



March 1, 1863 - Forage expedition and skirmish^{Note 1} at Bradyville



MARCH 1, 1863.-Skirmish at Bradyville, Tenn.

REPORTS.

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No. 1.

Report of Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans, U. S. Army.

MURFREESBOROUGH, TENN., March 2, 1863—2 p. m.

Gen. Stanley reports from his expedition to Bradyville: We fared badly for forage. The rebels of Morgan's and Wharton's commands made a stand in Bradyville. Col.'s Paramore and Long went in with sabers drawn, and whipped them in about three minutes. Stokes' cavalry advanced bravely with carbines. We took 70 prisoners, including 8 officers, their camp equipage, tents, saddles, and some 70 horses, and Basil [W.] Duke's regimental papers. Maj. [James] Murphy did good service. We lost 1 man killed and 1 captain and 7 men wounded. We found 4 of their dead.

W. S. ROSECRANS, Maj.-Gen.

No. 2.

Report of Brig. Gen. David S. Stanley, U. S. Army, Chief of Cavalry, Department of the Cumberland.

HDQRS. CAVALRY, DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND, Near Murfreesborough, March 5, 1863.

GEN.: On Sunday, the 1st of March, I conducted a foraging train of 400 wagons on the Bradyville pike as far as the village of Bradyville. The escort consisted of a part of the three brigades of cavalry at this place and one brigade (Miller's) of infantry. The advance was composed of the First Middle Tennessee Cavalry and the Third and Fourth Ohio Cavalry. I directed the advance myself, placing the infantry in the center, the Fourth U. S. Cavalry on the exposed flank of the train, and Col. Minty's command as rear guard. Two miles from the village we drove the enemy's pickets in, and, pressing upon them, soon found them disposed to make a stout resistance. The Tennessee





regiment soon became engaged, and were on the point of falling back, when the two Ohio regiments coming up, immediately charged the enemy in front and flank, routing him, and sending his men and horses flying in all directions over the rugged hills.



The result of the affair was the killing of 4 of the enemy-as nearly as I could ascertain, not less than 20 were wounded-and the taking of 83 prisoners. We captured two wagon-loads of saddles of a rough pattern (all new), one wagon-load of picket rope, some bacon, corn, and meal, and in all 70 horses and mules. The animals were poor.



The inclosed reports of Col.'s Paramore and Long will give you the particulars; also the lists of killed and wounded. See also the report of Capt. Flanagan. Maj. Murphy, First Middle Tennessee, is absent; his report has not been received. He behaved very gallantly, and had a bullet cut the hair of his head. Capt. [R. P.] Rifemberrick, Fourth Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, is highly commended for his bravery. I am sorry to say this valuable officer received a painful and, it is feared, dangerous wound. All these officers, and, indeed, others not mentioned, who engaged in the fight, are commended to the commanding general. These little affairs, though not important in results, often show the character of officers and troops more than great battles.



The promptness with which Col.'s Paramore and Long drew pistols and sabers and rushed upon an enemy sheltered behind houses, trees, and rocks, an enemy outnumbering the troops on our side engaged, or which the enemy could see, illustrates more strongly than any remarks I can add to their soldierly qualities.

The report of Maj. Murphy and the list (4) of wounded in the First Middle Tennessee Regt. will be sent when received.

Your obedient servant,

D. S. STANLEY, Brig.-Gen. and Chief of Cavalry.

P. S. -The enemy's force was part of the brigades of Morgan and Wharton. The regimental papers, as well as their possessor, the adjutant of Duke's rebel regiment, were captured.

No. 3.

Report of Col. James W. Paramore, Third Ohio Cavalry, commanding Second Cavalry Brigade.

CAMP STANLEY, NEAR MURFREESBOROUGH, March 3, 1863.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report of the engagement at Bradyville, Tenn., on the 1st instant, between the cavalry under my command, consisting of a portion of the First [Middle] Tennessee, and a detachment of the Second Brigade, consisting of about 100 men from the Third Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, under command of Capt. W. M. Flanagan, and 150 men of the Fourth Ohio, under command of Col. Eli Long, and the rebel force at that place, consisting of Col. Duke's Second Kentucky Cavalry, commanded by Lieut.-



Col. [James W.] Bowles, and the Fourteenth Alabama [Battalion], belonging to Wharton's brigade, and commanded by Maj. [James C.] Malone, jr.: About 2 miles this side of Bradyville, the First [Middle] Tennessee, under command of Maj. Murphy, being in advance, encountered the rebel pickets and drove them in. When near the village, they found the enemy strongly posted behind the houses in the village and a high piece of ground. After a short skirmish, they (the First Tennessee) were driven back in some confusion. I then brought up the Third and Fourth Ohio, and formed them in line, the Fourth occupying the right and the Third the left. I also went a squadron of the Fourth Ohio, under command of Maj. [P.] Mathews, around to the extreme left of the rebel line, and a portion of the Third around to their right. I then stationed the First [Middle] Tennessee as a reserve, and advanced the remainder of the Third and Fourth Ohio to engage the enemy in front, when we found them strongly posted in a piece of woods, about one-fourth of a mile beyond the village, where they were dismounted and sheltered behind rocks and trees, and gave us stubborn resistance for about fifteen or twenty minutes, when the detachments I had sent around to their right and left flanks arrived in position and opened an enfilading fire on both flanks. The enemy gave way in confusion, when a charge was ordered with sabers and pistols. We pursued them for about 3 miles, during which we took about 100 prisoners, with their horses, arms, and equipments; wounded from 20 to 30, and found 5 dead bodies on the field; also a large quantity of commissary and quartermaster's stores fell into our hands. Their rout was complete, and they fled in great consternation, throwing away their guns, overcoats, blankets, and everything that would impede their progress.

Among the prisoners were 8 commissioned officers, including the adjutant of the Second Kentucky Cavalry, with all his books, papers, reports, &c., of the regiment. The enemy's force has been variously estimated at from 600 to 1,000, while our force, actually engaged, did not exceed 250, and, considering the disparity of numbers and the advantage of the rebel forces in position, I think it may be considered one of the most daring and brilliant feats of the war.

When all, both officers and men, behaved with such determined bravery, it would be almost an act of injustice to mention any names in particular. . .

Officers of the Third Ohio: Capts. William M. Flanagan, commanding regiment; H. C. Miner, commanding First Battalion; J. B. Luckey, commanding Squadrons I and K, Third Battalion; Lieut.s. E. A. Haines, commanding Company H; Norman Brewster, commanding Company L; [J. W.] Likens, commanding Company K; F. Brainard, commanding Company I; and J. R. Hall, commanding Company K.

. . . We bivouacked for the night about 1 mile beyond the village. Nothing occurred during the night worthy of record.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. W. PARAMORE, Col., Cmdg. Second Cavalry Brigade.





No. 4.

Report of Capt. William M. Flanagan, Third Ohio Cavalry.

HDQRS. THIRD OHIO CAVALRY, March 3, 1863.

SIR: I have the honor to report the part sustained by the Third Ohio Cavalry in the recent skirmish of March 1, at Bradyville.

Pursuant to orders from brigade headquarters, the Third Cavalry marched at daylight on the 1st instant. On arriving at the Bradyville pike, which lies but a short distance from our camp, I was ordered by the colonel commanding to place my command in the rear of the Second Brigade. I marched in this order until near the village of Bradyville, and in sight of the enemy, who were in large force and strongly posted in the woods, on advantageous ground, on the south side of town. On forming a line of battle, the colonel commanding the brigade, with promptness and energy, ordered me with my command to take the left of the line. I objected somewhat as to the possibility of forming at that juncture at the left, as it would throw my command upon an impracticable, steep, stony side-hill. The colonel told me it must be accomplished. The enemy commenced about this time to send showers of leaden hail upon us, doing us, however, but little injury. As the officers and men of the Third seemed anxious for the affray, I ordered them to ascend the hill, which they did as promptly and quickly as the nature of the ground would admit. After getting my command in line, I noticed at this time that I could gain a strong position on the opposite side of a deep ravine that lay between my command and the edge of town; but to gain this position I would have to pass through an open field about 150 yards wide, and which would have exposed my command more to the enemy's fire. The colonel about this time ordered me forward. I commanded the "forward," and with a yell, as if the infernal regions had broken loose, we gained the desired position. We then opened a brisk and active fire upon the enemy, who returned it with a stubborn and determined spirit, holding us in check some ten minutes; but under our regular fire they were compelled to fall back a short distance to the top of a hill and in the woods, where they dismounted and secreted themselves behind rocks, trees, logs, and every place that would afford them shelter. In this position they awaited our approach. We then left our position in the village, and marched in line of battle to the woods on the south side of town, to the point the enemy had recently occupied. We had hardly reached their former position before we were greeted by a galling fire from the secreted enemy, wounding 3 men and killing 7 horses. This was the trying moment; but the gallant Buckeye boys of the Third never flinched. The enemy held us in check some twenty minutes, but their fire was kept up with spirit and energy. The colonel commanding brigade was present and in the front rank; ordered us to charge, and charge we did, though a little promiscuously, driving the enemy in utter confusion through the woods, capturing 15 men before they could mount their horses. The pursuit was continued some time, the enemy flying at breakneck speed over hills, rocks, and hollows, throwing away their arms and every incumbrance that impeded their flight. We were finally ordered





to cease pursuit, which we did reluctantly. Bivouacked 11/2 miles south of Bradyville for the night. At 4 o'clock on the following morning we took up the line of march for camp, where we arrived about 4 o'clock p. m. of the 2d instant.

I am highly gratified and pleased with the conduct of both officers and men during the skirmish.

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Captured 18 men and horses fully armed and equipped.

The wounded were at once conveyed to camp, and properly cared for by Surg. M. C. Cuykendall.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

W. M. FLANAGAN, Capt., Cmdg. Regt.

No. 5.

Report of Col. Eli Long, Fourth Ohio Cavalry.

HDQRS. FOURTH OHIO VOLUNTEER CAVALRY, Camp near Murfreesborough, March 3, 1863.

SIR: In compliance with instructions received from headquarters Second Cavalry Brigade, Department of the Cumberland, dated March 3, 1863, I have the honor to submit the following report of the part taken by the Fourth Ohio Volunteer Cavalry in the fight at Bradyville on the 1st instant: On approaching the village, the enemy was discovered plainly in sight, occupying the village. My regiment was about 400 yards in the rear of the First Middle Tennessee Cavalry. I was ordered to form my regiment in line on the right of the road, just without the range of the enemy's fire, which I did. I also at this time, pursuant to orders from the brigade commander, detailed Maj. Mathews to take the rear squadron and move to the right of a small hill, and then to move forward. Shortly after I had formed my line, I was ordered to move forward, which I did, giving the enemy my fire for a few minutes after getting within range. We then charged and drove the enemy before us, and pursued them on the road some 3 1/2 miles, capturing, as near as I could judge, about 55 or 60 prisoners. Maj. Mathews, after passing to the right of the hill, was out of sight, but I am satisfied from the report of his pieces, and the effect produced upon the enemy, that his squadron was handled with marked ability, and did credit to its immediate commander. I saw no killed of the enemy, but 8 or 10 wounded, several with sabers.

My officers and men all fully sustained their former good reputation for gallantry, and I dislike to make any distinction, but I cannot refrain from mentioning, with all the praise due to a gallant and zealous officer, Capt. Richard P. Rifemberrick, commanding Company I, the speed of whose horse enabled him to keep at the head of his regiment, in which position he was severely wounded.

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I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
ELI LONG, Col., Cmdg. Fourth Ohio Volunteer Cavalry.

No. 6.

Report of Col. John F. Miller, Twenty-ninth Indiana Infantry, commanding
Third Brigade, Second Division, Fourteenth Army Corps.

MURFREESBOROUGH, March 2, 1863.

SIR: The troops ordered to report to me on yesterday for forage expedition assembled at the time and place indicated in the order, and, in addition to these forces, Maj. [A. B.] Bonnaffon reported, with 200 men from the Seventy-eighth Pennsylvania, for the same duty. The train consisted of 300 wagons, and started for Bradyville at 7 a. m. Brig.-Gen. Stanely assumed command of the expedition. The cavalry in advance of my command attacked and routed the enemy posted in and around Bradyville, capturing about 70 prisoners. The infantry and artillery force was in supporting distance, but was not engaged. About 40 wagons were loaded with forage. This was all that cold be obtained in the region of Bradyville. Gen. Stanley ordered the train back yesterday evening, and I sent up, by his order, the Third Tennessee and Thirty-seventh Indiana as escort for the train. The prisoners were sent in under guard of the Thirty-seventh Indiana. The remainder of the force bivouacked in and about Bradyville for the night, expecting an attack this morning, but the enemy made no attack.

At about 8 a. m. to-day I commenced the march to camp, and arrived in camp at 2 p. m.

There is no forage on or near the Bradyville road.

The conduct of the troops was good.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JNO. F. MILLER, Col. Twenty-ninth Indiana, Cmdg. Third Brigade.

OR, Ser. I, Vol. 23, pt. I, pp. 65-70.

Note 1: *Dyer's Battle Index for Tennessee* refers to this as an action, and judging from these reports, he may be right. However, the *OR* registers it as a skirmish.

