

August 7, 1862 - Federal attack on Confederate guerrillas five miles east of Dyersburg at Wood Springs and suggestion to initiate scorched earth policy in West Tennessee



AUGUST 7, 1862.-Skirmish at Wood Springs, near Dyersburg, Tenn.

Reports of Brig. Gen. Grenville M. Dodge, U. S. Army.

HDQRS. CENTRAL DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI, Trenton, Tenn.,
August 8, 1862.



CAPT.: I have the honor to submit the following report:

Yesterday, August 7, between 2 and 3 o'clock p. m., Capt. Peck and 50 men attacked Faulkner's company of Jackson's cavalry 5 miles east of Dyersburg, in the river bottom, and completely surprised them. They report that they killed some 25 to 30, took 53 horses, a large number of guns, arms, &c. The dispatches taken show that this company crossed the Tennessee line five days ago, with orders to get into Kentucky to recruit and to burn all cotton they could find. At the time they left, Col. Jackson was in Senatobia, Miss. Most of Faulkner's men who escaped left without their clothes, arms, or horses. They were receiving recruits in large squads from Dyer, Lauderdale, and Hickman Counties.



I believe our only policy is to burn up these counties. They pay no attention to the oath, feed and guide the rebels. Two negroes led our cavalry to them, guiding them around their pickets. No white man had the pluck to do it. Most of Faulkner's company were asleep. They travel in the night and sleep day-time. North of Dyersburg is another band, 100 strong, waiting to join Faulkner. I expect to trap them before to-morrow morning unless the news of Faulkner's rout gets to them. Faulkner's horse and equipments were taken, and one of the prisoners says he was killed or wounded.

The three prisoners taken are Fielding Bland, who lives within 7 miles of Blandville; Henry Torpley, 6 miles from Feliciana, Hickman County, Ky., and W. S. Bennett, 3 miles from Baltimore, Hickman County, Ky.^{Note 1} Our loss was 7 men wounded, 2 mortally. Our cavalry under Maj. Bush is now following up the scattered band.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

G. M. DODGE, Brig.-Gen., Comdg. Division.

HDQRS.,

Trenton, Tenn., August 10, 1862.

Capt. Peck with 53 men of Sixth Illinois Cavalry attacked Faulkner's company of Jackson's cavalry on Thursday between 3 and 4 o'clock p. m., 5 miles east of Dyersburg, completely surprising and routing them. He reports 20 killed; has sent in 53 of their horses, most of their arms and ammunition, with 3 prisoners. Those that escaped left without their clothes, arms, or horses. Their company

roll showed them to be 127 strong. Our loss was 7 wounded, 2 mortally. Their dispatches taken show they, with Porter's band, crossed the Tennessee line five days ago; left rest of Faulkner's cavalry at Senatobia, Miss. They were ordered to burn all cotton west of Tennessee River, and if possible get into Kentucky to recruit their commands. One of the prisoners taken says he saw all of Cheatham's army on their way to Richmond via Chattanooga.

I forwarded dispatches by telegraph and letter to the district headquarters promptly. Will hereafter forward to you as directed. Faulkner's band is used up and we are catching the stragglers from it.

G. M. DODGE, Brig.-Gen., Comdg. Division.

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Note 1: Today Graves County, Kentucky.

From Trenton, Tenn. Special Dispatch to the *Chicago Times*.

Trenton, August 8 (via Cairo, August 8) Gen. Dodge sent our Capt. Peck and fifty-three men of the Sixth Illinois Cavalry to attack Faulkner's company of Jackson's cavalry, who have been burning cotton, who burned the bridge near Humboldt, and who are committing other depredations in this vicinity. They surprised Faulkner's band five miles east of Dyersburg yesterday afternoon [7th] while they were resting and sleeping, as they travel nights and sleep in the day-time, and completely routed them, killing 30 of Faulkner's men, taking 55 horses, and a great portion of their arms, also Faulkner's horse and his orders from Jeff. Thompson and Jackson, which are very important to us.

Faulkner was trying to get into Kentucky, but was cut off, and most of his men shot. He escaped, but left without arms, horses, or clothes.

Gen. Dodge was informed of this camp by two negroes, who guided the cavalry around the rebel pickets. He has freed the negroes.

Capt. Peck and men, though outnumbered, fought very gallantly, and gave no quarters. His loss was seven wounded, two mortally.

Memphis *Union Appeal*, August 12, 1862.

