary of the river. Dislodging these veteran soldiers would be a difficult task.⁹

At 3 p.m. Hardee's artillerymen commenced their bombardment, prior to launching the infantry assault. After about ten minutes, Cleburne's skirmishers started forward. To the north, Lee, mistaking the fire of the skirmishers for the beginning of the main assault, ordered his corps forward. Lee's men advanced in grand style, driving in the Federal skirmishers before they ran into a wall of lead from Logan's veterans. Many of them turned and fled after first coming under fire. Others tried to advance, but soon the

⁶ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 495-496.

⁷ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 125.

⁸ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 499-500.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 501.

entire corps degenerated into a disorganized mob and refused to go forward. One Union officer thought it the least determined assault he had ever seen Rebels make. The Federals slowed their fire with deliberate aim, slaughtering the Confederates.

Meanwhile, to the south, Cleburne's Division fared little better. Granbury's Texans occupied the extreme left of the division and hence the extreme left of the army. As they began their assault, the left of the brigade came under fire from Kilpatrick's Federal troopers to the right of Logan's infantry. Instead of following orders and swinging north, the Texans continued due west. They charged impetuously across an open field toward the dismounted cavalymen. Capt. Foster wrote that because of their repeating rifles the Yankees, "just fairly made it rain bullets as long as they had any in their guns, but as soon as they gave out, and we getting closer to them every moment, they couldn't stand it but broke and ran like good fellows."¹⁰ The Texans chased the enemy across Anthony's Bridge over the Flint River. They pursued them, "as long as we could find any to follow," before they returned. It proved a perfect way to divert an entire Confederate brigade away from the battlefield. Cleburne rallied and reformed his division by 5 p.m. only to find the battle over. The fighting at Jonesboro had been one-sided in the extreme. Logan's men suffered 172 casualties of all sorts while the Confederates sustained 2,200 dead and wounded.

From his headquarters in Atlanta Hood had received erroneous intelligence of a large Federal force heading for the city. He decided that he should bring Lee's Corps back to counter the threat. At 6 p.m. he issued a dispatch, instructing Hardee to send Lee's Corps back to Atlanta. He also instructed Hardee to hold the railroad around Jonesboro against Sherman's "feint." Hardee recognized Sherman's move as not merely a

¹⁰ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 126.

feint, but he felt he had to obey his orders. On the evening of August 31 Lee's tired veterans marched north towards Atlanta.

Hood at last received a dispatch from Hardee in the early morning of September 1. The news proved exactly what the Confederate commander feared: Hardee had failed to drive the Federals across the Flint. Immediately, Hood decided to abandon Atlanta. With a large part of Sherman's army bearing down on his supply line at Jonesboro, Hood had little choice but to retreat toward Macon. At the very least, he instructed Hardee to hold the railroad.¹¹

At Jonesboro, Hardee made his defensive dispositions. At 3 a.m. he ordered Cleburne's Division to the extreme right, extending his line northward and eastward toward the railroad. Cleburne stretched his men so thin that they stood about a yard apart, with elbows "not quite touching."¹² Lowrey's Brigade occupied the left of the line with Granbury's Texans in the middle, and Govan's Arkansans on the right. As soon as Cleburne put them in place the Texans and Arkansans began strengthening their position in dangerous proximity to the enemy, who had begun to mass immediately beyond the tree line to their front.¹³

At first light Cleburne and his men could see the danger of their position. As they watched, the Army of the Cumberland massed to their front and right to deliver the final, crushing blow. In the early afternoon Hardee learned of the threat gathering on his right and ordered Govan's Brigade back to a more secure position. He also sent two brigades to extend its right.¹⁴ In the meantime, the soldiers could clearly see the fate about to befall

¹¹ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 509.

¹² Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 240.

¹³ Clauss, "The Atlanta Campaign," 331.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 337.

them. Capt. Foster wrote in his diary, “All the forenoon we can see the Yanks passing to our right—Regt after Regt of the blue coats going to the right. The report by noon is that they are massing their troops in our front.”¹⁵

A little after 4 p.m. the Federal columns started southward against the salient occupied by Govan’s Brigade. William Carlin’s division of the XIV Corps advanced first. The two brigades that Carlin had on the field had to force their way through brush so thick it became difficult to maintain contact with one another. Because of this Carlin’s men emerged piecemeal from the underbrush. The first of the Northerners pushed forward to a ridge from which they beheld the Confederate works. A storm of canister and bullets forced the hapless Federals to fall to the ground. After advancing a little further, it soon became obvious that they could not take the Confederate position without reinforcements. Carlin’s third brigade advanced, only to suffer the same fate as their comrades. At the same time Carlin decided to renew the assault with George Este’s Brigade of Absolom Baird’s Division.¹⁶

At 5 p.m. Este’s 1,100 veterans moved forward to the top of the ridge. Unlike their predecessors, they flopped to their stomachs just in time to avoid the opening volley of the Arkansans. Then they jumped to their feet and charged straight into the middle of Govan’s line, held by the 6th & 7th Arkansas. Using their bayonets freely, the Midwesterners overwhelmed the Arkansas regiment and punched a hole in the middle of Govan’s position. Este’s men exploited the gap by moving the 10th Kentucky and 74th Indiana behind the Confederates. Govan’s men fought tenaciously until completely engulfed by the enemy. In the fierce struggle, the attackers clubbed down the

¹⁵ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 126.

¹⁶ Castel, *Decision in the West*, 515-516.

Confederates or forcefully took their rifles from them. The Union troops soon overwhelmed Key's and Swett's Batteries as well, bayoneting one of Swett's officers when he refused to surrender. The Federals captured Govan and most of his Arkansans, who wept and cursed the fact that they had never before been whipped in battle.¹⁷

As soon as Granbury saw the fate of the Arkansans not more than forty paces to his right, he ordered the right of the brigade back at an angle to protect his flank. At this moment, Hardee saw the Texans apparently falling back. Immediately, he and Lowrey rode toward the Texans and began trying to rally them before Granbury approached them. The supposition that his men would fall back without orders hurt the Texan, and he said to Hardee, "General, my men never fall back unless ordered back." Hardee assured him that he had ordered up Cleburne with reinforcements to shore up his right. With this new information Granbury led his men forward, quickly retaking their breastworks.¹⁸ During this action an errant ball wounded Capt. Sebron Sneed of Granbury's staff in the breast while he served as a messenger.¹⁹ Soon, Cleburne rode to the front at the head of John Gordon's Brigade of Brown's Division. Sweeping forward, the Tennesseans stemmed the onrush of Federals through the gap in the line.

Sherman took personal command on the field and felt that one final push by David Stanley's division east of the railroad could crush Hardee's line. Seeing the movement, Hardee shifted the rest of Brown's Division east to counter the threat. Because of the stiff resistance and gathering darkness, Sherman decided not to attack. This ended the battle of Jonesboro.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 516-518.

¹⁸ T.B. Roy, "General Hardee and the Military Operations Around Atlanta," *Southern Historical Society Papers*, vol. 8, (1880), 374-375.

¹⁹ O.R. Series I, Vol. 38, pt. 3, 745.

The aftermath of the two-day battle revealed the ferocity of the fighting. On August 31 Granbury reported his losses as sixteen killed and thirty-two wounded. For September 1 the casualties of the small brigade amounted to eighteen killed and eighty-nine wounded.²⁰

After dark, Hardee began withdrawing his men south toward Lovejoy's Station, to rendezvous with the other two army corps. Atlanta had fallen. After four months of hard fighting and campaigning, Sherman could at last report, "Atlanta is ours and fairly won!"

In the late night hours of September 1, 1864, the weary soldiers of Hardee's Corps grudgingly abandoned their trenches around Jonesboro and moved south along the railroad toward Lovejoy's Station, the rendezvous point designated by Hood. As the foot soldiers moved through the pre-dawn darkness, they could distinctly hear explosions coming from the north—from Atlanta. They knew it as the sound of defeat. Before abandoning the city, Hood ordered his rear-guard to destroy whatever munitions and supplies that could not be brought off, to deny their use to the Federals. In addition, the soldiers could see the northern horizon lit with the bright blaze of the munition cars in the Atlanta railway yard. Lt. O.P. Bowser of the 17th & 18th Texas recalled, "Many a soldier in the brigade regarded the dismal sounds as the death knell of the Confederacy."²¹

Despite their fading prospects, the spirits of the Texans in the Army of Tennessee remained bright as they skirmished with the pursuing Federals. Following the withdrawal from Jonesboro and Atlanta, Hood marched his men south to Lovejoy's Station to regroup. On the morning of September 2, Granbury's Texans reached Lovejoy's and began throwing up breastworks in anticipation of a renewed assault. Samuel Foster

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Bowser, "Notes on Granbury's Brigade," 750.

recorded in his diary the nature of the breastworks. “By the middle of the day we have made a ditch about 4 feet deep and put the dirt in front so as to mak[e] a bank about a foot high but slants off about 10 feet,” he wrote. On the evening of September 2, Yankee skirmishers approached within 250 yards of the Confederate breastworks before withdrawing for the night. On September third and fourth, they continued to skirmish with the Confederates, and on the fifth, Foster wrote, “Picket firing and artillery are making music all day today.”²² Finally, on September 6, the last of the fighting in the Atlanta Campaign came to an end when Sherman opted to withdraw his forces back to Atlanta.

As Sherman and Hood planned their next moves, word reached the family and friends of Texans who had fallen defending Atlanta. On September 17, from a hospital in Barnesville, Georgia, Lt. Sebron Sneed penned a letter to Mrs. Susan Piper of Austin. He wrote her regarding the fate of her son Benjamin who had received a severe wound at Jonesboro. Sneed began by citing a letter he had written to her nine days earlier in which he:

“Could give you but little ground to hope for the recovery of your son Benjamin. Our fears were realized—on the night of the 14th inst. The pure spirit of your brave and noble soldier boy, fled from this world of suffering and strife and took refuge in the bosom of its God. I know my dear Madam, this will be a severe blow to you, and feel incompetent to offer a word of comfort, save, it would be to assure you, that Ben has always done his duty to his Country and Companions. He suffered much, and had little hope of getting well. He continued sinking rapidly, and on the 13th inst. His wound commenced bleeding afresh from the lungs. From this time on he went rapidly down, and on the night of the 14th expired as gently as a child falling into a sweet sleep. . . . I remember your last words to me when our Company of lively, handsome boys left Onion Creek, ‘Seb, take good care of my baby boy.’ I have ever tried to do my duty to Ben, and had hoped to one day see you meet him in all the pride of his manhood, flushed with the proud consciousness of having done his duty to his God and his Country—liberty took

²² Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 129-130; Buck, *Cleburne and His Command*, 258-259.

him for one of her martyrs. Let us not weep, his trials and troubles are over-May he rest in peace.”²³

Granbury's Texans understood the importance of the loss of Atlanta. The defeat crippled the Confederacy's ability to win the war, if any still existed. Yet, even after Atlanta fell, they retained bright spirits. With their regimental, brigade, and division leaders still in place, they stayed in the ranks as well. Desertion during this time took a more clandestine form; many of the Texans who received wounds during the Atlanta Campaign never returned to their regiments. This had the same effect as desertion because it denied their services to the Confederate cause. From a local perspective, the Confederate war effort kept going, in that the Texas Brigade did not desert *en masse*, because of the example set by their officers. As long as they stayed in place, their men would too.

²³ Letter from Lieutenant Sebron G. Sneed to Mrs. Susan Piper, Barnesville, Ga., September 17, 1864. (Piper Papers, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin)

Chapter 15

The Lull

In the wake of the fall of Atlanta, the Texans felt it more imperative than ever to stay with the Confederacy. Even though the Confederate war effort had clearly lost its viability by this point in the war, the local perspective of the Texans and their leaders kept them going, through sheer force of will and perhaps denial of reality. More than ever, it seems that a fatalistic determinism gripped the Texans to sacrifice all for the Confederacy if necessary.

As they abandoned Atlanta, Confederate soldiers made dire predictions for the future in their letters and diaries. The Army of Tennessee had reached a critical juncture in its history. Capt. Foster recorded his pessimistic remarks when he wrote, “This army is going to do something wrong—or rather it will undertake something that will not be a success, if the future is to be judged by the past. . . .”¹

After the fighting of the Atlanta Campaign, on September 6, the Confederate awoke to find quiet. After over 100 days of constant fighting and skirmishing from May through September, they could not hear a single gun. Samuel Foster wrote, “Every body astonished this morning. No shooting in hearing of us, everything is as quiet as a meeting house. Whats up.”² Charles Leuschner wrote, “We wake up at daylight and we could not hear a single gun fired. Our Gen. soon sent scout’s out to see whether yankey were gone, & they soon come back & reported them gone.”³ Sherman had in fact withdrawn to

¹ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 135.

² *Ibid.*, 130.

³ Spurlin, *Leuschner*, 47.

Atlanta and remained content to let Hood's army stay at Lovejoy's Station.⁴ This signaled the end of the Atlanta Campaign, and the beginning of a lull in the fighting.

As Sherman and Hood retreated to their respective corners, Hood began to push some of his units north toward Jonesboro to feel out the Federals. Hood cautiously advanced his men north in the early morning of September 8, where, along the road of advance, the Confederates encountered the offensive odor of, "dead horses, decaying men, and the debris of the battlefield."⁵ It became a most unwelcome and disheartening sight to the Confederates who had so recently fought over the ground they now camped upon.

The Confederate army stayed at Jonesboro for ten days, during which they experienced beautiful weather. One of the Texans camped at Jonesboro with his regiment in early September 1864 was Lt. Thomas J. Stokes, commanding Company I, 10th Texas. Thomas Jefferson Stokes hailed from Georgia, but had moved to Texas before the war. Having voted for secession, Stokes felt it his duty to fight in the war. He had worked as a schoolteacher in Johnson County, Texas before the war and proved a deeply religious man, and as such, he helped bring about the mass revivals in the Army of Tennessee preceding the Atlanta Campaign. In April, Stokes wrote his sister, Missouri Stokes, and confided to her almost prophetically that many believed this "the beginning of the end." He had no way of knowing how events would prove him right.⁶

During this period Mary A.H. Gay of Decatur, Georgia visited the troops of Granbury's Brigade. Gay, the half-sister of Lt. Stokes, visited the Texans to see her

⁴ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 126.

⁵ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 243.

⁶ Gay, *Life in Dixie During the War*, 85, 273; 1860 Census for Johnson County, Texas at www.heritagequest.com (accessed January 26, 2007).

brother “Thomie,” but also in anticipation of the winter privations she knew would come. Before the commencement of spring campaigning, several men of Granbury’s Brigade, including Stokes and Granbury, left their heavy winter coats in the possession of Miss Gay for safekeeping. With the return of fall, she decided to return the coats. In doing so she exhibited quite a bit of ingenuity. She first approached the Federal provost marshall in Decatur with a request for a wagon to go to her sister’s house in Augusta with bedding items. The provost marshal granted the request, and Gay requested the use of some large grain sacks lying unused at the Federal depot. Returning home, Gay sewed the sacks shut with the coats inside them. The next morning, a Federal soldier arrived, loaded the bundles into the wagon, and proceeded south to Atlanta, where Gay met some of her friends evacuating the city in compliance with Sherman’s orders. She continued south with the Federal wagon as far as Rough and Ready, and then the rest of the way to Jonesboro.

While at Jonesboro, Mary Gay wrote that events seem to have altered the spirits of the Texans. She noted this change particularly in Gen. Granbury, whose fatalistic remarks to her during their conversation led her to realize that in the wake of the fall of Atlanta, though they tried to maintain optimism about success, these Texans knew their chances for ultimate victory had become bleak.⁷

Also while at Jonesboro, the Federals exchanged Gen. Daniel Govan and six hundred Arkansans, who returned to Cleburne’s Division. The Arkansans found themselves the fortunate beneficiaries of an unusually quick prisoner exchange. This exchange brought the strength of Cleburne’s Division to 3,290 men. The Arkansans, after

⁷ Gay, *Life in Dixie*, 185-188; McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 127; Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 688.

returning to the camp of the division, immediately put into circulation a petition carried by a group of Arkansans into the camp of Granbury's Brigade to see whether or not the Texans had lost confidence in them. If they had indeed lost confidence in them, the Arkansans stated, they were prepared to request a transfer, rather than serve with men who would not accept them on an equal footing. The Texans for their part heartily welcomed back the Arkansans, and went so far as to turn out *en masse* to the camp of Govan's Brigade to express their confidence.⁸

On September 15, Governor Joseph Brown of Georgia set aside a day of prayer and fasting, and Gen. Hood required that the Army of Tennessee observe the holiday. Accordingly, they held a worship service in a, "grove of gigantic poplars and oaks where seats made of logs covered almost half an acre." Gen. Mark Lowrey, commander of one of Cleburne's brigades, had served as a Baptist minister before the war, and he agreed to preach a sermon from Psalms, "'He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms. . . . I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again until they were consumed.'"⁹ Lowrey, with his flowing beard, appeared the epitome of an Old Testament warrior, a contemporary Joshua or Gideon.

On September 16, the Confederates started west toward Palmetto, Georgia, the first leg of a trip designed by Hood to cut Sherman's supply line. At 1 a.m. on September 16, they started westward, resting at daylight and again at 1 p.m. on September 17, and so on until they reached the West Point and Palmetto Railroad at Palmetto during the night of September 19. After they arrived, their officers formed the men in line of battle and allowed them to rest. On the morning of September 20, around 3 a.m., Cleburne ordered

⁸ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 243; Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 683.

⁹ Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 195; Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 243-244.

Granbury's Texans to make breastworks, during "considerable rain," with their right flank across the West Point Railroad and with their left flank across the Chattahoochie River.¹⁰

Here at Palmetto, Georgia, the Army of Tennessee stayed for nine days, resting and gathering supplies as President Jefferson Davis and his staff traveled to Georgia to visit the army and consult with Hood. President Jefferson Davis, accompanied by his aides Custis Lee and ex-Governor Francis Lubbock of Texas, departed Richmond for Palmetto on September 20. On September 25, Davis reached Hood's headquarters. He intended to gauge the morale of the Army of Tennessee as well as to discuss strategy with Hood. Davis and Hood agreed that the army should cross the Chattahoochie and strike the Western and Atlantic Railroad in order to draw Sherman north from Atlanta. But Davis instructed Hood that if Sherman moved south from Atlanta, Hood should follow him as far as necessary, to the Atlantic Ocean if necessary.¹¹ On September 26, President Davis, accompanied by Gen. Hood and Francis Lubbock, reviewed the troops of the army. Lubbock took this opportunity to visit the Texas troops. On his visit, however, he embarrassed himself, as Samuel Foster recorded in his diary. "He stopped in front of an Irish (Brigade) Regt. Just on our right before he got to us," wrote Foster. Lubbock, thinking that he had found the Texans, "rode square up about the centre pulled off his hat and says 'I am Governor Lubbock of Texas' and just when he expected to hear a big cheer, an Irishman says 'An who the bloody H—I is governor Lubbock?' with that peculiar Irish brogue, that made the Governor wilt." Lubbock, mortified, then turned his horse and galloped on to catch up with Davis and party, and passed by the Texans

¹⁰ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 131-132.

¹¹ Connelly, *Autumn of Glory*, 477-478.

without even so much as a glance.¹²

Gen. William J. Hardee took advantage of the visit by Davis to personally request a transfer from the Army of Tennessee. Hardee had felt slighted, as the senior corps commander, when Davis appointed Hood to army command. In addition to this, Hardee and Hood did not get along well together. Considering these circumstances, Davis permitted Hardee's transfer, assigning him instead to the command of the defenses of Savannah Georgia, on September 27. In his stead, Hood appointed Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. "Frank" Cheatham, one of Hardee's divisional commanders, to lead the Second Corps, and elevated Brig. Gen. John C. Brown to command Cheatham's Division. The inexperience of these leaders certainly boded ill for the battles ahead.

As he visited the Army of Tennessee and returned to Richmond, President Davis in his speeches disclosed perhaps too much of the plan he and Hood had formulated. In a speech at Macon, Georgia on September 24, Davis indiscreetly revealed a hint of the plans that he and Hood had been concocting to draw Sherman north from Atlanta. He even went so far when addressing some Tennessee regiments at Palmetto Station as to hint that they might soon march toward their homes. In subsequent speeches that he gave at Montgomery, Columbia and Augusta, Davis broadly hinted at the possibility for an invasion of Tennessee.

On September 29, the Army of Tennessee began its northward trek through Georgia and Alabama to try to draw Sherman out of Atlanta. That day Granbury's Brigade moved west through Palmetto and along the south bank of the Chattahoochie.

¹² Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 133; Lubbock had stopped in front of the 5th Confederate Regiment, primarily made up of Irishmen from Memphis, Tennessee. Though a part of Granbury's Texas Brigade, the Irishmen apparently had no appreciation for Texan politicians. Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 694.

That night, Hood summoned the regimental commanders of the army to his headquarters to discuss the invasion of Tennessee, the specifics of which remained as of yet largely unknown to the rank and file. The following day the soldiers of Cleburne's Division crossed the Chattahoochie River. That night the Texans made camp eight miles north of the Chattahoochie and waited for daylight before resuming their northward progression. On October 1, the rest of the army crossed the river, and the Confederates started northward, though as Capt. Foster noted, "but no one knows where." On October 2, Hood had drawn the army up west of Marietta, Georgia, and here the regimental commanders briefed the men on what the days ahead had in store. Hood requested that the colonels instruct their men that they would attempt to flank Sherman out of Atlanta, and that while maneuvering, the rations might get short, but that he would do everything he could to ensure the welfare of his men. Capt. Foster recorded, "He expected there to be some fighting and some hard marching, and wanted an expression of the men upon it. Of course every man said go."¹³

On the night of October 2, a bolt of lightening struck a stack of rifles in the Texans' camp, throwing the guns about before bouncing between two trees, "knocking the bark off both of them." The blast knocked one man of Company F, 24th Texas temporarily unconscious, and another man lounging around the camp suddenly died. The bolt carried Capt. Foster, "about five feet forward, apparently like a rail had struck both my legs from behind, below the knees and carried me forward without throwing me down." The lightning momentarily stunned nearly every man in the 24th and 25th Texas. The blast killed at least three men from the 6th & 15th Texas and the 24th & 25th Texas, and a number suffered breathing difficulties, and remained in general unnerved and

¹³ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 135-136.

dumbstruck from the abnormal occurrence.¹⁴

As the Army of Tennessee continued northward, the Federals under Sherman did not remain idle. Leaving the XX Corps to hold Atlanta, Sherman started north along the railroad to rescue his garrisons along that route as well as stop Hood from cutting his supply lines. As an additional precaution, Sherman sent Gen. George H. Thomas to Nashville to guard against the suspected invasion of Tennessee.

During the march north, one of Hood's predictions came true; rations became short. Because of this situation, inevitable foraging occurred, despite Hood's constant warnings regarding the respect for private property. While riding ahead of his soldiers with part of his staff, Cleburne came upon half-a-dozen soldiers who had stripped a nearby apple orchard of its contents, and now nearly six bushels of apples lay at their feet. Cleburne, with a grim expression, ordered the men to move the apples to the roadside. Then, lighting his pipe, Cleburne waited for the head of his division. Soon Gen. Granbury arrived at the head of his troops, who happened to be the head of Cleburne's column that day. As Granbury rode up, Cleburne addressed him: "General Granbury, I am peddling apples today." Granbury replied, "How are you selling them, General?"

"These gentlemen," Cleburne replied, motioning towards the foragers, "have been very kind. They have gathered the apples for me and charged nothing. I will give them to you and your men. Now, you get down and take an apple, and have each of your men pass by and take one—only one, mind—until they are all gone." Smiling, Granbury selected an apple, and sat on his horse munching while the entire Texas brigade passed by in single file and each selected an apple. Cleburne then ordered the guilty foragers to

¹⁴ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 136-137; Sessums "A Force to be Reckoned With," 696.

carry a rail for a mile before rejoining their units.¹⁵

The night of October 2, while encamped near Powder Springs, Georgia, some of the men of Cleburne's Division serenaded him, and in the warm night, Cleburne decided to address his men. He expressed the importance of the current offensive, and urged every man to do his duty. In Ireland, Cleburne said, the downtrodden masses had suffered from oppression, but if the North prevailed against the South, the condition of Southerners would become much worse. Then he paused, looked toward the sky, and with a resolute expression on his face, said, "If this cause which is so dear to my heart is doomed to fail, I pray that heaven may let me fall with it, while my face is toward the enemy and my arm still battling for that which I know to be right."¹⁶

The theatrics of Patrick Cleburne indicate the mindset shared by many of Granbury's Texans and their officers. In the wake of the fall of Atlanta, they felt it imperative to stay with the Confederacy in spite of its waning fortunes. The Confederate war effort remained viable at this point in the Civil War, it seems, almost through sheer force of will on the part of the few officers and men who stayed with the cause.

¹⁵ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 245-246.

¹⁶ Clayton Rand, *Sons of the South*, (New York: The Fairfax Press, 1978), 138.

Chapter 16

Cutting Off Sherman

During the march into north Georgia and beyond, the Texans of Granbury's Brigade exhibited a bravado that remains difficult to analyze. The more desperate the situation became, the more they voiced their faith in the ultimate outcome of the war. As long as the Texans enjoyed their local leadership, they remained willing to sacrifice all for their leaders and each other. During this time, it is apparent that the Confederate cause held together through sheer determination on the part of the men left in the ranks.

The morning after Cleburne gave that rousing speech to his men, Hood set into motion his plan to cut Sherman's supplies by severing the rail lines. That day Stewart's Corps captured Big Shanty and its garrison of 175 men. On October 4 the Federal garrison at Acworth, Georgia surrendered with 250 officers and men, while the Confederate army halted and threw up breastworks west of Big Shanty.¹ On October 5 Maj. Gen. Samuel French and his division assaulted the Federal garrison at Allatoona Pass, and made limited gains in the face of high losses, until reports of Union reinforcements forced French to withdraw.

As the weary veterans of French's Division made their way back to rejoin the army Hood formulated his next move against Sherman. On October 5, A.L. Orr of the 18th Texas Dismounted Cavalry wrote his sister Mary, "Gen. Hood says we will go to Tennessee, that we will never turn back." Should Sherman try to bypass the Confederates, "we will still flank him." Orr also wrote of the visit from "Olde Jeff" Davis who according to Orr told the Texans, "If we would run the Yanks out of Georgia, that he

¹ Wiley Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind: The Confederacy's Last Hurrah*, (New York: The General's Books, 1994), 54.

would furlow us this winter. We Texans,” he wrote, “are a going to doo all we can, all though there is but few of ous.”² At 4 a.m. on October 6, the bugle sounded for Granbury’s Texas Brigade to rise and renew their northward trek. Rain made the marching miserable on this particular October day. Capt. Foster recorded in his diary, “Mud over our shoes and every little gully had to be waded. About 12 Oclock the rain stoped and we camp—build fires and dry our clothes blankets &c.”³ The next day Capt. Foster wrote in his diary that at noon as the Texans rested, “Genl Hood passed us, and told us ‘*that the Yanks were leaving Atlanta in a great hurry.*’” In their enthusiasm at this remark all the Texans yelled, “Hurrah for Genl Hood” as he tipped his hat and rode on. At 2 p.m. the Texans reached Cedartown, Georgia where they went into camp with all “in high spirits.” According to Capt. Foster this boost in morale results from the Confederates “Running the Yanks out of the State of Ga. Without a fight.” Foster surmised that Hood intended “evidently making for Tenn. and perhaps Ky.” This action, hypothesized the Texan, would force Sherman to retreat and, “go into East Tenn. and go across Cumberland gap, and if we can get there first they will have to go into Ky. This army,” Foster wrote enthusiastically, “has done wonders! Flanked the Yanks out of Atlanta without firing a gun.”⁴ Hood withdrew to Cedartown, Georgia to regroup and communicate his intentions to Richmond of destroying the Federal railroad from Kingston to Tunnel Hill. The lanky Kentuckian remained highly optimistic about the results of his flanking maneuvers thus far. He wired Bragg, then serving as military advisor to President Davis: “In truth, the effect of our operations so far surpassed my expectations that I was induced to change my original plan.” Hood intended to draw

² Anderson, *Campaigning With Parson’s Texas Cavalry*, 146.

³ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 138.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 139.

Sherman out in the rough terrain near the Tennessee River and offer battle.⁵ On October 9, the Texas Brigade departed its camp around 1:30 p.m. and proceeded nine miles to Cave Spring, Georgia, where they moved through the town and, according to Capt. Foster, “camped on a high hill—or rather a mountain. . . .” That night the Texans experienced the first frost of the season while passing through the mountains.⁶ At Cave Spring, Georgia, Hood met with Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard, departmental commander, regarding his proposed railroad wrecking scheme. Beauregard concurred with Hood, and on October 10 the army crossed the Coosa River, near Rome, Georgia.

For the next few days the Confederates wrestled with tough Federal garrisons along the railroad. Hood, deciding the Union garrison at Rome would be too strong to assault, bypassed it and instead continued north along the Oostanaula River, reaching Resaca on October 12. The Federal commander, in replying to Hood’s demand for an unconditional surrender of the 700 man garrison, wrote, “If you want it come and take it.” Deciding that he could just as easily bypass the position, Hood continued up the railroad.⁷ On October 12, Cleburne’s Division formed the rear of the army, even behind the wagon trains, and the going proved slow for the impatient Texans.⁸ At Dalton, fifteen miles north of Resaca, the Confederates encountered another small force of Federal troops, including Gen. John Schofield who barely slipped away north along the railroad ahead of the Confederates.⁹ Hood formed Cleburne’s Division directly in front of the 751 man Dalton garrison primarily composed of the 44th U.S. Colored Infantry under Col. Lewis Johnson. Johnson, severely outnumbered, talked nervously with Hood under a flag of

⁵ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 56.

⁶ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 139; Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 700.

⁷ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 56.

⁸ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 139.

⁹ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 56.

truce, seeking assurances that, if he surrendered, the Confederates would treat his black troops as prisoners of war. Hood declined to make any such promise.¹⁰ Many of the men of Granbury's Brigade had already made up their minds, shouting, "Kill every damn one of them." Johnson, nevertheless, in no position to bargain, reluctantly surrendered his garrison. After his men had stacked arms, the Confederates pounced upon Johnson's men and divested them of their shoes and clothes. Many of the Confederates threatened the lives of the black prisoners, incessantly haranguing and taunting them. Instead of killing them, though, they put the prisoners to work tearing up the railroad.¹¹

On October 13, the Army of Tennessee struck the railroad below Dalton and put their hands to destruction. The first rail, however, proved extremely difficult to pull up. Consequently, Cleburne aligned his division along the railroad in a single rank and called out, "Attention Men! When I say ready, let every man stoop down, take hold of the rails and when I say 'heave ho!' let every man lift all he can and turn the rails and crossties over. . . ." And so when Cleburne called out, "Heave," and the men of his division lifted all lifted at once, and removed the first rail.¹²

Capt. Foster wrote in his diary on October 13 of the manner in which the Confederates destroyed the railroad track. With the first rail that Cleburne's Division Removed, wrote Foster, "we prize them up as fast as we can handle it." Following this, the Confederates piled up the rails on top of the track along with kindling until the piles Reached, "as high as a mans head," at which time they set them on fire. On top of each of these bonfires, the "iron rails are then balanced," and, "they soon get red hot." After the iron had reached this point, four men with two on each end would take each rail to the

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹¹ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 247.

¹² *Ibid.*; Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 701.

nearest telegraph pole and “bend it double—by walking around until they meet. Have considerable fun,” wrote the Texan. They dubbed these bent rails “old Mrs. Lincoln’s Hair pins.”¹³

The Confederates continued to tear up railroad tracks until midnight on October 13, at which time the commissary issued meager rations, and the troops settled down for the night. On October 14 the railroad mischief continued until around 10 a.m., when the entire Confederate army began to move off in a southwestern direction, toward La Fayette, Georgia. Hood and his army had succeeded in vandalizing the railroad from Resaca to Tunnel Hill, just south of Chattanooga. The Confederates became exuberant about their chances for success. Capt. Foster described this feeling: “The whole army are in high spirits,” noting they had “torn up the R.R. 100 miles in the rear of the Yankee army and cut off their supplies.” In light of this, theorized the Texan, “their only chance of now to live is to disband and scatter over the country, and make their way back north as best they can.” Because of this seeming success, the Army of Tennessee began to gain confidence in their new commander. Foster wrote that the Texans began “to think that Jeff Davis and Hood made a ten strike, when they plan[n]ed this thing. It beats fighting ‘all hollow.’”¹⁴

Unfortunately, the destruction of the railroad only worsened the situation for the Georgian populace. Sherman, in typical sarcastic fashion, wrote, “We find [an] abundance of corn and potatoes out here. They cost us nothing a bushel. If Georgia can afford to break our railroads, she can afford to feed us. Please preach this doctrine to men who go forth and are likely to spread it.” With Sherman’s soldiers spread out in north

¹³ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 140.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Georgia in an attempt to protect the railroads, he put ten thousand men to work repairing the more than eight miles of railroad that the Confederates had destroyed. The repairs required thirty-five thousand railroad ties and six miles of iron, and yet in the space of a week they had the railroad up and working again.¹⁵

As Sherman and his Federals ravaged the Georgia countryside and repaired the railroads, the Confederates continued north. On the morning of October 15, Cleburne's Division marched 15 miles over the mountains and bivouacked near La Fayette. The next day, the men of the division moved a few miles down the La Fayette and Rome road, and bivouacked on the exact ground that they had occupied prior to the Battle of Chickamauga.¹⁶ On October 17, Hood started his army west towards Alpine, Georgia. For the next few days the march continued west, heading for Alabama.

During this leg of the campaign communications with the rest of the South remained uncertain at best. Only occasionally did a piece of mail get through. On October 18, Lt. Thomas Stokes wrote his sister Missouri Stokes that "I am tired of confusion and disorder—tired of living a life of continual excitement. You spoke of passing through a dark cloud. 'There is nothing true but Heaven,' and it is to that rest for the weary, alone, to which we are to look for perfect enjoyment." He went on to write, "I think we will cross the Tennessee river and make for Tennessee." Some of the Texans, like Stokes, remained guarded in their hopes for success and thoroughly tired of the war.¹⁷ Others, though equally weary of the war, still stayed confident of success. Wiley Donothan of the 24th Texas wrote to his sister on October 18, "Our prospects were never brighter for a

¹⁵ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 59, 62.

¹⁶ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 141.

¹⁷ Gay, *Life in Dixie*, 246.

great change has been wrought within the last two weeks.”¹⁸

On October 20, Hood reached Gadsen, Alabama on the Coosa River, and here he again met with Beauregard, who agreed with Hood’s evolved plan to invade Tennessee. Beauregard only stipulated that Hood leave Gen. Joseph Wheeler’s cavalry in Georgia to watch Sherman, whose forces remained spread out in north Georgia and Atlanta. In Wheeler’s stead, Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest would move from west Tennessee to accompany Hood and the Army of Tennessee in their invasion of Tennessee. On October 21, Hood started his men towards Decatur, Alabama. The Confederates moved across Sand Mountain, a huge plateau in northern Alabama. For five days, according to Capt. Foster, the Confederate army trekked across the plateau, before descending towards the Tennessee River on October 25. On the night of October 27, a drenching rain began, and soaked everything, creating mud and knee-deep water in the pitch-black darkness. On October 28 the Confederates reached Decatur, but found the town strongly garrisoned by Federal troops. Instead of assaulting the garrison, Hood decided to move to Tuscumbia, Alabama, one hundred miles west of Decatur, where he might construct pontoon bridges to ferry his men across the Tennessee. At Tuscumbia, while gathering supplies for the invasion, Hood waited for Forrest to arrive.¹⁹

This delay along the Tennessee River cost Hood dearly in time, as it gave Federal Gen. George H. Thomas time to organize his defense. Thomas gave command of the IV and the XXIII Corps to Gen. John Schofield, who established his headquarters at Pulaski,

¹⁸ Ralph A. Wooster and Robert Wooster, “Rarin’ For a Fight: Texans in the Confederate Army,” Ralph A. Wooster ed., *Lone Star Blue and Gray: Essays on Texas in the Civil War*, (Austin, Tex.: Eakin Press, 1995), 77.

¹⁹ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 141-142; Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 704.

Tennessee.²⁰

While the Federals made their defensive preparations, the Army of Tennessee under Hood remained idle. The Confederates reached Tuscumbia on October 30, and here they stayed for the next sixteen days. Because of the nature of the march, Hood's army had been cut off from any good source of supplies. Therefore, many members of Granbury's Texas Brigade resorted to foraging. On the night of November 2, the Texans found a pen with a large number of hogs in it. While one Texan distracted the guards, another made a gap in the fence and drove out two hogs, which the Texans subsequently butchered. The Texans cleverly buried the meat in the camp, and then distributed it throughout the brigade while the officers had their backs turned.²¹

As a part of Hood's invasion, the Confederates gathered up all of the able-bodied men in from the various hospitals in northern Mississippi and Alabama, and ordered them to report to their commands. Lt. Robert B. Collins of Company B, 15th Texas Dismounted Cavalry had received a wound at the Battle of Peachtree Creek on July 19, and occupied himself "recovering" in a hospital by "laying up in day time and chewing sugar-cane, and running around courting at night," until, "one day about the 11th of November, a red-headed, red-whiskered, red-eyed doctor by the name of Redwine, came into our room and remarked in a very authoritative manner, 'this outfit is about ready to go to the front.'" Collins received orders to gather all the men he could and report to his unit, "which was then at Florence, Alabama." Collins commented on the condition of the northern Mississippi countryside: "Corinth was a hard, dirty-looking town, the few people remaining seemed to be out of humor with themselves and all of their kind. The country

²⁰ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 142.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

around had the appearance of having been blasted by a curse of the gods.”²² Capt. Foster also commented in his diary that the land through which the Confederates marched was “the richest country I have seen since I left Texas.” Despite this richness, wrote Foster “now it is a desert waste. . . .Fences burnt, large dwelling houses burnt, leaving two chimneys and their shade trees to mark the place, and sometimes as many as fifty negro cabins.” In the midst of all this desolation he could not detect a single life form, “unless an occasional old negro came out of a hut.” Foster also thought it strange to note that there remained “No cattle, horses, hogs chickens, nor people—nothing but desolation on every hand.”²³

With the beginning of November, Hood began to move his army across the Tennessee. On November 2 Gen. Stephen D. Lee’s I Corps crossed the river on massive pontoon bridges. Hood, however, frustrated by the lack of a railroad between Tuscumbia and Corinth, Mississippi, decided to remain in vicinity of Tuscumbia and Florence, to gather supplies and await the arrival of Forrest. The army issued Granbury’s Texans new clothing and shoes. On November 6, the Texans marched down river in preparation for crossing.²⁴ A.L. Orr of the 18th Texas Dismounted Cavalry wrote his sister on November 9, “We are camped on the banks of the Tennessee River. We have been hear about ten days.” The Confederates had, “stoped to rest and wash our clothes.” He related that “Stewart’s Corps has allready crossed the River,” while the Texans had orders, “to move this evening at four o’clock. I guess we will bee off for Tennessee in the morning. If so, we have a long and heavy march before ous.” The Ellis County man ended his letter with a note of determination. “We have many hardships to endure, but I am willing to to stand

²² Collins, *Chapters*, 237-238.

²³ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 142-143.

²⁴ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 131; Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 706.

them all if it will doo any good. . . . Marchen is pretty hard, but I had rather march than fight.”²⁵

On November 13, Cheatham’s Corps began to move across the pontoon bridge into Florence, and those who witnessed it thought it an imposing martial scene. The pontoon bridge became a feat of engineering in itself. After building it to an island in the middle of the Tennessee, the engineers had continued on to the north bank. In all, the bridge stretched for more than a mile. As Cheatham’s Corps moved across, a brass band preceded each brigade, and marching by fours, the Confederates crossed the Tennessee and marched into history.²⁶

While Granbury’s Brigade encamped along the river’s banks on November 12 an unfortunate incident occurred. That night high winds toppled a tree, instantly killing a nineteen-year-old member of the 6th Texas. Lt. Stokes wrote to his sister that as the, “rough, uncouth, yet tender-hearted soldiers,” formed a semi-circle around his grave Stokes recited a few passages of Scripture from memory including an extract from one of the Pauline epistles to the Corinthians: “For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ.” Many Texans stayed up until dawn discussing the melancholy sight and the meaning of it all.²⁷ On November 16, Hood appointed a day of fasting and prayer and stipulated that every soldier in his army should attend a church service of some sort. Capt. Foster attended a church service in Florence, about which he scribbled in his diary, “I went to church today in Florence, heard a good sermon, about 700 men present, and all seem quiet and attentive.”²⁸

²⁵ Anderson, *Campaigning With Parson’s Texas Cavalry*, 148.

²⁶ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 144.

²⁷ Gay *Life in Dixie*, 248-249; Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 707.

²⁸ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 145.

Also on November 16, Hood set the final preparations for the Tennessee campaign in motion. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest's tired cavalrymen arrived from western Tennessee and, with their arrival, Hood rushed to get Stewart's III Corps across the Tennessee River on the pontoons. Hood scheduled Stewart's crossing for sunrise of November 19, but drenching rains and overcrowding the crossing delayed the march until November 20.²⁹

The anticipated northward advance into Tennessee lifted the spirit of the Army of Tennessee with hopes of victory, tempered by the harsh realizations of their prospects for success. On November 17 Pvt. William G. Young of the 15th Texas wrote his sister, "With this army we can tough it out four years longer. As for rations and clothing," he wrote, "we have done very well since here." Because of the decent weather while in northern Alabama, the youthful Texan estimated that the Army of Tennessee "will not go into winter quarters before the first of January." He also wrote of the hopes of many Texans of getting home at least temporarily in order to "recruit this winter." Despite this hope, he realistically concluded, "It is nothing to be relied on. I merely give you this hope so if such should be the case. At any rate there will be a trial made. This campaign is not ended yet. My opinion is we will have another fight, but where or when or if ever I can't say." According to Young, the 15th Texas had become very badly under-strength. He stated that only he and two other men constituted his old Company A, 15th Texas. The following day, Young again wrote to his sister, after the receipt of a letter from her. He first related the position of Sherman, who "is now reported to have his army divided in three parts." Young confided that he did not care where the Federals went, "so they keep away from us." Though confident, he also wrote of his longing for the end of the war,

²⁹ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 74.

“for I am worn out.”³⁰ Young related one final piece of disheartening news to his sister on November 17: “Lincoln is elected we will have to fight him four years longer.” The terrible truth had begun to circulate amongst the veterans of the Army of Tennessee of Lincoln’s reelection victory. The Confederates knew all too well the implications of the election. Lincoln had committed himself to pursuing the war at all costs. This circumstance strengthened the idea among the Texans that they had to fight to the death in one last attempt for victory.³¹

Finally on the morning of November 21, the Army of Tennessee started off in the long-awaited northward advance into Tennessee. That same day Capt. Foster scribbled in his diary, “All the regimental commanders call their men out and say that Genl Hood says that we are going into Tenn. into the enemy’s country, and we will leave our base of supplies here.” Foster related that Hood promised his men “that we will have some hard marching and some fighting, but that he *is not going to risk a chance for defeat in Tenn.* That he will *not fight in Tenn. unless he has an equal number of men and choice of the ground.*” Hood also warned the Southerners that sometimes they “would be short of rations,” but “that he would do his best” to keep them supplied. The Texans, including Foster, took faith in these promises for “all felt confident” that they “could always whip an equal number of men with the choice of ground, and every man felt anxious to go under these promises from Genl Hood.” No sooner had the Texans left their camp than it began snowing, and, according to Capt. Foster, it became “Very cold, with the wind from the north.” The wintry conditions continued all day.³² The hardships had just begun for

³⁰ Letters From Private William Young to his sister November 16-17 1864, Vertical File of the 15th Texas Dismounted Cavalry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.

³¹ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 707.

³² Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 145.

the determined Army of Tennessee.

The optimism voiced by the Texans remains hard to analyze except in the context of their local circumstances and outstanding leadership. Their sense of bravado probably sprang from a sense of desperation about the future of the Confederacy, but probably also contained genuine hope for the future. The Confederate war effort benefited from the march into Tennessee and this rise in morale, forestalling any further desertion, and temporarily prolonging the life of the Confederacy.

Chapter 17

Desperate Courage

As the Texans marched into Tennessee, they exhibited desperate courage in their willingness to sacrifice everything. Though the march into Tennessee temporarily leavened the morale of Granbury's men, it ended in the deaths of many of them, including the two men most responsible for keeping the war effort alive in Granbury's Brigade during the twilight of the war: Hiram Granbury and Patrick Cleburne.

For his line of advance, Hood sent his three corps on three parallel roads into central Tennessee. Hood assigned Cheatham's III Corps, which contained Granbury's Brigade, to the westernmost line of march, through Waynesboro. Hood instructed the three columns to unite again at Mount Pleasant, a little town just south of Columbia, Hood's first objective.¹

Granbury's Texans led the advance of Cleburne's Division into Tennessee. On the night of November 22, Granbury sent the 24th & 25th Texas out as an advance guard during weather so miserable, that William Young of the 15th Texas wrote that it was "freezing like the blue blazes."² The next day Granbury's Brigade passed through Waynesboro, which Capt. Foster described as, "a very nice little town, but nearly ruined by the war. Several houses burned down, some torn down, gardens destroyed." That night the Texans camped on a ridge north of town while the temperature reached zero. With dawn on November 24 the commissary issued Granbury's men scant rations and they marched fifteen miles, reaching Hervyville before dark. The wintry conditions were

¹ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 248.

² Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 711-712.

uncomfortable for the Texans, who endured icy winds from the north.³

Though the weather remained unpleasant, the Texans did encounter some bright spots during their northward progress. On November 26 they marched through Mount Pleasant, passing by St. John's Episcopal Church and Ashwood, the home of Gen. Leonidas Polk, who had perished in the Atlanta Campaign. Capt. Foster thought "it was the prettiest place I ever saw."⁴ Patrick Cleburne, while passing St. John's Church, dismounted and walked through the chapel and the graveyard behind it. The cemetery reminded him of Athnowen churchyard in Ireland where his father lay buried, and, deeply moved, Cleburne remarked, "It would almost be worth dying to be buried in such a pretty place."⁵

Upon detecting the northward movement of the Army of Tennessee in mid-November, Union Gen. John M. Schofield, whom Thomas had assigned to contest any advance by Hood, hurriedly gathered in his scattered units from middle Tennessee. Schofield decided to concentrate his 20,000 men in Columbia, the crossroads town which Schofield divined as Hood's objective. On November 27 Hood's army arrived within three miles of Columbia, along the south banks of the Duck River, and there began a long-range skirmish with the Federals in the town. That night Schofield decided to abandon his position, cross the river to the north bank, and block the Confederate advance from a place of greater security. The weather had turned rainy and miserable, and Hood remained content to sit on the south bank of the river while he formulated his plan to get at and destroy Schofield.⁶

³ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 146.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 249.

⁶ *Ibid.*

That night, Hood finished perfecting his strategy. The next morning, November 29, he would leave two divisions of S.D. Lee's I Corps and the army's artillery in place in front of Columbia to harass the Federals and make them believe that a general frontal assault was imminent. With these forces pinning down the Federals, Hood would march with the balance of his army, Cheatham's II Corps and Stewart's III Corps, along with Edward Johnson's Division of Lee's Corps, and cross the Duck River at Davis Ford, east of Columbia. From here, Hood intended to get in the rear of the Federal army and cut them off by capturing the Columbia Pike in the little village of Spring Hill.

Early on the morning of November 29, Cleburne set his division in motion toward Davis Ford, the crossing point designated by Hood, five miles upriver from Columbia. Lowrey's Brigade led the column, followed by Govan and last, Granbury's Texans brought up the rear. Hood designated Cleburne's Division the vanguard of his flanking column, and Hood, along with Governor Isham Harris of Tennessee, accompanied Cleburne, who rode with Lowrey's Brigade.⁷

Though Hood's flanking maneuver remained sound in theory, in practice difficulties immediately arose. Lowrey's Alabamans crossed the river just after 7 a.m., and the rest of the column followed. Hood became impatient, and the road north of Davis Ford did not help matters any. The narrow path wound and bent back on itself so many times that Hood in fact wondered if they had taken the right route. Stopping to consult a local scout, he confirmed that the road did indeed lead to the Franklin-Columbia Turnpike at the village of Spring Hill, but what he had originally anticipated as a twelve-mile march turned out to be closer to seventeen. Hood, who exhibited buoyant spirits initially, quickly fell into an ugly mood. At noon, with the column stopped for lunch,

⁷ *Ibid.*

Hood, frustrated by the delays, exchanged heated words with Gen. Granbury. Although the content of their argument remains unknown, Granbury apparently felt that his honor had been insulted, and this may explain the later conduct of the commander of the Texas brigade.⁸

As the artillery of both armies exchanged salvos, on the north bank of the river Schofield soon discovered Hood's intention to trap him, and rapidly the Federal commander started his army north toward Spring Hill. Lowrey's Brigade crossed Rutherford Creek, south of Spring Hill, just after 3 p.m. Ahead, Forrest's Cavalry had already begun skirmishing with Federal infantry drawn up in a semicircle around the town. While Hood moved ahead to reconnoiter, he ordered Cleburne to form his division to the left of the road and attack toward Spring Hill. While Cleburne formed Lowrey's Brigade to the west of McCutcheon Creek, Hood returned from his reconnaissance, instructed Cleburne to form his division *en echelon* and then assault the Federals south of Spring Hill. This disposition would place Lowrey's Brigade in the most advanced position, Govan a little behind him and to the left, and Granbury a little behind him and to the left.⁹ While Cleburne formed his division, Hood remained at his newly designated headquarters, the Absalom Thompson home, located near where Cleburne's Division had crossed Rutherford Creek southeast of Spring Hill. Hood's withdrawal from the front left Gen. Cheatham in the role of the battlefield commander as the ranking officer present on the field.

As Hood established his headquarters Cheatham, known as a ferocious fighter, pushed forward with the attack on Spring Hill. Forrest soon arrived on the scene and

⁸ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 117.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 126.

volunteered one of his brigades to cover Cleburne's right flank. Cleburne accepted, and at 4 p.m., he ordered his division to advance. The men advanced due west, toward the Franklin-Columbia Turnpike. Because of the disposition of Cleburne's Division, they advanced toward the pike south of the Union troops around the town. As a consequence, a large body of Federals appeared on the right or north flank of Lowrey's Brigade, making considerable noise and waving their hats. Cleburne, believing they intended to charge, ordered Lowrey and Govan to swing north and attack, while Granbury's Texans continued west. Lowrey and Govan found themselves up against the inexperienced 2,000-man Federal brigade of Luther Bradley which fled in the face of the assault by the Arkansans and Alabamans. The two brigades chased the Federals across McCutcheon Creek and up the opposite bank.¹⁰

Just as everything seemed to fall into place, the advancing Confederates encountered difficulties in their attack on the Federals in Spring Hill. No sooner had Cleburne's men cleared the trees on the other side of the creek than eighteen Federal cannon, arrayed north of the pike, opened on them. In addition, a two-gun section of Battery B, Pennsylvania Light Artillery, pounded Govan's left flank from west of the pike. The 36th Illinois, held in reserve to that point, rushed to the assistance of the two exposed cannon as Granbury's Texans, who had continued to advance west, quickly moved upon the small body of Federals, forcing the Pennsylvanians and Illinoisans to flee. Cleburne, realizing that he could not keep his division exposed, ordered his three brigades back to the line of McCutcheon's Creek. Meanwhile, Union Brig. Gen. John Lane had moved his brigade out of its position facing east and advanced south toward Cleburne's men. Cleburne sent his aide, Lt. Leonard Mangum, to recall Granbury and

¹⁰ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 250-252.

place him in position to thwart Lane's advance.¹¹ Bate's Division, which Hood also counted on, had not yet arrived on the field.

Again, the Confederates seemed on the verge of victory, but Frank Cheatham developed tunnel vision. Hood's originally intended to block Schofield's retreat along the Columbia Pike by having Bate's Division sweep west and then south along the pike while Cleburne captured Spring Hill itself. Cheatham, however, saw the Federals still in place around the village and decided that he should overwhelm them at any cost. Accordingly, Cheatham placed Maj. Gen. John Brown's Division on Cleburne's right flank with Jackson's Confederate cavalry division on the high ground north of Brown's right flank. In addition to placing Cleburne and Brown in position to attack, Cheatham also insisted that Bate realign his division with Cleburne's left flank in order to join in the assault. In a council of war just before 5 p.m. Cheatham arranged Brown's Division to initiate the assault on the Federals. Because of the gathering darkness, he ordered Cleburne not to attack until he heard the sound of Brown's guns to the north.¹² At 5 p.m. with the attack orders issued, Cheatham rode south with his staff to find Bate's Division, which had not yet arrived.

Though William Bate had difficulty bringing his men into position, by 5:30 p.m. he set his division in motion. The Tennesseans also advanced west in obedience to Hood's earlier orders. The Confederates, after advancing west, struck the Columbia Pike, just north of the Nathaniel Cheirs residence, well south of the main action around Spring Hill. Now Bate with his full division poised to sweep south along the pike toward Columbia, cutting off Schofield's retreat. Before he had a chance to block the pike,

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 251-252; Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 130.

¹² Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 133.

couriers arrived from Cheatham ordering him to align his troops with the left flank of Cleburne's Division. These confusing orders mystified Bate because they forced him to yield the wide-open turnpike; but adhering to Cheatham's directive, he withdrew his men from their position adjacent to the pike and marched north and east in search of Cleburne.¹³

Meanwhile to the north, Cleburne and his men waited and waited, but no sounds of assault from the direction of Brown's Division ever came. Brown had decided not to attack because of what he described as a large Federal force on his right flank. In order to counter this threat he at first looked to Forrest's cavalrymen positioned on his right flank, but to no avail. Half an hour earlier Forrest had withdrawn Jackson's tired troopers to the rear, leaving Brown's flank wide open. Though his flank now lay unprotected, the threat from the north remained minimal. The large Federal force that worried Brown in actuality consisted of a single regiment with two extra companies, about three hundred men in all, though the apprehensive Tennessean did not know this. Under these circumstances Brown, having entirely halted his advance, sent messages to Cheatham, and the corps commander rode back north, aborting his mission of finding Bate in order to consult with Brown. The sun had set at 4:26 p.m., and by 6:15 that evening it had become completely dark. Cheatham, not wanting to assume any undue risks, sought out Hood for orders concerning Brown's perceived predicament.¹⁴

John Bell Hood, in front of his headquarters at the Thompson home, fumed as the sun set on November 29. His commanders had obviously not carried out his orders to cut the pike and overwhelm the Federals in Spring Hill because he could not hear any sounds

¹³ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 136-137.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 135; Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 252.

of battle from the front. When Cheatham arrived at the Thompson place, he informed Hood as to his dilemma, and Hood sent couriers to find Stewart's Corps, already marching to block the pike north of Spring Hill. The army commander, assuming that Brown's Division still faced west, redirected Stewart to the left in order to extend Cheatham's right while accomplishing his original mission of blocking the pike. Wearied by the day's long ride, Hood retired for the evening by 9 p.m.¹⁵ To the north, Alexander Stewart at the head of his corps halted his column to confer with Forrest, whom he encountered along the march, when a staff officer informed him that Hood wanted him to extend the right of Brown's Division while cutting the pike. Stewart halted his column, and riding ahead, found Brown's Division facing north instead of west as Hood had supposed. Stewart discovered that the Franklin-Columbia Pike ran northeast to southwest, and Brown had aligned his division to conform with the pike, placing his division facing more north than west. Confused at Hood's orders to position his corps facing north as well, Stewart halted his men in the road in the pitch-black darkness and rode back to find Hood. About 11 p.m. he arrived at Hood's headquarters and awakened his commander for clarification of his orders. Hood, also confused and half asleep, told Stewart that the matter was not important, that they would find the Federals in the morning and destroy them. Stewart, satisfied, rode back to his command and went into camp for the night.¹⁶ Meanwhile Cheatham had given Brown permission to suspend the attack until dawn. This action brought a close to all Confederate infantry movement for the night. Though somewhat capable officers, Cheatham and Brown remained inexperienced and this at least in part, cost the Army of Tennessee victory at Spring Hill. While inaction and

¹⁵ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 135-136.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 138-139, 147.

incompetence paralyzed the Army of Tennessee, the entire Federal army under Schofield quietly slipped by along the pike, north toward Franklin.

That night Granbury posted his men along an old farm fence within sixty yards of the Franklin-Columbia Turnpike. The Texans heard an occasional rustling, and many of them maintained that it was merely Bate's Division connecting with their right flank while others insisted that it was the Yankees. In the midst of these conjectures Capt. Richard English of Granbury's staff said, "I'll be d-d if I don't intend to find out." Some men of the brigade let down the fence for him, and English "went in on his mule."¹⁷ He crept forward to investigate, and flankers of the 23rd Michigan captured him as they moved north.¹⁸ The Texans remained along this fence line until 10 p.m., when Granbury moved them back about one hundred yards. Here, they built fires and ate their supper, which consisted of parched corn and "biled" pork. The Confederates remained so close to the pike that several Federal soldiers approached their camp fires to light their pipes and the Texans captured them.¹⁹

Thus ended Hood's grand flanking maneuver, otherwise known as the Spring Hill fiasco. Hood and his subordinates had an excellent chance to destroy Schofield's army, but, just as so many times in the past, the high command of the Army of Tennessee had failed the fighting men in the ranks. Lt. Robert Collins of the 6th & 15th Texas wrote in later years that "the easiest and most charitable way to dispose of the whole matter is to say that the gods of battle were against us and injected confusion into the heads and

¹⁷ Collins, *Chapters*, 243-244.

¹⁸ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 135. Captain English was the only Confederate captured at Spring Hill on November 29.

¹⁹ Collins, *Chapters*, 244.

tongues of our leaders.”²⁰

The morning of November 30, 1864 dawned “cold bright and frosty” for the soldiers of the Army of Tennessee. The men of Granbury’s Texas Brigade awoke to find that the Federals had escaped. Oliver Bowser, a Second Lt. in the 18th Texas Dismounted Cavalry remembered that the Columbia Pike, “was literally strewn with broken-down and abandoned wagons, caissons, and dead mules, left by the retreating Federals the night before.”²¹ Their officers issued Texans rations of three ears of corn apiece, the best they could procure under the circumstances.²²

When he reached the town of Franklin, some fifteen miles north of Spring Hill, Schofield discovered, to his dismay, that the pontoon bridges he had requested Thomas to send from Nashville had not yet arrived. Seeing that rains had swollen the Harpeth River, and that a narrow railroad bridge provide the only passage across the river, he determined to place his men in the breastworks south and west of the town as a precaution while his engineers reconstructed the wagon bridge and replanked the railroad bridge across the river. Once his men completed these repairs, he would march his army north to Nashville to join Thomas.²³

When he awoke on the morning of November 30 and learned what had happened, Hood became furious. His brilliantly planned flanking maneuver had gone awry, and he angrily sought the source of the failure. He immediately ordered a rapid pursuit of the Federals marching toward Franklin. That morning, Hood held a conference of his subordinates at the Nathaniel Cheirs House, on the road to Franklin. There he lashed out

²⁰ Collins, *Chapters*, 245.

²¹ Bowser, “Notes on Granbury’s Brigade,” 751.

²² Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 730.

²³ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 159-160.

at his subordinates, blaming them for the failure at Spring Hill. In particular, he singled out Cheatham, Brown and Cleburne. In addition, he accused the men of the army of cowardice. When this stormy council of war broke up, Hood ordered the pursuit to continue.²⁴

As word of Hood's charges of cowardice began to permeate the ranks of the Army of Tennessee, the veterans took offense at the accusations. The accusations bothered Granbury, like his men, and he no doubt remained disturbed about his exchange with Hood the previous day. During the march toward Franklin, the lanky Texan rode the length of his brigade several times as if agitated.²⁵ The reports of the meeting also deeply disturbed Cleburne. He confided his anger to Gen. John Brown, whom Hood also held responsible. Cleburne stated to Brown, "Of course the responsibility rests with the Commander-in-Chief, as he was upon the field during the afternoon and was fully advised during the night." Cleburne was visibly upset, and informed Brown that he would resume his conversation with him at the "first convenient moment."²⁶

When the Army of Tennessee arrived in front of Franklin, Hood had already made up his mind as to his course of action he would take against Schofield's Federals; he would order a direct, all out frontal assault to overwhelm them in their fortifications. Writing in his book *Advance and Retreat* after the war, Hood admitted that his principle line of reasoning for assaulting Schofield was that he felt his men were still, "seemingly unwilling to accept battle except under the protection of breastworks." This fear, he felt, had cost him victory at Spring Hill and it caused him "grave concern. In my inmost heart," the crippled general wrote, "I questioned whether or not I would ever eradicate

²⁴ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 254-255.

²⁵ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 732.

²⁶ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 255.

this evil.” Against the Federals around Franklin, he intended to remove this “stumbling block to the Army of Tennessee.”²⁷ Because Cleburne’s and Brown’s Divisions principally bore the blame for the debacle at Spring Hill, Hood reasoned, they would occupy the center of the Confederate line that would attack Franklin to eradicate the evil of hesitancy to assault breastworks.

South of Franklin, Hood held one final council of war, this time in the parlor of the Harrison House, south of Winstead Hill. Here he outlined to his officers, including Cleburne, his plan to assault the Federals entrenched around Franklin. Hood expressed his insistence that the attacking force should, “go over the main works at all hazards.” The Irish general reportedly said, “I will take the enemy’s works or fall in the attempt.”²⁸

Cleburne rode back to his division to give them the attack orders. He instructed Granbury, Lowrey, and Govan to move their men to the foot of Winstead Hill, on the east side of the pike. Gen. Daniel Govan, seeing that Cleburne’s despondency, said: “Well, General, there will not be many of us that will get back to Arkansas.” Cleburne replied: “Well, Govan, if we are to die, let us die like men.”²⁹

With this disheartening comment, Cleburne and his division began to make their preparations for the assault. As the men of the Texas Brigade moved through the saddle on Winstead Hill and began forming their line to the east of the pike, many of them did not like what they saw. A formal line of breastworks encircled the town of Franklin, built and strengthened during two years of occupation by Federal troops. In the center of this line, along the Franklin-Columbia Turnpike, the Federals constructed a reserve line of

²⁷ Hood, *Advance and Retreat*, (Bloomington, Ind.: 1959), 290.

²⁸ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 254-255.

²⁹ David R. Logsdon, *Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin*, (Nashville, Ten.: Kettle Mills Press, 1991), 7.

breastworks around the Carter House, a fairly large brick home. To the east of the Carter House, across the Columbia Pike, stood the Carter cotton gin which also served as a landmark. In advance of the main Federal line, straddling the pike, the brigades of Gen. John Q. Lane and Col. Joseph Conrad, whom Cleburne's Division had scuffled with the day before at Spring Hill, took their positions. These two brigades served as the rear-guard of the army, and because Schofield expected Hood to make no more than a strong demonstration, he placed these men in an advanced post with orders to hold their position at all costs. In addition, across the Harpeth River Fort Granger sat atop Figures Hill. This fort bristled with artillery and stood in positioned to sweep the southern approaches to the town. Into this formidable defense the Texans would soon march. Lt. Bowser recalled that at, "three o'clock in the afternoon Hood's army halted about one mile south of Franklin, and he immediately formed his lines for a general assault on the enemy's works." He went on to write that from the position of Granbury's Brigade the fortifications "looked almost impregnable." To the left of the Texans, "there was an open woodland," while, "to the right and in front was an open field or valley." The left flank of the brigade rested on the Columbia Pike, while the right rested in the open farm field.³⁰ As Cleburne rode down to his command after one final futile consultation with Hood, the order drifted down the line to "Fix bayonets." Upon reaching the base of Winstead Hill, Granbury halted the Texas brigade to realigned it, and here Granbury threw out the 7th Texas as skirmishers. He arranged the Texans with the 24th & 25th Texas on the extreme left of the brigade, their left flank resting on the Columbia Pike, while the 6th & 15th Texas occupied the extreme right of the brigade.³¹ Capt. Foster later wrote in his diary,

³⁰ Bowser, "Notes on Granbury's Brigade," 751-752.

³¹ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 748.

“Our regiment [24th & 25th Texas] being on the left of the the Brigd. put our Regt. Next the Pike” while Company H which Foster commanded, “being on the left of the regiment—it puts us on the Pike.”³² On the right of Granbury’s Brigade, Cleburne placed Daniel Govan’s Brigade, and on the right of Govan he placed Mark Lowrey’s Alabamans. To the left of Cleburne’s Division, across the pike, lay John C. Brown’s Division. To the right of Cleburne and Brown, between Cleburne’s right and the Harpeth River, Hood squeezed Stewart’s entire III Corps into position to assault. To the left of Brown’s Division, Hood aligned William Bate’s Division to attack up the Carters’ Creek Pike.

Some of the advancing Texans also had premonitions of death prior to Franklin. Second Cpl. John W. Scott of Company H, 10th Texas, experiencing such a premonition, entrusted his watch and other effects to a comrade to give to his wife if he was killed.³³ As the soldiers of his brigade made their final preparations, Granbury also prepared for battle by ordering his staff to dismount, to make less inviting targets for Federal bullets. As the Texans formed their lines for the assault, Granbury made a speech, telling his men that they would soon march to the front, and that they must take the enemy’s works at all hazards.³⁴

Nearby, as Granbury’s chief of staff Lt. Col. Robert Butler Young dismounted, perhaps his thoughts turned to home. After graduating from the Georgia Military Institute, Robert Young had been assigned to the command of the 338th Battalion of Georgia Militia. He married Josephine Florida Hill in Walton County, Georgia in 1853.

³²Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 147.

³³ Scott McKay “Casualty Rolls for the 10th Texas Infantry at Franklin” <http://members.aol.com/Smckay1234/Casualties/Franklin.html> (accessed March 29, 2007)

³⁴ Letters and Diary of William Young, Unpublished manuscript, The vertical file of the 15th Texas Cavalry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.

The couple had only one daughter, Ida, in 1853. In 1858, because of financial problems, Young moved his family to McLennan County, Texas, where he became involved in stock raising. He had strong Southern sentiments, and with the outbreak of hostilities, considered joining the Texas Rangers. Despite this early commitment, he later confided that he would rather “fight Yankees than Indians.” The governor of Texas commissioned him a major of the 10th Texas Infantry and soon received promotion to lieutenant colonel. After his capture and imprisonment following Arkansas Post, Young’s physical condition became so severe that it forced him to recuperate at his family’s plantation home near Cartersville, Georgia. During the Atlanta Campaign he rejoined the 10th Texas and received a slight wounded at the Battle of Atlanta on July 22, 1864. Viewing the strong Federal fortifications, perhaps Young regretted his decision to fight Yankees rather than Indians, or perhaps his thoughts turned to his wife, Josephine, and their eleven-year-old daughter, Ida, in far away Texas.³⁵

The ranks of Granbury’s Brigade marching into Franklin also contained reminders of the youth of Texas. Amongst the men of the 24th & 25th Texas on the left flank of the brigade at least one veteran of the Texas Revolution, Sgt. Jackson H. Griffin of Company I, 25th Texas, marched into battle. “Hawkeye,” as his comrades called him comrades, had participated in the fight for freedom from Mexico as a seventeen-year-old youth and now once again prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for his comrades.³⁶

At 3:30 p.m. the order to advance came, and the 20,000 men of the Army of Tennessee stepped off as bands that accompanied the advancing Confederates began

³⁵ Biographical Sketch of Lieutenant Colonel R.B. Young in the possession of the Carter House Museum Archives, Franklin, Tennessee.

³⁶ Biographical Sketch of Sergeant Jackson H. Griffin in the possession of the Carnton Cemetery Archives, Franklin, Tennessee.

playing “Dixie.” The Texans brought their arms with bayonets fixed to right shoulder shift and began to advance with their “lion-hearted Granbury” in the lead.³⁷ As they went forward, their blue Hardee-style flags waved overhead in the breeze of the Indian Summer day. Col. Ellison Capers of the 24th South Carolina in Brig. Gen. States Rights Gist’s Brigade of Brown’s Division, recorded the magnificent martial spectacle of the advance. “Just before the charge was ordered,” he wrote, “the brigade passed over an elevation, from which I beheld the magnificent spectacle the battlefield presented.” Bands “were playing and general and staff officers and gallant couriers were riding in front of and between the lines.” Floating above the Army of Tennessee, “100 battle-flags” were “waving in the smoke of battle,” while “bursting shells” wreathed the “air with great circles of smoke.”³⁸

Their advance exposed the Texans to artillery fire from Fort Granger across the river. A shell fragment struck Lt. Linson Keener of the 7th Texas in the chest, breaking a rib, whereupon he fell unconscious upon the field. “Keener’s killed” yelled Gregg Pickett of Company D. The lieutenant revived, however, as litter bearers carried him from the field, and said, “Put me down, boys. I want to see how bad I am hurt. Help someone who needs it. I will take care of myself.”³⁹

As the Confederates approached Winstead Hill in the early afternoon of November 30, another drama had occurred in the ranks of George Wagner’s division, posted as the rear-guard of the Federal army. In mid-morning Wagner placed the brigade of Col. Joseph Conrad, commanded by Brig. Gen. Luther Bradley until his wounding the

³⁷ Collins, *Chapters*, 248.

³⁸ O.R. Series I, Vol. 45, pt. 1, 737.

³⁹ “Lieutenant Linson Montgomery Keener His Four Years With the Seventh Texas Infantry C.S.A. as told by him to Mrs. W.U. Carre.” Unpublished manuscript, The vertical file of the 7th Texas Infantry, The Harold B. Simpson Confederate Research Center, Hill College, Hillsboro, Texas.

day before at Spring Hill, about a halfmile in front of the main Federal line. Wagner also placed John Lane's Brigade further south on the Columbia Pike guarding the saddle on Winstead Hill. Wagner's third brigade, commanded by Col. Emmerson Opdycke, proved more of a problem. When Opdycke's men approached Conrad's brigade along the pike, Wagner ordered Opdycke into line with the other men. Opdycke refused, insisting that his men needed rest. In flat disobedience of his orders, Opdycke marched his men inside of the main Federal line where they finally came to rest a few hundred yards north of the Carter House. After 3 p.m. Wagner ordered Lane, at that officer's behest, to withdraw his brigade from the position on Winstead Hill, where the Confederates were about to envelope his flanks, back to the line occupied by Conrad's brigade. About this same time it became apparent to Col. Conrad that Hood intended to do much more than skirmish, and when Wagner approached him he requested that he allow his men to withdraw into the main Federal line. George Wagner had remained in an ugly mood since the day before when Cleburne's Division disgracefully routed Conrad's troops, then under Bradley. After his confrontation with Opdycke, Wagner's mood worsened, and when Conrad made his request, Wagner vehemently refused, even going so far as to order the colonel to place his sergeants with bayonets fixed in the rear to hold his "cowardly" men in place. This directive alarmed Conrad, and he hurriedly ordered his exposed men to entrench as best they could. Lane's brigade, positioning themselves on the other side of the Columbia Pike began to dig in as well. Following this incident, still believing that Hood intended no more than a strong demonstration that day, Wagner withdrew to the rear, where he soon came under the influence of a bottle of whiskey.⁴⁰ Capt. John Shellenberger of the 64th Ohio in Conrad's brigade recalled the position of his brigade,

⁴⁰ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 173-176.

“in a large old cotton field not under cultivation that year.” In attempting to entrench, wrote Shellenberger, “the men eagerly relieved each other in handling the spades. Whenever a man working showed the least sign of fatigue, a comrade would snatch the spade out of his hands and ply it with desperate energy.” The Ohioan wrote disgustedly, “We...only succeeded in throwing up a slight embankment high enough to afford good protection against musket balls to the men squatting down in the ditch....the opinion was universal that a big blunder was being committed in forcing us to fight with our flank fully exposed in the midst of a wide field.”⁴¹ The hapless Federals of Wagner’s division had little time to better their position.⁴²

As the Confederates moved forward, the distance between Cleburne’s and Brown’s Divisions and Wagner’s two brigades decreased. Upon reaching within two hundred yards of the advance Federal line, the Confederate main line caught up with the skirmishers and the 7th Texas stepped back into formation with the Texas Brigade, neither force losing any time in the transition. The bugles sounded “Double-Quick,” and the line of rapidly moving men with rifles at right shoulder shift began to gain momentum. As the Confederates reached within one hundred yards of the Federal position, the men of Lane and Conrad opened up, and a sheet of flame exploded in the faces of the Southerners.

The Confederates, not halting to fire, rushed up and over the slight embankment. The Texans with Granbury at their head became the first to reach Wagner’s line, and initially breached it.⁴³ The break then reminded Capt. Shellenberger of a powder train ignited, so fast did the panic spread among the Federals. Just as Wagner’s men began to

⁴¹ Logsdon, *Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin*, 23.

⁴² It was Conrad’s Brigade, and particularly the 79th and 51st Illinois Regiments that Granbury’s Texans were directly facing in this advance line.

⁴³ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 191.

run, the Confederates delivered a point-blank volley into their backs. As the men of Lane and Conrad's brigades sprinted back for the main Federal line, the Confederates, following on their heels, began to yell, "Go into the works with them."

The Southerners pursued, as Capt. Foster wrote, "yelling like fury and shooting at them at the same time." The Texans killed some of the Yankees before they reached the breastworks and, fortunately for the Confederates, the Federals, "in the second line of works," were "not able to shoot," because their own men were in between them and the charging Confederates. "So here we go," wrote Foster, "Yanks running for life and we for the fun of it," but the difference in motivation for these "objects are so great that they out run us, but loose [lose] quite a number of their men before they get there."⁴⁴ When the Confederates reached within about eighty yards of the breastworks, the Federals opened a murderous fire on them. A soldier of the 64th Ohio wrote that "the long line of blue-coats within the trenches rose, and a flash of flame shot out in a sinuous line, and the white smoke rose like the foam on the crest of the breaker." The Ohioan remembered "The few straggling blue-coats," from Wagner's Division, "and the long line of gray went down like over-ripe grain before a blast of wind and hail. But the enemy," he lamented, "were legion."⁴⁵ As Gen. Cleburne moved forward on horseback, he sent his aide Lt. Mangum to the left instructing him, "go with Granbury," as Cleburne himself led the Alabamans of Mark Lowrey against the blazing entrenchments.

This murderous fire immediately had a terrible effect on the advancing Confederates. As he moved amongst the Texans, Mangum noted, "Generals Govan and Granbury on foot were in the midst of their men, cheering them on." Suddenly, within ten

⁴⁴ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 147-148.

⁴⁵ Logsdon, *Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin*, 23.

feet of Mangum, “General Granbury’s voice rang out clear and commanding ‘Forward men, forward! Never let it be said that Texans lag in the fight!’” At this instant a ball struck the Texan, “in the lower part of the cheek and passed through his brain. Throwing both hands to his face as in the impulse of the instant to find where the pain was he sank forward on his knees, and there, half sitting, half crouching, with his hands over his face,” he remained, “rigid in the attitude in which the bullet with its blow and its swift coming of death had left him.”⁴⁶ Granbury had fallen squarely in the center of the Columbia-Franklin Turnpike, his last words obviously reflecting his desire to defend his honor and that of his men. About this time a ball also struck down Lt. Col. Young, felling him not far from his commander. Meanwhile, Cleburne, who had his horse shot from under him, continued to lead Lowrey’s Brigade against the breastworks until a minnie ball found its mark. Struck squarely in the heart, the gallant Irishman fell instantly dead.

The Texans continued to advance into the face of triple-shotted canister from the Federal battery of Kentuckians in their front and, as they advanced farther, the fire became hotter. The fire became incredible, and about forty yards from the works, Sgt. Jackson Griffin of the 25th Texas fell lifeless.⁴⁷ Thirty steps from the breastworks, Lt. Thomas Stokes of the 10th Texas also fell dead.⁴⁸ As the fire mowed the soldiers down in windrows, Pvt. John T. Gillespie of Company B, 7th Texas also died, pierced through both lungs by a minnie ball. Nearby his twenty-two-year-old brother, William H. Gillespie, suffered a similar fate. Cpl. Joseph Bookman of the 10th Texas became perhaps the youngest Texan to die that day when a ball struck him dead at the age of nineteen.

⁴⁶ Leonard H. Mangum, “General P.R. Cleburne,” *Kennesaw State Gazette*, June 15, 1887.

⁴⁷ Biographical Sketch of Sergeant J.H. Griffin in the possession of the Carnton Cemetery Archives, Franklin, Tennessee.

⁴⁸ Gay, *Life in Dixie*, 272.

Nearby, the commander of Company G, 6th Texas, Lt. William Dunson, had several bullets pass through his clothes and one ball graze his cheek while shrapnel severed his accoutrements. Cpl. John Scott of the 10th Texas, true in his premonition of death, also fell upon the field of Franklin, never to rise again.⁴⁹

The fire hit the regimental commanders in Granbury's Brigade hard. Capt. James W. Brown of the 7th Texas went down wounded as did Capt. Edward Broughton of the same regiment, struck in the thigh. Nearby, Capt. Aaron Cox of the 5th Confederate also received a wound and Maj. James Formwalt, commanding the 10th Texas, stumbled into the ditch in front of the Federal works after a minnie ball splintered his upper thigh. Maj. William A. Taylor of the 24th & 25th Texas also tumbled into the ditch and there took refuge with other Texans, too winded to scale the earthworks.⁵⁰ Granbury's Texans had drifted to the left during the advance, placing the left flank of the 24th & 25th Texas to the west of the Columbia Pike, while the center of the brigade struck near where the turnpike ran through the breastworks.

Despite their losses the Texans still possessed enough momentum to breach the Federal line, and once there all became chaos. The hard charging pressure of the Texas Brigade forced the green troops of the 100th and 104th Ohio on the east side of the pike, as well as the Kentucky gunners, to flee. The majority of the Texans crossed the Federal breastworks and began toward the reserve line of works. Inside the works, all became pandemonium; bullets whizzed demonically as men struggled for their lives amidst the tumult of battle.

The confusion remained so great that men became widely separated from their

⁴⁹ Scott McKay, "Casualty Rolls for the 10th Texas Infantry at Franklin"
<http://members.aol.com/Smckay1234/Casualties/Franklin.html> (accessed March 29, 2007)

⁵⁰ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 758.

regiments as the Texans fought tenaciously inside the breastworks. Though part of the 24th & 25th Texas fought west of the Columbia Pike, somewhere between the Columbia Pike and the cotton gin, east of the pike, Adj. Phillip Curry of the 24th & 25th Texas went down wounded while cheering on his regiment. Nearby Sgt. Miriam Sharp of Company G, 24th Texas and Pvt. R.G. Foster of Company F both received serious wounds inside the works and, along with Adj. Curry, became Federal prisoners.⁵¹ The Texans, having captured the guns of the Kentucky battery east of the pike, tried in vain to turn the cannon on the enemy. Lacking primers for the guns, they attempted to find a way to discharge the cannon as the 12th and 16th Kentucky and 8th Tennessee counter-charged them. Capt. Asa Hutchins of the 16th Kentucky described how, “These regiments at once opened fire upon the enemy and charged.” The counter-charge became brutal as “men clubbed with muskets and used the bayonet.”⁵²

In the melee several of the Texans penetrated deep into the Federal works where Union soldiers captured most of them. Pvt. Charles Leuschner crossed the “fourth line” of Federal works where he forced several Yankees to surrender, only to himself be captured a short time later.⁵³ Pvt. Valentine Hardt of Company K, 24th Texas found himself inside the works, and after seizing a flag from a Yankee color bearer, he advanced all the way to the Wick home, “opposite the cotton gin.” Like Leuschner, Hardt soon found himself a prisoner.⁵⁴

Meanwhile the Federal counter-attack began to gain momentum as the fighting intensified around the gap in the breastworks at the Columbia Pike. In addition to the

⁵¹ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 758, 760, 772-773.

⁵² Logsdon, *Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin*, 28.

⁵³ Spurlin, *Leuschner*, 50-51.

⁵⁴ Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 773.

Kentuckians and Tennesseans, other Federal units joined in the counterattack to force the Confederates back out of the works. Some members of Conrad's Brigade who had recovered enough from their shock, also took part in the charge. Col. Thomas Wolf, commanding the 64th Ohio, "saw a Confederate soldier," close to him, "thrust one of our men through with the bayonet, and before he could draw his weapon from the ghastly wound his brains were scattered on all of us that stood near, by the butt of a musket swung with terrific force by some big fellow whom I could not recognize in the grim dirt and smoke that enveloped us." As Wolf "glanced hurriedly around and heard the dull thuds," he "turned from the sickening sight and was glad to hide the vision in work with a hatchet."⁵⁵ The Texans who found themselves fighting west of the Columbia Pike had their own counter-attack to deal with. Col. Emmerson Opdycke, who had earlier stubbornly refused to place his brigade in an advanced position, now swept forward with his western regiments, known as "Opdycke's Tigers," in a vicious counter-thrust against the men of Cleburne's and Brown's Divisions swarming around the Carter House. With brutal Federal counter-attacks on both sides of the pike, the Confederates reached their high water mark at Franklin.

With the tide of battle turning against them, the Federals captured many of the Texans inside the works, and then forced the remnants of the brigade into the ditch on the outer side of the works. The Federals advanced as darkness fell over the field of Franklin, and both sides remained separated by a bank of dirt and continued to fight. Capt. Foster recorded in his diary that the Yankees came up and met the Confederates "on one side" of the breastworks while Foster and his comrades remained "on the other—with a bank of dirt between us. By this time," recalled the Texan, "it was getting dark and the firing was

⁵⁵ Logsdon, *Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin*, 28.

stopping gradually.” Despite the thick fog of dirt and smoke that enveloped the participants, Foster recognized that they were “just in the edge of town and the dead and wounded are all around us, Yank and Confed. Lie near each other.” An hour after nightfall the firing had “nearly ceased, except when one man will hold his gun up as high as he can and shoot over the bank of dirt.” The fighting remained so desperate that the Federals threw “clods of dirt over and sticks or anything they can get hold of.” By this time the grim rumors had begun to circulate through the survivors of the Texas Brigade “that Gen. Pat. Cleburne and Gen. Granbury are both dead.”⁵⁶

Some of the Texans used the opportunity of night to slip back to their own lines, but most remained pinned down in the ditch in front of the Federal works. Many surrendered under the stress while the Federals forcefully made others prisoners. Pvt. Jim Turner of the 6th & 15th Texas remembered that as he and Maj. Rhoads Fisher commanding the regiment, along with Pvts. Frank Wilkes and James Baldwin crouched near each other in the ditch the four Austinites, “were dragged over the breastworks by the Federals and taken prisoners.”⁵⁷ Capt. Shellenberger of the 64th Ohio wrote that when some Confederates wanted to surrender, they “finally elevated their hats on the ends of their muskets . . . as a signal to us, and called over” that if the Federals “would stop shooting they would surrender.” When the Federals granted this request, “many of them came over and surrendered, but many more,” he wrote, “took the advantage of the darkness and confusion . . . to slip back to their own lines.”⁵⁸ The Federals, who had only halted long enough to repair the bridges over the Harpeth River and let their wagon train cross, began withdrawing north toward Nashville around 1 a.m. The Confederates stayed

⁵⁶ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 150.

⁵⁷ Turner, “Jim Turner,” 177.

⁵⁸ Logsdon, *Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin*, 56-57.

in position, too decimated and exhausted to move.

The aftermath revealed the ferocity of the fighting. On December 3, Capt. James Douglas wrote his wife Sallie and described Franklin. “We advanced in magnificent style across the fields and attacked the enemy’s works, driving them from one line of works where I planted my guns and opened fire. Our infantry,” he continued, “swept gallantly on and in several places drove them from their main works.” The enemy rallied and the battle continued far into the night. “Our men,” he concluded, “fought with more desperate courage than I have ever known before. Granbury’s Brigade suffered heavily.”⁵⁹

The field of Franklin proved a gruesome sight on the morning of December 1. Bryan Bowers of Ferguson’s Alabama Battery wrote, “From what I had heard...the slaughter was great and at dawn of day I hit the pike road to go and see for myself.” When Bowers reached the gap in the breastworks where the Columbia Pike ran through, he remembered, “there must have been 2,000 dead Confederates in sight.” Bowers wrote of the “Cold and stiff bodies . . . laying in every conceivable posture, all with ghastly faces and glassy eyes.” Some of the corpses, “lay with faces up and some with faces down.” Some bodies remained upright, braced by the remains of dead comrades, while others lay with dead men piled on top of them. “Sometimes,” concluded the Alabaman, “you could see a man who had . . . a heavy martial frown; then again you could see others who wore a pleasing smile.”⁶⁰

The next morning the men of Granbury’s Texas Brigade wearily regrouped for roll call and the toll of the vicious fighting became readily apparent. Lt. Collins reported that prior to the battle, 1,100 men reported for roll call in Granbury’s Texas Brigade. Now

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Logdsdon, *Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin*, 69.

only 460 remained—a casualty rate of sixty percent. The actual loss in Granbury’s Brigade amounted to a little over 400 killed wounded and captured. Pvt. Albert McKinney of the 24th Texas wrote that he believed the brigade loss to be close to fifty-two percent in killed and wounded.⁶¹ Bullets killed Gen. Granbury and Lt. Col. Young, as well as nearly 100 other Texans. A ball wounded Maj. James Formwalt, commanding the 10th Texas, and the Federals later captured him. The 10th Texas, which went into battle numbering 150 rifles, suffered nineteen killed, fourteen wounded and thirteen captured for a total of forty-six.⁶² Capt. John W. Brown, commanding the 7th Texas, was also wounded and captured; Brown’s regiment suffered nineteen killed, twenty-nine wounded and twenty-eight captured, for an aggregate of seventy-six.⁶³ Maj. Rhoads Fisher commanding the 6th & 15th Texas also received a wound and suffered capture, and his regiment sustained fourteen killed, thirty-one wounded, nineteen captured, twelve

⁶¹ There are several conflicting sources for the numbers and casualties of Granbury’s Brigade at Franklin. Major J.A. Formwalt of the 10th Texas stated in an interview with Dr. J.N. Doyle in the *Confederate Veteran* that Granbury’s Brigade went into Franklin 450 strong, and only 175 answered the roll-call the next morning. However, Lieutenant Robert M. Collins of the 15th Texas Dismounted Cavalry, in his book *Unwritten Chapters from the History of the War Between the States*, stated that Granbury’s Brigade went into Franklin 1,100 strong and only 450 answered the roll-call the next morning. Formwalt was eighty-three years old when Doyle interviewed him, and Doyle may have even misunderstood the old soldier. Furthermore, 1,100 would coincide with the numbers that Cleburne’s Division possessed at Franklin: approximately 3,000 men in three brigades. In addition, Collins was present with the brigade after the battle while Formwalt was wounded and captured and thus would have obtained his information second-hand. However, the figures of Major Formwalt are corroborated by the letter of Private James McCord of the 30th Georgia who wrote to his brother on December 3, 1864 that “Granbury’s celebrated brigade left this place yesterday morning with 137 guns all told.” Most sources seem to agree that Granbury’s Brigade lost somewhere over 400 men in killed wounded and captured at Franklin. This added to the 344 effectives at Nashville on December 10 would give them a strength of 750-800 going into Franklin. It is quite possible that only 150-200 men answered the roll call on the morning of December 1 and the rest, stragglers from the campaign, unarmed or slightly wounded men merely rejoined the brigade in front of Nashville. Collins, *Chapters*, 249; *Confederate Veteran*, 12: 175; Anderson, *Campaigning with Parson’s Texas Cavalry Brigade*, 154; Sessums, “A Force to be Reckoned With,” 775; Letter of Private James A. McCord to his brother, December 3, 1864. From The Special Collections of the Woodruff Library of Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia <http://www.franklin-stfb.org/letters1.htm> (accessed March 29, 2007)

⁶² Compiled Service Records of the 10th Texas Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323 Rolls 337-343; Scott McKay, “Casualty Rolls for the 10th Texas Infantry at Franklin” <http://members.aol.com/Smckay1234/Casualties/Franklin.html> (accessed March 29, 2007)

⁶³ The Compiled Service Records of the 7th Texas Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 315-320.

missing and three mortally wounded for a sum of seventy-nine.⁶⁴ Maj. William A. Taylor, commanding the 24th & 25th Texas also experienced capture, and according to Capt. Foster, the regiment suffered at least “eighteen dead on the ground.”⁶⁵ Capt. Edward T. Broughton of the 7th Texas, as the senior officer in the brigade, assumed command of what had been Granbury’s Texas Brigade. Broughton too had received a slight wound, and this prevented him from taking command for a few days.⁶⁶

Litter bearers transported some of the wounded Texans to hospitals in Franklin, while they transported others to the McGavock residence, Carnton Plantation, south of Franklin. Mrs. McGavock had turned her large house into a hospital, and thousands of wounded Confederates lay in and around the mansion. The survivors conveyed still other members of Granbury’s Brigade to private residences, such as Pvt. Samuel W. Morris of the 6th & 15th Texas, who received transportation to a home near Franklin after having his leg amputated, only to die of his wounds.⁶⁷ In all, of the 20,000 Confederates engaged in the Battle of Franklin, seven thousand were killed, wounded or captured. These numbers included six generals killed or mortally wounded, and six others wounded.⁶⁸

The morning after the battle some Texans made efforts to locate the bodies of Gens. Cleburne and Granbury. Albert McKinney of Company B, 24th & 25th Texas and David Myers of Company G, 10th Texas participated in the detail sent from Granbury’s Brigade to recover the corpse of the fallen Texan. They discovered his body “within twenty steps of the breastworks and right in the edge of town.” They found him in the

⁶⁴ The Compiled Service Records of the 6th Texas Infantry and 15th Texas Cavalry, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 308-314 and 85-89; Casualty rolls for the 6th & 15th Texas in the *Galveston Daily News* March 6, 1865.

⁶⁵ Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 150.

⁶⁶ Douglas, *Douglas’ Texas Battery*, 149-150.

⁶⁷ Letter From James B. Morris to Mrs. S.F. Glass January 20, 1866 (Courtesy of the Carter House Museum Archives, Franklin, Tennessee [ac #90.471]; *McGavock Confederate Cemetery*, 40.

⁶⁸ Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 261.

same position in which he had fallen—with his hands to his face on his knees. The men also discovered the body of Lt. Col. Robert Young nearby, and they placed both bodies on litters and bore them to Carnton.⁶⁹ On the porch of Carnton, the Confederates laid the bodies of Gens. Otho Strahl, Hiram Granbury, and Patrick Cleburne in state along with those of Lt. Col. Young and Lt. John Marsh of Strahl's staff.

The men of Cleburne's Division experienced great demoralization due to the death of their beloved commander "Old Pat." As one of the men of Granbury's Brigade made his way towards the rear the morning after the battle, he came across Hood sitting astride his horse smoking a cigar. Hood inquired what division the Texan belonged to. The man replied that he was a part of Cleburne's Division. When Hood asked about the location of his division, the Texan replied that they remained gathered around the body of Cleburne. Hood then took his cigar out of his mouth, lowered his head and wept for half an hour.⁷⁰ Lt. Leonard Mangum, Cleburne's aide, recorded that on the morning of December 1, "Information came to our headquarters that General Cleburne's body had been found." Mangum went in search of the body of his fallen commander and "found it laid on the gallery of the McGavock brick house, with boots, pocket-book, diary and sword-belt gone." Cleburne's face, he continued, "was covered with a lady's finely embroidered handkerchief. . . ." The Irishman had received only one wound, his aide observed, a minnie ball through the heart. Mangum "procured coffins for Generals Cleburne and Granbury and Colonel Young of the Tenth Texas," and "carried their remains to Columbia for interment."⁷¹

⁶⁹ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 766.

⁷⁰ Letter from Private William M. Stanton Company A, 6th Texas to his cousin Mary L. Moody January 17, 1865. The William Stanton Papers, The Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

⁷¹ Logsdon, *Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin*, 80.

That afternoon the Confederates loaded the five bodies into a wagon and took them to Columbia where they again laid them in state. The next day, December 2, they interred the officers in Rose Hill Cemetery in a service presided over by the Revrend R.T. Quintard. Lucius Polk, a former brigade commander under Cleburne, made his appearance at the service as well. After the burial, neither Qunitard nor Polk remained satisfied with the resting place of the five officers. Someone pointed out that the section in which they had buried the men was set aside for paupers. Hearing that Cleburne had made a remark about St. John's Episcopal Church, Quintard determined to have the five Confederates removed to the churchyard.⁷² Col. Robert F. Beckham, commander of artillery for Lee's I Corps, who had been mortally wounded in the fighting on November 29, also lay buried at St. John's.

Elsewhere, concerned relatives laid other Texans to rest beneath the Tennessee soil. Ellen White, a small girl of Spring Hill, recorded the burial of Adj. George Blaine of the 7th Texas. Blaine, on the eve of Franklin, "told his negro servant that he had a cousin, the wife of Dr. Aaron C. White, living at Spring Hill, twelve miles from Franklin. The Texan "wished to be taken to their home if killed or wounded in the battle." Blaine was killed and his servant took him to Spring Hill. Ellen "was one of the three small children of the home." There were, the girl remembered, "no military honors, no minister to conduct a religious service, and no crowd to follow him to his last resting place. Only three small children looked on in awed silence while their father helped the faithful servant lower the body into the grave and fill in the earth." Uncle Nick Blaine, the adjutant's servant became very upset at the death of his master, and as Blaine's body was lowered into the ground, Uncle Nick "shook with sobs and the tears rained down his

⁷² Symonds, *Stonewall of the West*, 261.

face.”⁷³

Along the Franklin-Columbia Turnpike where the majority of the fighting had taken place, the Confederates dug long trenches and laid their comrades to rest. Pvt. Milton A. Ryan of the 14th Mississippi Infantry remembered that in some places, “the dead were piled upon each other three and four deep.” In the process of interring the deceased, sometimes they “would find a poor wounded comrade pinned down by several dead comrades lying on him. . . . We dug trenches,” wrote Ryan, “two and one half feet deep and wide enough for two to lay side by side. A piece of oil cloth was spread over their faces and covered up. Every one that could be identified, a small piece of plank was placed on their head with their names on it.”⁷⁴

Pvt. William Stanton of the 6th & 15th Texas, assigned to such a burial detail, noted that the fighting had laid out many of the bodies in perfect rows just as they had fallen on the field, obviously the victims of one massive volley. It also became apparent that the survivors had in many cases stacked the bodies in an effort to provide shelter, and some bore the marks of being struck by hundreds of bullets. They threw the bodies in the ditch on the outside of the Federal line together and buried them by toppling the headlogs and dirt on top of them.⁷⁵

On the morning of December 1, Hood ordered his men to move north, up the Franklin-Columbia Pike directly through the main area of the contest. This had, to say the least, a highly demoralizing effect on the 20,000 remaining soldiers of the Army of Tennessee. Franklin broke the spirit of the Confederates in the Army of Tennessee. A

⁷³ Logsdon, *Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin*, 69.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁷⁵ Letters of Private William E. Stanton Company A, 6th Texas to his cousin Mary L. Moody of Victoria, Texas. The William Stanton Papers, The Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

Mississippian wrote in later years of the horror he experienced. “Franklin,” he recalled, “was the only battleground I ever saw where the faces of the majority of the dead expressed supreme fear and terror. . . . Their eyes were wide open and fear staring. Their very attitude,” he remembered with abhorrence, “as they lay prone upon the ground, with extended, earth clutching fingers, their faces partially buried in the soil, told the tale of mental agony they had endured before death released them.” This same Mississippian recalled that afterwards, the specter of Franklin “stalked among us.”⁷⁶ Pvt. Sam Watkins of the 1st Tennessee Infantry in Brown’s Division lamented, “Would to God that I could tear the page from these memoirs and from my own memory. It is the blackest page in the history of the war of the Lost Cause. It was the bloodiest battle of modern times in any war. It was the finishing stroke to the independence of the Southern Confederacy. I was there. I saw it. My flesh trembles, and creeps, and crawls when I think of it today. My heart almost ceases to beat at the horrid recollection. Would to God that I had never witnessed such a scene!”⁷⁷

As the survivors of Cleburne’s Division regrouped, the going became tough for Granbury’s Texans. Capt. Foster noted in his diary on December 1, “Our Brigd and the Ark. Brigd are so badly cut up that we can’t move. Some officers have no men, and some men have no officers—so we have to reorganize and consolidate, a Captain has to command the Brigade.” Many of the Texans, as they moved north towards Nashville harbored bitter feelings against Hood. Capt. Foster angrily wrote on December 1, “Gen. Hood has betrayed us (The Army of Tenn.). This is not the kind of fighting he promised us at Tuscumbia and Florence Ala. When we started into Tenn. This was not a ‘fight with

⁷⁶ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 267-268.

⁷⁷ Watkins, *Company Aytch*, 232.

equal numbers and choice of the ground' by no means." Then Foster added bitterly "The wails and cries of the widows and orphans made at Franklin Tenn Nov 30th 1864 will heat up the fires of the bottomless pit to burn the soul of Gen J.B. Hood for Murdering their husbands and fathers at that place that day."⁷⁸ The Battle of Franklin spelled the death of Cleburne's Division. Lt. Gen. William J. Hardee, writing after the war, wrote of Cleburne and his men, "Where this division defended, no odds broke its lines; where it attacked, no numbers resisted its onslaught, save only once-there is the grave of Cleburne and his . . . division."⁷⁹

The Battle of Franklin also killed the spirit of Granbury's Texas Brigade. The Texan regiments suffered through desertion, which harmed their cause more than anything, but those who stayed in the ranks then suffered through battlefield slaughter from Tunnel Hill to Franklin. Finally, Franklin broke their spirits, not only because of the massive casualties they suffered, but also because of the deaths of Granbury and Cleburne. They had agreed to follow these men in defending the Confederacy, but with them gone, their loyalty to the Confederacy disappeared as well. The survivors of Franklin, and those who did not desert in the immediate aftermath, continued to go through the motions, but Granbury's Texas Brigade died on the night of November 30, 1864. Only the postmortem remained.

⁷⁸ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 150-151.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Title Page.

Chapter 18

One Last Gamble

The remaining campaign in Tennessee finished destroying the spirit and any sense of dedication that remained in the ranks of Granbury's Brigade. The Confederate war effort among the Texans effectually died on the frozen hills outside Nashville in December, 1864.

In the wake of Franklin, Hood faced two choices: either he could retreat and end the campaign or he could follow up the Federals in Nashville. Being a fighter and gambler, Hood chose the latter course, ordering an immediate pursuit of Schofield. On the morning of December 3, 1864, the battle-shocked soldiers of Granbury's Texas Brigade began the trek toward Nashville. That night the Texans took position on the hills south of the city. Capt. Foster noted that it became "very clear and cold."¹

Hood immediately made dispositions to besiege the Federals. He placed Cheatham's Corps on the right, Lee's in the center and Stewart's to cover the left side of the line. He intended to try and force the Federals to come out of their entrenchments and attack him. However, the Confederates actually suffered much more from the "siege" with no shelter, scarce firewood and no shoes in the December weather that had turned bitterly cold.

Hood's position, as finally established, stretched more than two miles from east to west. Cleburne's old division held the right flank of the army. The right flank of Cleburne's Division rested on or near the Nolensville Pike as it ran southeast from Nashville. From this point the Confederate line ran southwest to just south of

¹ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 152.

Montgomery Hill, and thence almost due west across the Granny White Pike to the Hillsboro Pike. Along this latter road the Confederates constructed five redoubts four hundred yards apart and numbered from north to south Redoubts #1, #2, #3, #4, and #5. They manned these unconnected, partially constructed, earthen fortifications by Stewart's III Corps. The line was too long to be adequately defended by the decimated survivors of Franklin. Also, because the position was concave toward Nashville, it deprived Hood of the advantage of interior lines. These weaknesses made it even more difficult for Hood's infantry to defend their overextended position.

As the cavalry skirmished with the Federals, the infantrymen continued to cope with the material privations and harsh weather as best they could. On December 4, Granbury's Texas Brigade, now under the command of Capt. E.T. Broughton of the 7th Texas, moved toward the Murfreesboro Pike, and later in the day Hood ordered them toward the city, within reach of the Federal cannon. There, according to Capt. Foster, the Texans constructed breastworks and "lay behind them all day." On December 5 Foster reported intermittent shelling of the Confederate position.² The weather rapidly deteriorated in the Tennessee winter, and soon the conditions became "bitterly cold," and included misting rain that froze as it fell. In this weather, the Texans soon erected "winter quarters," including huts constructed out of corn stalks, as well as shelters in the shape of an "old fashioned chicken-coop," which the men constructed "out of rails," before they covered them with dirt. Lt. Collins noted ruefully that "when the boys would bounce out early in the morning to answer to roll-call, their dens would be steaming like a bed where an old sow and a litter of pigs had roosted over night."³ Because of a lack of shoes, many

² *Ibid.*

³ Collins, *Chapters*, 251.

of the Texans tied blankets around their feet, but a new type of footwear soon appeared. As Capt. Foster reported, "At Brigade Head Quarters there has been established a Shoe Shop, not to make shoes, for there is no leather." Rather, the Confederates would, "take an old worn out pair of shoes and sew Moccasins over them of green cow hide with the hair side in. The shoe is put on and kept there, and as the hide dries it draws closer and closer to the old shoe. I am wearing just such foot coverings now," wrote Foster, "and they are about as pleasant to the foot and about as comfortable as any I ever had."⁴

While at Nashville Hood also received the stragglers and slightly wounded from Franklin as well as those units that had guarded the wagon train during the campaign. This number included Brig. Gen. James A. Smith, former commander of Granbury's Brigade. As the senior officer present, he assumed command of Cleburne's old division.⁵

On December 9 the weather worsened and it began sleeting as the Army of Tennessee took stock of its strength. At this time, the brigade numbered 344 effectives. Capt. O.P. Forrest commanded the 7th Texas, Capt. R.D. Kennedy the 10th Texas, Capt. B.R. Tyus commanded the 6th & 15th Texas, Capt. F.L. McKnight took command of the 17th & 18th Texas, and Capt. J.F. Mathews commanded the 24th & 25th Texas. Lt. W.E. Smith commanded the 5th Confederate and the 35th Tennessee under Col. Benjamin J. Hill remained on detached duty.⁶ Capt. George Williams of Govan's Brigade wrote Capt. Irving Buck, Cleburne's former chief of staff, that the Arkansas brigade numbered 431 effectives, whereas "Granbury's is not so large and is commanded by a Captain."⁷

While the Texan infantrymen settled down for their siege of the Federals in

⁴ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 153.

⁵ O.R. Series I, Vol. 45, pt. 1, 739.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 784.

Nashville, Hood devised a plan to take the focus off of his beleaguered infantry in front of the city by threatening the Federal supply lines around Murfresboro. Hood ordered Forrest to take the divisions of Jackson and Buford and besiege the Federals within Murfresboro, to try to draw Thomas out of Nashville to their assistance.⁸

As Forrest besieged Murfresboro, the Confederates around Nashville continued to strengthen their position. On December 13, Smith ordered Granbury's Brigade to the north side of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad cut to construct a strong redoubt capable of holding three hundred men, which it promptly completed. The lunette the Texans created included a ditch around the perimeter and palisades of timber. The Texans now found themselves on the extreme right of the Confederate army.⁹

Meanwhile, U.S. Grant had begun pressuring George Thomas, in communications from Washington, to attack Hood and break the siege. Thomas, despite his often-lethargic mood, prepared to strike. On December 15, he made his move. The Federal commander, seeing the weaknesses in Hood's position, ordered his troops to make a strong demonstration against the Confederate right flank while the main body of his army delivered a crushing blow to the vulnerable Confederate left. Accordingly, Thomas arranged for three corps to hit Stewart's men on the left. Meanwhile, he planned to distract Hood from the main assault by sending James Steedman's division to make a demonstration against the Confederate right. At 6 a.m. on December 15, Steedman's division moved southeast out of Nashville along the Murfresboro Pike until it reached the Rains House. From here, Steedman positioned his men so as to advance southwest and take Cheatham's men in right-rear, rolling up their right flank.

⁸ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 283.

⁹ O.R. Series I, Vol. 45, pt. 1, 739-740.

At 8 a.m. Col. Thomas J. Morgan's brigade of Steedman's division, made up primarily of United States Colored Troops, began their advance on the Confederate right flank—the ground held by Cleburne's old division.¹⁰ In his reconnaissance the night before, Col. Morgan failed to see the lunette occupied by Granbury's Brigade because of the heavily wooded nature of the hill the Texans occupied. He described it merely as a skirt of logs and this miscalculation would cost his brigade. The 17th U.S.C.T. commanded by Col. William Shafter led off Morgan's column. Shafter had orders to push southwest, through the Confederate skirmishers, and swing back north, thus surrounding the Southerners in their main line of works. After pushing back the skirmishers, Shafter and his men came upon the twenty-foot-deep railroad cut of the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad. Here the colonel halted his regiment when suddenly, from atop the wooded hilltop to their right, Granbury's Texans, augmented by a four-gun battery of artillery, raked the front of the Federal regiment. In addition, across the railroad cut, to the southwest, another battery of artillery fired canister into the ranks of the Federals, and Shafter's black troops, caught in this crossfire, rapidly fled. Col. Morgan next rushed the 18th Ohio under Col. Charles Grosvenor against the lunette, but as the Ohioans attempted to make their way through the palisade, the Texans slaughtered them. Grosvenor then attempted to push forward the 2nd Battalion, 14th U.S. Infantry, merely to have this regiment flee after only a few minutes of fighting.¹¹ Finally, around noon, Morgan withdrew his brigade. During the fighting the small brigade of Texans suffered a loss of thirty killed and wounded, roughly ten percent of their strength.¹² These casualties

¹⁰ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 324.

¹¹ After the war, Colonel Charles Shafter would become known in the American west as "Pecos Bill." *Ibid.*, 324-326.

¹² O.R. Series I, Vol. 45, pt. I, 739-740.

included Capt. Edward Broughton, who suffered a wound. Capt. James Selkirk of the 6th & 15th Texas succeeded Broughton in the command of the brigade.¹³

As the Federal demonstration on the right fizzled out, Thomas set into motion his crushing blow intended for the Confederate left, the position held by Stewart's III Corps. Redoubts #4, #3, and #5 fell in the face of the Federal advance. The situation looked critical, and Stewart begged Hood for reinforcements to shore up his sagging line. Hood, recognizing that the real Federal push lay on the left, ordered large portions of Lee's Corps as well as Cheatham's Corps, including Granbury's Brigade, to the rescue, but by early evening the Federals had put the left of the Confederate army to flight. Fortunately for the Army of Tennessee, the fighting ended on December 15 as night closed in, before the Federals could push their advantage. The struggle to rally his troops occupied Hood even as Thomas concluded the battle had ended. Schofield, who had roomed with Hood at West Point, dissuaded his commander of this notion, asserting that Hood would still be there in the morning, ready to fight.¹⁴

That night the Texans of Granbury's Brigade, who had not reached the left flank before the Confederate line collapsed, slogged south with the rest of the army and bivouacked for the night near the Lea House on the Granny White Pike in the rear of the new line. Just as the Texans bedded down for the night, orders arrived from Hood that they should march to the right. With Govan's Brigade in the lead, Cleburne's Division had not even reached its destination before Hood ordered them back to the far left. The hapless Texans spent the night of December 15 marching and counter-marching in the

¹³ Collins, *Chapters*, 253.

¹⁴ Stanley F. Horn, *The Army of Tennessee*, (Wilmington, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1987) 413-414.

freezing cold.¹⁵

As morning dawned on December 16, Schofield's prediction proved correct; Hood remained, ready for a fight. Consequently, Thomas decided to launch a strong demonstration against the Confederate right while delivering a hammer blow to the left as he had done the day before. During the early morning of the sixteenth, Steedman renewed his attacks on the Confederate right, this time against men of S.D. Lee's Corps. While Steedman attacked the right, Thomas struck with the main body of his infantry at the left of the Confederate line. As the Federals also experienced limited gains on the right, it looked for a time as if the Southerners would hold.

Elsewhere on the battlefield Granbury's Brigade under Capt. Selkirk spent much of the day marching and counter-marching as Hood shifted units to meet new threats. With the coming of dawn on December 16, Granbury's Texans found themselves near the center rear of the Confederate line. Here Selkirk allowed them to rest on their arms for an hour before he awakened them with news that they must rush to the left to aid in the defense in that vicinity; quickly, Selkirk had his band of Texans up and moving. Before reaching their destination Hood ordered Cleburne's men back to the east again, backtracking yet another time. Upon reaching the right, Smith placed the men of Granbury's and Lowrey's old brigades in the Confederate battle line, and along with James Holtzclaw's Alabama Brigade, fought off attacks from Post's Federal brigade as well as some of the United States Colored Troops of Steedman's division. These troops proved some of the same men the Texans had fought the day before from their redoubt, and again they Federals suffered the same fate. The Yankees launched a determined attack against Granbury's Brigade, only to have the Texans mow them down. During this

¹⁵ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 789-790.

assault alone the 13th United States Colored Troops suffered 220 casualties, nearly forty percent of its strength, as the Texans and Alabamans soundly beat back the assault. At 2 p.m. Cleburne's Division reversed for the last time and marched back toward the vicinity of Compton's Hill.¹⁶

As Cleburne's men hurried toward the left, disaster struck the Confederates atop Compton's Hill. During one of the determined assaults against the Confederates on the hill, John McArthur's Federal Division struck the Achilles heel of the Confederate position, the line of Smith's Tennessee Brigade. Because of the poorly placed, inadequate breastworks, the Federals breached the center of Bate's thinly stretched division on the critical hill.¹⁷ Bate's line completely collapsed. Because of the prominence of Compton's Hill to the right, the entire Army of Tennessee could see the disaster that had befallen their comrades, and panic spread like wildfire among the veteran troops. The men of Granbury's Brigade, marching to the rescue, soon realized the severity of the situation. Capt. Selkirk nudged Lt. Collins, the Acting Asst. Adj. of the brigade, and admonished him to look to the right, saying, "we are whipped." Collins looked to his right, "up on the mountain field, and sure enough the Confederates were running like wild cattle, throwing everything away that would in the least impede their flight. About this time," recalled the lieutenant, "the enemy run a battery upon the pike and sent a shell about every two seconds down just to the left of our line, screaming like the damned in purgatory, plowing up the earth and spattering us with mud." Upon seeing this, the frightened Texans quickly joined the exodus of the Confederate army fleeing south from

¹⁶ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 793; Anne J. Bailey, *The Chessboard of War: Sherman and Hood in the Autumn Campaigns of 1864*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 160.

¹⁷ Sword, *Embrace an Angry Wind*, 373; During the struggle Lieutenant Colonel William Shy of the 20th Tennessee was killed after a .58 caliber rifle was discharged at point-blank range into his skull. After the war the hill upon which Shy fell would be renamed in his honor.

Nashville.¹⁸

By 3:30 p.m. on December 16, 1864, the Army of Tennessee degenerated into a full rout, one of the few instances during the war in which a major Confederate army was completely routed and driven from the field. As the Southerners streamed south from Nashville, a freezing rain began to fall, causing some Confederates to wonder if indeed God Himself disapproved of their retreat to safety. By the evening of December 17 the routed army reached Franklin, and all the wounded fit to travel joined the exodus for fear of capture. They left those unable to travel to the mercy of the Federals.

Granbury's Brigade re-crossed the Tennessee River on December 26. As they marched over the pontoons, the Texans sang an altered version of a verse of the Yellow Rose of Texas that went like this:

“So now I’m marching southward;
My heart is full of woe
I’m going back to Georgia to find my Uncle Joe.
You may talk about your Beauregard
And sing of General Lee,
But the gallant Hood of Texas
Played Hell in Tennessee.”¹⁹

After re-crossing the river Hood ordered his army to move toward Corinth, Mississippi. At Tuscumbia, Alabama, Granbury's Texans were detached as the provost guard, and after so much privation, according to William Stanton of the 6th Texas, the men, “feasted on fresh pork; washing it down with a gill of liquor.” The men of Granbury's Brigade also took to looting and pillaging in the northern Alabaman countryside. Just before New Years Day, the Texans marched to Iuka, Mississippi, many

¹⁸ Collins, *Chapters*, 254-255.

¹⁹ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 156.

of them making this last march without any shoes.²⁰ By January 1, 1865 the remnants of the Army of Tennessee had reached Corinth while the weather remained very cold. The Tennessee Campaign had come to an end.

The Battle of Nashville finished off what Franklin had started. The destruction of the Army of Tennessee at Nashville extended to Granbury's Texans, and the defeat buried whatever hope the Confederate war effort had of success. The looting perpetrated by the Texans in northern Alabama and Mississippi indicate their mood following the Tennessee Campaign. Their frustration spilled out against the Confederate population, indicating that the Confederate war effort had come full circle, literally cannibalizing itself.

²⁰ Sessums, "A Force to be Reckoned With," 796-799.

Chapter 19

The End of the War

The year 1865 dawned bleakly for the remnants of Granbury's Brigade. On New Years morning the Texans awoke in their encampment three miles from Corinth, Mississippi. In the morning the brigade marched through Corinth and camped two miles beyond the town. Here around Corinth, the Texans viewed the demoralizing sights of the last several years of war. Capt. Foster wrote in his diary of the old, abandoned forts and trenches stretching in every direction, and as he explored, he noticed "the great many graves here . . . nearly all have a plain headboard with the name Co. Regiment &c. . . . This is one part of the war we have never seen before. The dead part. The graveyard. . . ."¹

Despite these demoralizing sights, not all of the Texans had their spirits as completely crushed as Capt. Foster. On January 17 William Stanton of the 6th Texas wrote his cousin Mary Moody in Victoria of the events that had transpired during the battles of Franklin and Nashville. He recorded that "It is given up that Texas has the best troops in the field, but a set of Rascalls. Our brigade is counted as the biggest set of theaves in the army." In this short statement Stanton revealed the frustrations felt by the Texans after the Tennessee Campaign that they proceeded to take out on the local citizenry wherever they happened to be.²

On January 13, Hood requested that Davis remove him from command of the Army of Tennessee, and Davis readily complied. In his place, Davis instructed P.G.T.

¹ Brown, *One of Cleburne's Command*, 160.

² William E. Stanton to Mary Moody, January 17, 1865, The William Stanton Papers, The Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

Beauregard, now commanding the Western Division of the Confederacy to assign Gen. Richard Taylor. The plans for the shattered Army of Tennessee then changed as William T. Sherman began moving his Federal legions from Savannah, Georgia into South Carolina on February 1. With this movement, Davis instructed Taylor to send the Army of Tennessee to aid Gen. Joseph E. Johnston in stopping Sherman in the Carolinas.

On January 20, the Texas brigade started out for Tupelo, Mississippi, as the first leg of a journey to the Carolinas. Most of the Texans rode the railroad, while those with horses covered the distance in the saddle. Along the way Lt. Collins developed a severe infection, probably gangrenous, that almost cost him his limb, but after a brief respite at the house of a local farmer and his wife, he recovered enough to rejoin the brigade, which he found camped a mile west of Tupelo. Here, Collins began taking over the duties of brigade adjutant. At Tupelo, the weary Confederates approached their new commander, Dick Taylor, and asked him to grant them furloughs. Taylor acquiesced, and every fifth man received a furlough, never to return to the army.³

Collins reported that, like Corinth, Tupelo also showed signs of the war. “Great farms gone to ruin,” he wrote, “and fine mansions. . .were now the abode of owls, bats and hobgoblins.” On January 26, the remnants of the Army of Tennessee boarded box and flat cars on their way to North Carolina. On the night of January 28, the brigade reached Mobile, Alabama.⁴

From Mobile, the Texans moved up the Tensas River to Tensas Landing, and then on to Montgomery via railroad cars, where they proceeded to take out their frustrations on the local population. Lt. Collins recalled that the reverses in battles and frustrations

³ Collins, *Chapters*, 272.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 272-273.

over the war put the Texans in an ugly mood and that Mobile was spared from their ravages only because they arrived there at night and boarded vessels early the next morning. Montgomery did not fare so well. The brigade arrived in the cradle of the Confederacy just at dusk, and despite the fact that their officers had put an armed guard around the camp, after dinner many enterprising Texans slipped by the guards, intent on raising hell and taking out their frustrations.⁵

Upon reaching town, the Texans and some Arkansas troops attacked the provost marshals and city police, before turning their attention to a dance hall called “The Light House” in the middle of the city. Even though the Texans and Arkansans took over “management” of the place, everything went well until 10 p.m. when some of the troops discovered a grocery store across the street run by a “Dutch” proprietor. In an effort to stave off disaster, the store owner gave the Texans some whiskey, and all hell broke loose. The Texans next proceeded to “clerk” for the grocery store owner and then took over running the store, and commanded the store owner to go home to his wife and children, which he did without argument. The Texans then rolled out a barrel of whiskey from the store out into a defile behind the building, knocked the top off and proceeded to indulge themselves. Pvt. Lee Kinman of the 15th Texas approached Lt. Collins on the dance floor, blew his breath in Collins face, and then led the lieutenant to the back of the store. When Collins reached the spot, he reported that “the boys were drinking out of the barrel like horses or thirsty chickens around a pan of water on a hot summer day.” The Texans then went on a rampage, and some made it back to camp that night, some not until the next morning for roll call. “Some had one eye in a sling and some had two. Some didn’t have as many ears nor as much hair as they took to town with them. The

⁵ Collins, *Chapters*, 273-274.

floor of that dance hall was a sight to look at. . . .”⁶ Pvt. William Stanton of the 6th Texas wrote his cousin Mary Moody. “Our Brig. behaved shamefully all the way around from Tupelo Miss to Raleigh, N.C. The boys had not been paid off in ten months they would not issue Tobacco and that made the Boys angry they would break open stores, get the Tobacco and Lichors. . . .I never seen men go do as our Brigade done after Maj Genl Cleburne and Granbury got killed there was not an officer who could do any thing with them. . . .”⁷

Early the next morning their commanders placed the Texans aboard box cars bound for Columbus, Georgia. The citizens of Columbus had gotten wind of what had happened in Montgomery, and the townspeople turned out with tables of sumptuous food and banners, greeting the Confederates with messages like “Welcome, Army of Tennessee,” “Welcome Heroes of Chickamauga.” The soldiers proceeded to stuff themselves with the food, and then took their rifles and went into town, where they ravaged the “gambling houses and saloons.” Again, the Texans departed the next morning aboard trains, bound for Fort Valley, Georgia. Again at Fort Valley the citizenry turned out to welcome them. This time, instead of ravaging the town, the men merely behaved rudely in consuming the food. The brigade then passed through Macon, and according to Lt. Collins the Texans “had it in” for the city, but the train simply sped by rather than stopping.

The next stop along the way was Milledgeville, the Georgia state capital, where the Texans disembarked from the train a mile from town and began foraging for wood and food of any kind. It was at Milledgeville that the Texans encountered the results of

⁶ *Ibid.*, 275-276.

⁷ William E. Stanton to Mary Moody, March 30, 1865, The William Stanton Papers, The Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

Sherman's March to the Sea, and the desolation made a deep impression on the troops. Early in March, the Texans reached Augusta, Georgia, and crossed over the Savannah River into South Carolina where they camped for the night. At Augusta, one Texan paid \$75 for a cup of sweet milk and some little corn bread. That night, some of the brigade stayed in town to make trouble, but most of the troops behaved themselves on the South Carolina side of the river. The day after crossing the Savannah, the Texans marched to Chester, South Carolina, where they camped and continued to forage as best they could.⁸

With Sherman's forces moving through North Carolina, Joseph Johnston determined to try to stop the Federal advance. While most of the Army of Tennessee, including the Texas Brigade, moved north to reinforce him, Johnston decided to counterattack the left wing of Sherman's forces along the road to Goldsboro near the town of Bentonville, North Carolina. Johnston set a trap on March 19, and the Confederate cavalry served as a decoy, engaging the Federals along the road and then falling back through the ranks of the infantrymen. The Union troops marched into the trap, and Johnston launched his counterattack, initially driving back the Federal columns, but reinforcements soon arrived, driving back the Confederates. Johnston then withdrew his men into a defensive position to await developments.⁹

On the morning of March 20, Granbury's Texans debarked from their trains at Smithfield and immediately heard the booming of artillery to the south. Johnston detached the Texans from Cleburne's Division and moved them into position on the Confederate left, along with Cumming's Georgia Brigade. Johnston placed Cumming's Brigade in reserve, and moved the Texans back and forth to shore up weak points in the

⁸ Collins, *Chapters*, 283-285.

⁹ McCaffrey, *This Band of Heroes*, 151-152.

line. While Granbury's men remained on the line, some of the Texans went out to investigate the battlefield, and in particular the Federal dead, whose knapsacks still contained the contents they had plundered in Georgia and South Carolina.¹⁰ Finally on March 21 Sherman reached the battlefield with the rest of his men, and badly outnumbered, Johnston withdrew to the vicinity of Smithfield. Sherman advanced to Goldsboro. The last Confederate attempt to defeat Sherman had failed.

As Johnston waited in North Carolina, the Confederacy disintegrated. On April 2, Grant forced Lee to abandon Petersburg, and the Army of Northern Virginia began retreating west toward Appomattox Court House. President Davis and the rest of the Confederate government simultaneously abandoned Richmond and scattered in all directions.

On April 9, the day Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox, Johnston undertook a reorganization of the Army of Tennessee. Johnston consolidated the remnants of Granbury's Brigade into a single regiment, the First Texas Consolidated, under Lt. Col. William A. Ryan of the 18th Texas, the highest ranking officer left with the brigade. Maj. John A. Formwalt of the 10th Texas and Adj. John A. Willingham of the 10th Texas served as the regimental field and staff. Ryan formed the old 6th Texas into Company A under Junior 2nd Lt. Mark A. Kelton. He formed the old 7th Texas into Company B under First Lt. James D. Miles and the old 15th Texas into Companies C and F under First Lt. James L. McCracken and Second Lt. Robert M. Collins. Ryan made the 10th Texas into Companies D and E under Capts. Reuben D. Kennedy and John R. Kennard. He formed the 17th Texas into Company G under Capt. Louis Little and the 18th Texas into Company

¹⁰ Mark L. Bradley, *The Battle of Bentonville: Last Stand in the Carolinas*, (Mason City, Iowa: Savas Publishing, 1996), 345; Collins, *Chapters*, 286-287.

H under Third Cpl. Jesse Graham. The old 24th Texas made up Company I under Capt. Samuel T. Foster and finally Third Lt. James Rotan commanded the old 25th Texas as Company K.¹¹ Johnston placed the 1st Texas Consolidated in Daniel Govan's Brigade along with the 1st Arkansas (formerly the 19th and 24th Arkansas Infantry Regiments) and placed Govan's Brigade in Cleburne's Division old division now under Maj. Gen. John Brown.

As what was left of Granbury's Brigade remained encamped around Smithfield, wild rumors and some facts circulated through the ranks. On April 10, Capt. Foster remarked in his diary that the news had reached the Army of Tennessee that Lee had surrendered, and that it demoralized the Confederates a great deal. But he wrote, "I do hope and I believe that we will whip this fight yet." That same day, Johnston put the Army of Tennessee in motion toward Raleigh. Three days later Cleburne's old division marched from Raleigh to Chapel Hill and encamped near Salem. On April 16, rumors began circulating that Johnston had surrendered to Sherman, and the Texans remained very demoralized. On April 17 and 18 the Confederate commissary issued clothes to Granbury's Texans, and on the eighteenth, Capt. Foster wrote, "Had Battalion drill today just to see if the men would drill." Late that evening an order reached the Texans announcing that Johnston and Sherman had signed an armistice, but not a surrender, and this seemed to satisfy the veterans. On April 19 the Texans moved about a half mile, and word reached them that Lincoln had been assassinated and that Seward had been shot at the same time. "It is also reported," wrote Capt. Foster, "that the United States has recognized the Confederacy and agrees to give us all our rights (and slavery) if we will help them fight all their enemies whatsoever." Soon after the Texans reached their camp

¹¹ O.R. Series I, Vol. 47, pt. 3, 848-849.

on April 19 some Confederates discovered two barrels of apple brandy buried at the base of an old tree, and the Texans received one of the barrels in their camp and immediately tapped it. While Foster reported that some of the men got “funny drunk” or “gentlemanly drunk,” according to him all of the officers got “dog drunk.” But he also wrote that no one got angry, and all remained in a good humor.¹²

On Sunday April 23, Cleburne’s old command marched ten miles or so west before encamping near Greensboro. The next day another wild rumor began circulating that a war was about to commence with the Confederacy, France, Austria and Mexico on one side and England, Russia and the United States on the other. In this case, Capt. Foster reported the rumor that the Confederates would then take an oath of allegiance to France and fight under the French flag. Rumors like these kept up for the next three days.¹³

On April 26, word reached the Texans that hostilities would resume with the Federals if Johnston did not surrender within two days. That same day, word filtered down that Johnston had officially surrendered to Sherman, effective April 28. The night of April 27, Foster wrote in his diary that all the men stayed up talking about the situation despondently, and “if crying would have done any good, we could have cried all night.” On the twenty-eighth, all of the Texans marched up, signed a document, received their paroles and were issued one dollar in silver.¹⁴ Later that day, the officers of the Texas Brigade sent a short, but heartfelt message to Gen. Johnston that stated in part, “We. . . respectfully desire to assure Gen. Johnston of our undiminished confidence and esteem and fully sympathizing with him in the present unfortunate issue of our affairs, do most cordially tender him the hospitality of our State and our homes (such as the future may

¹² Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 166-171.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 167.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 169; Collins, *Chapters*, 300-301.

provide for us).” The Texans then requested that Johnston visit them before leaving. Eighteen officers then signed the note, and it is unclear whether or not Johnston ever visited Granbury’s command.¹⁵

The muster rolls at the surrender revealed just how small Granbury’s Brigade had become. Company A of the 1st Texas, the old 6th Texas, surrendered with sixty-two members, the 7th Texas paroled forty-nine men, while the 10th Texas surrendered the most with seventy-six. At the same time the 15th Texas ended the war with only forty-four soldiers. The 17th Texas surrendered with thirty-seven soldiers and the 18th Texas paroled forty-eight. The 24th Texas surrendered with fifty-one men and finally the 25th Texas retained the least number of any regiment in the brigade with only thirty-four, making a total of 402 Texans who surrendered out of roughly 9,800 who were carried on the muster rolls of these regiments at the beginning of the war.¹⁶

By groups of two, three and five, the Texans of Granbury’s Brigade began making their way home from North Carolina. Lt. Collins traveled with various groups of Texans and he traveled by boat from New Orleans to Galveston and from Galveston, he traveled by train to Millican. At Milliken he took a buggy north to Decatur, where he arrived on June 25, 1865, after three years, three months and twenty-five days of absence.

Other members of the brigade made their way home from hospitals all over the South.

¹⁵ The note was signed by R.D. Kennedy, Captain Company E, 10th Texas; A.L. Steele, Captain Company G, 10th Texas; Jim D. Miles, Captain Company B; L.W. Little, Captain Company G; J. Graham, Lieutenant, Company H; J.A. Willingham, Adjutant; S.T. Foster, Captain Company H, 24th Texas; P.M. Curry, Lieutenant, Company D, 24th Texas; J.M. Rotan, Lieutenant, Company F, 25th Texas; M.A. Kelton, Captain Company F, 6th Texas; B.D. Foscue, Lieutenant, Company C, 7th Texas; L.F. Moody, Lieutenant, Company B, 7th Texas; A.H. Hardin, Second Lieutenant Company G, 17th Texas; M.V. Tate, Second Lieutenant Company F, 15th Texas. James D. Shaw, Second Lieutenant, 10th Texas; J.H. Logan, Second Lieutenant, 10th Texas; J.A. Formwalt, Major, Granbury’s Brigade and W.A. Ryan, Lieutenant-Colonel, Granbury’s Brigade. O.R. Series I, Vol. 47, pt. 3, 848-849.

¹⁶ The Compiled Service Records of the 6th, 7th and 10th Texas Infantry Regiments and the 15th, 17th, 18th, 24th and 25th Texas Cavalry Regiments, National Archives Microfilm Series M323, Rolls 308-314, 315-320, 337-343, 85-89, 93-96, 99-103, 119-123 and 126-130.

Joseph McClure of Company A, 18th Texas was wounded by several bullets in the fighting east of Atlanta on July 21, 1864. After he convalesced at Griffin hospital for a month, he was granted crutches and a sixty day furlough. A kind woman named Mrs. John Garrick took McClure in and nursed him back to health from August, 1864 until July, 1865. On July 15 McClure started out for Texas on crutches and after an arduous journey, he arrived home in Alvarado, Johnson County on August 15, 1865. After his capture at the Battle of Franklin, Charles Leuschner of the 6th Texas spent time in New Orleans and then Alexandria, Louisiana until his release on May 26, 1865. From Alexandria, Leuschner made his way home to Victoria, arriving on June 16, 1865. At 9 a.m. on May 3, Capt. Foster also began making his way home from Greensboro. Despite his earlier sadness at surrender, after turning in his weapons and signing his parole, he wrote that he felt relieved at the prospect of going home for the first time in four years. After traveling through Nashville, New Orleans and Galveston, Foster reached his home at Hallettsville on June 16, 1865. As he contemplated the end of the war, Foster summed up the feelings of many ex-Confederates when he wrote, “Who is to blame for all this waste of human life? It is too bad to talk about. And what does it amount to? Has there been anything gained by all this sacrifice? What were we fighting for, the principles of slavery? And now the slaves are all freed and the Confederacy has to be dissolved. We have to go back into the Union.”¹⁷

¹⁷ Collins, *Chapters*, 333; Joseph McClure, “A Wounded Texan’s Trip Home on Crutches,” *The Confederate Veteran*, 17: 162-163; Leuschner, *The Civil War Diary of Charles A. Leuschner*, 52-54; Brown, *One of Cleburne’s Command*, 170.

Conclusion

Local circumstances remained the preeminent factor in determining the behavior of the common soldiers in Granbury's Texas Brigade. Loyalty to the Confederacy that transcended local circumstances never materialized among Granbury's men. Those that then stayed in the ranks to the end did so because of the stellar leadership they enjoyed at the regimental, brigade and division level. The experience of the Texans exemplifies both the best and worst offered by common soldiers to the Confederate war effort. Desertion obviously hurt the Texan regiments more than anything else, depriving many of them of sixty percent or more of their strength before they ever saw battle. In this sense, desertion proved "more damning than slaughter" to the Confederate war effort among the Texans.

As much as the desertion damaged the Confederates, those who remained in the ranks became an effective fighting unit, despite still suffering from intermittent desertion even after Arkansas Post and prison. Finally, the addition of the only regiment to never seriously suffer from desertion, the 7th Texas, completed the composition of the brigade in November, 1863. The 7th Texas provided a great deal of the leavening to the other Texans they would have otherwise received from their deserted comrades. The additions of Hiram Granbury and Patrick Cleburne to the leadership of the Texans also helped inspire them to continue in defense of the Confederacy probably much longer than they would have otherwise. Without a doubt the 7th Texas, Hiram Granbury and Patrick Cleburne made Granbury's Texas Brigade the fighting unit it became.

From November, 1863 to November, 1864 Granbury's Texans became the "Color Brigade" of the Army of Tennessee, a crack fighting unit hampered only by a lack of numbers due to earlier desertion and constant battlefield slaughter. In this instance,

Granbury's men exemplified the best of the Confederate war effort and helped to prolong the life of the Confederacy. Only with the deaths of Granbury and Cleburne at Franklin did the Texans completely lose faith in the Confederate war effort, as evidenced by their shameful antics in the last months of the war. The effective leadership of Granbury and Cleburne held the Texans with the Confederacy much longer than any other single factor.

Granbury's Texans provided the best and worst of the Confederate war effort, with some crippling and some sustaining the Confederacy. The answer to what role Granbury's Texans played in the war effort seems multifaceted in that they both shortened the life of the Confederacy through desertion, but also prolonged the viability of the Southern nation through hard fighting, until the death of their leaders overwhelmed them.

Appendix: The Battle Casualties of Granbury's Brigade

Regiment	Number of Men Captured at Arkansas Post or Fort Donelson	Number of Men who Died in P.O.W. Camps	Total Number of Battle Casualties	KIA	WIA	WIA Twice	WIA Three Times Plus	Captured (Excluding Arkansas Post and Fort Donelson)	Individuals Wounded or Captured Multiple Times	Died of Wounds or in a P.O.W. Camp	Died of Disease	Those Who Surrendered at Greensboro who had previously been wounded or captured
6 th Texas	589 (64% of Total Regiment)	58 (9.8% of those captured)	259 (28% of Total Regiment)	50 (19.3%)*	205 (79%)*	30 (14% of those who were wounded)	3 (1.4% of those who were wounded)	45 (17.3%)*	71 (27.3% of those who were wounded or captured)	8 (3% of those who were wounded or captured)	52 (5.6% of Total Regiment)	34 (55% of those who surrendered)
7 th Texas	379 (37%)	58 (15%)	420 (41%)	98 (23%)*	253 (60%)*	56 (20.6%)	3 (1%)	87 (20.7%)*	120 (33.5%)	34 (9.4%)	233 (23%)	20 (41%)
10 th Texas	715 (60%)	86 (12%)	267 (22.4%)	74 (27.7%)*	153 (57.3%)*	22 (14%)	0	43 (16%)*	52 (27.3%)	10 (5.2%)	190 (16%)	13 (17%)
15 th Texas	478 (38%)	94 (19.6%)	119 (8.4%)	26 (21.8%)*	75 (63%)*	7 (8.6%)	0	24 (20%)*	15 (15%)	12 (12%)	87 (7%)	14 (32.5%)
17 th Texas	390 (33%)	103 (26.4%)	86 (7.3%)	10 (11.6%)*	46 (53.4%)*	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	32 (37%)*	15 (18.7%)	5 (6.25%)	64 (5.45%)	9 (24%)
18 th Texas	533 (43%)	105 (19.6%)	221 (18%)	34 (15.3%)*	119 (53.8%)*	2 (1.6%)	1 (0.8%)	74 (33.4%)*	53 (26.6%)	9 (4.5%)	64 (5.24%)	12 (25%)
24 th Texas	652 (57.6%)	112 (17%)	193 (17%)	59 (30.5%)*	109 (56.4%)*	12 (10%)	2 (1.7%)	30 (15.5%)*	30 (20.6%)	11 (7.5%)	64 (5.6%)	14 (28%)
25 th Texas	555 (40%)	134 (24%)	158 (11.4%)	33 (20.8%)*	97 (61.3%)*	11 (11%)	0	31 (19.6%)*	23 (17.5%)	4 (3%)	55 (3.9%)	9 (25.7%)
Totals:	3,702 (40%)	750 (20%)	1,723 (18.5%)	384 (22.2%)	1,057 (61.3%)	141 (12.3%)	10 (0.87%)	366 (21.2%)	379 (25%)	93 (6.1%)	809 (8.7%)	91 (22.6%)

Percentages are based on the total number of battle casualties within that regiment.

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ABSTRACT

GRANBURY'S TEXAS BRIGADE C.S.A.: THE COLOR BRIGADE OF THE ARMY

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“Granbury’s Texas Brigade C.S.A.” chronicles the history of Granbury’s Texas Brigade in the American Civil War while advancing the thesis that loyalty to the Confederacy could not override the local circumstances experienced by these Texans. It also seeks to answer the question of what role common soldiers played in the Confederate war effort by exploring Granbury’s Brigade as a microcosm of the war effort.

“Granbury’s Brigade” also explores the socioeconomic context of the soldiers of Granbury’s Texas Brigade in an effort to understand their behavior. Perhaps most importantly, “Granbury’s Brigade” examines the issue of Confederate desertion in the context of these Texas regiments in an effort to better understand Confederate desertion across a broad spectrum. Despite the early difficulties and desertion, the leadership of Hiram Granbury and Patrick Cleburne helped turn the small remnant of Texans into Granbury’s Texas Brigade, a crack fighting unit. This small band then became “The Color Brigade of the Army,” from November, 1863 to November, 1864, until the Battle of Franklin destroyed them.