

O.R.--SERIES I--VOLUME XXXIX/1 [S# 77]

SEPTEMBER 16--OCTOBER 10, 1864.--Forrest's raid into Northern Alabama and Middle Tennessee.

No. 7.--Report of Lieut. Henry C. March, One hundred and fifteenth Ohio Infantry, Assistant Inspector of Railroad Defenses

CAMP CHASE, OHIO, December 2, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor to make the following report of the surrender of Athens, Ala., on the 24th of September, 1864, to Major-General Forrest, commanding C. S. forces, and the condition of railroad and other defenses:

About 4 p.m. on the 23d the railroad section foreman reported to Colonel Campbell, commanding that post, that the guerrillas were tearing up the railroad about five miles south of Athens. Major Pickens, Third Tennessee Cavalry, with 100 men, was sent down the Decatur road. Colonel Campbell, taking 150 men on the cars (the train having just arrived), ran down. They succeeded in driving them off. When returning our forces were attacked and a sharp skirmish ensued. About this time our pickets on the Brown's Ferry and Buck Island road were driven in, when our artillery opened from the fort and fired a few rounds. At this time it was dark. The quartermaster's building was set on fire, the enemy having invested the town on all sides and made several attempts to get possession of town, but were driven back with some loss. About 11 o'clock they got possession of the railroad depot. At this time the Second Tennessee arrived and drove them away wounding and capturing several. (The Second Tennessee Cavalry had been out on a scout and were ordered back to Decatur by General Granger's assistant adjutant-general, who was along.) At midnight the commissary building was burned, and during the latter part of the night all troops were moved to the fort.

About 7 a.m. on the 24th the enemy opened on the fort with a 12-pounder battery from two directions, north and west. The cannonading continued about two hours; about sixty shells were thrown, well directed, exploding in and about the fort, and was answered by our artillery, two 12-pounder howitzers. The enemy's fire did us little harm. We had 1 killed and 2 wounded. Our works were not injured in the least. At about 10 o'clock the enemy sent in a flag of truce, demanding our surrender. The communication, not being signed, was sent back. Another flag was sent by the enemy, communication signed "Major-General Forrest," which was again returned, Colonel Campbell refusing to surrender. General Forrest then asked a personal interview. Colonel Campbell rode out. General Forrest said he came to take the place and intended to do it; that he had 8,000 or 10,000 men. Asked Colonel Campbell to ride around the lines and satisfy himself, which he did. After consulting some of the other officers, the fort and whole garrison were surrendered at 12 m. on the 24th. The terms of surrender were in substance as follows: The officers were to retain side arms and all personal property, be taken to Meridian, Miss., and paroled for exchange soon as communication could be had with General Washburn; the enlisted men to be treated as prisoners of war. The garrison at time of surrender consisted of about 450 men of the One hundred and sixth, One hundred and tenth, and **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**, and about 130 men of the Third Tennessee Cavalry. The fort was an earth-work, 180 by 450 feet, surrounded by an abatis of brush and a palisade 4 feet high, and a ditch 12 feet wide, was 18 feet from the bottom of the ditch to top of parapets. The embankment was strong enough to resist any field artillery; in fact, it was one of the best works of the kind I ever saw.

On the morning of the 24th General Granger, commanding at Decatur, sent detachments, by railroad, of the Eighteenth Michigan and One hundred and second Ohio, both amounting to 350 men, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Elliott, of the One hundred and second Ohio, to re-enforce the garrison at Athens. They arrived at the breach in railroad and were attacked by the whole of General Buford's division. Our force, though small, pressed their way on in the direction of Athens, strewing the woods with the enemy's dead. On two occasions heavy lines were formed in their direction, which were charged and driven back in disorder. In this manner they had almost gained the fort, which had been surrendered not more than thirty minutes before they arrived within 300 yards, when they, too, were forced to surrender. We lost in this engagement 106 men killed and wounded, among whom were

Lieutenant-Colonel Elliott (since dead), Captain Zody, and Lieutenant Davis. The enemy's loss, killed and wounded, according to their own account, was equal to our force engaged.

DEFENSES.

Block-house No. 1, single cased, garrisoned by Lieutenant Hunter and 44 men of the Fourth Tennessee Cavalry, not attacked.

Block-houses Nos. 2, 3, and 4 were double cased, garrisoned by Capt. James Henry, **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**, and about 100 men of the **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**. These block-houses were evacuated, whether with or without orders I am unable to say.

Block-house No. 5, double cased, garrisoned by First Sergt. H. C. Weaver (white) and 40 men of the One hundred and sixth U.S. Colored Infantry, was attacked by infantry and surrendered.

Block-house No. 6, double cased up to loop-holes, garrisoned by [Capt.] A. Poe and 40 men, One hundred and sixth U.S. Colored Infantry, was attacked by artillery. Captain says there were several shots penetrated the block-house, killing and wounding a number. Nos. 5 and 6 were surrendered about 12 m. on the 24th. <ar77_520>

Block-house No. 7, double cased, garrisoned by Licut. J. J. Phifer and about 25 men of the **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**, was surrendered on the morning of the 25th without a fight. No artillery could be brought to bear on this block-house. Dense forest all around, through which no roads had been cut. I see no reason to justify this surrender.

Block-houses Nos. 7 and 8 were both double cased and at Sulphur trestle, that was also defended by a small earth-work in close proximity to both block-houses and trestle. This was defended by about 400 men of the **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**, 400 of the Third Tennessee Cavalry, and about 200 of the Ninth Indiana Cavalry. At this place a considerable fight took place. Our forces lost 107 men, among whom was Colonel Lathrop, of the **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**. They had exhausted most of their ammunition; in fact, the cavalry were entirely out and were forced to surrender. This rendered the block-houses useless, which were also surrendered on the 25th.

Block-house No. 10, doubled cased, was garrisoned by Capt. S. B. Akins, Company K, **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**, and 45 men. This was evacuated (whether with orders I am unable to say) without resistance.

Block-house No. 117 double cased up to loop-holes four days before the surrender. This was also evacuated without any resistance.

Sir, these are the facts of the surrender of the different posts on my section of the Nashville and Decatur Railroad. On the morning of the 24th I, with considerable effort, reached the fort at Athens. I went there for the purpose of helping defend the place, and was surrendered with the garrison.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. C. MARCH,

Lieut., 115th Ohio Vol. Infy., Asst. Inspector of Railroad Defenses.

Maj. J. R. WILLETT,

Inspector of Fortifications, Department of the Cumberland.

SEPTEMBER 16--OCTOBER 10, 1864.--Forrest's raid into Northern Alabama and Middle Tennessee.

No. 8.--Report of Col. Wallace Campbell, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry.

SAINT LOUIS, MO., *November 24, 1864.*

LIEUTENANT: I have the honor to submit the following report relative to the surrender of the fort and forces at Athens, Ala., on the 24th day of September, 1864, to Maj. Gen. N. B. Forrest, C. S. Army:

On the 23d day of September, 1864, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, was informed by ---- Burley, railroad employé that he had been down the railroad some four miles toward Decatur, Ala., and discovered a body of the enemy, as he supposed, some 200 or 300 strong, tearing up and destroying the track. I immediately ordered 100 men to report at the railroad depot, expecting every moment the evening train from Nashville. As soon as the train arrived, at 4 o'clock, placed my men on a car and started down the road, went four miles from town, found enemy on track, deployed skirmishers, and drove them. They had set fire to a small trestle. I pushed forward and extinguished the fire and crossed with the <ar77_521> train. About a mile farther discovered the enemy were on the track in my rear. I learned at this time, from citizens, that the enemy were in force, commanded by Col. Jesse Forrest. I immediately ordered the train back to town and drove them from the track as I returned. Found the track obstructed in several places. As I reached the outskirts of the town was attacked by enemy, some 1,000 strong; threw men off the train; ordered conductor to run train back under protection of blockhouse; engaged the enemy for one hour and fifteen minutes, losing 3 men killed and 4 wounded, when, discovering I could not drive them from town, fell back to the fort. I found, on reaching the fort, they had been engaging a large force on the south and southwest part of town. The quartermaster's and commissary stores being in town, about one-quarter of a mile from the fort, I took twenty men and went in town. At this time, as it was impossible to remove them, the quartermaster's stores were set on fire. I now put my men in commissary buildings, determined to hold them if possible. About 9 p.m. Lieutenant-Colonel Prosser, commanding Second Tennessee Volunteer Cavalry, with 500 men, reached the town. I ordered Colonel Prosser to charge down public square and drive enemy from depot. He declined to obey, saying he could not sacrifice his horses. I finally dismounted some thirty of the cavalry and, together with twenty colored infantry, charged down public square and drove them from the depot and extinguished the fire. I captured Surgeon Lauderdale, Fifteenth Tennessee (rebel) Regiment, and a private soldier of the same regiment. I learned from this private soldier that General Forrest, with his entire force, had invested the place, his force being estimated at from 10,000 to 12,000, with nine pieces of artillery. I now ordered all forces in town to the fort, burning all Government property. I ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Prosser to remain at or near the fort. He refused to obey, saying he did not think with his force the fort could be held. He was then ordered by Lieutenant Kneeland, acting assistant adjutant-general of General Granger's staff, to return to Decatur. I sent, by Colonel Prosser, word to General Granger what forces were investing the place. I also started two couriers with dispatches to General Starkweather, informing him of my condition. The one bearing the dispatches was murdered on the outskirts of town, shot after capture. The other escaped with wound through shoulder and returned to the fort. During the night was occasionally annoyed by sharpshooters firing, and could hear their artillery being brought into position.

Just after daylight on the morning of September 24, they opened on the fort with artillery from three different sides, casting almost every shell inside the works. I could not reach them with my 12-pounder howitzers, they being perfectly useless. The firing now ceased, 8 a.m., and I received the following communication from General Forrest:

HEADQUARTERS FORREST'S CAVALRY,
In the Field, September 24, 1864.

OFFICER COMMANDING U.S. FORCES,
Athens, Ala.:

I demand an immediate and unconditional surrender of the entire force and all Government stores and property at this post. I have a sufficient force to storm and take your works, and if I am forced to do so the responsibility of the consequences must rest with you. Should you, however,

accept the terms, all white soldiers shall be treated as prisoners of war and the negroes returned to their masters. A reply is requested immediately.

Respectfully,

N. B. FORREST,

Major-General, C. S. Army.

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I replied to him as follows:

HEADQUARTERS U.S. FENCES,
Athens, Ala., September 24, 1864.

Maj. Gen. N. B. FORREST,
Commanding Besieging Forces, Athens, Ala.:

GENERAL: I have the honor to decline your demand of this date.

WALLACE CAMPBELL,
Colonel One hundred and tenth U. S. Colored Infantry, Commanding.

I sent Lieut. Col. J. A. Dewey, **One hundred and eleventh Regiment U. S. Colored Infantry**, and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General William T. Lewis, to receive flag of truce. They met Major Strange, General Forrest's chief of staff, and Colonel Galloway, aide-de-camp, and held conversation with them. They said from conversation held with General Forrest they knew he was determined to take the fort, and if he was compelled to storm it no lives would be spared. I refused to comply with last demand as with first, when General Forrest sent in request for a personal interview, reading as follows:

ATHENS, September 24, 1864.

COLONEL: I desire an interview with you outside of the fort, at any place you may designate, provided it meets with your views. My only object is to stop the effusion of blood that must follow the storming of the place.

N. B. FORREST,

Major-General.

I immediately met General Forrest, accompanied by Lieut. Col. J.A. Dewey. General Forrest told me he was determined to take the place; that his force was sufficiently large, and have it he would, and if he was compelled to storm the works it would result in the massacre of the entire garrison. He told me what his force was, and said myself and one officer could have the privilege of reviewing his force. I returned to the fort, when, after consultation with the commanders of various detachments in the fort, it was decided that [if] after reviewing the force of General Forrest I found he had 8,000 or 10,000 troops, it would be worse than murder to attempt to hold the works. I then took Capt. B. M. Callender, First Missouri Light Artillery, and rode round his entire line, thereby satisfying myself and the captain accompanying me that there were at least 10,000 men and nine pieces of artillery. It was now 11 a.m. I had been "dilly-dallying" with General Forrest since 8 a.m. expecting re-enforcements would be sent from Decatur. Believing they could not reach me, I ordered the surrender of the fort. After the surrender I learned that a force of 350 men, composed of the Eighteenth Michigan Infantry and One hundred and second Ohio Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Elliott, of the One hundred and second Ohio, had been surrounded and captured below the town.

The following are the terms of capitulation:

Agreement entered into at Athens, Ala., on the 24th day of September, 1864, by Maj. Gen. N. B. Forrest, of the C. S. Army, and Col. Wallace Campbell, One hundred and tenth Regiment U. S. Colored Infantry.

We, on the part of our respective Governments, stipulate and agree that the following articles shall be faithfully executed and maintained:

On the part of the U.S. Government, by Col. Wallace Campbell, that the fort and United States and public Government property at this point be, and the same hereby are, surrendered to Maj. Gen. N. B. Forrest, of the C. S. Army.

On the part of the C. S. Government, by Maj. Gen. N. B. Forrest, that all commissioned officers surrendered or surrendering as above, be, and hereby are, permitted to go to Meridian or some other point in Mississippi, and the said officers shall, so soon as Major-General Forrest can communicate with Major-General Washburn, U.S. <ar77_523> Volunteers, be sent to Major-General Washburn or other commanding officer at Memphis, Tenn., to be retained on their paroles of honor not to act in opposition to the forces of the Confederate States until they are duly exchanged by Generals Washburn and Forrest, which exchange shall occur as speedily as possible. The exchange is to be conducted by an exchange of officers for officers of same rank, and man for man.

Again, said commissioned officers shall and hereby are permitted to retain and keep all their personal property, including horses, saddles, side-arms, and clothing. All this permanently.

Again, the enlisted men (soldiers) of Col. Wallace Campbell's command shall be kindly and humanely treated and turned over to the C. S. Government as prisoners of war, to be disposed of as the War Department of the Confederate States shall direct.

N. B. FORREST,

Major-General, Commanding, C. S. Army.

WALLACE CAMPBELL,

Colonel 110th U.S. Colored Infantry, Commanding.

About 2 p.m. we were marched south by Florence road. It is the opinion of officers in my command from conversations held with General Forrest and his officers that had the fort been stormed no lives would have been spared.

On the 21st day of September I sent Lieut. Col. J. B. Minnis, commanding Third Tennessee Cavalry, to scout in the direction of Florence, Ala., with instructions to send me courier in case of meeting the enemy or gathering any information, which he failed to do after having met the enemy at or near Rogersville, thereby leaving me perfectly ignorant and unprepared for the approach of such a force.

My force consisted of detachments from the following regiments: One hundred and sixth Regiment U.S. Colored Infantry, 105 men and 4 officers; One hundred and tenth Regiment U.S. Colored Infantry, 233 men and 17 officers; **One hundred and eleventh Regiment U.S. Colored Infantry, 80 men and 8 officers**; Third Regiment Tennessee Cavalry, 120 men and 4 officers. Total, 538 men 33 officers. Number of men unarmed, 140; number of muskets, 398.

I have the honor to be, lieutenant, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WALLACE CAMPBELL,

Colonel 110th U.S. Colored Infantry.

Lieut. J. D. HAZZARD,

Actg. Asst. Adj. Gen., U.S. Forces, Pulaski, Tenn.

ADDENDA.

ENTERPRISE, MISS., October 17, 1864.

We, the undersigned officers in the U.S. service, who were surrendered to Maj. Gen. N. B. Forrest, at Athens, Ala., on the 24th day of September, 1864, by Col. W. Campbell, commanding the post, feel it incumbent upon us to make known to the public the precise situation of affairs in the fort at the time, in order that the responsibility of the surrender may rest upon the proper persons, and also to place upon record our judgment as to the necessity of the surrender.

The fort was a strong one, well built, 1,350 feet in circumference, 17 feet from the bottom of the ditch to the top of the parapet, and encircled by both a palisade and an abatis of felled trees. It was considered by inspecting officers to be the strongest work between Nashville and Decatur.

The garrison at the time of surrender consisted of detachments from the One hundred and sixth, One hundred and tenth, and **One hundred and eleventh Regiments U.S. Colored Infantry**, numbering in the <ar77_524> aggregate 469 efficient men. In addition to the colored troops there were 150 men

belonging to the Third Tennessee Cavalry, and two 12-pounder howitzers. On the night of the 23d and 24th the colonel commanding caused nearly, if not quite, all the commissary stores at the post to be moved into the fortifications. These stores were thought ample for a siege of ten days. A well in the fort afforded a sufficient supply of water. As for the ammunition, there was at the time about 70,000 rounds elongated ball cartridges, and an ample supply for the carbines of the cavalrymen. For the howitzers there were 120 rounds each.

Our pickets were driven in at 5.30 p.m. of the 23d, and from that time until long past dark there was a good deal of skirmishing. The night was passed in making preparations to receive the enemy and getting provisions into the fort.

On the morning of the 24th, about 7 o'clock, the enemy opened fire on the fort, throwing solid shot and shell from a battery planted on the Buck Island road. Shortly after they opened on us another battery from the Brown's Ferry road. From these two batteries the enemy threw fifty-five or sixty shots. Of this number of shots twenty-four struck in the fort or buildings in the fort, causing the death of 1 man only, a non-combatant, and wounding 1 soldier. At 9 a.m. the enemy sent in a flag of truce demanding the surrender of the place; this was refused by Colonel Campbell. General Forrest then again demanded the surrender of the place, stating that he had ample force to take it and offering to show his force to Colonel Campbell. Colonel Campbell then called a council of officers commanding detachments, in which council, we are informed, but two officers voted in favor of a surrender, neither of whom had a command in the fort. Of the forty-five officers present in the fort at the time this council was held but eight were consulted, and of these eight there were several who had no command present with them in the fort, whilst officers who had the largest number of men under their charge were excluded. Colonel Campbell, after reviewing the forces of the enemy returned to the fort, saying, "The jig is up; pull down the flag," thus surrendering the best fortification on the line of the Nashville and Decatur Railroad.

We also feel it our duty to make mention of the bearing and disposition of the soldiers in the fort, both white and black. It was everything that any officer could wish of any set of men. So far from there being any disposition on the part of the men to surrender or to avoid a fight, it was just the reverse. Officers had to exert all their authority, even to threatening to shoot their own men, to restrain them from exposing themselves. The soldiers were anxious to try conclusions with General Forrest, believing that in such a work they could not be taken by ten times their number. When told that the fort had been surrendered, and that they were prisoners, they could scarcely believe themselves, but with tears demanded that the fight should go on, preferring to die in the fort they had made to being transferred to the tender mercies of General Forrest and his men. Another thing should be taken into consideration, which is that we were on the point of receiving re-enforcements.

While the truce was in operation and during the time occupied by Colonel Campbell in viewing the enemy's force, firing was heard on the Nashville and Decatur Railroad. This came from a force of our troops sent to our relief from Decatur, consisting of detachments from the Eighteenth Michigan and One hundred and second Ohio Infantry, numbering 360 men, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Elliott, of the One hundred and second Ohio, who was severely wounded. These brave men had forced their way through three lines of the enemy, were <ar77_525> within musket-range of the fort when our flag was lowered. The surrender of the fort allowed General Forrest to throw a portion of his force between the fort and them, thus compelling them to surrender after a hard fight of three hours' duration, during which they lost one-third of their number in killed and wounded, and after they had arrived almost at the very gates of our fort.

In conclusion we do not hesitate to say over our signatures that the surrender was uncalled for by the circumstances, was against our wishes, and ought not to have been made.

(Signed) S. W. Pickens, major Third Tennessee Cavalry; Lafayette Coile, captain Company I, Third Tennessee Cavalry; J. A. Goddard, captain Company H, Third Tennessee Cavalry; W. V. Cumming, first lieutenant Company K, Third Tennessee Cavalry; J. T. Homer, first lieutenant Company E, Third Tennessee Cavalry; J. J. Wade, first lieutenant Company B, Third Tennessee Cavalry; A. B. McTeer, lieutenant and regimental quartermaster, Third Tennessee Cavalry; Alfred C. Derrick, first lieutenant Company F, Third Tennessee Cavalry; C. L. Norvell, second lieutenant Company F, Third Tennessee Cavalry; Zene Harlan, captain, One hundred and sixth U.S. Colored Infantry; Benj. Beeson, first lieutenant, One hundred and sixth U.S. Colored Infantry; J. W. Sidwell, first lieutenant and regimental

quartermaster, One hundred and sixth Infantry; Ben. F. Woods-second lieutenant, One hundred and sixth U.S. Colored Infantry; Edward H. Chase, captain Company D, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; Norton W. Campbell, captain Company F, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; Zac. C. Wilson, captain Company H, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; Rich'd Atkin, first lieutenant Company K, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; Robt. McMillan, first lieutenant Company D, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; H. M. Sprague, first lieutenant Company I, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; H. E. Blinn, first lieutenant Company F, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; Chas. M. Linn, second lieutenant Company D, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; Jas. M. Mills, second lieutenant Company F, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; J. H. Lauchly, second lieutenant Company H, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; Win. A. Duck-worth, second lieutenant Company K, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; Thad. Donohue, surgeon, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; William King, chaplain, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry; W. H. Scroggs, captain, One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry; A. W. Forbes, captain, One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry; Wm. J. Harrod, first lieutenant, One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry; F. M. Crosson, first lieutenant, One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry; James H. Lunn, first lieutenant, One hundred and eleventh U. S. Colored Infantry; O. O. Poppleton, second lieutenant, One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry. <ar77_526>

We also respectfully request that a thorough and immediate investigation of the above statements be made, that our names may not be placed in the list of cowards in the general summing up of our nation's history.

Very respectfully, &c.,

OFFICERS THAT WERE SURRENDERED.

We would also respectfully request that permission be granted us to publish the original statement, of which [this is a] verbatim copy.

Very respectfully,

ROBERT McMILLAN,

*First Lieut., 110th U. S. Colored Infantry, Parole Camp,
Benton Barracks, Saint Louis, Mo.*

If permission should be granted please forward papers to the above-named officer.

**ADJUTANT-GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE
TENNESSEE,**

Nashville, Tenn.

O.R.--SERIES I--VOLUME XXXIX/1 [S# 77]

SEPTEMBER 16--OCTOBER 10, 1864.--Forrest's raid into Northern Alabama and Middle Tennessee.

No. 9.--Report of Brig. Gen. John C. Starkweather, U.S. Army.

HEADQUARTERS U.S. FORCES,
Pulaski, Tenn., October 1, 1864.

SIR: I have the honor most respectfully to submit the following report as to the disposition, movements, and part taken by my command in the late skirmishes and battles with General Forrest's forces:

The line being extensive, and nearly all my district defenses attacked from time to time, of necessity my report will be more lengthened than I wish it were. There are many minor details also which in justice to myself and command I am obliged to state in brief, in order that a perfect report may be laid before the general commanding.

On the 19th day of September I telegraphed Brigadier-General Granger that the enemy, 300 strong, were at Florence, and with other distributed commands the enemy were about 1,000 strong, gathering supplies, &c.

On the 21st day of September I telegraphed General Granger that Roddey had crossed the river the Sunday previous with four regiments at Bainbridge Ferry; that the information was from one of my own men who had been captured by them; that my command had driven Biffle, with command 400 strong, from Henryville in the direction of Clifton; that Johnson, with 400 men, was on Cathly Creek night of the 19th; that my forces had returned from pursuit of Biffle and confirmed Roddey's crossing, as already reported. I immediately telegraphed and sent the information to the different commands of my district, and ordered everything placed in good fighting trim and that the most obstinate resistance must be made by all.

Received dispatches on the 22d from General Granger saying he was satisfied as to my Biffle expedition, but to continue watching him and company. Telegraphed him immediately that Wheeler intended moving <ar77_531> in direction of Huntsville, and again confirmed my reports of the 21st; reported also that a number of bands of the enemy were passing west of Sulphur Branch trestle, and that my colored troops had skirmished with them. On the 23d Col. Wallace Campbell, One hundred and tenth U.S. Colored Infantry, commanding at Athens, dispatched me that enemy were tearing up track (railroad) two miles south of him, and that he should move down and drive them away; dispatched same information to Major-General Rousseau and General Granger, and stated that I would be ready to move at once; and almost immediately informed generals commanding that line was cut south.

Early on the morning of the 24th I dispatched General Rousseau that road had been struck near Athens; that at 5 p.m. on the 23d heavy artillery firing had been heard, with musketry intermingled, and at 7.30 p.m. a bright light as of burning buildings at Athens had been seen; that I had already moved all my mounted force to Sulphur Branch trestle and Elk River bridge, and that I would try and communicate with Athens by courier, and requested him to send the information to General Granger by way [of] Stevenson. Immediately sent another telegram that the enemy, 3,000 strong, passed through Rogersville at 10 a.m. on 23d instant making for the railroad; that the Third [Second] Tennessee Cavalry, Colonel Presser commanding, had skirmished with the enemy at 2 p.m. the day previous; that I had informed General Granger of the crossing of Roddey on Sunday previous with four regiments, and to inform General Granger of this news also; that my mounted force had moved to the bridges at 3 a.m. that morning, under command of Col. Thomas N. Pace, Tenth Indiana Cavalry. In the mean time I had received dispatches from Colonel Lathrop, at Sulphur Branch trestle, informing me of the arrival at that post of Lieutenant-Colonel Minnis with Third Tennessee Cavalry, on his way to Athens; that the firing in direction of Athens had continued that morning (24th), and that he, Colonel Lathrop, would send forward for information. At this time I received the following dispatch, dated 24th, at Nashville, and signed by command of Major-General Rousseau:

General Granger telegraphs, via Stevenson, that the force on the road below Pulaski is about 200 strong, and that Colonel Presser is after them; have a few scouts toward the Tennessee River.

Same being immediately followed by the following telegram, dated at Nashville, 24th, by command of Major-General Rousseau:

General Granger telegraphs this morning that the enemy 200 strong struck the road near Athens last evening and burned a house there; he also says a small party was near Decatur; he

seems to be waiting for you to attend to the party at Athens. You will attack the enemy vigorously on the road wherever he may be, and please keep us posted.

To which I replied, acknowledging receipt of the two dispatches, and stated that they seemed inconsistent with each other, but that I would fight the enemy if found; that the information which I had already sent was entitled to weight, being from an officer of Colonel Prosser's regiment, who had already met and skirmished with the enemy at 2 p.m. the day previous; that I had ordered Colonel Pace forward to find and attack the enemy, but not to uncover the bridges. I also informed my officers commanding below of the dispatches received as to the 200 men. At about noon same day I dispatched to General Rousseau the information received from Colonel Spalding, dated on the 23d, that Forrest with 8,000 men and eight pieces of artillery passed toward Athens the day previous; that he camped at Rogersville night of 22d. I immediately countermanded my order to Colonel Pace, as to finding and fighting [the enemy](#), and ordered him to hold the two bridges, and keep open communications. I immediately placed the command in fighting trim and superintended arrangements of fort, court-house, &c., by having supplies of water, rations, and ammunition placed therein. At or near the regular hour trains arrived from Nashville; ordered them to await my orders before moving; telegraphed and asked for orders for the trains, and received dispatch, dated at Nashville 24th, by command of General Rousseau, saying:

If Forrest, with 8,000 men, is on the road, it is deemed unsafe for the trains bound south to proceed, but it is left with you to decide.

I thereupon ordered the trains to return to Nashville and telegraphed General Rousseau that Lieutenant-Colonel -----, Third Tennessee Cavalry, and a captured man of Ninth Indiana Cavalry corroborated all I had already dispatched. Received dispatch by courier from Colonel Pace that Athens had surrendered, and that he was disposing his troops so as to hold the bridges. Informed General R[ousseau] of the fact and that I had no men to re-enforce those posts further, Colonel Spalding's command still being absent and not being under my orders. My effective force at Pulaski, after re-enforcing the bridges with my mounted command, at this time consisted of 23 officers and 519 men, of whom 50 acted upon courier lines, 35 were at the fort guns, and 166 men, with proper officers, were on duty as interior and grand guards, leaving 16 officers and 263 men to perform all the camp and garrison duties outside of special-duty men, all of whom were placed under arms in the courthouse and rifle-pits. Soon as Colonel S[palding] arrived I telegraphed the fact, with the further information that Forrest, Roddey, Biffle, and Wheeler were supposed to be concentrated; that enemy were on this side of Athens, moving rapidly, and that I would send Colonel S. to reenforce the bridges, which I did by assuming the responsibility and issuing a peremptory order to Colonel S. to move at once with his command. This was at 2 a.m. morning of 25th, his command having arrived the night previous at 9 p.m. Telegraphed General Rousseau that he had moved, and for re-enforcements to be hurried forward. Received dispatch, dated on 24th, at Nashville, by order General Rousseau, that General Croxton with brigade of cavalry would move from Franklin at daylight in morning, and that Colonel Jones would leave Nashville at same hour with 1,300 men and a battery; to which I replied, asking that they might move at once, and that then it would be too late, as it was; to hurry them up, I needed them badly. Received dispatch from General Granger, dated 24th, to hold on, that he would join me on the morrow with heavy re-enforcements. Having courier lines established between Sulphur Branch trestle and Pulaski I ordered the most desperate resistance to be made and not to surrender, giving the commandants the information that re-enforcements would arrive soon. Troops were properly posted for making a stubborn defense of this post, and everything, under the circumstances, placed in as good shape as could possibly be. Thus matters continued during the 25th, my forces continually skirmishing and

fighting with the enemy, contesting all the ground as well as the strength of the force would allow, slowly retiring from point to point as they were outflanked or overpowered by the enemy's forces.

On the morning of the 25th I was relieved from my command and ordered to turn the same over to the next ranking officer. Colonel Jackson, Ninth Indiana Cavalry, assumed command, by my orders, until the return of Colonel Pace, Tenth Indiana Cavalry, when he, being the ranking officer, assumed command. <ar77_533>

Re-enforcements began arriving on the 26th at about 12 m. My forces, under Colonel Spalding, were then fighting, and being driven back slowly; re-enforcements were sent to their support, and reported to Colonel Spalding, commanding, at dark on the 26th instant.

On the 27th the engagement became pretty general, and when the troops were rapidly leaving the field in confusion and disorder, I was, at 12 m., ordered to reassume command, and arrange town and other matters for a stubborn defense. Staff and self immediately set to work, and so continued doing our duty to the best of our ability, and, as I believe, with beneficial results.

Col. Wallace Campbell, commanding at Athens, had a fine force of able-bodied, well-disciplined colored troops, with a fine fort, almost impregnable, with two pieces of artillery, and without that fighting or showing that valor and courage that I expected at his hands, he surrendered his entire command on the morning of the 24th, much to my disgust and to that of his whole command, and, as facts now show, if he had held out even for a short time longer re-enforcements would have reached him, as they were then moving rapidly to his assistance, some arriving just after the surrender of the fort and in time to be captured by the enemy. There may be some reason for this surrender, but with my imperative orders to hold out and fight to the last, he did not do it, and he now being a prisoner I am unable to give the general commanding any definite information upon the subject, only to say that in my judgment it was a disgraceful surrender, not only on account of it in itself, but because it infused a spirit of disappointment and demoralization into the balance of his command in block-houses not yet under fire. After the surrender of Athens the prisoners and artillery were sent to and crossed over the Tennessee River, and the enemy moved on against low trestle or Block-house No. 6, commanded by Lieut. John J. Phifer, Company K, **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**, which was also basely surrendered without firing a gun.

Colonel Lathrop, before the surrender of Athens, sent his mounted (force) men under Major Lilly, Ninth Indiana Cavalry, toward the town, and finding it surrounded retired his force upon Sulphur Branch trestle, where, as he dispatches me at 4 a.m., morning of 25th, he intended to make a desperate resistance. Major Lilly, Ninth Indiana Cavalry, with 196 officers and men, Colonel Minnis, Third Tennessee, with about 300 men mounted, were reluctantly ordered by the brave Colonel Lathrop into the fort to help defend it--deprecating this move, in my judgment, in a military point of view, yet believing that Colonel L[athrop] deemed it the best thing to do under the circumstances, it was done; and here was made a stand worthy of the highest praise. With a fort badly constructed, not fully completed, two guns worked by men not artillerymen, but drilled for the purpose from the infantry command, a greatly superior force attacking with much artillery, was fought a battle worth its niche among the well-contested battles of the war; but all was of no avail. The brave Colonel L. fell, killed by the second shot; Colonel Minnis took command and he too was struck down, but rallying fought on bravely and well; ammunition became short and surrender stared them in the face. Colonel Spalding with his small command were inadequate for the occasion. They could not succor them against the overwhelming forces of the enemy, and as brave men they were compelled finally to surrender to a vastly superior force, after suffering heavy loss, and inflicting a much more severe loss upon the enemy. The bridge was then destroyed and enemy moved on. Prisoners and artillery being sent across the river, Colonel S[palding] <ar77_534> fell back slowly to Elk River

bridge, ordering men at next blockhouse to evacuate and fall back and report at Elk River block-house. Colonel S. finding himself being flanked on his right and left, by the enemy crossing at the fords above and below him, felt compelled to abandon the bridge and fall back to save his command from capture, first ordering the colored troops and their commanders to hold blockhouse long as possible, as he expected to have re-enforcements in the morning, and would undoubtedly reoccupy the ground, which they did not do, leaving with, if not before, the cavalry at or about 3 in the morning. Bridge was destroyed and enemy moved on, Colonel S. falling back slowly and fighting as he retired. Block-houses and bridges one after another were struck by the enemy and destroyed. No fighting of any consequence being done by any of the colored troops at any of them, except tunnel trestle, on the 26th, where quite a fair stand was made. The troops continued falling back slowly until the arrival of re-enforcements on the 26th, when they (the re-enforcements) took up position at dark and allowed my troops to proceed to Pulaski, where they camped for the night, and finally, on the 27th, the engage-meet became quite general, and lasted nearly all day, my same mounted command being engaged with various successes, our troops falling back and forming battle line on east side of the town, upon which the last shot was fired.

On morning of the 28th the enemy were found gone. Colonel Spalding's command was ordered to find out direction taken by the enemy, which he did and then returned to this post.

My casualties have been large, particularly in captured men, and the same are given in accordance with the best post data at my disposal.

For the particular parts taken by the separate commands I most respectfully refer the general commanding to the reports of the several officers, forwarded herewith and made a part hereof. (*)

Outside of the colored troops (and excepting them at Sulphur Branch trestle and tunnel trestle, and believing they would have fought at Athens if opportunity had been given them) the command has fought bravely and well, and is entitled to credit.

Many officers and men particularly distinguished themselves, but where all did so well it would be invidious to particularize; yet in the case of Col. W. H. Lathrop, who fell so gallantly fighting at his post, with the last words upon his lips, "Do not surrender the fort," I feel that I shall be pardoned in mentioning his name as one of the gallant and most noble men of my command, who, although dead, yet lives, and to whom reference can be made as a bright example for all to pattern after.

To my staff officers, orderlies, and scouts I have to make my acknowledgment for the promptness and efficiency exhibited by them during the many trying days through which we passed.

And in conclusion, I desire most particularly to thank the actresses, Miss Ada Gray and Mrs. Lowry, who of their own accord administered to the wants of the wounded men in hospital during many days and nights.

Respectfully,

JOHN C. STARKWEATHER,

Brigadier-General, Commanding.

O.R.--SERIES I--VOLUME XXXIX/1 [S# 77]

SEPTEMBER 16--OCTOBER 10, 1864.--Forrest's raid into Northern Alabama and Middle Tennessee.

No. 12.--Report of Col. George W. Jackson, Ninth Indiana Cavalry.

PULASKI, *September 25, 1864--1 p.m.*

I have just received a dispatch from Colonel Lathrop, commanding Sulphur Branch, Ala., in which he says Block-house No. 6, at low <ar77_539> trestle, was disgracefully surrendered last evening by Second Lieut. John J. Phifer, **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**. One man escaped. Reports he saw a line half a mile long, undoubtedly a heavy force; they advanced along the railroad, destroying the track; were then (6.30 this a.m.) advancing on him (Lathrop) in heavy force; so pickets reported. Lathrop's dispatch was indorsed by Colonel Spalding, Elk River bridge. 8.30 this a.m., as follows: "I will move to Sulphur trestle immediately." Major Lilly reports fighting for the bridge. Have just received a dispatch from Captain Robbins, Elk River, in command there, at 11 this a.m. He reports Forrest moving his force in the direction of Pulaski from Elkton. We have but small force here to hold out against a superior force, but will hold out to the last. Surrender is not in our vocabulary. I have sent my mounted men, thirty in number, with scouts, in the direction of Elkton, to ascertain the truth of Captain Robbins' report.

GEO. W. JACKSON,

Colonel, Commanding.

Maj. B. H. POLK,
Assistant Adjutant-General.

O.R.--SERIES I--VOLUME XXXIX/2 [S# 79]

UNION CORRESPONDENCE, ORDERS, AND RETURNS RELATING TO OPERATIONS IN KENTUCKY, SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA, TENNESSEE, MISSISSIPPI, ALABAMA, AND NORTH GEORGIA (THE ATLANTA CAMPAIGN EXCEPTED), FROM OCTOBER 1, 1864, TO NOVEMBER 13, 1864.

HUNTSVILLE, *October 22, 1864--9.50 p.m.*

Major-General THOMAS:

In answer to your telegram of to-day I report my command as follows: At Decatur--One hundred and second Ohio Infantry, Eighteenth Michigan Infantry, eight companies of Tenth Indiana, Second Tennessee Cavalry; Battery A, First Tennessee Artillery; Battery F, First Ohio; Battery D, Second Illinois Artillery; total effective force, artillery, infantry, <ar79_403> and cavalry, 1,745. At Huntsville---six companies Thirteenth Indiana Cavalry; Battery D, First Missouri Light Artillery; Companies C and D, Twelfth Indiana Cavalry; total, 475. On railroad from Huntsville to Stevenson--Thirteenth Wisconsin Infantry, 320; Eleventh Indiana (four companies), 255 men, and Company H, Twelfth Indiana Cavalry, 32. On Tennessee River, at Whitesburg---detachment Thirteenth Wisconsin, 36. At Claysville--two companies Thirteenth Wisconsin Battalion, 21 for duty; 180 Thirteenth Wisconsin, time expires November 13. At Athens and in block-houses at Huntsville---Seventy-third Indiana Infantry; one company of same regiment at Triana; total, 360. At Pulaski--four companies Tenth Indiana Cavalry; detachments One hundred and sixth, One hundred and tenth, and **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry**, three companies. At Columbia and from Grace's Trestle to Thompson's Station---detachment First Brigade, Second Cavalry Division, 997; detachment Second Brigade,

Second Cavalry Division, 558; detachment Third Brigade, Second Cavalry Division, 682; 2,237. Above numbers give effective force. If a more detailed report is required it can be forwarded immediately.

R. S. GRANGER,

Brigadier-General.

U. S. ARMY - SERIES P - VOLUME 1000 - PART 1

MARCH 10, 1865.--Skirmish near Boyd's Station, Ala.

Report of Lieut. Frederick Becker, One hundred and eleventh U. S. Colored Infantry.

BOYD'S STATION, ALA., March 11, 1865.

ADJUTANT: I herewith very respectfully report to you a skirmish that took place last evening before dark on ground between here and Woodville Station. About 4 o'clock some firing was heard below the gap about one mile from here. I immediately ordered eight men, under charge of Sergt. M. Bell, Company E, One hundred and first U.S. Colored Infantry, to investigate the matter. When they came to the gap they found five men from the next station below driven into the cut half a mile from here, where the guerrillas thought to capture them. My boys, accompanied by these five men, immediately charged the guerrillas, the number of the latter being about eight, and drove <ar103_85> them, but as the guerrillas were mounted my men could not get in fair range of them. They fought them until night. Report one of the guerrillas wounded or dead, as saw him fall from his horse. The railroad working party were plundered about 3 o'clock on the same ground by the same guerrillas, and further they were ordered not to be found working on the railroad any more. One of their party, a colored boy, was carried off by the guerrillas, and they made him run before their horses with cocked revolvers behind him. What they did with the men is not known; they were not to be seen when the train passed.

I am, adjutant, very respectfully, your humble servant,

FREDERICK BECKER,

First Lieutenant, Commanding Defenses.

Lieut. WILLIAM M. SCOTT,

Acting Assistant Adjutant-General.

O.R.--SERIES II--VOLUME VIII [S# 121]

UNION AND CONFEDERATE CORRESPONDENCE, ORDERS, ETC., RELATING TO
PRISONERS OF WAR AND STATE FROM JANUARY 1, 1865, TO THE END.--#2

HEADQUARTERS 111TH U.S. COLORED INFANTRY,
Nashville, Tenn., January 5, 1865.

Maj. Gen. B. F. BUTLER,
Commanding Department of East Virginia:

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that I have in my possession a copy of the Mobile Advertiser and Register of October, 1864, which contains a printed order from D. H. Maury, major-general, C. S. Army, giving the names of about 570 of our colored soldiers who belong to the One hundred and sixth, One hundred and tenth, and **One hundred and eleventh U.S. Colored Infantry Regiments**, and notifying the former owners of said soldiers that they were at that time employed by the engineer department at Mobile, Ala., and for the owners to report and receive the pay due for the soldiers' services. If you desire me to send you the paper which contains the order, or a copy of the order, I will do so.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

O. O. POPPLETON,
Lieutenant and Acting Adjutant, 111th U.S. Colored Infantry.