

**SHERMAN'S MARCH THROUGH FAIRFIELD COUNTY**  
(Taken from The Chester News, July 30, 1953)

"Having utterly ruined Columbia," says General Sherman in his Memoirs, "the right wing began its march northward..."

At Winnsboro he found General Slocum with the left wing who had come by way of Alston.

In an order written, "In the Field, near Columbia," Sherman's strategy was to stimulate a movement on Charlotte in order to deceive the Confederates and leave Beauregard to concentrate his forces at Charlotte but actually to have the Union Army execute a turning movement to the Eastward and direct its march on Fayetteville, N. C. From Fayetteville it would be an easy matter to establish water communication with the Union Garrison at Wilmington... The strategy of General Sherman produced the results which he expected.

General Beauregard, who was in Chief Command of the scattered detachments of the Confederate Army in the Southeast, dropped back from Columbia toward Charlotte, and was followed by Wheeler and Butler's Cavalry under the command of Lieut. General Hampton.

The remnants of Hood's army, under Cheatham, Stephen Lee and Stewart, were drifting across Georgia and upper South Carolina and were also directed on Charlotte.

In the meantime Sherman's army executed a grand wheel to the right, pivoting on Muddy Springs (a point about 13 miles North-east of Columbia, not far from the Camden road), and swept through Fairfield county to the crossing of the Wateree (or Catawba river) at Peay's Ferry and Rocky Mount (Fairfield county.)

The extreme left element of the wheeling army consisted of Kilpatrick's Cavalry which passed through Western Fairfield and the lower part of Chester county and crossed the Catawba at Rocky Mount.

For several days nearly every road in Fairfield county (and lower Chester county) was congested with the movement of these marching columns.

They filled the East and West roads as well as those of the North and South; and Fairfield was foraged upon and burned more thoroughly, perhaps, than any other county in the march of the Army north from Savannah...

Each Corps consisted of three or four infantry divisions. The Cavalry Division was commanded by Major General Judson Kilpatrick. General Sherman's headquarters traveled near the center, and with whichever wing of the Army as best suited his plan.

The axis of advance of Bogan's Corps of the Right Wing was north along the railroad from Columbia to Winnsboro. His rate of march was slow due to his task of destroying completely the railroad...

General Sherman arrived at Winnsboro on the afternoon of the 21st. At 6:00 p.m., he wrote to General Howard, who was at Dr. Boyd's (about 6 miles east of Winnsboro): "General Slocum and Davis are here. Slocum sends his pontoons and wagons tomorrow straight for the ferry at Rocky Mount P. O. by Gladden's Grove. He will keep four divisions breaking road up as far as the Chester district line and aim to cross his whole command the day after tomorrow. Let Blair finish up the road good to this point and assemble at Poplar Springs and effect a crossing of the Wateree, prepared to get all across the day after tomorrow. Slocum will assemble his command at Gladden's Communicate with me there or at Gladden's.

On February 22nd the movements of the Fourteenth Corps were

directed as follows:--General Carlin from Adger's to Springwell Post Office and destroy the railroad from that point back to Youngsville; General Baird to White Oak and destroy the railroad from that point to Youngsville; General Morgan with the trains and reserve artillery to march via White Oak to Wateree church. In the Twentieth Corps General Geary's division continued to occupy Winnsboro and destroy the railroad between Winnsboro and White Oak. The other two divisions with the Artillery and trains marched via Wateree church to Rocky Mount and started the construction of a pontoon bridge at that point.

On the night of the 22nd General Davis, of the Fourteenth Corps had his headquarters at the Douglas house near Blackstock; Kilpatrick was also at the Douglas house; General Geary was at Wateree church. All the rest of the forces of the Left Wing were near Rocky Mount, and those of the Right Wing were crossing at Peay's Ferry.

General Howard completed the passage of the Right Wing across the river at Peay's Ferry on February 23rd. However the passage of the Left Wing at Rocky Mount was not so easy. The famous "Sherman Freshet" was on; the pontoon bridge was swept away and all of the troops did not get across until February 28th.

General Sherman's headquarters until the 24th was at James G. Johnson's house at Rocky Mount. On that day he moved on to join his advanced troops which were marching on Cheraw.

General Kilpatrick remained at Lancaster until the 28th covering the left flank of his cavalry.

#### Confederate

During the retirement of the Confederate forces from Columbia to Charlotte General Beauregard was in supreme command, with Lieut. General Hampton in command of the forces actively delaying the advance of the Federals.

Beauregard was at Ridgeway on February 17th and 18th, while Governor Magrath was at Winnsboro. On the 19th Beauregard stopped for luncheon at Winnsboro and then moved on to White Oak where he spent the night. The next day he established his headquarters at Chester and remained there for two days and then moved to Charlotte. On February 22 General Joseph E. Johnson superseded him in command.

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Captain John Mattocks was one of the heroes who fell at King's Mountain. His family resided a few miles below Armstrong's Ford on the south fork of the Catawba River, at what is known as "Allison's Old Place". His whole family was noted for its stoutness. He had three brothers and two sisters, Sallie and Barbara. John and Charles were staunch Whigs, but Edward was a Tory. All of them fought at Kings Mountain, John was killed early in the action, and Edward or "Ned", the Tory brother, was among the severely wounded. Charles, fearing his brother would be hanged with other Tories who suffered this penalty, interceded in his behalf, took him home and nursed him until his recovery. This extraction of blood, so effectually performed by the gallant Whigs cured "Ned" Mattocks of Toryism. After the Revolution, the whole family moved to Georgia, where they have plenty of descendants. Captain Mattocks, with William Rabb and John Boyd, is buried in a common grave at the foot of the mountain with a simple headstone of slate rock.

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