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INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS OF THE ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND
DURING THE TULLAHOMA AND CHICKAMUGA CAMPAIGNS

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ARTS AND SCIENCE

by

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A.A., Georgia Military College, 1975
B.S., Troy State University, 1984

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This study is a historical analysis of the intelligence operations conducted by the Union Army of the Cumberland between 15 May 1863 and 18 September 1863. The study analyzes two key campaigns the Tullahoma (or Middle Tennessee) Campaign and the Chickamauga Campaign. The Tullahoma Campaign lasted from 23 June 1863 through 7 July 1863. The Chickamauga Campaign lasted from 10 August 1863 through 22 September. The study does not cover the actual Battle of Chickamauga on 19 and 20 September 1863. The study analyzes how Union Major General William S. Rosecrans used the available information to plan and conduct these two campaigns.

The means used to gather intelligence were: spies; cavalry operations; the questioning of civilians, deserters, and prisoners of war; the forming of hypothesis by the commander; a network of signals; and newspapers. By today's standards, the commander in 1863 had a limited ability to gather, decipher, and then act on intelligence. Commanders actively gathered intelligence in spite of not having sophisticated gathering means, and dedicated interpretation staffs. The commander analyzed the accumulated information and decided on how to use it.

The study concludes that: The Tullahoma Campaign was successful because Rosecrans used the available intelligence effectively. Rosecrans actively gathered information about Bragg's strength, dispositions, and unit morale. Rosecrans then correctly analyzed this information and developed a plan that would strike at Bragg's weak points. The study further concludes that: The Chickamauga Campaign was unsuccessful because Rosecrans did not effectively use the available intelligence. Rosecrans failed to properly interpret the available intelligence because the success of the Tullahoma Campaign had convinced him that Bragg could not or would not fight. This preconceived idea about Bragg caused Rosecrans to disperse his army over a forty mile arc in the rugged north Georgia mountains. Belatedly, Rosecrans correctly analyzed Bragg's true intentions. Rosecrans then assembled his scattered corps, by herculean forced marches, in time to face Bragg's reinforced army in the Battle of Chickamauga.

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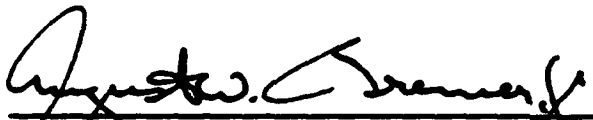
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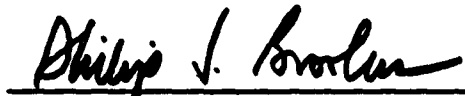
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ABSTRACT

INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS OF THE ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND DURING THE TULLAHOMA AND CHICKAMAUGA CAMPAIGNS by MAJ Doyle D. Broome, Jr., USA, 137 pages

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Figure 1:

George B. Davis, et al, Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies,
(Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1891-1895),
Plate CXLIX.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Since the first organized military campaigns began, commanders have relied on intelligence operations to bring them critical information about the enemy. Modern writers have tended to downplay the importance of intelligence operations during the American Civil War. In The Craft of Intelligence, Allen Dulles wrote, "Intelligence did not play any significant part in the American Civil War. Moreover, acquisition [of information] was confined to local and temporary targets."¹ Are both assertions made by Dulles true? Were commanders in 1863 able to win without good intelligence? This thesis will attempt to answer these questions by examining two Civil War campaigns.

The Tullahoma and Chickamauga Campaigns of Major General William S. Rosecrans provide good examples of maneuver warfare. For example, during the Tullahoma campaign, Rosecrans maneuvered Confederate General Braxton Bragg completely out of middle Tennessee. At the time, Lincoln called it "The most splendid piece of strategy I know of."²

THESIS QUESTION

During the Tullahoma and Chickamauga campaigns, did Rosecrans effectively use the intelligence that was available to him? This is the main question this study will answer. By answering the following subordinate questions, a clear picture should emerge about Rosecrans' use of intelligence. Exactly what did Rosecrans know? When did he know it? How did he use it? The answers to these three questions should provide insights into how effectively Rosecrans used the information he had. Answering these questions facilitate a cause and effect analysis to take place. This analysis might explain why Rosecrans made the decisions he did.

DEFINITIONS

FM 101-5-1, Operational Terms and Symbols, defines combat intelligence as: knowledge of the enemy, weather, and geographical features required by a commander in planning and conducting combat operations. There was no definition in 1863 for what the commanders considered intelligence. However, it is doubtful they would have argued with this interpretation. During this period, "intelligence" was a synonym for information. The special meaning of information about an enemy or a rival power did not enter the American lexicon until 1888.³

Today we have intelligence officers and staffs, and entire units devoted to gathering and processing information in order to convert this "raw" data into usable intelligence. In 1863 no single staff officer had supervision for this activity. The staff supervisor for information ranged from the provost marshal, to the adjutant, to the chief of staff, to the commander.⁴

Commanders in 1863 operated at two levels, tactical and strategic. In order to better understand the information, this study will define intelligence in the three levels that in use today. The study includes the operational level of intelligence because of the manner by which the Union forces divided the war into theaters. Additionally, adding the operational level should aid the reader in drawing useful parallels with today's forces.

Tactical Intelligence - Information that had a near term effect on operations within the local area. The utility of this information lasted from minutes to several days. Tactical intelligence allowed the commander to maneuver his forces in order to win engagements and battles. This information was useful to units from regimental level up to army size units.

Operational Intelligence - Information that had an effect over a longer period of time, from several days to weeks. But, it was only useful within the theater of operations, (i.e., the Western Theater). This information

allowed the generals to maneuver armies in the field, in pursuit of national objectives (e.g. blocking a hostile invasion or conducting an offensive campaign.)

Strategic Intelligence - Information that was relevant to the entire war effort and was applicable to all theaters of operations. This could be useful for periods from weeks to several months. This information was valuable in the formation of national strategy necessary to prosecute the war.

INTELLIGENCE GATHERING MEANS

During the American Civil War, commanders had five means of gathering information. In The Art of War Baron De Jomini described these as: (1) a well arranged system of espionage; (2) reconnaissance made by skillful officers and light troops; (3) the questioning of prisoners of war (POWs), deserters and civilians; (4) the forming of hypotheses about the enemy's intentions; and (5) a well arranged system of signals.⁵

Some historians believe that commanders in the Civil War were heavily influenced by Jomini's writings. It is possible that Rosecrans learned of Jomini's five means of gathering intelligence while at West Point. Professor Dennis Hart Mahan, one of the Academy's greatest teachers, founded a "Napoleon Club" which studied the campaigns of Napoleon. Rosecrans was a member of this club and it is

possible that during these studies he studied of Jomini's writings about Napoleon. However, many modern historians doubt the validity of this theory.⁶

Regardless of whether Rosecrans remembered his instruction or not, the five levels identified by Jomini provide the modern reader with a view of the intelligence gathering means in the mid-1800s. Because definitions change with the passage of time, it is necessary to review each of the five means.

Espionage

Commanders at all levels engaged in intelligence and counterintelligence activities. Commanders hired spies and detectives and assigned covert projects or spy missions to these agents, all according to the commanders own wishes or needs.

The Civil War spy had several factors in his favor. First, he shared a common language and race with his opponent. Americans, then as now, were great travelers, so it was not unusual for the local populace to see someone from a different part of the country. Second, Americans were soft hearted; they executed very few spies. Last, most captured spies were either exchanged or paroled; a number easily escaped. These factors allowed the Civil War spy to operate easily, but not always effectively due to a lack of training in the craft of spying.⁷

In the Civil War, extensive use was made of the term "secret service." This was essentially a counterintelligence operation, and could even be used in connection with regular criminal investigations. Additionally, it was not a national system; there was no central agency to direct or coordinate these activities or collate and analyze the data they generated.

Reconnaissance by Skillful Officers and Light Troops

In the American Civil War engineers and cavalry performed this intelligence gathering activity. In The Myth of Civil War Intelligence, Edwin Fishel states,

"Commanders in the Civil War trusted reconnaissance by cavalry units more than all other forms of intelligence gathering." Commanders termed this reconnaissance "scouting." Scouts sometimes wore enemy uniforms on missions; this allowed the scouts to avoid capture and infiltrate the enemy camps seeking information. Cavalry also reported the unpredictable contingencies that took place in every battle. This allowed the commander to react to the ebb and flow of a battle.⁸

One lesson learned from the War with Mexico was the need to send a trained officer along with the cavalry patrols to gather technical data. Engineers were sent on reconnaissance with the cavalry to obtain information on

terrain and enemy fortifications. This information was then used to develop battle plans and maneuver formations.⁹

Questioning of Prisoners, Civilians, and Deserters

The provost marshal or the chief of police in an army often questioned prisoners, local civilians, and deserters. This interrogation sometimes yielded information about the enemy strength, location, and troop morale. However, a clever opponent could easily insert false information, so it was necessary to filter these reports. In The History of the Military Intelligence Division, Bruce Bidwell asserts that the interrogation of prisoners, deserters, and refugees generally produced more information than did most covert intelligence operations.¹⁰

Forming a Hypothesis

Commanders in the Civil War were sometimes able to make an educated guess about how their opponent would act. Commanders were able to do this because many of the commanders in the Civil War had either attended West Point or had served in previous assignments together. Additionally, by 1863 many of the commanders had faced each other in at least one battle and, therefore, were able to form a general idea of how their opponent would behave.

System of Signals

The American Civil War saw the development of elaborate systems to communicate with distant units, take advantage of unexpected events, and transmit intelligence and orders. Since signal posts were generally placed on commanding terrain, these posts could also observe the battlefield. In fact, the Signal Corps in the Army of the Cumberland had the duty of reporting on enemy troop movement and intercepting Confederate signals. To prevent the other side from reading their signals, both sides developed a series of simple substitution ciphers. But so irregularly were these ciphers changed that codes were easily compromised.¹¹

Newspapers

A source of information not identified by Jomini was the newspapers. Since the founding of the American Republic, freedom of the press has been one of this country's most cherished ideals, sometimes to the horror of military leaders. The newspapers sometimes published troop movements and changes in commanders. However, during the war the press became so loaded with errors, contradictions, and rumors that commanders had trouble distinguishing fact from fiction.¹²

THESIS STRUCTURE

Five chapters comprise this study. Chapter One introduces the topic, states the thesis question, provides definitions, and reviews the intelligence gathering means in 1863. Chapter Two provides the information necessary for the reader to understand the military situation in the Western Theater during mid-1863 and background information on two principal personnel in the Army of the Cumberland, Major General William S. Rosecrans and his Chief of Staff James A. Garfield. The chapter also covers the Army of the Cumberland intelligence gathering system. Chapter Three is an analysis of the intelligence operations of Rosecrans' army during the Tullahoma Campaign. This chapter includes a brief description of the terrain in which the Tullahoma and Chickamauga Campaigns occurred. Chapter Four is an analysis of the intelligence operations from the end of the Tullahoma Campaign until the beginning of the Battle of Chickamauga. The fifth and final chapter contains the analysis of the two campaigns. Appendix A is a compilation of intelligence messages received by Rosecrans' headquarters before and during the Tullahoma Campaign. Appendix B is a compilation of intelligence messages received by Rosecrans' headquarters before and during the Chickamauga Campaign.

CHAPTER ONE

ENDNOTES

¹Jock Haswell, Spies and Spymasters. A Concise History of Intelligence (London: Thames and Hudson Co., 1977), p. 86.

²William M. Lamers, The Edge of Glory: A Biography of General William S. Rosecrans (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), p. 290.

³FM 101-5-1 Operational Terms and Symbols (October 1985), pp. 1-15; John T. Hubbell, Battles Won and Lost: Essays from the Civil War, (West Port, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1975), The Mythology of Civil War Intelligence by Edwin C. Fishel, p. 83.

⁴Fishel, Mythology, p. 84.

⁵Baron De Jomini, The Art of War, trans. G.H. Mendall and W.P. Craighill (West Port, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1977), pp.269-72.

⁶Hubbell, Battles, pp. 100-01.

⁷Lamers, The Edge, pp. 14-16.

⁸Fishel, Mythology, p. 84; Hubbell, Battles, pp. 104-06.

⁹Bruce W. Bidwell, History of the Military Intelligence Division. Department of the Army General Staff: 1775 - 1941 (Frederick, Md.: University Publications of America, 1986), p. 23.

¹⁰Hubbell, Battles, p. 105.; Bidwell, M.I. History, p. 35.

¹¹[Fitch] Annals of the Army of the Cumberland (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippencott and Co., 1863), pp. 303-09; Bidwell, MI History, pp. 34-35.

¹²Hubbell, Battles, p. 105.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIC SITUATION

The Tullahoma and Chickamauga Campaigns took place between 23 June 1863 and 21 September 1863. In order to properly study these two campaigns, a short review of the American Civil War is necessary.

In early 1863, the war was not going well for the Union armies. In the Eastern Theater, Lincoln struggled to find a commander worthy of the men in the ranks. The major Union army in the east, the Army of the Potomac, had had four commanders since the beginning of the war. A fifth would be in place by the end of June 1863. This state of flux was bad for the morale of the soldiers and for the families at home.

Beginning with the debacle at First Bull Run--near Manassas, Virginia, on 21 July 1861--and continuing through six other major engagements, the Union generals had been outfought and outmaneuvered. Only the battle at Antietam, Maryland, on 17 September 1862, marred the string of Confederate victories.

The situation in the Western Theater was better. A bloody Union victory at Shiloh, Tennessee, on 6 and 7 April

1862, was cause for rejoicing in the North, but the casualty figures shocked the people at home.

On 8 October 1862, a Confederate invasion in the West came to an end at the Battle of Perryville, Kentucky. Although a Union victory, Lincoln relieved Major General Don Carlos Buell because he had failed to provide effective leadership during the battle. Major General William S. Rosecrans replaced Buell as the commander of this army.

At the end of 1862, the Union forces in central Tennessee fought the Confederates at the two-day Battle of Murfreesboro from 31 December 1862 through 2 January 1863. The battle was essentially a draw; the Confederates withdrew and Rosecrans was left in control of the field. This was the second time that, after being fought to a standstill, Bragg had withdrawn when the battle still could have been won. The Union, therefore, claimed a badly needed victory. After his victory at Murfreesboro, Rosecrans settled into garrison life at Murfreesboro to rest and refit his worn out army and repair his lines of communication. No amount of inducement or prodding from Washington could push him into a move before he was ready.

The Union Navy seized New Orleans in April 1862, achieving the first success in an effort to split the Confederacy. To complete the division, a Union army under Grant attempted to take the Confederate stronghold at

Vicksburg on the Mississippi River from December 1862 through June 1863. Grant's campaign began as maneuver warfare and deteriorated into a siege.

By June of 1863, the Union was in a deplorable state. In the East, Confederate General Robert E. Lee's 60,000 men routed Major General Joseph Hooker's 130,000 Union soldiers at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Virginia. In the West, Rosecrans was resting in Murfreesboro, clamoring for more cavalry support. Grant was trying to find a way to reduce Vicksburg. The Northern populace detested the recently imposed draft laws, and called Lincoln the "widow maker." Additionally, the war was costing the North the lives of two soldiers and \$100,000 to kill one Confederate soldier. Perhaps most ominous for the Lincoln administration, secret societies were springing up and agitating for peace at any price.¹

MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM S. ROSECRANS

To understand why a commander operates in a certain manner, it is necessary to gain an understanding of the man.

Asked at the beginning of the Civil War to identify the three Union generals he respected most, Confederate General D.H. Hill replied without hesitation, "Sherman, McClellan, and Rosecrans." When speaking of Rosecrans he

said, "Rosecrans has a fine practical sense, and is of tough and tenacious fiber."²

Rosecrans was a complex individual. His men considered him brave, gifted, lovable, irritable, and peculiar. While the troops adored him, an officer once said, "He is an impulsive man, too apt to meddle in details." Also, whether in garrison or on campaign, he was excitable, even emotionally unstable, but from anger not fear.³

Rosecrans was an excellent student of military history. However, he used it to find the answer to a problem before it occurred, instead of weighing each situation on its own merit. One subordinate believed, "Rosecrans relied too heavily on military precedents ... and he tended more to salute, rather than augment, the judgment of history." But, among Union generals, he came closest to being rated a tactical genius by his peers.⁴

Rosecrans also had a problem controlling his temper. He was known to verbally abuse soldiers and officers for not doing their duty. Brigadier General John Beatty described one verbal explosion, which he received, as "ungentlemanly, abusive, and insulting." Some officers believed their general lacked "full balance" when under stress and that this was a sign of his lack of stability.⁶

The daily routine for Rosecrans was to rise at 8 A.M. and receive visitors until noon. He then would

visit units until late afternoon. From sundown until midnight he would conduct business, drafting messages or planning. When this was complete, a "bull session" would commence that lasted until at least 2 A.M., sometimes till dawn. Rosecrans kept to this routine in garrison and on campaign. The result of this routine was that in the field he was soon exhausted. In this state, Rosecrans was apt to misunderstand or disregard information that was brought to him. As an example, during the earlier West Virginia campaigns Union Major General Jacob Cox noted that "his [Rosecrans'] speech, ordinarily rapid, became hurried to the point of stammering when he was excited."⁵

Rosecrans was an intelligent man, respected by friends and foe alike. But his excitability, mixed with self-induced fatigue, could cause him to misinterpret information and not use it properly.

Following the Battle of Murfreesboro, Rosecrans was foremost among Union generals; he was the prime candidate to succeed Major General Ambrose Burnside as Commander of the Army of the Potomac. However, because he was a "western" general, the command was given instead to Major General Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker.⁷

The amicable relationship between Rosecrans and his superiors lasted only until March 1863. After that date Union General-in-Chief Henry Halleck and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton constantly hounded Rosecrans to attack the

Confederates at Shelbyville and Tullahoma, Tennessee. Rosecrans resisted undertaking any offensive action until he rested and refitted his army. Rosecrans earned the wrath of Stanton by refusing to move.⁸

BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES A. GARFIELD

When commanding an army of 86,000 men, a commander cannot attend to all details. An able chief of staff must assist the commander and remove some of the burden from his shoulders. The "chief" plays the devil's advocate for the commander, always viewing the problem from a different angle.

When Brigadier General James A. Garfield arrived on 25 January 1863, Rosecrans had not decided where to assign him. Rosecrans took the measure of his newly arrived general, and three weeks later, offered him either the command of a division or the chief of staff position. Garfield chose the chief of staff position.⁹

With Garfield as his chief advisor and confidant, Rosecrans had an intelligent, efficient, hardworking man, with courage and initiative. Garfield was also an ambitious congressman, with very specific ideas about how the war should be fought. He had numerous powerful friends in Washington and intended to remain in service only until Congress convened. During the interim he hoped to engage in a significant victorious action. This could

help further his political ambitions by bolstering his public image as a hero.¹⁰

INTELLIGENCE GATHERING ASSETS

Because he was a meticulous individual, Rosecrans organized a variety of intelligence gathering operations. He used the six sources previously identified to compile information about the Confederate Army of Tennessee.

ESPIONAGE

The Western Theater was less formalized in its intelligence activity than its Eastern counterpart. Rosecrans did, however, use a sizable spy service that was operated by his Police Department. The Chief of Police was William Truesdall, a civilian who had no background in intelligence. Truesdall recruited spies from the local populace and from the ranks of the army. Rosecrans paid particular attention to the spy service, believing it paid dividends. At least some of the elements of this department worked directly for Garfield, two captains serving as scouts reported directly to him.¹¹

CAVALRY

The cavalry corps provided Rosecrans with reconnaissance by skillful officers and light troops. The cavalry had long been a source of irritation to Rosecrans. Rosecrans had two main problems with the Cavalry Corps.

First, the Confederate cavalry outnumbered Rosecrans' by a margin of four to one. Second, the southern cavalry leaders were superior to the Union in audacity, cunning, and tactical ability. While Rosecrans' cavalry did attempt to perform the traditional function of reconnaissance, they were usually tied up securing the lines of communication and fighting off raids by Confederate Generals Nathan Bedford Forrest, John Hunt Morgan, and Joe Wheeler. The Union cavalry simply could not match the Confederate cavalry until something happened to bring the two forces more into balance--at least numerically.¹²

QUESTIONING OF REFUGEES, PRISONERS, AND DESERTERS

Either Truesdall or the provost marshal questioned any individual who passed from the Confederate lines to the Union lines. Army headquarters received any information this questioning produced. Truesdall also kept records on all adults living in the areas under Union control. However, because two different individuals questioned these people no central agency was collecting and evaluating information.¹³

FORMING A HYPOTHESIS

By June 1863, Rosecrans was probably able to form hypotheses about Bragg's future courses of action. Rosecrans should have been able to do this because he had fought Bragg at Stone's River, he and Bragg were trained

alike at West Point, and Rosecrans had six months to study Bragg's dispositions and gather intelligence about Bragg's army. No records exist, though, to indicate that Rosecrans made an educated guess about Bragg's intentions. However, not forming a hypothesis would be out of character for Rosecrans.

SIGNALS CORPS

The Army of the Cumberland had three different "communications" sections. First, the U.S. Military Telegraph, controlled by officials in Washington, provided Rosecrans with long distance communication. Second, the Signal Corps handled tactical telegraph duties and flag and light signals. Third, the cavalry corps provided a system of couriers. However, there was no central officer in charge of all three sections. In fact, the two telegraph sections were in competition with each other. The opportunity for confusion between these three elements was enormous.¹⁴

NEWSPAPERS

Rosecrans read Confederate newspapers on a fairly regular basis. Scouts sent out by Truesdall routinely brought back papers from Chattanooga and other cities. Additionally, Truesdall or the provost marshal would confiscate newspapers from the deserters and refugees that their departments questioned. Army headquarters received

these newspapers and the information gathered from questioning.

SUMMARY

Information gathered by army sources or corps and division sources usually made its way to Rosecrans' headquarters. Garfield was normally the addressee on all messages intended for Rosecrans. Therefore, Garfield probably made an assessment of the information and gave Rosecrans an opinion on message. If Rosecrans received the report, he was apt to ask Garfield's opinion or one of his commander's opinion about it. It was not unusual at one of Rosecrans' late night "bull sessions" to see Rosecrans in "his corner" with Major General George Thomas, Rosecrans' most trusted subordinate, reviewing intelligence reports. In the end, it was Rosecrans, with all his faults and brilliance, who had to decide on the value and authenticity of a report and use it.¹⁵

CHAPTER TWO

ENDNOTES

¹William M. Lamers, The Edge of Glory: A Biography of General William S. Rosecrans (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), p. 258; Glenn Tucker, Chickamauga: Bloody Battle in the West (Dayton, OH.: Press of the Morningside Bookshop, 1984), p. 91.

²Lamers, The Edge, p. 21.

³Tucker, Bloody Battle, p. 32.

⁴Tucker, Bloody Battle, pp. 36-41.

⁵Ibid

⁵Tucker, Bloody Battle, p. 40.

⁶Lamers, The Edge, pp. 245-51.

⁷Thomas Yoseloff, Campaigns of the Civil War, 8 volumes, (New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1963), volume 4, Henry M. Cist, Army of the Cumberland, p. 152.

⁸Frederick D. Williams, The Wild Life of the Army: The Civil War Letters of James A. Garfield (East Lansing, MI.: Michigan State University Press, 1964), p. 217.

⁹Williams, Wild Life, p. 218.

¹⁰John T. Hubbell, Battles Won and Lost: Essays from the Civil War, (West Port, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1975), The Mythology of Civil War Intelligence by Edwin C. Fishel, p. 98; [Fitch] Annals of the Army of the Cumberland, p. 34.

¹¹Truesdall was essentially a speculator. He had government contracts to provide the army with beef and to run the mail service. [Fitch] Annals, p.355.; One of Truesdall's most famous spy recruits was a creole actress named Pauline Cushman who was playing on stage in Louisville. Truesdall had her denounce the Union on stage. She then traveled throughout the Confederate lines with impunity, exchanging "favors" for information. The

Confederates eventually caught on to her, and she was sentenced to hang. Granger's troops liberated her in Shelbyville the day before she was to hang. Cushman later toured the north as a heroine. Harnett T. Kane, Spies for the Blue and Gray, (Garden City, NY: Country Life Press, 1954) pp. 174-89.

12Lamers, The Edge, p. 249.

13Ibid.

14Phillip Baker, Command and Control Mechanisms in the Chickamauga Campaign, (Fort Leavenworth Ks.: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1989), pp. 25-45.

15[Fitch], Annals, p. 260.

CHAPTER THREE

INTELLIGENCE BEFORE AND DURING THE TULLAHOMA CAMPAIGN

16 MAY 1863 - 7 JULY 1863

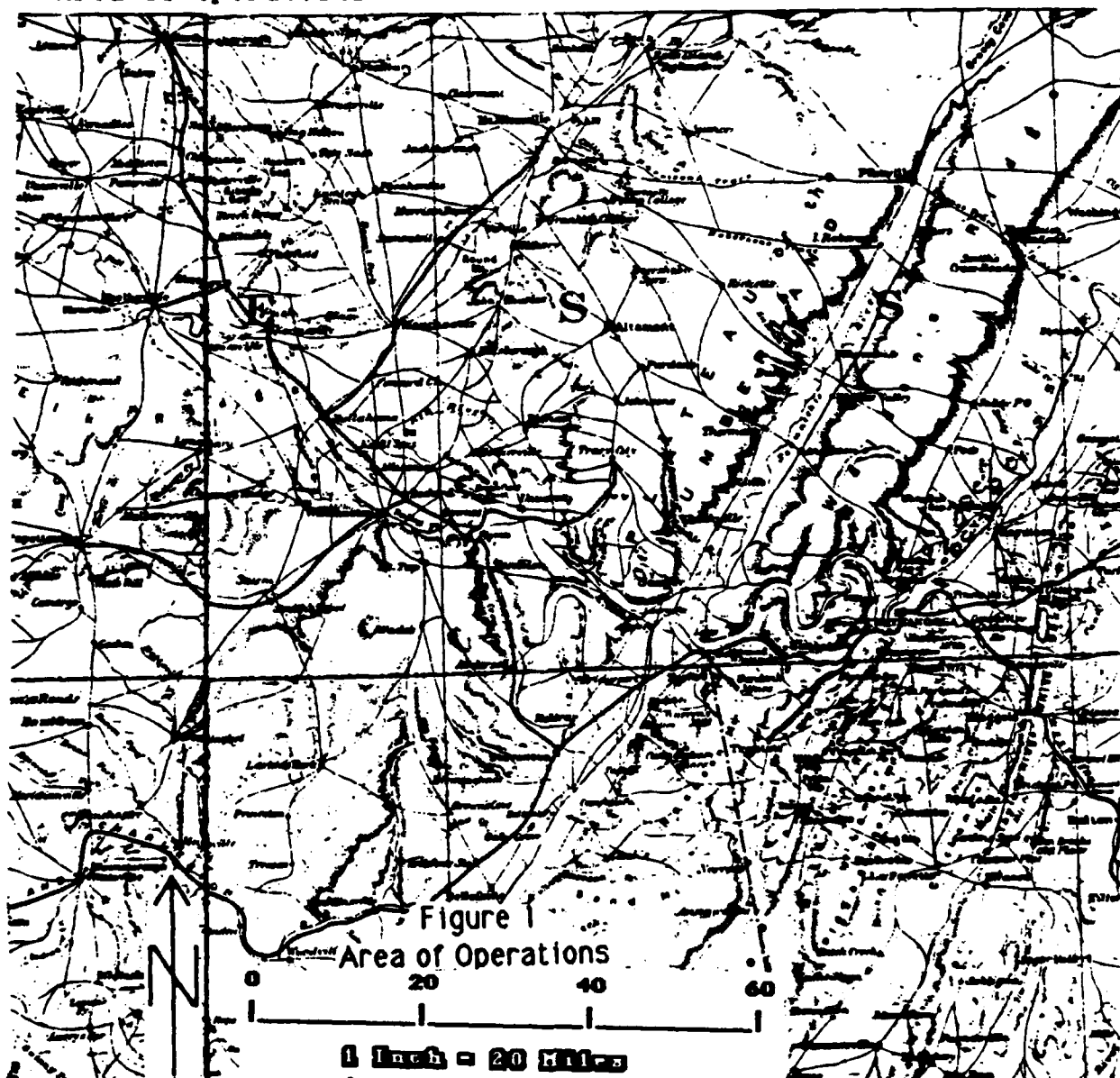
OVERVIEW

After the Battle of Stone's River, Major General Rosecrans had delayed putting the Army of the Cumberland in the field for over six months while he rested and resupplied his troops and repaired his lines of communications. When he finally did commit his army to an offensive, the resulting campaign was known as the Tullahoma (or Middle Tennessee) Campaign. During this campaign, which lasted only nine days, most of it in a driving rain, Rosecrans used extensive wide flanking movements. These flanking movements caused the Confederate Army of Tennessee, under General Braxton Bragg, to abandon strongly entrenched positions and gave the Union complete control over middle Tennessee. The campaign was remarkably inexpensive in terms of casualties, with only a total of 560 Union soldiers killed, wounded, or missing.

AREA OF OPERATIONS

The Tullahoma and Chickamauga Campaigns took place in the middle and southern sections of Tennessee and

northwest Georgia. Steep, rugged, mountains with a few poor roads characterize this section of the nation. These roads only cross the mountains at the low points or "gaps" in the mountain range. This section was sparsely populated and food and forage were scarce. Lastly, the area is cut by several major rivers, most notably the Tennessee, all of which generally flow east to west. (See Figure 1 below, Area of Operations)1



OPERATIONAL LEVEL INFLUENCES

Events across the theater of war were impacting on Rosecrans' decision to delay an offensive movement. The Union army under Major General Ulysses Grant besieged Vicksburg on 18 May 1863. Trapped in Vicksburg with his army, Confederate Lieutenant General John Pemberton awaited help. Confederate General Joseph Johnston was frantically rounding up troops to attack Grant and lift the siege. Troops were moving to Johnston in Mississippi from Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, and Tullahoma.

The other Union army in the Western Theater, the Army of the Ohio under Major General Ambrose Burnside, was inactive in Cincinnati. Some of Burnside's troops were being sent to reinforce Grant (p. A-3, # 14) and Burnside refused to move into eastern Tennessee until these troops returned. Without Burnside to cover his left flank, Rosecrans was loath to commit his army into middle Tennessee.

POLITICAL PRESSURE

The detachment of troops from Bragg caused Rosecrans' superiors to apply pressure for offensive action. In mid-May, General-in-Chief Henry Halleck in Washington, D.C., began a stream of telegrams (p. A-1, # 3) that averaged one a week, until Rosecrans finally took

the field. In his messages Halleck repeatedly urged Rosecrans to take some form of offensive action. Halleck also told Rosecrans that "extreme dissatisfaction is felt here over your inactivity" (p. A-3,8, # 15, 36). On 16 June 1863, Halleck finally demanded to know when Rosecrans would take the field (p. A-10, # 41).²

The Secretary of War, as well as the General-in-Chief, pressured Rosecrans to take action. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton wired Rosecrans and expressed apprehension about his lack of activity (See page A-3, message # 11). President Lincoln also wired Rosecrans and pleaded for some form of action to keep Bragg from sending troops to Johnston (p. A-2, # 8).³

The political pressure only served to infuriate Rosecrans, who believed that his superiors did not understand his problems. The pressure also set a pattern that would continue through the summer of 1863. Officials in Washington repeatedly urged or ordered Rosecrans forward without clear or complete knowledge of the situation.

INTELLIGENCE GATHERING AND ITS USE

Initial indications of Confederate troops leaving Bragg's army came from operational level sources during the middle of May 1863. These sources reported to Union army commanders other than Rosecrans.

Scouts reporting to the Union commander in Memphis, Major General Hurlbut, discovered that heavy reinforcements were being sent from central Tennessee (pp. A-1, 3, 8, 10, # 2, 13, 35, 39). In Corinth, Mississippi, Union Major General Dodge's scouts discovered that up to seven infantry brigades were leaving Bragg to join Johnston (pp. A-2, 3, # 6, 12, 16).⁴

Rosecrans initially discounted any reports that enemy troops were leaving his front. (pp. A-1,2, # 4, 5) But, on 21 May 1863, Rosecrans concluded from his own scouts that Bragg's was transferring troops. Accordingly, Rosecrans wired Halleck that he believed that from three to seven infantry brigades had left Bragg's army (page A-2, # 7). This information should have told Rosecrans that Bragg's force had been depleted by twenty-five to thirty percent. However, the reported transfer of Bragg's troops did not mention any movement of cavalry (p. A-2, # 10). This intelligence led Rosecrans to the conclusion that his cavalry forces were still outnumbered. The Confederate cavalry superiority meant that Rosecrans' long supply lines from Louisville, Kentucky, were still vulnerable to attack. Thus, Rosecrans still did not want to move and took the opportunity to sound a familiar complaint, "...if I had 6000 more cavalry I would advance in three days" (p. A-2, # 7). The disparity between his cavalry force and Bragg's continued to haunt him.⁵

The pressure coming from his superiors in Washington and the reports from other Union forces caused Rosecrans to query his corps, division, and cavalry commanders about the advisability of making an advance (p. A-4, # 17). Rosecrans also asked them if they believed Bragg's army was weaker because of the Confederate troop withdrawals. The responses were near unanimous. The generals did not believe that Bragg had been significantly weakened, and they also opposed any forward movement (pp. A-4-7, # 18-34). These opinions did not only come from his less reliable generals, these were also the opinions of his most trusted commanders, such as XIV Corps Commander Major General George Thomas and division commander Major General Philip Sheridan.⁶

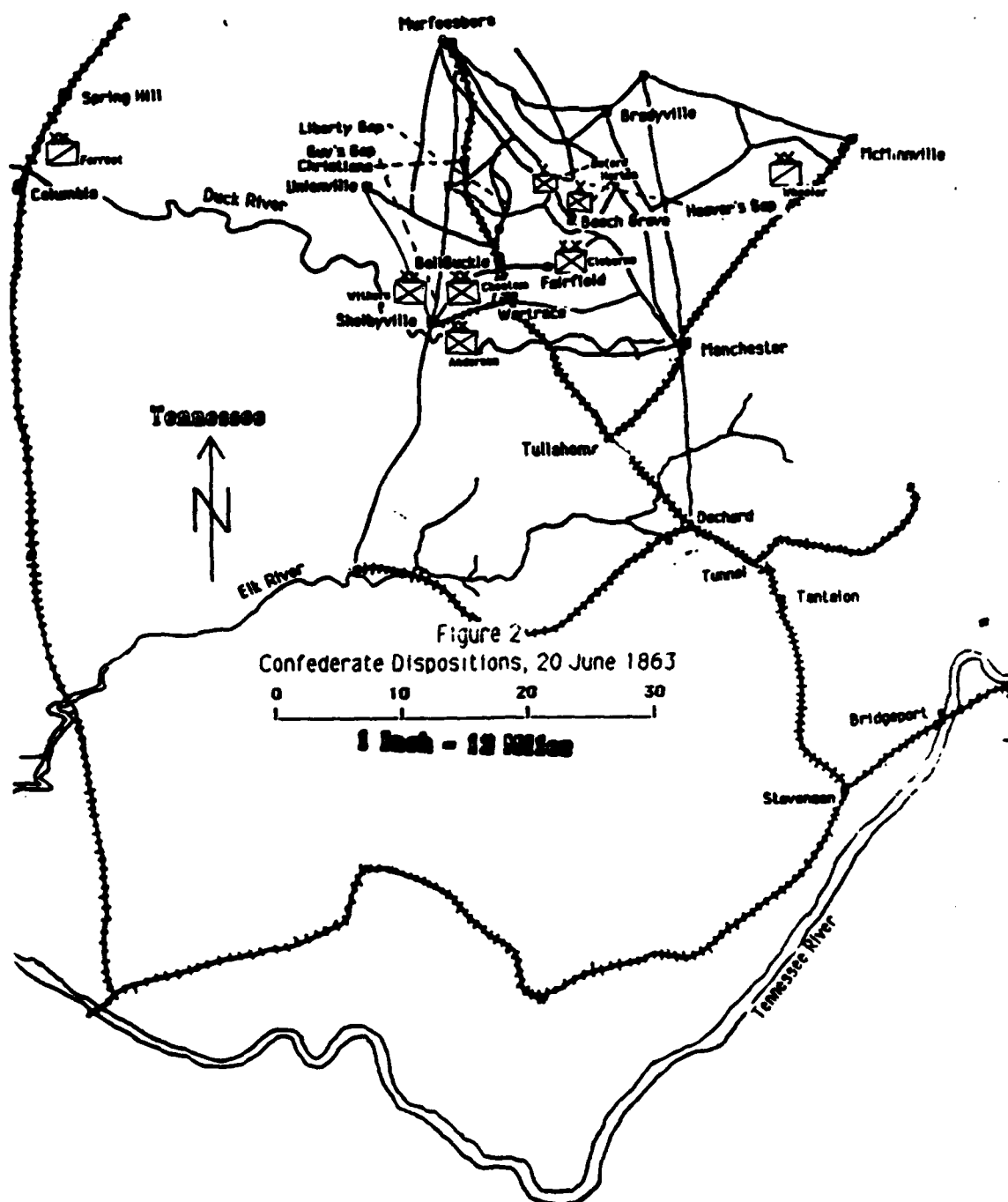
The officer voicing the loudest and longest opinion was not an addressee on the message. On 12 June 1863, Garfield wrote a long, detailed letter summarizing the subordinate commander's responses (p. A-8, # 37). Garfield also compiled a summary of Bragg's strength at the Battle of Murfreesboro and the presumed losses in infantry, cavalry, and artillery since that battle. Garfield went to great pains to explain the reasons why an advance should be made immediately. These reasons included an appraisal of the political advantages for an immediate advance. This analysis gave Rosecrans a clear picture of what he was facing and what forces he had to use against his opponent.⁷

While Rosecrans pondered the responses of his commanders and chief of staff, he also continued to collect information about the dispositions and strength of the Confederate forces. Beginning on 16 June, Rosecrans received four reports that gave him the location of the brigades and divisions in the Army of Tennessee. On 16 June he received the reports of a scout and a civilian (p. A-10, # 42). On 19 June another scout reported in with additional information (p. A-11, # 43). Then, on 20 June a last scout reported to army headquarters (p. A-11, # 44). These reports roughly coincided with each other and with Garfield's assessment of the Confederate strength. These four reports coincided with each other on the location of the Confederate units. Therefore, these four reports gave Rosecrans confidence that he had good intelligence about the strength and location of Bragg's forces. 8

These four reports placed Polk's Corps at Shelbyville with a strength of 18,000 Infantry. Anderson's Division was at Fishing Ford south of Shelbyville, and Withers' Division was three and one half miles north of Shelbyville on the Unionville Pike. Cheatham and his division were on the Murfreesboro pike three and one half miles north of Shelbyville.⁹

Additionally, Hardee's Corps of 15,000 Infantry occupied Wartrace, Fairfield, and Bellbuckle. Cleburne's Division was at Fairfield. Brigades of Hardee's Corps held

the mountain passes at Hoover's Gap and Liberty Gap. In particular, posted at Hoover's Gap were two brigades, Horton's and Buford's. (See Figure 2 below, Confederate Dispositions, 20 June 1863)



Wheeler's cavalry division constituted the right wing at Beech Grove and further east. Forrest's cavalry division formed the left wing at Spring Hill and Columbia.

In analyzing these four reports, Rosecrans arrived at the following conclusions. The Union forces outnumbered the Confederate forces: 65,137 effective and available Union troops to 44,000 total Confederate troops. The difference in troop strength was greater than it seems. "Total troops" was the total number of soldiers assigned and on the rolls. "Effective and available" meant that was the total number of soldiers left after subtracting the guard forces, fatigue details, sick, leave, etc. Therefore, Bragg's total troops were possibly reduced to 30,000 available and effective troops.

The Confederate infantry forces were preparing defensive works and were probably not going to engage in an attack. With the Confederate cavalry forces on the wings, Bragg was blind in front of his main defensive line at Shelbyville and Wartrace. Bragg's forces were spread out in a long arc of seventy miles from Columbia in the east, to McMinnville in the west. This meant that Bragg could not be strong everywhere, that somewhere this seventy mile arc was vulnerable to penetration.

The location and strength of the main Confederate works, at Shelbyville and Wartrace, indicated that these towns were where Bragg expected Rosecrans to attack.

Attacking the strong Confederate entrenchments would negate Rosecrans' numerical superiority. All this information gave Rosecrans the operational initiative and allowed him to set the tempo of the campaign.

On 20 June 1863, Rosecrans received a report that the Confederate cavalry under John Hunt Morgan was leaving Rosecrans' area and crossing into Burnside's area of responsibility (p. A-11, # 44, 45). This information led Rosecrans to conclude that Morgan was no longer a threat to his lines of supply and that Morgan was leaving Bragg's immediate control. The departure of Morgan's units brought the cavalry arm of the two armies more into balance. Although Rosecrans did not have a commander of the stature of Forrest, Rosecrans undoubtedly felt more comfortable with the situation.¹⁰

With all this information Rosecrans knew the location of most of Bragg's brigades and divisions. With most of the Confederate forces clustered around Shelbyville and Wartrace, an advance directly from Murfreesboro and an attack on the Confederate fortifications would have been a difficult task. However, the capture of Manchester would have bypassed and rendered useless the formidable works that Polk's and Hardee's troops had been constructing. Rosecrans identified Hoover's Gap as the the key to capturing Manchester. Rosecrans could see that, once he had control of Manchester, seizure of the Elk River

bridges could have isolated Bragg's army and cut off the Confederate line of retreat. Rosecrans needed to deceive Bragg as to the Union "main effort" so that Bragg would remain inactive. Therefore, he needed to fix Bragg's forces by threatening Bragg's main fortifications.

Rosecrans appeared to have a good idea of the way his opponent thought. Rosecrans could have arrived at the conclusion that, with the Confederate forces reduced, Bragg would be content to remain behind the defensive works and accept an attack. From Bragg's conduct at the Battles of Perryville and Stone's River, Rosecrans knew that if the "going got tough", he could stand his ground and Bragg would probably retreat. Therefore, Rosecrans realized that he would either have to go and get Bragg or force Bragg out of his entrenchments.

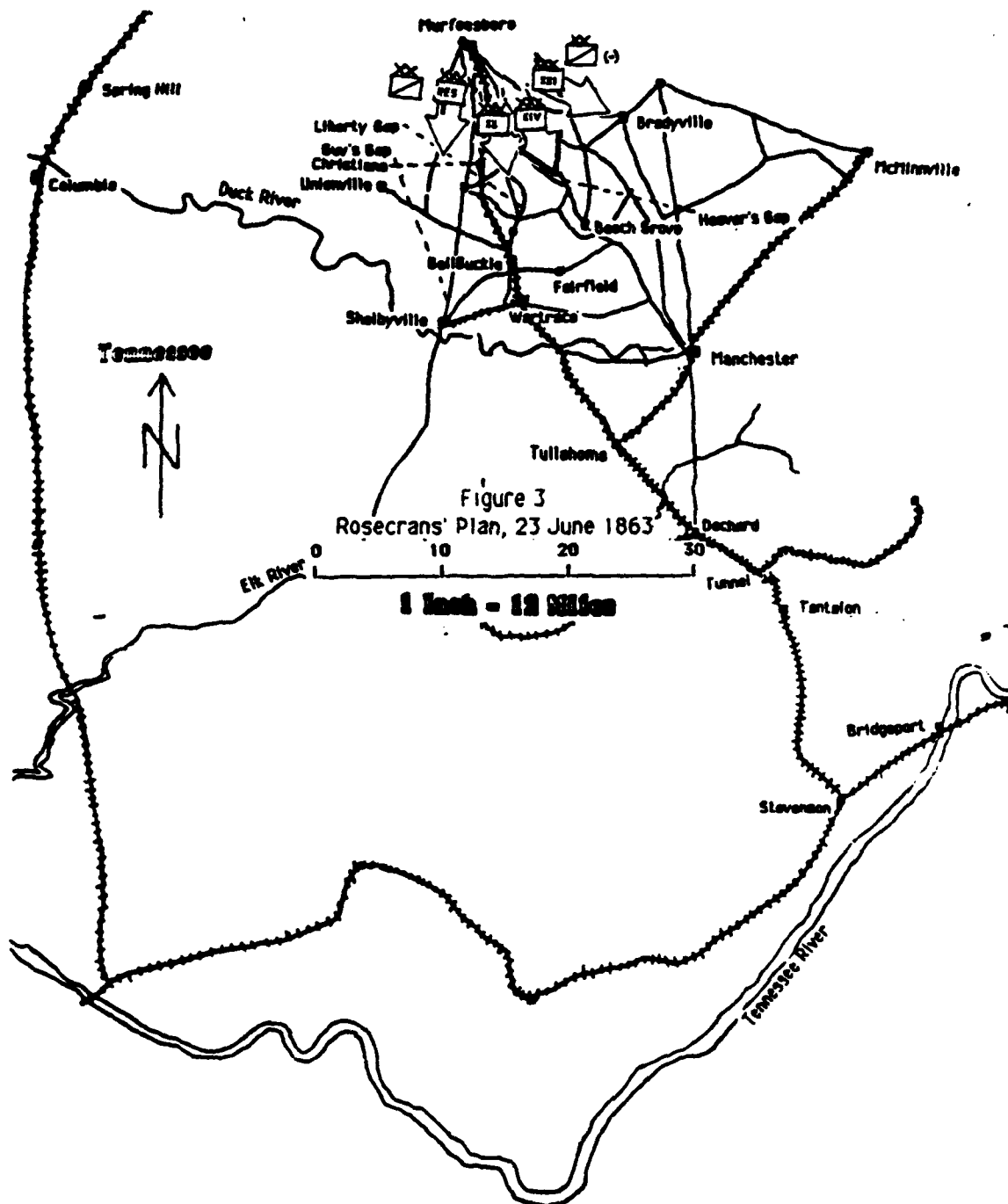
Rosecrans began the process of putting his army into motion on 22 June by moving the Reserve Corps of Major General Gordon Granger, the most northern corps, to the vicinity of Murfreesboro. About midnight on 23 June, the corps commanders gathered at the army headquarters in Murfreesboro to receive their written orders for the offensive. Rosecrans ordered his most trusted subordinate, Major General George Thomas, to advance along the Manchester Pike toward Beech Grove and Manchester (p. A-12, # 49). Major General Thomas Crittenden was to leave one division to secure Murfreesboro and move his

remaining two divisions to Bradyville and await orders (p. A-12, # 46). Major General A. McD. McCook was to move down the Shelbyville Pike, pass through Millersburg and take Liberty Gap (p. A-12, # 48). Granger was to move his corps down the old Middleton Road to Christiana, seize that town, and assume a defensive position there (p. A-12, # 47). The cavalry corps of Major General David Stanley was split. Most of it was to move with Granger on the army's right flank and a "division minus" was to move toward McMinnville on the army's left flank (p. A-12, # 48).

Rosecrans certainly considered Forrest a greater threat than Wheeler, and therefore placed the bulk of his cavalry on the Union right flank. The army headquarters was to follow Thomas along the Manchester Pike. Rosecrans decided to follow his "main effort" so he could be at the probable decisive place. This was a clear indication of the importance which Rosecrans placed on Thomas' moves. 11

Using his knowledge of the Confederate dispositions, Rosecrans planned to threaten Shelbyville with Granger and McCook, exactly as Bragg hoped. With Bragg blind to his real intentions, Rosecrans would make

his main effort with Thomas toward Manchester, while holding Crittenden in reserve to reinforce Thomas. (See Figure 3 below, Rosecrans' Plan, 23 June 1863)



There is no record available to indicate that Rosecrans explained his full "intent" to his commanders. Rosecrans asserted in his after action report that he intended from the start to turn Bragg's right flank and "compel a battle on our own ground or drive them on a disadvantageous line of retreat."¹²

Being a prudent commander, Rosecrans chose on 24 June 1863 to restrict the press dispatches leaving his area (p. A-12, # 52). Rosecrans restricted the newspaper correspondents by denying them access to the U.S. Military Telegraph. This was a counterintelligence move to keep the papers from disclosing his intentions or movements.¹³

As the army was making its initial deployments, the sky darkened and rain began to fall. The rain continued unabated for the next two weeks, turning roads into quagmires and bringing the rivers to flood stage. The heavy rains soaked the soil, a light sandy loam, and caused wagons to sink to their axles and horses to founder.

Thus, it was all but impossible to maneuver off the macadam roads in the fields. This quagmire rendered even the most effective intelligence useless, as commanders could not move fast enough to take advantage of a reported enemy weakness.¹⁴

In the falling rain, Reynolds' Division led Thomas' Corps. Wilder's Brigade of mounted infantry spearheaded Reynolds' Division. They rode virtually

unopposed into Hoover's Gap and seized it early on 24 June. So stunned were the Confederate defenders that they were not able to dispatch a rider to warn the Confederate garrison in Beech Grove. Confederate Generals Buford and Horton, charged with guarding Hoover's Gap, clearly did not expect any Union offensive, as most of their officers were at a Masonic picnic (p. A-16, # 74). The seizure of Hoover's Gap opened the road to Manchester and gave Rosecrans the key to Bragg's position.¹⁵

McCook advanced his corps rapidly and seized Liberty Gap. The seizures of this defile and of Hoover's Gap by Wilder gave Rosecrans two avenues to flank the Confederate forces at Shelbyville (p. A-13, # 53). Rosecrans knew he had achieved total surprise since Hoover's Gap and Liberty Gap had been taken so easily.

Rosecrans chose to push Thomas directly down the Manchester Pike. To keep Bragg confused about the ultimate objective of the Union Army's movements, Thomas was to threaten Fairfield, while driving quickly for Manchester (p. A-13,14, # 59, 63). To foster the impression that Union forces were planning to attack Shelbyville, Rosecrans ordered McCook to demonstrate as if he were planning a major attack from Liberty Gap (p. A-13, # 54, 56). At the same time McCook was to move two divisions quietly toward Beech Grove and follow Thomas. McCook was to leave only one infantry brigade to guard the gap (p. A-14, # 61, 62)!

Rosecrans then ordered Crittenden to move with all possible speed toward Manchester (p. A-13, 14, # 55, 60).

Meanwhile, Rosecrans left Granger and Stanley to hold Bragg's attention at Shelbyville.¹⁶

By 10 P.M. on 27 June, Thomas was in control of Manchester, and Rosecrans concluded that Bragg must surely have understood what had happened. A report from an escaped slave indicated Bragg had begun pulling his forces back toward Tullahoma (p. A-14, # 66). Trains carrying artillery and wagons loaded with supplies were leaving Wartrace and departing to the south. This report told Rosecrans that Bragg was abandoning his works and would be vulnerable to attack in the open field. This was exactly as Rosecrans had hoped Bragg would react.¹⁷

However, Rosecrans did not believe he had sufficient strength to complete the envelopment of Bragg, or defeat him in the open field, until all three corps were present (p. A-15, # 68). The abysmal condition of the roads made it difficult for Crittenden to close on the other two corps at Manchester.

To delay Bragg's escape across the Elk River, Rosecrans ordered Wilder to break the railroad in the rear of Tullahoma and destroy the enemy trains (p. A-15, # 67). By cutting the railroad lines, Rosecrans hoped to trap Bragg on the north side of the Elk River. Then, when all three Union Corps had arrived, Rosecrans could force a

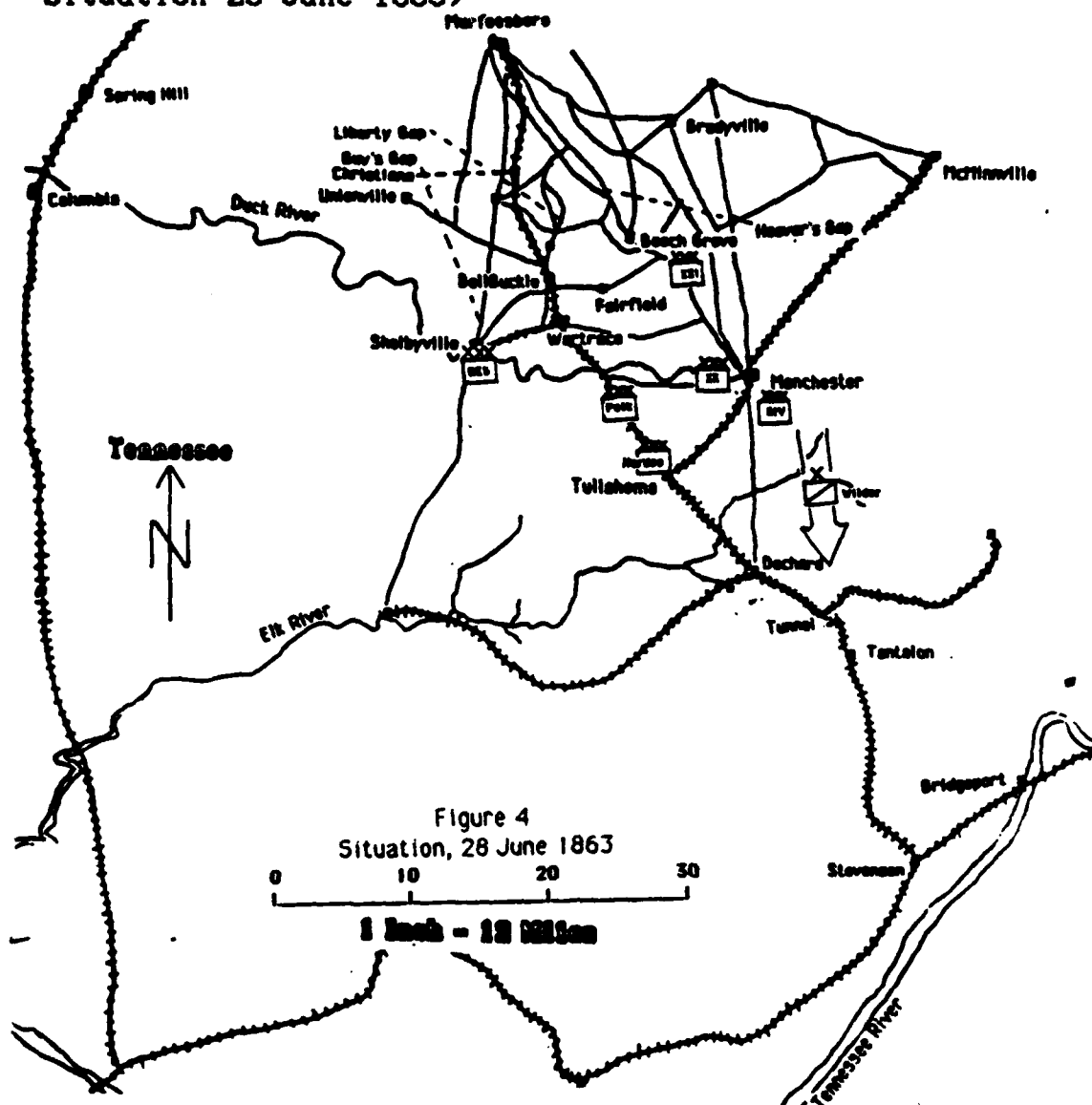
general engagement that would result in the capture or destruction of the Confederate Army. However, Wilder failed to destroy the Elk River bridge because of a strong Confederate guard force stationed there.¹⁸

The condition of the roads did not allow all the elements of Rosecrans' army to close on Manchester until 29 June. While waiting for Crittenden to close with the army, Rosecrans received reports from citizens and deserters that Bragg was withdrawing to Bridgeport, Alabama and Chattanooga (p. A-15, # 69). However, by this time Rosecrans had lost all contact with the Confederate army. Rosecrans ordered Thomas to send strong reconnaissance parties in the direction of Tullahoma to determine what Bragg was doing.¹⁹

As Thomas was entering Manchester, Granger was pushing the Confederate pickets back through Guy's Gap toward Shelbyville. Granger believed that Polk was evacuating the town. Granger based this belief on information from local citizens and his own observations of the Confederate pickets who were deserting their posts. Granger easily carried Guy's Gap and, sensing a rout, pushed the cavalry under Stanley quickly down the pike. Stanley's cavalry soon overcame an artillery battery blocking the road and captured Shelbyville with many prisoners. Stanley also captured intact the bridge over the Duck River.²⁰

On 29 June Rosecrans received a report from a "captured" civilian that indicated Polk's Corps was in Tullahoma along with large numbers of cavalry. The report also indicated the Confederate soldiers did not think they would fight at Tullahoma (p. A-15, # 69). This coincided with a report on 24 June, from one of Thomas' scouts, that indicated, if Bragg were out flanked, he would fall back to Chattanooga (p. A-12, # 51). (See Figure 4 below,

Situation 28 June 1863)



Granger had also arrived at the conclusion that Bragg was retreating and had sent his assessment to Rosecrans (p. A-15, # 70). From these reports Rosecrans probably deduced that Bragg would not fight at Tullahoma and there would be a race to cut off Bragg's line of retreat.

Wilder returned from his expedition on 30 June, having cut the railroad at Dechard and Tantalum. When Wilder struck at Tantalum, rail cars were arriving there from Knoxville carrying troops of Confederate General Simon Buckner's east Tennessee army. This information indicated to Rosecrans that all the Confederate strength in middle and east Tennessee was against him. Buckner had the only large, organized force in east Tennessee, and with this force absent, east Tennessee could be easily captured. Rosecrans immediately wired Burnside and advocated an advance by Burnside toward Knoxville (p. A-15, # 71).²¹

On 1 July Thomas' probes revealed that Bragg had fled Tullahoma. By all indications, the Confederates had abandoned Tullahoma in great haste and disorganization (p. A-16, # 72). Civilians reported that the surrounding countryside was full of deserters, principally Tennesseans, from Bragg's army. A Confederate rear guard had burned the bridge over the Elk River at Tullahoma and was waiting on the south bank to oppose any Federal crossing attempt (p. A-16, # 73). As Thomas and the other corps commanders

tried to find a place to cross the rain-swollen Elk river, Rosecrans directed Stanley to take his cavalry corps and intercept Bragg's southeastern flight. Because of the number of deserters and the indications of headlong retreat, Rosecrans deduced that Bragg's army was no longer a viable fighting force.²²

Reports from civilians, prisoners, and deserters that arrived at the Union army headquarters painted the picture of a broken and dispirited Confederate Army (p. A-16, # 75). These sources said that enemy troops were deserting hourly. This was the first report Rosecrans had received of a beaten and demoralized enemy. Reports of dissatisfaction and desertion continued to arrive at Rosecrans' headquarters for the rest of the summer. These reports convinced Halleck, Rosecrans, and others that Bragg would not fight.²³

The treacherous roads and rising rivers combined with the destruction of key bridges, by Bragg's rear guard, to halt all Union pursuit. On 4 July Rosecrans signaled that the pursuit was over and issued orders for the corps commanders to consolidate their commands (p. A-16, # 76).²³

While the last of Rosecrans' troops were establishing camps, Stanton wired Rosecrans with the news from Mississippi and Pennsylvania. Stanton gleefully announced that Pemberton had surrendered the fortress of

Vicksburg and Meade had defeated Lee at Gettysburg. Stanton also asked Rosecrans if "he (Rosecrans) would miss the chance to deal the finishing blow to the Confederacy." (p. A-16, # 77). Stanton's apparent disregard for the accomplishments of the Army of the Cumberland, deeply stung Rosecrans (p. A-17, # 78). It set the tone for relations between the War Department and Rosecrans during the coming months. This message created tension between Rosecrans and his superiors.²⁵

SUMMARY

The Tullahoma Campaign began after Rosecrans' Army had been inactive for six months. During this time the Army of the Cumberland had rested and refitted. Rosecrans had also collected a large amount of intelligence about his enemy.

Rosecrans had received strategic information from Halleck about Bragg's army being weakened by transfers to Mississippi. Stanton informed Rosecrans about the Union successes in Mississippi and Pennsylvania. Operational level information from other field armies told Rosecrans the strength of the forces leaving Bragg's army and identified most of the commanders. These same sources also told Rosecrans that Bragg was moving his supplies further south. Tactical intelligence gave Rosecrans the location and the strength of the Bragg's divisions and brigades.

This information depicted for Rosecrans the strong points and the vulnerabilities of Bragg's defensive positions. Rosecrans also knew Bragg planned to fight a defensive battle.

Thus, when Rosecrans began the campaign he had near-perfect intelligence about his enemy. Rosecrans devised a plan to flank Bragg's positions by seizing the town of Manchester. This threatened Bragg's line of retreat and compelled Bragg to either abandon middle Tennessee and retreat or leave his defensive works and fight Rosecrans in the open country.

Rosecrans' plan worked because he achieved tactical and operational surprise. He captured the critical passes through the mountains. With these passes in his control, Rosecrans had the initiative and never relinquished it. His forces pushed south and took Manchester, rendering the fortifications at Shelbyville useless. Bragg's army retreated to Tullahoma.

Heavy rains, however, slowed Rosecrans' advance to a crawl. He could not consolidate his army in time to attack Bragg at Tullahoma. Rosecrans sent Wilder's mounted infantry brigade to cut the bridges south of Tullahoma in an effort to stop Bragg's escape. Rosecrans hoped to trap Bragg on the north side of the Elk River, but Bragg's army escaped over the Elk and retreated toward Bridgeport and

Chattanooga. Rosecrans then called a halt to the pursuit and consolidated his exhausted army.

During this campaign Rosecrans received his intelligence from all six sources. His primary source of intelligence was the spy or scout. These men brought Rosecrans the detailed information about Bragg's dispositions that allowed Rosecrans to devise his plan. The cavalry corps provided little useful intelligence. However, the exploits of Wilder's brigade gave Rosecrans much valuable intelligence on Bragg's readiness for combat. The army police chief and provost marshal, as well as unit commanders, questioned prisoners, civilians, and deserters. The answers from these individuals gave Rosecrans a surprising amount of intelligence about the strength and location of Bragg's forces. They also provided Rosecrans with an insight into the morale of his enemy. Rosecrans probably formed a hypothesis about how Bragg would fight. He could have done this with the information about Bragg losing troops and his own knowledge of Bragg's style of fighting. The signal corps provided Rosecrans with intelligence from his subordinate commanders. On one occasion Rosecrans used the Chattanooga Rebel to confirm a scout's report. This report told Rosecrans that his knowledge of Bragg's organization was correct. Therefore, Rosecrans used all six intelligence sources to collect intelligence about the Confederate Army.

One perplexing question remains. Why, after months of waiting, did Rosecrans finally take the field against Bragg? This is more baffling after considering that the majority of Rosecrans' commanders opposed an advance. The answer is complex. First, Rosecrans may finally have succumbed to the intense political pressure from Halleck and Stanton. Second, the letter written by Garfield which summarized the commanders' responses, the probable Confederate strength, the Army of the Cumberland's strength, and the reasons why an advance should be made may have given Rosecrans second thoughts about his continuing reluctance to advance. Third, the departure of John Hunt Morgan and his Confederate cavalry division reduced the threat to Rosecrans' lines of communication. Instead of Confederate cavalry outnumbering the Union cavalry four to one with Morgan's departure it dropped to only about two and a half to one. Fourth, troops from Bragg's army were sent to Johnston in Mississippi. This reduced Bragg's forces to the point that Rosecrans had a two to one manpower advantage. Lastly, Rosecrans cited the need to build a logistics base and to improve the condition of his horses. The logistics buildup and the improvement in the horses condition were accomplished on 1 May and 15 June respectively. Finally, Rosecrans believed he had all the ingredients necessary to assure himself of success.²⁶

There were numerous factors impacting on Rosecrans as he planned the Tullahoma Campaign. Rosecrans' intelligence gathering sources provided a large amount of information about Bragg's army. Halleck, Stanton, and Lincoln pressured Rosecrans to attack Bragg. Rosecrans had formed a hypothesis about how Bragg fought. These three factors, along with Rosecrans being well rested, allowed Rosecrans to properly analyze the intelligence and develop a plan which capitalized on the Union strengths and Confederate weaknesses. Therefore, the Tullahoma Campaign was successful due, in large measure, to the effective use of intelligence by Rosecrans.

The Tullahoma Campaign ended with all of middle Tennessee in Union hands. However, Bragg's army had escaped to fight another day. The next objectives for Rosecrans were Chattanooga and the destruction of Bragg's army. These two objectives would launch Rosecrans on the Chickamauga Campaign.

CHAPTER THREE

ENDNOTES

¹George B. Davis, et al, Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891 - 1895), Plate CXLIX.; In order to depict unit locations and movements I have traced from Plate CXLIX the significant towns, major rivers, and major road and rail networks. This eliminates unnecessary clutter and orients the reader on the essential features.

²U.S., War Department, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Volume XXIII Part I (1889), pp. 8-10; Ibid.

³U.S., War Department, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Volume XXIII Part II (1889), p. 369-71.

⁴Ibid., p. 343.

⁵Ibid., p. 351.

⁶Ibid., pp. 394-95.

⁷Ibid., pp. 420-24; Garfield's analysis of the relative strengths of the Union and Confederate forces seems to be the first serious attempt by a staff officer to quantify the opposing forces.

⁸National Archives, Washington, D.C. Record Group 393, Part 1. Entry 986, "Summaries of the News Reaching the Headquarters of General W.S. Rosecrans, 1863 - 1864," pp. 1-4.

⁹These strength figures, as well as the dispositions are the ones that Rosecrans used in his "after action report."

¹⁰O.R., p. 440.

¹¹Ibid., p. 405, 444-46.

¹²Ibid., p. 404.

13Ibid., p. 448.

14Thomas Yoseloff, Campaigns of the Civil War, 8 volumes (New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1963), volume 4, Henry M. Cist, Army of the Cumberland, p. 155.

15Commandery of the State of Ohio, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Sketches of War History, (Cincinnati: Monfort & Company, 1908), Volume VI, John T. Wilder, The Battle for Hoover's Gap, p.170.

16O.R., p. 458-63.

17Ibid., p. 470-74.

18Ibid., p. 474.

19Ibid., p.479.

20Ibid., p. 536.

21Ibid., pp. 485 - 486.

22Ibid., p. 495-504.

23Ibid., p. 508.

24Ibid., p. 512.

25Ibid., p. 518.

26Ibid., p. 403.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTELLIGENCE BEFORE AND DURING

THE CHICKAMAUGA CAMPAIGN

8 JULY 1863 - 18 SEPTEMBER 1863

OVERVIEW

The Chickamauga Campaign of Major General Rosecrans had many of the same features as the Tullahoma Campaign. Flanking movements characterized both campaigns, as did the deception of the enemy commander, movements over extremely rugged terrain, and the peaceful capture of a fortified significant city.

The main difference in these two campaigns is the ending. The Tullahoma Campaign ended with the Confederate Army of Tennessee in disorganized flight from Rosecrans' forces. The Chickamauga Campaign, on the other hand, saw the Confederate forces turn and give battle and the Union forces flee in a rout.

OPERATIONAL SETTING

When Bragg and his army escaped over the Elk River, Rosecrans gathered his army and repaired his lines of communication. Rosecrans also began a series of cavalry reconnaissances to explore the area in northern Alabama and southern Tennessee. Rosecrans ordered Stanley to move to

Huntsville, Alabama (p. B-1, # 3). Rosecrans urged Stanley to take his time and return with his horses in better shape than when he left. Rosecrans also sent Wilder and his mounted brigade on an expedition to Columbia, Tennessee, with orders to take "six or seven days if necessary."¹

On 11 July, Rosecrans wired Halleck to inform him that, "the operations now before us involve a great deal of care, labor, watchfulness, and combined effort to insure a successful advance to Chattanooga" (p. B-2, # 5). It is obvious that Rosecrans had no intentions of conducting a rapid advance. Once again, his lack of immediate movement was to cause him trouble with his superiors.²

POLITICAL PRESSURE

General-in-Chief Halleck felt a constant need to urge his generals forward. However, Halleck was very tired of constantly urging Major General Rosecrans to take action. After receiving Rosecrans' telegram on 11 July, Halleck waited until 23 July, anticipating some sign of movement by Rosecrans. After twelve days, Halleck wired Rosecrans and inquired about the disposition of the Union and Confederate forces (p. B-3, # 10).⁴

After receiving Rosecrans' reply from Nashville (p. B-3, # 11), Halleck admonished Rosecrans that he must not wait for Johnston and Bragg to unite. Halleck also

informed Rosecrans that "people in Washington were disappointed in his slowness."⁴

Even after this message, Rosecrans waited until the beginning of August to reply to Halleck (p. B-4, # 15). After returning to Winchester, Rosecrans wired Halleck and told him that, if the officials in Washington had a general better than himself, they should put him in command. Rosecrans also spelled out for Halleck the extended lengths of his lines of communications from Louisville and Nashville. Additionally, he detailed for Halleck the requirements for a successful advance.⁵

Undeterred by Rosecrans' message, Halleck sent an order to his strong-willed subordinate to move without delay and report daily the position of each corps (p. B-5, # 15). After receiving this order, Rosecrans assured Halleck that he wanted to move as soon as possible and inquired if Halleck's order took away his discretion (p. B-5, # 21). The General-in-Chief informed him that the orders were preemptive (p. B-5, # 19)!⁶

A final round of telegrams followed. In a message to Halleck, Rosecrans laid out his plan and once again detailed the problems of supplying his forces in the desolate countryside (p. B-5, # 21). Halleck --obviously tired of the "game"--wired back, somewhat imperiously, that Rosecrans had his orders and that he should not stop to discuss "mere details"(p. B-6, # 22).⁷

Halleck was not the only one who was disappointed in the Rosecrans' slow movement. Garfield became so disenchanted that he wrote a letter to his political mentor Simon Chase, Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury. In his letter to Chase, Garfield went to great pains to point out that the army's inactivity was not his doing and that he was making great efforts to urge Rosecrans forward. Garfield also stated that, if Rosecrans had followed his advice and had begun the Tullahoma Campaign on 12 June, then another campaign would not have been necessary. Garfield felt vindicated because the weather had remained dry until 24 June; if Rosecrans had employed his army sooner he would have trapped Bragg instead of being held up by the abysmal road conditions after the rain started on 24 June.⁸

Again officials in Washington ordered the army into motion without considering the consequences or without a full appreciation for the circumstances. This type of pressure led to disregarded information and rash decisions.

INTELLIGENCE GATHERING AND ITS USE

From the time that Rosecrans called a halt to the Tullahoma Campaign on 7 July, he was receiving a steady stream of information concerning Bragg's army (pp. B-1-6,

1, 2, 4, 6-9, 13, 16, 20, 23, 25, 26, 28). These reports from scouts, deserters, and refugees provided Rosecrans with a wealth of information about Bragg's army. The Confederate troops from Tennessee were deserting in large numbers. All these deserters reported the same thing --the troops had no confidence in Bragg. The Confederate soldiers did not expect to fight at Chattanooga. Confederate troops were still reported leaving for Mississippi. During the Tullahoma Campaign, the average strength of Bragg's army was 30,000. Since Tullahoma, desertions had decreased the Confederate Army by about 10,000 men.

The information also told Rosecrans that Bragg had made a change in the Confederate command structure. Hardee had departed, and Confederate General D.H. Hill had taken his place. While Hill came from Lee's victorious Army of Northern Virginia, it would take him some time to learn the terrain and his troops.

Reports also told Rosecrans that Bragg's troops were short on rations and supplies. Additionally, Bragg expected Rosecrans to cross into Alabama and make an attack through Gadsden and cut his lines of communication with Atlanta.⁹

Halleck paid so little attention to Bragg that he assigned Rosecrans a new campaign objective. Instead of concentrating on the Confederate Army, he made Chattanooga the objective.¹⁰

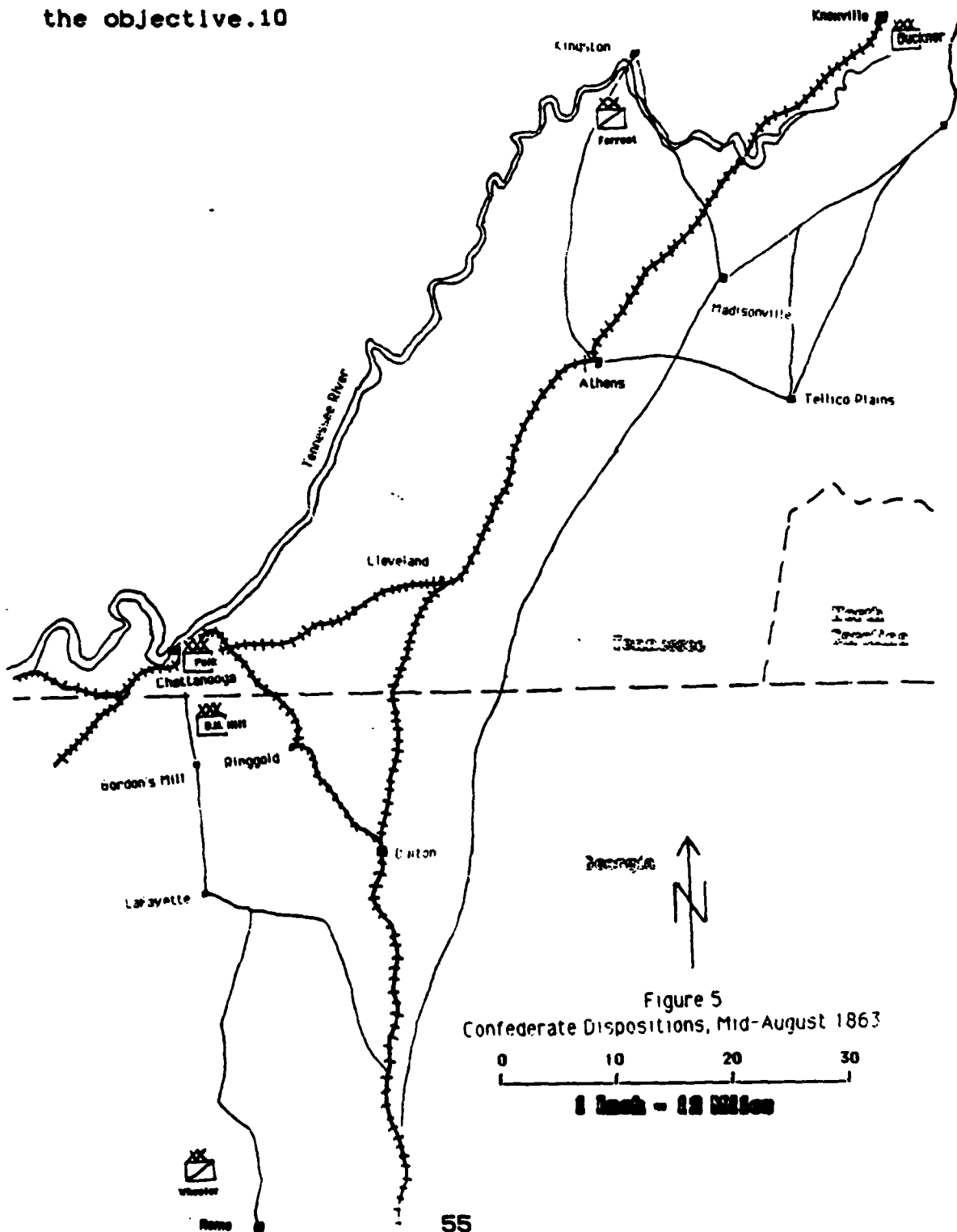


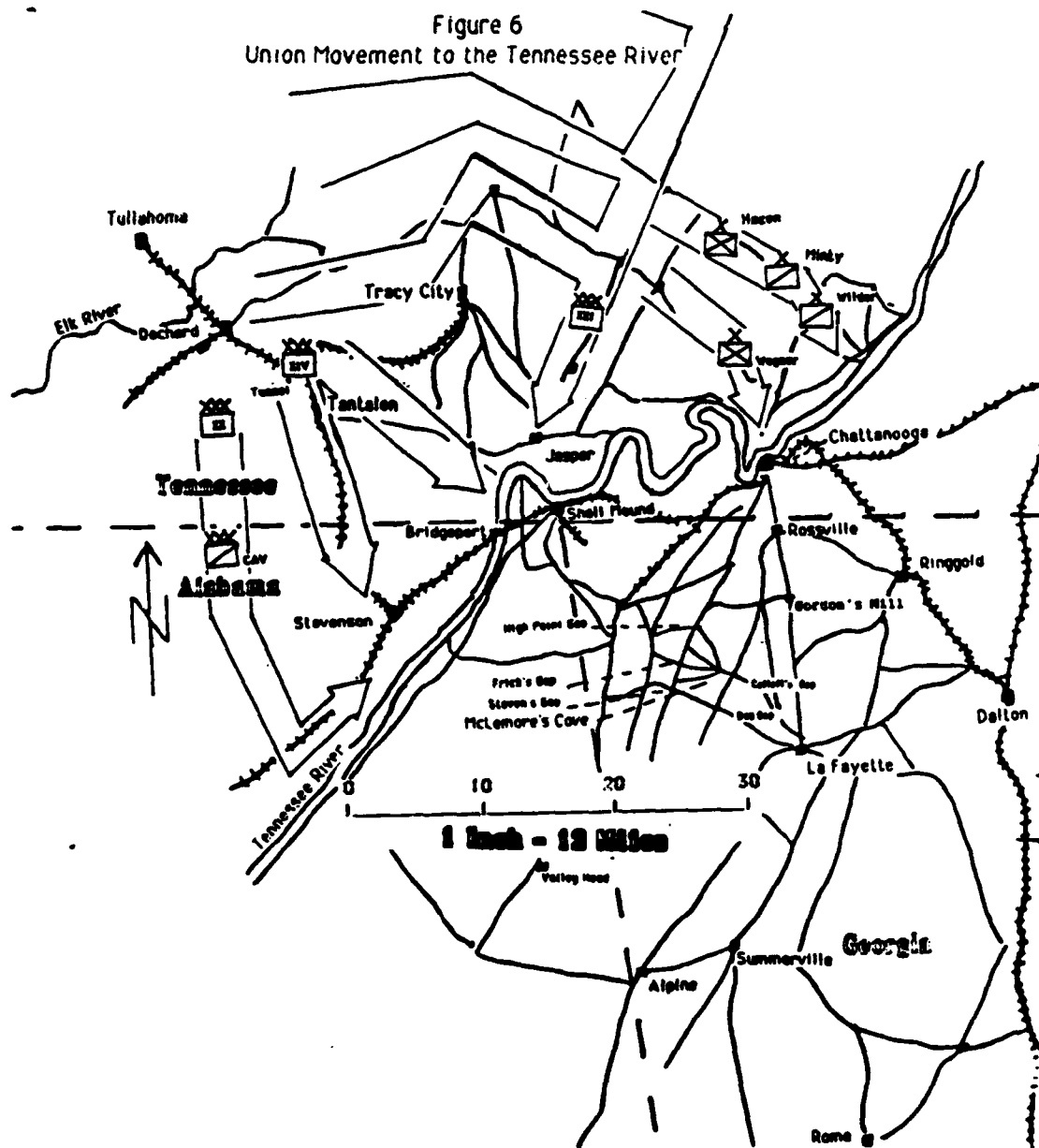
Figure 5
Confederate Dispositions, Mid-August 1863

Rosecrans could maneuver his units with virtual impunity because Bragg had again malpositioned his cavalry as he had done during the Tullahoma Campaign. Wheeler and his division were at Rome, Georgia, guarding the Confederate left flank. Forrest was at Kingston, Tennessee, connecting with Buckner's army in Knoxville. No Confederate cavalry was north of the Tennessee River watching and reporting the Rosecrans movements (pp. B-2, 3, 6, #7, 13, 23, 28). Rosecrans knew this from several reports and exploited it to the fullest (See Figure number 5 Confederate Dispositions, Mid-August 1863). 11

In Washington, Halleck had grown so used to the reports of dissension and desertion in Bragg's army that he came to discount it as a viable fighting force. He urged Rosecrans to move forward at a faster rate. Halleck's main concern was not what Bragg might do, but that Bragg was sending troops to Lee in Virginia (p. B-8, # 30). Rosecrans did not believe that Bragg could send away any more troops (p. B-8, # 31).

On 16 August, Rosecrans put all three corps into motion (p. B-6, # 27). Rosecrans moved the bulk of his army forty miles west of Chattanooga, or downstream, to the vicinity of Bridgeport and Stevenson, Alabama. An ad hoc force moved to the north bank of the Tennessee River opposite Chattanooga. This force consisted of two infantry brigades under Brigadier Generals Wagner and Hazen, a

cavalry brigade under Colonel Minty and Wilder's Brigade. The intent of this disposition was to confuse Bragg as to the correct crossing point by making Bragg believe it would be upstream, closer to Burnside's army which was moving toward Knoxville. This force would also guard the left flank of Rosecrans' army. (See Figure number 6, Union Movements to the Tennessee River)12



However, reports from civilians indicating the opposite was taking place were reaching Rosecrans. Johnston's Mississippi army was reinforcing Bragg (pp. B-9, 10, # 35, 36, 40). In spite of this revelation, both Rosecrans and Halleck did not expect much from the Confederate Army of Tennessee.¹³

By the end of August, Rosecrans had moved his entire army across the Cumberland Mountains and had advanced brigades to concealed positions near the Tennessee River. Wilder, with Hazen and Wagner providing support, was opposite Chattanooga engaging the Confederate batteries every day and generally making a nuisance of himself to Bragg.

As Wilder sat opposite Chattanooga, he saw an opportunity to fool Bragg completely about the intended crossing point. Nothing exists in the Official Records that would indicate Rosecrans ordered Wilder to create the type of diversion that he did (p. B-9, # 38). Wilder appears to have devised the deception on his own. He apparently knew Rosecrans' "intent" and acted accordingly. The best description of this deception comes from Wilder's report of the campaign.

Once in front of Chattanooga we commenced to make feints as if trying to cross at different points for 40 miles above and below the town, and succeeded in so deceiving them as to induce them to use an entire army corps to prevent the execution of such a

purpose, they (Bragg's army) were working every night fortifying the south bank of the river at every feasible ford for miles above. Details were made every night to build fires indicating large camps, and by throwing boards upon others and hammering on barrels and sawing up boards and throwing the pieces in streams that would float them into the river, we made them believe we were preparing to cross with boats.¹⁴

Wilder and the other commanders opposite Chattanooga provided Rosecrans with a steady flow of information concerning the events taking place in and around Chattanooga. Wilder reported that the Confederates were removing all heavy machinery and inoperative locomotives from Chattanooga (pp. B-10, 11 # 39, 43-45, 50).¹⁵

The removal of equipment, along with the scores of deserters who swam the Tennessee River, indicated that Bragg had no stomach for a fight. All this information gave Rosecrans additional confidence that his opponent would retreat. Rosecrans believed Bragg would retreat toward Atlanta and "if we bring him to battle it will be between Dalton (Georgia) and Atlanta" (p. B-12, # 51).¹⁶

Rosecrans believed that Bragg would not fight at Chattanooga and that he had completely deceived Bragg again. The reasons for this were the splendid deception operation Wilder was conducting and the reports that continued to stream in from deserters, refugees, and scouts. These reports said that the officers and soldiers felt contempt for Bragg, desertions were taking place

regularly, and that Bragg was transferring equipment and supplies to Atlanta.

Thus, on 28 August as Rosecrans began to cross the Tennessee River, he knew that Bragg's army had low morale, that it was stretched from Knoxville to Rome, that Bragg would probably not fight at Chattanooga in spite of protests to the contrary, and that elements of Johnston's army were reinforcing Bragg (p. B-11, # 46). With this information Rosecrans probably expected a repeat of his victory at Tullahoma.

Thanks to the deception operations of Wilder and Bragg's misuse of his cavalry, Rosecrans began an unopposed crossing of the Tennessee River on the night of 28 August (p. B-11, # 48,49). As the infantry brigades were crossing, a cavalry patrol brought in a prisoner. The prisoner reported that Bragg would not risk battle if Chattanooga were flanked, but that Bragg must give battle within two months or lose his army to desertion (p. B-12, # 54). This coincided exactly with Rosecrans own views, and accordingly, he pushed forward. However, the reported reinforcement of Bragg so concerned Rosecrans that he wired Halleck and asked if it was possible that Lee was sending troops to Bragg, instead of vice versa (p. B-13, # 56).¹⁷

By 5 September Rosecrans had all three of his corps across the river (p. B-13, # 59). As Rosecrans began pushing Crittenden's corps toward Chattanooga on

6 September, Rosecrans received several reports about Bragg's army from deserters and scouts. These reports indicated that Bragg would fall back toward Atlanta and that Johnston was sending troops to Bragg. However, Bragg was also reputed to have made a speech in Chattanooga in which he promised to fight before another withdrawal (p. B-14, # 65). In spite of this, Rosecrans still believed Bragg would not stand and fight (p. B-14, # 58). However, on 6 September, Rosecrans conceded that reinforcements were arriving at Bragg's army. Rosecrans wired Halleck and told him that Johnston and Breckinridge were both with Bragg (p. B-14, # 62).

Halleck also became a bit worried on 6 September (p. B-13, # 61). Halleck wired Rosecrans and urged him to unite with Burnside if Buckner had reinforced Bragg. When Rosecrans received this message he lost his temper and on 7 September sent Halleck a scathing message in which he said, "your apprehensions are just and (are) the legitimate consequence of your orders" (p. B-14, # 66). Rosecrans was laying the blame squarely on Halleck's shoulders for ordering an advance without coordination between Rosecrans and Burnside.¹⁸

Still, scouts and civilians continued to report that Bragg's army would not fight at Chattanooga. This caused Rosecrans to view the situation in a more favorable light (p. B-14, # 63, 64).

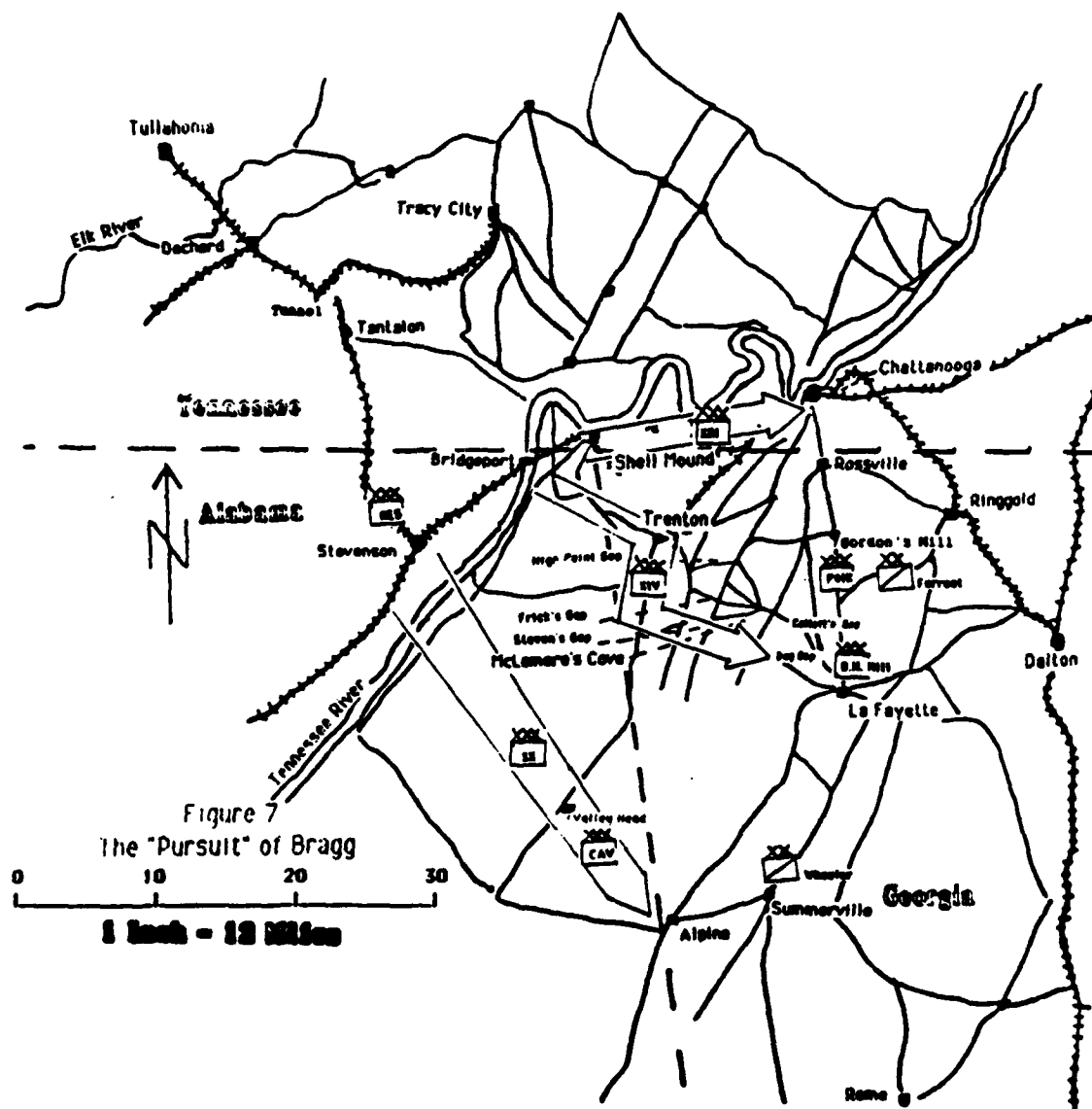
The following day, 8 September, the situation brightened even more. Scouts reported that Bragg was in fact retreating from Chattanooga. The absence of Confederate pickets on Lookout Mountain served to confirm this (p. B-15, # 67-70). From across the Tennessee River, Wagner sent word that Chattanooga was completely evacuated. Union infantry occupied Chattanooga on 9 September.¹⁹

Euphoria gripped the army headquarters. It was Tullahoma all over again. Gleefully Rosecrans signaled Halleck.

Chattanooga is ours without a struggle, and east Tennessee is free. Our move on the enemy's flank and rear progress, while the tail of his retreating column will not escape unmolested (p. B-15, #71).²⁰

Rosecrans, probably wishing to avoid another charge of slowness, ordered a general pursuit after Bragg's retreating forces. Rosecrans planned to strike at the rear, flank, and head of Bragg's retreating army.

Rosecrans also planned to sever Bragg's lines of communication with Confederate supply base in Atlanta. (See Figure 7 below, The "Pursuit" of Bragg)



Rosecrans ordered Crittenden to strike at the rear of the Confederate column by pushing through Chattanooga and then south to Ringgold, Georgia. Thomas received orders to move his corps south along the western side of Lookout Mountain, cross at Steven's Gap and occupy LaFayette, Georgia, to strike at the flank of Bragg's army. Rosecrans ordered McCook to travel along the west side of Lookout Mountain, cross at Alpine, Georgia, and take Summerville, Georgia, to cut off Bragg's probable escape route.²¹

At this juncture, Thomas suggested that all three corps concentrate at Chattanooga and an orderly pursuit be conducted. Rosecrans probably rejected this suggestion for three reasons. There were three gaps over Lookout Mountain, each corps could cross at a different gap without unnecessary delay. Secondly, Rosecrans undoubtedly did not relish the obscurity of his last campaign and saw the chance to make a significant impact on the northern populace with the destruction of Bragg's army. Wide public acclaim was possible with a major victory, since Meade was sitting idle on the Rappahannock, and Grant was resting in Mississippi. Lastly, a slow orderly pursuit did not coincide with Rosecrans' preconceived notion of Bragg's army fleeing in disarray.²²

Rosecrans committed a grave tactical mistake--he misused his cavalry forces. Instead of pushing them along Bragg's line of retreat to locate and fix Bragg's army, he

sent Stanley and the bulk of his cavalry to Alpine, under McCook's command, to strike at the Confederate flank, destroy rail lines, and cut off the enemy retreat, if possible. Therefore, all three Union corps pushed blindly forward, spread over a rugged mountain range with the wings of the army forty miles apart.

Even with the capture of Chattanooga, some disquiet existed. Crittenden reported to Garfield that rumors had reached him that Bragg had deliberately retreated from Chattanooga in order to lure the Union forces into a trap (p. B-17, # 73). In spite of this and other reports that seemed to contradict the notion that Bragg was fleeing Rosecrans urged his commanders onward (p. B-16, # 75).

In Chickamauga: Bloody Battle in the West, Glenn Tucker asserts that Bragg, "sent scouts back to pose as deserters...carrying sensational disclosures of how the Confederate Army...was in full flight, unlikely to put up any serious resistance this side of Rome." The report of a deserter captured by Crittenden had this very theme (p. B-16, # 74). There is little doubt that Rosecrans would have arrived at the same conclusion with or without Bragg's deserters. Rosecrans had been receiving the same type of intelligence since 7 July, and had become convinced that Bragg's army was not a viable force.²³

A message sent to Crittenden set the tone for this entire part of the campaign.

(General) Wood sends a report of a contraband that Bragg was at Gordon's Mill today, and that a heavy force was with him, moving this way, with the intention to attack this place. There have been several rumors over the last two days that Bragg moved out with the design to fight us between this and LaFayette. These rumors, and particularly that of the contraband, are hardly worth a moment's consideration. They should be treated with total indifference....
(p. B-16, #76)24

In other words, nothing would disturb the euphoric attitude that prevailed at army headquarters. Halleck joined in, once again, with belief that parts of Bragg's army were being sent to reinforce Lee (p. B-18, # 78). No one at the Union Army headquarters or in Washington believed that anything could keep Rosecrans from moving unchecked to Atlanta.

The Chickamauga Campaign had been in progress for twenty-six days. By then Rosecrans was probably exhausted from his habit of staying up till early morning. Additionally, Rosecrans, in keeping with a penchant for meddling, was involving himself in staff matters. The job of getting food and forage to the army was overwhelming the Union Quartermaster. Rosecrans began personally issuing orders in this field. The late nights and details of keeping the army supplied probably took their toll on Rosecrans so that he was nearing physical and mental exhaustion. This self-imposed state could have caused

Rosecrans to make serious errors analyzing information during the next five days.²⁵

September 11th saw the first cracks in Rosecrans' beliefs about the Confederate army. Thomas' lead division had crossed Lookout Mountain and entered a valley known as McLemore's Cove. The division commander, Major General J.S. Negley, was told by deserters and civilians that a large Confederate force was waiting for him in the cove (p. B-18, # 80, 81). A scout reported that Bragg's intent was to "hem in the Yankees...and whip them by divisions" (p. B-16, # 77). A civilian reported that Bragg had received 16,000 reinforcements from Johnston.

Another prisoner, captured by the cavalry on the army left flank, reported that at least two brigades of cavalry and two infantry divisions were at Gordon's Mill directly in front of Crittenden (p. B-17, # 79). Rosecrans acknowledged the apparent threat and told Thomas, if necessary, to pull McCook to within supporting distance (p. B-17, # 82). Rosecrans' judgment was that these forces were only a covering force to throw off pursuit until the bulk of Bragg's army could escape (p. B-17, # 83).²⁶

On 12 September, Thomas reported that Confederates had attacked Negley in McLemore's Cove with an overwhelming force and compelled Negley to fall back (p. B-18, # 85). Rosecrans still appeared to cling to the belief that it was merely a delaying force when he responded.

After maturely weighing your dispatch the general commanding is induced to believe that Negley withdrew more through prudence than through compulsion....(p. B-18, # 86)²⁷

Another message from Thomas finally woke Rosecrans to the dangerous situation that existed. Thomas reported that he had information that indicated Negley had been attacked by all of Hill's corps, a portion of Buckner's, and 2,000 cavalry (p. B-18, # 87). When Rosecrans read this and combined it with the other indicators he had received, it sent a "shock wave" through the headquarters. Quickly a message was sent to Crittenden informing him of the new situation.

The general commanding says that there is no doubt that the enemy is in heavy force in the vicinity of LaFayette, and there is far more probability of his attacking you than that he is running....²⁸ (p. B-19, # 89)

Far to the south at Alpine, McCook had arrived at the conclusion that Bragg intended to defeat each corps in detail. For some reason, McCook only voiced this concern to Thomas and not to Rosecrans (p. B-18, # 88). McCook probably did not want one of Rosecrans' famous tongue lashings and, therefore, did not express his beliefs to his commander.

As if a flood gate had opened, Rosecrans received a series of reports from scouts and prisoners indicating that Bragg had concentrated around LaFayette. Also, the Confederate army reportedly had advance elements at

Gordon's Mill (p. B-19, # 90, 91). This startling revelation meant Bragg was concentrated and was able to strike at the widely separated portions of Rosecrans army. Rosecrans evidently realized that if his assumption about Bragg retreating was wrong so might be his hypothesis about Bragg receiving reinforcements. Rosecrans probably realized this meant that Bragg had the strength to attack each corps in detail with a virtual certainty of success.

The Union Army was due for another shock. Troops from Lee's Army of Northern Virginia were being sent to Bragg. The New York Herald reported on 9 September,

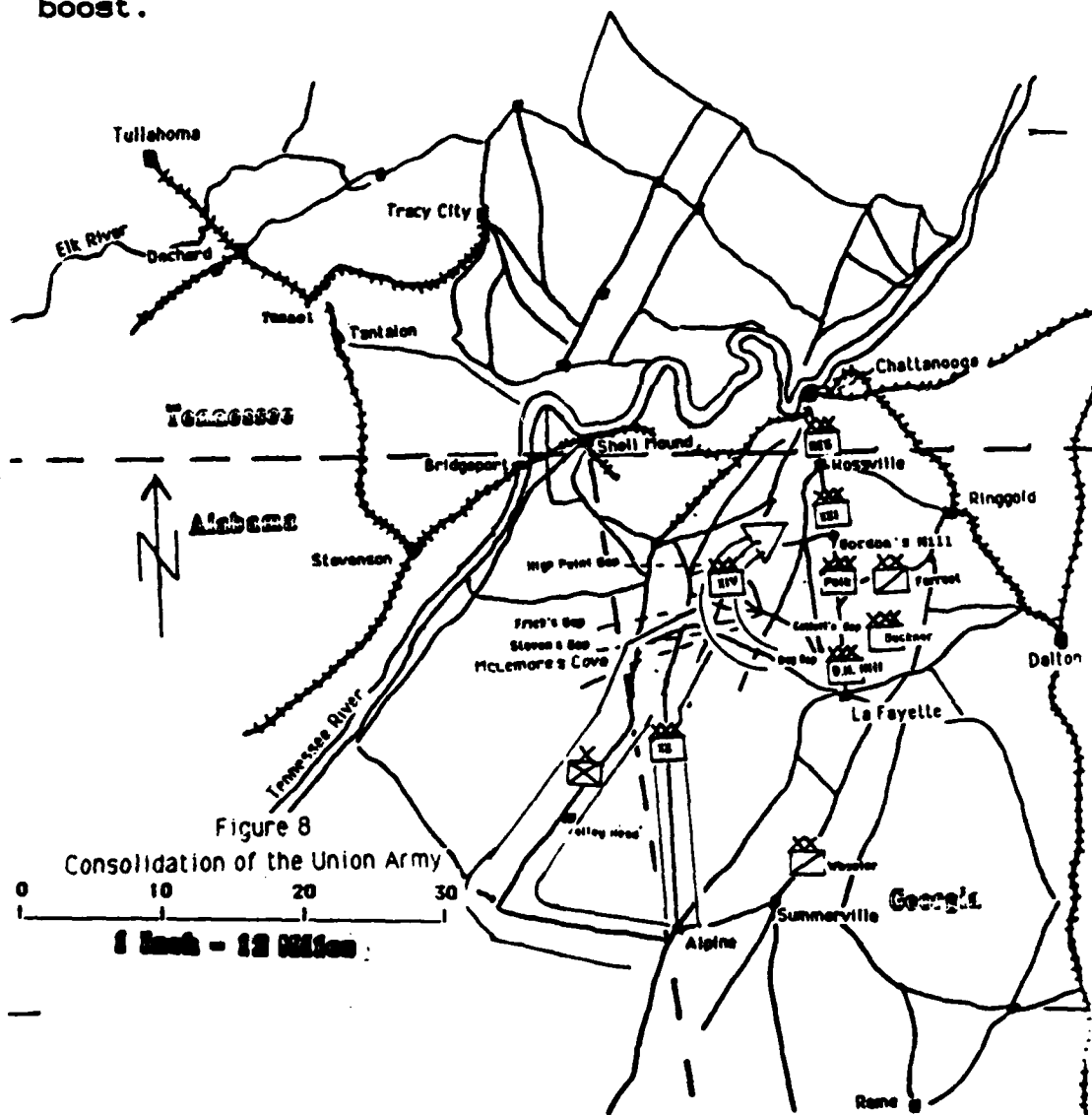
It appears that some of Lee's best regiments, horse, foot, and artillery have been sent southward, but whether to Charleston or Chattanooga, we have yet to learn.²⁹

On 13 September, Halleck received reports that the railroad south of Richmond was extremely busy--indicating large-scale transfer of troops. Halleck gave enough credence to the report to signal Major General Hurlbut in Memphis rather cryptically, "there are reasons why troops should be sent to assist Rosecrans' right with all possible dispatch" (p. B-20, # 95). Halleck also sent the same message to Burnside urging him to close on Rosecrans' left flank. Evidently Halleck had enough intelligence to warrant ordering troops from other parts of the theater to Rosecrans' assistance. However, Halleck still did not inform Rosecrans of the danger.

On 15 September, Meade reported that Longstreet's corps was missing from the Rappahannock line. On 15 September, Stanton received a telegram from a citizen, Abram Wakeman, who had traveled to New York from Atlanta (p. B-20, # 95). Wakeman reportedly saw three divisions of Lee's army enroute to Dalton to assist Bragg. Halleck was convinced and telegraphed the news to Rosecrans (p. B-20, # 96). By this time Rosecrans had already come to a conclusion about Bragg's reinforcements (p. B-20, # 97). Rosecrans also believed that Lee was sending troops to assist Bragg.³⁰

Literally overnight, the situation had changed. Instead of pursuing a dispirited fleeing foe, there was an enemy, growing stronger every day, in position to devour the Army of the Cumberland in bite-size morsels. Accordingly, Rosecrans issued orders for McCook to close northward on Thomas and then for the two of them to close on Crittenden (p. B-20, # 92). Rosecrans also sent a message to Burnside urging him to close down as rapidly as possible (p. B-20, # 93, 100). (See Figure number 8, Consolidation of the Union Army)

The new situation had several implications for Rosecrans. The strength of Bragg's army was almost twice what it had been at Tullahoma. Bragg was no longer on the defense, he was preparing to take the initiative and attack. Longstreet was bringing veterans from Lee's army south. These troops believed themselves unbeatable and their presence would give the morale of Bragg's army a boost.



On 16 September, Halleck received final confirmation that Longstreet was moving south (p. B-23, # 102). Halleck frantically telegraphed all commanders in the theater to move troops to Rosecrans' aid. Halleck had wired Burnside in Knoxville, Hurlbut in Memphis, and even Grant in Vicksburg (p. B-21, # 102).

Rosecrans also received information on 16 September that must have been disturbing (p. B-21, # 98,99). A scout reported to Crittenden that Bragg knew the location of each Union corps. A civilian reported that Longstreet's corps had passed through Atlanta on 11 September. This told Rosecrans that Bragg was cognizant of the Union situation and that Longstreet was very close to uniting with Bragg.

By the afternoon of 18 September, Rosecrans had concentrated the majority of his army and, even though exhausted, the army was ready to give battle. The forces of Thomas and McCook had executed a herculean march. McCook's Corps had moved fifty-six miles to close on Crittenden. A message from the peerless Colonel Wilder at 8:50 P.M. on 18 September characterized the battle that was to come.

The rebels are across Chickamauga Creek, and are in great force on any of the roads leading to the right...they are planting artillery in my front, and our lines of skirmishers are mixed together. My main line and theirs is not more than 200 yards apart....if my right is not strengthened, am in danger of being driven back. They attacked

us at dark with cheers, but were held in check.
The force is nearly all infantry and from all
appearances it is a large one.(p. B-22, # 103)31

SUMMARY

Rosecrans began his Chickamauga campaign with a sense of superiority over his opponent, Braxton Bragg. The victories at Murfreesboro and Tullahoma had convinced him that Bragg and his army were not a viable fighting force.

The pressure applied from Washington was more intense than it had been in the past. Halleck ordered Rosecrans to move and discounted the obstacles that Rosecrans faced. When Rosecrans tried to explain the issues with which he was dealing, Halleck responded by refusing to quibble over "mere details."

The Army of the Cumberland moved unopposed to the Tennessee River. Due to faulty employment of the Confederate cavalry, Bragg was blind to what Rosecrans was doing.

Rosecrans achieved tactical surprise by crossing downstream from Chattanooga. He was able to accomplish this because of the deception operations of Wilder and Bragg's poor cavalry dispositions.

After crossing the Tennessee River, Rosecrans moved on Chattanooga. When Bragg evacuated Chattanooga, Rosecrans saw a repeat of Tullahoma. He immediately

ordered a pursuit and sent his corps through three different passes in Lookout Mountain.

Blinded by his own beliefs and by his faulty cavalry employment, Rosecrans believed Bragg's army to be fleeing in total disarray. The truth was best summed up by Edward Anderson writing in the September 1912 edition of The Journal of the United States Cavalry Association, "No army has ever been more deceived than was Rosecrans' from September 8, 1863 through September 12, 1863."³²

Rosecrans' superiors in Washington were so rooted in their belief that Bragg was fleeing that they believed Bragg was sending reinforcements to Lee. Until the contrary evidence became overwhelming, Halleck and Stanton refused to believe otherwise.

Belatedly, Rosecrans realized he had been deceived. He then concentrated his corps and prepared to give battle, just as the lead elements of Bragg's army attacked.

Rosecrans did not receive any useful information from the strategic level until it was almost too late. Halleck urged Rosecrans forward instead of advising him of the intelligence he had been received in Washington. Halleck was only worried about the possibility of Bragg's forces moving to reinforce Lee.

Rosecrans received little useful intelligence from the operational level. The commanders of the other Union

armies could not provide any intelligence because they had lost contact with Johnston's Army.

The majority of the intelligence Rosecrans received was tactical. These reports told Rosecrans a great deal about his enemy. The Union army had received very good intelligence until it crossed the Tennessee River. After the river crossing, the quality of the reports dropped significantly.

Once again Rosecrans received intelligence from all six intelligence sources. He made extensive use of spies and scouts to discover the locations and strength of Bragg's forces. Only after Bragg fled Chattanooga did the espionage system fail Rosecrans.

Once again Stanley's cavalry corps made almost no contribution to the Union effort. Wilder sitting opposite Chattanooga, however, provided Rosecrans with numerous reports about Bragg evacuating heavy machinery and rolling stock.

The questioning of civilians, prisoners, and deserters provided Rosecrans with a wealth of information about Bragg's army. These sources told him the disposition, composition, and morale of the Confederate army. Unfortunately, Rosecrans placed too much faith in these reports, and this faith almost resulted in the piecemeal destruction of his army.

Rosecrans appears to have formed a hypothesis about how Bragg would act. However, Rosecrans did not reassess his hypothesis in the light of new and conflicting intelligence.

Although stretched over long distances the signal system again provided Rosecrans with the means to communicate with his commanders. The time necessary to send a courier was considerable, but the messages that counted did get through.

Rosecrans did not receive any useful information from the local newspapers. But, the War Department knew of the New York Herald article and it was a factor in Halleck's efforts to rush reinforcements to Rosecrans.

Numerous factors impacted on Rosecrans' planning and execution of the Chickamauga Campaign. From 7 July until 7 September Rosecrans was able to gather a considerable amount of information about Bragg's army. This information told him the location, strength, and morale of Bragg's divisions. Not only did the officials in Washington pressure Rosecrans to make a move, but Halleck issued preemptory orders! Most importantly, Rosecrans had formed an opinion about how Bragg would react. Rosecrans formed this opinion based on his recent historical experience ("He [Rosecrans] tended more to salute, rather than augment, the judgement of history.") and his low opinion of Bragg's ability. Rosecrans was also close to physical exhaustion

after his corps crossed the Tennessee River. Therefore, he failed to properly analyze the available intelligence and did not properly use it. Rosecrans disregarded all intelligence indicators except those that matched his preconceived assessment of Bragg's capability and intent.

CHAPTER FOUR

ENDNOTES

¹U.S., War Department, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Volume XXIII Part II (1889), pp. 526-27.

²Ibid., p. 529.

³Ibid., p. 550.

⁴Ibid., p. 552.

⁵Ibid., p. 585.

⁶Ibid., p. 592.

⁷Ibid., pp. 594-97.

⁸Fredrick D. Williams, The Wild Life of the Army: Civil War Letters of James A. Garfield (East Lansing, MI.: Michigan State University Press, 1964), p. 290.; Garfield's letter was shown to Secretary of War Stanton, after the Battle of Chickamauga, and became a factor in Rosecrans relief from command. Society of the Army of the Cumberland, Burial of General Rosecrans, (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke Company, 1903), p. 97.

⁹U.S., War Department, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Volume XXX Part III (1889), p. 48.

¹⁰U.S., War Department, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Volume XXX Part I (1889), p. 34.

¹¹Q.R., p. 179.

¹²John Wilder, Preliminary Movements of the Army of the Cumberland before the Battle of Chickamauga: A Paper Read before the Ohio Commandery of the Loyal Legion November 4, 1908, p. 1.

¹³Ibid, p. 83.; Q.R., pp. 34, 123.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 445-46.

- 15Ibid., pp. 119, 164.
- 16Ibid, p. 236.
- 17Ibid., pp. 306, 339.
- 18Ibid., pp. 381, 406-07.
- 19Ibid., p. 460.
- 20Ibid., p. 479.
- 21Ibid., p. 483.
- 22Glenn Tucker, Chickamauga: Bloody Battle in the West, (Dayton, OH.: Press of the Morningside Bookshop, 1984), p. 29.
- 23Ibid.
- 24Q.R., p. 517.
- 25Robert Richardson, Rosecrans' Staff at Chickamauga, (Fort Leavenworth, Ks.: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1989), pp. 51-106.
- 26Q.R., pp. 532-34.
- 27Ibid., p. 564.
- 28Ibid., p. 577.
- 29New York Herald, 9 September 1863.
- 30Tucker, Bloody Battle, pp. 96-7; Q.R., p. 643.
- 31Ibid., p. 725.
- 32Edward L. Anderson, "The Truth about Chickamauga," Journal of the United States Cavalry Association, Volume XXIII, Number 9, 1912, pp. 185-206.

CHAPTER FIVE

COMPARISONS AND CONCLUSIONS

COMPARISON OF THE CAMPAIGNS

The initial tendency in comparing the Tullahoma and Chickamauga campaigns is to view only the outcomes. For the Union, Tullahoma was successful and Chickamauga was a disaster. However, an in-depth analysis provides many valuable lessons for the student of military history.

Although it did not receive great public acclaim, the Tullahoma Campaign was a major victory for the Union. Rosecrans forced Bragg to withdraw his army to Chattanooga and brought middle Tennessee under Union control. Bragg's officers charged him with incompetence and cowardice because of his handling of these two campaigns. The humiliation also caused many desertions from the Confederate army. Rosecrans' army captured over a thousand prisoners and vast quantities of military stores. The cost to Rosecrans and the Union was cheap, compared to other Union victories--only 560 casualties. It was a classic case of maneuver warfare combined with good intelligence.

How did Rosecrans accomplish this feat? The delay of six months had allowed Rosecrans to compile nearly perfect intelligence about Bragg's army. Before Rosecrans ordered his army into motion, he knew the location of all Bragg's divisions and most of his brigades. From this Rosecrans was able to develop a hypothesis about how Bragg would fight. Thus, Rosecrans knew that the key to defeating Bragg's defense lay in seizing Hoover's Gap and the town of Manchester. Once the army was in motion, the tactical intelligence Rosecrans received told him that his hypothesis was correct and allowed him to carry out his plan.

The principal failure of the Tullahoma Campaign was Rosecrans' failure to destroy Bragg's army. This is mainly attributable to the downpour that started on the first day of the campaign. Had the roads been passable, there is little doubt that Rosecrans could have consolidated his army in time to cut Bragg off from the bridges on the Elk River. This could have resulted in a battle which may well have produced a major defeat for the Confederacy.

The success of the Tullahoma campaign contributed to the failure of the Chickamauga Campaign. Rosecrans began to plan his conquest of Chattanooga and the defeat of Bragg's army with a bruised ego, because his army received little recognition from the press and none from the government. He also had lost his respect for Bragg as an

opponent, having beaten him at Stone's River and Tullahoma. This lack of respect led Rosecrans to make mistakes he ordinarily would not make. Richard Johnson summed it up best in Memoirs of Major General George Thomas.

The success of the Tullahoma Campaign had given Rosecrans additional confidence in himself and his army. It lessened his opinion of Bragg and his army, whom he regarded as a man of little enterprise, leading a whipped army. He planned his Georgia Campaign without any reference to Bragg or his army.¹

Rosecrans had a good deal of intelligence about the location of Bragg's forces before he began his Chickamauga Campaign. Once again, he knew the dispositions of Bragg's infantry corps and cavalry divisions. Rosecrans also knew there were no Confederate forces on the north side of the Tennessee River. Armed with this information, Rosecrans was able to move his corps undetected to the river and prepared to cross. Thanks mainly to Wilder's brilliant deception operation, Rosecrans made an unopposed crossing of the river. This is a perfect example of intelligence allowing the commander to execute maneuver warfare.

But what happened after the crossing? Why did Rosecrans send his corps through three widely dispersed passes? Why did he refuse to believe that Bragg was not fleeing? Johnson's Memoirs of Thomas offers the primary reason for the failure of Rosecrans to awaken to the threat

Bragg presented. Rosecrans had become infused with the belief that Bragg would not fight. Rosecrans discounted any report which did not match his preconceived notion about Bragg's intentions. This was due to the continuous flow of deserters and prisoners who reported that the Confederate morale was low and that the officers and men had no confidence in Bragg. Additionally, when Bragg withdrew from Chattanooga, Rosecrans had to believe that it was a repeat of Tullahoma.

Rosecrans was repeating a pattern. He had forced Bragg from his defensive works at Shelbyville with a flanking move and then from Tullahoma with another flanking threat. Rosecrans had no reason to believe that his flanking movement would not work again. With Bragg leading a dispirited and disintegrating army Rosecrans must have thought, "Why not send one corps to strike at Bragg's rear, another to hit his flank, and then send my last corps and the cavalry to cut off the retreat?" Had Bragg conformed to Rosecrans' plan, it may well have succeeded. Unfortunately for Rosecrans, Bragg had other plans. He intended to fight Rosecrans for the possession of north Georgia, and Bragg had received reinforcements which doubled the size of his army.

Johnston had sent back from Mississippi the troops previously withdrawn from Bragg's army. Buckner and Forrest had moved from the vicinity of Knoxville to

LaFayette. Longstreet and his corps were enroute from Lee's army. The Confederacy was consolidating all available manpower in an effort to save Georgia. Rosecrans downplayed the reinforcements, and Halleck refused to believe that Lee would send reinforcements to the Western Theater. As always, Halleck was more concerned about Bragg sending troops elsewhere.

Thomas tried to point out the danger to Rosecrans; Thomas received a rebuke for his trouble. McCook, who was not regarded as one of the more capable commanders, deciphered Bragg's intentions long before Rosecrans did. But, for some reason, McCook was not anxious to express his beliefs to Rosecrans. When Crittenden forwarded some intelligence and expressed his fears, he was told it "these rumors...are hardly worth a moment's consideration."²

In summary, after crossing the Tennessee River, Rosecrans disregarded any intelligence that did not match his preconceived ideas about the current situation. Bragg had always conformed to Rosecrans' plans--or so Rosecrans believed. The idea that Bragg would not conform never entered Rosecrans' mind until it was almost too late. This denial of the facts nearly led to disaster for the Union forces.

A total defeat of Rosecrans' army is conceivable. It does not take much imagination to envision Bragg's army destroying Thomas' corps and then Crittenden's, leaving

McCook all alone deep in Georgia. Bragg could have followed this by a campaign against Burnside in Knoxville, with a subsequent reinvasion of Kentucky.

CONCLUSIONS

Rosecrans made effective use of the available intelligence during the Tullahoma Campaign. This information allowed him to have his formations execute the wide flanking movements that they did.

During the Chickamauga Campaign, Rosecrans made effective use of intelligence until he crossed the Tennessee River. After crossing the river Rosecrans stopped appropriately analyzing the available information.

The six sources of intelligence contributed to both campaigns in varying degrees. Scouts and spies provided Rosecrans with the majority of the intelligence he used. From these sources, Rosecrans was able to determine the location and strength of most of Bragg's units.

The cavalry corps played almost no significant role in either campaign. They were either misused or, when given a mission, performed poorly. A lack of forceful leadership by Stanley was the main contributor to this lack of utility. On the other hand, Wilder with his mounted infantry brigade, rendered sterling service. He always accomplished the assigned mission and brought back good tactical information. Ironically, the information that

Wilder sent about the evacuation of heavy machinery from Chattanooga may have helped foster Rosecrans' belief that Bragg would not fight.

Deserters, prisoners, and civilians provided Rosecrans with another significant source of information. From these sources Rosecrans was able to determine the strength, location and morale of Bragg's forces. Additionally, some prisoners provided Rosecrans with information about the state of equipment and subsistence in the Confederate army. Again, these numerous reports may have imbedded in Rosecrans' mind the belief that Bragg had neither the means nor the will to make a stand "this side of Atlanta."³

Rosecrans had his own ideas about Bragg. Rosecrans had guessed right about Bragg at Stone's River and at Tullahoma. The possibility of guessing wrong about Bragg's course of action did not enter Rosecrans' mind.

The signal corps rendered adequate service in difficult terrain. While they did not provide the spotting and reporting service which was a part of their job, they gave Rosecrans the ability to communicate with his far-flung elements.

Newspapers provided Rosecrans with the means to confirm intelligence gathered by other means. In some instances they gave Rosecrans the first indication of a

change in the Confederate army, such as Hill replacing Hardee.

Rosecrans received intelligence from all three levels. The amount and utility varied with the source. The amount of intelligence that Rosecrans received from Halleck was next to nothing. Halleck provided Rosecrans with almost no useful information. The majority of the time, Halleck merely repeated messages from operational sources. Halleck also added his demand that Rosecrans move his army. The one time that Halleck had a truly valuable piece of intelligence (the movement of Longstreet's corps to Georgia), he did not provide it quickly to Rosecrans. The New York Herald article, Wakeman's telegram, and Meade's report were all analyzed by Halleck; the warning was sent to other armies before Rosecrans received it. Halleck sent messages to Hurlbut and Burnside at 3 P.M. on 14 September stating, "there are reasons why troops should be sent to assist Rosecrans." Obviously Halleck had determined that Longstreet was on his way south. Halleck did not bother to forward this intelligence to Rosecrans until 4:30 P.M. on 15 September.⁴

Rosecrans received a varied and valuable amount of intelligence from operational sources. Commanders in west Tennessee and Mississippi provided Rosecrans with solid information about the movement of troops from Bragg's army.

These commanders told Rosecrans how many brigades had left Bragg and who commanded these units.

Tactical intelligence provided by spies, civilians and captured Confederate soldiers provided most of the intelligence used by Rosecrans. Although this information was usually several days old, it was still valuable to a commander in 1863. The majority of the intelligence used by Rosecrans came from these sources.

Rosecrans was the individual who interpreted the available information. He was also the commander who had to effectively use this intelligence. During the Tullahoma Campaign, Rosecrans' use of this intelligence was brilliant. He gathered intelligence from a variety of sources, correctly analyzed the information, and developed a plan to exploit the weaknesses in Bragg's defense. Rosecrans approached this campaign with an open mind when he was well rested. Even though harassed by officials in Washington, Rosecrans made the right decisions and properly used the available intelligence.

Rosecrans began the Chickamauga Campaign with a lack of respect for Bragg. This lack of respect colored his analysis of the information he received. Twenty-three days of movement through the rugged Tennessee mountains had exhausted Rosecrans. After crossing the Tennessee River, Rosecrans' intelligence sources did not provide as much information as normal. Rosecrans misinterpreted the

available information because of his self-inflicted exhaustion, his lack of respect for Bragg, his preconceived notions about Bragg's intentions, and the pressure from Halleck and Stanton. Therefore, Rosecrans failed to effectively use the available intelligence. This led to his army nearly being beaten in detail.

A review of the available evidence suggests that, while Rosecrans effectively used his available intelligence in the Tullahoma Campaign, he failed to effectively use intelligence in the Chickamauga Campaign. Allen Dulles statement that intelligence did not play any significant part in the American Civil War is obviously incorrect in these two campaigns. Intelligence did play an important role in the Tullahoma and Chickamauga Campaigns and it was not confined to temporary or local targets.

CHAPTER FIVE

ENDNOTES

¹Richard W. Johnson, Memoirs of Major General George H. Thomas (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippencott and Company, 1881), pp. 84.

²U.S., War Department, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Volume XXX Part III (1889), p. 517.

³National Archives. Washington, D.C. "Summaries of the News Reaching Headquarters of General W. S. Rosecrans, 1863 - 1864", Record Group 393, Part 1, Entry 986.

⁴O.R., p. 638.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

SELECTED MESSAGE TRAFFIC AND INTELLIGENCE REPORTS ARRIVING AT ROSECRANS HEADQUARTERS BEFORE AND DURING THE TULLAHOMA CAMPAIGN

(1)

3/XIV, 16 May

Garfield

One division of infantry at Middleton, under Cheatham and one near Unionville under Withers. They arrived on the 12th. Report seems reliable. Impression is the enemy is advancing.

Crews Commanding rebel cavalry brigade and three regimental commanders near Harpeth this morning. Appear to be camped near Jordan's store.

Schofield

(2)

Memphis, 17 May

Rosecrans

Heavy reinforcements, expected in Mississippi from Tennessee and Virginia. A movement in considerable force is being made from the enemy in your front. This is from my best scout.

Hurlbut

(3)

D.C. 18 May

Rosecrans

Burnside

Johnston with considerable force has left Tennessee to reinforce Vicksburg. Enemy will threaten an advance, and attempt raids into Kentucky and Tennessee. Counter this by concentrating your forces and advancing into East Tennessee.

Halleck

(4)

Murfreesboro, 18 May

Halleck

Scouts out in all directions. No considerable force of any type have left our front. Information from rebel papers say two or three brigades from Savannah and Charleston have gone to Mississippi.

Rosecrans

(5) Murfeesboro, 18 May

Halleck

New information arrived from Shelbyville, no officer leaving except McGown. Will watch closely. Their papers confirm our reports of their army organization, showing the perfection of our espionage.

Just arrived, since the above was written. Three trains left carrying two or three brigades from McGown.

Rosecrans

(6) Corinth, 20 May

Rosecrans

A scout sent out last Jan, taken prisoner and just escaped, just arrived. Saw five to seven brigades passing through Chattanooga, from Bragg going to Vicksburg and Rome. Two days latter saw two more brigades pass thru Stevenson. Also at Stevenson saw large numbers of empty cars going to Tullahoma.

Dodge

(7) Murfeesboro, 21 May

Halleck

Am satisfied that three to seven brigades have left for the south. Need 6000 cavalry, and would attack Bragg in three days. All corps and cavalry commanders are opposed to an advance.

Rosecrans

(8) D.C., 28 May

Rosecrans

I would not push you to any rashness, but I am anxious that you do your utmost, short of rashness, to keep Bragg from getting off to help Johnston against Grant.

Lincoln

(9) Murfeesboro, 28 May

Lincoln

I will attend to it.

Rosecrans

(10) Murfeesboro, 28 May

Stanton

One brigade of McGown's started south but returned last Thursday, all other troops are in position except Breckinridge who moved or went south. Doubt they went south, because a brigades appeared near Bradyville

yesterday, said to be Palmers, who belongs to Breckinridge. Forrest has left with no large force, if at all.

Rosecrans

(11)

D.C., 29 May

Rosecrans

It was rumored that Forrest went south. There is much apprehension that Bragg will escape from your front and fall on Grant.

Stanton

(12)

Corinth, 1 June

Rosecrans

Prisoners taken at Florence say there is no doubt that Bragg is sending troops to Johnston.

Dodge

(13)

Memphis, 2 June

Rosecrans

A scout just in from Columbia. Van Dorn's old command, & of two brigades of cavalry, 5000 men, is at Jackson, Mississippi. Two divisions from Bragg have gone to Johnston. Forrest is at Columbia. Johnston is being reinforced very slowly, causing great disaffection. They believe that if Pemberton can hold out two weeks, Johnston will relieve him.

Hurlbut

(14)

D.C., 3 June

Burnside

Telegrams from Memphis say Bragg is sending large reinforcements to Johnston. You must hurry men to Grant.

Halleck

(15)

D.C., 3 June

Rosecrans

Accounts received here indicate that Bragg is sending heavy reinforcements to Johnston. If you cannot hurt the enemy now, he will hurt you soon.

Halleck

(16)

Corinth, 8 June

Rosecrans

Scouts report that Bragg is moving his stores to Atlanta.

Dodge

(17)

Murfreesboro, 8 June

Confidential

To Brannan, Crittenden, Davis, Granger, Johnson, McCook, Mitchell, Negley, Palmer, Reynolds, Rousseau, Sheridan, Stanley, Thomas, Turchin, Van Cleve, Wood.

In view of our present military position, the general commanding desires you answer, in writing, according to the best of your judgment, the following questions, giving your reasons therefore.

1. From the fullest information in your possession, do you think the enemy in front of us has been materially weakened by detachments to Johnston or elsewhere, that this army could advance on him at this time, with strong reasonable chances of fighting a great and successful battle?

2. Do you think an advance of our army at the present likely to prevent additional reinforcements being sent against General Grant by the enemy in our front?

3. Do you think an immediate or early advance of our army advisable?

He desires your reply tonight.

Goddard

(18)

1/XX, 8 June

Garfield

1. No Bragg has not been weakened. I do not believe a great and successful can be fought, chances of success about equal. I recommend against an immediate advance. I do believe that an advance would prevent Bragg from sending further reinforcements.

Jef. C. Davis

(19)

2/XX, 8 June

Goddard

I do not believe that Bragg has been weakened, and do not believe that a successful battle can be fought. An advance by our army might prevent reinforcement of Johnston, but Bragg may retreat behind the Tennessee destroying roads and bridges, which would delay us, then he could send reinforcements. Chances of success about even. An advance unadvisable.

Johnson

(20)

XX, 8 June

Garfield

I do not believe many troops have been sent to Johnston. I do not believe a successful battle can be fought. An advance could not prevent Johnston being reinforced. An advance not advisable.

McCook

(21)
Goddard

2 Cavalry Division, 8 June

I think the enemy is weakened but, not materially so. We may gain success but our line of communications will be lengthened and exposed. Before we advance east Tennessee must be captured.

Turchin

(22)
Goddard

3/XIV, 9 June

I believe that the enemy has been weakened. He will fight us from behind his entrenchments. Our success would be doubtful. I do not think an advance would prevent reinforcements being sent against Grant. The Army should not move until the fate of Vicksburg is known.

Brannan

(23)
Goddard

XXI, 9 June

The enemy has not been weakened. A successful battle cannot be fought. An advance would prevent them sending reinforcements against Grant. Advance not advised.

Crittenden

(24)
Rosecrans

Reserve, 9 June

Bragg's army is intact and not weakened. I do not believe we can gain a success. Bragg will not weaken his army unless we weaken ours. An advance is not advisable. If we are beaten, and Hooker already beat, then Grant was forced to raise the siege, the Confederacy would be recognized.

G. Granger

(25)
Goddard

1/XXI, 9 June

No to all three questions. Bragg has probably only sent three to four brigades.

Wood

(26)

2/XIV, 9 June

Goddard

No more than two divisions sent to Johnston. By extreme measures a decisive battle can be fought. While we demonstrate no reinforcements can be sent to Johnston. We should not advance until Burnside is up.

Negley

(27)

2/XXI, 9 June

Goddard

The enemy has not been weakened. He may of sent 10,000 men. I do not believe that either us or him can fight a decisive battle. I do not believe we can prevent reinforcements being sent to Johnston.

Palmer

(28)

4/XIV, 9 June

Goddard

The enemy has been weakened by about three brigades, 5000 - 7000 men. So much conflicting information is available about the departure of two divisions, that I discard it. Although we outnumber him I don't believe that we can advance with the assurance of fighting a successful battle. The enemy can not send any more reinforcements against Grant. I recommend against an immediate advance.

Reynolds

(29)

1/XIV, 9 June

Goddard

The enemy in our front is weaker than us, but not by much. It is bad policy to offer battle on ground the enemy has chosen. We cannot fight a great battle with sure chances of success. I do not see how we can prevent reinforcements from going against Grant. An immediate advance is not advisable.

Rosseau

(30)

3/XX, 9 June

Goddard

Bragg's forces number about 25,000 to 30,000, with a large number of cavalry. He will fight a delaying action to the Tennessee river. An advance will not prevent reinforcements being sent against Grant. An advance is not advisable.

Sheridan

(31)
Goddard

Cavalry Headquarters, 9 June

I believe the enemy is greatly reduced and we can defeat him if we meet him on the open field. If we advance we can prevent other reinforcements being sent against Grant. Battles must be fought for political or military reasons. If Grant falls, we must advance. From a military standpoint we should not advance, but should keep his attention. The nations nerves are strained as it is, with Hooker whipped, if Grant should fall and we are defeated then it will be a tragedy. The time is past when the fate of armies must be staked because newspapers do not sell well.

Stanley

(32)
Rosecrans

XIV, 9 June

The enemy has been weakened. If we advance we will have a great battle, but with equal numbers it may not be a decisive victory, and our communications will be extended. By feinting and operating on his flanks we can prevent Bragg from sending more men against Grant. Should Bragg get reinforcements and attack us I will be happy to meet him here. If we had 6000 more cavalry that would alter the state of affairs.

Thomas

(33)
Goddard

3/XXI, 9 June

The enemy has been filling his ranks with conscription and therefore can send troops against Grant. His army nearly is as large as ours. He has already sent all the troops he can send. An advance is not advisable.
Van Cleve

(34)
Goddard

1 Cavalry Division, 10 June

The enemy has not been weakened. We should wait until the fate of Vicksburg is sealed. We should not take any unnecessary risks. If Grant is beaten and we are repulsed then the Copperheads will take over.

Mitchell

(35)

Memphis, 10 June

Rosecrans

Scouts report from Corinth that Bragg is moving his stores to Atlanta. Breckinridge at Jackson with 10,000 men. Johnston has not more than 30,000.

Hurlbut

(36)

D.C., 11 June

Rosecrans

I deem it my duty to repeat to you the great dissatisfaction that is felt here at your inactivity. There seems to be no doubt that part of Bragg's force has gone to Johnston.

Halleck

(37)

Murfreesboro, 12 June

Rosecrans

In your inquiries to the division, corps commanders and cavalry generals, you essentially asked five questions.

1. Has the enemy in our front been materially weakened by detachments to Johnston or elsewhere?

2. Can this army advance on him at this time with strong reasonable chances of fighting a great and successful battle?

3. Do you think an advance of our army at the present likely to prevent additional reinforcements being sent against Grant by the enemy in our front?

4. Do you think an immediate advance of this army advisable?

5. Do you think an early advance of this army advisable?

The officers replied as follows:

Answers	Yes/ No
1st	6 / 11
2nd	2 / 11
3rd	4 / 10
4th	0 / 15
5th	0 / 2

Some officers qualified their answers so as not to fit in any category.

The following is an assessment of the Confederate strength:

His army consisted of five infantry divisions and two independent battalions, totaling 95 regiments, with an average strength of 400, total 38,000. Cavalry, thirty

five regiments at 500, 17,500. Artillery, twenty six batteries at 100 each, 2,600. Total strength - 58,100.

It is clear that he sent three brigades to Johnston from McGown and two from Breckinridge. If they each had four regiments, then twenty regiments at 400 have left. A total reduction of 8000. A remainder of 30,000 Infantry.

At least two brigades of cavalry have been sent to Mississippi and it appears that Morgan's command has been permanently sent to eastern Kentucky. At least four brigades of cavalry are gone. A total of sixteen regiments at 500 each, total reduction 8000. A remainder of 9,500 cavalry.

With the nine brigades departed at least six batteries of artillery should have been sent. 80 men each, 480 total. Leaving twenty batteries and 2,120 men.

This is a total reduction of 16,480 men, leaving 41,680.

Our strength is as follows:

Infantry, 173 regiments total effective strength 70,918.

Cavalry, twenty seven regiments 11,813.

Artillery, forty seven batteries, consisting of 202 guns and 5,069 men.

Garrison duty reduces them by the following, 15,050.

That gives us a total of 65,137 to throw against Bragg's 41,680.

The following considerations also apply:

1. Bragg's army is now weaker than we can ever expect it to be, while we are as strong as we will ever be.

2. What ever the result at Vicksburg, Bragg will be reinforced by Johnston.

3. If Bragg fails to give us battle and falls back he loses the harvest and spreads dissatisfaction in his ranks. The Tennessee and Kentucky troops are already deserting in large numbers.

4. The possession of McMinnville would threaten Chattanooga and eastern Tennessee.

5. A sudden and rapid movement would compel a general engagement by Bragg.

6. The turbulent aspect of politics in the loyal states renders a decisive blow against the enemy at this time crucial to the government at the polls.

7. The Government and the War Department believe that this army ought to advance.

8. Our objective is the rebel army, his last reserves are in the field now and a blow will crush the shell and bring about a collapse of the government.

Garfield

(38)

Clarksville, 12 June

Garfield

Five deserters from the 3d Kentucky rebel regiment, Breckinridge's division, arrived here. They say that he had 10,000 men and was on his way to Vicksburg. The men are on half rations with bad clothing.

Bruce

(39)

Memphis, 14 June

Halleck

It is very important that Rosecrans advance immediately. My flank and rear is open. He can relieve Grant and me by moving. I have notified him of the day to day depletion of Bragg's army, he does not seem to credit it.

Hurlbut

(40)

D.C., 15 June

Rosecrans

An intercepted letter from Richmond dated 8 April gives Bragg's strength as 50,000. A letter dated the same day from an officer, gives the strength as 60,000. Another officer says that Hardee's corps is at 19,000, Polk's about the same, total 35,000 to 40,000. Morgan's cavalry 6,000 - 8,000; Forrest and Van Dorn at about 10,000. An officer in Mobile writes that on 15 April seven regiments had been ordered to Tullahoma from there.

Halleck

(41)

D.C., 16 June

Rosecrans

Is it your intention to make an immediate movement forward? A definite answer, yes or no, is required.

Halleck

(42)

16 June: A scout left Murfreesboro for Wartrace 1 June via Bellbuckle. There are two brigades of infantry and seven pieces of artillery at Liberty Gap...Lydell's Brigade was encamped at Bellbuckle with 10 pieces of artillery...Bates' Brigade ...one mile above Fairfield on Beech Grove Pike 4 pieces of artillery...Johnsons Brigade below Fairfield on the 3 Fork Mill Road beyond Garrison Creek...Brown's Brigade about two miles on the same road...Wood's Brigade

is at Halls Farm on the road from Bell Buckle to Wartrace...At War Trace there is about one Brigade of Tenn & Arkansas troops...Hardee's Head Qrs have been moved ...to a place one mile south of Wartrace....Week before last Cleburne's Division was at Shelbyville...Polk's command is posted as follows. The largest part of it at Horse Mountain...another part on the north side of Duck River at Skull Camp Ford....Pope's Brigade is at Tullahoma, Horton's & Buford's at Beech Grove.

Mr _____ of Shelbyville said Bragg's army consisted of 31,000 inftry & 13,000 cavalry including Breckinridge's Division, 2 brigades of which at least went to Mississippi.

(43)

June 19: A scout from Shelbyville reports the disposition of Bragg's army as follows: Wither's division with Forrest's cavalry composes the left wing. Cheatham's division of inftry and one brigade of Breckinridge's division together with the troops in Churchill's command form the center. Cleburne's division with Morgan's, Wheeler's & Martin's cavalry form the right wing.

(44)

June 20: N.W.D. a scout who returned from vicinity of Shelbyville on the 20th reported Polk's Corps 18,000 strong at that place. Anderson with one division at Fishing Ford. 3 1/2 miles from Shelbyville on the Unionville Pike is Wither's Division. Cheatham's division is on the Murfreesboro Pike 3 1/2 miles from Shelbyville. Stewart and three regiments at Wartrace of Tennesseans.....Hardee's Corps composed of the troops at Fairfield, Wartrace, and Bellbuckle numbers 15,000. They have in all about 11,000 cavalry. Forrest commands at Spring Hill, Russel's command is at Rover, Wheeler's at Beech Grove & at Middleton. 1 brigade at Chapel Hill.

Two men sent out from Nashville to the neighborhood of Antloch reported on the 20th that they learned Genl Morgan was at Silver Spring....the rest of his command numbering 4000...were nine miles from Lebanon, intending to go into Kentucky.

(45)

Murfreesboro, 20 June

Hartsuff

Morgan is reported 9 miles from Lebanon, probably on his way to Kentucky or Carthage. His forces about 4000 men and one battery.

Rosecrans

(46)

Murfeesboro, 23 June

Crittenden

Move your corps except Van Cleve to Bradyville.
Garfield

(47)

Murfeesboro, 23 June

Granger

Move on the Old Middleton road to Christiana. Take
a defensive position there. Observe toward Fosterville.
Assume command of the district from Van Cleve.
Garfield

(48)

Murfeesboro, 23 June

McCook

Move on the Shelbyville pike, advance a Division to
Christiana, a brigade to Old Fosterville. Move two
Division through Millersburg and take Liberty Gap.
Garfield

(49)

Murfeesboro, 23 June

Stanley

Move your command on the Woodbury Pike send a force
toward McMinnville and another via Pocahontas to establish
communication with Crittenden.
Garfield

(50)

Murfeesboro, 23 June

Thomas

Move on the Manchester Pike to Millersburg road and
camp. Be ready to move to support McCook at Millersburg or
to go down to Beech Grove or Manchester.
Garfield

(51)

June 24: V.B.R.N. sent by Genl Thomas to east Tenn. on the
14th April reports that while at Philadelphia where he
stayed 3 days trains were passing south conveying a large
amount of ammunition to Chattanooga. The talk there was
that Bragg will fight at Tullahoma & if driven from there
make a feint at Bridgeport in order to get his stores back.

(52)

Murfeesboro, 24 June

Van Duser

No dispatches for the press will be sent over the
lines, no military intelligence sent without authority from
these Headquarters.

Garfield

(53)

Big Spring, 24 June

Crittenden

McCook has taken liberty Gap. Thomas has reached the road that leads up Garrison's fork to Fairfield. We hope to discover the enemy's force and his intentions. When we do we shall be able to determine whether to advance upon Manchester directly or by way of Fairfield.

Garfield

(54)

Big Spring, 24 June

McCook

The General does not intend to drive the enemy beyond Liberty Gap, unless he is not in great force.

Garfield

(55)

Big Spring, 25 June

Crittenden

Move to Manchester. Connect with Thomas, he is enroute there from Beech Grove.

Garfield

(56)

Big Spring, 25 June

McCook

... The general hopes that the demonstration will result in convincing the enemy that you are making the main attack.

Bond

(57)

XIV, 25 June

Rosecrans

Reynolds is in position in Hoover's gap. The enemy is considerable force on the road from Beech Grove to Fairfield. We think they are Johnson's Brigade. Cheatham and Cleburne's Division are said to be at Fairfield.

Thomas

(58)

XIV, 25 June

Rosecrans

The enemy had one brigade on the Fairfield road and one on the Manchester pike. I think he is acting on the defensive.

Thomas

(59)

Big Spring, 25 June

Thomas

Threaten Fairfield. Push the remainder of your force toward Manchester via Matt's Hollow.

Garfield

(60)

Beech Grove, 26 June

Crittenden

Thomas has driven the enemy 2.5 miles toward Fairfield. McCook holds Liberty Gap with part of his force and the other part is moving to join us here. Move toward Manchester.

Garfield

(61)

Big Spring, 26 June 0115

McCook

The General believes the enemy expects you to attack Shelbyville. Foster this belief by attacking in the morning, but make no decided advance. Leave one Brigade in the Gap, follow Thomas with the rest.

Garfield

(62)

Beech Grove, 26 June 1500

McCook

Move your command to this place. Evacuate Liberty Gap silently and secretly

Garfield

(63)

Beech Grove, 26 June

Thomas

It is important to mask our intentions by threatening Fairfield. There is danger he will discover our plan and gain time on us.

Garfield

(64)

Beech Grove, 26 June

Thomas

Move Reynolds forward at daylight and secure the Duck River crossing at Manchester.

Garfield

(65)

Beech Grove, 27 June 1015

Crittenden

Reynolds will be in Manchester before noon. McCook is here. The enemy is retreating. Push forward toward Manchester.

Garfield

(66)

1/XIV, 27 June, Fairfield

Thomas

The enemy has fled Fairfield. Four brigades passed through heading for Tullahoma. An intelligent negro says that trains of cars left carrying artillery, about 25 to thirty pieces. He assures us that the brigades we pursued took the Wartrace Road. He says that a train of 400 to 500 wagons left also.

Rousseau

(67)

27 June 1230

Reynolds

Have Wilder move forward and break the railroad in the rear of Tullahoma and destroy the enemy's trains. A copy of this is being sent to Thomas.

Bond

(68)

Manchester, 2200 27 June

Crittenden

Thomas is here, and one division from McCook. Every thing has worked well so far. Our intentions are known by the enemy. He is gathering his forces for a full retreat on Tullahoma. If all our forces were here we could prevent him from reaching Tullahoma.

Garfield

(69)

29 June

Mr. _____ left Tullahoma on Saturday [he reports]...Cheatham's division came in from Shelbyville on Sunday...It is the impression that Bragg will fight at Tullahoma. The army is supposed to number from 35 to 50,000, heard some time since that 15,000 had been sent to Vicksburg.

H.L. Byrum a captured civilian states...Polk's corps was coming into Tullahoma. Saw a large amount of cavalry. Soldiers seem to think they will fight there if attacked, but if outflanked they would be in Chattanooga in 3 or 4 days. General Hardee is said to be at Tullahoma.

(70)

Christiana, 29 June

Rosecrans

From what I can gather the enemy is falling back rapidly as possible upon Bridgeport. The rebel cavalry has abandoned the Duck River and is pushing to join the rest.

Granger

(71)

Manchester, 30 June

Burnside

Wilder cut the railroad at Dechard and Tantalou. At Tantalou he found Buckner's troops coming from Knoxville. This would be a good time for you to clean out east Tennessee.

Rosecrans

(72)

Tullahoma, 1 July 1900

Baird

We occupy this place. The rebs left this A.M. very disorganized and in full retreat.

Goddard

(73)

XIV, 2 July

Rosecrans

The rebs burned the bridge over the Elk. They have a strong force on the south bank. They have retreated via Dechard. I will try and cross further up and flank them.

Thomas

(74)

July 3: A citizen who has resided in Tullahoma since January 1862 & whose opportunities for knowing are as good as any mans not in the army says Bragg's army consisted of two corps, Polk's & Hardee's, 4 divisions-- Cheatham's, Cleburne's, Polk's & Stewart's, & two divisions of cavalry Forrest & Wheeler, commanding 35,000 inftry & 15,000 cavalry.....They (the Confederates) believed that Rosecrans had sent 30,000 men to Grant. It was Bragg's intention to make a stand at the Gaps & contest every inch of ground from that point, but being surprised he fell back to his works at Tullahoma.

Some of his officers stated to me that when the attack was made they were in attendance at a Masonic Picnic, & that their suprise was very disgraceful on their part.

(75)

Tullahoma, 3 July

Crittenden

Thomas thinks the enemy will try and escape via Pelham. Move there and try and cut him off. The enemy is greatly demoralized and deserting hourly.

Garfield.

(76)

Estell Springs, 4 July

Thomas

McCook has occupied Cowan the last of Bragg's army left yeterday. The pursuit is over.

Garfield

(77)

D.C., 7 July

Rosecrans

...Vicksburg surrendered to Grant on the 4th of July. Lee's army overthrown; Grant victorious. You and your noble army now have the chance to give the finishing blow to the rebellion. Will you neglect the chance?

Stanton

(78)

Tullahoma, 7 July

Stanton

Just received your dispatch. You do not observe our victory in driving the enemy from middle Tennessee. Do not overlook such a great event because it is not written in blood. There is no organized rebel force in 25 miles of here or on his side of the Cumberland pass.

Rosecrans

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

SELECTED MESSAGE TRAFFIC AND INTELLIGENCE REPORTS ARRIVING AT ROSECRANS HEADQUARTERS BEFORE AND DURING THE CHICKAMAUGA CAMPAIGN

(1)

9 July

Lewis Green an Irishman who has been laboring in a foundry at Chattanooga (and escaped)...reports a great uproar in Chattanooga. No troops there when he left. Buckner had arrived there on Thursday evening from Tullahoma with his division, & has gone on to Knoxville. A Union woman at Stevenson told me (Green) that the soldiers did not think they would make a stand at Chattanooga. All their sick & hospitals are being shipped to Atlanta.

(2)

A citizen who left Chattanooga on Monday the 6th says that Genl Bragg arrived at that place on that day, & the troops were arriving in great disorder. He says that he heard officers express the opinion that they had not got out of Tennessee with 3000 Tenn. troops. A scout just in from Jasper says there is no enemy on this side of the Tenn. River, & but few stopping at Chattanooga. They seem to be going south & to East Tenn.

(3)

Tullahoma, 10 July

Stanley

Conduct a reconnaissance to Huntsville and the Pulaski road to Columbia. Make short marches with your horses so they may be in better condition when they return. There is no pressing emergency in this matter, and it is better to have your horses fresh so they may take part in the larger operations to be under taken soon.

Garfield

(4)

11 July

_____ of the Sequatchy Mountain range has learned from two deserters that.....trains were leaving almost constantly loaded with troops. Two divisions were leaving.....They were not fortifying and said they were not going to make much of a stand at Chattanooga, and were short of rations.

(5)

Tullahoma, 11 July

Halleck

The operations now before us involve a great deal of care, labor, watchfulness, and combined effort to insure a successful advance to Chattanooga.

Rosecrans

(6)

12 July

Genl McCook forwards communication from Genl Sheridan...Bragg concentrated at Chattanooga but cannot learn what disposition has been made of his troops since....Bragg's loss since leaving Tullahoma is estimated at 11,000.

Two regular scouts who left Chattanooga July 7th report...Bragg has lost 10,000 men since leaving Tullahoma. He is not making any preparations for a stand at Chattanooga.

Genl Wood forwards statement of Jno. Still...It was the impression among soldiers that Bragg would not fight at Chattanooga....That Hardee's Corps has gone to Mississippi and Polk's is to go, also that it was talked in camp that 10,000 had deserted during the retreat. (is quite an intelligent boy) (sic)

(7)

17 July

Genl Crittenden furnishes statement of a Tenn. deserter...Forrests command all on the south side of the Tenn. River. Thinks most of Bragg's army is at Chattanooga. Hardee's corps about 8 miles out on the Knoxville RR. Polk's corps near the town. No troops on this side of the river. There is much dissatisfaction in the rebel army & desertions are frequent, provisions scarce.....fortifications are being erected on Lookout Mountain....the army is much demoralized.

(8)

D.A.W. reports....Bragg has determined to make a stand at Chattanooga. His losses by desertions and straggling was stated to be 9000.

The Chief of the Secret Police forwards the following information. _____ who left Chattanooga on the morning of the 13th. Bragg's Head Qrs were in the residence of Dr. Kennedy. His army at Chattanooga and vicinity. One division is at Tynersville on the East Tennessee RR. A large portion of the cavalry is at Trenton Ga.....Learned that the full strength of Bragg's army is 27 to 30,000. This is correct. Had the information from one who certainly knew.

(9)

20 July

The Chief of Police forwards statement of man who left Sequatchy Valley on the 20th.....The general opinion was that Bragg will not make a stand there, but retreat further south...Reports Bragg's army much demoralized, and the opinion was that when they knew they were leaving Chattanooga, great numbers would lay down their arms. That desertions are taking place every day.

(10)

D.C., 23 July

Rosecrans

Telegraph the position of our army and what is known of the enemy.

Halleck

(11)

Nashville, 23 July

Halleck

Thomas at Decherd. McCook at Winchester, cavalry at Salem, Crittenden moving on Pelham. Railroad open to Bridgeport, supplies going forward rapidly.

Bragg is at Chattanooga. Polk also there. Hardee between there and Shellmound. All fords guarded by small forces. Buckner with 4000 troop in east Tennessee.

Rosecrans

(12)

D.C., 24 July

Rosecrans

You must not wait for Johnston to join Bragg. You must move immediately. There is great disappointment at your slowness. Unless you can move rapidly you will have both of them against you and your campaign will be a failure.

Halleck

(13)

25 July

Col. Truesdall Chief of Scouts sends in the following....Hardee has been assigned to some other command & D.H. Hill takes his place. There is (sic)

four divisions near Chattanooga, commanded by Cheatham, Withers, Claybourn, & Stewart, the farthest on from the city is seven miles. Informed General Wheeler left Chattanooga for the vicinity of Gadsden in Georgia.

(14)

Decherd, 28 July

Rosecrans

Statements from civilians report Bragg fortifying Chattanooga. Hardee's corps to join Johnston. He already has. Army much dissatisfied. Six thousand cavalry at Ringgold. Army on half rations.

Thomas

(15)

Winchester, 1 August

Halleck

.... Whenever the government can replace me with a commander in whom they have more confidence, they ought to do so, and take responsibility for the result. The problems we face are as listed:

1. Our base at Louisville is 264 miles away.
2. Our principal depot is 83 miles away at Nashville.
3. We must transport all sustenance, equipment, and most forage over these distances by rail.
4. We have in front of us 60 - 70 miles of desolate terrain to cover with few good roads.
5. We must cross the Tennessee River, in the face of a powerful enemy, and fight him either in his entrenchments or in mountains, with the nearest railroad being 26 - 45 miles away.
6. We must do this and not fall back so the populace will believe in us and not the enemy.
7. This all must be done before Johnston gets here.

These are the conditions of the first problem. The preliminaries are first to open the rail lines, establish and guard depots, build a means to cross the river and maintain communications over it.

Rosecrans

(16)

XIV, 1 August

Garfield

My chief of scouts reports as follows:

Wheeler's cavalry has only 8000 men. Bragg is much overrated he only has 30,000 men. When he left Tullahoma he only had 20,000 infantry and 8000 cavalry.

The infantry regiments only have 300 men, batteries 50-80. They have 150 guns.

Thomas

(17)

D.C., 4 August

Rosecrans

Your forces must move forward without delay. You will report the movement of each corps daily until you cross the Tennessee River.

Halleck

(18)

Winchester, 4 August

Halleck

...I am determined to cross the river as soon as practicable and have been making preparations to do so. I have been gathering information so that when I do cross I will not be driven back. Like Hooker I wish to know if your order is intended to take away my discretion as to the time and manner of moving.

Rosecrans

(19)

D.C. 5 August

Rosecrans

The orders for the advance of your army and its movement are preemptory.

Halleck

(20)

6 August

Wm Carter reports...Polks corps at Chattanooga. Hills between C. and Bridgeport. They think Rosecrans will make feints at Chattanooga & come in with his force at Rome Ga.

(21)

Winchester, 6 August

Halleck

My arrangements for a move almost complete. My intelligence shows a crossing between Bridgeport and Chattanooga is impracticable, but not enough to show whether to strike above Chattanooga and head for Cleveland or below and strike their rear. In any case we must have a means to cross the river, and supplies to sustain ourselves. To obey your order literally would mean that the troops would be pushed out into desolate country. I request your order either be amended or I be relieved.

Rosecrans

(22)

D.C. 7 August

Rosecrans

I have told you the Government's wishes. The object has been stated and you have been directed to lose no time in reaching it. The means you use or the roads you use are left to you. If you wish to carry out the wishes of the Government you will not stop to

discuss mere details. In such matters I will not interfere.

Halleck

(23)

8 August

W.C.M. from east Tenn reports...Genl Bragg was concentrating a large force at Gadsen. That Genl Wheelers cavalry was there....Bragg's effective force is 25,000 men, much demoralized.

(24)

Winchester, 11 August

Adjutant General

...The rebels expect us above Chattanooga.

Rosecrans

(25)

12 August

(four deserters report)...they intend a vigorous defence at Chattanooga. Soldiers are much discouraged, no confidence in Bragg. Desertions are frequent.

(26)

Stevenson, 14 August

Garfield

I believe that a large portion of Bragg's army is going to Atlanta. By 5 August they had sent three brigades there. They dread an attack via Rome, but have little idea of an advance on Chattanooga.

Sheridan

(27)

Winchester, 16 August

Adjutant General

All three corps are crossing the mountains. I think we shall deceive the enemy as to our point of crossing. It is a stupendous undertaking...that will place us in a point of secondary importance only to Atlanta.

Rosecrans

(28)

McMinnville, 8 August

Statement of R. Henderson

Bragg reached Chattanooga from Tullahoma with about 28,000 or 30,000 men. A portion of cavalry at Gadsen, Alabama, about 1,000 at Rome, Ga; one brigade sent to Atlanta, and small bodies at Marietta, Calhoun, and Dalton, on the Western and Atlantic Railroad; from 3,000 to 4,000 infantry at Loudon; a small force at Knoxville and Concord; about 4,000 cavalry at Kingston, under Forrest. The remainder of the army is at Chattanooga and vicinity....Fortifications at Chattanooga are good, occupying the eminence on the

river, there being three of them. The fourth, which is much the highest and farthest down the river, is not occupied, but probably will be. There are also rifle-pits and works for artillery in the flat below the upper and lower hills, commanding the river and ferry.

The army may be said to be demoralized, being but little, if any, better than a mob. The common soldiers feel and say that they are not able to contend with Rosecrans' army, and the prevailing opinion with officers and men is that Bragg will retreat as soon as an advance is made, and they expect a movement in the direction of Rome, GA, which they all fear. Neither officers nor men have any confidence in Bragg's ability, and many doubt his courage....I left Chattanooga on the 29th of July. Generals Bragg, Polk, and D.H. Hill were there. Hardee had been sent to Mississippi no force went with him and Hill took his place in Bragg's army.... The army is not increasing rapidly, the desertions amount to more or as much as the new recruits....There is a strong probability that Johnston's army will be sent to east Tennessee with the intention of making a move into Kentucky....Bragg's army has only one-third rations issued to it. Supplies are scarce and growing more so. Atlanta is the magazine for supplies. The feeling of the people of the northern counties of Georgia bordering on Tennessee, has undergone some change, and is softening down. There is a strong Union sentiment in those counties, but it is suppressed and kept down. It will manifest itself the first favorable opportunity.

(28)

Stevenson, 17 August

Brig. General. J.A. Garfield

The following dispatch is just received from General. Lytle, at Bridgeport;

Maj. General. Sheridan:

Holmes, the man at Island Creek Ferry, called over a soldier from rebel picket today and conversed with him. Two of my officers, hid in the thick canebrake within a few feet, heard conversation. Rebel soldier said they were determined to hold Chattanooga; that re-enforcements had come to Chat. from Johnston's army and Atlanta; that part of Johnston's army had gone to Mobile, that 500 men from Chattanooga had re-enforced Patton Anderson this morning.

Sheridan

(29)

Stevenson, 19 August

Major General. Burnside

Thomas corps will be between Chattanooga and Anderson tonight ; McCook from Bridgeport to Stevenson;

Crittenden in Sequatchie Valley. The head of your column ought to appear soon. If you are in time. We want to cross south of Bridgeport, penetrate between Rome and Chattanooga. Let us have full co-operation. Telegraph me position, progress, and plan.

Rosecrans

(30) War Department Washington, August 20
Maj. General. Rosecrans

It has been reported for some days that some portion of Bragg's army has been sent to Richmond to re-enforce Lee. It is important that the truth of this report be ascertained as early as possible.

Halleck

(31) Stevenson, Alabama, 20 August
Maj. General. Halleck

Reports of deserters and others are against the supposition that any troops have gone to Richmond. Cleburne's and Stewart's divisions are the only ones that could have gone, and they are reported in Atlanta.

Rosecrans

(32)

21 August

Genl Thomas forwards information that 6 to 8000 (sic) Bragg's have been sent to Rome, leaving 8 to 10,000 at Chat. They are much disheartened, and curse their leaders bitterly.

(33)

Stevenson, 21 August

Col. J.C. Kelton

.... I have reconnoitered the river below Bridgeport. It is a formidable obstacle, from 500 to 800 yds wide. pontoons are coming. I think we shall maneuver to cross where they do not expect us.

Rosecrans

(34)

Opposite Chattanooga 21 August

General. Reynolds

..... Clouds of dust are now rising in all directions south of the river. I can see no camps. Citizens, prisoners, and deserters say that Bragg has about 30,000 men. Including his cavalry.....Prisoners just taken say that Polk's corps is stationed at or near Chattanooga. Hardee's old corps, now commanded by D.H. Hill, said to be at or near Tyner's Station. Citizens and prisoners all think that Bragg's intention is to go into Kentucky by way of Kingston.

Wilder

(35)

Therman, 21 August

General. Garfield

.....Have heard nothing from Wilder. Enemy expect our main attack to be made from Bridgeport. The report in Chattanooga today among the soldiers was, that the main body of our force was in the neighborhood of Bridgeport and Sweeden's Cove, and that a smaller force was above, from the direction of McMinnville, by different routes; also that Johnston was within five days' march of Chattanooga, with 25,000 re-enforcements. Most of the troops about Chattanooga are encamped 3 or 4 miles from the city. It is believed that a general advance is being made by the Federals and the army at Chattanooga was very busy at work today with pick and shovel, they are said to be very strongly fortified. Another report says Johnston has arrived. This I do not believe.

Wagner

(36)

Stevenson, 22 August

Adjutant General

A rumor says that Johnston and 25,000 men have reinforced Bragg, and that Johnston in person is at Chattanooga.

Rosecrans

(37)

Stevenson, 22 August

Halleck

Reference your letter of 10 August.... The impression in the War Dept. that I "do not draw straight in the traces" is unjust to me.... I am convinced of the necessity and urgency of this army doing its share of the work....our success depends upon an adequate cavalry force....You know what it is like to advance with a great army especially over 30 miles of barrens and 70 miles of mountains, two small rivers and the Tennessee.... I ask for consideration from the General in Chief.

Rosecrans

(38)

Stevenson, 22 August

Thomas

...Tell Wilder to withdraw to a safe position, watch and report. Utilize strong pickets and patrols so as to deceive the enemy as to our intentions until Burnside is in position.

Rosecrans

(39) Opposite Chattanooga, 22 August
Garfield

I believe the rebels are leaving Chattanooga. I saw two locomotives pulling eight others. There do not appear to be as many troops in the vicinity.

Wilder

(40) Opposite Chattanooga, 22 August
Garfield

I believe the rebels have one corps of two divisions at Chattanooga that being Hill's corps. Polk's corps is reported at Bridgeport. None of this is well founded... It is reported that Johnston arrived on the 20th with two trains of troops and superseded Bragg. Bragg is reported to be in Atlanta.

Wilder

(41) Stevenson, 22 August
Burnside

...means of crossing getting ready. Wish to cross below Chattanooga if not hindered; may try it above if enemy move to suit.

Rosecrans

(42) 1/XXI, 24 August
Garfield

A quartermaster taken prisoners states that Bragg's force is not over 20,000, and that the fortifications are not finished. He also says that the consolidated ration return for last month was for 40,000. If his army is only 20,000 now what happened to the difference...

Wood

(43) 1/4/XIV, 25 August
Goddard

Three deserters say that all things of value are being sent away from Chattanooga even the church bells... the men deserted because they are satisfied that Bragg is making preparations to retreat..

Wilder

(44) XXI, 25 August
Garfield

A guide says that Bragg is removing his commissary to Atlanta, and driving all cattle, hogs, and horses from the country, and cutting down the corn...

Crittenden

(45)

2/1/XXI, 25 August

Garfield

..The railroads are very busy. The trains arrive empty and depart full. Wilder thinks they are moving all machinery from the railroad shops and rolling mills and other valuable property to Atlanta, in case of defeat.

Wagner

(46)

Larkinsville, 26 August

Garfield

A deserter reports that Bragg is forming a new defense. With the right resting on Knoxville with Buckner having 25,000 men and the left at Rome. Wheeler is at Rome. The army at Chattanooga is much demoralized and officers and men saying they will not follow Bragg any farther, and they regard their cause as hopeless.

McCook

(47)

28 August

Genl Wagner reports that prisoners say...they fear our crossing above the city & are guarding & fortifying all the crossing.

(48)

Stevenson, 28 August

Halleck

...pontoons down now. Advanced brigade in concealed position. Cavalry begins crossing tonight.

Rosecrans

(49)

Jasper, 29 August

Garfield

...Michigan Cavalry crossed today...Report Evacuation of Chattanooga.

Sheridan

(50)

30 August

Genl Crittenden forwards the report of a deserter...since Wilder shelled Chattanooga the railroads have been busy carrying to the rear all kinds of army property.....Bragg has not been successful in getting reinforcements from Johnston, & on one on that side of the river expects he will fight this side of Atlanta.

(51)
Crittenden

Stevenson, 30 August

..move your entire command except Hazen's and Wagner's Brigades....Wilder and Minty will cooperate with them. The present indications are that Bragg will fall back from Chattanooga, and if we bring him to battle it will be between Dalton and Atlanta...

Garfield

(52)

31 August

Genl Thomas reports information recd from a contraband....It is generally understood and believed that Johnston has reinforced Bragg with 30,000 men.

(53)

1/4/XIV, 31 August

Goddard

..a civilian says that Bragg has sent a portion of Hill's Corps to Kingston to support Forrest. Wheeler is at Rome and Coosa, watching for a move by our right. Johnston is to reinforce Bragg with 15,000 men two trains of which came in night before last...

Wilder

(54)

1/XXI, 2 September

Garfield

..A Confederate prisoner says that if Chattanooga is flanked Bragg will not risk battle there..The prisoner says that it is believed that the fate of the Confederacy hangs upon the issue of a battle that must be made somewhere with the army of Rosecrans. Bragg will be compelled to fight his army within two months or lose it by desertion.

Wood

(55)

3 September

Jno. Sherlock a scout reports....learned it is Bragg's intention to fight if the Federals cross over at Chattanooga, but if they cross at Shellmound & advance by way of Chattanooga Valley over Lookout Mountain through Steven's Gap aiming to cut him off from Dalton & Rome that he will fall back to Dalton and fight there....The secesh soldiers said there would not be a fight at Chattanooga because the d___d Yankees would not come out and fight them fair, but try and surround & cut them off as they always did.

(56)

Stevenson, 4 September

Halleck

... (the enemy) will probably concentrate in the rear of Chattanooga... It is not possible that Lee's movements are intended to cover the temporary detaching of troops to Bragg?

Rosecrans

(57)

Valley Head, 4 September

Thomas

...all my information leads me to believe that the grand concentration is taking place at Chattanooga. Johnston is there; also Longstreet from Virginia.

McCook

(58)

Bridgeport, 4 September

Burnside

...We shall move over the mountains upon the Dalton and Atlanta railroad..and attack Bragg if he does not run. I hope you will close down upon our left... I have much evidence that shows Johnston is reinforcing Bragg with a considerable force...

Rosecrans

(59)

Cave Spring, 5 September

Halleck

Except one division, the XIV, XX, XXI Corps are across the river...I have ordered Granger to bring up all available reserves to Bridgeport and Stevenson, leaving minimum garrisons at all posts.

Rosecrans

(60)

XIV, 5 September

Rosecrans

...fifteen deserters came into camp last night. One says that Bragg has 25,000 troops at Chattanooga, more or less demoralized and all anxious to get away; is of the opinion that he will fight at Chattanooga.

Thomas

(61)

D.C. 6 September

Rosecrans

You give me no information about the position of Bragg and Buckner. If they have united, it is important that you and Burnside unite as quickly as possible, so they may not attack you separately.

Halleck

(62)
Halleck

Trenton, 6 September

...enemy is still in force at Chattanooga, and threatening to cross the river (to the north). All reports concur that Johnston and Breckinridge are with Bragg. Buckner is closing down...Lookout is a formidable mountain...; 1,000 feet high and with only three passes in 40 miles.

Rosecrans

(63)
Rosecrans

Brown's Ferry, 6 September

...the impression among the citizens is that they will retire if they can to Atlanta.

Thomas

(64)
Garfield

Trenton, 6 September

...A scout returned this morning from over Lookout. He brings the following information: There are two divisions at Chattanooga, Bragg is with Johnston, and Breckinridge are at the tunnel 10 miles south of Chattanooga with the rest of the forces...the general feeling is that Bragg will fall back to Atlanta, where extensive preparations are being made. There is also a force at Rome...

Sheridan

(65)
Garfield

XXI, 6 September

...Bragg's Headquarters are at Ringgold, he lately made a speech at Chattanooga stating that he had been very much to blamed for retreating, etc., and that now he was going to fight at all events, before he retreated again...

Crittenden

(66)
Halleck

Trenton, 7 September

Your dispatch of yesterday is received with great surprise....it is impossible for this army to prevent Johnston from combining with Bragg...it must of been known that those two rebel forces would combine against us, and to some extent, choose their place of fighting us...Your apprehensions are just, and the legitimate consequence of your orders...The best that can be done is for Burnside to close down..while we get him in our grasp and strangle him or perish in the attempt.

Rosecrans

(67)

Trenton, 8 September

Halleck

Information leads me to believe that the enemy will not fight us at Chattanooga. Our reconnoitering today shows that he has withdrawn his pickets on Lookout Mountain....

Rosecrans

(68)

Trenton, 8 September

Thomas

The general commanding says that one of our most reliable scouts just in confirms the reports that the enemy is retreating...

Bond

(69)

Wagner's Headquarters, 8

September

Rosecrans

The enemy has evacuated Chattanooga. They left today. We will occupy the place tomorrow.

Wagner

(70)

Trenton, 8 September

Stanley

..The enemy is believed to be in full retreat...

Garfield

(71)

Trenton, 9 September

Halleck

Chattanooga is ours without a struggle, and east Tenn. is free. Our move on the enemy's flank and rear progress, while the tail of his retreating column will not escape unmolested...

Rosecrans

(72)

Trenton, 9 September

Thomas

The general has ordered a general pursuit of the enemy by the whole army. Crittenden has started to occupy Chattanooga and pursue along the line of Bragg's retreat. McCook has been ordered to move at once on Alpine and Summerville... you will move as rapidly as possible to LaFayette and make every exertion to strike the enemy in flank, and if possible cut off his escape..

Garfield

(73)

Chattanooga, 9 September

Garfield

...there are rumors of Bragg having said he just wanted to get us in here, that he is not far off, etc., but I am not a bit scared...

Crittenden

(74)

Chattanooga, 10 September

Garfield

...A deserter says that there is great disquiet among the Alabama troops, and they are deserting rapidly...From the best information I can gather Breckinridge's division and Walker's brigade are the only troops from Johnston's army that came to reinforce Bragg.

Crittenden

(75)

Chattanooga, 10 September

Thomas

...Your movement on LaFayette should be made with the utmost promptness...your advance ought to have threatened LaFayette yesterday evening...

Drouillard

(76)

Chattanooga, 10 September

Crittenden

..Wood sends a report of a contraband that Bragg was at Gordon's Mill today, and that a heavy force was with him, moving this way, with the intention to attack this place. There have been several rumors over the last two days that Bragg moved out with the design to fight us between this place and LaFayette. These rumors, and particularly that of the contraband, are hardly worth a moments's consideration. They should be treated with total indifference if Thomas had reached LaFayette this morning, as was expected to, but in all possibility has not...

Garfield

(77)

11 September

Jon. Carlock Scout no. ___ reports.....Bragg says he intends to hem in the Yankees and whip them by Divisions.

James Lamour...reports Bragg 29,000 strong Buckner and Forrest included. Has recd 16,000 reinforcements from Johnston, under Breckinridge, total 45,000.

(78)

D.C. 11 September

Rosecrans

...After holding the mountain passes on the west and Dalton, or some other point on the railroad, to prevent Bragg's return, it will be decided whether your army shall move farther south into Georgia and Alabama. It is reported here by deserters that a part of Bragg's army is reinforcing Lee...

Halleck

(79)

Clouds Store, 11 September

Goddard

.. A wounded prisoner says that two brigades of cavalry are on the LaFayette road....and that passing through Gordon's Mill he saw two divisions of infantry...

Palmer

(80)

XIV, 11 September

Rosecrans

..Negley has received reports from several different sources that the enemy is prepared to resist his advance with a considerable force, and to flank him...I am satisfied that his information is correct..

Thomas

(81)

Cooper's Gap, 11 September

Rosecrans

...reports from scouts and citizens are conflicting as to the rebel force in this vicinity; most of them report a large force with full complement of artillery.

Thomas

(82)

Chattanooga, 11 September

Thomas

Information from many independent sources makes it evident that the enemy has concentrated in considerable force at LaFayette...In case you find the enemy concentrated it will be best to draw McCook to within supporting distance...

Garfield

(83)

Chattanooga, 11 September

Crittenden

..reports received confirm the belief that the mass of the enemy has retreated on Rome..All doubts as to the general direction of the retreat are now resolved...

Garfield

(84) 12 September

Statement of Hopkins; Forrest Escort

...the soldiers are generally very much dissatisfied...I think most of the men would desert if they had the opportunity. Many of them are hiding out waiting on the advance of the Federal army.

(85) Cooper's Gap, 12 September

Rosecrans

Negley and Baird were attacked by the enemy yesterday at Davis' Crossroads. After severe fighting with an overwhelming force... were compelled to fall back to Steven's Gap...

Thomas

(86) Chattanooga, 12 September

Thomas

...After maturely weighing your dispatch the General is induced to believe that Negley withdrew more through prudence than through compulsion...

Goddard

(87) Steven's Gap, 12 September

Garfield

...All the information I receive from citizens confirm that a large force is concentrated at LaFayette...Negley reports that he was attacked by the whole of Hill's Corps and part of Buckner's force plus 2,000 cavalry...

Thomas

(88) Alpine, 12 September

Thomas

The following information has just been sent by Col. McCook.

".....The information I regard as definite and reliable is, that Bragg has not gone to Rome: that none of his force has passed over the Dalton Road, and there is but a small force in Rome (10,000-11,000)..."

This information must be taken with due allowance...I am not desirous of fighting Bragg's whole army, and in case he is concentrated at LaFayette I am in a false position, and could not reach you..LaFayette is the strategic point for Bragg; he then has his road open to Dalton or to points south on the railroad. His object will be to oppose his whole force to our fractions as they debouch from the mountains. All the citizens, both Union and secession say that he will have to fight, and with the advantages I think so also. I have no doubt that the rebel army is concentrated at or near LaFayette.

AD. McCook

(89)

Chattanooga, 12 September

Crittenden

...The General says that there is no doubt that the enemy is in heavy force in the vicinity of LaFayette, and there is far more probability of his attacking you than that he is running...

Garfield

(90)

1/XXI, 12 September

Garfield

One of my scouts reports that the rebels have a force of 12,000 massed at LaFayette, with the intention of resisting the farther progress of this corps. He says they are well informed of what part of our army is here; they know it is Crittenden's Corps...If the rebels intend to fight here their object is patent. It is that with the hope of inflicting a partial defeat on us and thereby destroying our plans...

Wood

(91)

Alpine, 13 September

Garfield

... A Lieutenant was taken prisoner last night...States that he has never seen so large an army together as the one now concentrated at LaFayette. The following generals are known to be there Johnston, Bragg, Polk, Hill, Forrest, Wharton, Harrison, Pegram, Scott, Breckinridge, Preston, Hodge, and Wheeler. He also states that he is morally certain that reinforcements are coming from Virginia by way of Atlanta....

McCook

(92)

Chattanooga, 13 September

Crittenden

...The General will close McCook down on Thomas and then both on you as soon as possible, so as to concentrate the weight of our army against the enemy...

Goddard

(93)

Chattanooga, 13 September

Burnside

...The enemy has never gone to Rome. He never retreated farther than LaFayette, and it appears that he is concentrating his forces in that vicinity and massing all his cavalry. Every indication now is that he feasible to give us battle....

Rosecrans

(94)

D.C., 14 September

Hurlbut

There are good reasons why troops should be sent to assist Rosecrans' right with all possible dispatch...

Halleck

(95)

New York, 15 September

Secretary of War

A reliable person who left Atlanta on the 4th states that he passed on his way from Atlanta to Richmond three divisions of Lee's army on its way to reinforce Bragg at or near Dalton, and that the general report was that the rebel forces were to be concentrated at or near there for the purpose of overthrowing Rosecrans' army.

Abram Wakeman

(96)

D.C., 15 September

Rosecrans

From information received here today it is very probable that three divisions of Lee's army have been sent to reenforce Bragg....

Halleck

(97)

Near Gordon's Mill, 16 September

Halleck

From information derived from various sources...I have reason to believe what you assert in your dispatch is true, and that they have arrived at Atlanta at last. Push Burnside down.

Rosecrans

(98)
Garfield

Gordon's Mill, 16 September

One of my scouts just returned...he reports that the bulk of the enemy force is about LaFayette....it is commonly understood that the enemy is not going to leave this region without a fight...Buckner's force is at Shield's Gap...and he is to attack and take Gordon's Mill...Buckner's force is reported at 10,000 and that the whole of Bragg's force is 50,000...

Wood

(99)
Garfield

Chattanooga, 16 September

...A person just in confirms the information of the reinforcements. He left Atlanta last Friday. Says all cars were sent to Augusta to convey Ewell's Corps to reinforce Bragg. Was reported to have from 30,000-32,000 troops....

Wagner

(100)
Burnside

Crawfish Spring, 16 September

The enemy reinforced by Johnston and Longstreet...doubtless intend to give us all the mischief in their power....He may wish to turn our left flank. I want all the help I can get promptly.

Rosecrans

(101)
Halleck

Fort Monroe, 16 September

Fresh reports continue to come in establishing the fact that a considerable force of Lee's army has passed to the south and southwest principally to Chattanooga...

Foster

(102)
Grant

D.C., 17 September

....I wish all available troops on the Mississippi sent to Tuscumbia... to cover Rosecrans right and secure his communications...It was early apparent that while you and Banks were operating west of the Mississippi the enemy would concentrate...on either Meade or Rosecrans. It was believed that Lee's army was to be greatly reinforced. It now appears that all of Johnston's army and at least three divisions of Lee's army have joined Bragg..

Halleck

(103)

1/4/XIV, 18 September

Goddard

...the rebels are across Chickamauga, and are in great force on any of the roads leading to the right...they are planting artillery in my front, and our lines of skirmishers are mixed together. My main line and theirs is not more than 200 yards apart....If my right is not strengthened, am in danger of being driven back. They attacked us at dark with cheers, but were held in check. The force is nearly all infantry and from all appearances it is a large one.

Wilder

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