

Going South on the Mississippi towards Vicksburg



REINFORCEMENTS FOR GRANT'S ARMY LEAVING MEMPHIS.—FROM A SKETCH BY F. B. SCHELL.

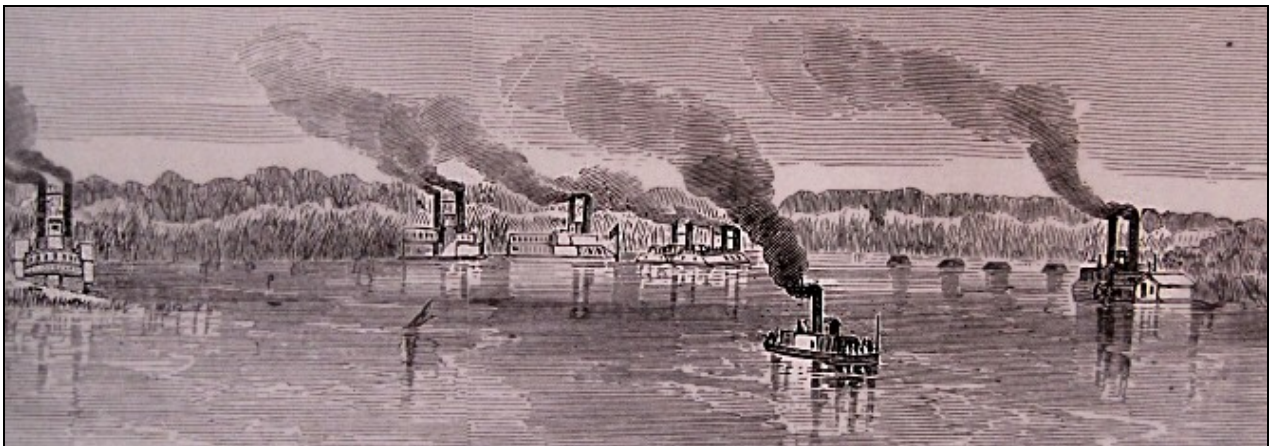
Sketch from the book Battles and Commanders of the Civil War : a graphic and pictorial history prepared directly from the government records in the Departments of War and Statistics, by Frank Leslie and Marcus J. Wright, 1902 and 1906, page 188.

Private Charles Cornell and Company K were on board the steamer "Key West" on the way down the Mississippi river to the Yazoo river and Johnson's Landing where they arrived 26 Dec 1862 in preparation for the attack on Vicksburg at Chickasaw Bayou. [Pension papers]

From the Diary of John Summerfield Petty, at that time a Private in Company C:

Sunday, **21 December 1862**: "I awoke at early dawn in consequence of running against a boat, which jarred us considerably. Steamboat riding is not as pleasant when U. S. pays our fare. When day dawned we found ourselves at Helena, Ark. This is a small dirty town. There are hundreds of Negroes here & a great many soldiers encamped who will descend the river with us."

Monday, **22 December, 1862**: [Just south of Helena, Arkansas, near Friar's point.] "We have met no opposition in our descent of the Mississippi though we are below the point where our boats ventured to trade. This is the largest expedition sent afloat during the war. There are perhaps 80,000 troops in the whole expedition. We get to see more steamboats afloat at one time than many who have travelled for years."



[Sketch by Henry Lovie from the book Battles and Commanders of the Civil War : a graphic and

pictorial history prepared directly from the government records in the Departments of War and Statistics, by Frank Leslie and Marcus J. Wright, 1902 and 1906, page 243. **Federal Flotilla at Mouth of Yazoo River.]**

[Petty diary] Friday, **26 December, 1862**: "At 7 O'clock we were loosed from our mooring commenced the ascent of the Yazoo river where we expect to land. We moved within a few miles of Vicksburg & found a rebel battery which was soon attacked by the gun boats & one or two brigades, name unknown. 3 O'clock P. M. We are now on the bank ready to advance on the enemy. I still trust in God for protection though dangers are thick around me. O that God would increase my faith.....We were held as a reserve until near night when we retired to the boat. We then cooked two days' rations & retired early to bed."

Saturday, **27 December, 1862**: "We are in readiness to march we know not where but suspect a fight today. O that we may enter into it in the strength of Israel's God. We moved a short distance from the boat where we lay all night on our arms. Then a fourth of the division had a very sharp skirmish."



Henry S. Sherman

Diary of Henry S. Sherman, nephew of Gen. W. T. Sherman, Sergeant Major, 120th Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, 9th Division, 13th Army Corps courtesy of David Sherman Carter, descendant of Henry Sherman.

[Henry was in company A when he wrote the following. He had been promoted to Sergt. Major from Private on 26 Sep 1862. Contributed by descendant David Carter.]

"**Dec. 27.** Lying on the ground on the bank of the of River about 8 miles from Vicksburgh. In the course of a few hours perhaps, we may be engaged in a deadly struggle. We are awaiting an order to move every moment. Regiment after regiment have filed past us as we lie on the ground. We have been under arms since 7 this morning. Heavy firing has been heard at intervals all along our front. About 11 A.M. we moved through an open piece of timber and took up our position in an old cotton field filled with nettles, and burrs six or eight feet in height. We were deployed in line of battle on the left of 69th Ind. in Col. Sheldon's Brigade being the left wing of the brigade. In the meanwhile heavy firing was heard for a short period in front and on the left which afterwards turned out to be an artillery duel. After remaining in our position a short time we were marched a mile to the front where we lay on our arms all night. The firing in front was continued until dark. Occasional discharges of musketry interspersed with the noise of artillery. About 10 P.M. a train of ambulances came filing past where we lay containing the wounded who numbered 12, two being killed in the skirmishing during the day. Felt cool and collected during the whole time."

[This fight at Chickasaw Bayou continues in the next section.]

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