

## MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE JACKSON PURCHASE AREA OF KENTUCKY, 1862 - 1865

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Continued from the April, 1965, *Register*.

THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 1863, brought a diversion from the customary duties of occupation in the Purchase area. Union officers and troops were assigned various tasks in regard to the supervising of elections. The governing directive was Special Order #159, issued from Headquarters, 16th Army Corps, Memphis, Tennessee, and applicable to so much of the State of Kentucky as was within the District of Columbus. In effect, it was ordered that, First, no person could be a candidate for office who was not "avowedly and unconditionally" for the Union and suppression of the rebellion; Second, no person could vote who did not also meet the test for candidacy; and Third, election judges could demand an oath when there was any doubt as to any voter, and no person could vote who refused to take an oath. Brig. Gen. Asboth, in his implementing order, directed the arrest and bringing before a military commission of any would-be-voter or election official who might "evade, neglect, or refuse compliance" with the requirements of the voting order. Martial law was given effect in Kentucky, a loyal state of the United States. The consequence of this military interference was that the August, 1863, elections were little more than a mere formality for the purpose of declaring legally elected the favored candidates, the "Regular Union" men. They prevailed in every case over "Independent Union" and Democratic candidates. Statewide, only about 85,000 out of a computed potential of 140,000 votes were polled. An estimated 40,000 would-be-voters were denied ballots, or kept from the polls by military interference, or by threats or fears of arrest. Troops were at most polls. Arrests of persons voting the Democratic ticket were not infrequent.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXIII, Pt. 2, 570-72; Jefferson Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy*, 2 volumes (New York, Etc., 1958 reprint of the 1881 edition), II, 468. It was also thought that the declaring of martial law

It would be difficult to argue that the voting policies enforced by military authorities in Kentucky, in the 1863 and subsequent elections, were not reasonable and prudent under the circumstances. After all, suspected disloyalty may be one thing in terms of abstract notions to a civilian, particularly in peacetime, but it is quite another thing to a soldier in wartime who must cope, in life and death terms, with its consequences. It is his duty to destroy its origins. However, such policies in a state initially predominantly Union in its sympathies, and legally loyal throughout the war, simply contributed to the transition, which would not be complete until after the termination of hostilities, of public attitude in the state.

Following their preoccupation with civil affairs in August, the Federal authorities returned to the more military business of conducting counter-guerrilla operations. During the first week in September, a guerrilla band was reported to be in the vicinity of Murray. Separate Federal columns, two companies each of infantry and cavalry from Paducah and a company of cavalry from Union City, converged on the town. The guerrilla band, under a Captain McGuire, was located, pursued, and finally overtaken near Conyersville, a few miles across the Tennessee line south of Murray. The Federal reports of the incident stated that the small band was broken up, since most of its members were either killed, captured, or wounded.<sup>61</sup>

Later in the month of September, information reached the Federals to the effect that Confederate forces, an estimated 800

in Kentucky would assist in coping with the frequent, and successful, Confederate raids into the state. See John E. L. Robertson, unpublished Master's Thesis: "West to the Iron Banks" (University of Louisville, 1961), p. 212. As to the results of the election, see Richard H. Collins, *History of Kentucky*, *op. cit.*, I, 127-28; Federal Writers' Project, *Military History of Kentucky*, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

<sup>61</sup> *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXX, Pt. 2, 648-50. Either by skill or chance, the Yankees succeeded in getting a unit in front of the Rebels, and another in their rear. The greatly outnumbered guerrillas, being trapped on a road, abandoned their mounts and took to the brush where they were surrounded. From the reports of the action, an interesting but unexplained fact emerged. Only nine horses and one mule were captured (giving some indication of the size of the band), yet the arms seized amounted to seventy three shotguns and rifles and two pistols.

The Federal force was commanded by Col. James S. Martin, 111th Illinois Infantry, and included elements of the 4th Missouri Cavalry and the 24th Missouri Mounted Infantry.

in number (this estimate was later reduced to 300), were raiding and conscripting between Paris, Tennessee, and Murray. They were reported to be under Bell, Greer, and Newsom. Faulkner was also said to be in the area. Col. James S. Martin, the same officer who led the expedition to Conyersville, departed from Paducah on the 20th with a large body of troops to seek out the guerrillas. His force included one 6-pounder gun, and detachments from the 111th Illinois Infantry, 15th Kentucky Cavalry, 4th Missouri Cavalry, and 101st Illinois Mounted Infantry. The number of men in the expedition totaled 37 officers and 817 troops. The main body went from Mayfield to Boydsville, and a detachment was sent to Murray. The force then went down into West Tennessee. Scouting parties were sent in all directions. The main body passed from Paris to Huntingdon to McLemoresville (they reached Faulkner's camp here eight hours after he had departed) and back to Huntingdon. From there, the command marched to Dresden. Here, part of the cavalry was released and ordered to report to Union City. At daybreak of the 27th, the expedition took up the line of march for Fulton Station. At Fulton on the next day, the balance of the expedition was disbanded; the infantry was embarked aboard trains for Paducah, a column of cavalry was ordered to report to Columbus, and another column of cavalry (the 15th Kentucky) was directed to return to Paducah with the baggage train and captured property. The official report of the expedition mentioned no engagements, and no casualties inflicted on the enemy other than the taking of three prisoners. However, the civilians in the area of march must have known that the U.S. Army had passed through. Listed as captured or "pressed into . . . service" were: 64 mules, 79 horses, 4 wagons and harness, 4 two-horse wagons, 17 old saddles, 8 single sets of harness, 9 old bridles, 4 old rifle guns, 2 old shot-guns, and 1 Colt revolver.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 656-57. Faulkner's departure from the area of his camp was only temporary. On 31 October, he issued a report from his headquarters at Huntingdon. His principal task was recruiting, and in this he was having great success. He also must have been making some contact with Federal forces, because he mentioned that he had just sent "about 40 more prisoners" across the Tennessee River. Faulkner noted that he had only 400 men in camp for duty, "necessity" compelling him to keep out several companies on detached service. He was contemplating a raid into Kentucky to supply his men with "hats, blankets, and boots." He stated that he would go as far as Paducah. *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXI, Pt. 3, 614-15.

Faulkner's report indicates that his regiment was then officially designated

The only other action in the Purchase in 1863 occurred in or near the Mississippi River area of Fulton County. There was a skirmish near Island #10 on 16 October, and another at New Madrid Bend, Tennessee, six days later. On 19 November, Rebels were attacked at Meriwether's Ferry (down the river toward Tiptonville from New Madrid) by a force sent from Union City. Rebel casualties reported were: eleven killed, and Col. Sol G. Street and fifty-five men captured. On 21 and 30 November and 2 and 3 December, Federal patrols were active in the vicinity of Island # 10. The first, some eighty men from the 32nd Iowa Infantry and the 25th Missouri Infantry, failed to catch a guerrilla band at Tiptonville, Tennessee, but seized a mule in the bend on the return to Island #10. (The animal was taken "to make out the number" which the officer commanding the patrol "had been ordered to seize heretofore.") The other patrols went into the bend for the primary purpose of conscripting able bodied males. A total of thirty-five white men and fifteen blacks were conscripted. Also taken were fifty horses and mules, four wagons, sixteen harnesses, "somewhat worn," and several old saddles and bridles. Guerrillas were reported to be active during the same period, competing with the Yankees for conscripts, horses, and mules. The reporting officer made the practical suggestion that the large quantity of corn in the bend should be taken possession of for the benefit of the government—

as one of Partisan Rangers. The Federal attack on his camp was, of course, unsuccessful. Another and more famous leader of Partisan Rangers in Kentucky, Adam Johnson, had some interesting comment on the critical problem of protecting his camps while behind enemy lines. Johnson considered the camp the "post of danger." He would designate a subordinate (he mentions Maj. G. Wash Owen) as camp commander. He further said: "My general plan for protecting the camp was to scatter small scouting parties throughout the territory occupied, each commanded by officers who, with most of the men, were familiar with the neighborhood from boyhood\*\*\*\*Roads would be picketed for a short time by the several parties challenging all passengers and giving passports in my name, when they would be withdrawn, to reappear at other points. All kept in touch with Owen and through him with one another, and were promptly advised of any movement of the enemy. Through Owen the scattered detachments could be rallied at any point at a given hour, to unite for an expedition, under my command. I should say, furthermore, that no man was allowed to sleep in a house; the few instances of capture occurred in violation of this order. We thus held the territory, meeting with no surprise or defeat or loss." Adam R. Johnson, *The Partisan Rangers* (Louisville, 1904) p. 141.

men were found in bed "having their pistols under their heads," but were so completely surprised that no resistance was offered. One was an officer from "Meriwether's company of bushwhackers" and another "claimed" to be from Faulkner's command.<sup>66</sup>

On 22 February, the rumor of a planned guerrilla raid on Mayfield was brought to the attention of Federal officers in Paducah. Two days later, a Lt. Cunningham and 200 colored troops reached Mayfield. The Rebels had already struck and departed. The raiding band had killed and roughed up several Union men, and had entered the stores of three Unionists, taking the goods they wanted, and destroying the rest. Pertinent correspondence does not completely answer the obvious question as to why it required two days to move troops some twenty-five miles.<sup>67</sup>

On 28 February, a skirmish took place at Dukedom, a small community in Graves County east of Fulton, and on the Tennessee state line. A squad of guerrillas which had been "robbing on" the Paducah and Fulton railroad were surprised by a detachment of Federal troops. One prisoner was taken, and also four horses, four "loaded" revolvers, and one carbine. The official report also dutifully notes that the hats of "perhaps the entire party" were captured.<sup>68</sup>

Exactly a week later, the previously complacent garrison at Columbus found itself the target of guerrillas. A body of some thirty men attempted a night infiltration of the defensive works of the position, the strongest in the Purchase, and certainly the best protected Union point on the Mississippi River between Cairo and Memphis. The partisans apparently got within the outer breastworks before their presence was discovered by pickets who drove

<sup>66</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 404. The reference here to Meriwether's company of "bushwhackers" is typical of the loose use of this term by Federal officers in describing Rebel units in U.S. held territory. (If they were not "bushwhackers", then they were "guerrillas".) In fact, Meriwether was an officer in Faulkner's command of Kentucky Partisans before it became the 12th Kentucky Mounted Infantry. O.R., Ser. 1, XXXI, Pt. 3, 614-15. A Capt. R. M. Meriwether was one of the officers captured with Faulkner at the Island #10 affair (see text concerning footnotes 27 and 28) in October of 1862. O.R., Ser. 1, XVII, Pt. 1, 460. The indiscriminate use by the Federals of such terms to describe all small Rebel units encountered, whether regular army units or partisan rangers, was no small factor in clouding history in this respect.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 417.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.

the bend was "pretty effectually" cleaned of male inhabitants, and the corn was therefore "uncared for."<sup>63</sup>

Little of military significance occurred in the Kentucky portion of the Jackson Purchase throughout the remainder of 1863. However, December saw Forrest raiding the Purchase area south of the state line. He entered West Tennessee with 500 men, and for three weeks marched up and down that country gathering cattle, horses, mules, and recruits. Some 20,000 Federal troops, in detachments, tried in vain to surround him, or cut him off while he operated in their 16th Army Corps area. But they were never able to mass against him. When he recrossed the Tennessee River on 27 December he took with him some 3000 unarmed recruits, 40 wagons of captured or otherwise procured supplies, and many cattle for the hungry Confederate Army. His original raiding force had endured daily skirmishing, and five distinct engagements in thwarting the efforts of the frustrated Union defenders.<sup>64</sup>

The Kentucky Jackson Purchase area was apparently, as reported in December in relation to all West Kentucky, "swarming" with guerrillas.<sup>65</sup> The coming year would see the guerrilla bands grow more daring in their operations. The new year would also bring for the first time since the Spring of 1862 a large body of Confederate regulars into the Purchase in the conduct of a relatively major Confederate military operation far behind Union lines.

#### 1864

With the break-up of winter, Union occupation troops began to leave the warmth of their quarters. Acting on rumor, on 17 February, a detachment of forty men from the 34th New Jersey Infantry was sent from Island #10 to Riley's Landing, six miles south of Tiptonville, to seek out four reported Union deserters. Instead, the Federal troops ended up surprising and capturing "5 of the gang of guerrillas which has infested the bend (i.e., Madrid Bend) for five months past." Arms and horses were also taken. The

<sup>63</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXX, Pt. 2, 5; XXXI, Pt. 1, 1, 570, 571, 591-92.

<sup>64</sup> These statistics are found in *The Southern Bivouac*, II (April, 1884), 337-45. The official reports, Northern and Southern, of the campaign are found in O.R., Ser. 1, XXXI, Pt. 1, 606-21. They are not as specific concerning statistics as is the *Bivouac* article. However, the reports generally do not reveal anything which would tend to indicate that the statistics in the article are clearly exaggerated in any respect.

<sup>65</sup> Richard H. Collins, *History of Kentucky*, op. cit., I, 129.

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.

them off. It was also reported that an "obstruction" had been placed on railroad track two miles beyond Columbus, but that it was "found" before it caused "harm."<sup>69</sup>

Two days later, on 8 March, disaster almost befell a squad of men from the 34th New Jersey which ventured out of the protection of the works at Island #10. Twelve troopers were sent out to capture three men who had killed a Negro the day before, and to seek out one Joseph Malady, "a notorious guerrilla and horse-thief" said to be in the area. The detachment landed on the Tennessee side, and went up river some seven miles into Fulton County, Kentucky. The house where Malady was supposed to be was surrounded, but he was found to have departed. Subsequently, as the troops were returning to Island #10, they rode into an ambush composed of an estimated seventy-five to one hundred and twenty-five guerrillas under Parks and Bradford. The Union troops fell back, providentially found an old raft on the river bank, and were able to escape.<sup>70</sup>

Thursday, 10 March, saw guerrillas (possibly the same band) riding into both Mayfield and Clinton. The stores of Union men were sacked as usual. In addition, at the latter town, the guerrillas encountered a windfall in the form of thirty-five to forty horses which had been purchased for the U.S. Army, and were there awaiting pick-up. Col. Stephen G. Hicks of the 40th Illinois Infantry at Paducah reported that he had, as a result of the raid at Mayfield, sent the 122nd Illinois to the place to garrison it. Col. William H. Lawrence, 34th New Jersey Infantry, at Columbus, upon receiving notice of the raid on Clinton immediately dispatched Col. Hawkins with mounted infantry in hot pursuit. Col. Lawrence also took further action. Noting that it had become a military necessity to prevent large shipments of goods to "defenseless towns" such as Clinton, he advised that thereafter he was going to place restrictions on any goods to be taken outside of his pickets. However, Brig. Gen. H. T. Reid, commanding the District of Cairo, immediately countermanded that intended order before it ever became effective.<sup>71</sup> Political implications apparently outweighed pure military considerations.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 492. In fact, for a long period of time Columbus was the only point on the river between Cairo and Memphis that was permanently garrisoned with troops. See John E. L. Robertson, unpublished Masters's Thesis: "West to the Iron Banks," *op. cit.*, p. 222.

<sup>70</sup> *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 491-92.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 493-94.



A detailed discussion of the state of commerce in the Jackson Purchase of Kentucky during the Civil War is not feasible here. However, certain of the more prominent facets of the situation deserve comment. Certainly, one of the factors leading to the declaration of martial law in July of 1863 was the desire of Union officials to have the authority to place restrictions on the stockpiling of goods by private merchants. It was obvious that large inventories of desirable goods, necessities of one kind or another, were an attractive feature of Kentucky to would-be raiders such as Morgan and Forrest.

Another aspect of commerce which was particularly vexing to those conscientious Union officers interested only in winning a war (and not a fortune) was the fact that throughout the war, the existence of hostilities only slowed, never stopped, the longitudinal flow of interstate commerce. North to south, and vice versa, it continued, from and through Kentucky, in particular the Purchase and the rest of the southwestern part of the state. The role which was played by this area in such trade was two-fold, to wit: 1) As a link in illegal commerce between the United States and the Confederate States; and 2) a source, in and of itself, of illicit goods and supplies destined for the Confederate States.<sup>72</sup>

Livestock, salt, flour, coffee, sugar, leather, and like goods and commodities were transported overland. Other goods were transported on the rivers leading into the southland. (Cotton was the principal product moving northward.) Trickery was often resorted to in the movement of illicit goods aboard river steamers. Such items as whiskey were permitted to be passed. Boxes and barrels were often labelled as containing some exempt item (such as, for example, whiskey), but in fact held proscribed goods.<sup>73</sup>

The complicity of dishonest and profiteering Army and Treasury officers was, of course, a not inconsequential factor in the "success" of such illegal trade. And, too, there were periods of time when applicable policies or regulations permitted the unrestricted movement of some goods by rail or river. In addition, there was the difficulty experienced by the Union Army in its efforts to police the vast area over or through which such trade passed.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>72</sup> William E. Connelley and E. M. Coulter, *History of Kentucky*, 5 volumes, Edited by Judge Charles Kerr (Chicago, 1922), II, 874-75.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 875.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 875.

Eventually, very drastic restrictions were placed upon commercial intercourse between or involving the inhabitants of the Purchase area, as well as the rest of Kentucky. Only proven Loyalists were free from military restraint in their commercial activities. In addition to the limitations on land trade, strict restraints were ultimately imposed in regard to river traffic. Steamers were forbidden to land between Paducah and Memphis. All ferry boats, skiffs, and other irregular craft were prohibited from unauthorized operation on the same general area of the Mississippi.<sup>75</sup>

The placing of restrictions on trade constituted a negative Union policy which was imposed upon the people of the Purchase. A positive policy, and one even more psychologically onerous, was the widespread use of Negro troop units to garrison the area. The utilization of these people as troops was never welcomed in Kentucky, and especially the Purchase. An incident illustrating this fact occurred in Paducah on 21 March. Col. Cunningham's Negro troops undertook to conscript some Negro hands on board the steamer, *Carrie Jacobs*. The boat officers and crew resisted, and appealed to white troops for help. A "bloody fight" ensued between black and white Union soldiers. In this instance, the violent reaction of the white military occupier reflected the opinions and attitudes of the white civilian occupied.<sup>76</sup>

Events on the day following the internal affair at Paducah served to turn the attention of the Federal authorities back to their real enemy from without. A train was attacked at Mayfield, and Fancy Farm (ten miles to the south) was raided. Thirty-five guerrillas were reported involved at the former, and fifty at the latter place. (It could, of course, have been the same band.) A man (presumably a civilian) was killed and another wounded in the

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 876; O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 514-15. Regarding the flow between North and South of illegal trade, see also Bruce Catton, *Grant Moves South*, *op. cit.*, pp. 347-51. Catton notes the reciprocal needs of the warring nations: Northern industry wanted cotton, and the South desired, had to have, the products of Northern industry. In terms of direct military benefit, the advantage from the trade was the South's—for, in return for its cotton, it received salt, gunpowder, revolvers, etc. Perhaps one of the most thorough discussions of governmental restraints on commerce and the consequential illegal trade between North and South relative to the Purchase can be found in the unpublished Master's Thesis of John E. L. Robertson, "West to the Iron Banks," *op. cit.*, pp. 200-13.

<sup>76</sup> Richard H. Collins, *History of Kentucky*, *op. cit.*, I, 132; John E. L. Robertson, Master's Thesis: "West to the Iron Banks," *op. cit.*, p. 228.

Mayfield affair. At Fancy Farm, the Postmaster was shot, the Catholic Chapel burned, goods taken from a store, and several hostages were forced to leave with the guerrillas as hostages. Col. Hicks at Paducah was prompted to say, "No Union man can go out of this place with safety in that direction (south to Graves County). The interior is full of guerrillas."<sup>77</sup>

Further west in the Purchase, a guerrilla hunting patrol had departed on 18 March from Island # 10 and had gone down the river by steamer. It landed in Tennessee, and then swept northward into the Madrid Bend area of Fulton County (following much the same route as the similar foray from Island # 10 which was ambushed in the latter part of February). This expedition brought back a prisoner, one Obadiah Green, said to be the brother-in-law of the guerrilla leader, Bradford. (He was taken at Bradford's house—available records do not make it clear as to whether his crime was anything more than being the male in-law of a guerrilla chieftain.) Intelligence collected by this patrol was to the effect that the band of partisans under the same locally notorious Bradford and Parks had departed from Madrid Bend the previous week.<sup>78</sup>

Thus far, the month of March had been for Yankee occupation troops in the Purchase the familiar routine, but with an ever increasing tempo, of counter-guerrilla operations which had been going on for the past two years. There had been occasions, such as the seizures of Union City and Hickman, when Confederate regulars on independent missions had ventured into the Purchase area. And there had been the scares created by Forrest's raids into West Tennessee. But mostly, for occupation troops, it was patrol, patrol, patrol. Occasionally, contact was made with guerrilla bands and brief fire fights resulted. But mostly, for those professional army officers and men who were stationed in the Purchase, it was a frustrating type of duty—the business of searching out, and sometimes pursuing, but rarely ever overtaking, the relatively small bodies of irregular fighting men which were the principal enemy.

However, events were taking place to the south in the month of March which would bring back a phase of orthodox warfare to the Purchase. (It was also during this month that General Grant

<sup>77</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 628; Pt. 3, 131.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, Pt. 1, 623-24.

left the Western theater and went to the East where he assumed the command of all U. S. forces.)

Before the month passed, there would come riding into the Purchase columns of seasoned Confederate regulars. They would ride with that peculiar confidence which comes only from the habit of success in battle. At their head would be the incomparable Nathan Bedford Forrest, and included among their numbers would be Brig. Gen. Abram Buford's Kentucky Brigade. Many of the men of this brigade were natives of the Purchase. As well as looking forward to seeing their homes again, they were seeking the clothing, equipment, and mounts which always seemed to be in short supply to the armies of the Confederacy.

Forrest's 1864 raid into West Kentucky (actually it was his second penetration since, it will be remembered, his troops had gone as far as Moscow in December, 1862) was well underway by 15 March. On that date, his main body had entered Tennessee near Corinth, Mississippi.<sup>79</sup> By 24 March, a detachment under Col. Duckworth, and including the 12th Kentucky Regiment, from Forrest's main body had seized Union City. The taking of the place came after a close and vigorous investment of the square redoubt in which the Federals were strongly entrenched. (Before launching his attack, Duckworth had sent detachments north of Union City to cut telegraph lines, and to burn the railroad bridge at the small community of State Line, six miles away. However, word of the presence of the Confederate forces was transmitted to Columbus before the telegraph wires were severed.<sup>80</sup>) There was sharpshooting of several hours duration, and at least one charge by Faulkner's 12th Kentuckians which carried them to within "twenty or thirty yards of the work." However, the Federal commander, the same Col. Hawkins who had surrendered Union City once before to Forrest's forces in December, 1862, was tricked into capitulating. Although the opposing forces were actually about equal in numbers, Hawkins was led to believe that he faced the redoubtable Forrest himself, and his entire army. Both Duckworth and Hawkins were aware that Brig. Gen. Mason Brayman was on the way with a relief force of some 2,000 Union troops (he would get as far as the Kentucky line north of Union City, hear of the surrender, and return to Columbus). Col. Duckworth (bluffing,

<sup>79</sup> Gen. Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, *Campaigns of Lieut. Gen. N. B. Forrest and of Forrest's Cavalry*, *op. cit.* p. 407.

<sup>80</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 3, 142-43.

because he felt that he could not take the position by assault without artillery) demanded the surrender of the post. Hawkins asked for time to consider "so grave a matter," and requested a personal interview with Forrest. Duckworth answered in the name of Forrest to the effect that further delay was impossible under the circumstances. He arrogantly stated that he (Forrest) was not in the habit of meeting, under a flag of truce, officers inferior to him in rank. Duckworth won the game of wits, and with it the surrender of 475 men with arms and ammunition, supplies, and 300 horses. It was also reported that the Union City garrison had just had a paycall (for a year's service); therefore, some \$60,000 was presumed to have lined Rebel pockets as a result of the affair.<sup>81</sup>

At this point, before following the advance of Forrest into the Purchase, we might take a closer look at the Kentucky units which were with him then and throughout the remainder of the war. These were the 3rd, 7th, 8th, and 12th Kentucky Regiments, composed almost entirely of troops from the western end of the state. They, with Forrest's Alabama Regiment, formed a brigade. Along with Bell's Tennessee Brigade (also composed to a great extent of troops from the western end of that state) the Kentucky brigade constituted a division under the command of Gen. Abram Buford.<sup>82</sup>

Buford, a West Point graduate (class of 1841) had served a number of years in the regular army before returning to his native Woodford County, Kentucky, prior to the Civil War. He was rather stoutish of figure, and a gentleman said to be fond of his toddies. He was extremely popular with his troops. One of them would later fondly describe him as "the grand old man who contributed so much to the fame of Forrest's command, and whom writers of history have treated with so little consideration."<sup>83</sup>

All of the Kentucky regiments, with the exception of the 12th, were initially infantry units, and first came under Forrest's command in early March, 1864. The 8th had been mounted almost a

<sup>81</sup> Gen. Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, *Campaigns of Lieut. Gen. N. B. Forrest and of Forrest's Cavalry*, op. cit., p. 408. Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th, and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, op. cit., p. 74. Hall Allen, *Center of Conflict*, op. cit., pp. 160-62. O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 503, 543-44. In the latter it is reported that the Rebels made one mounted charge, and then dismounted and made three more charges, all with "heavy loss," before the post capitulated.

<sup>82</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 3, 865.

<sup>83</sup> Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th, and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, op. cit., pp. 101, 148-49.

year, and the 3rd and 7th became, technically (horses were scarce), mounted infantry when they joined Forrest.<sup>84</sup>

The 3rd Regiment was organized in the summer of 1861 at Camp Boone, in Montgomery County, Tennessee, and had as its nucleus troops from McCracken and nearby counties. The 7th was organized at about the same time at Camp Burnett in Hickman County, situated some two miles west of Clinton and eight miles south of Columbus. The 8th was also organized in the summer of 1861. It was closely associated for much of the war with Brig. Gen. Hylan B. Lyon, a colorful, but thoroughly competent, former regular army officer (West Point, 1852) from Lyon County. This regiment had its first significant ordeal under fire at Ft. Donelson, and, after the surrender, spent several months in Yankee prison before being exchanged.<sup>85</sup>

The origin of the 12th Kentucky is less clear and concise. It apparently evolved from a company of cavalry organized in the Spring of 1862, by W. W. Faulkner. He eventually became regimental commander of the 12th when it was formally organized in early 1863. Prior to that time, and for a while afterwards, the troops forming the core of this regiment were engaged in independent operations behind Federal lines. (As mentioned earlier, they participated in an abortive attack upon Island # 10 in October, 1862.) Soon after joining Forrest's command in the latter part of 1863, they were frequently, and derisively, referred to as the "Kentucky gorillers". But their demonstrated capacity for hard fighting soon removed any stigma related to their past.<sup>86</sup>

These were Forrest's Kentucky troops which went with him to the bitter end. Their devotion to him was singular, and never waned until the day when the last survivor of them was laid to rest, years after the war, in his moth-eaten old gray uniform. Some of Forrest's most famous exploits, of those which have committed him to military immortality, occurred when these troops served under him. They were all on the field of battle at Brices Cross Roads in June, 1864, when old Bedford, in his most classic victory, attacked more than twice his own number, achieved a double envelopment, and inflicted casualties almost equal in numbers to his own total forces.<sup>87</sup> But let us return to his Paducah raid, note-

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56, 68-69, 74.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 27, 47.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 68-73.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91. See *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXIX, Pt. 1, 84-231, for a full account of the battle and its attendant details.

worthy enough itself because he was able to paralyze Federal forces, far behind their own lines, to the extent that the Kentucky Purchase was for some three weeks virtually a Confederate territory.

After Col. Duckworth completed his mission at Union City, his command, less detachments, moved toward Jackson, Tennessee, to await and join Forrest's main body on its return from Paducah.<sup>88</sup> It was probably one of those detachments which rode into Hickman, found it undefended, and "without molestation carried off large quantities of supplies."<sup>89</sup>

Hickman was undefended because the attack on it was anticipated. A small company of Union troops had been evacuated by a river transport even while Union City was under attack. As a matter of fact, both Col. Hawkins at Union City, and Col. Hicks, commanding at Paducah, had correctly predicted attacks on their respective posts.<sup>90</sup> Hicks, before Forrest had ever entered Kentucky, had been reporting the particularly aggressive action of armed bands in the area of Paducah.

One of the incidents to which Hicks possibly made reference was a reported clash between Union and Confederate mounted detachments near Benton in Marshall County on 23 March. The Rebels involved, though, rather than being merely another band of guerrillas, were probably advance elements of Forrest's command. The meeting of the troops seems to have been mutually unexpected. Both units were purportedly seeking horses—and accidentally met on a road near what was locally known as the Hugh Arant farm. Two separate skirmishes resulted in a total of seven dead.<sup>91</sup>

By the night of the Thursday that Union City fell, Forrest's main body (probably most accurately described by Maj. Gen. Hurlbut in a dispatch to Maj. Gen. Sherman as numbering some 2500 "picked" men, moving unhampered by baggage<sup>92</sup>) had reached Mayfield and went into bivouac there. Early the next

<sup>88</sup> John A. Wyeth, *That Devil Forrest*, op. cit., p. 304.

<sup>89</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 510; see also Pt. 3, 162, wherein it was reported that the size of the raiding force was "one thousand."

<sup>90</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 541; Pt. 3, 129, 142.

<sup>91</sup> There may have been as many as twelve killed in the two skirmishes. Local tradition placed the number of dead at that figure, according to Joe Creason, a native of Marshall County, in a letter dated 1 August 1962, to W. A. Wentworth of the Kentucky Historical Society.

<sup>92</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 3, 157.





morning, the raiders were in their saddles and on the way to Paducah. Capt. H. A. Tyler and a company of the 12th Kentucky led the advance, and were the first troops to enter Paducah. The roads leading into the town had only a short while before been reported clear of Rebs—therefore, their sudden appearance provided some element of surprise.<sup>93</sup> The Yankee garrison, according to prearranged plan, retired in "hot haste" to Ft. Anderson in the western limits of the town. The Fort was a large enclosed earthwork, about a hundred yards from the river bank, and surrounded by a broad, deep ditch, fringed with a strong abatis. It had been constructed for just such an emergency as the attack of the raiders created.<sup>94</sup> Its proximity to the river enabled it to receive the defensive benefit of the accurate supporting fire of river gunboats. This was no minor advantage.

The position was strong. It was held by some 600 to 700 men. Its commander, Col. S. G. Hicks of the 40th Illinois Infantry, was a resolute and brave officer. The attackers were probably not acquainted with the character of the Union Commander—but the character of the position should have been obvious. Nevertheless, a decision was made to assault Ft. Anderson. From the standpoint of the Confederates, the consequences were tragic. The preponderance of evidence is to the effect that the assault was not ordered by Forrest (such foolhardiness would have been altogether out of character for the man). Circumstances tend to indicate that the attack was launched on the initiative of its leader, Col. A. P. Thompson. Some 400 men of the 3rd and 7th Kentucky Regiments took part in the charge. They were met by a withering small arms fire. Shells and balls from the cannon of the fort and the gunboats (the *Peosta* and the *Paw Paw*) slammed into their ranks. The result was predictable. They were repulsed with relatively heavy loss. Col. Thompson, a native of Paducah, was one of the casualties. He breathed his last almost within sight of his home.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>93</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 547. Hall Allen, *Center of Conflict*, op. cit., p. 163.

<sup>94</sup> John A. Wyeth, *That Devil Forrest*, op. cit., p. 304.

<sup>95</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 510, 547-48, 551-52. Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th, and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, op. cit., p. 77; Hall Allen, *Center of Conflict*, op. cit., pp. 163-64; John A. Wyeth, *That Devil Forrest*, op. cit., p. 305; Andrew Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*, op. cit., p. 273; Gen. Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, *Campaigns of Lieut. Gen. N. B. Forrest and Forrest's Cavalry*, op. cit., pp. 409-13. Col. Hicks was a first rate, combat experienced soldier. He had served in the Black

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Thereafter, Confederate involvement with the fort consisted of accurate and deadly sniping from the roofs and upper stories of adjacent buildings. They thereby pinned down the occupants of the fort while their fellow raiders went about the systematic gathering of removable supplies and the destruction of unwanted or untransportable material. There was fighting in the streets when Yankees, so unfortunate as not to have made the safety of the fort, were flushed out. All the while, the projectiles from Union cannon were raining down on the town. (During one thirty minute interval, the rate of fire was three guns per minute.) During the course of the afternoon, Forrest directed one of his customary ultimatums to Col. Hicks, demanding the surrender of the fort and warning that if the Federals surrendered, they would be treated as prisoners-of-war, but if the place had to be stormed, they could expect "no quarter." His demand was refused. The Federal Commander knew the strength of his position.<sup>96</sup>

Forrest's actions at Paducah, viewed in the light of his other operations, make it rather apparent that his intentions were to hold the Federals in their gunboats (his sharpshooters were also at work on these) and in their fort while he removed horses and supplies from Paducah. (His typical admonition of "no quarter," such as that issued here and at other places, was violently denounced by the Northern press. In addition, this tactic, for that was what it amounted to, would receive the attention of a Congressional investigative group.<sup>97</sup>)

When Forrest's forces finally withdrew from Paducah, after a ten hour stay, flames leaped high into the dark night. A steamer, a dry-dock, and some sixty bales of cotton piled on the wharf had been put to the torch. (The very next morning, Col. Hicks took his turn at the torch by ordering the burning of all houses within musket range of Ft. Anderson, and from which Rebel sharpshooters had sighted in on the fort.) Forrest brought out fifty prisoners. The Federals reported their own total casualties, exclusive of captured, as fourteen killed and forty-six wounded. Forrest stated

Hawk and Mexican Wars, and had been severely wounded at the Battle of Shiloh. See article, *Colonel Hicks-Captain Bagwell*, in *The Southern Bivouac*, II (February, 1884), 270-71.

<sup>96</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 547; Pt. 3, 153.

<sup>97</sup> A great deal of attention was focused on Forrest and his methods of warfare as a consequence of the Ft. Pillow engagement. See Wyeth's work at pages 336-41.

his total losses to be twenty-five killed and wounded (most of these casualties having been suffered in the ill-advised assault on the fort).<sup>98</sup>

A report of an outbreak of smallpox in the town possibly hastened the withdrawal of Forrest's forces from Paducah.<sup>99</sup>

Before and during the time of the affair at Paducah, Confederate forces had been active in other parts of the Purchase seeking additional sources of supplies and horses. The aforementioned raid on Hickman had occurred, and the previously described chance meeting of Union and Rebel troops near Benton had taken place. In addition, a company of Confederate troops rode into Clinton and occupied it for a period.<sup>100</sup> Thus, while gathering supplies and horseflesh, these detached units screened the main body's movements, and helped to keep Union troops at Columbus pinned down.

On his withdrawal southward, Forrest paused in Mayfield long enough to release for a week's furlough those Kentuckians with homes in the immediate area. They had orders to report back to a specific point on a specific date. This was rather remarkable when it is remembered that these troops were deep in Federal held territory. What is more remarkable, is that these men returned to a man.<sup>101</sup> Certainly, there are better places to desert than in enemy territory. But these men were home. And 1864 was not the banner year of the Confederacy. No doubt, a large

<sup>98</sup> Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th, and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, *op. cit.*, p. 77. *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 549, 607, 612.

<sup>99</sup> *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 607. See also Hall Allen, *Center of Conflict*, *op. cit.*, p. 165. Forrest lingered in the vicinity until the next morning. He made one demonstration, and also attempted to arrange with Col. Hicks to exchange some prisoners. *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 548.

<sup>100</sup> *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXIX, Pt. 2, 50. This company was, according to the Federals, led by an officer named Horn. It was back in Clinton again in May. It was possibly Company M of the 3d Kentucky, and under Capt. J. C. Horne. (A variation in the spelling of the name would be understandable.) See Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th, and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, *op. cit.*, p. 140, 172. See also Gen. Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, *Campaigns of Lieut. Gen. N. B. Forrest and Forrest's Cavalry*, *op. cit.*, p. 700. If, in fact, it was Company M, then support is lent to the argument that regular units of the Confederate Army on independent missions of a partisan nature were responsible for a substantial portion of the irregular activity in the Purchase.

<sup>101</sup> Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th, and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, *op. cit.*, p. 78. See also, *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 608.

factor in their dedication to a cause was based upon their devotion to their leader.

Forrest's Kentucky troops, like other Kentucky units under both flags, had excellent records.<sup>102</sup> There is no need to present a brief in this respect. These particular Kentucky units followed their leader to the tragic end, and in one engagement, suffered forty-five percent casualties in relation to the number engaged.<sup>103</sup> Much has been written of their general—he has been ranked with the greatest of the war, and others have termed him the greatest.<sup>104</sup> It has been said that he did not command the love of his troops as Jackson did.<sup>105</sup> But he had their unbounded respect—their high esprit

<sup>102</sup> They must have all been good because the impression left by almost any history of a particular unit is that that unit was the best in the war. They were, undoubtedly, fine troops. However, for an interesting discussion as to whose (U.S.A. or C.S.A.) Kentucky troops were the best, see the chapter entitled "The Soldiers" in Thomas Speed's *The Union Cause in Kentucky, 1860-1865*, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-315. Examine also Justice John M. Harlan's foreword to Speed's work.

<sup>103</sup> Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th, and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, *op. cit.*, p. 98. This was the Battle of Harrisburg, in Mississippi.

<sup>104</sup> According to John A. Wyeth, Gen. Sherman after the war made the statement that he considered Forrest "the most remarkable man our Civil War produced on either side"—whereas Jackson, Sheridan, and other brilliant leaders were soldiers by profession, Forrest, uneducated as he was, had a genius for strategy which was native. See page 561 of *That Devil Forrest*. Also, according to Wyeth, Gen. J. E. Johnston made a similar statement. See page 562. Another writer has said that Forrest's rise to pre-eminence as the gifted cavalryman of the war resulted, not so much from the literary effusions of admiring military biographers, as from the gradual crystallization of opinion over the better part of a century. Out of the great cavalry leaders of the war—Stuart, Sheridan, Wilson, Hampton, Wheeler, and many more—Forrest stands out as the clear, unfettered genius who, like Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Jackson, arose from almost nowhere and dominated those about him by his sheer resolution and innate power. Glenn Tucker, *Untutored Genius of the War*, article, in *Civil War Times Illustrated*, III (June, 1964), beginning at page 7. His attitudes toward war were contagious. It has been said that every soldier who served under him soon learned that his "legitimate business was TO FIGHT." Thomas A. Head, *Campaigns and Battles of the Sixteenth Regiment, Tennessee Volunteers* (McMinnville, Tennessee, 1961), p. 423.

<sup>105</sup> Article entitled "Recollections of General Forrest", in *The Southern Bivouac*, II (April, 1884), 363-65. While it was well known by his men that he had no respect or mercy for a coward (he, actually, on at least two occasions, shot down panic-stricken troops in attempts to check routs), it was just as well known to his soldiers that he went to very extreme lengths to insure their comfort and safety. John A. Wyeth, *That Devil Forrest*, *op. cit.*, pp. 571, 574-76.

de corps reflected that. And no doubt, his common soldiers as well as his officers, must have sensed that they followed a man, relatively unlettered though he was, who was an incomparable genius on the field of battle. Such complete confidence in matters of war can lead to a devotion approaching the holy.

Buford and his Kentuckians, when they returned from their furloughs, would be ordered to raid Paducah again. Meanwhile, though, in the interval between raids, there was considerable activity in the Purchase. One incident involved the almost fatal ambush of Col. Ed Crossland of the 7th Kentucky. He had been painfully wounded at Paducah, and was determined to do his recuperating in his home county of Hickman. He, along with the other furloughed troops, left the main body at Mayfield. He was persuaded to spend a night, it being freezing weather, before starting for his destination some twenty miles from Mayfield, at one Bill Pryor's home near Mayfield. With Crossland was a small detail from Faulkner's regiment. When the group settled down for the night, most of them left their arms with their horses in a stable. They thought that the nearest enemies were the Yankees holed up in Paducah. However, an old Negro carried the word of their presence to a band of "Home Guards" located in the area. These men, under one Gregory, and referred to by natives as "Gregory's Cut-throats," took full advantage of the situation. (These militiamen were part of a state-wide effort by Federal authorities to use local people to counter Rebel-inclined guerrillas, and to suppress or harass Rebel sympathizers. From the Southern sympathizer's point of view, they were "outlaw bands, acting without let or hindrance from the Federal authorities, who took the law in their own hands, and who prostituted their authority for private gain.") They did their night's work well, taking the sleeping Confederates completely by surprise. However, their chief quarry, Col. Crossland, feigned death after being shot in his bed, and fled into the dark. Nevertheless, most of the Rebel soldiers with him were either killed in bed, or executed in summary fashion after surrendering. Some, like Crossland, managed to escape and hide. All were found the next day by Confederate Cavalry which came out from Mayfield.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th, and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, op. cit., pp. 79-81. See also O.R., Ser. I, XXXII, Pt. 1, 506, 546, wherein it was erroneously reported that Col. Crossland was killed. Ten Home Guards

The affair at Pryors occurred on 26 March. On 29 March, Col. Hicks at Paducah reported that Forrest's headquarters were at Mayfield and that his troops were scattered about the Purchase on furlough, and that gangs of ten to twenty men were collecting horses and mules, pressing in wagons and teams, and gathering bacon.<sup>107</sup>

However, during this period of virtual occupation by Confederate forces, the Yankees made at least one attempt at normal patrol activities. On 31 March, Col. William H. Lawrence at Columbus reported the results of a fifty man Union scout from Columbus to Clinton to Moscow and back to Columbus. The "enemy" was encountered at Clinton and caused to retire and gallop off. Rebels were again run into at Moscow. Bagged as prisoners of war were three Confederate soldiers, two conscripts, two guerrillas, and two other men said to be aiding the enemy.<sup>108</sup>

Two days later, Brig. Gen. Brayman, Commanding the District of Cairo, reported all Western Kentucky, with the exception of the rivers, to be under "insurrectionary control." He further reported that "Forrest occupies it with not less than 9,000 men, and his force is increasing." He noted that even Southern Illinois was stirring with activity. "This portion of Illinois is infested by domestic traitors and rebels from the South." In fact, he reported, an officer from his command had interrupted one of Forrest's colonels in the process of brazenly undertaking to organize a regiment in Southern Illinois.<sup>109</sup>

However, this was not the first instance of a report of Rebel activity in the Little Egypt portion of Illinois. As noted earlier, the cotton belt actually overlapped the Mason-Dixon Line in this area—and, as might be expected, enthusiasm among the inhabitants (at least, an alarming number of them) for the Yankee war effort left something to be desired. The presence of Confederate regular

were said to have killed seven of Crossland's "guerrillas." This, of course, is another example of Federal officers' indiscriminate use of the term "guerrilla."

<sup>107</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 3, 188.

<sup>108</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 652-53. Col. Lawrence, making the report, said that if they had not been falsely informed as to the number of Rebels in Clinton, they would have charged the place, rather than approaching it cautiously, and would have taken the forty to sixty Rebs there.

<sup>109</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 3, 232. Southern Illinois had furnished recruits to the Confederate Army since the beginning of the war. See mention of this fact in *The Southern Bivouac* article cited above at footnote 95.

troops in the Kentucky Purchase, and their prolonged stay, seemed to inspire overt reactions against Federal authority in Southern Illinois. On 28 March, "gangs" attacked the 54th Illinois Infantry Regiment at Charleston, Coles County. A riot ensued resulting in the death of six soldiers and one loyal citizen, and two of the attackers. A number were wounded on both sides. The dissidents were reported to have had among their numbers and leaders members of the infamous "Knights of the Golden Circle".<sup>110</sup>

On the same day (2 April) of Brayman's despondent summary of conditions in West Kentucky and Southern Illinois, Col. Hicks reported that Buford's headquarters was at Dukedom, with some five or six regiments based there, that Faulkner remained in Clinton with eight hundred men, and that Forrest was at Jackson, Tennessee. Buford was in fact at this time reassembling his division. Indications are that the next day, a Sabbath, Buford's mounted columns began riding south to Trenton, Tennessee, to join Forrest's main body.<sup>111</sup>

However, not all of the Confederate troops in the Purchase left with Buford on that April Sunday morning. With the Yankee holed up in his forts at Columbus and Paducah, a vacuum, so to speak, had been created which was favorable for various Rebel post-invasion purposes. Numerous small units remained behind with specific missions not unrelated to the ever more desperate efforts of the Confederate Army to find anything with which to fill a uniform or on which to place a saddle. On the 10th, Col. Lawrence at Columbus reported that "There are small bands on all sides of us. They have been in Clinton, Milburn, Blandville, and Hickman in squads of 20 to 40 men, conscripting all and taking everything in the shape of a horse."<sup>112</sup>

The next day proved even more eventful. Some fifty Confederate cavalrymen audaciously attacked the outer defenses of Columbus itself, driving in the pickets, wounding one man, and cap-

<sup>110</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 629-43. Active disaffection was reported in Southern Illinois as early as April, 1861. J. Henry Haynie, *The Nineteenth Illinois* (Chicago, 1912), pp. 54-55.

<sup>111</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 3, 232; Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, *op. cit.*, p. 78; Gen. Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, *Campaigns of Lieut. Gen. N. B. Forrest and of Forrest's Cavalry*, *op. cit.*, p. 416; John A. Wyeth, *That Devil Forrest*, *op. cit.*, pp. 305-06.

<sup>112</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 3, 319. On the night of the 10th five companies from Faulkner's command rode into Mayfield. *Ibid.*, 329.



turing a corporal, before being caused to retire. Rebel squads of fifty to sixty were reported "all through the country." A larger group of some two to three hundred were reported to be in Blandville—and "Col. Bell's command," seven hundred strong, was said to be marching on Hickman. A body of one hundred and eighty was reported to be within six miles of Paducah, "hovering" around the place.<sup>113</sup>

Forrest had his adversaries thoroughly confused. His very impudence in striking so far behind enemy lines implied a large raiding force. Yankee intelligence helped by grossly over-estimating his numbers. The sum effect of these factors was to cause the Union garrisons in the Kentucky Purchase to stay within their defensive works while Confederate troops roamed at will on scrounging missions. But the drama of Forrest's raid was not yet complete. Yankee confusion was to be compounded. Buford was to be ordered back into Kentucky with directions to strike Paducah again. Less than a week after departing, Buford would start his division riding northward once more into the homeland of so many of his Kentucky troops.

Considered in retrospect, it seems quite obvious that the primary reason for this second raid against Paducah was to confuse and divert Federal attention from Forrest and his main body while they moved toward their very controversial attack on Ft. Pillow. (Ft. Pillow, some forty miles north of Memphis on the Mississippi River, was garrisoned substantially by Negro troops. It fell to Forrest on 12 April after bloody investment and assaults. Most of its garrison was annihilated after an offer of surrender was refused. The racial aspects of the matter found favor quite predictably (in some respects, history never varies) with Northern journalists, and were subsequently exploited from a political standpoint by a Congressional Committee.) A secondary, but more colorful, reason for Buford's follow-up raid against Paducah concerned some horses which the Confederates missed in their first go-around.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>113</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 552-53. Below his signature on this report, Col. Lawrence added the comment: "From scouts just in the enemy in squads of 200 or 300 are reported in every direction." Col. Hicks reported the movement near Paducah. *Ibid.*, Pt. 3, 329.

<sup>114</sup> Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, *op. cit.*, p. 78. Buford started north on or about 8 April. See George's work, 78, and Jordan and Pryor's, 416. Relative to the Ft. Pillow affair and its consequences, see John A. Wyeth, *That Devil Forrest*, *op. cit.*, pp. 336-41.

While at Trenton, Buford was apprised of a Yankee newspaper which carried an account of the late Paducah action. The article stated that the horses taken by Forrest had been actually the property of civilians—and that some U.S. Army horses had been missed by Forrest because of their “adroit concealment” in an old foundry or rolling mill on the edge of Paducah.<sup>115</sup> Buford wanted the horses for remount purposes—and, after all, there is something engagingly clever about the thief who is able to return to the scene of the crime, and pick up something which he overlooked the first time.

Just as Buford’s excursion was, in a sense, a sub-plot relative to Forrest’s main effort against Ft. Pillow, Buford himself created a very realistic diversion from his movement against Paducah. The principal actor in his sub sub-plot was, according to most accounts, Capt. H. A. Tyler, mentioned previously, and the stage was Columbus. Tyler was ordered to lead a demonstration against the place. The demonstration was so effective that three companies involving some 110 to 150 men were taken by the Federals to be, at the least, a division under Buford, and by others, nothing less than a force commanded by Forrest himself.<sup>116</sup>

Tyler seems to have approached the place from the direction of Clinton. He said that he marched his men across an open space in full view of the Columbus garrison, repeated the circuit several times, and thereby created the impression that he had a large force with him. Unconditional surrender was then demanded in the name of Buford with the usual Forrest admonition that no quarter would be shown if the offer was refused. To the great credit of the Union Commander and troops, the offer to surrender to a force no more than one-tenth their number was declined. It has been said, though, that Col. Lawrence, the commanding officer, seriously considered the offer.<sup>117</sup>

Concurrently, Buford and his main body were riding toward

<sup>115</sup> Andrew Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

<sup>116</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 511, 553; Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, *op. cit.*, p. 78; Andrew Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-75. John E. L. Robertson, unpublished Master’s Thesis: “West to the Iron Banks,” *op. cit.*, pp. 232-33.

<sup>117</sup> Andrew Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*, *op. cit.*, pp. 308-09; John A. Wyeth, *That Devil Forrest*, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-75; John E. L. Robertson, unpublished Master’s Thesis: “West to the Iron Banks,” *op. cit.*, pp. 233-34.

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While these events were taking place at Columbus and Paducah, Buford also had detachments thrown out to make an ostentatious display of force elsewhere in the Purchase, especially at points on the Tennessee River. When he finally withdrew his main body from Paducah, he left Faulkner and his 12th Kentuckians to make a demonstration of force "for some hours longer." The latter subsequently began a retrograde movement westward on the road to Blandville in order to continue the deception regarding the movement and strength of the Rebel force. Buford's main body reached Dresden, Tennessee, on 18 April. There he remained, until the 30th, recruiting men and gathering horses from the general area of West Tennessee and Kentucky. In addition, he permitted some of his troops to visit their homes again.<sup>119</sup>

Forrest was back in Mississippi by the first week of May. His command was considerably stronger, better mounted and equipped—all as a result of his extended intervals of uninterrupted conscripting and requisitioning of horses and supplies in West

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While at Trenton, Buford was apprised of a Yankee newspaper which carried an account of the late Paducah action. The article stated that the horses taken by Forrest had been actually the property of civilians—and that some U.S. Army horses had been missed by Forrest because of their "adroit concealment" in an old foundry or rolling mill on the edge of Paducah.<sup>115</sup> Buford wanted the horses for remount purposes—and, after all, there is something engagingly clever about the thief who is able to return to the scene of the crime, and pick up something which he overlooked the first time.

Just as Buford's excursion was, in a sense, a sub-plot relative to Forrest's main effort against Ft. Pillow, Buford himself created a very realistic diversion from his movement against Paducah. The principal actor in his sub sub-plot was, according to most accounts, Capt. H. A. Tyler, mentioned previously, and the stage was Columbus. Tyler was ordered to lead a demonstration against the place. The demonstration was so effective that three companies involving some 110 to 150 men were taken by the Federals to be, at the least, a division under Buford, and by others, nothing less than a force commanded by Forrest himself.<sup>116</sup>

Tyler seems to have approached the place from the direction of Clinton. He said that he marched his men across an open space in full view of the Columbus garrison, repeated the circuit several times, and thereby created the impression that he had a large force with him. Unconditional surrender was then demanded in the name of Buford with the usual Forrest admonition that no quarter would be shown if the offer was refused. To the great credit of the Union Commander and troops, the offer to surrender to a force no more than one-tenth their number was declined. It has been said, though, that Col. Lawrence, the commanding officer, seriously considered the offer.<sup>117</sup>

Concurrently, Buford and his main body were riding toward

<sup>115</sup> Andrew Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

<sup>116</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 511, 553; Henry George, *History of the 3d, 7th, 8th and 12th Kentucky, C.S.A.*, *op. cit.*, p. 78; Andrew Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-75. John E. L. Robertson, unpublished Master's Thesis: "West to the Iron Banks," *op. cit.*, pp. 232-33.

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Kentucky and Tennessee. The Confederate Congress, on 6 May, by resolution, tendered its thanks to him and the men of his command "for their late brilliant and successful campaign in Mississippi, West Tennessee, and Kentucky—a campaign which has conferred upon its authors fame as enduring as the records of the struggle which they have so brilliantly illustrated."<sup>120</sup>

There were other consequences for those who had opposed him. Sherman, in overall command of the theatre and then busily engaged in his Atlanta campaign, said, "It does seem as though Forrest has our men down there in cow, but I will try new leaders, for I believe our men will fight if led."<sup>121</sup> Try new leaders he did, shaking up his command structure thoroughly in West Tennessee and West Kentucky. Sherman's fears were of a strategic nature. While Grant had to crush Lee in Virginia, Sherman had the same mission regarding Johnston in Georgia. His line of supply was extremely long, and would be extended even more if he succeeded in pushing his adversary back upon Atlanta. But, as one author has said, "The rat in his meat barrel was Forrest."<sup>122</sup>

Forrest would again, before the year ended, use the Kentucky Purchase, at least a corner of it, as a base of operations against Sherman's very sensitive line of supply. But, with the exception of that interval of activity by Rebel regular troops, occupation duty in the Kentucky Purchase was, for the rest of the war, largely one of counter-guerrilla operations for the Federal forces. However, guerrillas, already extremely active from the beginning of 1864, were emboldened by the breakdown of Federal authority during Forrest's extended visit in March and April. (There were also the not infrequent excursions by small units of regulars.) Hence, the rest of the year, if we can judge from Union correspondence, was a difficult one. For the occupying force, coping with small bands of irregulars and occasional regulars provides little, if any of the usual sources of satisfaction which the professional military man has the right to expect from combat operations.

A cardinal principle of successful partisan warfare is strict adherence to the rule of Falstaff to the effect that discretion is the better part of valor. Hence, the regular taking the field against

<sup>120</sup> Andrew Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-87; *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 619.

<sup>121</sup> *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 3, 411.

<sup>122</sup> Andrew Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

the guerrilla seldom sees much of his enemy—unless he, the regular, is caught in an extremely disadvantageous tactical position (such as being ambushed), or is otherwise on the wrong side of a grossly disproportionate numerical ratio. Experienced guerrillas will fight regulars only when the tactical advantage is overwhelmingly theirs. Such was the face of war to the Union soldier in West Kentucky—a fleeting foe, who shot from the shadows, and ran but often inflicted death on his pursuers.

Even the river was unsafe on occasions. Gunboats bringing wounded up from Fort Pillow to Mound City, Illinois, reported harassment from guerrillas at numerous points along the river. On 15 April, an estimated 100 guerrillas opposite Mound City itself opened fire on a Union gunboat. Another activity on the river, and in the area, served to remind the Federal garrison troops that somewhere there was still such a thing as a Confederate Army regular establishment. On 16 April, a floating recruiting station, a trading boat, was discovered on the Illinois side of the Ohio River near Metropolis. It was boarded and found to contain a store of brand new Rebel army uniforms. It was said to be there for the purpose of receiving volunteers from Illinois for the Confederate Army. The "keeper" of the boat escaped.<sup>123</sup>

Three weeks later, another disquieting incident occurred. A detachment of Federal troops on patrolling duty were camped near Mayfield. It was a Saturday night when most troops, especially in an occupation situation, had rather be in town spending their pay. Inevitably, under such circumstances, soldiers are prone to be less vigilant than usual. In this case, the pickets beyond the camp area were no doubt talking among themselves, and paying little attention to the sounds of the spring night around them. Perhaps they had laid their rifles aside. Suddenly, and quietly out of the darkness, the invisible enemy came. A corporal and nine men found themselves the prisoners of guerrillas that night.<sup>124</sup>

Retaliatory measures were directed. Brig. Gen. Henry Prince (who had replaced Hurlbut as District Commander at Columbus), ordered Col. Hicks to seize "influential Rebel sympathizers" in the neighborhood of the embarrassing incident, and hold them as hostages for the safe return of the snatched Union troops.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>123</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 3, 395.

<sup>124</sup> O.R., Ser. 1, XXXIX, Pt. 2, 24, 26.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

Four days after the capture of the pickets, three Yankee soldiers were killed between Dublin and Baltimore in Graves County by a band (reported to number sixty) of guerrillas.<sup>126</sup>

Forrest was still the imagined enemy. On 13 May, Gen. Prince reported to his immediate superior, Maj. Gen. C. C. Washburn at Memphis, that he had found the Purchase, with the exception of Columbus and Paducah, in the "possession of Forrest's forces." He was appalled at the smuggling which went through the district into Tennessee, and at the overt partisan activities of the natives. "Great quantities of goods went from Paducah to Fulton, and of course, into West Tennessee."\*\*\* The anti-unionism is so strong in this district that large bodies of guerrillas, led by men of respectable families, assembled in the best settled parts."<sup>127</sup>

The impression that Forrest or his forces were still present in West Kentucky was erroneous, at least for the most part. Old Bedford himself was in Mississippi reorganizing his command.<sup>128</sup> It is probable though that he had left some officers and troops behind for recruiting and other purposes. There are enough direct statements in Union reports that Forrest was often on the receiving end of contraband smuggled south, and sufficient veiled suggestions in Forrest's own correspondence, to conclude presumptively that he in fact had some sort of regular procurement system involving agents, civilian and military, operating in West Kentucky and Tennessee. There is also compelling reason to believe that small units were frequently detached from his command for quasi-independent operations, including recruiting, behind Union lines.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 25-26.

<sup>128</sup> Andrew Lytle, *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*, op. cit., p. 289.

<sup>129</sup> An example of his procurement system in operation is found in an article, *The "Confederate Sins" of Major Cheairs*, by Robert M. McBride in *The Quarterly of the Tennessee Historical Commission*, XXIII (June, 1964), 121-35. At page 131, there is an account of the capture by Federals of Maj. Nathaniel Cheairs, another Confederate officer, and a civilian. Cheairs had been detailed by Forrest to the Commissary Department, and was captured near Brownsville while on a cattle buying expedition to the Cane Bottoms of West Tennessee. See also *O.R.*, Ser. 1, XXXII, Pt. 1, 608, where, in a report, Forrest said: "If supplied with the right kind of money or cotton (I) can furnish my command with all small arm ammunition required, and I think with small arms also." It seems rather certain that Forrest frequently sent entire units behind enemy lines on independent operations. As observed in



footnote 100, a Capt. Horn and his cavalry company, reported on occasion to be active in the Purchase, was possibly Capt. Horne and Company M, 3d Kentucky. (Horne was subsequently promoted to Major. See page 140 of Henry George's work.) Another officer frequently mentioned in Federal reports in connection with irregular activities was one with the ironic name of Outlaw. For example, see O.R., Ser. 1, XXXIX, Pt. 1, 355, 360-61. He could have been Capt. D. A. Outlaw, Company L, 3d Kentucky. See pages 68 and 172 of Henry George's book. It will also be recalled that the Confederate cavalry operating in the area in July, 1863, was said to have been from Forrest's command. See text relative to footnotes 46-53.

(To be Concluded)