

"The Federal gunboats attacked about 9 a. m. on the 17th. After an engagement of nearly three hours' duration the Mound City was blown up by a shot from our batteries and the rest retired out of range. The infantry then landed and carried the position, our little force spiking the guns and retiring up the river.

"Our loss was 6 killed, 1 wounded, and 8 missing. That of the enemy was over 200. On the Mound City alone 180 perished. Captain Fry, the last to retreat, was severely wounded and made prisoner. For further particulars of the heroic conduct of this officer and of Captains Dunnington and Williams, with the officers and men under them, I refer to the detailed report of the engagement heretofore forwarded through the headquarters of the Western Department.

"Several days before this battle, Col. (afterward Brig. Gen.) Allison Nelson, now deceased, a most excellent officer, arrived at Little Rock from Texas with a well-armed and finely-disciplined regiment of infantry.⁸ He was ordered to Saint Charles in ample time to have reached there before its fall, but, being without ammunition, was detained at Devall's Bluff until I had succeeded in begging, buying, and impressing enough for 40 rounds, making it into cartridges and sending it to him by rail. He then started down the river by steamer and was within 15 miles of Saint Charles when it fell. Apprised of that event, he returned to Devall's Bluff, where intrenchments were thrown up and three heavy guns from the Pontchartrain put in position. Obstructions were also put in the channel to detain the enemy's vessels under fire. A regiment and battalion of Arkansas infantry, just organized and armed partly with shot-guns, sporting rifles, and partly with pikes and lances, were sent to Devall's Bluff, together with three batteries of artillery, and, with the regiment already there, were formed into a brigade under Colonel Nelson.

"The expedition under Fitch was joined on the 17th and 18th by an additional gunboat and six transports carrying troops, which raised his land force to 4,000 men or thereabouts. Evidently alarmed by the resistance met at Saint Charles, he moved very slowly upstream, fired upon from both banks by my cavalry, dismounted, and by citizens. His losses were considerable. At Clarendon, 25 miles below Devall's Bluff, he landed a regiment of infantry and moved it forward on the west side to reconnoiter, escorted by the tug Tiger.

"After advancing 5 miles it was compelled to retire with a loss of 55 in killed and prisoners. This repulse was given by Morgan's squadrons of Texans and four unattached companies of Arkansas troops under Capt. P. H. Wheat, assisted by several independent companies of non-convicts.

"I had called upon all citizens, not within the ages of conscription, to form themselves into companies bearing this designation, and of any strength between 10 and 80. They were to arm, equip, and ration themselves and to live at will, and were to receive the value of subsistence and forage furnished, with pay as soldiers, for the time actually served. They proved invaluable as guides, scouts, and guerillas.

"On June 24 certain information reached me that Curtis, with his entire army, was in motion down the east bank of White River, and that he was almost destitute of supplies. General Ruse was ordered toward Jackson-