Order Without Law

The Wilbur Fisk Sanders Story

Benjamin E. Sanders

authorHOUSE®

AuthorHouse™
1663 Liberty Drive
Bloomington, IN 47403
www.authorhouse.com
Phone: 833-262-8899

Published by AuthorHouse 06/27/2023

ISBN: 979-8-8230-0547-0 (sc)
ISBN: 979-8-8230-0546-3 (hc)
ISBN: 979-8-8230-0545-6 (e)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2023906466

Print information available on the last page.

Cover photo: This nearly Century and a half old oil painting by Harriet Peck Fenn Sanders is in the collection of the Montana Historical Society.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Because of the dynamic nature of the Internet, any web addresses or links contained in this book may have changed since publication and may no longer be valid. The views expressed in this work are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher, and the publisher hereby disclaims any responsibility for them.

CONTENTS

LIST OF IMAGES

FOREWORD

A few years back I was asked to review a manuscript on the early Montana Vigilantes that had been written by a sitting judge in New York State. I found it a factually enticing story of the difficult formation of early law and governance in Montana, and that book became Montana Vigilantes, 1863–1870: Gold, Guns and Gallows by Mark C. Dillon, which is a monument to rigorous, convincing writing on the subject. Ben Sanders' book stands right beside it and emanates authority.

Before I got into history and writing, I was a lawyer, well-schooled in the importance of fact gathering, and the existence of contested facts which are what most lawsuits are all about. Now, as an author of three history books, I am naturally inclined to appreciate diligence in discovering and reporting on facts, realizing that there are grey areas where there may never be an unassailable factual conclusion. I recognized immediately the fact-finding determination of Ben Sanders as he set out to level the playing field for the biography of his great-great grandfather Wilbur Fisk Sanders, and I looked forward to reading his book which is based on what actually happened.

Ben had been on a journey, tracing his relatives' footsteps, and I found out, both Ben and I were interested, for different reasons, in the Shiloh battlefield of the Civil War. That is where Wilbur Fisk Sanders, fought for the Union, and it was a place I had visited in recent years. I was familiar with the fight the battle participants had to wage just to survive in the swamps while engaging the enemy. It goes practically without saying that Civil War battles were traumatic for the soldiers as they viewed the deaths of enemies, and the killings of friends and

comrades to the extent they could even see them through the dark underbrush.

In a surprising twist of fate, Ben discovered that his other great-great grandfather from his great-grandmother's side of the family was also in the Civil War at Shiloh, but for the Confederates. Becoming the Attorney General for the state of California, William Francis Fitzgerald, and, nearly 30 years after Shiloh, his daughter, and Wilbur Sanders' son were wed in California before moving to Montana.

As the author of a book that included much about the Civil War battles, I was immediately impressed with Ben's very factual description of the battlefield, its environment and what Wilbur saw, and how as an abolitionist he confronted the issues of slavery. As an abolitionist this would have been a large part of building his character. In a troubled time when soldiers faced death, Wilbur Sanders too was becoming the strong resourceful person he later became. Charged with dealing with the lawlessness of others he sometimes did so without examination. In my own writing about Thomas Francis Meagher, I saw the same kind of person, who had witnessed life at its worst in the horrible realities of the Civil War battlefields. They both survived and came out West where Meagher served as Territorial Governor before his untimely death and Sanders stayed to see Montana's statehood and became its first Senator.

Almost without examination of the facts, some historians have accused Wilbur Fisk Sanders of being involved in the murder of Meagher. One of their sources is, of all things the performance of a light entertainment amateur play I wrote scripted as a coroner's inquest into Meagher's death. It was performed several times in different towns in Montana, and in Virginia City, in the county courthouse, I had it performed as part of a weekend Irish Festival honoring the memory of Meagher. The players were all my friends who thought it would be a fun thing we could do, and a very melo-dramatic amateur actor, played the part of Wilbur Sanders. By portraying his character as arrogant and evasive, he convinced a jury of audience volunteers that he was evil enough to have been responsible for Meagher's murder. The jury's conclusion that Sanders was guilty gave a well-known author writing a Meagher biography, and his book publisher, license to say on the

dust cover that it was "conclusive new evidence" that proved Sanders' guilt! Rather than receiving a pat-on-the-back for coming up with the "conclusive new evidence," which is certainly nothing I ever claimed, I would have rather had my *Irish General* book acknowledged with some attribution for the research I had done which was set out in 25 pages of footnotes! In his book I see that Ben has undertaken to look into this "evidence", or lack thereof, and has included an informative Appendix on the subject.

I have mentioned the Chapter on Shiloh as among the many moving chapters and episodes Ben has provided us in the story of Wilbur Sanders' experience with the Union Army in Northern Alabama. An "Exercise in Futility" Ben titles it, where he goes into the shocking conditions of Buell's Army of Tennessee where Union troop rations were reduced to one-quarter their requirements. When Wilbur received an order to capture and use slaves, as slaves, he resigned his commission and helped a slave, Frank Mitchell, to freedom in the north. Another surprising and moving story about individual freedom comes toward the end of Wilbur's life when he helps imprisoned Northern Cheyenne obtain pardons for alleged crimes that wrongly imprisoned them. These Chapters are clearly among the most moving for Ben, and will be for the readers.

Ben Sanders' is to be commended for taking the tremendous amount of time to assemble a factually accurate account that deftly separates fact from fiction. Scholars who labor in archives to discover facts and primary sources will appreciate this, and the readers will be benefited by Ben Sanders' clarity.

Foreword by Paul R. Wylie, April 23, 2023
Author of: The Irish General: Thomas Francis Meagher, 2007; Blood on the Marias: The Baker Massacre, 2016; Montana States Golden Bobcats: 1929 National Collegiate Basketball Champions, 2022

PREFACE

A memorial statue of Wilbur Fisk Sanders stands on the second floor in the rotunda of the state capitol building in Helena, Montana. The monument was commissioned by his friends and admirers who proposed a bill providing the funding and organization of the memorial effort to the State Legislature. Along with some of those friends and admirers, there were men who did not particularly like or agree with Sanders' opinions or tactics. During his career, Sanders was accused, chiefly in the opposition press, of all manner of unscrupulous political and business practices.

Even Republican Governor Potts, who suffered immensely under the stinging rebukes for which Sanders was so well known, made such claims. And there were plenty of others who would have just as soon seen him dead or at the very least ruined.

The short summation of his life reads like a good deal of failure peppered with some incredibly brilliant moments of such courage and deliberation as would be rare in anyone's life. The reality is that Wilbur Sanders was not an entirely fortunate man in his business or political career; he was, however, undoubtedly fortunate in love, family, and the richness of his life. As is true about anyone, his story is not one about him alone, and for all his accomplishments his was a life told best in the stories of the lives of the people who surrounded him.

In the past two decades Sanders has seen renewed negative rancor based on conjecture about his involvement in the death of Thomas Francis Meagher. Outside of what can only be described as scant, far-reaching circumstantial inferences, no real evidence exists to support

such theories, and the zeal by which some pursue the idea is perplexing. It appears, however, to be politically driven, although the political parties of the time were not those of today and the continued effort to assign blame for Meagher's death to anyone does not appear to have much of a purpose.

Most compelling for the author on this issue is that as much as some despised Sanders' tactics, no one from that time seems to have concluded or even suggested the idea. Given the volatile political climate and his nasty treatment of nearly every opponent to his views, it is almost unimaginable that none would have taken the opportunity to pounce, had even the appearance been there. The answer to the question is unknowable.

Truly, whatever you know about his widely published or apparent life story, it is likely to be a mere scrap of the whole. These scraps are the very types of things that I found on my own, as I studied the man in all the typical venues. But then, a rare opportunity fell upon me that I should imagine few are ever afforded. While digging deeply into every written word and comparing all the details of everything I could discover, I had an epiphany.

It was from this portion of his sketch found in the *Progressive Men of Montana* on page 33, that so many have read, that I reread for yet another time, that a picture of the story that resulted in this book snapped sharply into focus for me – the portion of the history reads as follows:

> Thereafter he was engaged in the practice of his profession until the outbreak of the war of the Rebellion, when his intense loyalty and patriotism quickened in responsive protest. In 1861, he recruited a company of infantry and a battery of artillery, and in October of that year he was commissioned first lieutenant and regimental adjutant of the 64th Infantry Regiment, Ohio Volunteers. He was acting assistant adjutant-general on the staff of General James W. Forsyth, and in 1862 assisted in the construction of the defenses along the railroads south of Nashville. His health

finally became seriously impaired and he was compelled to resign his military position in the month of August 1862.

Compared to vigilantes and statesmanship, these lines didn't ever seem to resonate much with us Sanders boys growing up. As far as Wilbur Fisk Sanders' military service was concerned, the appointment as adjutant in the staff of a general officer or the description of wartime duties such as "assisted in the construction of defenses along the railroads" isn't the kind of stuff that excites images of heroic combat. We were more inclined to focus on the stories that invoked images of thrilling miners' courts, hanging villains in the face of murderous crowds of road-agents and the first Republican Senator of the States of Montana captured our attention more.

Wilbur Fisk Sanders is typically described in history as a figure of the American western frontier. His life has been written about anecdotally in parts of other works; and most efforts have simply repeated the same brief narrative that is limited to vigilantes and his political career. Until now he has not been the sole focus of a comprehensive book.

This work is intended to "fit that bill" by providing as complete a picture of his life as can be derived from available sources. Researching his life, as the story came together, revealed to me that the book was about much more than just one man. Not only was *He* a remarkable man, but he was also surrounded by other very remarkable people, and he lived in and contributed to an important part of our country's history.

At the time of the writing of this book, current events are viewed by many as an unusual time of great unnerving upheaval. But I believe the reader will find from this history reveals a great deal about what we as Americans are expecting now and that such times as these are neither unique nor indicative of an unbreachable divide between our people and in our social order. I think this story illustrates that we have been through arguably much worse as a nation, and that we not only survived but grew and became much better as a result.

The Wilbur Fisk Sanders story also demonstrates that when our government fails to protect us from lawlessness, there will always be

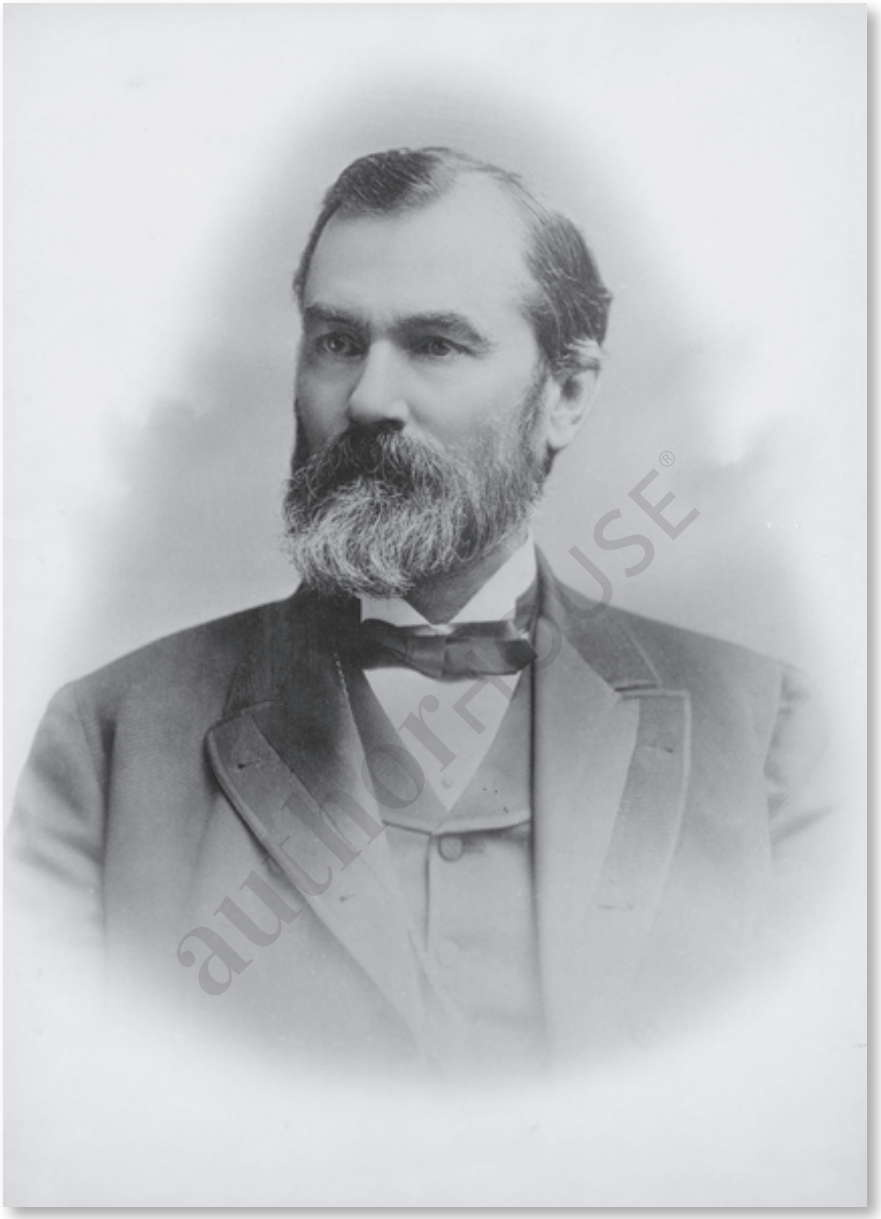
those who independently organize and stand up to the predatory elements of society. Additionally, this story also shows that written history is often written to favor either one political narrative or another using major historical events as "weapons." Fortunately, I believe that time has a way of reconciling such discrepancies.

The goal of this book is to take an objective look at the accounts of events surrounding Sanders from only original, credible sources. I have taken the opportunity to give my opinion only where speculation has prevailed in some current literature. References accompany my rebuttals where fiction has been written without citation and is itself opinion. Mine is a simple attempt to preserve as accurate a history on the subject as possible. History should not be politicized, but it is, and not all politics are Democratic or Republican; some are far less free.

The truth is that all written history has its flaws and should not be immune to doubt, question and examination. Even with careful analysis some facts seem irrefutable while other remain unanswered. As far as using a perception of history to galvanize an opinion on current events it is an unwise path to take – as history is like a rainbow, an image and reflection that appears differently depending on the angle viewed.

CHAPTER 1

Wilbur Fisk Sanders



Wilbur Fisk Sanders

Sanders is best remembered as an early pioneer of the territory of Montana and the state's first United States Senator. He was an organizing member and the prosecuting attorney for the Vigilantes of Montana.

He was a jurist, a politician, a social reformist, and a member of the early Republican Party who abhorred slavery – a Radical Republican.

During the first year of the Civil War, he recruited a company of Infantry and a battery of artillery for the Union Army. He served as Adjutant to James W. Forsyth and then James A. Garfield, who consecutively commanded the 64th Ohio Infantry during his time with the unit. He sacrificed his military career for the freedom of black slaves and helped them evade their masters and find passage north to freedom.

Sanders served in the territorial legislatures and engaged heavily in territorial politics at the national level helping to separate the Montana territory from Idaho. He was the attorney for the Northern Pacific Railroad from its building through the Territory to the end of his life. He was a member of the code commission and worked on the codification of Montana law. He was a founding member and the first president of the Montana Historical Society.

He fought for sound money and against the use of free silver as coinage valued below the global market, which ultimately divided the Republican Party and gave him the title in the press of "Gold Bug." He defended the rights of Chinese immigrants against violence and boycotts in Butte, Montana. He defended and achieved the acquittal of falsely imprisoned Northern Cheyenne.

Early in his career he took the title Colonel Sanders when appointed to a command in Montana' first territorial militia in the face of Indian uprising in the young territory. His political rivals nicknamed him "The War Horse."

Sanders was a self-declared agnostic, much like his lifelong friend James Fergus. In Sanders' own terms, "No man can know the nature of God." His motto was "Strength Through Magnanimity," taking a reverse on Aquinas' view by identifying magnanimity as the means to achieving fortitude and defying Aristotle and Aquinas, as well as the Christian Judaic position, by believing that anyone in a position of advantage owes a duty to the less advantaged by way of service and providing an environment for them to prosper. This was his chief disgust with the treatment of the African slaves, Native Americans and Chinese immigrants.

Given Sanders' general notoriety history remembers the Colonel by a specific characterization. There are however a considerable number of less well known facets to his character. He was of Irish, English and Scandinavian descent, from a line Sanders by way of Sanders Court near Wexford, Ireland. Over the centuries, these people migrated to both Cornwall and Southern Wales and settled in Charlwood south of London, England. This is chiefly supported by DNA and the descriptions of Irish Celtic migrations as the Roman province of Albion decayed.[1] Sanders' family tradition has it that when the Normans invaded Cornwall, the Sanders there helped to fought them off with clubs and rocks and drove them back into the sea.[2]

The origins of this particular Sanders line are further supported by the use of the Elephant in the line's Coat of Arms, rather than the Bull. The use of the Elephant is consistent with the Irish line from Sanders Court. Louis Peck Sanders used the Elephant in his own Coat of Arms, although this was not registered with the College of Heraldry.

The family eventually moved to the northwest of London to Amersham, England, before emigrating to the United States at Boston.

Lois Peck Sanders Coat of Arms*

* From the Sanders's family collection. The family motto in Louis Sanders' COA reads: "Nil Conscire Sibi Nulla Pallescrere Culpa" in Latin meaning "To be conscious of no guilt, and to turn pale at no charge."

Sanders' ancestors emigrated to the United States for opportunity. While the historical background of Tobias Saunders' life in England is subject to some conjecture, family oral tradition suggest that he was put on a ship headed for Boston, Massachusetts, by his widowed mother, the destitute Isabella, in 1636, when he was just 13. One account says that knowing she would likely never see her son again, she hoped that he might find opportunity and prosperity in the New World.[3]

Toby, as he was called, was among the founders of the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Westerly, Rhode Island. He was among those who used the spelling of his name as Saunders. It is unclear as to why the spelling has come and gone from this surname although it is clearly a regular occurrence in the line. Including Toby, three generations had remained in Westerly when George Saunders departed, perhaps along with his ties to the church, and moved to Rensselaer County, roughly Albany, New York.

There, George and his wife had a son, Ira, who eventually moved to Leon, New York, and married Freedom Edgerton, the much younger sister of Sidney Edgerton. Ira and Freedom had six children, and their second eldest was Wilbur. It is around this time that Ira permanently dropped the "u" on an 1850 census, and no Sanders of this line has looked back on alternative spelling.

The place of Wilbur Sanders' birth, Leon, is situated in northwestern Cattaraugus County, New York. In 1833 Ira Sanders settled on a portion of the level and marshy Lot 45, in northwestern Leon. Sometime later that year, Ira and several others are listed as owners of parcels of land on Lot 45. Each is listed as owning improved properties of value. The town had no railway of its own but was an easy commute to the adjoining town to the west which had the Buffalo and Southwestern Railroad.

Wilbur Fisk Sanders was born on the 2nd of May 1834 Leon, Cattaraugus, New York. In the 1850 Census, Wilbur is listed as the second eldest child aged 15 to his sister Sophia aged 17, followed by brothers Beverly aged 13, Philorus "Philo," aged 10, Junius aged 7 and their baby sister Serepta who was 4 at the time. Like most people in rural America in the middle of the 19th Century, Wilbur Sanders and his

siblings worked the family farm and studied their lessons. Their father, Ira, was a strict disciplinarian whose preferred form of punishment was the reading and memorization of the Bible – a form of punishment that Wilbur apparently enjoyed.

Wilbur proved to be a voracious reader and demonstrated a talent at an early age for retention of language and for words and their meanings, and possessed a diverse vocabulary. He is described by the family as having been placed on a table as a small boy by his uncle Junius Edgerton to recite Bible verses from memory.

As he got older and began to earn money working for neighbors, he grew more and more resentful of his pious father, who took Wilbur's meager earnings. He loved his mother Freedom dearly. Her desire was that he study law, which was done despite his father's opposition.

He was a diligent student in the public schools and became a teacher by the age of twenty.[4] He made the meaning of words, and the rules of English grammar and rhetoric, his "means to an end." Even his everyday writing had formal tone and structure.

In conversation or in argument, he was exact in his use of terms and stated his propositions with precision. Never satisfied with his knowledge of language, he made himself a keen student of all manner of diction and syntax.[5]

It was clear, at a very young age, that Wilbur's path would be independent from his father's. His younger brothers, Beverly, Junius, and Philo, were also destined to leave the farm. Wilbur must have certainly been provided the opportunity to further his education by the generous influence of his uncle, Sidney Edgerton, then an aspiring lawyer in Akron, Ohio.

Sanders attended the Phelps Union and Classical School in upstate New York, around 1850. The incorporation of the Phelps Academy in 1846, and its management by a board of education, placed it on a level with the best academic institutions in the country.[6]

Based on his choice of careers and demonstrated strengths, it is likely that he enrolled in the three-year modern classical program. Omitting the foreign languages, it emphasized English, science, economics,

bookkeeping, ethics and psychology – a program of study that would have been requisite for a continued education in the law.[7]

It is at the academy dances that Wilbur likely first met his future wife, Harriet Peck Fenn, as Phelps held frequent engagements with the ladies' schools in the region and the elite academic societies. The population then was small and Fisks, Pecks, and Fenns dominated many learned institutions.

CHAPTER 2

Wild Country

In the early 1860's immigrants began to head north from the Oregon Trail into what was called Gold Country. They knew the country was raw and unsettled, yet the allure of riches drew them there in ever-growing numbers. They must have believed, in that great American spirit of adventure and optimism, that they would prevail no matter the conditions. The assumption that civilization somehow existed there, based chiefly on the presence of other immigrants and a smattering of military, put travelers under a thin veil of perceived security, teetering on the fringes of a still very wild country.

The reality is that humans had been living there for thousands of years. The people that inhabited the region were initially friendly toward the strange new pale-skinned explorers, trappers and traders, but fought intensely amongst themselves. Their lives were not easy or without peril.

Before the influence of Europeans on the North American continent, life was abundant for the native tribes that lived in the valleys of the Missouri River and its large estuaries that flow through what is today Montana and Idaho. The buffalo then were plentiful, and with the introduction of the horse could be easily killed with spear and arrow, albeit at the inevitable loss of human life.

In the nineteenth century, the Missouri River met the Kansas River in the middle of Sioux territory, at present-day Kansas City. It was not

until the upper Missouri River Valley became United States territory that any serious thought was given to its exploration.

When Thomas Jefferson, the Democratic-Republican, became President, he saw the opportunity to accomplish his plan to procure the Oregon country for the United States. The Canadian fur companies had been gaining great wealth and influence over the native people in that country, and he wanted the same opportunity for Americans.

There were those who were determined to advance the virtue of the American people, their institutions and American exceptionalism. This was often traced to America's Puritan heritage, particularly John Winthrop's famous "City upon a Hill" sermon of 1630, in which he called for the establishment of a virtuous community that would be a shining example to the Old World.[1]

In his influential 1776 pamphlet "Common Sense," Thomas Paine echoed this idea, arguing that the American Revolution provided an opportunity to create a new and better society: "We have it in our power to begin the world over again. A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah until now. The birthday of a new world is at hand..."

Many Americans agreed with Paine and came to believe that their own virtue was a result of that special experiment in freedom and democracy, prompting intense nationalism.[2]

In 1803 the Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the United States. With that, Thomas Jefferson opened the West for an explosion of continental expansion. The opening of new territories could mean increased freedom, immigration and prosperity – truly a country with legitimate claims to the moniker of the "shining city upon a hill".[3]

With all the virtuous language, the practice of slavery continued in America when the Declaration of Independence was signed. The contradiction was largely ignored but would fester like no other malignancy in America. The feeling then was that the signing of the Declaration was, for many, a turning point from which all events would be measured in this new country with its promise of freedom.

The contradiction would go largely ignored by Americans who adopted the belief that they were obligated to expand and preserve

their newfound freedom – while applying the practice of oppression to populations that shared the count and the rest of the world.[4] President Lincoln described the United States as "the last, best hope of Earth" in his December 1, 1862, message to Congress nearly a century later.[5]

There were also many who believed that God had a direct influence on the foundation and further actions of the United States. "God, at the proper stage in the march of history, called forth certain hardy souls from the old and privilege-ridden nations... in bestowing his grace he also bestowed a peculiar responsibility."[6] Americans made the presumption that they were divinely selected both to maintain the North American continent, and to "spread abroad the fundamental principles stated in the Bill of Rights."[7] In many cases this meant neighboring colonial holdings and countries were seen as obstacles rather than having the same destiny God had provided the United States.

This was the socio-political landscape that influenced the minds of men such as Wilbur F. Sanders and Sidney Edgerton. The dichotomy between the principles of freedom and equality, and the reality for black Americans, drove Sanders to the extreme. He became uncompromising in the conflict between all men being created equal and the existence of slavery. In his and Edgerton's minds, fueled by this discrepancy in ideology and reality, slavery had no place in a country founded on freedom.

Most Democrats supported expansion, whereas many others, largely Northern Whigs, were opposed. The Whigs welcomed most of the changes brought by industrialization but advocated for growth and development only within the country's existing boundaries.

Many Whigs opposed the Democratic claim that the United States was destined to serve as a virtuous example to the rest of the world and had a divine obligation. They also feared that expansion meant that the question of slavery expanding to the territories and the rights of those states to decide the issue for themselves would create deeper division within the Union.

On the other hand, many Democrats feared the industrialization the Whigs welcomed and the implication of the replacement of manpower

infringing on the slave trade. Many Democrats wanted to continue to follow Thomas Jefferson's vision of establishing agriculture in the new territories.[8] For those engaged in the slave trade, the prospect of huge tracts of agricultural land meant tremendous profits.

Another very real influence was racial supremacy, namely the idea many white people believed at the time: that the American Anglo-Saxon race was "separate, innately superior" and "destined to bring good government, commercial prosperity and Christianity to the American continents and the world." This view also held that "inferior races were doomed to subordinate status or extinction." This was used to justify "the enslavement of the blacks and the expulsion and possible extermination of the American Indian."[9]

In July 1848, U. S. Congressman from Georgia, Alexander Stephens denounced President Polk's expansionist interpretation of America's future as disingenuous.[10] Ulysses S. Grant said of the war with Mexico, in which he served: "I was bitterly opposed to the measure [to annex Texas], and to this day regard the war [with Mexico] which resulted in one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation. It was an instance of a republic following the bad example of European monarchies, in not considering justice in their desire to acquire additional territory."[11]

In the mid-19th Century expansionism, especially southward toward Cuba, also faced opposition from those Americans who were trying to abolish slavery.[12] Lincoln opposed anti-immigrant nativism and the imperialism of manifest destiny as both unjust and unreasonable.[13] He objected to the Mexican war for much the same reason as Grant and sought to "perpetuate the inseparable moral and fraternal bonds of liberty and union through a patriotic love of country."[14]

For radical abolitionists like Sanders and Edgerton these sentiments and conflicts created an atmosphere of staunch and often violent opposition to their efforts. The two men would never forsake their principles and drove at least Sanders in his commitment to stay his course.

CHAPTER 3

The Tempest

After completing his studies, Sanders stayed in Tallmadge, Ohio, teaching. At the continuous urging of his mother, in 1854, he moved to Akron to live with his uncle Sidney to teach elementary school and read the law in his uncle's firm, Edgerton & Upson.[1] Martha Edgerton, just a child at the time remembered him vividly. She recalled her cousin, the tall slender young man who had just arrived to stay with her family pacing back and forth, the length of a darkened room in their house with her baby brother Wright in his arms. Her mother lay desperately ill with malaria in an adjoining room while Wilbur did his best to keep the baby quiet so she might rest. Men, even young men in the 1850 did not in general attend to the care of babies. Martha remembered, "It was characteristic of my cousin Wilbur to pay slight heed to conventionalities – he was a law unto himself in this respect."[2]

He was admitted to the Ohio bar in 1856 and became partner in Sidney's practice. [3] Wilbur had been working hard and settling in when Freedom let him know her displeasure at not receiving any word from her son since leaving home. He hurriedly penned a note home explaining his busy life and punctuating the note with descriptions of his "matrimonial troubles."[4]

Harriet Peck Fenn Sanders

In October of 1858, Wilbur solved his matrimonial problem and married 24-year-old Harriet Peck Fenn, whom he had met while teaching in Tallmadge, Ohio. Like the Sanders's family, the Fenns were also descended from a line of Puritans who had landed in Dorchester, Massachusetts, in the 1630s.

Harriet had attended Lake Erie College at Painsville, Ohio.[5] The young couple must have properly consummated their marriage, as they had their first son, James Upson Sanders, on July 12, 1859.[6] Sanders was perhaps so impressed with William Upson, Sidney's law partner, that he gave his own son his name.

Edgerton and Sanders were considered among the early lawyers of Akron.[7] The two men were active public orators and Sanders was a member of the Akron Literary Association. Immediately preceding the Civil War, public oratory had been a very popular form of entertainment; however, its popularity dwindled and became overshadowed by activities that focused on the war and its political issues, as well as other, baser amusements.[8]

Sidney Carter Edgerton

As an ardent abolitionist, Sidney Edgerton made numerous speeches about the abolition of slavery and as a result became a target. After John

Brown's 1859 raid on the National Armory and Arsenal at Harper's Ferry, he was seen widely as a man willing to sacrifice his life in the name of abolition. Nearing the eve of Brown's execution, Edgerton was asked by Brown's brother and son to come to West Virginia and arrange some of John's business affairs.

Despite the risk of traveling to a state with such bitter divisions over the slave question, Edgerton ignored the danger and agreed to go to Charlestown anyway. He started out on December 1st and went by train and was joined by Congressman H. G. Blake and a reporter from a Philadelphia paper. At Martinsburg they were joined by Congressman Alexander Boteler.

When they reached Harper's Ferry, they were conducted by soldiers from the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad to the Charlestown train. After they were seated, Boteler was called out of the car. When he returned, he said that there was great excitement, and they were advised against going any further. Boteler and Blake heeded the advice, but Edgerton refused to go back.

On his arrival at Charlestown, Edgerton found the town in a state of high alert, with cannons strategically placed about town and soldiers training amid a general uproar. He worked his way to the headquarters with considerable difficulty and found the commander, General William Taliaferro, an ardent Confederate who would eventually serve under "Stonewall" Jackson.

Edgerton explained his purpose there, but Taliaferro informed him that he had just received a letter from Governor Wise instructing him to deny all access to Brown except for a minister and members of his immediate family. He told Edgerton that he could not provide him with safe passage back home at that moment, but might be able to provide him with such passage that evening, back to Washington, D.C.

At dusk a wagon pulled up, Edgerton got in by the side of the driver and a young Southern officer took the seat on the box behind them. Someone came and asked the young officer in a whisper if he knew with whom he was traveling. He got out, went into a nearby hotel, where he undoubtedly got the answer to the question, for when he returned, he

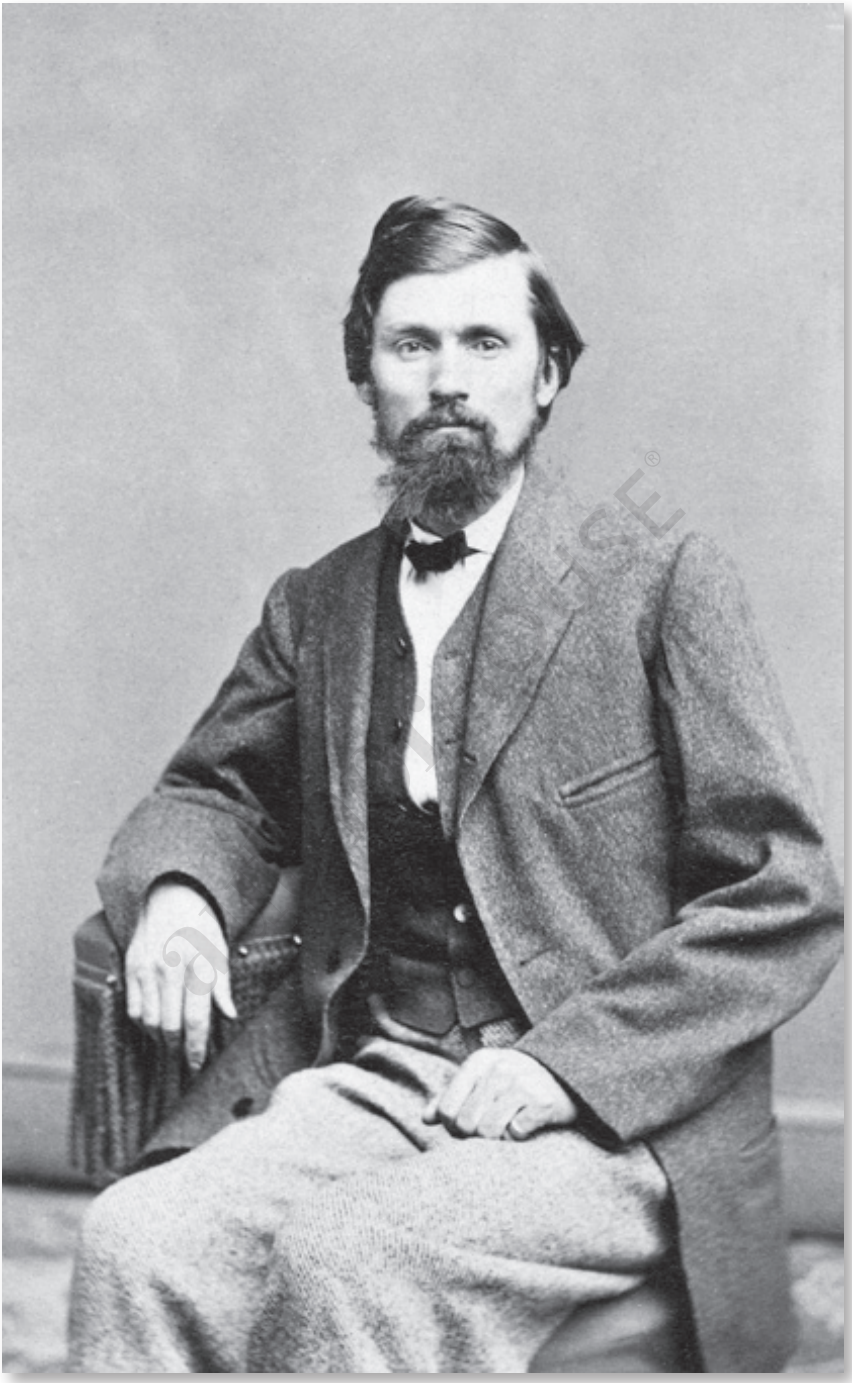
took a seat on the end-board of the wagon to be ready for flight should the situation turn deadly.

Near the edge of the town, the Black Horse Guard came up with them, when the young officer jumped down and ran. The soldiers quickly brought him back and Edgerton asked him why he ran. He said, "I heard them say that they would kill you." The soldiers tried several times to persuade Edgerton to leave the wagon. Sidney believed then that if he had left the wagon, he would have been shot under the pretext that he was trying to escape. He kept his place beside the driver and, escorted by the Virginia troops, arrived safely after a long and tense journey to the station.

However, Sidney was not yet out of danger, as he shortly discovered. While engaged in conversation with his seat mate, a man strode down the aisle of the car to where he sat, and brandishing a revolver announced with curses, "I've been listening to what you said, and by God I've a mind to shoot you." Sidney sprang to his feet exclaiming, "I am in the enemy's country, but I believe there are gentlemen here who will not see you shoot an unarmed man." Overawed by Edgerton's looks and remark, his assailant slunk back to his seat. On leaving the car, probably at Harper's Ferry, a dignified, white-haired gentleman approached Edgerton and addressed him with the explanation, "I witnessed the scene back there, and I do not wish you to think that man represents the better element." Then he turned and walked away.

After this encounter, Edgerton viewed Southerners with contempt and continued to be a prominent voice in the anti-slavery movement.[9] After John Brown's execution on December 2, 1859, flags were flown at half-staff in Akron, Ohio; stores and other business places were closed; the Court of Common Pleas adjourned; bells were tolled; and in the evening a large crowd met in Empire Hall, where emotional yet respectful speeches were made by Sanders and others.[10]

That year, Sidney was re-elected as representative to Congress and, while he was away in Washington during his first term, Sanders gained valuable experience in running the law firm.[11] In August the following year, the Sanderses welcomed their second son, Wilbur Edgerton Sanders.



In 1860 Sanders Was 26 Years of Age

On the 2nd of March 1861, the United States Congress created the Territory of Dakota, defining its boundaries as between Minnesota, Iowa and the Territories of Nebraska and Washington along the 43rd and 49th parallels.[12] The creation of the new territory happened just two days before the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln, and many Americans were compelled to be a part of this very busy and exciting time in the country's history.

The day before, Sanders and his friend Charles Manderson had come to Washington with a party of young men from Canton, Ohio, to witness the inauguration of the new Republican President. In a foreshadowing of things to come, the two went together up Pennsylvania Avenue to the nation's capital to observe the Senate in action. That night probably neither of them imagined that one day they would both return there as United States Senators.

The two sat in the Senate gallery on that afternoon and listened to debates by the intellectual giants of that generation until late suppertime, when they went down to the Senate restaurant. When they returned upstairs, Sanders said that he was going on the floor of the Senate, even though access was restricted to the general public.

Manderson cautioned Sanders against trying to enter the Senate, but he scoffed at his objection, strode up to the door and was entering when a watchman halted him and inquired: "Are you a member of Congress?" Sanders replied, "Of course I am," as he swept along. "A member of the Confederate Congress at Montgomery, Alabama." (At that time, the Confederate States Congress was in session at Montgomery, Alabama, passing secession ordinances and other bills.)

The attendant was surprised by the response and knew not what to do, as times were then precarious, so he stepped aside while Sanders went on in. Manderson stood there a moment, unsure, and decided that two of them couldn't pull off the same ruse. So, he went upstairs and took a seat in the front of the gallery. Down below he saw Sanders sitting on a sofa in the rear of the Senate, seemingly unnoticed. He presumed that Sanders was believed to be a Senate staffer.

In the morning Manderson and Sanders witnessed the inauguration together.[13]

On January 9, with two cannonball holes in her side, the Union merchant ship Star of the West turned about and headed back out to sea after the failed attempt to resupply Fort Sumter. The incident drew great attention in the press, who published the contents of letters between the young major commanding the battery and Governor Pickens.

The governor admonished the major for his suggestion that the firing upon an unarmed vessel of the United States could not have been done without his knowledge. The governor corrected the young officer and stated that not only had it been done with his full knowledge and direction, but also the Union Army had been made fully aware of the consequences of such an attempt and that the vessel had been warned by a shot across her bow upon approach. The major gave in to the fact that the matter would rest in the hands of then-President James Buchanan.

On the 4th of March 1861, when Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President, he was almost immediately informed that South Carolina state troops under the command of Brigadier General P. G. T. Beauregard were controlling nearly the entirety of Charleston and the harbor, and that only six weeks of rations remained at the fortification that protected that port – Fort Sumter.

Lincoln and his new cabinet struggled with the decisions of whether to take actions that might start open hostilities and the political ramifications. The Confederacy faced the same dilemma. Following the failure to comply with his demands to evacuate Fort Sumter on the 11th of April, Beauregard bombarded the fort from the 12th through the 14th. Two days later the American Civil War began.[14]

The citizens of Akron were among many in Ohio who clung to the memories of the various wars in which she had participated. Well before shots were fired at Sumter, men in Summit County were already forming into organized, drill-proficient units, with a considerable number under the influences of ethnic pride, predominantly German and Irish. At the outbreak of the war, as a matter of tradition, the principal active military officers in Akron were Major General Asa S. Marriner, Brigadier General George W. McNeil and Major Erhard Steinbacher.[15]

When the news arrived that Fort Sumter had been fired upon by armed traitors, patriotic excitement erupted among the citizens of Akron and the rest of Summit County. Following President Lincoln's first call for 75,000 volunteers, a meeting of the citizens of Akron and its vicinity was held on April 15, 1861, at Union Hall with leading Republicans and Democrats of Summit County.

Members of both parties made patriotic speeches adopting resolutions to dissolve all party lines, oppose secession and rebellion and, if necessary, organize a great force that "in one campaign, shall wipe out the rebellion of petty tyrants, and restore peace and prosperity to our country."[16]

The citizens of Cincinnati, Ohio, held their first substantial meeting to endorse the Union and prosecute war just days later, and the resolutions drawn up by Rutherford B. Hayes were enthusiastically passed.

Akron and Summit County were among the very first to respond to Lincoln's call for troops, and Sanders found himself swept up in the enthusiasm and excitement that followed. Two full companies had been organized and the third nearly completed.

Seeming endless in number, national flags were stretched across the streets and displayed outside nearly every storefront, shop and home. Soldiers mustered in the streets, while the sound of fife and drum echoed through the town. With the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner," "Hail, Columbia" and other patriotic songs, the presentations and cheers for the Union, the excitement was unmistakable.[17]

On the 17th, the people held a meeting at an office on Main Street to organize a home guard and aid the efforts of the Union in whatever way they could. Young and old men alike hurried to join the ranks of the army. The creation of companies and regiments, their transformation into organized units and their rapid mobilization was marvelous. One of these first units was the Turner regiment, commanded by Colonel Robert L. McCook and composed entirely of Germans. It would soon become famous for making the first bayonet charge of the Civil War, at Mill Springs.[18]

Just one week after the call for men, Company A of the Akron Light Infantry was formed in line on Market Street, between Howard and Main. The street thronged with spectators and presentations were made, with appropriate speeches and responses.

One such presentation was made by William H. Upson to Lieutenant Gilbert S. Carpenter. Upson presented Carpenter with a Colt revolver, saying, "I present you this revolver which I trust may be useful to you. I know you will always be true to the noble cause in which you have enlisted and may the blessing of God go with you."

Lieutenant Carpenter responded, "I receive this weapon from your hands, Sir, with emotions I cannot express. I will endeavor to so use it that it will never speak less firmly and surely for the right than its former owner. You have my thanks, Sir."

Another presented a revolver to a young officer saying, "To you, Sir, I present this weapon believing that it will be used by you as an effective argument against the traitors of our native land." Another said, "I present to you this instrument of death, fully believing that in your hands it will never be dishonored, and that when the time arrives, at least one traitor will meet his just deserts."

Other presentations were made, including one wherein W. F. Sanders made a speech and presented a revolver to Joseph W. Swaggard on behalf of General Asa S. Marriner.[19]

On the 20th of April, 1861, Sanders' younger brother Junius enlisted in the United States Army at Canton, Ohio, and was mustered into service on May 4th as a private in Company F of the Fourth Ohio Volunteer Infantry for three months. A month later he re-enlisted in the same company at Camp Dennison for an additional three years and was promoted to the rank of corporal the following day. The Fourth Ohio moved to Grafton, West Virginia, from June 20th through the 23rd and were attached to McCook's Advanced Brigade of West Virginia until July 1861.

On the 16th of October, Wilbur's youngest brother Philo enlisted at Leon, Ohio, and was mustered into service in the Cattaraugus Regiment at Elmira in December 1861.[20]

Amidst the uproar of excitement over the coming war, Sanders found himself caught up in the bizarre and disturbing murder case of Maria Kerst. Henry Kerst was a German emigrate, a quarryman and stonecutter by trade who also sold whisky on the side.

As it turned out, Henry consumed a good portion of his product and was often drunken and violent towards his family. Eventually in his increasingly enraged stupor he became violent and abusive towards his second wife, Maria. He threatened to kill her, for which proceedings against him commenced for assault with intent to kill.

Eventually Henry became so abusive that Maria left him and retained Sanders and Jacob A. Kohler as co-counsel to begin divorce proceedings. The court granted her a writ of injunction on the charge of extreme cruelty, restraining Henry from disposing of property that would provide her with alimony should her divorce be granted.

Early in the afternoon of the 14th of May, Maria and her friend, Mrs. Boies, with whom she had been staying, went to the village of Peninsula to consult with her attorneys on her divorce. Along their way an irate Henry showed up, carrying a gun.

The possession of a weapon in the open was not unusual for that time, as there were many on the streets at the beginning of the war when armed men met daily in the formation of local military companies. The two ladies hurried along to the law office.

On leaving the office, Maria and Mrs. Boies started for home. Henry Kerst followed them, heaping on his wife such abusive language and threats that the ladies turned back to wait until his anger subsided, or until they could get a safe escort home.

Henry departed shortly afterwards in the direction of his own house, and around four o'clock p.m. the two women gain started for the Boies' residence. When they were about halfway there, Henry suddenly rose up from behind a fence and fired at his wife.

Two bullets and several buckshot shattered her left wrist and entered her body immediately below the breastbone. Both women turned and fled toward the village screaming for help. Maria Kerst ran about twenty feet, fell to the ground and died within minutes.

A search party was quickly formed for the apprehension of Henry

Kerst. After an extensive search of their home and the area near the place of the shooting, Henry was found. He fled, firing at his pursuers, but was eventually captured.

A mob gathered, intent on exacting their own justice on the killer. Cooler heads prevailed and the law was duly enforced. Jacob Kohler filed an affidavit before Justice Merrill Boody and a preliminary hearing was held. Sanders, Kohler and Mrs. Boies, among others, were examined as witnesses.

After hearing the testimony of witnesses and Henry's history, the evidence was determined to be sufficient for the case to go to trial and he was remanded to the county jail. At the ensuing term of the Court of Common Pleas, the matter was brought before the grand jury. They returned an indictment of several counts, the severest being malicious, premeditated and deliberate murder.

That June, Kerst was brought before the court and, hearing the indictment, entered a plea of not guilty. The counsel for the defense then asked for a continuance of the case until the next term of court, which was granted.[21]

Just as Sanders prepared to go off to war, and after a long and heavily contested trial, Henry Kerst, after working the insanity plea as far as it would take him, was convicted by the court for the murder of Maria. Judge Clark sentenced him to "be hanged by the neck until you are dead; and may He who is the Resurrection and the Life stand by you in that hour of need." Kerst never made it to his execution; after a failed appeal, he hanged himself in his cell with a rope.[22]

In November of 1861, the Honorable John Sherman, a United States senator from Ohio, obtained the authority to raise two regiments of infantry, a battery of artillery and a squadron of cavalry. These became a part of what was known among Ohio troops as the "Sherman Brigade." Sherman was among the foremost in prosecuting the war. After the adjournment of the extraordinary session, which began on July 4th, the Senator's efforts succeeded, and he put the Twentieth Brigade in the field.[23]

Applications for recruiting commissions poured in from all over the state. Selections were made and recruiting posts sprang up in every town and village. Recruiting flags appeared everywhere and towns were decorated with posters soliciting for crack organizations to meet at Mansfield. The response was quick and recruiting was enthusiastic.[24]

Sanders wasted no time in engaging in the effort to obtain his own recruiting commission, as well as others. In September he wrote Governor Dennison a letter endorsing Jonas Schoonover of Northampton in Summit County in his seeking orders for the enlistment of a company of infantry.[25]

The law firm of Edgerton, Upson & Sanders essentially closed in the preparation for war. Mary Edgerton and Harriet Sanders proceeded to transform the suite and its Market Street-facing balcony and the entirety of Hall's Corner into a recruiting station, complete with banners, flags and posters.[26]

On October 11, 1861, Sanders was appointed to the recruiting service in the army[27] and almost immediately found himself in hot water with the Ohio Militia's office over his long-winded letters. In correspondence from the Assistant Adjutant General, he was instructed to make his letters as brief as possible. He was informed that the office had "no time to read of your hopes and fears, nor excuses, nor explanations of what you are doing or expecting to do… All your letters will be promptly attended to unless they are deemed trivial and not worth the time required to reply." And, of course, even the nastiest letters among the military and government were always signed, Your Obedient Servant.[28]

The quota for the entire state of Ohio, under Lincoln's call, was only around 13,000, and when nearly 80,000 responded across the many cities and counties, most could not be accepted by Governor Dennison and many companies had to be disbanded. Fortunately, Summit was not one of those counties, and Sanders was assigned recruiting Company G of the 64th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, and eventually mustered into the 6th Ohio Battery, both part of Sherman's Brigade, at Camp Buckingham near Mansfield, the home of the Senator.[29]

One young recruit whom Sanders' assisted was John Weber, just sixteen at the time and already recruited into the 6th Battery by Lieutenant Baldwin without his parents' knowledge. He had returned home to await his departure when Baldwin started with his men to Mansfield. Young John hoped to give his father the slip and make his way to camp, where he believed he would then be safe from his reach. His father appeared, snatched John up by the ear and took him back home.

Lieutenant Sanders had raised a squad of men for the 64th and started for Camp Buckingham when young Weber slipped off again and joined Sanders on the train and went with him to camp. In the end his father conceded, and his son left for Louisville, Kentucky, with the 6th.[30]

At the end of October John Sherman sent a letter from Camp Buckingham, Ohio, to the Adjutant General on a recommendation to resolve a dilemma involving Sanders and another recruiter. Lieutenant J. L. Smith had reported thirty-three men in camp and Lieutenant Sanders reported the same number. Smith and Sanders were from Akron and were recruiting separate companies but had not yet filled them.

Sherman explained that he wished to unite them and that they could then unquestionably fill a company within a few days. He further explained that one section unanimously desired Samuel Neeper as captain while the other unanimously desired Augustus Goldwood as captain, but that the two could be united with agreement from both sides having Neeper as Captain and Goldwood as first lieutenant.

He explained that the difficulty was that one section was recruited by Smith, but neither section desired him for an officer, not even as second lieutenant, and that Smith's recruitment was upon the idea that a full company would be made of which Goldwood would be captain. Also, since he had to recognize Smith, Sherman felt it troublesome consolidating the two sections, as Sanders had declined the command in favor of Neeper, but Smith did not decline.[31] Ultimately, Smith was made second lieutenant in Company G and Sanders bided his time.

By the middle of November both regiments were fully organized and were mustered into the service of the Union. Squads of recruits arrived daily with the goal of achieving one hundred men in each

company. The 64th and 65th Ohio Regiments took the field with about nine hundred men each. Meanwhile, the battery followed suit and was mustered in shortly after the infantry.

By then, formally, Colonel Sherman was successful in finding officers with both military education and experience to command the various groups of volunteers. Initially, he selected Captain James W. Forsyth of the 18th United States Infantry to command the 64th.

Forsyth was a graduate of West Point and had served several years in the regular army. Although a very successful soldier, he proved to be ill-equipped to command a regiment of green volunteers. Many regular army officers lacked practical experience, and although an effective administrator and tactician he was not a leader of troops.

His strict discipline proved excessive, and he lacked the patience and tolerance needed to transform nearly one thousand raw volunteers. His command lasted just two weeks when leadership in Washington pulled him away from the 64th. Forsyth was later reassigned to the staff of the Department of the Army for the remainder of the war.[32]

Forsyth was, however, at the time of his taking command promoted to colonel and Lieutenant Sanders was assigned his adjutant. The company of infantry recruited by Sanders, Company G of the 64th, was initially commanded by Captain Samuel Neeper, as Sanders had preferred.

The 6th Ohio Battery, also recruited by Sanders, was commanded by Captain Cullen Bradley. His staff included First Lieutenants Oliver H. P. Ayres and James P. McElroy and Second Lieutenants Aaron P. Baldwin and Edwin S. Ferguson.[33]

The troops of the Sherman Brigade were outfitted with their complete issue of equipment, with the notable exception of weapons with which to fight. The green troops spent a good deal of their time working out the wear and use of their new equipment. They felt, however, that without weapons they could not ever be considered soldiers.

Two weeks after arriving in camp, the arms they so deeply desired were delivered. Each enlisted man was issued a new Model 1861 Springfield rifled musket, complete with bayonet and all the necessary

accessories. Suddenly, with the weapons of war in hand, the whole affair took on a very serious tone.

On the first of December Colonel Sherman reluctantly left the brigade he had worked so hard to prepare for active service and the job for which the Secretary of War had commissioned him brigadier general. President Lincoln, however, had decided that the Honorable John Sherman should serve his country best from his seat in the Senate.

Near the middle of the month, the citizens of Mansfield presented to the 64th a beautiful silk banner. The presentation took place in a formation following a full pass and review. The Honorable T. W. Bartley made a speech on behalf of the donors and was responded to on behalf of the regiment by Adjutant Sanders, who said, "If you hear that this flag has been trailed in the dust, you may know that you have given the parting hand for the last time to every member of this regiment."

Sanders was not mistaken; by the conclusion of the war, the record of the 64th would prove that his bold words were justified. Indeed, its flagbearer did fall in battle on more than one occasion, but the regiment's flag was never "trailed in the dust."[34]

CHAPTER 4

Hardened by the Road

On the morning of December 17th, the long drum roll sounded, and the 64th was ordered to break camp. The formation shifting and flowing, marched in columns out onto the road and bid Camp Buckingham farewell and the massive procession moved down the pike the short distance to the train station.

Throngs of town's people crowded the railway station to see their boys off. The moment men and baggage were stowed in the cars, the train rolled away. The men hung from the car windows, hands and caps waving. The crowd cheered and wept, likewise waving their hats and handkerchiefs.

Upon arriving in Cincinnati, the command boarded the mail-steamer Jacob Strader and arrived in Louisville, Kentucky the following morning. From there the 64th marched in an impressive column, through the city to camp, a mile to the south.

As the regiment marched proudly along the streets, the excited people crowded the sidewalks. The camp was a raw and foreign place, unlike the familiar Mansfield, but with the arrival of their baggage the men pitched their tents and settled in.[1]

The men of the Sherman Brigade were in good spirits and were contented on their journey so far. There were those, however; whose thoughts were introspective and somber, for many had never been away from their homes, let alone set foot on, what was to them, foreign southern soil.

Camp Buell, named in honor of the current Commanding General of the Army of the Ohio had become a field of white tents and curling columns of campfire smoke. The camp was located near the residence of the rebel General Simon Bolivar Buckner.

At that moment Buckner was amassing a force at Bowling Green, Kentucky and had announced his capture of Louisville, where he intended to, "eat his Christmas dinner at home." To the contrary, he surrendered to General Grant at Fort Donelson just two months later.

The stay at Louisville was brief but miserable. At first, excited over their first experience with army life, the troops had all their focus on the

present. They soon found that such conditions would be characteristic of a likely prolonged war.

The temperature hovered near freezing and rain fell continuously; the camp became a throng of mud. Moving about the camp was done with great labor, slogging through sinking mud that sucked boots off of bare feet, which became the mode of travel through the mire.

After leaving camp, the first day's march was just 10 miles, however; the troops were in great discomfort from muscle and joint aches, and painful blisters. The men of the 64th thought they would be able to march with great ease—they discovered otherwise in the three days from Louisville to Bardstown.

The regiment had been lying in camp and drilling; now they hit the road. With breakfast in their bellies and the sick in the hospital, they broke camp at 8:00 a.m. With the sun up, in two hours the wagons were loaded and the men ready in the order of march. At 10:00 a.m. they heaved their heavy knapsacks onto their shoulders.

Their knapsacks were packed to the hilt with extra clothing, books, and objects of every imaginable sort from home. The troops had no way of knowing how heavy the load would really be and that before night every pound of excess would make them pay.

Heavy loads of 40 to 60 pounds were more than most of the men could bear. Many dropped by the roadside, despite orders against doing so. At 4:00 p.m. the brigade turned into a field, exhausted, and were ordered to set camp. Many did not reach camp until well after dark.

The march was four miles longer than the day before. During the afternoon the aching and limping and groaning were even worse than before. They finally reached the ground on which they would camp, in a driving snowstorm.

On the morning of the third day the regiment was blistered and sore. They made fifteen miles, and went into camp near Bardstown, in the fair grounds of Nelson County.

On December 30th, the 64th and 65th regiments broke camp, marched through Bardstown and three miles south, where they found

many troops already encamped. It was a "camp of instruction," with constant drilling, and all that the name implied.

It was named "Camp Morton," in honor of the Governor of Indiana. General Thomas J. Wood was in charge and afterward became very familiarly known as "Tommy" Wood, as he rode at the head of the 6th division, part of which the Sherman Brigade became.[2]

In January of 1862, Sanders pleaded with Adjutant General Buckingham, explaining that in October 1861, he was appointed as a 2nd Lieutenant to recruit for the 6th Ohio Battery, and that in a month had recruited about 100 men. Sanders stated that there should be no question he was entitled to a commission and suggested that Buckingham's failure to forward it with the other commissions to the 64th Ohio Infantry was simply an oversight.[3]

On the 14th of January the 64th Ohio broke camp and started for Lebanon, Kentucky. They marched just nine miles, and went into camp early, as the weather became unbearable. The next day, they began their march through snow that turned into slush by the afternoon, after 14 miles they camped at Springfield, Kentucky.

The third leg of their journey was even worse. A cold driving rain pelted their faces without ceasing and soaked them to the skin. The brigade reached Lebanon by the middle of the afternoon and went into camp a mile west of the town. The rain continued to fall, the brigade was near hypothermia, and the ground was covered with water and mud.

Other units had recently camped there and there were no fences or straw for fires. They felled live trees and pitifully attempted to ignite their fires with wet, green wood. Passed the miserable night as best they could, lying on tree limbs to keep their blankets out of the mud.

By the morning, the ground and the men were frozen. During the night a Private from the 65th, died from exposure. They remained in this condition for four wasted days, finally receiving orders to march on.[4]

The march to Hall's Gap would prove the most difficult march the Sherman Brigade would endure throughout their push to Savannah.

They arrived after two days and thirty miles at the remarkably Union loyal, Danville, Kentucky. Upon their arrival they received word of General Thomas' victory over the Confederate Brigadier General Felix K. Zollicoffer at Mill Springs, the latter was among the dead from the engagement.

It was during this march that Colonel Forsyth requested relief from his command, which was approved. The job then fell upon Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Gass for a time. The Regiment made Hall's Gap by the 24th.

Orders came down to provide relief to General Thomas' Army who was cut off and out of rations at Somerset. The road was nearly impassable from Hall's Gap to Thomas at Somerset, it being a deep channel of mud, from continuous rain.

The Sherman Brigade soon discovered their purpose there and commenced the construction of corduroy road, (thatched logs, tied together like one continuous raft. The texture of its surface was like corduroy and vibrated vehicles literally to pieces when in the best condition). It was expected that once the brigade finished its work there, they would join General Thomas.

The conditions were absolutely miserable, with frequent heavy rains that drenched everything and slowed their progress. In four days, they only made 1 ¼ mile of road, at which rate it would have taken 4 or 5 months to reach Somerset, about 35 miles away. The exposure began to take its toll on the men. Hospitals were established in Stanford and every day dozens were sent there.

The men were all sick, and morale was low. The effective force that went out each day and slogged about soaked and chilled to the bone were ever shrinking, and the work steadily slowed. Without straw for the tents, the men slept with little to protect them from the soaking ground. Their lives had become perpetual and utter misery.

Away they worked, for a week longer, struggling with the wagon-train, doing all they could to hold the road together and extending the corduroy total of roughly six miles from camp. Every day an increasing

number of sick were sent to Stanford. The companies were smaller at rollcall on each succeeding morning.

On the morning of February 8th, they turned out as usual, and shouldering axes and shovels started for the scene of their daily toil. They had not gone more than a mile when a messenger came riding out with orders for them to break camp and march immediately. Cheers filled the woods as the word spread throughout the troops.

In an hour the place was a barren trampled scar, just the debris of the camp gave a clue to the force that had been there for two weeks. They did not continue on through the mud toward Somerset, but rather, turned about and headed back the way they had come.

As they passed through Stanford they waved farewell to the sick and disabled men left behind in the hospital. Many of them were never seen again. From their three regiments they left behind more than 400 men, of whom 100 died within the ensuing three months, and half of the remainder were medically discharged. The Sherman Brigade's two weeks at Hall's Gap cost them as many casualties as they lost in combat at Stone's River or Chickamauga.[5]

In the first months of 1862, along with his recommendation for the regiments new commander the Honorable L.V. Bierce endorsed Sanders for selection of the position of Major in the 64th Ohio. In the endorsement Bierce informed Governor Tod that he had recommended Sanders to former Governor Dennison to his current position as Adjutant and suggested that General John Sherman would have done the same.[6]

Not only did Senator Bierce not get his choice for the command but Sanders remained in limbo. At Danville the 64th was introduced to a new colonel, John Ferguson, who had been commissioned by Governor Tod to the vacancy.

At first there was some feelings of consternation because the vacancy had not been filled in the usual way, by promotion within the regiment, which would have advanced six or eight persons. The tension soon disappeared, for Colonel Ferguson, quickly won the men over with his impeccable presence, keen military knowledge and natural command ability.[7]

Sanders, simply desiring his promised second lieutenancy, which he had earned by his recruiting effort, pleaded to William T. Coggeshall, the State Librarian for assistance in the delay.[8]

From Stanford they retraced their steps back to Lebanon and arrived there at noon on February 11th. The afternoon was devoted to vaccination, as two or three cases of smallpox had appeared in the brigade.

They were at Lebanon just a short time when the order was given to advance to Green River the following day, with two days' cooked rations. Reveille sounded the following morning at 4:00 a.m., and by 6:00 a.m. the brigade was ready to go. It was not before noon, however, that the regiment finally moved out.

The weather was bitter cold, and they spent their time gathering around their fires. They were to go by train, and marched a mile to the railroad, where they waited nearly hypothermic, for an additional five hours. It was nearly dark when the regiment put out the word that the train was ready. Making things worse, the train had been stopped on a high embankment.

After tremendous difficult climbing and hoisting they were all on board, many upon the roofs of ordinary freight cars. Nearly a third of the men were forced to ride on the top of the train. Every one of them suffered the sleepless, jolting night in the relentless cold and choking smoke and cinders.

They reached Lebanon Junction at 10:00 p.m. and continued southward on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. At 2:00 a.m. they halted at Munfordville, Kentucky, unloaded themselves and their baggage and scattered out across a nearby cornfield for the rest of the night. On beds of cornstalks they slept, until they woke to the warmth of the sun.

That day, Brigadier General Ormsby M. Mitchel, with 12,000 men, made a forward movement toward Bowling Green, Kentucky. The whole army would soon follow, as part of the operations of General Grant on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers.

The bridge over Green River was an impressive iron structure,

resting on massive piers nearly 100 feet high. The rebels had partially destroyed it, by demolishing one of the piers, but was quickly replaced with a considerable trestle, built by the 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics.

As large details of men worked to repair the railroad beyond the river, Lieutenant Sanders and the men saw for the first time the graves of Union soldiers who had been killed in battle.

On the 18th, the regiments learned the exciting news that Grant had captured Fort Donelson, with 13,000 prisoners; that Bowling Green had been occupied by General Mitchel; and in the east General Ambrose Burnside was victorious at Roanoke Island, capturing 3,000 prisoners.[9]

At noon on the 22nd of February a battery of 34 guns near the camp of the 64th Ohio, fired a national salute celebrating Washington's Birthday. An order was read announcing the organization of the 6th Division, Army of the Ohio, with General Wood quickly ascending to its command. Colonel Harker moved up to command the brigade.

Two days later Wood's division received orders to march immediately. The division only moved to the south side of the Green River, crossing by the high railroad bridge which had been planked. The mules clearly did not like the elevation and a good deal of coaxing and whipping was done to get them across.

Later that night, as the Sherman Brigade crossed the river, a violent squall swept the camp, waylaying tents and disrupting operations. The 64th made the dangerous trip in the dark by the scanty light of wind-blown lanterns.

The last of the regiment did not reach the far side until after midnight. The conditions halted any hope of moving to more suitable grounds and for the first time the regiment camped without tents. It was all any of the men could do to keep themselves out of the mud, if any of them got any sleep, it was brief.

The division started out early, but quickly found that the road was in terrible condition. After mucking their way for just four or five miles in as many hours, that route was abandoned for a more promising

alternative. The locals claimed that along the summit of a high range of hills called the "Green River Knobs," there was a rough country road sometimes used during the rainy season.

It was decided to try the road and the entire division marched off the main thoroughfare through a large opening in the fence and crossed the fields, with the wagons and artillery close behind. As they approached the foothills Lieutenant Sanders could see that the climb was long and steep, and the teams would require a great deal more than just mules to get them up and over.

Teams were doubled on the wagons, with twelve mules to each, and forty or fifty men with ropes and poles. With every man strenuously pulling and lifting, bit by bit, they finally reached the top. By the time the wagons were all up, it was nearly dark. Utterly exhausted Sanders passed along the order to go into camp.

The next two days consisted of much of the same. There were no real roads, and the teamsters navigated the route as best they could. In places, there was but tracks on the side of a steep angle and the only way across was to fasten ropes and a dozen men to the uphill side of the wagons to prevent them from overturning.

Despite their best efforts, many wagons got away from their handlers, and over they went, their contents scattered in a swath down the hillside. Others found soft ground and became so stubbornly stuck that they had to be unloaded, wrested out, and then reloaded.

All day long the woods resounded with the braying of mules and yelling men in a scene of mass confusion. When, at the close of the third day, the straggling column filed down from the hills to the solid pike, with tremendous elation. Both men and mules exhausted as the distance of the diversion was just 12 miles, but it took 2 ½ days to complete.[10]

On the evening of February 27th, the rebels evacuated Nashville and it effortlessly occupied by General Mitchel. The following day the Sherman Brigade pushed on to Bristow Station, a few miles from Bowling Green, Kentucky. Once there, the brigade halted for several days.

The evening of March 4th, the brigade received orders to cross the Barren River. The next morning, they were up before dawn and moved

out. As they neared Bowling Green, they passed the deserted enemy camp and fortifications.

The Confederate Army had been living very comfortably, in huts, with fireplaces and chimneys. On their retreat, the rebels left the camp a smoldering field of blackened timbers and chimneys, destroying along with them the railroad and bridges. The brigade forded the river using three small steamboats left by the rebels along with pontoons to build a usable bridge. Lieutenant Sanders observed the operations until all of the 64th was safely across.

After a brief rest, the brigade fell in and marched to College Hill, just south of town, where they camped inside the fortifications. All the hills surrounding Bowling Green were covered with impressive defensive works that had been built by the rebels. A tremendous amount of labor had gone into the construction of works that had never been used – this was common on both sides throughout the war.

Several of the finest buildings in the city had been burned, including the warehouses containing all the military supplies that the enemy could not carry in his hasty retreat at the fall of Fort Donelson.[11]

Here again, Sanders found himself the subject of controversy when, in March of 1862, Captain Bradley, wrote a letter to Adjutant General Buckingham while the brigade was at Camp Green on the Cumberland River, in Kentucky. Apparently, responding to the Adjutant General on questioning from an unknown source as to the legitimacy of Bradley's appointment.

Bradley explained that Sanders was appointed as a recruiting officer for the artillery battery and that his rolls showed nearly seventy-four names. He asserted that Sanders' recruits were given to him by others who did not hold recruiting commissions. He defended himself, stating that, "he had nothing to do with recruiting the battery and certainly, not any more than Sanders did."

He also stated that, "he could not be expected to know anything about the matter, except what he had been told by the officers and men of the battery." The Captain complained that the Army had placed him in the command, and in his words, "almost against his own consent and

could not be blamed for any part he had in displacing Sanders" and that, "if Sanders had lost a situation by his coming, he was perfectly willing to vacate and allow Sanders to receive his just deserts."[12]

Sanders had earlier declined the command to Neeper. With all his efforts to get Governor Tod to provide his promotion, someone may have tried to place him in command of a company rather than the Major position endorsed by Bierce – who knows?

Starting nearly a month to the day before the Battle of Shiloh began, the Sherman Brigade's march to Nashville was bitter cold, with a biting wind chill. They camped in two inches of snow.

In a large field they camped through the wild and stormy night, with sleep impossible, the men and even the officers eventually spent the slowly passing hours huddled in and hovered around the warmth of burning fence poles.

Over impassable roads, by back breaking work they moved the brigade. In two and a half days they crawled over 15 miles to solid ground and camped near midnight, in Tennessee.

The following day they marched 22 miles and arrived within 7 miles of Nashville. They had maintained a rapid pace, with few halts, but only about half the men had made the march by the time they stacked arms. Hundreds fell out of rank and came straggling in, blistered and exhausted, well after midnight; then laid in camp for two days.

They broke camp on the 12th, and again started in a hard shower that lasted an hour and soaked them to the skin. They soon came in sight of Nashville, with its fine state house, high above the city, visible for miles in all directions.

They passed through Edgefield from the north and reached the Cumberland River, at 10:00 a.m. The bridges had been destroyed by the rebels and the troops, artillery and wagons were being ferried over by steamboats. After hours of waiting, the Sherman Brigade was ferried across, and, with the wagons following behind, they marched to the public square and stacked arms.

Nashville had few fortifications, as the rebels had depended upon

the army at Bowling Green, and Fort Donelson for its protection. When Donelson fell, General Sidney Albert Johnston's army fled. There was a wild rush from Bowling Green, and Nashville was left defenseless.

Nearly all the wealthy and influential citizens of Nashville advocated the cause of secession and the rebellion. On one occasion a well-dressed highborn lady of the southern aristocracy, approached General Buell's headquarters, and stepped off the sidewalk into the muddy street to avoid passing under the Union flag that hung overhead.

As she carefully maneuvered the muddy street, she paused and, quite lady like, spat upon the high hanging flag. An hour later General Buell arrived at her residence with several ambulances laden with sick soldiers and occupied the home as a temporary hospital.

The brigade's wagons finally joined the troops in the public square, and they marched another five miles south of the city and made camp. Without delay the regular routine of camp life and its continuous drilling was resumed. By then, the warmth of spring had arrived and with the sun shining and the ground dried, the soldiers of the brigade began to feel normal again.

It appeared that the rebels were determined to fight at Corinth, and the word pleased the soldiers of the Sherman Brigade, with the hopes of a speedy conclusion of the war. The campaign for the spring and summer were looking up. With the Union's intentions clear, General Johnston, had clearly come there to make the stand in person.

Johnston was receiving reinforcements daily and demonstrated his intention to fight somewhere in the area. With the advance of Grant, and Buell it was evident that the Union Army intended to provide him the opportunity.

General Grant transported his army down the Tennessee River, some 45,000 strong, and landed them on the west bank, at Pittsburg Landing. It became apparent that a battle would soon take place, and with the majority of Buell's army moving forward to reinforce Grant, tensions were high.

By the 20th of March, the soldiers of Sherman's Brigade, knew that they would be on the road again, and this time for a fight.[13] That day, Major General Henry W. Halleck, head of the Department of Mississippi, instructed Grant to keep his forces together until he connected with General Buell and "Don't let the enemy draw you into an engagement now."[14]

Excitement filled the brigade when, on the 28th, they received orders to march to the Tennessee River the following morning. They were instructed to move to Savannah, 120 miles from Nashville; by far the longest continuous march they had yet faced.

At that time Buell's army had an overall strength of 95,000 men, with 74,000 present for duty. Nearly half of this force was stationed at numerous points in Kentucky and Tennessee, to protect the lines of communication.

Following the occupation of Nashville, General Mitchel's 3rd Division, was engaged in disruption along the base of the communication triangle; the line of the Memphis and Charleston railroad, between Decatur, Alabama and Chattanooga, Tennessee. Five divisions were mobilized for the advance to the Tennessee River.

McCook's division took the advance, breaking camp on March 15th. The divisions of Nelson, Crittenden, Wood and Thomas followed in that order, at intervals of one to two days apart.

Sadly, General Buell moved his Army along with extreme prudence. After the grueling conditions of moving down muddy roads the previous three weeks, it was thought more advantageous to make the road less congested. Had Buell moved his army with more urgency the result of the first day at Shiloh may have gone much differently.

The advanced divisions were delayed several days near Columbia, as the bridges across Rutherford's Creek and Duck River had been destroyed by the rebels.[15]

At 4:00 a.m. on March 29th, the drums and bugles sounded through the camp of Wood's 6th Division and Lieutenant Sanders and the Sherman Brigade, were on the move again. They marched the men just

8 miles on the first day, and they were glad to camp in the middle of the afternoon. It was hot and dry, and the air was thick with limestone dust that was suffocating.

In their position at the rear of the formation, the Sherman Brigade ate the dust of the two brigades ahead of them. The dust mixed with the sweat upon their faces, making one man indistinguishable from another.

Few marches that short over the course of the next 4 years, would prove as miserable as that first day's march to Shiloh. They did, however; camp next to a beautiful stream, in which thousands of men were soon bathing with great relief.

The next day, General Wood's men proved their metal with a nearly 20-mile march. With heavy packs, only about a third of the division arrived at camp together. They passed through Franklin, Tennessee and about 8 miles beyond, where they camped.

The drums rattled loudly at reveille the next morning, arousing the unwilling to their feet. The miserable souls, marched just 12 miles, when they went into camp not far from Columbia.

On the first day of April, they marched through the very rebellious town. The people of Columbia looked upon the Yanks with distain, while their bands played the "Star Spangled Banner," "Hail Columbia," "Red, White and Blue" and "John Brown's Body." As a joke, one band played "Dixie," the town's people waved their hats and cheered loudly but with some reservation.

The Division camped a short distance beyond Columbia, as the temporary bridge which had been built there over the Duck River required repairs before Buell's army could advance. Each day they pushed on, and each night they drew into camp, every mile taking them closer to learning the horrors of war.

Two days after leaving Columbia they left behind the hard, smooth pike on which they had traveled since Nashville. At that point, their route put them back on rough and muddy country roads that punished the teamsters and their mules.

Brigadier General James A. Garfield

On the morning of April 4th, a new officer appeared at the head of the 20th Brigade – General James A. Garfield; he was just 30 years old at the time. Entering the service as Lieutenant Colonel of the 42nd Ohio, he soon became its Colonel and was quickly promoted to Brigadier General

for his brilliant campaign against the Rebel forces under Humphrey Marshall, in eastern Kentucky.

Having reported on orders to General Buell, he was assigned to the command of the Sherman Brigade. Garfield was a brave and soldierly officer, with a commanding presence. Almost immediately he had the confidence and respect of every officer and soldier in the brigade.[16]

CHAPTER 5

The Battle of Shiloh

The Confederate forces under General Johnston in western Tennessee left Corinth, Mississippi, to meet Grant's advancing Army of West Tennessee. Throughout the operation Johnston's plan would run into crippling obstacles, and a big one was the terrain along the banks of the Tennessee River.

Fighting Union forces through its deep ravines would prove to be the obstacle that nearly halted the Confederate Army's right flank. Here a boy of just fifteen named William Francis Fitzgerald, fighting for the Confederate 10th Mississippi, demonstrated the spirit that would later earn him the moniker "Fighting Fitzgerald." Meanwhile, a desperate Lieutenant Sanders and the 64th Ohio spent everything they had on making the scene in time to help defeat the rebels. Following the battle of Shiloh, the two men's lives would become forever intertwined. Nearly thirty years later the Union Lieutenant and the Confederate Captain would become in-laws – but that's another story.

After Grant's capture of Forts Henry and Donelson, Johnston's forces in the west concentrated on holding the Memphis & Charleston Railroad. Thousands of soldiers from Mississippi, western Kentucky, and middle Tennessee converged on the strategic crossroads at Corinth in northern Mississippi. An earlier Union attempt by C. F. Smith to cut the line near Eastport, Mississippi, had failed, in large part from the flooded and rain-soaked terrain.

Confronted with the Confederate concentration, Grant assembled his army in southwest Tennessee. Five Union divisions disembarked at Pittsburg Landing, while one garrisoned just to the north at Crump's Landing. Major General Don Carlos Buell was ordered to march from Nashville to join Grant. To communicate with Buell's column, Grant established headquarters at Savannah, Tennessee. Once combined, the federals planned to strike Corinth and cut the southern railroads at that vital junction.

With no intention of sitting and waiting for the inevitable, Johnston determined to attack the federals on the ground southwest of Pittsburg Landing. His plan was simple: sweep the Union forces in a counterclockwise wheeling line with its right flank along the Tennessee River, turning the Union's left flank and driving them back to the north and west, into the swampy bottoms of Snake and Owl Creeks.[1]

On the morning of the 6th of April, while Sanders prepared for the day's march, the battle of Shiloh erupted. The men of Wood's division had marched every day for more than a week. It had been the hardest thing any of them had ever done.

If they had known what hardship and suffering lay before them over the course of the next three days, none would perhaps have chosen to go on. An hour after breakfast was over, they were on the move with Savannah still twenty-five miles away. Just two or three hours into their march, the clear sound of distant artillery chilled the air.[2]

Early that morning, Johnston's entire Confederate Army surprised the unexpecting and ill-prepared Union forces under Grant and drove them at bloody cost to the confinement of Pittsburg Landing. Such scenes as the deadlock along the sunken road later dubbed the "Hornet's Nest" were indicative of the many engagements that stalled the Confederate advance, costing thousands of lives on both sides, that first day.

Along the rutty terrain towering over the Tennessee River, incredible struggles were fought through several two hundred foot-deep ravines, some with just bayonets. In the depths of those cavernous climbs was the place where the term "like shooting fish in a barrel" was used

by Confederate soldiers as they shot retreating federals, "where the suspenders cross their backs." This was also the important sweeping right flank in Johnston's plan that was not sweeping – it was crawling.

The stall caused Johnston to personally take control of the right flank, and in doing so he was struck by a wild bullet in the back of his knee. The sting he barely felt killed him in minutes, as he commanded from his horse in the Peach Orchard. This marked the death of the highest ranking officer of the war – Johnston was a four-star.

By the end of the first day's fighting at Shiloh, Buell's Army of the Ohio began to trickle ashore from across the river at Savannah, north of the landing. Later that night and throughout the following day, three more of Buell's divisions—Crittenden, McCook, and Wood—would move by boat from Savannah to Pittsburg Landing.[3] Sanders and Garfield's brigade in Wood's division would not arrive on the battlefield until late the second day of Shiloh.

The first day's fighting ended at dark. Exhausted and disorganized, the Confederates retired beyond the Hamburg-Purdy Road and bivouacked in captured Union camps. Union gunboats Lexington and Tyler pummeled the battlefield through the night, along with a violent thunderstorm that settled in at midnight, and the weary survivors spent the terrible night under bolts of lightning, listening to the cries of the wounded and dying.[4]

It began to rain, and flashes of lightning revealed hogs feeding on the ungathered dead. One soldier recalled: "Some cried for water, others for someone to come and help them. I can hear those poor fellows crying for water. God heard them, for the heavens opened and the rain came."

Grant spent that night beneath a tree rather than listen to the screams of the wounded from his headquarters. It was there that Sherman found him. "Well, Grant," he said, "we've had the devil's own day, haven't we?"

"Yes," said Grant. "Lick'em tomorrow, though."[5]

Earlier that day, while the battle raged, Wood's division was still on the road. With the heat of the day having its full effect, Sanders made his way along the muddy road through the rising steam of the mass

of marching wet soldiers. Around noon, a courier rode up to General Wood's caravan and delivered dispatches. Then, on a fresh horse, he rode off to find General Thomas, whose division was ten miles behind them.

Upon receiving the message General Wood ordered an immediate halt, and every man knew the purpose. The 64th was quickly directed to strip down to light marching order. Knapsacks, overcoats and even blankets were stacked by the roadside and left with guards from each company, to be loaded on the wagons. Cartridge boxes were filled to their full capacity of forty rounds, and each man was ordered to carry twenty additional rounds in his pockets.

Haversacks were hastily packed with three days' rations and canteens were filled from a nearby stream, all within about thirty minutes. The troops were ordered to fall in, followed by the command "Forward! Quick time-march!" and away they sped, trailed only by the artillery, ammunition train, hospital wagons and ambulances.

All that Sunday afternoon Sanders and the brigade pushed on in great haste, with only brief stops to rest. The sound of cannonading continued, growing louder and clearer as they approached the battle. They talked bravely to each other, and tried to feel that way, as they moved along in their hurried stride. Faces wore a serious look, and the usual jests were hardly spoken. There seemed at last to be the prospect of seeing what they had so long been looking for: a fight.

Toward evening another courier arrived who delivered orders from General Buell for the division to push on through the night and make every effort to reach the field as soon as possible. They were told that a great battle had been raging since early morning, that the situation was uncertain and that Grant's army was in desperate need of reinforcements.

Inspired with the supreme sense of duty and energized with adrenaline, few felt any fatigue from their heavy loads or the pace of the march. Near sundown they halted for half an hour at a small stream called Indian Creek to refresh themselves for the night march. Fires were lighted and they prepared plenty of strong coffee. As the twilight gathered, they again fell in and moved rapidly on through the darkening shadows.

Their route lay through a wild and desolate stretch of country. The road was very rough, full of ruts and stones and stumps, and led up and down hills and through sparse lowlands of heavy timber. The darkness came on quickly, the temperature grew colder, and before long black clouds spread across the sky, robbing the men of their very last shred of light. There was no moon, and the army groped its way, through darkness so black that no one could see the man next to him.

Around ten o'clock p.m. the first frequent rumblings of thunder told of the severe storm that was about to assail them. Thirty minutes later came flashes of blinding lightning, repeated in quick succession, and rain fell in torrents while thunder shook the earth.

Many of the younger men had never in their lives experienced such a storm. The rain poured down, flowing and rushing about in pools and rivers upon them as they slogged along through the dangerous quagmire.

The storm did not distract them from their goal, though the rain fell for three hours without interruption. The road was entirely flooded, with hidden holes into which men sank to their knees in water and mud. Flashes of lightning disclosed scenes of masses of struggling men, drenched and floundering in the mire, but man and animal pushed on. Before midnight the movement of artillery and vehicles of every kind was abandoned as wholly impracticable. The cannon wheels sank deep into the soft earth and were hopelessly stuck in the mud.

At first, attempts were made to help them along by putting twenty men to tug at the wheels, but the efforts proved useless. Many of the horses, terrified by the thunder and lightning, became unmanageable. The infantry was ordered to move on, leaving the artillery and wagons to follow at daylight.

Sanders dismounted and trudged along with the men, for riding was no less difficult or dangerous. Horses stumbled and fell, and in their distress could hardly be controlled. Some of them broke away in their fright, bolted into the darkness, and were never seen again.

Around two o'clock a.m. there was a lull in the storm, but the rain continued to drizzle until morning. Lieutenant Sanders and the 64th

pushed on, slogging through the mud in total darkness, without even lightning to reveal the way. For hours they strained their eyes for any glimpse of daylight, an endless hopeful gaze; but it was a long, long night.

Eventually faint outlines and varying hues began to emerge from the darkness. The sun began to cast its rays through the dripping wet trees and shimmering puddles. The eight thousand men of Wood's division emerged from the Tennessee night in a truly pitiful condition. For twenty-four hours they had not thought of sleep; their clothes, wet and mud soaked, were sucked to their skin.

They had eaten nothing during the night, except what on occasion their struggle would allow: a bit of hardtack, a gnaw of raw bacon. As soon as it was light enough to see, they halted for an hour's rest and refreshment. It was not easy to find anything that would burn, but by pulling down fences and a deserted shanty they succeeded in getting some fires started.

The morning air was raw and chilly, and the shivering men, numbed from the cold, hovered around the fires with their kettles, making coffee. The warmth soon began to work its healing effect, and the hot coffee greatly improved the mood among the exhausted men who lined both sides of the road for a mile.

The local population turned out for miles on each side of the road to see the long column pass. The battle then raging was as unexpected to them as it was to the men. Those residents had sons, brothers, husbands and fathers in the Confederate ranks.

Anxiety, fear and sorrow were depicted on their faces. Many of the women were crying bitterly. Most of them were too much affected to express themselves in words. Groups collected at every house.

At one point where the soldiers halted, several old, gray-haired men and women had come to hold a prayer-meeting, but they gave it up since everyone's thoughts were on the battle. One old patriarch could only say, "God give the victory to the right!" That prayer was answered the next day, although probably not in the way he had hoped.

Their halt was brief. While still engaged in drinking their coffee the terrible sounds of battle rang in their ears. Savannah was now only

four or five miles away, and they were only a dozen miles from where the deadly battle started anew. Every man, stirred by the same instinct, dumped his coffee, grabbed his gun and impulsively fell into line.

"Attention—battalion! Shoulder—arms! Right—face! Right shoulder shift—arms! Forwaaard—march!" and off they went at the quick-time to reach the river. The rain still fell off and on, and they had neither blankets nor overcoats. They halted just once or twice and arrived at Savannah about ten o'clock a.m. on the 7th.[6]

Overnight, Union Generals Crittenden and McCook ascended the embankment from the river to the battlefield. With Buell's reinforcements, Lew Wallace and veterans from Sunday's battle, the tightly compressed Union Army was ready for daylight.

At dawn, thus reinforced and seventy thousand strong, Grant's army burst forth like an unstoppable tsunami. One Confederate soldier described the Union soldiers that "sprang up like mushrooms" on the battlefield and drove into Beauregard's beleaguered thirty thousand remaining Confederates.

On the second day of the battle the sun rose over the little town of Savannah, Tennessee, revealing an unimaginable scene of extreme chaos and the ghastly sights of the wounded and dying. All night steamboats had been running to and from Pittsburg Landing, carrying up troops, artillery and ammunition for Buell's army, and returning with hundreds of wounded men from the first day's battle. All the buildings in the little village had been taken over for hospitals. The bodies of those who had died during the night littered every nook and cranny of the town. In nearly every house, surgeons dressed wounds and amputated shattered limbs.

As Garfield's brigade came down the main street toward the river, Sanders and the others could hear the groans of the suffering in nearly all directions. The horrific sight awakened in them, the reality of their possible fate.

The town was full of stragglers, who had fled there in their demoralization of the previous day. Officers and men on horseback were dashing about engaged in gathering up the fugitives from many

different regiments and organizing them into companies, with the hope they might be able to fight. Staff officers and orderlies hurried back and forth, issuing orders to move troops and ammunition to the front.

At the landing Sanders waited to be ferried to the field ten miles up the river, where the battle was raging. The steamer on which they were to go had recently arrived filled with wounded, who were being carried on shore as fast as possible. There were many with bleeding arms and legs, hobbling along as best they could, while others were carried on stretchers to any available building and placed in the care of the surgeons. Three or four corpses were carried ashore from the boat; they were soldiers who had died during the short passage from the battlefield. Nonetheless, every man agonized over the delay, anxious over the ensuing fight.

As soon as the wounded were removed from the boat, the brigade collected arms and went on board, the decks stained with blood. Their own artillery had not yet come up, but a battery was hastily loaded on the main deck with nearly two hundred boxes of ammunition.

Casting off the lines, they steamed upriver, the boat filled with men, horses, cannon and ammunition wagons called caissons. Every foot of space was occupied. From just upriver, the constant roar of battle became more and more distinct as they neared Pittsburg Landing. Halfway up they met a steamer coming down, filled with freshly wounded.

"How is it going?" shouted a dozen voices.

"It's bully today!" was the answer. "We're drivin' 'em all along the line. I reckon you'll have to hurry if you want to take a hand before the game is over!" And a resounding shout went up from the boat as they passed.

At about one o'clock p.m. they tied up at the landing and the gangplank was run out. General Garfield was the first ashore, with Colonel Harker and Lieutenant Sanders close at his heels. The troops hastily followed, clambering up the steep bank and forming in line at the top.

The landing was total bedlam. There was a desperate horde of thousands of stragglers and wounded, on foot and horseback; officers

dashed about giving orders; and the troops who had just arrived formed to move to the front.

Before them the battlefield of Shiloh stretched away for miles. They learned that the Union lines had gradually advanced since the renewal of the battle that morning. With the arrival of Buell's reinforcements, the enemy had been steadily forced back and was believed to be soon in full retreat.[7]

At first the determined counterattacks by Confederate Generals Breckinridge and Hardee hurled Nelson and Crittenden back. On Grant's right, Wallace, Sherman, McClernand and Hurlbut advanced, driving the Confederate left under Bragg and Polk steadily south. With the renewed attack from Crittenden and McCook, Breckinridge also withdrew. By noon, Beauregard's weakening Confederate battle line paralleled the Hamburg-Purdy Road.

To hold the Corinth Road, Beauregard led a series of counterattacks from Shiloh Church. From noon to two o'clock p.m. Sherman, Rousseau, Kirk and Gibson were hammered by the assaults at Water Oaks Pond. Reinforced by Tuttle, Crittenden seized the Eastern Corinth and Hamburg-Purdy Road Junction and drove the Confederates into Prentiss's old camps.

Here Nelson resumed his advance and by late afternoon seized the heights overlooking Locust Grove Branch. As Wood's division reinforced Crittenden, Grant moved Veatch forward to flank Beauregard's final counterattack.

Beauregard ordered a general retreat, placing Breckinridge in charge of the rear guard. To discourage further Union advance, Confederate batteries were massed at Shiloh Church and on the ridge south of Shiloh Branch.[8]

The 64th was quickly organized, a staff officer directing their movements with no delay. In a moment they were formed. The order was given, "Double-quick-March!" and off they went. W. F. Hinman of the 64th recalled, "Away we went over the field thickly strewn with the dead and dying. All the terrible scenes of the three succeeding years did not obliterate from my memory the picture of the first ghastly corpse I

saw. It was that of a Union soldier who had been struck by a cannonball, which carried away one leg and the lower part of his body. He lay where he fell, a short distance away being the mangled limb."

As Sanders advanced across the battlefield, he saw the dead lying about on every side, Union and Confederate soldiers often closely intermingled. The entanglement showed how desperately the ground had been fought over as the tide of battle ebbed and flowed.

As they neared the place of the fight, the air was filled with smoke. Now and then they heard a wild shout or yell, but the roar of battle was fading. Their lines seemed to be constantly advancing. Men with bleeding wounds who could help themselves streamed past to the rear.

"We've got 'em on the run, boys!" they shouted. "Go for 'em! Give 'em the best you've got in the shop!" Their own suffering seemed lost in the emotions of victory.

More sobering were the sights they would see on the actual field of battle, as they reached the ground that in just the past hour had been the scene of the last intense fighting between the armies. The dead lay thickly about, and among them were the severely wounded, screaming and moaning with pain, many of them near death.

The victorious shouts of the lines in front grew louder and louder, and then came a few terrific volleys of musketry. General Garfield spurred his horse and dashed ahead, while the men, already out of breath, followed as best they could. Soon they came in full view of the line of battle, and stray rebel bullets, still far beyond, began to fall around them. A few of the brigade were struck by these spent projectiles and received slight wounds, but none were killed.

General Garfield came back immediately, and they halted a few moments to see that their muskets were in order, for they had been drenched by the rain the previous night. Hastily wiping out their pieces they obeyed the command "Load!" and then away they went again at the double-quick. But now their whole line was charging, with a tremendous cheer.

Around two o'clock p.m. the 64th advanced upon the retreating Confederate line, approaching Peabody Road near the southeast corner

of Lost Field, where Lieutenant Sanders was likely just a few hundred feet up the road from Private Fitzgerald and the 10th Mississippi. The rebels gave way at all points and fled. The battle was over. "Well, boys, I guess it's your turn now!" proclaimed a wounded Confederate who sat against a stump, a bullet in his leg.

Garfield's brigade pressed on, joining in the pursuit for two or three miles, when they were recalled. The men were deeply disappointed that, after all their efforts, they had only reached the field in time to mostly hear the rebels' final retreat. They shouted and yelled with the rest, for they felt that they had at least earned the right to do that.

The lines were established for the night about two and a half miles from the river, at a point that had changed hands again and again during the two days of fierce fighting. Because they had not been engaged in the battle, they were considered "fresh" troops.

They were not. None had forgotten how exhausted they were, after their two-day ordeal of the hardest marching in such horrible conditions and without any sleep. They were in for a night of duty at the extreme front, and they prepared themselves to push through another awful night.

The wounded had nearly all been taken to the rear, but the ground everywhere was thickly strewn with the dead. The soldiers of Garfield's brigade stood the whole night in line of battle, although an attack was not expected. But, given the surprise the Union army had experienced the morning of April 6th, leadership was not going to take any chances.

The rebels, however, were utterly spent. Two or three times during the night there was some sporadic firing along the outposts, which readily caught the brigade's attention, but nothing came of it. A cold rain fell continuously and soaked them to the skin. Blankets and overcoats were stripped from the dead to cover and warm the living. Three or four men huddled together or squatted on the muddy ground with a soaking wet blanket over their heads, hoping to gain a little warmth.

General Garfield and Colonel Harker spent the night sitting together on a log, shivering in the cold, with one dripping blanket covering their shoulders. They fared no better than the rest of the men and bore their share of it without complaint. Lieutenant Sanders and the other staff

officers and orderlies stood ready. While the men kept an eye out for the enemy, they kept their eyes on the men and their commanders.

While the troops were instructed to maintain readiness, some of them were permitted to find what comfort they might, without standing at arms. Sometime during the night Captain Orlow Smith of Company G of the 65th Ohio thought he would try to get some rest, even if he had to lie down in the mud. Finding a soldier covered in a blanket, and thinking him one of his own, he crawled under the blanket and drifted off to sleep, only to wake at reveille next to a dead Confederate soldier.[9]

It is notable to recognize the names given to this battle, for it is commonly called both the Battle of Shiloh and the Battle of Pittsburg Landing. Shiloh was the name of the crude log house of worship around which some of the heaviest fighting took place - *Shiloh* ironically meaning "place of peace" in Hebrew. The Battle of Pittsburg Landing, as Sanders identified it in his correspondence home, was the same battle.

CHAPTER 6

Dear Corinthians

Major General Henry Halleck arrived at Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, on April 11th, 1862, commanding both Grant's Army of the Tennessee and Buell's Army of the Ohio. Along with the Army of the Mississippi, they formed the newly established "Grand Army of the Tennessee." Halleck's plan included the use of the Grand Army with over one hundred thousand men in a campaign to control the South. His first objective was the railroad junctions at Corinth, Mississippi.

Determined to avoid another surprise, Halleck began an exceedingly cautious and deliberate march toward Beauregard's Army just twenty-five miles away. The first Battle of Corinth would mockingly be remembered as the Siege of Corinth. By May 25th, 1862, after moving five miles in three weeks, Halleck would be in position to attack the town.[1]

Daylight brought Sanders a most welcome relief from the raw cold the morning of the 8th of April. But the comforting warmth of day also brought along the horror of the unimaginable death left upon the battlefield. Most of the men, many still boys, had never seen a dead person, let alone thousands of them, who had been violently killed. In all directions lay the silent forms of those slain in battle, man and animal alike. Across the entire landscape the riddled, splintered trees told the ominous story of the ferocity of the fight.

The men were frozen, aching and hungry. Light discipline had been

strictly enforced throughout the night, no fires had been allowed along their lines, and very few of the men had slept at all. Stiff and sore, wet to the skin and shivering for the past thirty-six hours, they were scarcely able to move.

With the few kettles found in the camps, details were sent to the rear to make coffee. No clean water was available, so the men made do with that which had gathered in puddles on the battlefield. Despite the use of certainly contaminated water, coffee was made, and every man enjoyed its soothing effect. The tradeoff would be devastating, for the brigade would lose vastly greater numbers from illness than would die in combat.

On April 8th, Grant instructed Sherman and McClernand to support Taylor's cavalry with infantry, determine whether the enemy had retreated and, if so, conduct further reconnaissance toward Corinth.[2]

The reconnaissance forces moved out quickly for five or six miles to the front, where the skirmishers found the rebels. It was presumed to be only a small observation force, and they were ordered to attack at once. While the lines were being formed, General Garfield rode out in front of the brigade and gave a motivating speech, urging every man to do his duty, and, if need be, meet death bravely.

Disappointingly, however, when the men charged through the thicket to where the enemy was supposed to be posted, they were gone. To their right the rebels did show the desire to fight. An intense skirmish killed or wounded men on both sides. It lasted just a few minutes and the rebels fled.

The reconnaissance force remained in the vicinity for a few hours, and then slowly made their way back to camp, re-entering their lines late in the evening. The mission proved to be a complete waste of both time and their last bit of energy.

Garfield's men were happy finally to be relieved from duty and sent to the rear to bivouac for the night. They marched back to within a mile of the river, where they stacked arms and dropped the gear they had carried continuously for three days and two nights. They built fires, made coffee, roasted bacon and filled their bellies. Utterly

exhausted, the men gave in to the sixty-eight hours of continuous operations without any rest.

Some had picked up blankets or overcoats from the battlefield, but most in just their filthy, wet clothes sank into the mud and drifted off to sleep. The relentless rain continued, but despite the impossible conditions they slept soundly until roused half an hour before daylight, when they were called to stand in line of battle.

As the reconnaissance forces returned earlier that Tuesday, they saw that the work of burying nearly three thousand dead had already begun. This was not just for moral reasons, for in the humid air decomposition had already begun. The dead stretched for miles across the battlefield, reeking of decay and the spilled contents of open bowels.

The carcasses of hundreds of horses lay scattered about, filling the air with their nauseating stench. Some of the animals were buried, while others were burned on great mounds of wood which produced its own peculiar smell.

The bodies of the slain were gathered at convenient points and buried in long trenches. Side by side they were laid, generally wrapped in blankets, and carefully covered with the earth over which they had so bravely fought and given their lives. Where identification was possible, a board was placed at the head and rudely inscribed with the soldier's name and regiment. The rebel dead were buried in separate trenches; very few of these could be identified in any way.

During the whole of Tuesday and Wednesday, the burial parties were engaged in their somber task, scouring the field beyond the actual fighting ground. Many of the mortally wounded had crawled away into the woods and thickets. For weeks to follow, decayed remains were occasionally found as the army gradually advanced toward Corinth.[3]

By Thursday the soldiers of Garfield's brigade were badly used up, after the excessive hardship and exposure of the previous three days. General Wood ordered a generous ration of whisky issued to each officer and man. This was rarely done, except upon occasions like this, when the men had suffered so severely from extraordinary exposure and pushed to the very limits of endurance. Many temperate men,

like Sanders, might have felt that this was not the right answer, but that morning at Shiloh there were few who did not drink their rations. These men traded theirs for coffee with others who were only too glad to get the additional ration. The ration was one gill, a quarter of a pint per man.

When General Buell had reached Pittsburg Landing near the close of the first day's fight, matters looked very grim for the Union Army. He had then asked General Grant whether he had made provisions for a retreat in case the battle went against him on the following day. Grant replied that he had not even thought of that; he had come there to stay and had no intention of changing his purpose.

He did stay, and they all stayed with him the next day to defeat the rebels. For two months after, April and May, they engaged in what some called the Siege of Corinth. Preparations were made on a massive scale for the advance upon Beauregard, who had succeeded to the command of the rebel army upon the death of General Johnston during the battle. All available intelligence indicated that Beauregard was receiving reinforcements from all over the region, and no effort was spared to bring the Union Army up in size.

By the latter part of April, General Halleck commanded more than one hundred thousand men, all advancing on the town. The massive force was organized as Right Wing, Center, Left Wing and Reserve. Garfield's brigade was in the Center, which was composed of the divisions of McCook, Nelson, Wood and Crittenden and commanded by General Buell.

For weeks, a much greater battle than Shiloh seemed imminent. The next days and weeks, with the monotony of drilling and picket duty for the Army of the Ohio as it advanced on Corinth, were agonizingly slow. It was another week before the knapsacks, blankets and overcoats they had left behind finally reached them. During that time the men lay in the mud, enduring tremendous physical hardship.

After the battle the rain fell in torrents and the continuous tread of thousands upon thousands of men and animals had turned every route of travel into a bog. While waiting for their wagons, they were wholly

without shelter but for rude huts made of poles and the boughs of trees. These were little protection against the showers which continued to visit with ridiculous frequency. They had no change of clothing and did not get dry for ten days.

They did, however; forego the usual three or four hours a day in company and battalion drill. This would come later, after the mud had dried and conditions bringing an entirely different misery emerged. The lines of the army fully established, they were positioned about three miles from Pittsburg Landing and a short distance to the east on the road to Corinth.

On the evening of April 16th, the men perked up at the familiar yells of the mule driver and were happy to finally see their wagons arrive. For eleven days, they had been without tents, overcoats or blankets, exposed to storm and sun, and had suffered that entire time in the same filthy clothes. A considerable portion of their baggage had been lost or stolen, and what was left was damp and moldy. Since by that time anything was an improvement, they pitched tents, unpacked their belongings and made something as close to home as they could.

The weather began to improve, and the mud began to dry. The daily sick-call was attended by large numbers who went for their doses of quinine and blue-mass. It really didn't seem to make any difference what ailed the men – the two medicines were the Ibuprofen of the day and doctors in the field prescribed them both liberally.

Since they had left Savannah more than a hundred men from each regiment had been sent to the hospital. Many whose condition made them unfit for duty for days or weeks had been sent north by steamboats. Many died and others were discharged; few ever rejoined their regiments.

On April 18th there was a general advance of the Union lines. They struck tents and moved some three miles to the front. Not surprisingly, it rained all day and they were again thoroughly soaked. The air was raw and cold, and both day and night were miserable. To make matters worse, the location of their camp was terrible; there was no spring in the area, and their only water supply was a small stream that wandered across the battlefield, and viscous puddles of polluted rainwater.

About that time an order was issued requiring all the troops to stand in line of battle every morning, from three-thirty a.m. until the day had fully dawned. This continued for five or six weeks, until the siege was over.

On April 22nd they moved camp a short distance to higher ground and the rain seemed to abate along with the move.[4] Six days later, Grant moved his divisions forward to a point along the Corinth Road that was occupied by their advance pickets, each occupying positions in advance of the road, all with similar instructions.[5]

Grant ordered Sherman to move a detail of two brigades and one company of artillery from his 5th Division out the following morning to support General Wallace, who had left that afternoon to destroy the railroad near Bethel. Wood's orders were nearly identical to Sherman's.[6]

Accordingly, the following morning, the 29th, although Garfield's men had occupied their new camp for just a few days, they pulled up stakes again and moved nearly five miles toward Corinth. Their march was through a most desolate section of country and over awful roads – again, it rained the entire movement. Just before going into camp in their new position, they emerged into a fertile, cultivated spot. As they halted the band played and the men cheered.

When they left their old camp, many of the sick from the two regiments and the 6th Battery – which had joined them just a few days before – were sent to the hospital, further reducing their already much depleted ranks.[7]

Sanders was on the battlefield east of the Corinth Road and north of the Bark Road when he began a letter he had promised to write to Martha Edgerton. He sent the letter marked from Pittsburgh Landing, Tenn. He wrote the letter in two parts, the first on the 28th and the second on the 30th, beginning with the greeting "My Dear Little Cousin." The letter reads as follows:

> Actually, I have committed myself to write to you and write I will.
>
> The same individual which talks to Peter upon an island has been repeating to me that same conversation and trying

to pass it off as new and original – "write" – All right say I but then I have read some and I have the authority here in my desk to show that what you say is mere repetition.

The honest presence says true but I only repeat it on rare occasion and to rare persons. Peter in the year 38 and you in 1862. So here is my effort. Writing to a nice young lady I must pick my subject. Not of the bloody cruel horrors of the battle field which I saw, not of the monotony of this oak grove for this is no civilized country but a land upon which the almighty has stretched out x x x the lines of confusion and the stones of emptiness, not upon the dull scenes of the camp so often repeat themselves before me will I write and what is then left to write about why yourself say you and the same question show wisdom beyond your size for I am a subject to interest any lady of so good taste as yourself.

I call that a rather hard beginning for a letter to you I wrote it night before last. I was sick which you will have perceived before reading thus far my epistle I have been doing duty ever since. I have been here although excused by the surgeon for a week to come just after I commence writing you. Orders came to prepare for an immediate attack on the dear Corinthians a people in whom Paul felt so much interest that he wrote them two long letters of advice which while they felt a profound interest in them, they never very fully appreciated. We left yesterday our camp and have gone out through the woods five or six miles and are today (Apr 30th) encamped upon an old plantation which I wish you could see. The owner came here from S.C. after early day and bought him 400 acres & with (slaves) to help him, has been fighting scorpions, fleas, spiders, snakes, bugs and all other vile and poisonous reptiles until his farm has run down, the old log fence which he built when he came here is now rotted once his head his boys have run away to the war..."[8]

Martha "Mattie" Amelia Edgerton

Meanwhile, Beauregard was still in command of the Confederate Army and he had plenty of time to choose a strategy. His superiors wanted the Memphis & Charleston Railroad junction held, but Beauregard was certain that Memphis would fall to the Union first. He determined to wait until the last minute and then withdraw to hold the Mobile & Ohio Railroad. As time advanced, Beauregard became frustrated by the Union's slow approach. Confederate morale was low, and Beauregard was outnumbered two to one. All around Corinth the water was bad. Typhoid and dysentery had claimed the lives of almost

as many men as he had lost at Shiloh. At a council of war his officers concluded that they could not hold the railroad crossing.

When the Union Grand Army finally reached Corinth, Beauregard enacted his plan. He allowed false information about a Confederate advance to leak to the cautious Halleck. The sick and wounded of Beauregard's army were evacuated by train, along with their heavy equipment. Throughout the night, he kept the empty trains running, with orders to stop at certain points where Confederate soldiers loudly greeted the arrival of "reinforcements." Campfires burned and drummers beat reveille at the usual hours, but the soldiers had already moved out. Beauregard's soldiers even mounted fake siege guns manned by stuffed mannequins.[9]

Each day that the Union drew closer to Corinth, the likelihood of a general engagement increased. There was occasional contact and heavy firing broke out along those points where the whole army was in line.

As a result, Halleck determined that the construction of entrenchments had become necessary to avoid another Shiloh. A new policy was adopted, and miles of works were built.

At first the men resisted the labor, but it became clear to all of those who had faced the rebel onslaught without protection on that Sunday morning at Shiloh that they should build them and build them quickly. Where no shovels were available, the men used bayonets, sticks and even their hands to dig rifle pits.

Toward the end of April, when the sun began to beat down, daily drills were prescribed for all the troops not engaged in picket or other duty. Each day came company and battalion drills, with an occasional brigade drill thrown in as well.[10]

As the massive Union Army drew closer to enemy lines, the situation grew more and more serious. There were frequent alarms, day and night, and each one caused the signal to "fall in" of a hundred thousand men, most likely on both sides. With the two biggest kids on the block squared off, all waited with high tension to see who would flinch first.

At the evening formation of May 8th, orders were read announcing the capture of New Orleans by Admiral Farragut; the whole army

cheered. It was also announced that McClellan was making good headway toward Richmond and the speedy capture of the Confederate capital was expected.

It was believed the war would soon be over and they could all go home in a few days, but it would be another three years before the fall of Richmond, and nearly four years before the few that were left of Garfield's brigade would "stack arms for the last time."[11]

During the afternoon of the 17th, Wood's division was ordered, with three days' cooked rations in their haversacks and their tools, to cross Seven Mile Creek and occupy a position on the Purdy and Farmington Road. They did not reach their intended position until late that night.

Upon their arrival a strong skirmish was going on between the outposts of General W. T. Sherman's division and the rebels, while the main body of the division was actively engaged in entrenching itself. Without any knowledge of the ground and with strong indications of an attack in the morning, the division rested with their rifles at the ready during the night. Wood's division was encamped in two lines in an order of battle considered strong enough to withstand any Confederate attack.[12]

Wood received information from the outposts about ten o'clock p.m. Wednesday night the 21st that there was a movement on foot by the enemy, and that he was apparently massing troops immediately in their front. He directed Garfield to go to the outposts and verify the report. Garfield returned about midnight satisfied that the information was correct. Supposing an early morning attack was imminent, the made preparations to meet it.

From deserters who came into the outposts, rumors from the rebel camps suggested that a very heavy force, estimated at seventy thousand, had been marched out the previous afternoon and night and that morning, commanded by General Bragg himself, to make a grand attack on their center. This attack was to be preceded by an attack on their right flank. A failed demonstration on the right during the day confirmed the statements of the deserters, which was confirmed by other deserters from different regiments.

Having completed the task of securing their entrenched camp, Wood's division remained in position, quietly awaiting the moment for moving forward to attack Beauregard's army. A week passed by, but the moment never came.[13]

During that time, relative quiet existed along the lines save for the occasional picket firing and artillery shots. The claims by rebel deserters that there were signs that Beauregard intended to evacuate Corinth a few days later were proved correct.

During the 27th, 28th and 29th the rebels showed unusual activity all along the line. The pickets skirmished continually, and heavy firing at various points kept the Union Army in a constant state of alarm. There was very little sleep, and five or six times a day they were called into line at the entrenchments.

Hinman described it as like keeping a railroad hotel, with "warm meals at all hours for the wayfaring public." It was just a ruse to distract Halleck while Corinth was being evacuated. All during the days and nights of constant skirmishing and standing at arms in the trenches, Beauregard was making his preparations to "jump the town."

Train after train hauled the heavy artillery, munitions and baggage south out of town. The night of May 29th was the last night the rebels spent in the trenches defending Corinth. While their pickets put on a noisy show, the rest of Beauregard's army quietly folded their tents, left their huts and slipped away into the night.[14]

The early morning silence of the 30th was broken by the loud sound of powerful explosions. The outposts of the most advanced divisions pushed forward to discover the Confederate ruse and that the loud explosions were the rebels destroying material they were unable to move.[15]

CHAPTER 7

Alabama – An Exercise in Futility

The war in the western theater was as much a matter of opponents finding each other and transporting men and equipment to the right location at the right time as it was a tactical contest. Control of the Mississippi River at Vicksburg appeared to be the only meaningful objective in Mississippi.

Grant and Pope approached from the north, along with an expedition of the forces that had captured New Orleans in April and had begun their movement northward up the river to occupy Natchez and Baton Rouge. Halleck turned his attention eastward, although he found that controlling just northern Alabama and middle Tennessee would be far more difficult than he had imagined.

The Confederates had also concentrated their troops from Corinth to oppose this advance, and shadowed Buell along the south side of the Tennessee River in middle Alabama. The Union firmly held Nashville and most of Kentucky but little else.

A small division of about eight thousand federals commanded by Brigadier General Mitchel drove well into northern Alabama in March, while the Army of the Ohio left Nashville to join Grant at Pittsburg Landing. Mitchel made it to Huntsville, Alabama, located on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad.

A Confederate force with fewer than ten thousand men was the only sizable one in the area, and it was stretched thin across eastern Tennessee from Cumberland Gap to Knoxville and Chattanooga, Tennessee. After

losing the Cumberland Gap, the Confederates gave up a critical access into eastern Tennessee, including the strategically significant rail line at Chattanooga connecting Virginia with the western Confederacy.

Wanting to begin the invasion of Georgia by the middle of June 1862, General Halleck sent Buell's Army of the Ohio eastward from Corinth to seize Chattanooga. The railroad eastward from Huntsville passed through Stevenson, Alabama, and continued along the Tennessee Valley, providing the most direct line of advance to Chattanooga.

On the afternoon of June 1st, Garfield marched his brigade back to their old camp behind the entrenchments. With a plan for operations apparently decided upon, they were ordered to march early the next day.

They were awakened early the next morning and by 8:00 a.m. their long column was cutting a trail through the thick woods and swamps around Corinth. Turning eastward, their route took them along the whole line of General Pope's position at Farmington that had been heavily fortified during the last day of the siege.

The Union works were very strong and before the rebels had evacuated had been extended daily to envelop Beauregard's right flank. Bearing still farther east, the brigade marched through a wild and isolated region of bogs and swamps that reeked with foul odors and were full of poisonous snakes and biting insects.

They constructed corduroy road through the swamps, but in some places the floating logs made for a good swim. After eleven more miles, they found tolerable ground on which to camp.

Darkness fell over the bivouac without any sign of their wagons. Those who had carried their blankets were fortunate; but most had not, having piled them on the wagons, and they spent the night shivering and sleepless. Although daytime in June was very warm, even hot, the cold, moist southern nights soaked through clothes and chilled the skin.

In the morning the wagons were found stuck in the mire four or five miles to the rear, both teamsters and mules having given up in exhaustion. After several hours spent rescuing the pitifully waterlogged procession, the soldiers returned to the brigade and resumed the march at noon.

For eight miles they suffered a dry, sandy desert without fresh

water. It was scorching hot and many men fell behind, dehydrated and overheated. The wagons and ambulances were unable to accommodate most of them and as soon as the brigade reached camp they rushed back with water to collect casualties.

An order came down from General Wood's headquarters to the relief of the weary men. They were told that there were mineral springs at Iuka, Mississippi, and that Southerners considered it a resort. As the soldiers passed through the town, a large group of "Southern belles" came down to the front gate of a young ladies' academy to watch them march by. Although pleased at the sight, the lonely men of the brigade were painfully reminded of their own girlfriends, wives and daughters.

The brigade camped three miles beyond Iuka and rested there for several days.

On the 9th of June, Lieutenant Sanders and the brigade left their camp standing and was back on the road with two days' rations. They marched eight brisk miles to Bear Creek, in Alabama, where they were directed to stack arms and go to work replacing the railroad bridge destroyed by the rebels.

Several of the 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics were already engaged in the work, and Garfield's brigade was put to work cutting timber, removing the debris of the old bridge and gathering large quantities of stone to make a foundation for a trestle. The brigade worked in shifts and the off-duty soldiers enjoyed bivouacked near Bear Creek and enjoyed the cool relief of its clear waters.

They continued bridge-building the next morning and before noon marched back to their camp, relieved by a regiment of Kentuckians. On the 12th they resumed their journey under the scorching hot sun as they groped along through choking dust. Fording Bear Creek was a tremendous relief, and the troops went on their way uplifted and refreshed.

Except for the discomfort from the extreme heat, the brigade's march through northern Alabama was pleasant compared to the miserable swamps around Corinth. The men had plenty of rations for the most part, as the orders restricting foraging were generally lifted.

Several cases of sunstroke occurred in the brigade, some fatal. The

extreme heat was sometimes avoided by marching at 4:00 a.m. and finishing before the midday heat, or sometimes resting for several hours in the middle of the day and marching a few miles toward evening.

On the 14th of June, Garfield's brigade reached Tuscumbia, Alabama, and went into camp half a mile west of the town. Their tents were pitched in an open field, without any shade. The sun beat down relentlessly; however, there was plenty of good water from a clear, cold stream (likely Spring Creek).

They expected to remain for some time at Tuscumbia, and the morning after their arrival an order was given for four drills a day. When not drilling, the work of rebuilding burned bridges and repairing the railroad was hard-pressed. On the 16th the first train arrived from Corinth.

A great roar of cheering rang out through all the camps at the first sound of the locomotive whistle. The train brought a company of Michigan Engineers to work on the Tuscumbia Bridge and a squad of recovering wounded. It also brought the men a large shipment of mail, their first in more than two weeks.

Tuscumbia, Alabama, was a beautiful place, its many fine business blocks and residences uncommon in Southern towns. The people were generally enthusiastic secessionists and even the young ladies turned up their noses at the sight of the federal blue and took a detour in the street to avoid passing under a United States flag.

At one o'clock in the morning on the 24th, the long drumroll brought the men quickly out of their tents for preparation to march at once. Before daylight their bands stirred the sleeping citizens of Tuscumbia as the brigade marched through the streets. They quickly marched out onto the road headed toward Decatur.

At 9:00 a.m. they halted and lay in the shade until 3:00 p.m., when they resumed the march. Their progress was hampered by a violent thunderstorm. Two hours later they turned into camp, muddy and drenched.

Soon the glow of a hundred fires dotted the area and the next day they stayed in camp. The spot was a clean, grassy slope on the bank of

a stream of pure water, shaded by oaks that kept the ground cool and breezy. They would have been ordered to drill, but, fortunately, there was no suitable ground within reach. They were surrounded in all directions by sprawling cornfields.

The brigade was camped on the plantation of a truly horrid man who owned some two hundred slaves whose appearance showed that they were no strangers to the whip. The planter visited the camp and scowled at the Union soldiers as he passed along their lines. Scenes likes these represented a terrible conflict of interest for soldiers and their officers, as they were strictly forbidden to involve themselves in local moral conflicts with noncombatants.

They marched early on the morning of the 26th and on the 28th they entered Decatur, situated on the south bank of the Tennessee River. It was a major northern Alabama cotton market, with the Tennessee River and railroad providing excellent shipping. Before the war it was a busy town; however, General Mitchel had been there and left it deserted in blackened ruins.

The railroad bridge there had been a wonderful seven-hundred-foot-long edifice on fifteen enormous stone piers. Mitchel in fact had desired to preserve the bridge, but was attacked by a superior force of rebels who compelled him to withdraw and destroyed the structure. Nothing was left but charred buttresses.

The brigade's only means of crossing the river was a small, decrepit steamboat. Barely fifty men could cross at a time, so all afternoon the tiny vessel went back and forth. Before dark the brigade was once again north of the Tennessee River.

On the 2nd of July the brigade marched five miles eastward on the railroad track to Mooresville, a place that was little more than a name but for a splendid spring of water. The brigade laid out camp and remained there for some time. The details from Town Creek and Courtland rejoined the brigade and four daily drills were begun promptly on the 3rd. The brigade celebrated their first Fourth of July in the army. Salutes were fired by Captain Bradley's 6th Ohio Light Battery at dawn, noon and dusk, and all drills and other unnecessary duties were suspended.

For several days and at different points insurgents had been attempting to ruin the railroad, was the brigade's only line of supply. With the brigade's rations now running low, the shortage was made up by foraging from the surrounding country. All through the region the land was mostly planted in corn instead of cotton, as ordered by the Confederate government at Richmond. The cornfields were just beginning to yield "roasting ears," and these, with a few vegetables and early fruits, an occasional pig or chicken, and an abundance of blackberries, helped make up the difference. The supply was, however, insufficient to supply everyone, with the exception for green corn in abundance.[1]

By July, Lieutenant Sanders, still frustrated by his lack of advancement to a higher position in the regiment despite his recommended appointment to a position as one of the field officers of the regiment, which had gone ignored, wrote to Governor Tod that those offices had been given to others. He reminded Tod that he had been assigned to the position of adjutant, and in that capacity he was assured by his friends that he had not disappointed.[2]

At Mooresville General Garfield left the brigade on a sick furlough, having for some time been in failing health. Ordered to Washington a few weeks later, he was engaged for a time as a member of the court-martial of General Fitz John Porter.

After the death of Colonel Garesche at Stone's River, Garfield was appointed to chief of staff to General William S. Rosecrans. He served in that capacity at the Battle of Chickamauga when, after having been elected to Congress, he resigned from the army. Colonel Harker resumed command of the brigade until his death at Battle of Kennesaw Mountain.

Mail from home brought news of McClellan's failed campaign against Richmond and the call by the President for three hundred thousand additional troops. This news greatly disappointed the men of the brigade, who had been led to believe that they might soon pack their knapsacks and start for home.[3]

Meanwhile, Buell positioned half of his army at the mouth of

Battle Creek in hopes of protecting Stevenson, Alabama, where the connection of the Memphis and Charleston line with the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad gave him two alternative lines.

Wood's 6th Division, to which Sanders and the 64th belonged, was sent in mid-July to Decherd, just west of the Cumberland Plateau.[4] Lieutenant Sanders was detached to assist the 1st Michigan Engineers commanded by Colonel Innes, who was under the gun from General Buell to build fortifications protecting the bridges along the Nashville and Decatur line.*

That section of road and the Nashville-Chattanooga line, along with the Decatur-Stevenson section of the Memphis and Charleston line formed a strategic triangle of supply and communication.[5]

Along the Nashville and Decatur line the rail spanned Sulphur Creek just before reaching the town of Elkmont, Alabama. The Sulphur Creek Trestle spanned that drainage during the war with the tallest bridge of that line.

To the east of Huntsville, the Nashville and Chattanooga line climbed up the western side of the Cumberland Plateau into the valley of Crow Creek to Stevenson. Two tunnels that took the line under the worst part of the plateau were clear targets of the Confederates.

The Army of the Ohio was spread out on a line sixty miles long on a front that generally faced east. The left was at McMinnville, Tennessee, the center at Decherd, Tennessee, and the right near Stevenson, Alabama – the whole line facing Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Buell was forced to stop his advance there to secure his communications, the railroad. He had found that the difficulties of sustaining a large campaign in this area was more enormous than anyone could have imagined. Even Mitchel's small division of only ten thousand men was barely able to sustain itself in the mountains of northern Alabama, and Buell had seventy thousand. The railroads had to be repaired before he could even think about Chattanooga. The

* Today, the original Nashville and Decatur line is no longer complete, and a portion of it from County Road 81 north of Athens, Alabama, to the state line is now the popular Richard Martin Trail, a nature trail closed to motorized vehicles.

rail lines already required much repair and were nearly impossible to protect from attack. The Memphis and Charleston line was of little concern compared to the two northern running lines. This line entered the Tennessee River Valley in northeastern Mississippi and essentially followed the Tennessee River to Chattanooga. The most vulnerable point was at Bridgeport, Alabama, with its mile-long bridge.

The Nashville and Chattanooga line traversed more difficult terrain. It had three big bridges over major rivers and went through a tunnel south of Decherd that was over two thousand, two hundred feet long.

In addition to these two main lines, Buell struggled to open a third route, the Nashville and Decatur line. This railroad would provide insurance for Buell, and Sanders was placed on it to assist in the construction of fortifications to defend it. If the Nashville and Chattanooga line were cut, it could be a viable contingency.

But the Nashville and Decatur line represented a far greater challenge than either of the other two. It ran through rough terrain and had twelve substantial bridges between Nashville and Columbia alone, many of which lay in dense wilderness virtually unreachable by any force except by rail.

The largest targets on the line were the trestle at Culleoka, Alabama, that was over a thousand feet long and, at another point, had a curving tunnel a quarter-mile long. The first major concern, however, was a seven-hundred-foot-long bridge over the Elk River that was fifty-eight feet high.

The cost in resources necessary to repair and defend the bridge were great, but Buell was determined to use it. He deployed the 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics with detachments of infantrymen as labor, and persisted with the notion of repairing. The work was slow but by July 12th the Elk River Bridge was ready and the Nashville and Chattanooga line opened.

The need for troops to guard all of Buell's rail lines was imperative, for insurgents had already begun to attack them. Buell put two regiments of infantry, a battery and some cavalry at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, to serve as a mobile force to protect the line.

Well-fortified blockhouses were built along both the

Nashville-Decatur and Nashville-Chattanooga lines, while more expedient stockades were constructed on the Memphis and Charleston line. Much stronger than mere stockades, these blockhouses were needed for protection against the better firearms and possibly even artillery possessed by the mobile cavalry forces operating in Middle Tennessee. The less substantial stockades were all that were needed against the isolated bands of insurgents in the Tennessee River Valley.[6]

On July 13th Buell's garrison, commanded by Brigadier General Crittenden at Murfreesboro, was hit by fourteen hundred cavalrymen under Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest.[7] The federal pickets were taken by surprise as Forrest's cavalry fought a swirling action with several detached Union forces and managed to capture nearly twelve hundred Union soldiers before the day was over.

He also destroyed a quarter-million dollars' worth of federal property, the railroad depot and a nearby bridge before escaping eastward. His exploits delayed the first shipment of supplies to Buell along the newly rebuilt Nashville and Chattanooga line, forcing him to keep his army on half rations.[8] The pressure to secure the Nashville and Decatur line was now immense.

Sanders reached Stevenson before 11:00 a.m. on the 18th of July. Just down the line at Bridgeport the rail was cut, and stretching across the river was a long row of bare and blackened piers where the bridge had been. Their excursion by rail clearly at an end, the brigade set camp a short distance south of the railroad and a quarter-mile from the river.[9]

Insurgents continually hit the railroad between Tuscumbia and Decatur, avoiding the fortifications built along the line, and cut it by the 25th. The line to Chattanooga was finally reopened nearly a week following Forrest's destruction of three bridges near Nashville. The first supplies reached Stevenson on July 29th, allowing Buell's men to return to full rations. However, another Confederate raid soon followed, supply was once again cut off and the men were soon back on half rations.[10]

Buell's other supply options had literally dried up. The Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers had fallen so low by mid-July that heavily laden boats could not move upriver from either Nashville or Pittsburg Landing.

The Memphis and Charleston line also proved to be inadequate. It could easily support enough shipments from Memphis to feed Grant's garrison at Corinth, but the area east of that point was still open to attack.

For weeks, Buell's long and slender line of supply was the target of rebel cavalry. They tore up the railroad track, destroyed bridges, burned out and plugged tunnels and captured trains loaded with supplies, destroying what they could not carry away. The result of these constant raids put the Union on half rations very soon after their arrival, and by early August they were reduced to one quarter of the regulation allowance.[11]

These conditions quickly became intolerable. From the time they left Nashville, the brigade's regiments experienced the extreme loss of officers by death from a list of diseases.[12] Before the brigade had been in active service a month, many of the officers had already begun to resign. In 1862 no fewer than sixteen of the 64th and eighteen of the 65th resigned. Fewer than half of the officers who'd left Camp Buckingham remained.[13]

On August 6th the Nashville and Decatur was finally opened.[14] By the 8th, General Wood was directed to begin the impressment of black slaves to work on the fortifications.[15] On the 10th Colonel Harker received orders from General Buell to return the slaves employed on public works.

When Lieutenant Sanders received the order he refused and resigned his commission at Stevenson over the matter.[16] His objection was fully substantiated, since General Mitchel had written Secretary Stanton back in May about providing government protection to blacks who gave valuable information. Stanton replied in a telegram on May 5th: "The assistance of slaves is an element of military strength which, under proper regulations, you are fully justified in employing for your security and the success of your operations."

Stanton explained that the enemy was using them and that not using them judiciously would be a "…failure to employ means to suppress the rebellion and restore the authority of the Government. Protection to those who furnish information or other assistance is a high duty."[17]

For all the maddening scramble to keep up fortifications and repairs, Sanders' contribution must have certainly helped in success with the rails, for the supply problem that plagued Buell's operation was finally relieved when the ever-difficult Nashville and Decatur line was finally ready for use on August 11th.

Unfortunately, Colonel John Hunt Morgan cut off Nashville itself when the Confederate general struck the Louisville and Nashville line at Gallatin, Tennessee, twenty-five miles *north* of Nashville, on August 12th. He easily captured the small garrison without a struggle, loaded several flatcars with flammable material, set them on fire, and pushed them into the Big South Tunnel causing it to cave in.

Morgan also burned forty railroad cars and a quantity of stores, and destroyed a bridge south of the tunnel, another bridge south of Gallatin, a trestle and six hundred feet of track. This was a very serious setback for the Union.[18]

In the first year of the war, near the time of Sanders' departure, Frank Mitchell, a slave ran away from his master and went to the Northern army. He was picked up by the 64th Ohio Volunteer infantry and made a cook for a company in the regiment.

It was some time after the battle of Shiloh, and the 64th Ohio regiment was camped in the woods near Iuka, Mississippi, on a Sunday morning. Lieutenant Sanders was in his tent when suddenly he heard a loud screaming out on the parade ground. He asked the orderly to see what the trouble was, and soon afterward went out himself.

There he saw a black man running across the parade ground as hard as he could go, and behind him a great strapping fellow was doing his best to catch up with him. As he was closing in on the man, Sanders' orderly halted the two and placed Mitchell with the officer of the guard. Sanders question him as to why he was running across the parade ground in that manner. He said he was Frank Mitchell, a slave who had belonged to a soldier in the Confederate army and he had run away. He informed Sanders that he was a good cook, so Sanders kept him as a cook in a company of the regiment until transferring him into another brigade with his cousin, Dr. Pierce, but he soon returned.

When Sanders left the army over the mishandling of other slaves, Mitchell begged him to take him along. Sanders told him that he was going on horseback, and that if Mitchell could make it to Tallahoma in southern Tennessee he would take him north. Sanders rode along very rapidly but every night when he camped, to his astonishment Mitchell would amble into his camp and stay with him.

In Louisville they boarded a boat for Cincinnati. On the other side of the Ohio an officer asked him who the darky was. Sanders replied that Mitchell was a free man and they were traveling together. The officer said that they did not allow any negro to go out of Kentucky who did not show his free papers. Sanders told the man that he did not have any papers. The officer told him that he was sorry, but he could not take him out of that state. Sanders told the porter to leave his trunk on the boat, having made up his mind that he would not go out of Kentucky unless Mitchell went with him.

Brigadier General R. S. Granger, an old friend of Sanders, was in command of Louisville at the time. Sanders went to see him, telling him that he wanted to take Mitchell back North. General Granger soon fixed matters and when Sanders took a boat for Cincinnati, Mitchell went with him. After finally making Cincinnati, the pair went on to Akron where Sanders rejoined his family and went back to work in his uncles law firm and Mitchell went to work on a farm and lived there the rest of his life.[19]

About the 20th of August, Buell received intelligence that Confederate troops were moving away in large groups and their sentinels appeared to have almost wholly disappeared from the opposite bank of the Tennessee River. Buell hastily abandoned the line of the Memphis and Charleston railroad and moved his headquarters from Huntsville to Decherd on the Nashville-Chattanooga Road. He kept moving until he established his headquarters in Louisville.

On the 21st of August details from the 64th and 65th – consisting of two officers and one non-commissioned officer from each company – were sent to Ohio on recruiting duty. They hoped to fill up the ranks so badly depleted by the exceedingly hard service that had plagued the

Army of the Ohio in northern Alabama. Nearly one hundred officers and men of each regiment had already died from illness resulting from excessive hardship and exposure. More than three hundred others from each were absent or sick or had been discharged for disability – all without a shot fired in battle.[20]

In the summer of 1862 the fame of John Morgan and Kirby Smith in the press emboldened rebel raiders, which resulted in bold and successful raids into Kentucky which directly threatening Cincinnati. The threat put the Queen City under martial law, and the call to "every able-bodied male citizen" was put out for building and manning defenses. All newly formed regiments in Ohio were ordered there. Governor Tod also called for "minute men" from the border counties to aid in repelling the invaders, saying; "The soil of Ohio must not be invaded by the enemies of our glorious Government."

A few days later, on September 10th, Tod appealed to northern Ohio in the press, directing the several military committees in the region to send all armed men that could be raised immediately to Cincinnati. He also requested railroad companies to furnish transportation for troops ahead of all other business.

Thousands of farmers, mechanics, businessmen and professionals promptly responded, as described in the *Beacon* on September 16th, 1862: "Among the two hundred, or more 'sharp shooters,' who left Akron and vicinity for Cincinnati, on Wednesday last, was a fine squad from Tallmadge, among whom we noticed Dr. Amos Wright and the Honorable Sidney Edgerton."

Facing the prospect of fighting with the old-style Harper's Ferry muskets, some of these new volunteers preferred their trusty squirrel rifles. Despite their hearty response, and after advancing as far as Columbus, they were ordered to return home. Governor Tod telegraphed Secretary of War Stanton, as follows: "The minute men, or squirrel hunters, responded gloriously to the call for the defense of Cincinnati."

The muster roll of the Summit County "Squirrel Hunters" has not been preserved. The names of those from Tallmadge, thirteen in all, include Sanders and Edgerton. Their departure had been so sudden that

there was no time for organization before quickly boarding the train. On the cars, however, officers were elected as follows: Daniel W. Storer, captain; Charles R. Howe, first lieutenant; Wilbur F. Sanders, second lieutenant; and J. Alexander, lance orderly sergeant.[21]

By that time, Sanders' younger brother Junius, with the Fourth Ohio, had been promoted to Sergeant and then First Sergeant on January 1, 1863.[22] Their baby brother, Philo, wrote home to his mother Freedom, from his camp in Falmouth, Virginia, on the 18th of December 1862.

> Dear Mother,
>
> I have survived another terrible battle which was fought on the 14th inst. The Army of the Potomac under Burnside crossed the river and engaged the enemy. This is something that McClellan never would have done. He would have flanked them, and I hope that this move will put McClellan in command again…
>
> Junius has been very sick with the fever at Georgetown they say he is better. I have been the worst I have been since I enlisted. The order came for us to put up winter quarters and I worked hard with wet feet and got the Rheumatism and was hardly able to go over the river but did go and went to fight…
>
> I was taken with a cramp in my legs the night before we evacuated Fredericksburg and by having four boys help me I got across the river and lay down and slept about an hour and it rained so we started on and came about 1 ½ miles in the rain… reported myself to the Hospital and stayed about two hours and they sent me away but I think I am or shall be all right in a few days.
>
> We received 4 months' pay yesterday I shall send $5.00 to you now and wait until I can express some more write if Junius has sent any.
>
> It is so dark you must allow me to close.
> I hope you are all for McLellan yet.
> Write soon and all the news.
> P. W. Sanders[23]