



## Two Wings of Sherman's Army

Sherman's army consisted of a right wing and a left wing. It also consisted of cavalry units. The right wing consisting of the 15th and 17th Corps. **This wing consisted of 26,618** soldiers. This wing entered Fairfield from the south and the southeast. The right wing also had the burden of tending to many camp followers, and stragglers. The left wing consisted of the 14th and 20th corps. This corps entered Fairfield County on the western side, crossing the Broad River. **The left wing consisted of 26,716** soldiers, General Sherman himself traveling with the left wing. The cavalry units entered Fairfield on the western side. They moved around quite a bit in the county skirmishing with Confederate units, and trying to confuse the Confederates of where the army was heading. **The Cavalry units consisted of 4,436** soldiers. The total number of soldiers entering Fairfield County was **57,770**. There were also many Confederate prisoners being carried with them as well. ( Many slaves and northern sympathizers also followed the army. )

# The Fourteenth Corps Moves into Fairfield Co.

February 19th, Crossed over Broad river on pontoon into Fairfield and marched to Thompsons Post Office and halted for dinner. Two regiments were sent to tear up the railroad. The remainder of the division was sent to the junction of Alston and Monticello road and camped for the night at 4p.m. February 20th, Moved from the junction of Alston and Monticello roads at 6:30a.m., via Johnston's and Ebenezer Church, to Little River. Bridge over Little River partially destroyed; Crossed part of troops on temporary bridge (Built From Floorboards of Ebenezer Church). All troops and wagon trains crossed and in camp by 4p.m. February 21st, Marched eleven miles and reached Winnsboro at 10:30a.m. Halted outside of town, The Twentieth Corps having possession of the town, taking all tobacco and everything else which our advance had placed under guard, arresting both men and officers, who were doing simply their duty; moved to the north side of town and halted two hours for rest and dinner. Moved at 2p.m. and camped at 4:30p.m. on Adger's place, five miles from Winnsboro. February 22nd, Moved from Adgers at 6:30a.m., via White Oak, to Black Stocks Station, on the railroad. Found a division of Kirpatrick's Cavalry here. Commenced tearing up railroad soon after 12n., and after destroying three miles, marched back to Chester Road and camped at crossroads at William's place at 5p.m. February 23rd, Marched at 6a.m., via Gladdens Grove Post Office, to near Rocky Mount Post Office on the Catawba River. Camped on Doctor Scott's place at 3p.m. having marched sixteen miles. February 24th, No changes, rain all day. February 25, No changes, rain all day, waiting for completion of pontoon bridge. February 26th, Moved at 1p.m. from Scott's place and took position about a half mile from the Catawba River. February 27th, Daring attack made on our pickets about 10a.m., several men were captured outside the lines. Reconnaissance made by two regiments of the First Brigade to recover wagons of pontoon train. One wagon was found burned, the other eight abandoned. February 28th, Rain all night. Bridge done, troops crossing all day. Sixty-Ninth Ohio Volunteers was left as rear guard on west side of river. Rebel Cavalry followed close up, and this regiment skirmished for two hours with them. Battery C opened up with five, or six rounds and scattered them. P 446-447.

## Facts and Figures

Fourteenth Corps consisted of the following: 571 Infantry Officers, 12,192 Infantry Soldiers, 7 Artillery Officers, and 438 Artillery Soldiers.

## The Twentieth Corps Moves into Fairfield Co.

February 20th, We crossed Broad River, and taking to the right we crossed Little River and camped on Morris Creek, on the Winnsboro Road. On the following morning we pushed forward to Winnsboro, which was occupied without opposition. Before reaching the place, several buildings seen to be on fire. Geary, who had the advance, was ordered to hurry a brigade and, if possible, save the town, which, after much effort, was successfully accomplished. Two of Geary's Brigade were put to work destroying the railroad track toward White Oak. Two divisions marched through town and camped on Beaver Dam Creek. February 22, We moved rapidly with an unencumbered division toward Rocky Mount Ferry, on the Wateree, in the hope of cutting the column of Butler's Cavalry, reported as marching across our line. The advance reached Rocky Mount Ferry, at 3p.m. without encountering the enemy. Detachments were sent across the river without opposition. The wagon trains, including nearly 250 Cavalry wagons, which have been with us the entire march, were delayed the whole night by heavy hills and bad roads. The pontoon wagons arrived at 4:30p.m. February 23, The bridge being laid, and the steep, rocky road on each end repaired as far as practicable, I began crossing at 7a.m. P583.

### Facts and Figures

The Twentieth Corps consisted of the following: 610 Infantry Officers, 12,300 Infantry Soldiers, 23 Artillery Officers, and 481 Artillery Soldiers.

Grand Total=13,414

## **The Fifteenth Corps Moves into Fairfield Co.**

February 20, The corps marched north in the direction of Winnsboro, leaving leaving the railroad and line of march of the Seventeenth Corps far to the left. Owing to the scarcity of water in the neighborhood of Muddy Springs the troops were moved several miles further than intended, and camped on Rice Creek. The rear guard of the army had been drawn from this division, and before leaving Columbia General Woods had driven all stragglers and camp followers in front and moved his command from the city in good order. February 21, The same movement was continued in the morning. The country was hilly and barren. Little forage for man or animal could be procured. The corps encamped three divisions on Dutchmans Creek. General Wood's division was at Longtown camping on the Winnsboro and Camden road. The next day the corps moved to the Wateree River, the left column, via Poplar Springs, to Peays Ferry. At this place it was directed to cross the river. General Woods was instructed to move along the road to Mickles' Ferry, demonstrate at that crossing, but moving his command to Peay's Ferry by the most direct left hand road. No signs of the enemy were discovered at either crossing, and the pontoon was laid without interruption. One division crossed taking a position on the opposite side of the river. The rest of the corps camped, ready to cross in the morning. February 23, The rest of the corps crossed the river. P228-229.

### **Facts and Figures**

The Fifteenth Corps consisted of the following: 733 Infantry Officers, 14,076 Infantry Soldiers, 2 Cavalry Officers, 12 Cavalry Soldiers, 14 Artillery Officers, 348 Artillery Soldiers, and many refugees.

**Grand Total=15,185**

# The Seventeenth Corps Moves into Fairfield Co.

February 20, The command moved without opposition to Doko(Blythewood) station, seventeen miles north of Columbia. Details were engaged destroying railroad up to this point. The following morning one brigade was detached from each division with orders to move along and destroy the railroad. The balance of the command moved, via Sandy Level Church, to a point where we again struck the railroad, five miles south of Winnsboro(Simpson). At this place the detached brigades rejoined their divisions. The railroad was thoroughly destroyed to this point. Early on the following morning heavy details were at work destroying the railroad up to Winnsboro. The command then moved and camped at Poplar Springs. February 23, The command moved forward and very soon struck the rear of the Fifteenth Corps at the pontoon bridge at Peay's Ferry, on the Wateree River. The rear of the Fifteenth Corps crossed the pontoon at 3p.m. We followed, the advance division arrived in Liberty Hill about dark. The third division was unable to get everything over before morning.

## Facts and Figures

The Seventeenth Corps consisted of the following. 441 Infantry Officers, 10,675 Infantry Soldiers, 4 Cavalry Officers, 42 Cavalry Soldiers, 5 Artillery Officers, and 266 Artillery Soldiers.

**Grand Total=11,433**

## Camps of Western Fairfield County-Feb.-1865\*

P531 Camped at Freshley's Ferry.

P546 Works thrown up one mile from Freshley's to the left of the road.

P455 Crossed Broad River and camped at Gibson's Meeting House.

P815 Crossed Broad River, moved out on Winnsboro Road, camped on left.

P550 Camped at plantation of Mrs.. A Johnston, 1.5 miles before Little River.

P115 Camped at Alston Station.

P446 Camped at the junction of the Alston and Monticello roads.

P111 Camped at Ebenezer Church.

P540 Camped at Little River.

P546 Camped near Kinkaid's Bridge, on Little River.

P455 Crossed Little River and camped one half mile from crossing.

P583 Forded Little River and encamped on Morris Creek on Winnsboro Road.

P662 Camped on Myrtle Hill, between Little River and Winnsboro.

P516 Camped near Thompsons Post Office, five miles from Freshley's.

P482 Camped at Thompson's house, between Broad and Little Rivers.

P805 Camped near Thompson's Post Office..

P516 Camped at Longrun, five miles Northwest of Thompson's.

P769 Camped on Owen's Farm, at Kinkaid's Crossroads

P707 Camped at crossroads near Kinkaid's house.

P859 Cavalry camped at Monticello

\* Grouped as to areas.

## Camps of Central Fairfield County-Feb.-1865\*

P662 Camped three miles beyond Winnsboro.

P583 Marched through Winnsboro and camped on Beaver Dam Creek.

P115 Camped three miles beyond Winnsboro on the railroad.

P805 Camped three miles beyond Winnsboro on the Rocky Mount Road.

P455 Camped at junction of Chester Courthouse Rd. and Rocky Mount Rd.

P656 Camped three miles east of Winnsboro.

P815 Camped on very high hill, three miles from Winnsboro.

P431 General Sherman's Headquarters in Winnsboro.

P687 Brevet General Pardee's Brigade directed to occupy Winnsboro.

P765 Camped in Winnsboro.

P115 Camped at Youngsville at the forty- six mile post.

P765 Camped at Youngsville, three miles north of Winnsboro.

P491 Camped six miles from Winnsboro and two and half from railroad. Turners.

P446 Camped on Adgers place, five miles out of Winnsboro.

P885 Cavalry camped near Adger's Turnout.

P455 Camped on railroad six miles north of Winnsboro.

P479 Camped near White Oak Turnout.

P740 Camped at White Oak Station.

P558 Camped near the Concord Church, near White Oak.

P452 Camped at Black Stocks Station.

P885 Cavalry camped at Black Stock Station

P446 Camped at crossroads at Wilsons, south of Blackstock on the Chester Road.

P 96 Camped at Simpsons Turnout.

P98 Camped at Simpson's Station.

\* Grouped as to areas.

## Camps of Eastern Fairfield County-Feb.-1865\*

P245 Camped in the vicinity of Longtown.

P 84 Camped at Harrison's Crossroads.

P347 Camped on Harrison's Plantation.

P 79 Camped on Dutchmans Creek.

P281 Crossed Dutchmans Creek and camped.

P 92 Camped at Poplar Springs.

P380 Camped at Poplar Springs.

P345 Camped at Wateree Creek Bridge, near Peay's Ferry.

P 87 Camped at Peay's Ferry.

P546 Camped close to Wateree Creek (Fosters Bridge) on White Oak side.

P687 Camped at Wateree Church.

P491 Camped at Wateree Church, Headquarters at Harpers.

P516 Camped on the west bank of the Catawba River.

P122 Camped at Rocky Mount Post Office.

P447 Camped on Dr. Scott's Place.

P455 Camped at mouth of Rocky Mount Creek and the Catawba River.

\*Grouped as to areas.



## **Additonal Fairfield Camps - Part II Correspondence**

### **Western Fairfield County Camps**

P480 Camp at Larkin's Mill, near Pearson's Island, 2 miles upriver from Alston

P481 Camp at the point where left hand road from Thompsons to Monticello intersects with the road from Alston.

P489 Cross Little River and camp at forks of road beyond.

P507 Camped at Mrs. ONeal's house.

### **Central Fairfield County Camps**

P533 Camped at Douglas House, near Black Stocks Station

P533 Camped at Springwell, on railroad, and across J.Y. Mills house, on Little Rocky Creek

### **Eastern Fairfield County Camps**

P514 Camped 400 yards east of Dutchman's Creek Crossing,

P515 Camped on the South bank of Dutchman's Creek.

## Skirmishing at Rocky Mount

P240-Some skirmishing took place here(Rocky Mount)with the enemy's cavalry in our rear. **One man killed**, and two men wounded.

P452-Butler's **Rebel cavalry, in considerable force**, for a number of days were scouting about our camp, capturing a few of our foragers. They attempted no regular advance on our line until February 28th, at 12 m.n. They moved forward, and opened a lively skirmish with my pickets. This continued until I withdrew my Brigade and crossed the river.

P455-Camping at Rocky Mount Creek, I ordered a detail of mounted foragers from this regiment to join a similar detail from the Indiana Regiments to gather substinance from the surrounding country. The detail crossed the Rocky Mount Bridge near camp and moved up the road by Cloud's house, near which the details separated. The detail from this regiment headed towards Stroud's Mill. Near the mill the detail was attacked by a force of the Rebel's Cavalry. **One officer and eight privates were captured**. The rest of the detail escaped, while 1 private was wounded. The next day I sent out a detail for forage where the party was captured the day at Stroud's Mill. Crossed Rocky Mount Creek at the bridge and moved up the road to Cloud's, the junction of the road to the mill and the Lancaster Road. At this point we had a slight skirmish with the enemys cavalry and moved on toward the mill. Two miles beyond Cloud's the road crossed a large creek which was impassable for infantry. We countermarched and went back into camp.

P458-**3 men captured** at Rocky Mount.

P459-At Rocky Mount we encountered numerous bands of Rebel Cavalry, who seemed to be anxious to get their hands on our pontoon bridge.

P467-The Sixty-Ninth Ohio was ordered to hold the hill commanding the crossing until the bridge had been taken up. Skirmishing was kept up with the enemy's cavalry from **4p.m. until 11 p.m.** when the regiment withdrew in the face of the enemy and crossed the river in boats without opposition.

P480-At Rocky Mount **five men of the command were captured** while foraging. February 27th at 10a.m. the rebels drove in our pickets. The Seventy-Ninth was quickly in line and deployed as squirmishers, and after a sharp fight drove the rebels one mile, after which the regiment was again formed and ordered to go two miles to bring in some wounded. Then we returned to camp.

## Skirmishing at Rocky Mount (cont.)

P491-A captain and Lieutenant captured at Rocky Mount.

P794-One man was capture while foraging at Rocky Mount from our division.

P446-Daring attack made on our pickets about 10a.m. Several men captured outside the lines. Reconnaissance made by two regiments of First Brigade to recover wagons of pontoon train. We found one wagon burned, the other eight abandoned.

P446-Second brigade assisting pontoniers in taking up the bridge at Rocky Mount. Sixty-Ninth Ohio was left as rear guard on west side of river. Rebel Cavalry followed close up, and this regiment skirmished two hours with them. Battery C opened up from east side of river with six rounds, it scattered them. Rear guard crossed over and bridge all up.

P491-A soldier of the 113th Ohio shot by one of the 15th Corps.

P571-We had 1 commissioned officer, and 12 enlisted men captured near the Catawba River at Rocky Mount while foraging.

P796- On the 22nd, while acting as advance guard of the column, my regiment encountered a squad of Butler's cavalry near the Wateree River. Companies B, D, and F were deployed across the road, and the enemy driven off without loss.

P820-1 Lieutenant and 2 enlisted men captured while foraging.

P822- At Rocky Mount we heard of two Union officers, who were escaped prisoners and hiding in the woods in this vicinity. A company was sent for them and succeeded in bringing them back.

## **Pontoon Bridge Washes Away at Rocky Mount**

P-427-February 22, March on the road to Rocky Mount, reaching the river at 5 p.m., and threw a bridge across during the night of 660 feet. This bridge was laid just below the rapids, and at that time the river was very low and not very rapid. On the night of the 23rd it commenced raining heavy. The hill on the opposite bank being very steep, and becoming almost impassable from increasing rain, the trains progressed slowly in crossing. February 25th, River still rising and the current becoming so rapid that I had to place heavy timbers on the lower end of the boats to prevent them from sinking or filling with water. At 12p.m. the same night some 400 feet, midway the span, broke loose and washed violently away. February 26th, We took out the remainder of the pontoons and made hasty preparations to span the river some 500 yards below, and at that time received orders from General Davis to suspend orders until further orders. February 27th, Today we laid our second bridge, 680 feet in length. Here the current was not so rapid, and by 11p.m. we completed the bridge and the troops commenced crossing. February 28th, The army all being crossed we took up the bridge that night.

P-431-Anchors, ropes, boats, &c, were generally lost. Fortunately but two teams were on the bridge at the time, and they being close to the shore escaped. The difficulties overcome in crossing this river were by far the greatest met during our long campaign and the consequent delay was most vexatious, and it affected to some extent the progress of the whole army at an important juncture.

P171-One bridge at Rocky Mount was carried away by flood water. It was 700 feet in length, and about 200 feet of it was totally lost. The balance of it was recovered and the bridge rebuilt.

## Hardships at Rocky Mount Crossing

P805 February 22nd, We reached Rocky Mount on the Catawba River at 5 p.m., where we encamped. At dark we were ordered to cross the river the moment the pontoon bridge was completed and repair the road on the opposite side. After a personal inspection of the labor to be performed the brigade was crossed in the middle of the night. The road to be repaired had not been in use to any extent for years and led up a very steep hill for the distance of three-quarters of a mile. It became necessary first to cut an entire new road directly through a swamp, from the head of the pontoon bridge to the main road, for nearly 100 yards, and next the same piece of road had to be corduroyed. On account of the scarcity of poles and other suitable timber for this work a great number of rails were packed for the distance of one mile or more to complete the road. A large amount of work was also done on the west side of the river, repairing the approaches to the bridge cutting down the bank, straightening the old road, and bridging a deep ravine which intersected the road. By sunrise the next morning the wagons commenced crossing. Details were furnished from the brigade to assist in lifting the wagons up the steepest and most difficult portions of the hill.

P552-II-The bridge was broken twice in the night by wagons going into the river, one of the First Michigan Supply train and one of mine. General Force.

# **Yankees Captured and Killed in Winnsboro Area**

P455 Private Daniel McHarrie, Company K, killed while foraging, near Little River.

P462 Two foragers captured, Privates George W. Bumgardner and Joseph Waltman, Company G, near Blackstock.

P579 One sergeant and one private missing, supposed to have been killed by the enemy, near Winnsboro.

## **Cavalry Skirmishing and Burning Fairfield.**

P870 At Monticello, Lieutenant Jackson, with Company C, Eighth Indiana, went to burn the Spartanburg railroad bridge over Broad River. The order was executed. He burned several minor bridges on the same road, also destroying a large factory and gristmills, driving 300 home guards across the Broad River, and rejoined the command at Blackstocks.

## **Incidents in The Town of Winnsboro**

P707 February 21, The brigade entered the town of Winnsboro and was detailed as provost guard, and immediately entered upon its duties. The town was filled with foragers from different corps of the army. These men, in the most unlicensed manner, had plundered the public and nearly all the private residences, and to the same body may be charged with firing the town. As soon as possible the town was cleared of these foragers, or, as they might more properly be termed, plunderers, and measures taken to extinguish the flames. The brigade remained in Winnsboro until the afternoon of February 22, when it marched to Wateree Church. The quantity of cotton burned in Winnsboro without authority was about 1000 bales.

P687 February 21, When we were within two miles of Winnsboro, I saw heavy smoke arising from it, and double-quickened my two advance regiments in order to reach it in time to arrest the conflagration. This we effected with much labor, my troops performing the part of firemen with great efficiency. About one square was burned before the fire could be arrested. A large number of foragers from various corps were found in the town. These were sent to their commands, and Brivette Brigadier-General Pardee, with his brigade, was directed to occupy the town,

while my two other brigades commenced destroying the railroad northward, three miles and a half from which they destroyed most effectually during the afternoon. They burned the ties, other timbers, and twisting every rail. Winnsboro is a pretty town of about 2,500 population, the seat of justice for Fairfield District. Among its residents were many residents from Charleston. The surrounding country is well farmed and furnished abundance of supplies, which were brought in by foraging parties.

February 22, Pardee's brigade remained on duty in Winnsboro until the rear of the army had passed through at 4:30 p.m., when we left the town by the road toward Rocky Mount Post Office. During our occupation of Winnsboro the best of order was preserved and private property protected. Lieutenant-General Wade Hampton commanding the enemy's cavalry forces, had left the mayor a note pledging his word that any men of our army who might be left in town as safeguards after the departure of the main forces should be protected from arrest or injury if overtaken by any of his troops. At the urgent request of the mayor and citizens I left two mounted men from my provost guard. The citizens of the town, drove out a few stragglers from our army, who came into the place, and preserved good order and security in the town until a detachment of Butler's rebel cavalry entered the town the next morning, who showed my men every courtesy in their power. When the two guards left, the people of the town crowded around them to express their gratitude. The men rejoined me safely the next morning. The incident is a very remarkable one in the midst of such a campaign as that of our army through South Carolina.

## **52nd Illinois veteran Infantry Volunteers Camp**

P-345-February 20th, The regiment marched 20 miles, reaching the Columbia and Camden road and camped. February 21st, The regiment marched 18 miles nearly north and encamped for the night. February 22nd, the regiment marched eight miles and was assigned an advance position to guard a bridge and crossing over Wateree Creek, two miles to the left of the Peays Ferry Road, and four miles distant from said ferry. It having been reported by scouts that **two soldiers were lying dead across the creek**, and about two miles distant. I sent out a detail of men who found and buried them, and a description of said two men and a paper found upon the person of one are herewith enclosed, with the hope that it may lead to their identification. February 23rd, The regiment rejoined the brigade at Peay's Ferry, crossed the river and encamped about ten miles north of the ferry.

### **Encamped on Harrison's Plantation??**

P-347-February 20th, marched at 7am, passing through a sandy, barren plain. This was a very severe march on account of the scarcity of water. February 21st, marched early, passing Round Top, and encamped on **Harrison's Plantation**. February 21st, marched at 10 am, roads good, country very hilly, encamped near the Wateree River. (Same place as Harrison Crossroad?)

### **Cannon Fire at Peay's Ferry**

P-372-February 22, One section of this battery took position at Peay's Ferry, on the Wateree River, to cover the crossing. Here **one shell** was fired, effect unknown.

### **Soldiers Almost Drown at Rocky Mount**

P-421-February 23rd, Our bridge was washed away by the flood wood brought down by the freshet. I (H.W. Slocum) returned to to the Catawba to expedite, if possible, the crossing of the Fourteenth Corps. On my arrival, it was impossible to communicate with the troops on the opposite bank. A pontoon boat, manned with the best oarsman of the train, in attempting to cross was swept far below the point at which the bridge was to be constructed, and the men narrowly escaped drowning.



## **Bridge Falls in on Wateree Creek**

P662 February 22, My brigade was put in charge of 540 wagons. At 2 p.m. it passed Wateree Church, and at 4 reached Wateree Creek. Only three of my regiments, together with the wagons assigned them, succeeded in getting over this stream until the bridge broke down. These regiments, excepting the One hundred and first Illinois Volunteers, which was detached by the division commander to cover a side road, moved on toward Rocky Mount Post Office, near which point they encamped at midnight. The regiments which had been cut off by the breaking of the bridge over Wateree Creek did not get into camp until toward morning.

## **General Sherman's Report on Fairfield Invasion**

The main body was moving straight for Winnsboro, which General Slocum reached on the 21st of February. He caused the railroad to be destroyed up to Black Stocks depot, and then turned to Rocky Mount, on the Catawba River. The 20th Corps reached Rocky Mount on the 22nd, laid a pontoon bridge, and crossed over during the 23rd. Kilpatrick's cavalry followed, and crossed over during the 23rd. From the 23rd to the 26th we had heavy rains, swelling the rivers and making the roads almost impassable. The heavy rains had so swollen the river that the pontoon bridge broke, and General Davis had very hard work to restore it and get his command across. At last we succeeded, and the Left Wing was put in motion for Cheraw.

In the meantime the Right Wing had broken the railroad up to Winnsboro, and then turned to Peay's Ferry, where it was crossed over the Catawba before the heavy rains could set in. P22

# Death To All Foragers-A Fairfield Incident

During the march through Fairfield County, there were several incidents that transpired involving Yankee bodies being found along the roadside with their throats cut. There was also a note attached bearing the words, "Death to All Foragers". General Sherman was horrified when he received the news of these incidents. One incident took place somewhere in the vicinity of Feasterville, in which nine men were found. Nine more were found elsewhere throughout the county. The following is a dispatch from General Kirpatrick of the Yankee cavalry to General Wheeler of the Rebel cavalry: (Sent out under flags of truce.)

## Headquarters Cavalry Command, Army of Invasion

In the Field, S.C., February 22, 1865

**Major-General WHEELER,**

Commanding C.S. Cavalry:

General: Yesterday a lieutenant and seven men and a sergeant of a battery were taken prisoners by one of your regiments-if I am correctly informed, a Texas regiment-armed with spencer carbines and commanded by a lieutenant colonel. This officer and his men, after surrendering and being disarmed, were inhumanly and cowardly murdered. Nine of my cavalymen were also found murdered yesterday, five in a barnyard, three in a open field, and one in the road. Two had their throats cut from ear to ear. This makes in all eighteen Federal soldiers murdered yesterday by your people. Unless some satisfactory explanation be made to me before sundown, February 23, I will cause eighteen of your soldiers, now my prisoners, to be shot at that hour, and if this cowardly act be repeated, if my people when taken are not treated in all cases as prisoners of war should be, I will not only retaliate as I have already mentioned, but there shall not be a house left standing within reach of my scouting parties along my line of march, nor will I be responsible for the conduct of my soldiers, who not only be allowed, but encouraged to take a fearful revenge. I know of no other way to intimidate cowards.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

**J. KILPATRICK**

Brevet Major-General, Commanding Cavalry

This dispatch was received by General Wheeler, and a reply was sent back as follows:

**Headquarters, Cavalry Corps,**  
Chesterfield, S.C., February 22, 1865.

**Major-General KILPATRICK**, U. S. Army,  
Commanding Cavalry, & c.:

GENERAL: Your dispatch of this date is received, and I am much shocked at the statements which it contains. I am satisfied that you are mistaken in this matter. I have no Texas regiments armed with spencer rifles, and none headed by a Lieutenant-colonel. The two Texas regiments which belong to my command are commanded by captains, and neither were in any engagement yesterday. If any of my regiments were engaged were engaged with the enemy yesterday that fact has not been reported to me. I will have the matter promptly investigated and see that full justice is done. Should the report, however, by any means prove correct, I prefer that the retaliation may be inflicted upon the parties guilty of the misdeeds, and not upon innocent persons. I have no desire to make counter threats in response to which those you have thought proper to address to me, but should you cause eighteen of my men to be shot because you chanced to find that number of your men dead, I shall regard them as so many murders committed by you, and act accordingly. I trust, however, such a painful necessity will not be forced upon me.

Your threat "to burn every house as far as your scouts can extend" is too brutal a character for me, and I think for my Government, to reply to.

Respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

**J. WHEELER**  
Major-General, C. S. Army

General Kirpatrick's reply was sent back, it read as follows:

**Headquarters Cavalry Command, Army of Invasion,**  
In the Field, S.C., February 22, 1865

**Major-General WHEELER**,  
Commanding Cavalry, C.S. Army:

General: Your dispatch dated February 22, has just been received and I feel satisfied that you will so fully investigate the circumstances attending the murder

of my men that the guilty parties will be discovered and punished. The regiment being referred to as being commanded by a lieutenant-colonel may have been commanded by a captain, but certain it is that the force was mostly composed of Texans, many armed with spencer rifles, and my people were shot by order of the officer in command. One of my scouts, a reliable man, was with this force all day, and testified to the fact that not only were these men referred to murdered, but that the general conversation of your men was that they would take no more prisoners. I hope that you may be able to furnish some reason that may in a degree may justify the course taken by your men.

You speak in your communication of my threat to burn houses, &c., as being "too brutal for your Government to entertain." No matter how brutal it may seem I have the power, and will enforce it to the letter, and more, if this course is persisted in, I will not only allow but encourage my people to retaliate man for man. I shall take no action for the present. If stragglers from my command are found the houses of citizens committing any outrages whatever, my own people are directed to shoot them on the spot, and I expect officers and soldiers of your command to do the same.

I am alive to the fact that I am surrounded by citizens as well as soldiers, whose bitter hatred to the men I have the honor to command did not originate with this war, and I expect that some of my men will be killed elsewhere than on the battlefield, but I know and shall not hesitate to apply a sure remedy in each case.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

**J. KILPATRICK**

Brevet Major-General, Commanding Cavalry

P860-861

General Sherman had already sent an order for Kirpatrick to kill eighteen prisoners. This order was observed when the army between Gladdens Grove and Rocky Mount Post Office. The prisoners were made to draw straws to see which ones would die. It is generally believed among historians that this hanging took place at Dr. Scott's house, where they were camped.

Mrs. Furman in her diary talked of the deaths of the Yankees as being due to the fact that they "tied Mrs. Rhabb up, stripped her of her clothes, had their way with her daughter, and burned her house in front of her."

Some of the deaths could be attributed to the "notorious" Nick Myers from the

Longtown section of Fairfield. He was known to be wearing a Yankee uniform during the invasion. He saved a few houses from being burned by ordering guards to be attached to them. Mrs. Bowler of the Flint Hill section of the county stated in her diary that she saw Nick Myers in her yard with the Yankee soldiers. She went on to say that he had lured many soldiers away from their commands and then would kill them, covering their bodies with brush. At the plantation house where Nick lived at, there were Yankee skulls that were kept in the attic after the war. This must have been trophies to him. After the war he was the most wanted man in Fairfield, and was said to evade capture and moved to Florida, where it's said that Fort Myers was named after him.

Additional orders and correspondence from Part II concerning this incident are as follows:

**HDQRS. Cavalry Command, Army of Invasion,**

Douglass' House, near Black Stocks Station, February 22, 1865

**Maj. L.M. Dayton, A.A.G.,** Military Division of the Mississippi:

An infantry lieutenant and seven men were murdered yesterday by the Eighth Texas Cavalry after they had surrendered. We found their bodies all together and mutilated, with paper on their breasts saying, "Death to Foragers." Eighteen of my men were killed yesterday and some had their throats cut. There is no doubt about this, general, and I have sent Wheeler word that I intend to hang eighteen of his men, and if the cowardly act is repeated, will burn every house along my line of march, and that can be reached by my scouting parties. I have a number of prisoners, and shall take a fearful revenge. My people were deliberately murdered and by a scouting party of 300 men commanded by a lieutenant-colonel. I will try and see the general-in-chief at the bridge (Rocky Mount).

Very respectfully, &c.,

**J. KILPATRICK**

Brevet Major-General

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**HDQRS. MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,**

In the Field, Rocky Mount, February 23, 1865-10 a.m.

**Major-General Howard,**

Commanding Right Wing:

General: Kilpatrick reports that two of his foraging parties were murdered by the enemy after capture and labeled "Death to all foragers." Now it is clearly our war right to subsist our army off the enemy. Napoleon always did it, but could avail himself of the civil powers he found in existence to collect forage and provisions by regular impressments. We can not do that here, and I contend if the enemy fails to defend his country we may rightfully appropriate what we want. If our foragers act under mine, yours, or other proper orders they must be protected. I have ordered Kilpatrick to select of his prisoners man for man, shoot them, and leave them by the roadside labeled, so that our enemy will see that for every man he executes he takes the life of one of his own. I want the foragers, however, to be kept within reasonable bounds for the sake of discipline. I will not protect them when they enter dwellings and commit wanton waste, such as women's apparel, jewelry, and such things not needed by our army: but they may destroy cotton or tobacco, because these are assumed by the Rebel Government to belong to it, and are used as a valuable source of revenue. Nor will I consent to the enemy taking the lives of our men on their judgement. They have lost all title to property, and can lose nothing not already forfeited; but we should punish for a departure from our orders, and if the people resist our foragers, I will not deem it wrong, but the Confederate army must not be supposed the champion of any people. I lay down these general rules and wish you to be governed by them. If any of your foragers are murdered, take life for life, leaving a record of each case.

I am, with respect,

**W.T. SHERMAN**

Major-General, Commanding

P537-II

**HEADQUARTERS, MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,**  
Colonel Ballard's Farm, S.C., February 23, 1865.

**Major-General KILPATRICK,**

Commanding Cavalry:

GENERAL: I regret the matter you report, that eighteen of your men have been murdered after surrender, and marked that the enemy intended to kill all foragers. It leaves no alternative: you must retaliate man for man and mark them in like manner. Let it be done at once. We have a perfect war right to the product of the country we overrun, and may collect them by foragers or otherwise. Let the whole people know that the war is now against them, because their armies now flee before us and do not defend their country or their frontier as they should. It is petty nonsense for Wheeler and Beauregard and such vain heroes to talk of our warring against women and children. If they claim to be men then they should defend their women and children and prevent us reaching their homes. Instead of maintaining their armies let them turn their attention to their families, or we will follow them to the death. They should know that we will use the produce of the country as we please. I want the foragers to be regulated and systematized so as not to degenerate into common robbers, but foragers, as such, to collect corn, bacon, beef, and such other products as we need, are as much entitled to our protection as our skirmisher and flankers. You will therefore, at once shoot and leave by the roadside an equal number of prisoners, and append a label to their bodies stating that man for man shall be killed for every one of our men they kill. If our foragers commit excesses punish them yourself, but never let an enemy judge between our men and the law. For my part I want the people of the South to realize the fact that they shall not dictate laws of war or peace to us. If there is to be any dictation we want our full share.

Yours, truly,

**W.T. SHERMAN**  
Major-General Commanding

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**HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY COMMAND,**

February 24, 1865

**Maj. Gen. W.T. SHERMAN,**

Commanding Military Division of the Mississippi:

GENERAL: I have the honor to report that Private Charles Wright, Ninth Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, General Atkins' headquarters, came in last evening from scout near Feasterville, below and west of Chester. He reports having found twenty-one of our infantrymen in a ravine, about eighty rods from the main road and about three miles from Feasterville, with their throats cut and stripped of their clothing. The evidence the enemy has resolved upon murdering our men is fast accumulating. Another report has just come in that a soldier belonging to the Ninety Second Illinois Mounted Infantry was found hung to the limb of a tree near the roadside. I shall retaliate as far as my own people are concerned, as you have directed. Major-General Wade Hampton is now at Lancaster. I can forward for you any communication to or through him to any higher rebel authorities you may desire regarding the facts mentioned.

I am, general, your obedient servant,

**J. KILPATRICK**

Brevet Major-General, Commanding



**HDQRS. MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,**

In The Field, February 24, 1865.

**Lieut. Gen. WADE HAMPTON,**

Commanding Cavalry Forces, C.S. Army:

GENERAL: It is officially reported to me that our foraging parties are murdered after capture and labeled "Death to all foragers." One instance of a lieutenant and seven men near Chester, and another of twenty "near a ravine eighty rods from the main road" about three miles from Feasterville. I have ordered a similar number of prisoners in our hands to be disposed of in like manner. I hold about 1,000 prisoners captured in various ways, and can stand it as long as you; but I hardly think these murders are committed with your knowledge, and would suggest that you give notice to the people at large that every life taken by them simply results in the death of one of your Confederates. Of course you cannot question my right to forage on the country. It is a war right as old as history. The manner of exercising it varies with circumstances, and if the civil authorities will supply my requisitions I will forbid all foraging. But I can find no civil authorities who can respond to calls for forage or provisions, therefore must collect directly of the people. I have no doubt this is the occasion of much misbehavior on the part of our men, but I cannot permit an enemy to judge or punish with wholesale murder. Personally I regret the bitter feelings engendered by this war, but they were to be expected, and I simply allege that those who struck the first blow and made war inevitable ought not, in fairness, to reproach us for the natural consequences. I merely assert our right to forage and my resolve to protect my foragers to the extent of life for life.

I am, with respect, your obedient servant,

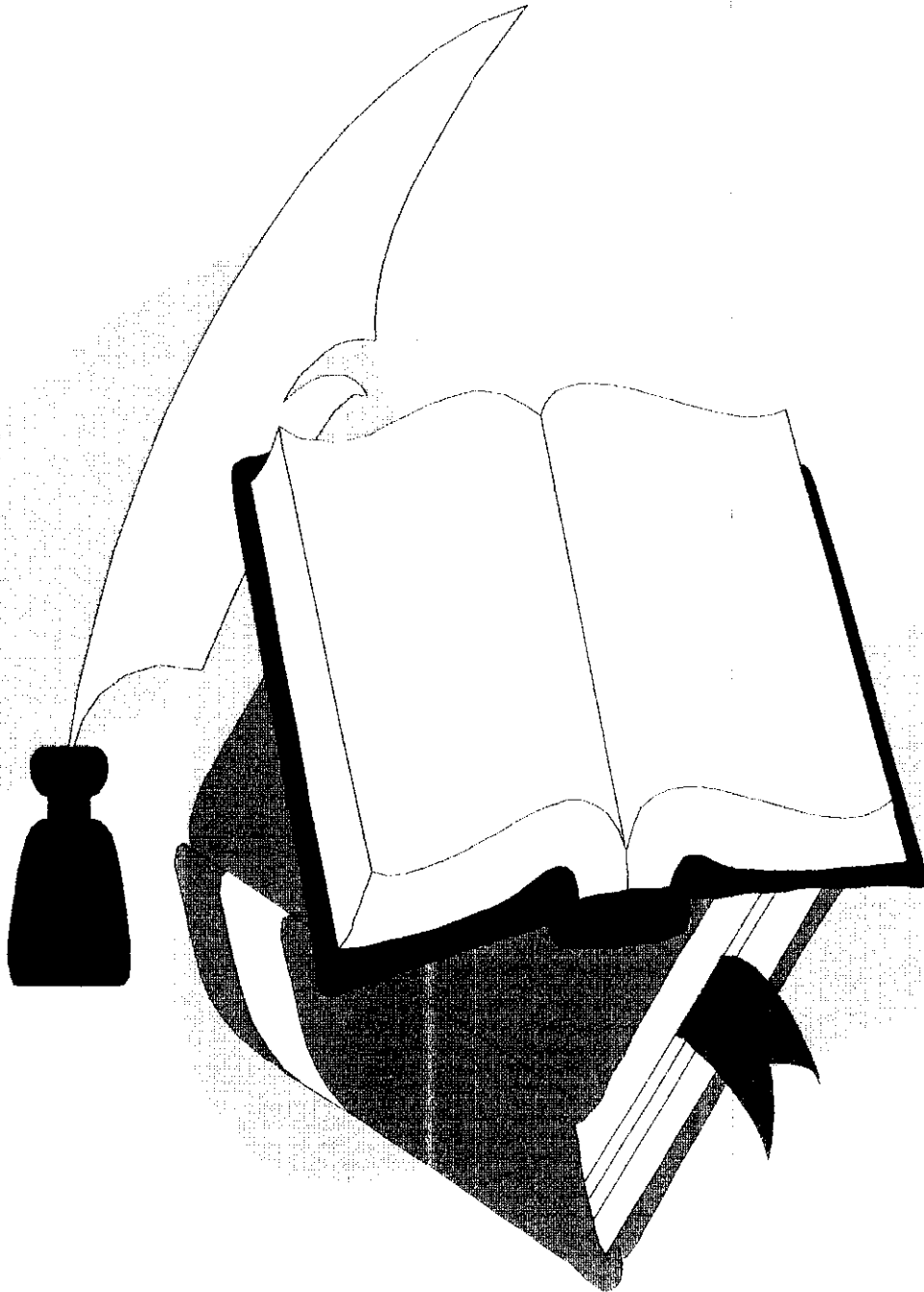
**W.T. SHERMAN**

Major-General U.S. Army

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# **Additional Information on Sherman's Activities In Fairfield County, South Carolina.** Compiled By: W.C. McFadden

There were a few diaries that survived to this day, concerning the activities of Sherman's men in Fairfield. The following pages contain a few of the examples of Yankee diaries kept during the occupation of Fairfield.



## **52nd Illinois veteran Infantry Volunteers Camp**

P-345-February 20th, The regiment marched 20 miles, reaching the Columbia and Camden road and camped. February 21st, The regiment marched 18 miles nearly north and encamped for the night. February 22nd, the regiment marched eight miles and was assigned an advance position to guard a bridge and crossing over Wateree Creek, two miles to the left of the Peays Ferry Road, and four miles distant from said ferry. It having been reported by scouts that two soldiers were lying dead across the creek, and about two miles distant. I sent out a detail of men who found and buried them, and a description of said two men and a paper found upon the person of one are herewith enclosed, with the hope that it may lead to their identification. February 23rd, The regiment rejoined the brigade at Peay's Ferry, crossed the river and encamped about ten miles north of the ferry.

### **Encamped on Harrison's Plantation??**

P-347-February 20th, marched at 7am, passing through a sandy, barren plain. This was a very severe march on account of the scarcity of water. February 21st, marched early, passing Round Top, and encamped on Harrison's Plantation. February 21st, marched at 10 am, roads good, country very hilly, encamped near the Wateree River. (Same place as Harrison Crossroad?)

### **Cannon Fire at Peay's Ferry**

P-372-February 22, One section of this battery took position at Peay's Ferry, on the Wateree River, to cover the crossing. Here one shell was fired, effect unknown.

### **Soldiers Almost Drown at Rocky Mount**

P-421-February 23rd, Our bridge was washed away by the flood wood brought down by the freshet. I (H.W. Slocum) returned to the Catawba to expedite, if possible, the crossing of the Fourteenth Corps. On my arrival, it was impossible to communicate with the troops on the opposite bank. A pontoon boat, manned with the best oarsman of the train, in attempting to cross was swept far below the point at which the bridge was to be constructed, and the men narrowly escaped drowning.