

"What Is All This War For Anyhow":
The Battle of Paris, Tennessee

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Beneath a pale amber sky, the advance party of a Union cavalry battalion trotted toward the quiet West Tennessee community of Paris. The spires of the distant town were on the horizon when two mounted men appeared on the road before them. Instinctively and without hesitation, the blue clad cavalymen clutched their rifles and rapidly galloped toward the unsuspecting pair. Shots rang out, killing the two Confederate scouts. As the dust settled, Captain John T. Croft, the commanding officer of the Union force, directed Lieutenant Frederick A. Williams and a detail of twenty men to continue on to Paris and secure the roadway. Within a few miles of the town, Lieutenant Williams came upon an outlying picket of eight Confederates. His men quickly encircled the rebels, and they surrendered without a firing a shot.¹ The road to Paris now lay open.

It was near dusk on March 11, 1862 when Captain Croft ordered Captain Robert E. Bulliss to storm the town with three cavalry companies and an artillery battery. They rumbled through the streets of Paris finding only empty storefronts, white flags draped from windows, and the wide-eyed stares of awestruck citizens. After being informed of a rebel encampment upon the wooded heights just west of town by a hired guide and local Unionists, Croft ordered Captain Bulliss to position his battery and shell the Confederate camp.

Upon the crest of the hill, Confederate Major Henry Clay King, commanding one cavalry battalion and two companies of mounted infantry militia, hastily prepared a defensive line

behind large fallen timbers. Following a brief preparatory artillery barrage by Union artillery, roughly 100 blue clad cavalrymen charged into the thick underbrush of the hill. Nearing the apex, King's men stood en masse from behind their defenses and fired upon the mounted Union troops. The attackers withstood the first couple of volleys but eventually turned about and retreated down the hill. Major King promptly ordered a pursuit. The Confederates reached the foot of the hill before the Federal artillery again opened fire and stalled the rebels' counterattack. As darkness overtook the battlefield, the Yankees retired towards Paris and hours later departed the city having fired 250 rounds of artillery and leaving behind five killed and five wounded.²

In retrospect, the battle had little effect upon the outcome of the war in West Tennessee, yet its effect upon the citizens of Paris and those that participated in the fighting was notably significant. Before Captain Croft and his men entered Paris, the community had been somewhat sheltered from the horrors of war. Newspapers and traveling soldiers had disseminated details of the distant battles in Kentucky and Virginia but Parisians had little idea of the conflict's brutality. On March 11, 1862, citizens and soldiers witnessed family members, friends, and neighbors fall wounded or dead upon the hill's forest floor or sandy valley below. The gruesome sight of the mangled dead and wounded dramatically altered the community's peaceful remoteness. Much like the inhabitants of Paris, the men involved in the battle had not seen combat prior to that day and were quite naïve to cruelties of war. These horrific visions haunted them forever.

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The railways and roads that converged on Paris made the community a thriving regional center for transportation and communication. By 1861, the population of the town had swelled to over 2000 people, due in large part to the completion of the Memphis and Ohio Railroad in May of 1860 and connection of the Memphis, Clarksville & Louisville Railroad in March of 1861.³ Besides the railways, Paris also had a series of

roads that fanned out from the city much like spokes from a hub of a wheel. The major roadways that left the city were the road north to Conyersville and Murray, Kentucky; the road northeast to Paris Landing (also known as the Mouth of Sandy Road); the road southeast to Big Sandy; the road south to Huntingdon; the road west to Dresden; and the road northwest to Boydsville, Kentucky that branched to other highways leading to Paducah and Columbus.⁴ These rail lines and avenues into Paris connected the community to regional trade centers on the Tennessee, Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, which not only boosted the exportation of local cash crops such as tobacco and cotton but also encouraged the development of the city's commercial and industrial businesses.

Like many communities in West Tennessee, slavery had become a deeply rooted institution both economically and socially in Paris. The town's very prosperity centered upon the agricultural labors provided by slaves on nearby tobacco farms and cotton plantations. In the decade preceding the war, close to one-third of the family farms in the region owned slaves and approximately one-fourth of the population was of African descent. Not surprisingly, most white Parisians supported the expansion of slavery and states' rights.⁵

As the nation continued to drift apart ideologically over the issue of slavery in the 1850s, the local press and regional politicians promoted southern rights and gravitated toward the secessionist movement. The *Paris Weekly Sentinel*, encouraged its readers to seek independence from the North. Former Representative John DeWitt Clinton Atkins, a resident of Paris who served the Ninth Congressional District from 1857 to 1859, was a strong proponent of the southern cause and pressed a pro-slavery agenda while in Washington. Other local leaders, such as State Representative James D. Porter and the county's leading attorney Calvin D. Venable, also promoted southern rights. Given these factors, it was no surprise that John C. Breckinridge, the candidate for the Southern Democrat Party, claimed the majority of Henry County votes during the presidential election of 1860.⁶

With the election of Abraham Lincoln as president, Paris and the State of Tennessee started down the path toward secession. Pro-secessionist Governor Isham G. Harris, a former resident of Paris and whose brother was a prominent Methodist minister in the district, called the Tennessee legislature into a special session and proposed a referendum whereby Tennesseans would decide on whether to hold a state convention to determine what actions the state should take. To the secessionists' dismay, the majority of Tennessee voters on February 9, 1861 rejected a convention and supported Unionist delegates. The voters of Paris and Henry County, however, voted in favor of a convention and elected a secessionist delegate.

Shortly after the inauguration of Lincoln, the residents of the county held a meeting in Paris where local leaders debated whether the state should secede from the Union. The seemingly pro-southern crowd listened with interest but could only await the actions of Governor Harris. Following the surrender of Fort Sumter, Governor Harris refused to comply with Lincoln's request for volunteer troops from Tennessee to suppress the rebellion. Ten days later Congressman Emerson Etheridge, an ardent Unionist from Dresden, was scheduled to deliver a speech in Paris criticizing Governor Harris' refusal to support the president's solicitation for troops. However, before he entered the city limits a committee of citizens from Paris threatened him and his entourage with bodily harm if Etheridge chose to proceed with his presentation. A bitter exchange of words and a struggle ensued whereby four men were shot and one man killed. Etheridge returned to Dresden with diminished hopes of preserving the Union in West Tennessee. Subsequently, Harris and secessionists took Tennessee out of the Union.⁷

When Tennessee joined the Confederacy, an enthusiastic patriotism aroused the community of Paris. Men lined up to enlist at a military camp located at the old fairgrounds northwest of town and many businesses suspended their activities to support the war effort.⁸ For several months Paris remained

insulated from the brewing conflict. All that changed in January 1862, when Federal forces struck south along the Tennessee River to test the Confederate river defenses at Fort Henry.

On January 18, 1862, Confederate scouts stationed at Paris spotted a large detachment of reconnaissance troops near Murray.⁹ The presence of a reported 6,000 Federal troops within twenty-five miles created a "great state of excitement" in Paris.¹⁰ A concerned few began relocating valuables and slaves to safer areas further south.¹¹ Major General Polk ordered 1,000 men to locate and engage the enemy troops but bad weather and muddy roads impaired his plans. Polk's rain soaked men reached Paris on January 22.¹² On the last day of the month Polk reported four battalions of cavalry, which included Major Richard H. Brewer's Battalion from Alabama and Mississippi, King's Kentucky Battalion, the First Mississippi Battalion and the Sixth Tennessee Battalion, stationed in the vicinity of Paris. Captain John G. Stocks' Company of men recruited from Henry County was also present in the city.¹³ In all over 1,000 cavalrymen and local militia prepared to defend Paris and guard the roadways between the Confederate bastion at Columbus and the forts on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers.

General Grant's target became obvious on the afternoon of February 4 as troop transports landed on the shores north of Fort Henry.¹⁴ Union forces crossed the river and captured the evacuated Fort Heiman the next day.¹⁵ News of the fort's new occupants reached the city that evening but more devastating news followed as Fort Henry surrendered on the afternoon of the sixth. Its capture ensured that both Kentucky and western Tennessee would be used as an invasion route into the rebel heartland.

With Grant's army now in striking distance, a frightened citizenry called a public meeting the next day. Political leaders at that meeting immediately organized a city guard to act as scouts.¹⁶ Confederate reinforcements arrived on February 8 bringing the total number of troops to about 1,500 men.¹⁷ Fortunately, the Union army marched eastward to Fort Donelson and temporarily spared the people of Paris.

The Union high command recognized the military significance of Paris soon after the fall of Fort Henry. Major General Halleck on February 7 warned to Major General George B. McClelland, general in chief of the army, that the enemy is collecting forces at Paris to flank Fort Henry and that the city "must be taken."¹⁸ Grant's attack on Fort Donelson postponed Halleck's plans to advance upon Paris and it was not until March 1 that Halleck revisited the idea of moving on Paris. In a telegraphed message to Grant, Halleck outlined a series of complex maneuvers to destroy the railroad connections at Humbolt, Jackson, and Corinth with strong detachments of cavalry and light artillery supported by infantry. Once those objectives included the plan to capture Paris from Danville, Tennessee and destroy the Confederate line of communication.¹⁹

To accomplish this mission, Grant chose to split his command with Brigadier General Charles F. Smith. Grant would lead the expedition to Jackson, Corinth, and Eastport, while Smith marched upon Paris and Humbolt.²⁰ Grant sent instructions to Smith at Clarksville the following day with one modification, that the expedition to Paris be launched from Fort Heiman rather than Danville. Smith received Grant's instructions along with Halleck's original plan but could not decipher which to follow. He replied to Grant requesting clarification.²¹

At the same time Smith had been corresponding with Grant, a communication breakdown occurred between Halleck and Grant. Since the capture of Nashville on February 26, Halleck's lingering distrust of Grant ballooned into a determined attempt by Halleck to remove Grant from command. Halleck, claiming Grant had disobeyed his orders to send troop locations and strength reports, replaced him with Smith as overall commander of the expedition up the Tennessee River on March 4.²² Grant denied Halleck's accusation but was sent to Fort Henry and directed to remain there for further instructions.²³ On March 5, Halleck changed his plan by informing Grant that "the expedition will not return to Paris but will encamp at Savannah, unless threatened by superior

numbers."²⁴ The Union expedition bypassed Paris and landed in force at Savannah where Smith's troops awaited the arrival of Major General Don Carlos Buell's army from Nashville for a combined advance upon Corinth, Mississippi.

The threat of invasion weighed on the minds of Parisians and forced even more residents to remove their costly possessions and slaves by wagon and rail further south. By February 14, a scathing editorial, written in the *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, addressed the exodus of the community's affluent citizens. It claimed in part that "patriotism and love of Southern rights and Southern honor" had been forsaken for the preservation of material wealth. The editorial continued by stating that true believers in the Confederate cause should "never surrender to Northern aggression until we had spent the last dollar and spilt the last drop of blood."²⁵ The writer's patriotic call fell on deaf ears, as still others continued to leave the city. Less than two weeks later, the *Daily Avalanche* reported another panic in the city and the arrival of families and slaves from Henry County at the rail station in Memphis.²⁶ Up until March 11, the day of the battle, there was a steady flow of refugees fleeing the city and surrounding areas.

The fear of enemy soldiers pillaging and punishing Southern sympathizers were primary reasons for the departure of citizens from the city, but there also was a lesser publicized and even more unpopular motive for some to seek refuge elsewhere. After the evacuation of the state capital at Nashville, the state's exiled Governor Harris issued a proclamation in order to raise troops quickly. His proclamation, published in local newspapers on February 20, called upon every able bodied man of the state without regard to age to enlist in its service.²⁷ Though it was not proposed as a form of conscription, the proclamation placed an enormous amount of pressure on those unwilling to support the Southern cause and serve in the Confederate military.

General orders and notices followed the Governor's proclamation. One announcement directed that "all the male inhabitants between the ages of eighteen and forty five years," not

currently serving in the state militia or Confederate army provide evidence of exemption to local military commanders.²⁸ On March 5, Governor Harris ordered one-fourth of the Tennessee Militia in the northwestern part of the state to muster ten days later at Henderson and Bethel Springs on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad.²⁹ Men that feared public humiliation and pressured enlistment became pariahs and fled to Union lines. The reluctant men that remained were subject to arrest and denounced as "traitors", "black republicans" and "abolitionists".³⁰ A few refugees escaped to Fort Heiman where they informed Federal officers of the Governor's call to service and a compulsory draft.

While awaiting orders at Fort Henry, Grant had received reports from the other side of the river that the Confederate government in Tennessee sought to conscript men into the rebel army at Paris.³¹ On the evening of March 10, Grant telegraphed Halleck that he intended to send a small force to Paris to prevent conscription.³² Before dawn on the eleventh, Grant ordered Colonel William Warren Lowe, commander of the Curtis Horse, to send a detachment to "protect the citizens as far as possible from conscription." He reminded Lowe to issue receipts for all items foraged from residents while at Paris or along the way.³³ Lowe responded with an inquiry on the number of men to be sent and asked whether he should command the detachment personally. Grant instructed Lowe to send two battalions under the command of a senior officer but told Lowe that he need not accompany the detachment.³⁴

Lowe handed command over to Lieutenant Colonel Matthewson T. Patrick, who ordered two battalions of the Curtis Horse to be transported across the river from Fort Henry and to march towards Paris. On the opposite side of the river at Fort Heiman, Captain John T. Croft was given the task of leading the advance battalion.³⁵ Croft, a forty year-old resident of Omaha and a native of Massachusetts, had limited military experience and like most of his battalion had yet to see combat.³⁶ Grant directly issued Croft the following orders:

With the troops now at your disposal give the citizens of Tenn[essee] who are disposed to be loyal, the best protection, you can. It is impossible for us to send a force to Paris, today, but you can go in that direction, and encamp for the night. You need not return tomorrow unless the approach of an enemy, in superior force, make such a course necessary.³⁷

At 4 A.M., Companies A, B, C, and D of the Curtis Horse (also known as the Nebraska Battalion) assembled at Fort Heiman and marched south along the river shore about ten miles to the intersection of the Paris Landing to Paris road.³⁸

That same morning, Captain Robert E. Bulliss received orders at Paris Landing to prepare his artillery battery and march west toward Paris. Bulliss met Croft at the crossroads at around noon, where Croft had been waiting for Bulliss most of the morning.³⁹ Believing Patrick's command must not be far behind and anxious to reach the outskirts of Paris before dusk, Croft pressed on without further delay. About 250 men saddled up their horses and loaded wagons for the journey to Paris.

A Union officer noted the road was "tolerably good," lined with small oak trees and underbrush but was often crossed by small creeks and other minor impediments.⁴⁰ The farms along the way were frequent though "poor and neglected" and the dwellings mostly small "backwoods timber houses" observed another officer.⁴¹ About quarter of the way to Paris, a few miles west of present-day Paris Landing State Park, the detachment crossed a long narrow wooden bridge above a swamp. Bulliss worried whether the bridge could support his caissons and cannon but they managed to cross without incident.⁴² As they progressed further inland from the Tennessee River, large numbers of Union supporters approached Croft to seek protection from the draft. Many fell in behind the Federals as they marched onwards to Paris.⁴³ By 3:30 P.M., Croft was within ten miles of the city, and his lead battalion had met no resistance nor spotted any rebel scouting parties.

Meanwhile at the Confederate camp, Major King supervised a force of some 600 men of which 200 were either scouting the roads east of town, absent on leave or too sick to perform their duties.⁴⁴ A few weeks earlier Colonel Brewer's cavalry battalions, the First Mississippi, and the Sixth Tennessee, redeployed to other outposts along the west Tennessee and Kentucky border. Their departure reduced the number of troops stationed at Paris by nearly two-thirds. Among those still assigned to scout the roads around Paris was a squad of about a dozen men sent by Captain Stocks under Corporal William H. Courts. Stocks ordered his men down the road to Paris Landing that afternoon. Courts set up a picket near Currier's Mill, a few miles outside of town, and forwarded a few scouts on horseback to patrol further up the road.⁴⁵

Croft's advance guard spotted Stocks' patrol about six miles from the city. The advance guard swiftly overwhelmed the two scouts as they attempted to wheel their mounts and return to Paris. In an effort to ascertain the position and number of enemy troops within the city, Croft detailed twenty men under Lieutenant Williams to "advance cautiously and secure their pickets."⁴⁶ Williams' detail slowly moved forward about four miles when they came upon Corporal Courts and several other men playing cards along side of the road. Williams' men surreptitiously encircled the unsuspecting poker players and captured the picket without firing a single shot.⁴⁷ A messenger brought Croft the word of Williams' remarkable success. Croft now faced a dilemma. He could await reinforcements and encamp for the night as stipulated by Grant's orders, or seize the initiative, take the city, and drive off the rebel forces. He contemplated his next move for close to forty minutes before he made a decision to advance on Paris.⁴⁸

While Croft paused to consider his options, four Confederate scouts traveling north-northwest on a less traveled cart path between the roads going to Conyersville and Paris Landing secured information from a traveling black man that a column of Union soldiers were en route to Paris. To verify this

intelligence Private Asa Cox galloped to Paris Landing road to investigate, while the other three men waited for his return. Cox did not get far before he noticed Williams' cavalry detail probing the outer limits of the city. Unnoticed he quickly reversed his course and told the others that the enemy was in fact marching on Paris. Cox also informed them that the enemy was too near the Obion road to attempt returning by that route. Their only alternative was to head west to Conyersville road than south into town. Driving hard, Cox and the others exhausted their mounts but were able to exchange horses at homesteads along the way. The four men dashed through the middle of Paris shouting warnings to the citizens on the streets. They reached the camp around 4:30 P.M.⁴⁹

First Lieutenant F. M. Wilkinson of Company C of King's Cavalry Battalion, who was standing near the edge of camp on the Dresden road, recognized Private Cox as he raced up the road from the direction of Paris. With a raised voice he called to him "What's the matter?" Cox responded "Yankees!" The other three men soon followed shouting the "Yankees are coming!" All four proceeded through camp and headed toward Major King's headquarters, about one quarter of a mile further up the road.⁵⁰

Major King reacted without delay and gave the call to arms. He climbed upon his horse and galloped into camp where he ordered Lieutenant Felin F. Aden of Stocks' Company to gather as many men as possible and reconnoiter the area east of town. Aden expeditiously assembled about forty men and rode them through the city and onto the Paris Landing road. As he came to the crest of a small hill, he noticed in the distance a numerically superior cavalry force led by a soldier carrying the "stars and stripes." Aden roughly estimated their numbers and ordered his men back to camp to report his findings.⁵¹ Hearing these reports, King resolved to make a defensive stand on the large hill near camp and west of town.

Though not well received among the citizens of Paris, or his later critics, Major King withdrew his troops from the city. The ground he chose was easier to defend than the small hillocks

northeast of town and strategically overlooked the major roads west of Paris, the railroad depot, and the western most parts of the city. The hill itself was the highest point within a five-mile radius of Paris at 620 feet. Large trees covered the crown of the hill with a moderately steep slope thick with bushes and underbrush. Before the hill was an open sandy hollow about 100 yards wide with a smaller fenced-in ridge almost parallel to the southeast.⁵² The elevated ridge opposing the hill was slightly over 500 feet above sea level. The Dresden road ran diagonally between the two heights.

With details of the city's defenses supplied by Lieutenant Williams and the whereabouts of the rebel camp provided by two citizens and a traveling salesman, Croft slowly advanced three companies of cavalry and a section of artillery. Companies A, B and D marched upon the city as Company C stayed behind to guard the remaining sections of artillery and baggage. When the lead company reached the small rise where Lieutenant Aden had stood only moments before, Croft gave the order to charge. A loud yell echoed through the city streets as two companies bolted down the main road. They passed by the courthouse and several homes draped with white flags before stopping at the railroad depot. One company of cavalry took a side street further south followed by Captain Bulliss and two pieces of artillery.⁵³ Accompanying the Union troops were George Warner, "a traveling wheat and potato merchant" who conducted business in Paris, John A. Farris, an overseer and resident of Paris who was considered a "notorious spy and [Union] guide", and another man by the name of "Coon" Harris.⁵⁴ The three men piloted Croft and his men through town and pointed them in the direction of the rebel encampment.

Upon reaching the railroad depot, Croft sent forward a small force of men to locate the position of the enemy.⁵⁵ He observed the rebel encampment not far from where his informants stated it would be found. At about 5 P.M., Croft ordered Bulliss to place his two guns on the ridge opposite of the enemy camp. "The country being very hilly," wrote Lieutenant Charles H. Thurber

of Bulliss' Battery, "we labored under great disadvantage in getting a position for the battery."⁵⁶ After a brief search for favorable ground, Bulliss unlimbered his guns on Freeman's field about 300 yards away from the crest of the opposing hill. As Bulliss struggled to place his cannon, Croft organized his men into line of battle on depot hill just to the right of Bulliss' Battery.⁵⁷ Noticing the tops of tents beyond the crest of the hill, Bulliss sighted the barrels of his cannon upon the rebel camp and prepared to fire.

Major King marched his men by foot to the wooded hill at roughly the same time Croft's men first reached the railroad depot. Forming his men by company into line, he deployed them facing the southeast slope near the hill's highest point. The mood of his men was surprisingly carefree as they stood in wait for the Yankee aggressors. Lieutenant Wilkinson wrote, a "good many were laughing and talking as if starting out on a parade."⁵⁸ This calm indifference changed dramatically as the first artillery shells flew overhead. The men nervously sought cover behind fallen timbers and uprooted trees. Those who could not find cover stretched themselves flat upon the forest floor. King gave his men strict orders not to fire until the order was issued.⁵⁹

Bulliss initially lobbed rounds into the Confederate encampment destroying accouterments, frightening the horses, and causing minor injuries to a few men. He then pointed his guns west toward the road and fired at a few stragglers attempting to find their units on the hill. One of those men, First Sergeant James S. Aden, wrote after the war, that I was moving "east down the road in sight of the enemy's artillery when a double handful of grape and canister shot bounced up the road and all around me."⁶⁰ After scaring these men back up the road, Bulliss focused his cannon on the valley and wooded hill. His men fired two or three rounds into the side of the hill with no response except the scattering of some rebel soldiers over the ridge of the hill toward their camp.

For the most part, King's command dodged the Yankee shells that plowed into the hillside, tore down limbs off trees, and

embedded into the fallen timbers. While shell fragments struck the earth around him, Captain Stocks' remarked "Boys, do you see that we can't compete with double-barrel shot guns" and shifted his men to the rear of the western slope of the hill.⁶¹ The other units in King's command held their ground but some individual soldiers were noted to have fled to safer places. Overall, the impact of the Federal artillery barrage upon King's defenses was minimal with no reports of killed or wounded.

Bulliss' ordered his men to cease firing at about 5:30 P.M. A silence fell over the valley as the clouds of smoke from the guns dissipated. Croft peered through the haze and fading sunlight but saw no activity upon the opposing hill. Believing the rebels had scurried back to their camp, he ordered Captain John J. Lower of Company A and First Lieutenant Milton S. Summers of Company B to take the rebel encampment.⁶² Captain Lower and Company A led the assault galloping down the ridge onto the road at half speed in columns of fours, "their sabers drawn and glittering in the evening sun."⁶³ Company B followed close behind. Upon reaching the foot of the hill, Lower adjusted his troops into line and ascended the hill. The thick underbrush made visibility difficult and caused some misalignment of his columns. As they neared the thick woods at the crown of the hill Sergeant Major Martin Stowell spotted a lone man clad in gray hiding amongst the shrubs to his left. Raising his saber high with one hand and drawing his pistol with the other Stowell shouted, "Here they are boys!"⁶⁴

During the brief lull following the Federal shelling, Private George Glover of Company A, King's Battalion, crept out from the timberline down into the underbrush closer to the road. Without permission from his company commander and quite possibly under the influence of alcohol, Glover took it upon himself to initiate the conflict.⁶⁵ Unnoticed by the encroaching enemy and members of his own company, he crawled out about forty yards in front of King's concealed defenses. As he crouched behind a large bush not far from the road, Sergeant Stowell caught a glimpse of him. Stowell cried out his final words and

fired his pistol, but missed. Upon being noticed, Glover rose from the behind the bushes and fired his shotgun point blank at Stowell knocking him back in his saddle. Responding to Stowell's actions upon noticing Glover, King's men commenced firing. Several more shots struck Stowell before he fell dead from his horse. Caught in the crossfire, Glover dropped to Earth gunned down by men from his own battalion.⁶⁶

All hell broke loose as the Confederate ambush "emptied scores of saddles" and sent rider-less horses scurrying into the valley and galloping through the woods.⁶⁷ Some of the horses, startled by the discharge of weapons, darted away with their riders in all directions. Other horses, in a state of shock, stood firm and refused to move causing some soldiers to dismount and fight on foot.⁶⁸ A few horses even rushed through the Confederate camp only to stop when they reached the corralled livestock of King's troops.⁶⁹ For fifteen minutes the two sides exchanged pistol shots and shotgun blasts. Most of Captain Lower's men got off two or three rounds before falling back in disorder to Freeman's field and the safety of Bulliss' artillery.⁷⁰ Lieutenant Wilkinson wrote of the Union retreat, "the fire was so unexpected that the Yankees became panic-stricken and went back pell-mell, and in the greatest confusion across the hollow, and disappeared over the opposite ridge."⁷¹

Left behind on the hillside were the bodies of Sergeant Major Stowell, Corporal David Geary of Company A and Private C. C. Nicholson of Company B. Returning badly wounded from the battlefield were Sergeant George Davison, Corporal George Thomas, and Privates Joseph Musgrave and John W. Warren of Company A. The rebels captured the wounded Private Patrick M. McGuire of Company A as he attempted to flee.⁷² Two wagons brought the severely injured to Paris. One of the wounded men somehow managed to stagger to the residence of Mr. Freeman, for whom Freeman's field is named, to request a drink of water. After receiving a drink from Mr. Freeman the man remarked, "what is all this war for anyhow" and collapsed to the ground dead.⁷³

Croft stemmed the confusion of the retreat and rallied his disorganized command behind Bulliss' two guns. Recognizing the momentum of battle had shifted to the enemy, Croft ordered the two reserve sections of artillery to be brought up immediately. He then prepared his men for a counterattack. Excited at their success, some of King's men ventured out from the woods to the thick underbrush and erratically moved forward firing on the fleeing Yankees. Bulliss opened fire upon the advancing enemy shortly after the retreating cavalry reached Freeman's field.⁷⁴ A barrage of Federal grapeshot and canister met the Confederates as they crossed the open road. The counterattack fizzled quickly and the rebels returned to the woods where they again sought shelter behind fallen timbers and large trees.⁷⁵

Captain Bulliss was standing among his guns directing fire when a stray musket ball struck him in the chest.⁷⁶ He collapsed mortally wounded. His limp body was carried from the field and brought to Paris. The dying Bullis was later transported to the private residence of a local Unionist in nearby Chickasaw.⁷⁷ Lieutenant Charles H. Thurber took command of Bulliss' artillery and directed the placement of the reserve cannon. Once in place on Freeman's field, Thurber pointed all six of his guns at the opposing hill and launched a devastating barrage of canister and shell upon the Confederate line. The Union fire was "heavy and rapid" but the terrain and diminishing sunlight limited the effect of the cannon.⁷⁸

Major King and his men stood defiantly as shrapnel peppered the hillside. Confederate officers dangerously exposed themselves as they walked among their men maintaining order and encouraging them to stay low while reloading. Captain Charles H. Conner of Company E, King's Battalion, was the first to be wounded as a canister ball grazed his leg. Using his sword as a cane he limped to Lieutenant Wilkinson and said, "I can't do much more, I am wounded." His men carried him off the field soon afterwards.

Lieutenant J. B. Yow of Company D, King's Battalion, was in the process of ordering his men further up the hill when grape

shot struck him in the left shoulder dropping him down to all fours. He struggled to get up but failed, tumbling down the hill eventually landing on his back. Seeing him hit, Lieutenant Wilkinson ran to his assistance. He immediately knelt beside him and asked him if he was badly hurt. Yow attempted to respond but his lips only quivered slightly. Overcome by the loss of blood Yow's face became pale white and motionless. Wilkerson peered into his eyes searching for some sign of awareness but found only a distant stare. As his blood seeped into the forest floor, a few of Yow's men rushed up, rolled him in a blanket and carried him back over the hill. Within minutes he was dead.⁷⁹

Wilkinson saw yet another of his fellow officers injured by an incoming missile. First Lieutenant T. Bun Carson, who took charge of Company E after Captain Conner left wounded, was looking at the reddening skies in the west when a solid shot tore a severe gash into his stomach and knocked him unconscious. Nearby, Wilkinson went to provide help but Carson too was carried from the field in a bloodied blanket.⁸⁰ The battle raged on with Federal artillery firing round after round into the hill and the camp beyond. King's men returned fire but with most armed with shotguns and outdated smoothbore muskets the effect upon the distant cannoneers was minimal.

With darkness overtaking the battlefield, fire slackened and then ceased completely. An eerie silence fell over the valley as both sides pondered their next move. In the shadows, Major King ordered a detachment to flank the Yankee artillery and capture the guns. Moving to the enemy's right, King hoped to cut off the artillery from the cavalry and the road east to Paris. The detachment maneuvered into position until detected by Union cavalry and fired upon. Lieutenant Thurber hastily repositioned his guns and lobbed a few shells in the direction of the disturbance. The Confederate detachment recoiled back into the thicket without receiving or inflicting any damage.⁸¹

Fearing another Confederate strike, Croft directed Thurber to limber the cannon and move them to Paris. The cavalry soon

followed, cutting the telegraph lines at the railroad depot and taking possession of the courthouse as a temporary headquarters. His troops also commandeered a nearby hotel for the wounded.⁸² Upon the steps of the courthouse, Croft received a report that a large rebel force was en route from Humbolt and was but a few miles from Paris on the railroad. After a brief consultation with his officers, Croft decided to retreat towards Fort Heiman and Lieutenant Colonel Patrick's advancing troops.⁸³ The Union troops departed the city, along with eight prisoners, the same way they had entered only a few hours earlier. Left behind were the seriously wounded and the disassembled remnants of the courthouse fence, which Croft's men had torn down to use as firewood before their hasty withdrawal.

Upon observing the bluecoats' evacuation of the city, Major King ordered his men to mount their horses and pursue the enemy. His men rode into Paris where they sighted the torn up fence posts at the courthouse and captured the few wounded soldiers at the hotel. A few local residents pointed toward the direction of the departing Yankees, and the chase continued. The night skies were near pitch dark when King's men met the Union rearguard a few miles from the city. A brief exchange of gunfire occurred upon contact, but a volley of artillery soon broke up the pursuit. With the utmost difficulty in determining friend from foe in the black of night, King directed his men to return to camp.⁸⁴

The Union troops retraced their steps on the road to Paris Landing until the early morning hours of March 12. At 3:00 A.M., Croft's weary troops halted for the night. Squads from Company C patrolled the camp while the others rested a few hours until daylight.⁸⁵ Throughout the nightlong trek Croft had expected to encounter the lead units of Lieutenant Colonel Patrick but the anticipated reinforcements were nowhere to be found.⁸⁶ The next day Croft and his men continued onward to Fort Heiman. About three miles from their destination they came upon Patrick's advance guard, which had crossed the river the day before but had not left Fort Heiman until that morning.⁸⁷ Croft

reported to Patrick the engagement at Paris and the sightings of a large rebel force moving toward the city by rail. Patrick halted his troops and sent a messenger to Grant's headquarters for further instructions. Patrick sent out a scouting party the next day that came within a few miles of Paris but returned to report no enemy activity.⁸⁸

Major King's men returned to their shell-shocked camp, where many who had lost tents and blankets slept restlessly beneath a starless overcast sky.⁸⁹ The Confederate reinforcements rumored to be arriving from Humbolt proved to be false. As the sun rose on the twelfth, a group of citizens directed King's men to where George Warner was hiding. He was promptly arrested as a traitor and sent to Jackson, Tennessee in irons.⁹⁰ On May 28, a Confederate military court in Jackson sentenced Warner to hard labor for an undisclosed amount of time.⁹¹ John T. Farris and "Coon" Harris escaped with the retreating Federals. Scouts of the Sixth Confederate Cavalry captured Farris while out on patrol on May 9.⁹² He was sent to Jackson, Tennessee where he was imprisoned and later hung as a traitor.⁹³ Harris avoided arrest until September of 1862 when he was arrested and tried for being "a guide to the enemy and spy." A Confederate military commission found him guilty and condemned him to be shot on September 27.⁹⁴

On the morning March 12, King received word that a larger Union force with infantry was now marching down the Paris Landing road. Unsure if he was to be reinforced or not, King packed what remained of his camp and marched his command ten miles southwest along the railroad to Henry Station.⁹⁵ Once there he sent patrols to Paris to keep him advised of enemy movements towards the city.

A messenger arrived at Grant's headquarters on the afternoon of March 12 to relay the news of the engagement at Paris. Grant telegraphed General Halleck in St. Louis that evening. Grant wrote that the "enemy were driven from their works situated about one & one half miles beyond the town with a loss of probably one hundred killed & wounded." He also reported the

death of Captain Bulliss and four others along with five men wounded.⁹⁶ Grant requested from Croft a detailed report of the expedition and engagement.⁹⁷ Croft sent a 380-word reply to Grant the same day that explained the circumstances that led up to the battle.⁹⁸ Halleck telegraphed Grant on the evening of the thirteenth not "to bring on any general engagement at Paris" and if the enemy appeared in force that "our troops must fall back."⁹⁹ Halleck's main objective was further up the Tennessee River.

On March 14, Grant issued Special Orders No. 24 commanding Colonel Lowe to call in all troops on the Paris Landing road, maintaining only a sufficient guard to prevent a surprise attack. Companies C and G of the Curtis Horse were within four miles of Paris when they received the order to return to Fort Heiman. Grant also informed Lowe to send an ambulance and a few men under a flag of truce to collect the wounded left behind at Paris. The eight prisoners taken by Croft were sent to Cairo to be processed and detained.¹⁰⁰

The job of recovering the wounded was given to Captain Charles C. Nott of Company E. Before he departed on his mission, Nott conferred with Croft to learn the names of the wounded and the best roads into the city. While at Croft's tent he met a Mr. Clokes, who had brought in Captain Bulliss' body to the Union camp the day before. Clokes was also the father of a Confederate soldier taken prisoner at Paris. He had hoped to procure the release of his son by returning the deceased officer, but his son was already at Cairo, Illinois awaiting transportation to a Federal prison camp further north. Nott, however, did convince Clokes to join his party to Paris.¹⁰¹

A cold steady rain prevented Nott's departure on the fourteenth but the following morning the storm dissipated and his party began its journey towards Paris. Nott rode with three mounted soldiers, an ambulance carrying the company surgeon, and Clokes. The rain drenched roads caused delays as the wheels of the ambulance continued to drag and skid in the mud. Nott's party reached Chickasaw, a few miles outside Paris just before dusk. Clokes led the party to the home of Nathaniel Currier,

who had nursed Captain Bulliss during his final hours. Currier was also responsible for retrieving the bodies of the fallen Union soldiers and burying them in the town cemetery. Nott questioned Currier on the captured and wounded men, but Currier was uncertain if the Confederates had more wounded prisoners other than the men he had buried during the past few days. Currier recommended that Nott and his party avoid entering the city that evening and that he seek shelter elsewhere for the night. Nott followed his advice, knowing in advance that Currier was already under suspicion and was likely to be under surveillance. Nott backtracked up the Paris Landing road about a mile and stayed the night at the Whorton residence.¹⁰²

On the morning of March 16, Nott and his party entered the city limits unopposed under a flag of truce. They stopped at the courthouse, where Nott asked one of the residents if he could speak to a Confederate officer. "No" was the reply, "they all retired this morning, a couple of hours ago." Another citizen stepped forward to inform Nott that two wounded men were removed to Memphis and that one wounded soldier was at a nearby hotel but his condition was very serious. Moments later a few men came up and handed Nott some of the personal effects taken from the dead and wounded soldiers. They assured Nott that the wounded were treated kindly. The company surgeon examined the remaining soldier and spoke to the local physician who had tended to the man's injuries. The two physicians agreed that the man could not be moved without loss of life. Nott, uncomfortable with the possibility of his small party being captured by returning rebels, set out on the Paris Landing road at a rapid pace. The return trip was uneventful. Though they did take a wrong turn along the way, they did manage to find the Federal camp before sunset.¹⁰³

For the next three weeks, small patrols were sent to scout the Paris Landing road for enemy troops but did not enter the city. On the twenty-first, General Grant reported to Halleck that Paris had been "deserted."¹⁰⁴ Ten days later, Captain William A. Haw of Company F received orders to proceed to Paris to

investigate reports of rebels in the city and to "assist and protect the peaceable and loyal." With a force of seventy-five cavalrymen Haw entered the town on the morning of April 1. Finding Paris empty of enemy troops, Haw's men occupied the courthouse and rounded up the community's most vocal secessionists. One of those was a man named Van Dyck who had assisted the rebels in the capture of George Warner. At 3 P.M. Haw departed the city with Van Dyck as a prisoner. Before departing, Haw raised the Union colors atop of the courthouse where it remained fluttering until the fifth when a Confederate patrol removed it.¹⁰⁵

Further attention to Paris was temporarily diverted during the Battle of Shiloh, which commenced on April 6 and continued until the afternoon of the seventh, when the Union Army turned back a desperate and bloody attack. On April 8, the Confederate forces at Island No. 10 formally surrendered. With Federal forces in command of the Tennessee River north of Pittsburg Landing and the Mississippi River south to near Fort Pillow, northwest Tennessee was now cut off from both the east and west. Though the supply route to the south remained open, the Confederacy's grip on the region began to slowly loosen as the focal point of the Union strategy centered on Corinth and mop up operations in Federal occupied areas.

On May 3, a detachment of about 130 men of the Curtis Horse, under the command of Major Carl Schaeffer de Boerstine, camped for the night at Paris. They left early the next morning in an attempt to intercept a shipment of medical supplies destined to the Confederate forces stationed at Humbolt and Jackson. The detachment was to return to the city once the mission was completed but five companies of Confederate cavalry surprised Scheaffer's men at a place called Lockridge's Mills, thirty miles west of Paris in Weakley County. After receiving reports of the detachment's defeat and capture, Colonel Lowe marched to Paris with a large contingent of infantry, a section of artillery and the remaining companies of the Curtis Horse which were at Fort Heiman. On the evening of May 7, he reached the outskirts of Paris where he dispatched several patrols



"Skirmishers of King's Kentucky Battalion, Confederate Caval[r]y in Action at Paris, TN, March 11th, 1862." This skirmish was fought March 11, 1862 in the vicinity of Forrest Heights on the west margin of the city. This painting, executed by Frederick Ruple, a veteran of the battle. The original print is hanging in the Paris-Henry County Heritage Center. Courtesy: Tennessee Postcard Collection, #2DK-866, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, TN.

to scout the area and bring on an engagement with rebel troops believed to be in the city. His scouts found the town empty of rebels and Lowe returned to Fort Heiman the following day.¹⁰⁶

From the middle of May to early June, Union and Confederate forces continued to send scouting parties to Paris but the advancement of Federal troops down the Mississippi River and up the Tennessee River made the city less relevant militarily. With the evacuation of Fort Pillow and the surrender of Memphis on June 6, stability in the region collapsed into a chaotic state of guerrilla warfare. For the remainder of the war, the citizens of Paris and Henry County lived in constant fear of marauding bands of criminals and bushwhackers.¹⁰⁷ Union and Confederate troops marched into the city numerous times throughout the war and on occasion set up encampments nearby. In early November of 1864, Lieutenant General Nathan Bedford Forrest located his headquarters at Paris as he raided Union supply bases along the Tennessee River.¹⁰⁸ In December, Brigadier General Hylan B. Lyon launched an attack on Hopkinsville, Kentucky from Paris.¹⁰⁹ During the final weeks of

the war, the Department of Western Kentucky used Paris as a temporary headquarters before formally surrendering to Federal officials on May 4, 1865.¹¹⁰

In the aftermath of the war, Paris slowly revived as commerce and industry returned to the city. A proud citizenry rebuilt their community and for a brief time the battle upon the hill was forgotten. Stories of the conflict began to arise a generation later as the survivors of the battle began to tell their children and grandchildren. Yet as memories began to fade, the events of the battle became more distorted as local folklore became celebrated as historical fact. One such fable stated that the "road was strewn with blood" from site of the engagement to the streets of Paris and that over thirty Yankees were killed.¹¹¹ Another declared that between sixty and eighty Union soldiers were killed or wounded and that commander of the cavalry force died upon the field.¹¹² A member of King's Battalion wrote in 1922 that his company actually captured one of Bulliss' artillery pieces from the fleeing bluecoats.¹¹³ Other tales surfaced after the war, but as the number of survivors dwindled, so did those unfiltered glimpses of the past. What remains untold may be hidden upon the crest of the hill or the valley below, where at dusk on a cool spring day men valiantly fought and died, asking themselves, "What is all this war for anyhow."

ENDNOTES

¹ U.S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols., (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series I, 10, (pt. 1): 16-18. (Hereinafter cited as *OR*; all citations are to Series I, unless otherwise noted).

² *OR*, 10, (pt. 1): 16-18; Andreas, A. T., *History of the State of Nebraska* (Chicago: The Western Historical Company, 1882), 244.

³ W. P. Green, ed., *The City of Paris and Henry County, Tennessee* (Paris, Tenn: Paris Pub. Co., 1900), 11; W. O. Inman, *Pen Sketches: Henry County, Volume One* (Paris, Tenn.: Henry County Historical Society), 84-85.

⁴ Inman, *Pen Sketches*, 35-36.

⁵ Roger Raymond Van Dyke, "Antebellum Henry County," *West Tennessee Historical Society Papers* (1979), 48-80. Van Dyke states that the Henry County census for 1850 listed approximately thirty-three percent of the heads of farm families owned slaves and that approximately thirty-two percent of the same category of county citizens owned slaves in 1860.

⁶ Van Dyke, "Antebellum Henry County," 48-80.

⁷ Van Dyke, "Antebellum Henry County," 48-80. It important to note that the wording of the referendum confused many Henry County voters and a number of others simply did not participate in the process.

⁸ *History of Tennessee: from the Earliest Times to the Present; together with an Historical and a Biographical Sketch of Carroll, Henry and Benton Counties, besides a Valuable Fund of Notes, Original Observations, Reminiscences, etc., etc.* (Nashville: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1887), pp.826-827.

⁹ *OR*, 7: 839.

¹⁰ *OR*, 7: 841-842.

¹¹ *Memphis Daily Appeal*, 22 January 1862, p. 2, col. 1.

¹² *OR*, 7: 844.

¹³ *OR*, 7: 854.

¹⁴ *OR*, 7: 858.

¹⁵ *OR*, 7: 148-152

¹⁶ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 8 February 1862, p. 2, col. 3.

¹⁷ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 11 February 11 1862, p. 2, col. 5.

¹⁸ *OR*, 7: 591-592.

¹⁹ John Y. Simon, ed., *Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, 26 vols., (Carbondale, Ill.: Feffer & Simons Inc., 1972), 4: 310. (Hereafter sited as *Grant Papers*)

²⁰ *Grant Papers*, 4: 317-318.

²¹ *Grant Papers*, 4: 310-312. Halleck's unedited message is transcribed in a note following Grant's letters dated for March 1, 1862. Smith's unedited reply to Grant's message is transcribed in a note following the letters of the March 2.

²² Geoffrey Perret, *Ulysses S. Grant: Soldier and President* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1997), 178-182; Jean Edward Smith, *Grant* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 170-178.

²³ *Grant Papers*, 4: 319-320. Halleck's message to Grant attached as a note following Grant's response on March 5.

²⁴ *Grant Papers*, 4: 327. Halleck's message to Grant attached as a note following Grant's response on March 6.

²⁵ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 14 February 1862, p. 1, col. 7.

²⁶ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 27 February 1862, p. 2 col. 1.

²⁷ *Memphis Daily Appeal*, 20 February 1862, p. 2, col. 5.

²⁸ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 10 March 1862, p. 2, col. 8.

²⁹ *Memphis Daily Appeal*, 11 March 1862, p. 1, col. 8. General Order #2 was issued from the Headquarters of the Tennessee Militia in Memphis on the March 5, No exact date of the rendezvous was listed in the General Order, but a "Militia Notice" published on the March 4 (see *Memphis Daily Appeal*, 4 March 1862, p. 1, col. 4) stated the militia were to meet on "Saturday next" which was March 15.

³⁰ Leroy P. Graf and Ralph W. Hasklins, eds., *The Papers of Andrew Johnson* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 5: 249-250 (Hereafter cited as *Johnson Papers*).

Robert G. Bails, a resident of Hickman County, Tennessee, divulged in a letter to Johnson that his lack of supporting the Confederacy led to the confiscation of his property, labeled a spy and his arrest.

³¹ *Grant Papers*, 4: 345-346. Grant received reports from Lieutenants Erwin Y. Shelley (Company I) and Mortimer M. Wheeler (Company E) of the Curtis Horse that conscription activities were to occur at Paris on March 12.

³² *OR*, 10, (pt. 2): 25.

³³ *OR*, 10, (pt. 2): 30.

³⁴ *Grant Papers*, 4: 347. Grant's subordinate, Captain John A. Rawlins, issued the order to Colonel Lowe. Listed as a note following March 11.

³⁵ Andreas, *History of the State of Nebraska*, 244; *Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion: Together with historical Sketches of Volunteer Organizations, 1861-1866* (Des Moines: Emory H. English, State Printer, 1910), 4: 846. Two different stories arise from the sources mentioned, the *Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion* states that Croft was to wait at Paris for Patrick, while the *History of the State of Nebraska* asserts that Croft was to wait for Patrick before advancing on the city. No official record exists of the orders except those issued by Grant, which is unclear.

³⁶ Andreas, *History of the State of Nebraska*, 286.

³⁷ *Grant Papers*, 4: 348.

³⁸ John S. Ezell, ed., "Excerpts from the Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley, Company C, Fifth Iowa Cavalry," *Iowa Journal of History* 49 (1951), 255. The Curtis Horse was re-designated the Fifth Iowa Volunteer Cavalry Regiment on June 25, 1862. The company letter assignments remained the same after the re-designation.

³⁹ Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 255. Bulliss' Battery was reorganized as Battery I of the First Missouri Light Artillery in July of 1862.

⁴⁰ *OR*, 10, (pt. 1): 79-83. On March 31, 1862, Captain William A. Haw (Company F of the Curtis Horse) took the exact same route to Paris. He offered a very detailed description of the road in his report to Colonel Lowe.

⁴¹ Charles C. Nott, *Sketches of the War: A Series of Letters to the North Moore Street School of New York* (New York: William Abbatt, 1911), 51. Three days after the battle, Captain Charles C. Nott (Company E of the Curtis Horse) was sent to Paris to retrieve the wounded and negotiate prisoner exchanges. He wrote in his memoirs some of the sites he saw along the way.

⁴² *OR*, 10, (pt. 1): 79-83. Captain Haw mentions the bridge in his report three weeks later.

⁴³ *OR*, 10, (pt. 1): 18. Croft's official report never mentioned just how many constituted a "large number."

⁴⁴ E. McLeod Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee: Descriptive, Pictorial Reproductions of Old Papers and Manuscripts* (Paris, Tenn: E. McLeod Johnson, 1958), 87. First Lieutenant F. M. Wilkinson, Company C of King's Cavalry Battalion, wrote after the battle "that perhaps 400 men were capable of duty, the rest being off sick, on scout, or absent on leave."

⁴⁵ *OR*, 10, (pt. 1): 18; Edwin H. Rennolds, *A History of the Henry County Commands which served in the Confederate States Army* (Jacksonville, Fla.: Sun Pub. Co., 1904), 232-243. Croft reported that he captured a "Captain Coutts of Stock's Mounted Infantry" and seven other men a few miles outside of Paris. The muster roll of Stocks' Company does not list a Captain Coutts but does list a Third Corporal William H. Courts (see Rennolds, *A History of the Henry County Commands*, 243). Asa Cox stated in his memoirs that the Federals had "surprised and captured the pickets near Currier's Mill" (see Rennolds, *A History of the Henry County Commands*, 232).

⁴⁶ *OR*, 10, (pt. 1): 18:

⁴⁷ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 14 March 1862, p. 2, col. 2; *Richmond* (Virginia) *Whig*, March 22, 1862, p. 3, col. 2. The *Daily Avalanche* reported that the pickets "criminally neglected their posts and were engaged in a quiet game of poker, to see who could win the pile" before they "permitted themselves to be captured." The *Richmond Whig* reported a story from the *Memphis Argus* (newspaper) that stated, "the Federals found our pickets playing a small game of 'draw' [poker] when they came upon them. They were taken prisoner without the firing of a single shot." The report was credited to H. W. Bryson of Paris.

⁴⁸ *OR*, 10, (pt. 1): 18; *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 17 March 1862, p. 2, col. 4. A citizen of Paris reported to the *Memphis Daily Avalanche* that Federal Cavalry entered the city "about a half hour" after Stocks' scouts passed through town informing citizens that Yankee cavalry had overtaken pickets two miles northeast of town.

⁴⁹ Rennolds, *A History of the Henry County Commands*, 231-232.

⁵⁰ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 87.

⁵¹ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 17 March 1862, p. 2, col. 4.

⁵² Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 87.

⁵³ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 17 March 1862, p. 2, col. 4; *OR*, 10, (pt. 1): 18; Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 255. It was reported in a Memphis paper that, "Three citizens of this place piloted the Federals to the camp... One of the Tories named Warner."

⁵⁴ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 15 March 1862, p. 3, col. 3; *History of Tennessee: from the Earliest Times to the Present*, 826. OR, 10, (pt. 1): 879-881; *Charleston (South Carolina) Mercury*, 27 September 1862. W. C. Williams, a citizen of Paris, reported to the *Daily Avalanche* that George Warner was a resident of Paris and that "no citizen of Paris would be guilty of such a treasonable and mendacious act" of piloting enemy troops through town. Colonel Thomas Claiborne of the Sixth Confederate Cavalry stated in an official report on May 9, 1862, that "notorious spy and guide Farris, a citizen of Paris, who led the enemy to King's camp, and has since figured conspicuously in pointing out our friends, was captured, and deserves to be shot." The *Charleston Mercury* reported on September 27, 1862 that a man from Paris named "Coon" Harris was tried before a military commission for being "a guide to the enemy and a spy." He was accused of having "led a squadron of Federal cavalry to the camp of our troops" and having been "often seen with the Yankees in their camps." The commission condemned him to be shot.

⁵⁵ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 17 March 1862, p. 2, col. 4.

⁵⁶ OR, 10, (pt. 1): 17.

⁵⁷ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 17 March 1862, p. 2, col. 4.

⁵⁸ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 87.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 87-88.

⁶⁰ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 87, 110.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 89F, 100. J. M. Ray, a former resident of Paris, wrote after the war that Stocks' command "took to their heels at once" after the shelling commenced on the hill. Sergeant James S. Aden, of Stocks' Company, stated that Stocks was ordered to form a "line in the rear."

⁶² OR, 10, (pt. 1): 18.

⁶³ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 88.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 88; James E. Potter, ed., "A Nebraska Cavalryman in Dixie: The Letters of Martin Stowell," *Nebraska History* 74 (1993), 30. Confederate Lieutenant Wilkinson wrote that Stowell raised "his sword on high."

⁶⁵ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 88; Rennolds, *A History of the Henry County Commands*, p.232. Lieutenant Wilkinson reported that "James Glover" was the private who was noticed by the Federal soldier, however only a "George Glover" from Company A, First Confederate Cavalry (also known as King's Cavalry Battalion) was listed in *The Roster of Confederate Soldiers* (see *The Roster of Confederate Soldiers, 1861-1865*, 4: 353). Rennolds wrote, the "plan of surprise was defeated by a drunken Confederate, who rose up and fired prematurely."

⁶⁶ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 88; Potter, "A Nebraska Cavalryman in Dixie: The Letters of Martin Stowell," 30. Clarence H. Gibbons of Lower's company wrote that Stowell "fired his pistol at them and in attempting to prepare for a second fire he was fired upon and killed instantly." Lieutenant Wilkinson's report of the battle does not mention Stowell firing his pistol but does state that he "fell dead from his horse on the spot."

⁶⁷ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 88.

⁶⁸ Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 255.

⁶⁹ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 88.

⁷⁰ OR, 10, (pt. 1): 17-18; *History of the State of Nebraska*, 244; Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 255.

⁷¹ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 88.

⁷² Andreas, *History of the State of Nebraska*, 285-289. Corporal Thomas died of his wounds sometime after the battle. Private McGuire was reported captured and later listed as killed at Paris. Private Musgrave died of his wounds in an Army hospital in Paducah on June 27, 1862. Private Warren was reported as wounded but later listed as killed at Paris. Sergeant Davison was discharged on August 14, 1862 for wounds he received during the battle.

⁷³ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 109-110.

⁷⁴ OR, 10, (pt. 1): 17.

⁷⁵ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 88.

⁷⁶ *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 17 March 1862, p. 2, col. 4.

⁷⁷ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 110.

⁷⁸ Leo Morgan Hauptman, "Martin Stowell." Leo Morgan Hauptman Manuscript Collection. Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska. Page 71 of Hauptman's "Martin Stowell" manuscript lists a transcription of a report given to Lieutenant Colonel Patrick following the war.

⁷⁹ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 88. Johnson incorrectly transcribed Lieutenant Yow's name as James B. Gow. A Third Lieutenant J. B. Yow, of Company D, First Confederate Cavalry (King's Cavalry Battalion), is listed in *The Roster of Confederate Soldiers* (see *The Roster of Confederate Soldiers, 1861-1865*, 16: 591).

⁸⁰ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 88.

⁸¹ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 89; Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 255.

⁸² OR, 10, (pt. 1): 17-18.

⁸³ Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 255; *History of the State of Nebraska*, 244-245.

⁸⁴ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 89. Both Captain Croft and Lieutenant Thurber mention Major King's pursuit in their official reports, but Lieutenant Wilkinson and Sergeant Aden state that a pursuit was ordered and that an engagement occurred. Lieutenant Wilkinson also reported that the "night was very dark." The moon was in its first quarter on March 11 according to *NASA's Eclipse Home Page: Phases of the Moon 1801 to 1900* [database online] (accessed January 18, 2004) at <http://sunearth.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse/phase/phases.1801-1900.html>; Internet but the clouds must have obstructed any glow from the moon or stars.

⁸⁵ Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 255. The exact location where Captain Croft set camp could not be ascertained from the present information found by the author.

⁸⁶ OR, 10, (pt. 1): 18.

⁸⁷ Andreas, *History of the State of Nebraska*, 244-245; Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 255. The reasons for Lieutenant Colonel

Patrick's delay were not mentioned in Official Records but turbulent river conditions and consolidating scattered infantry units may have hampered Patrick's departure.

⁸⁸ Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 256.

⁸⁹ OR, 10, (pt. 1): 17. Lieutenant Thurber reported, "setting fire to several of their tents" during the battle.

⁹⁰ *Memphis Daily Appeal*, 15 March 1862, p. 1, col. 2. Warner was reported to have been hung at Jackson or Memphis, however, no records have been found by the author to confirm this.

⁹¹ Bunch, Jack A., ed., *Roster of the Courts-Martial in the Confederate States Army* (Shippensburg, Penn.: White Mane Books, 2001).

⁹² OR, 10, (pt. 1): 879-881.

⁹³ *Johnson Papers*, Vol. 5, 439-440.

⁹⁴ *Charleston (South Carolina) Mercury*, 27 September 1862.

⁹⁵ Rennolds, *A History of the Henry County Commands*, 232.

⁹⁶ OR, 10, (pt. 1): 16-17.

⁹⁷ *Grant Papers*, 4: 351.

⁹⁸ OR, 10, (pt. 1): 18.

⁹⁹ OR, 10, (pt. 2): 32-33.

¹⁰⁰ *Grant Papers*, 4: 352; Ezell, "Civil War Diary of Lt. Charles Alley," 256.

¹⁰¹ Nott, *Sketches of the War*, 45-46. No "Clokes" was found on the company rosters of Stocks' or McCutchen's nor the battalion register of King's. "Mr. Clokes" may have been possibly the father of Corporal William H. Courts of Stocks' Company who was captured early in the battle but the name misspelled by the author or publisher.

¹⁰² Nott, *Sketches of the War*, 50-59; Johnson, E. McLeod, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 116B & 202. Johnson writes in his book the correct spelling of names and places mentioned by Nott in his memoirs.

¹⁰³ Nott, *Sketches of the War*, 59-63. Some personal effects of fallen Union soldiers were kept as mementos by the citizens of Paris. In 1903, Mr. F. H. Upchurch was reported to have a steel key ring that he took from the pocket of a Federal soldier. (see Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 89F)

¹⁰⁴ OR, 10, (pt. 2): 55-56.

¹⁰⁵ OR, 10, (pt. 1): 79-80; OR, 52, (pt. 2): 297-298. Captain Haw recorded the prisoner as being named "Van Dyk" but only a Van Dyck family could be found in Paris during the time of the Civil War. The roster of Stocks' Company lists three Van Dyck's serving with the unit, including a Jonathan S. Van Dyck listed as being captured (see *History of Henry County Commands*, 248).

¹⁰⁶ Dieter C. Ullrich, "They Met at Lockridge's Mills," *The West Tennessee Historical Society Papers*, 51 (1997), 1-20.

¹⁰⁷ *History of Tennessee: from the Earliest Times to the Present*, 826.

¹⁰⁸ OR, 39, (pt. 1): 867-875.

¹⁰⁹ OR, 45, (pt. 1): 803-806.

¹¹⁰ OR, 49, (pt. 2): 691-692.

¹¹¹ Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 109.

¹¹² Johnson, *A History of Henry County Tennessee*, 89. This myth was first

written by Lieutenant Wilkinson in his report of the battle and passed on from generation to generation.

¹¹³ *The Tennessee Civil War Veterans Questionnaires*, 2 vols. (Easley, S.C. : Southern Historical Press, 1985), 2: 727. William Simmons Duggan of Company E, King's Cavalry Battalion, responded to a questionnaire that at Paris his company "captured one piece of artillery and that was all that our co. had during the war."