

October 17, 1863 - Action at Bull's Gap



OPERATIONS IN EAST TENNESSEE

OFFICIAL DISPATCH FROM GEN. BURNSIDE

A Brilliant Action at Bull's Gap

COMPLETE DEFEAT OF THE REBELS

Knoxville, Tenn., Oct. 17, 1863

Maj. Gen. H. W. Halleck. General-in-Chief, Washington:

On the 8th inst. The enemy held down as far as Blue Springs, and a cavalry brigade of ours held Bull's Blue Springs, and a cavalry brigade of ours held Bull's Gap, supported by a small body of infantry at Morristown.

I, accordingly, dispatched a brigade of cavalry around by Rodgersville to intercept the enemy's retreat, and with a considerable body of infantry and artillery moved to Bull's Gap.

On Saturday, the 10th inst., I advanced a cavalry brigade to Blue Springs, where they found the enemy strongly posted and offering a stubborn resistance.

Skirmishing continued until about 5 o'clock in the morning, when I sent in a division of infantry, who charged and cleared the woods, gallantly driving the enemy in confusion until dark.

During the night the enemy retreated precipitately, leaving their dead on the field and most of their wounded in our hands.

We pursued in the morning with infantry and cavalry. The intercepting force met them at Henderson's but owing to some misunderstanding, withdrew and allowed them to pass with only a slight check.

The pursuit was continued until evening, when I withdrew most of my infantry and returned to this place.

Gen. Shackleford with his cavalry and a brigade of infantry continued the pursuit, the enemy making a stand at every important position; but he had driven them completely from the State, captured the fort at Zollicoffer, and burned the long railroad bridge at that place and five other bridges, and destroyed the locomotives and about thirty-five cars.

His advance is now ten miles beyond Bristol.

Our loss at Blue Springs and in the pursuit was about 100 killed and wounded.

The enemy's loss was considerably greater.

About 100 prisoners were taken.

A. E. Burnside, Major-General

