

Report on Operations of Iowa Troops in Missouri in June, 1861

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the mutative condition. To meet the developmental requirements of the vegetable kingdom there should be somewhere a large number of species of plants in the mutative state, but hitherto they have not been discovered. Botanists should give the subject no rest until this vital question is settled.

Faithfully yours,

March 1, 1908.

CHARLES A. WHITE.

REPORT ON OPERATIONS OF IOWA TROOPS IN MISSOURI IN JUNE, 1861.

BY COL. SAMUEL R. CURTIS.

In the course of its work in November, 1907, the commission having in charge the preparation of a complete roster of Iowa soldiers, sailors and marines discovered a most interesting military report. It is in the original manuscript form such as was prepared customarily at the front, and is subscribed in his own hand by Samuel R. Curtis, at the time Colonel of the Second Iowa Infantry. It is published below verbatim. No Iowa document appears to have referred to it, while opinions appended support the belief that it was never before published.

E. R. H.

Society of the Army of the Tennessee,
Office of Recording Secretary,
Cincinnati, O., Dec. 12, 1907.

My Dear Mr. Aldrich:

The only reference that I find to Curtis's 2d Iowa on the Hannibal and St. Joe road is Vol. 3 of War Records of the Rebellion at page 388, where Lyon says: "Col. Curtis is, I suppose, on the Hannibal and St. Joe road; vigorous measures should be shown the disorderly in that region. * * *" I am quite sure that the report in question has not been published.

Yours sincerely,

CORNELIUS CADLE, Rec. Sec.

War Department, The Adjutant General's
Office, Washington, D. C., December 7, 1907.

Hon. Charles Aldrich,
Des Moines, Iowa.

Sir,—I have the honor to advise you that nothing has been found of record in the War Department to show the receipt of such a re-

port [as that of Col. Curtis, June 27th, 1861, detailing operations of his command after leaving Keokuk]. Accordingly it has never been published by the Department.

Very respectfully,

F. C. AINSWORTH,
The Adjutant General.

Camp Lyon, St. Joseph, Mo.,
June 27, 1861.

Brig. Genl N Lyon Comdg.

Dear Sir:

Your telegraphic order directing me to raise all the forces I could muster in my vicinity and forthwith take military possession of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad and if possible move forward to Lexington, Missouri and to suppress rebellion and insurrection reached me at Keokuk June 13, 1861 at 1 o'clock A. M. and at 5 o'clock A. M. the 2nd Regiment Iowa Volunteers under my command was embarked on board the steamer Jeannie Dears. Immediately after receiving your order I notified Col. J. F. Bates Commanding the 1st Regiment Iowa Volunteers, who at my request ordered his command to follow for the purpose of uniting in the expedition.

The Regiments numbered about 2,000 men, well armed but otherwise indifferently equipped. Upon arriving at Hannibal in pursuance of your instructions I published a General Order assuming Command of the military forces at Hannibal and within twenty miles of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad.

The forces at Hannibal at that time were my own regiment, a detachment of about 450, from the 16th Regiment Illinois Volunteers under command of Lieut. Col. Wilson and a force of 250 Home Guards under command of Major Josiah Lamb. At that time I was not aware of there being any troops at St. Joseph. I immediately issued special orders to Lieut. Col. Wilson of the Illinois Volunteers to prepare his command for a forward movement along the line of the Hannibal & St. Joseph R R— and strengthened by three companies of my own Regiment. Myself in command of the detachment at 11 o'clock A. M. of the same day—June 13th, 1861—I moved west along the line of the road.

At Hunneville some arrests were made and several who fled were fired upon, but as I think without effect. The train passed on to Shelbina where a Secession flag was captured and a pole cut down. At Macon City a printing office was seized and a seditious sheet suppressed. Several prisoners were taken in our advance to this point and the taking of secession flags and scattering of rebels created much sensation.

Lieut. Col. Wilson's entire command was stationed near Chillicothe to guard the bridge across Grand River and to protect the line of the Rail Road in that vicinity. Details from Company "A" Lieut. T. J. McKinney Commanding and Company "B" Captain Littler of the 2nd Iowa Regiment were stationed at and near Hudson. Company "G" Capt. Baker 2nd Iowa Regiment was placed at an important bridge near Palmyra.

Before leaving Hannibal I had directed Companies "H" Captain Cowles, "I" Captain Cox, and "K" Captain Cloutman, to take position on the heights commanding the city of Hannibal previously occupied by the Illinois troops. The remaining Companies of my command and the Home Guard under Major Hunt were quartered in and around the Station House at South Hannibal to be in readiness to move, should they be so directed. Having thus secured the Road to Grand River against immediate danger I returned next morning June 14th, 1861, at 7 o'clock to Hannibal where I found Col. Bates with his command—the 1st Regiment Iowa Volunteers—they having arrived some time during the night.

The necessity of taking immediate possession and control of the entire road becoming more apparent I requested Col. Bates with his command to relieve Lt. McKinney at Hudson the junction of the North Missouri R. R. and sustain that central portion of the line as he might think best. Being thus reinforced on the Eastern portion of the line, I proceeded on the 14th collecting and moving my own Regiment forward, leaving Col. Wilson's command in protection of the important bridges and other interests in the vicinity of Chillicothe.

While the detachment of my Regiment under Lieut. McKinney remained at Hudson during the nights of the 13th and

14th, the troops routed several rebel assemblies, captured six prisoners, took three kegs of powder and two locomotives of the North Missouri Railroad which they learned on reliable authority were about to be crippled to prevent transporting U. S. Troops over the road. The prisoners and locomotives were turned over to Col. Bates and the powder to my Quarter Master.

As we proceeded westward we found the rebels disbanded and taken by surprise. Passing the town of Stewartville a private in Company "A" shot a Secessionist in the act of firing his revolver at him, a breach of discipline which I punished although the rashness of the unfortunate young man seemed to justify the homicide. But generally at our display of force the Secessionist fled in consternation. Flags, munitions of war and other evidences of armed rebellion were captured and much surprise manifested by the peaceable citizens who expressed their satisfaction at the appearance of United States troops bearing the Stars and Stripes.

I arrived at St. Joseph June 15, 1861 at 9 o'clock A. M. and encamped a short distance below the city on the bank of the Missouri River. I had thus in fifty-six hours from the time your dispatch reached me at Keokuk taken military possession of the entire road and established a sufficient guard along the line to protect it and at the same time scattered and disorganized the Rebel forces that were mustering through this portion of Missouri.

I found here in camp and in buildings within the city of St. Joseph three U. S. infantry companies under the command of Captains Sully, Steele and Gilbert, and one Company of Dragoons under command of Lieut. Armstrong numbering in all about four hundred and fifty men and two companies of Home Guards under command of Major Peabody whom I at once attached to my services.

Feeling apprehensive lest communications with the detachments along the line might be cut off, at 5 o'clock P. M. the same day of my arrival I detailed Companies "B," Captain Littler, "H" Captain Cowles and "I" Captain Cox, under the immediate command of Lieut. Col. Tuttle to return on the road

as far as the vicinity of Cameron. This was just in time to save the bridge at Cameron which was found on fire but was saved by the timely arrival of troops. Scouting parties from the Companies "B" & "H" of this detachment on the following (Sunday) morning captured in and near the town of Cameron, twenty-one prisoners, several guns, powder and shot and four secession flags. The prisoners have not been identified as in complicity with the attempt to burn the bridge, but were detained as belligerents against the General Government and members of military companies organized for the avowed purpose of aiding insurrectionary and rebellious movements against us. Many of them were men of position and influence in the vicinity in which they reside and some of them doubtless innocent sufferers.

The afternoon of the same day I again detailed three Companies "C" Captain Brewster "G" Captain Baker and "D" Lieut. Dykeman commanding the detachment under the immediate command of Capt. Brewster. This command by details stationed at different points has up to this time successfully supported the line sending out scouting parties capturing arms and ammunition and taken many prisoners all but two of whom I have released upon taking an oath of allegiance to the United States and giving further written assurance that they would keep the peace.

In skirmishing with the enemy along the line several rebels have been wounded and three or four probably killed. Roll-books and other papers relating to their military organizations have been captured showing extensive moves under progress to drive the State into secession and protracted civil war. Since my occupation and distribution of force as thus designated I have supported the entire line by keeping a constant vigilant movement of Engines and Cars with force concentrating companies wherever the enemy had collected with a view of making assaults and sending out parties from 5 to 15 miles to scatter rebels and keep them in perpetual consternation.

The Superintendent of the Railway Col. J. T. K. Hayward and the officers of the road generally have yielded ready obedience to my orders and the great military advantages of a Rail

Road and Telegraph have been signally illustrated. It will be seen by the disclosures eventuating from your captures at Booneville that the order of Genl Price to destroy the bridges and inaugurate hostilities on this line were issued on the 12th while your order for me to come and protect it was the same date. The least delay would have been fatal to this thoroughfare and in my judgment would have enabled the rebels in this portion of Missouri to have rallied several thousand troops at this place and for a long time destroyed the peace and prosperity of this populous and fertile portion of a country.

The certainty of this is shown by the following order of Genl Price and the report of Col. Jeff Thompson his acting Adjutant General.

(Copy)

[A 13]

Headquarters Missouri State Guard

Jefferson City Mo June 12 1861

General:—I am instructed by the Major General commanding to enclose to you the order for immediately assembling the military forces of the State.

The Governor's proclamation herewith will explain the cause and necessity of the movement.

The General desires that you will immediately on receipt of this cause all the Railroad bridges from Chariton river to Grand river to be destroyed, and cut the telegraph wires along the line.

Also procure a train sufficient to accomodate an Escort at Hudson and destroy the bridges and telegraph wires on the North Missouri Railroad. You will detail from the post of your command a sufficiently strong detachment under the command of discreet officers to carry into effect the above orders.

I am, General, very respectfully

Your Obedt serv't

HENRY LITTLE,

Asst Adj't Genl

To the Commander of the Fourth Military District
Chillicothe Livingston County Mo

(Copy)

[A 5]

Headquarters Fourth Military District

Camp Sterling Price on Platte River

May 19th 1861 12 o'clock M.

General Sterling Price Major General Commanding
Jefferson City Mo.

Sir:—General Orders No 2 have been received through the newspapers and this command is still in camp awaiting special orders. The same inefficiency that has heretofore existed, still exists, and for want of definite instructions the forces have been reduced to a skeleton as it is impossible to enforce attendance upon the militia near their homes until sufficient power is placed in the hands of their officers or there is apprehension of actual danger.

As we cannot hear yet of our Brigadier General being appointed and as those upon whom the duty would legally devolve, are not prepared to act, I will endeavor to give *to you* (well knowing your Adjutant) as near as I can the available force of the Fifth District.

There is in Atchison County one company infantry, 50 men; one company cavalry 50 men.

In Holt county no companies organized but five companies reported as awaiting arms (I can get 200 men in 12 hours)

In Nodaway County same report and same number of men—these 400 can be concentrated in 48 hours at St. Joseph.

In Andrew county there are 2 companies infantry 100 men; 500 men can be made available in 36 hours.

In Buchanan county we have 4 companies infantry whose present force does not exceed 120 men but can be filled to 200 in 12 hours: 4 companies dragoons who have 120 sabres and pairs of pistols for 2 companies and 80 double barrelled shot guns for residue say 200 men.

Buchanan can be put down at 400 organized and 200 available in addition to Thornton's artillery 4 pieces and 60 men.

Platte County has but 1 company dragoons with double barrelled shot guns organized—probably 300 more available.

Clay County has 2 companies dragoons, 100 men completely armed and 50 infantry and probably 200 more available.

This is our present district but the counties of Clinton, De Kalb and Gentry which naturally belong to us can turn out—Clinton 300 men available DeKalb 100 organized 100 men available—Gentry 250 men available. And as our fight, if fight we must, will have to be done speedily and on the inherent strength and patriotism of our people, I can report as available in 48 hours at St. Joseph or where ever else you may order as follows

	organized	available
Atchison	100	100
Holt	...	200
Nodaway	...	200
Gentry	...	250
DeKalb	100	100

Andrew	100	200	
Buchanan	300	300	
Platte	50	150	
Clay	150	100	
Clinton	...	300	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	800	1900	
			800 2700

I assure you that I can concentrate 2,000 men at St. Joseph and provide for them in 48 hours. I make this simple statement hoping that matters will shortly be so arranged that such things will be done officially.

Your Obedient Servant

(signed)

COL. M. JEFF THOMPSON

Inspector Act. Com'd

In the face of these extensive arrangements to scatter anarchy and revolution in this region organizations have been broken up and the peace and prosperity of the country maintained to the great satisfaction of a large majority of resident citizens and the undoubted advantage of all the people of Missouri.

While I have kept my force on duty night and day and often felt serious apprehensions because of the great length and slender force on portions of the line I tried to carry out to the utmost of my ability your orders, by directing detachments to move towards Booneville via N. Missouri railroad and sending all the regulars except the Company of cavalry down the Missouri river.

The success of your movements on the main line of operations and the final evacuation of the vicinity of Lexington have entirely disheartened the rebels and the occasional threats and movements of disorganized bands are all the disturbing elements now remaining in this region. Still a strong force should be preserved in this region to restrain resentment and prevent revolutionary reaction in event of temporary success of secession in other portions of the Union. There should be at least three regiments on this line of this road commanded by a Brigadier's rank to avoid the annoyance I have felt in consideration of respect due to the arrival of ranking officers. The 3rd Iowa Regiment having obtained arms I have

ordered it forward to take position near the center of this line, hoping thereby to give more rest to our troops and more confidence and repose in this country.

The prisoners I have taken have been generally discharged on written declarations of fealty and pledges to refrain from all future participation in secession and revolution. Two prisoners were taken before the Circuit Court on Habeas Corpus and bound over under heavy bonds to stand trial for Treason before the Circuit Court of the U. S. The trial elicited much feeling and assembled a great crowd of people. The fair and full ruling of the judge was expressed with so much force and wisdom I have directed a written report which at an early day I will submit to you, with a transcript, showing the grounds taken on the trial and the satisfactory determination and conclusion of the conflicting duties of State and Federal, civil and military agents of our Government.

I have thus given a somewhat detailed report of my movements in order to place facts fairly upon record, and in order to prevent the perpetuity of errors that have gone out from the telegraph and press giving wrong impressions to the public.

The officers and soldiers under my command deserve my commendation for their prompt and untiring cooperation during the period of this movement.

I could name many acts of gallantry but they were so general it would be unjust to discriminate. The loyal sentiment however, that prevails and predominates in the community has been the main cause of our success and it is only necessary to display the national power and the national ensigns in this portion of the country to rouse the masses to an active sympathy for the constitution, laws, and institutions which have so long and so successfully sustained the peace and prosperity of our whole country.

Hoping that my movements may merit and receive your approbation and other duties imperiously demanding my presence at Washington City I desire your indulgence by allowing

my absence for 30 days during which time the command will devolve on Col Smith of the 16th Illinois Regiment.

Very respectfully

Your obedient Servant.

Saml R. Curtis

Col 2d Iowa Vols

Comg Expedition.

CHARLES ELLIOTT PERKINS.

BY HON. THOMAS HEDGE.

We cannot understand a great life without some knowledge of that life's beginning and of the conditions that shaped its course, or comprehend a great character unless we discover the source of its elements, the influences that drew out and developed them. No life of our time is better worth reviewing and the character it developed better worth studying than the life and character of Charles Elliott Perkins. He was born November 24, 1840, in "the little Third Street House" in Cincinnati, the first child of James Handasyd Perkins and Sarah Elliott Perkins, but the home that he best remembered was at East Walnut Hills, then some three miles from the city, where his father bought a few acres of land and built a small house in the summer of 1845, "a very pretty place with a beautiful forest directly back of us," and to this home was given the quaint name "The Owl's Nest."

"From his father's and mother's side he came of pure New England stock and from both he inherited the best qualities of that fine race. Their ideality alike with their practical sense, their rigid conscientiousness and their saving grace of humor, their love of liberty and their profound respect for law, all these were his by right of inheritance. He was tuned therefore to the finest chords that vibrate through our common life. He was of the stuff from which the ideal American manhood is fashioned." These words spoken of his younger brother by an old familiar friend admit of no qualification when applied to him.

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