

CONFEDERATE OPERATIONS
IN THE JACKSON
PURCHASE:
A HISTORY OF CAMP
BEAUREGARD, KENTUCKY

DIETER C. ULLRICH



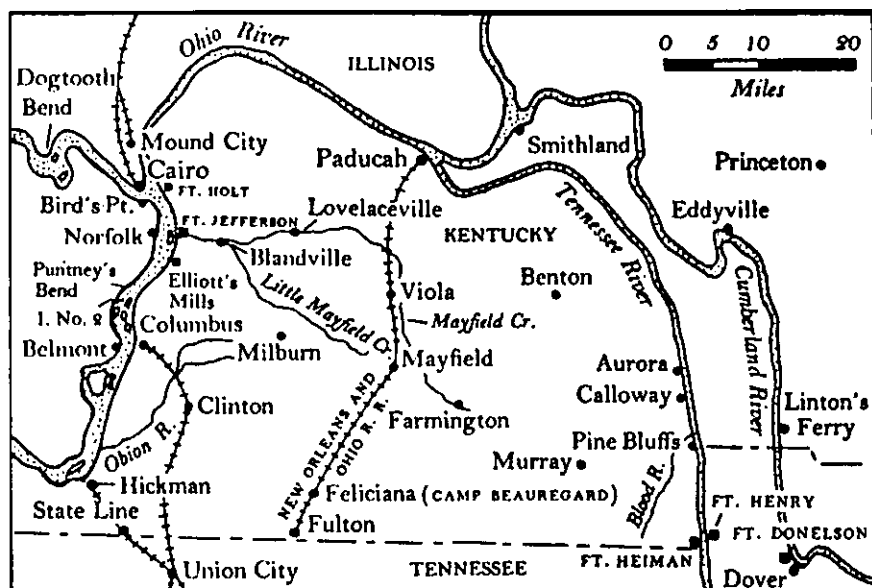
On a rounded hilltop overlooking the small hamlet of Water Valley, Kentucky, in the Jackson Purchase there stands a lone monolith amid a field of graves upon which are inscribed the words:

In memory of the loyal men who died here September 1861 to March 1862 for the Confederate States of America, and were thus denied the glory of heroic service in battle.

Around this memorial is the mass burial site of Confederate soldiers who suffered and died of disease during the harsh winter of 1861/1862. In the surrounding hills was Camp Beauregard, a winter encampment and fortified outpost between the Confederate bastion at Columbus, Kentucky, and the Confederate forts along the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers.

The series of events that led to the creation of Camp Beauregard began on 3 September 1861 as Confederate forces under the

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Western Kentucky in 1862

The Ulysses S. Grant Papers: Volume 4, January–March 31, 1862. "Grant's Area of Operations in early 1862," page 5–©1972 by the U.S. Grant Association, reproduced by permission.

command of Brigadier General Gideon Pillow entered Kentucky from Tennessee to secure the riverport of Hickman and to occupy the high bluffs near Columbus.¹ With the backing of Major General Leonidas Polk, the newly appointed commander of the Mississippi Valley, Pillow and his troops began to fortify the heights that overlooked the Mississippi.² Pillow's actions inevitably broke Kentucky's

¹*The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (128 vols.; Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1902), Series I, volume 3: 694 (hereafter cited as *O. R.*).

²Steven E. Woodward, "'The Indeterminate Quantities': Jefferson Davis, Leonidas Polk, and the End of Kentucky Neutrality, September, 1861," *Civil War History* 38 (1993): 290-92.

fragile neutrality and thrust the Jackson Purchase into an escalating Civil War.

In response, Union forces under Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant crossed the Ohio River and seized Paducah on 6 September. The seizure of Paducah countered the Confederate capture of Columbus and created a foothold for Grant's troops.³ The following day Polk issued orders to organize troops into field brigades in preparation for a Union advance on Columbus.⁴ For the next two weeks, both Union and Confederate forces jostled for position, built earthworks, and positioned artillery to fortify their strongholds.⁵ By the end of September both received reinforcements, extended their lines of defense, and constructed fortified outposts. Camp Beauregard became one of the most important of those garrisons, securing General Polk's right flank at Columbus and anchoring the center of the Confederate line between the Mississippi and Tennessee rivers.

By the end of September, Brigadier General Charles F. Smith, the commanding officer at Paducah, sent a regiment of infantry to capture railroad cars believed to be in Mayfield on the New Orleans and Ohio Railroad that ran between Paducah and Fulton, Kentucky.⁶ The Union regiment's efforts were thwarted when Confederate troops destroyed a bridge crossing north of the town and fell back toward Feliciana. Not to be deterred, however, Union troops began to rebuild the bridge and press onward to Mayfield. General Polk, having received reports of the reconstruction of the bridge, immediately issued orders to Colonel DeWitt C. Bonham at Union City, Tennessee, to counter the Federal advance on 27 September. Bonham was

³Geoffrey Perret, *Ulysses S. Grant: Soldier & President* (New York: Random House, 1997), 138-39.

⁴O.R., 4: 699.

⁵Ibid., 4: 257.

⁶Ibid., 3: 510.

instructed to assemble two regiments and march to the depot at Fulton five miles south of Feliciana.⁷

On 30 September General Albert Sidney Johnston, who had recently arrived in Columbus to assume command of the Confederate army in the west, called upon Lieutenant Joseph Dixon of the Engineer Corps to survey the region between Columbus and Fort Henry to locate an "advanced position for an entrenched camp."⁸ Johnston intended to place the camp near Milburn or Mayfield, but seasonably dry conditions left insignificant water reserves to supply a division of soldiers. He recommended to Dixon that the proposed encampment be located further south, somewhere along the New Orleans and Ohio Railroad and where there was a plentiful amount of water and wood for fuel.⁹ Dixon located a suitable site a mile and a quarter north of Feliciana and a mile and a half northwest of a minor railroad depot known as Morse Station, presently the town of Water Valley.¹⁰ The encampment was to be situated upon a wooded ridge referred to by the locals as "Mobley's old campground."¹¹ It was conveniently close to the natural springs of the Bayou du Chien River and strategically overlooked the surrounding countryside. It was also close to the

⁷Ibid., 3:510 and 4: 430-31.

⁸Ibid., 4: 432-33.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Robert M. Rennick, *Kentucky Place Names* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984), 310-11.

¹¹A letter of W.G. Pirtle, written in 1910, states that Mobley's old campground was two and a half miles north of Feliciana and two miles northeast of present-day Water Valley (Morse Station). See *A History of Camp Beauregard: Graves County, Kentucky* (Mayfield: Sons of Confederate Veterans, 1988), 14. There are, however, some inaccuracies in this statement, for it would place Camp Beauregard more than a mile north and west of where most contemporary maps place it. The most accurate contemporary map of Graves County, published in 1880 by D.J. Lake & Company, suggests that the encampment was about a mile and a quarter north of Feliciana and roughly a mile and a quarter northwest of Water Valley.

town of Feliciana, a regional trade center and an important link to the Confederacy.

As Lieutenant Dixon finalized his plans for an outpost, delays in communication and preparation stalled Colonel Bonham at Union City. It was not until the night of 1 October that Bonham finally set his command in motion toward Fulton. After a night-long march his command, consisting of around fifteen hundred infantrymen from the Twenty-second Mississippi and the Tenth Arkansas infantry regiments, reached Fulton.¹² The two regiments remained in Fulton until 6 October when they were sent to Feliciana to prepare for winter quarters.¹³ At roughly the same time, Colonel John Stevens Bowen set out for Feliciana from Columbus with about eighteen hundred men from the First Missouri Infantry, the First Mississippi Valley Infantry (later known as the Twenty-fifth Mississippi Infantry), Hudson's Artillery Battery (later known as the Pettus Flying Artillery Battery), the newly organized Kentucky Battalion, and a squadron of cavalry. Bowen's command joined Colonel Bonham's by the second week of

¹²Isaac E. Hirsh, *Life Story of Isaac E. Hirsh: Co. G Twenty-second Regiment Mississippi Infantry, C.S.A.* (published by author, n.d.), 36 and Dunbar Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi, 1803-1898* (Spartanburg, South Carolina: The Reprint Company, 1978; originally published in 1908), 244. See also *O. R.*, 4: 494 for the aggregate strength of the Tenth Arkansas and Twenty-second Mississippi in October 1861.

¹³*Ibid.* In his memoirs Isaac Hirsh listed 16 October as the day the Twenty-second Mississippi left for Camp Beauregard but that may be an error in transcription (36 and 68). In the *Military History of Mississippi*, which was taken directly from the *Official and Statistical Register of the State of Mississippi*, the date is cited as 6 October (244). Colonel H. J. Reid of Company G of the Twenty-second Mississippi stated that the regiment was at Fulton on 14 October and at Camp Beauregard on 1 November, but the *Official Records* and other correspondence seems to prove otherwise. See H.J. Reid, *Sketch of The Black Hawk Rifles* (Jackson, Mississippi: Mississippi Department of Archives & History, n.d.), 3. The exact date of their arrival at Camp Beauregard is somewhat inconclusive, yet the earlier date appears to fit chronologically.

October.¹⁴ Before the end of the month, an estimated 3,340 officers and enlisted men occupied the hills northeast of Morse Station.¹⁵ The troops named their outpost "Camp Beauregard" in honor of General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, well known for his military successes at Charleston Harbor and Manassas.

Once the troops consolidated at Camp Beauregard, General Polk issued Special Order No. 142 that prohibited the trade of grain in western Kentucky "for the use of the Army"¹⁶ In short, the order gave the commander at Camp Beauregard control over the gristmills and warehouses in the region surrounding the outpost. This included the storage facilities and mills located along the New Orleans and Ohio Railroad at Mayfield and Fulton, both of which were essential to the survival of the outpost.

The construction of winter quarters and the building of defenses around the camp were begun without delay. At first, the encampment was a series of tents organized in rows by company and regiment with patrols roaming the perimeter of the camp. Later the regimental camps evolved into log pens with tents serving as roofs and

¹⁴The *Official Records* do not mention specific orders being issued to Colonel Bowen to relocate to Camp Beauregard; however, Captain George W. Dawson wrote from Camp Beauregard on 19 October and mentioned being at the camp on 17 October. See H. Riley Bock, ed., "One Year at War: Letters of Captain Geo. W. Dawson, C.S.A.," *Missouri Historical Review* 73 (1979): 171-73. George C. Phillips of the Twenty-second Mississippi states in a letter after the war that soon after his regiment went into winter quarters "other troops came in, the First Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee regiments, in all some six or seven thousand troops to protect Gen. Polk's left wing" (see *History of Camp Beauregard*, 23). Captain Joseph Boyce of the First Missouri also wrote after the war, "early in October, the regiment was ordered to a point near...and went into camp at a place we called Camp Beauregard" (see *History of Camp Beauregard*, 26). See O.R., 4: 494 for aggregate strength of First Missouri, First Mississippi Valley, and Hudson's Artillery Battery.

¹⁵O.R., 3: 730 and 4: 494.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 52, part 2, 190.

barrels as chimneys.¹⁷ The outpost's defenses were gradually enhanced with the cutting of timber, the addition of guardhouses, and the strategic placement of rifle pits dug into the surrounding hillsides.¹⁸ Eventually the small pens were expanded into larger log cabins, and the trenches were extended to all approaches to the camp.¹⁹ An article in the *Memphis Daily Appeal* described the camp:

These cabins are erected with reference to each other like the tents of a company and regiment as prescribed by Hardee. There are about fourteen rooms for the privates of each company, and about one hundred and seventy-five for a whole regiment, officers, men, guardhouses, hospitals, etc. The rooms are ten by twelve, tightly daubed up, and are capacious enough to comfortably hold eight men.²⁰

The regiments that arrived at Camp Beauregard were ill-equipped for active duty, as many Confederate units were during the first year of the war. Most of the men were armed with outdated flintlock muskets, pistols, and shotguns furnished by state arsenals and local armories in the south.²¹ Some soldiers were issued arms at

¹⁷*History of Camp Beauregard*, 23.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 3. The existence of extensive trenches, redoubts, and other defensive fortifications are not evident in the correspondence of the period or in the recollections of those who wrote in the years following the war. George C. Phillips of the Twenty-second Mississippi wrote in 1915, "I do not think any fortifications were built" (see *History of Camp Beauregard*, 23). Nonetheless, one does have to consider that Camp Beauregard was defined in the orders of Lieutenant Dixon as an "entrenched camp" and that some defensive measures had been taken in case of an assault.

¹⁹*Memphis [Tennessee] Daily Appeal*, 31 December 1861.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 27 December 1861.

²¹Hirsh, *Life Story of Isaac Hirsch*, 119. Private Hirsh of the Twenty-second Mississippi recalled carrying a flint musket when on patrol between Camp Beauregard and Mayfield.

Columbus by the Confederate government, but they were later found to be dangerously inoperative. A cavalry battalion under Colonel Bowen was outfitted with Hall's carbines before being assigned to Camp Beauregard. While in camp, frequent misfires, some resulting in injuries, impelled Bowen to forbid the use of the weapon. He sent a requisition to the quartermaster at Columbus to replace the defective carbines, but it was denied. Frustrated with the reply, Bowen issued one round of ammunition for soldiers with Hall's carbines; he then ordered the men to fire their weapons and to discard them while out on patrol. The men gladly followed his orders.²² The difficulties with acquiring weapons and providing ammunition for the various types of muskets and rifles became a logistical nightmare in the months to come.

As more units filtered into the outpost, a power struggle developed between Colonel Bowen and Colonel Bonham over who was to command the troops. Bowen, a thirty-one-year-old native of Savannah, Georgia, a graduate of West Point Military Academy, and an officer in the United States army prior to the war, was convinced he should command the outpost.²³ Bonham, a forty-three-year-old cotton planter from Issaquena, Mississippi, who attended West Point for three years but did not graduate, believed that his age and experience were quite sufficient to supervise the activities of a military camp.²⁴ A spirited rivalry ensued, causing great confusion among the

²²"Unveiling Confederate Monument at Montgomery, Alabama," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 26(1898): 219-29. The presentation was made by Major Jefferson Manly Falkner during the unveiling of the Confederate Cavalry monument in Montgomery, Alabama.

²³Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Grey: Lives of Confederate Commanders* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 29-30.

²⁴1850 *United States Census: Issaquena County, Mississippi* (Wichita: S-K Publications, n.d.), 299 and *History of Camp Beauregard*, 23. Bonham was originally from York, Pennsylvania. He attended West Point from 1835 to 1838 and was only a year from graduation before resigning. No reason was given for his

ranks and a rift between the two officers.²⁵ The standoff lasted until 24 October when Bowen was assigned to command the Fourth Division of the Western Department. The Fourth Division consisted of the two brigades stationed at Camp Beauregard. The first was led by Colonel John D. Martin of the First Mississippi Valley and the other by the disappointed Colonel Bonham.²⁶ Though the controversy over command had ceased, the friction between the two officers continued throughout their stay at Camp Beauregard.

Prior to Colonel Bowen's promotion, on the afternoon of 22 October, reports reached the camp that Mayfield had been sacked and set aflame by "Lincolnites."²⁷ Similar rumors about Federal soldiers in Mayfield had proved false in the past, but these reports seemed more urgent.²⁸ The troops at Camp Beauregard relied heavily on the warehouses and gristmills at Mayfield, so much so that a locomotive, along with an escort of guards, had been sent from Morse Station to retrieve flour almost daily since the establishment of the camp. General Smith in Paducah, who had become aware of these regular visits, sent two regiments of infantry and a squadron of cavalry to surprise the guard and capture the locomotive.

Union troops had reached Viola, five miles north of Mayfield, the night before and prepared to enter Mayfield the next day. At dawn some three hundred cavalry soldiers galloped into Mayfield to await the arrival of the locomotive. The Union commander promptly

resignation; however, he was suspended and later placed on probation for failing grades after his freshman year.

²⁵*History of Camp Beauregard*, 23.

²⁶O.R., 3: 723. The final decision regarding the command at Camp Beauregard must have been made by General Johnston.

²⁷*Daily Appeal*, 26 October 1861.

²⁸Bock, ed., "One Year at War," 172. Correspondence written on 19 October 1861 from Camp Beauregard notes "some difficulty there this morning"; two companies were sent to Mayfield to investigate.

placed sentries on the major roads out of town and sent pickets out to warn of the approach of the train. He also ordered the arrest of prominent secessionists and other subversives who could cause distractions or communicate his whereabouts to the enemy.²⁹ Witnesses to the apprehension and detainment of Confederate sympathizers testified:

About daybreak . . . the quiet citizens [of Mayfield] were aroused from their slumbers by an unearthly noise in the street, which proceeded from mounted horsemen galloping at a furious rate down the thoroughfares. Of course the timid were much frightened, and, indeed, all felt some alarm, for they knew not whether these men came to pillage and burn or not. They appeared to have accurate information in relation to the political sentiment of all the men and women in the place—for they immediately arrested and held all who opposed the war and were friendly to the South. This compromised every man in the town, with three or four exceptions.³⁰

There was one major flaw in the Union commander's effort to suppress the town's residents. He neglected to cut the telegraph lines. This inexplicable error revealed his location to the Confederate forces at Columbus and Camp Beauregard.³¹

²⁹*Daily Appeal*, 2 November 1861.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 6 November 1861.

³¹*Ibid.* Reports of Mayfield being captured had reached Colonel Bowen at Camp Beauregard that day, and Colonel Bonham received the order to bring the train north from Fulton Station that evening. The word spread like wildfire soon afterwards with people in Paris, Tennessee, hearing the news of the raid that night. It would reach Nashville by 23 October and made the Memphis papers on 24 October. Natchez and New Orleans printed the story on the following day. See *Daily Appeal*, 25 October 1861; *New Orleans [Louisiana] Daily Picayune*, 25

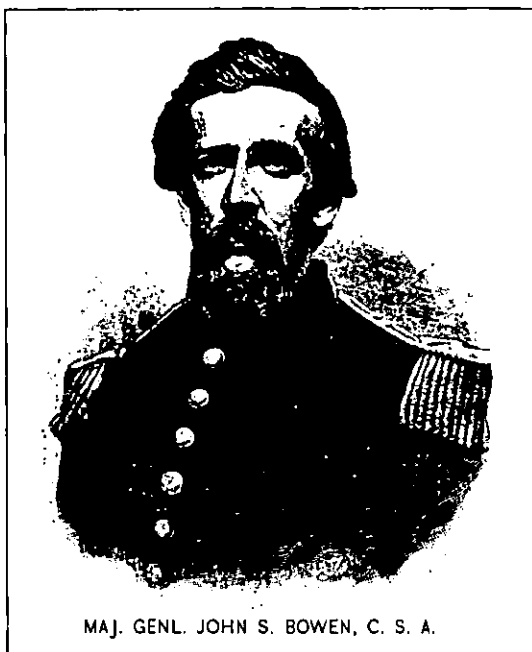
The news of Federal soldiers at Mayfield reached Colonel Bowen late that afternoon. He relayed the reports to Colonel Bonham who was at the Fulton depot retrieving supplies from the locomotive with a company of the Twenty-second Mississippi. Bonham was directed to return with the train to Morse Station at once. He arrived early the next morning, boarded the remainder of Twenty-second Mississippi on boxcars and rushed to Mayfield. They reached the outskirts that afternoon where Bonham halted the train and deployed his entire regiment into a line of battle. The soldiers with their weapons loaded and primed advanced toward Mayfield. Before they reached the town's limits, citizens came forth under flags of truce and told of the enemy's departure the afternoon before. Apparently, the Union commander realized that the raid had failed to capture the locomotive and ordered his men to return to Viola. Bonham entered Mayfield at dusk, set up a line of defense, and sent scouts north of town. The remaining troops camped for the night in buildings upon the town square where the inhabitants told stories of the atrocities committed by drunken Yankee soldiers.³²

Bonham remained in Mayfield until the afternoon of 27 October when he and his men were ordered back to Camp Beauregard. Before their departure, Bonham informed the people of Mayfield that the train would return the next day for supplies.³³ When the sun rose on the morning of 28 October, scouts left behind by Bonham returned with reports of a strong enemy presence a mile and a half north of Mayfield. The train, which had left Morse Station hours earlier with two companies of the First Mississippi Valley, continued its scheduled journey unaware of the reports. When the train came within hearing distance, concerned citizens rushed down the tracks waving

October 1861; and *Natchez* [Mississippi] *Daily Courier*, 25 October 1861.

³²*Daily Appeal*, 2 November 1861 and 6 November 1861.

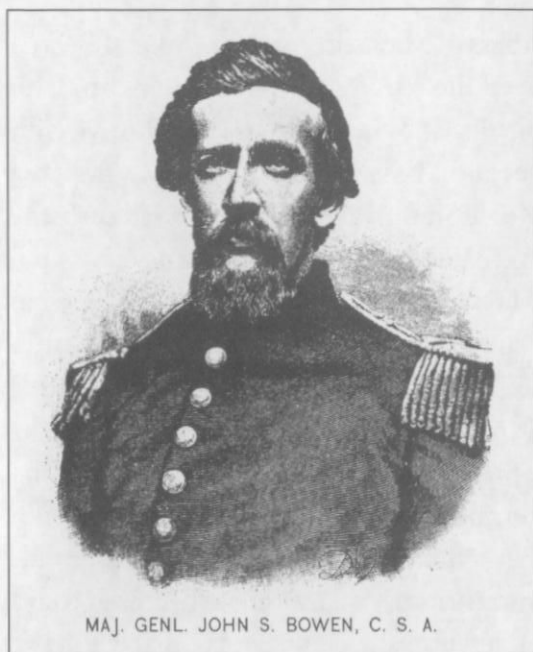
³³*Ibid.*



John Bowen
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handkerchiefs and screaming words of warning. Captain Daniel R. Hundley, who was riding the locomotive with the engineer, spotted the frantic townspeople and quickly stopped the train. After hearing the report that five thousand enemy troops were closing in upon the town, he promptly instructed the engineer to reverse the locomotive. As the train slowly backed up the tracks, he shouted orders to his men to fix bayonets and prepare to disembark. Once the train had reached an area where it was safe from view, he dispatched skirmishers and sent the train's conductor into town to ascertain the opposition's location and strength. The conductor returned some time later with news that there were no enemy soldiers in the town. Relieved, Hundley recalled his men and proceeded to the depot where he organized a picket to guard the town while he loaded supplies.³⁴ The train departed uneventfully for Camp Beauregard before evening.

³⁴*Ibid.*



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³⁴Ibid.

The trips to Mayfield by train continued with the threat of Federal cavalry raids. A soldier of the Twenty-second Mississippi later recalled that, "Both sides captured and evacuated Mayfield regularly once a week, the garrison in possession invariably retreating before the enemy appeared."³⁵ This game of cat-and-mouse lasted throughout the fall and into winter.

On the morning of 10 November, three days after General Grant's attack at Belmont, Missouri, Colonel Bowen received orders to intercept a diversionary force of two thousand men that was spotted east of Columbus near the village of Milburn. This force, under the command of Union General E.A. Paine, had set out from Paducah on the afternoon of 6 November to distract the defending armies at Columbus while Grant advanced upon Belmont. To prevent Paine from being flanked, General Smith detached one thousand men from Paducah to Viola the following day. Delayed by the slow advance of unseasoned recruits, Paine did not reach Milburn until the night of 7 November. The next morning messengers brought news of Grant's withdrawal from Belmont. Realizing that it was futile to continue the mission, Paine retreated to Paducah, and the detachment from Viola was called back. His worn-out troops straggled into Paducah on the night of 9 November.³⁶

Unaware of General Paine's retreat, Bowen assigned Colonel Bonham to lead an expeditionary force to cut off Paine's troops before they could return to Paducah. Bonham's force, consisting of the Twenty-second Mississippi, the Kentucky Battalion, and four companies of the First Mississippi Valley, the First Missouri, Hudson's Artillery Battery, and a company of cavalry, departed camp on the afternoon of 10 November. The Twenty-second Mississippi was sent immediately to Mayfield by train while the rest of the expedition

³⁵Hirsh, *Life Story of Isaac Hirsch*, 117.

³⁶*O.R.*, 3: 299-304.

marched the dusty dirt roads. Bonham and the Twenty-second Mississippi reached the town at dusk to find that the enemy had departed from Viola the day before. He posted pickets and sent scouts to locate the enemy while the rest of his troops filtered into Mayfield later that evening.³⁷

With the location of the enemy uncertain, the troops settled in for a restless night. At midnight, a sentinel dashed into town warning of an advance of Yankee soldiers. A call to arms was raised, and the men rapidly positioned into a line of battle. On the edge of town, Bonham peered out into the darkness anticipating an attack. For hours they awaited an assault, but it never came. The observations of the scouting party proved to have been the overactive imagination of an inexperienced private. The next morning, reports from reliable scouts and citizens confirmed that Paine had avoided the trap and was on his way back to Paducah. With rations running low and an enemy safely en route to Paducah, Bonham chose to return to camp rather than to pursue. He boarded the train for Camp Beauregard on the afternoon of 12 November. His weary and disheartened troops soon followed. Bonham arrived that night at Morse Station and was greeted by rumors that Mayfield had been recaptured.³⁸

On 14 November, General Pillow received intelligence at Columbus that Federal troops were planning to strike at Camp Beauregard in the next few days. Pillow, who had been placed in temporary command on 12 November after General Polk had been injured following an explosion of a cannon, ordered Colonel Bowen to destroy the locomotive and burn the railroad cars. He also informed Bowen that he was sending reinforcements to assist in defending the outpost.³⁹

³⁷*Daily Appeal*, 19 November 1861 and Bock, "One Year at War," 178-79.

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹O.R., 4: 552 and Nathaniel Chears Hughes and Roy P. Stonesifer, *The Life and Wars of Gideon J. Pillow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 205.

Bowen acknowledged Pillow's concerns but decided not to torch the train or its cars because his scouts reported Federal troop movements in the direction of Columbus, not Camp Beauregard. Bowen communicated this information by a dispatch the next day. Pillow confirmed the reports and advised Bowen to advance and attack if the enemy were to lay siege to Columbus.⁴⁰ The movement of Union troops, however, proved to be a harmless foraging expedition to the small village of Lovelaceville, fifteen miles southwest of Paducah.⁴¹ Camp Beauregard returned to its daily ritual of sending out scouting parties and performing guard duty.

An over-anxious General Pillow, fearing that his army at Columbus was outnumbered and would soon be encircled, called upon the governments of Confederate states to supply more troops rapidly.⁴² In a message to the state of Alabama on 20 November, he specifically emphasized the need to strengthen Camp Beauregard to protect railroad communications against the encroaching enemy forces.⁴³ Shortly afterwards, articles began to appear in southern newspapers discussing the urgent need for armed men and the importance of Camp Beauregard in supplying Columbus.⁴⁴ For the next two weeks, Pillow sent daily dispatches to government officials and military authorities in Memphis of phantom enemy troops closing upon Columbus and the desperate need for reinforcements. The Confederate army in the Jackson Purchase was in a state of near-hysteria by the end of November.⁴⁵

While Pillow nervously awaited more troops, he ordered the Ninth Arkansas Infantry along with a cavalry battalion and two

⁴⁰Ibid., 557.

⁴¹Ibid., 494-95 and *Daily Appeal*, 27 November 1861.

⁴²Hughes and Stonesifer, *Pillow*, 205-206.

⁴³O.R., 7: 684.

⁴⁴*Daily Appeal*, 30 November 1861.

⁴⁵Hughes and Stonesifer, *Pillow*, 206.

artillery units to bolster Bowen's division. Upon their arrival on 26 November, they were added to the brigades of Colonel Martin and Colonel Bonham.⁴⁶ Martin's brigade consisted of the Tenth Arkansas, First Mississippi Valley, First Missouri, Hudson's Artillery battery and cavalry battalion. Bonham was in command of the Ninth Arkansas, Twenty-second Mississippi, King's Kentucky Battalion, Watson's Artillery battery, and Williams Artillery battery.

The weather took a sudden change for the worse in late November when an unusually warm fall gave way to an unseasonably cold winter. Overcast skies and freezing rain struck the region during the last week of November.⁴⁷ On the last day of the month, three inches of snow fell, making roads impassable and disrupting communications.⁴⁸ This change of the weather took its toll on the men stationed at Camp Beauregard as frigid temperatures swelled the number of sick in the camp.

The first signs of disease were documented in September when the regiments were being organized at Memphis, Columbus, and Union City. The first deaths were recorded as early as October while the troops were encamped at Fulton and Columbus.⁴⁹ The dark shadows of disease and death followed the men to Camp Beauregard where they struck indiscriminately through the ranks. "There are a good many men discharged on account of sickness," remarked a soldier of the First Missouri in a letter to his wife. He further wrote that, "Our regiment is reduced [to] around 500 effective men (half the total number the regiment had the month before), and I feel that we

⁴⁶William James Howard journal, 1860-1930, University Archives, Auburn University. Howard states in his journal, which is incorrectly dated in the transcripts, that the Ninth Arkansas arrived at Camp Beauregard on 26 November after a twenty-eight-mile march.

⁴⁷*Jackson [Mississippi] Weekly Mississippian*, 11 December 1861.

⁴⁸*New Orleans [Louisiana] Daily Picayune*, 6 December 1861.

⁴⁹Reid, *Sketch of The Black Hawk Rifles*, 3.

will have to discharge many more.”⁵⁰ By the end of November a full-scale epidemic had developed. Of the 4,260 officers and men listed on Colonel Bowen’s returns for 30 November, only 3,361 were fit for duty.⁵¹ The effect of the disease was so severe and so widespread that General Smith had received reports of the devastating epidemic in Paducah.⁵² Assistant Surgeon George C. Phillips of the Twenty-second Mississippi described the seriousness of the outbreak in a letter following the war:

The weather became cold and rainy, then sleet and snow. The drilling and picket duty to most of the men was very hard, and the diet was not what they were accustomed to. It was mostly fresh beef and flour, no vegetables, with plenty of coffee, tea, tobacco and whiskey. Soon typhoid fever and pneumonia broke out among the men. There were 75 cases of typhoid fever and typhoid pneumonia in my hospital tent during one month. I speak only of our regiment. It was as bad or worse than other regiments. Then the most terrible disease, cerebrospinal meningitis broke out, killing nearly every case attacked, and frequently in a few hours.⁵³

⁵⁰Bock, “One Year at War,” 172-73; see also R.S. Bevier, *History of the First and Second Missouri Confederate Brigades, 1861-1865* (St. Louis, 1879), 80 for aggregate strength in September 1861.

⁵¹O.R., 7: 727-28. There are some numerical discrepancies in the monthly returns listed for Camp Beauregard. General Polk reported 3,713 men aggregate and present while Bowen recorded 4,260 men aggregate and present, a difference of 547 men. The percentage of men unfit for duty in November, based on Bowen’s numbers, was 11.7 %.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 4: 339-40.

⁵³*History of Camp Beauregard*, 21. “Typhoid pneumonia” was an infectious febrile disease which is known today simply as typhoid fever.

Continued threats to attack Camp Beauregard and encircle Columbus became more pronounced in the early weeks of December. On 5 December, the *Cairo City Weekly Gazette* reported that fifteen thousand men were being organized and supplied to capture the railroad stations at Union City. The article offered details and explained that the Union army's objective was to cut off Columbus from the rest of the Confederacy and attack the citadel from all points east of the Mississippi River.⁵⁴ General Pillow reacted by sending to Camp Beauregard, the Twenty-seventh Tennessee Infantry Regiment from Union City and four companies of the First Tennessee Cavalry Battalion (later the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry Regiment) from Camp DeShaw near Moscow.⁵⁵ Despite the reinforcements, numerous reports of enemy troops advancing from Paducah continued, and the outpost remained on constant alert.⁵⁶ The effects of bad weather, endless guard duty, and sickness took their toll upon the troops, leading some to desert their posts. On 20 December, three such men were convicted and punished for the crime. A soldier present describes what occurred:

On last Friday all the troops at this station were assembled together and formed into a square for the purpose of witnessing the punishment of three men, belonging to the First Missouri regiment convicted of desertion . . . They were branded on the left hip with the letter "D," which was done with a hot iron made in the shape of that letter, their heads were closely shaved, and finally they were each hit fifty lashes upon the back, in the presence of all their comrades,

⁵⁴*Cairo [Illinois] City Weekly Gazette*, 5 December 1861.

⁵⁵*New Orleans [Louisiana] Daily Picayune*, 14 December 1861; *Daily Appeal*, 31 December 1861, and *O.R.*, 7:507.

⁵⁶*Daily Appeal*, 27 December 1861.

and drummed out of the service to the tune of the
"Rogue's March."⁵⁷

While some chose to desert, others coped with the depressing conditions by drinking heavily. Before the war Feliciana had been known for its home-brewed bourbon whiskey, and it was not long after the first troops arrived that soldiers ventured into town for a few swigs. On their return to camp it was not uncommon that a dozen or so adventurous men wound up in the regimental guardhouse for consuming more than their share of the local spirits.⁵⁸ In some cases their intoxication was so extreme that soldiers were confined several days until they had properly "rested themselves."⁵⁹ Alcohol also brought out the evil side in a few of the men. On one late evening, three drunken soldiers returning from Feliciana "robbed and otherwise mistreated" an old woman and her two daughters. The women identified the men the next day, and the three were court-martialed and found guilty.⁶⁰

Private William J. Howard of the Ninth Arkansas vividly recounted the harsh punishment of the convicted men in his journal:

[The prisoners were] sentenced to leap frog around a bullring for one hour rest four hours and so on. The bullring was thirty feet in diameter and was made by driving studs into the ground six feet apart. The studs were eighteen inches high with boards two feet long layed across them flat on top. They had to do this for thirty days living on bread and water the whole time.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Bock, "One Year at War," 175-76.

⁵⁹*History of Camp Beauregard*, 27.

⁶⁰Howard journal, 27 November 1861. "While in winter quarters three men from another regiment got drunk and went out to where an old woman and her two daughters lived alone and robbed and otherwise mistreated them. The women came to camp, hunted the three out and reported them to their colonel."

They had to leap over the boards at [the] tap of [a] drum with a bayonet close behind them. Often they would faint. When the thirty days were out the whole division was called out and formed into a hollow square. The three men were then stripped to the waist and their heads shaved. They were marched around close in front of all the other men so that all could see them well. Three stacks of arms were made and one of the men tied to each stake, then the ten musicians were ordered to give each man ten licks with a horse whip. The bass drummer was last to come and was ordered to cut the skin at every lick where the first man had been told to strike lightly, they cried out with pain at every blow he struck them. The twelve guards who had been guarding them all the time with fixed bayonets double quicked them out into the woods and left them.⁶¹

As Colonel Bowen struggled to keep up morale, General Johnston faced a threatening Union force under Brigadier General Don Carlos Buell in central Kentucky. Since the middle of November, Buell had been consolidating his troops in an effort to flank the Confederate stronghold at Bowling Green and to drive southward toward Nashville. On 17 December, Union troops crossed the Green River and fought with Johnston's men near Rowlett's Station. Johnston attempted to push the Federals back across the river, but his efforts failed.⁶² Outnumbered and concerned about his base of operations at Bowling Green, Johnston requested reinforcements from General Polk at Columbus. Polk, who resumed command at Columbus from Pillow earlier in the month, responded on 18 December,

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²O.R., 7: 14-21.

stating that the enemy “was threatening to attack me in the next four days” so the troops in Columbus must remain. Johnston rescinded the order the next day.⁶³ When five days had passed without incident, Johnston again ordered Polk to send reinforcements. Polk reluctantly agreed on Christmas Eve, sending Bowen’s entire division of infantry and the artillery batteries of William and Hudson to join Johnston at Bowling Green. Polk retained King’s Kentucky Battalion, Watson’s Artillery Battery, and a regiment of cavalry to temporarily defend his flank.⁶⁴

Colonel Bowen received the order directly from Johnston’s headquarters on the night of 24 December.⁶⁵ At midnight on Christmas day, forty-eight hundred men packed their belongings and began the eighteen-mile march to State Line, Kentucky on the Mississippi and Tennessee Railroad.⁶⁶ They left behind rows of vacant log cabins, abandoned trenches, and mounds of dirt where their comrades lay buried. The troops arrived at State Line at ten o’clock that night. The next morning they boarded the train to Bowling Green, and after a fatiguing trip that lasted four days they arrived on 30 December. Colonel Bonham, sadly, did not make the trip to Bowling Green. The disease that he had valiantly tried to prevent among his men had inflicted him only days earlier. At half past three, on the day of his brigade’s departure, he died of typhoid pneumonia. His body was placed on a wagon and brought to State Line where it was placed on a

⁶³Ibid., 7: 773-74.

⁶⁴Ibid., 790, Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi*, 482 and Stewart Sifakis, *Compendium of the Confederate Armies: Louisiana* (New York: Facts on File, 1992), 43.

⁶⁵O.R., volume 52, part 2, 243.

⁶⁶*Supplement to the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Wilmington, North Carolina: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1994-1997), Part II, volume 33, serial no. 45, 658-69 (hereafter cited as *O.R., Supplement*). See *O.R.*, 7: 814 for aggregate strength present and absent.

railroad car for the trip back to Mississippi.⁶⁷

To fill the void left by Bowen's men, Polk ordered three regiments of infantry and a small battalion of cavalry under Brigadier General James Lusk Alcorn from Columbus to Camp Beauregard on 26 December. Alcorn, a former state legislator from Mississippi and lukewarm secessionist, led a force of twenty-three hundred untrained and ill-equipped men to defend the vulnerable right flank.⁶⁸ His command consisted of sixty-day troops that had been organized only ten days before at Grenada, Mississippi.⁶⁹ Armed with double-barrel shotguns and little ammunition, the First, Second, and Third Mississippi Infantry Militia regiments disembarked the train at Morse Station on 28 December.⁷⁰ Upon arrival at Camp Beauregard, Alcorn reported:

Colonel Bowen's command, which evacuated Beauregard for Bowling Green on the day of our arrival, left comfortable quarters which have been constructed by the industry of his troops; these we found just finished and ready for occupation. Here I again revived my gun shops and recommenced the work of preparing cartridges. My supply of ammunition was still small; men unacquainted with the labor, my progress was by no means as I could have wished. I was placed in command of the remaining Confederate forces at this post, consisting of Brewer's and King's Battalion and Watson's Battery of artillery.⁷¹

⁶⁷*Daily Appeal*, 31 December 1861 and *History of Camp Beauregard*, 15.

⁶⁸Jon L. Wakelyn, *Biographical Dictionary of the Confederacy* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977), 69-70 and *O.R.*, *Supplement*, Part I, Serial No. 1, volume 1: 512.

⁶⁹Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi*, 368-69.

⁷⁰*O.R.*, 7: 771 and *O.R.*, *Supplement*, Part I, Serial No. 1, volume 1: 513.

⁷¹*O.R.*, *Supplement*, Part I, Serial No. 1, volume 1: 513.

In regards to the defenses around the outpost, Alcorn was far from impressed and remarked:

I have been somewhat disappointed in the supposed fortifications at this place. A few rifle pits, full of water, which I am having leveled down, and a lot of fallen timber, compose the defenses.⁷²

On the evening of 29 December scouts from King's Kentucky Battalion reported an advance party of three hundred Union cavalry six miles north of camp possibly followed by an infantry force of unknown strength. Alcorn quickly sent forward his cavalry to delay the enemy as he telegraphed Columbus that he would attempt to defend Camp Beauregard.⁷³ After receiving Alcorn's communiqué, Polk relayed orders to Lieutenant Colonel John H. Miller at Camp Desha to move his entire command of cavalry to Mayfield in an effort to distract the Union forces advancing upon Camp Beauregard.⁷⁴ Polk also sent Colonel Daniel R. Russell's Twelfth Tennessee Infantry Regiment by rail from Columbus to Moscow with instructions to aid Alcorn's command.⁷⁵ The lead companies of Miller's cavalry came in contact with the withdrawing enemy on the afternoon of 30 December at Viola. The Union cavalry, under the command of Brigadier General Lew Wallace, had left Paducah with two hundred men on the night of 28 December to confirm reports that Camp Beauregard

⁷²O.R., 7: 803. Those same rifle pits and earthworks mentioned by General Alcorn were evident sixty-five years later during the first memorial service in 1926. See *Mayfield [Kentucky] Messenger*, 21 June 1926.

⁷³O.R., *Supplement*, Part I, Serial No. 1, volume 1: 513; O.R., 7: 803.

⁷⁴O.R., 7: 808-809.

⁷⁵John Berrien Lindsley, *The Military Annals of Tennessee: Confederate. First Series: embracing a review of military operations, with regimental histories and memorial rolls, compiled from original and official sources* (Spartanburg, South Carolina: The Reprint Company, 1974; originally published in 1886), 307.

had been abandoned.⁷⁶ By the morning of 31 December, Miller had determined that Wallace's detachment was engaged in reconnaissance and conveyed his observations by couriers to Columbus and Camp Beauregard.

Meanwhile on New Year's Eve, Alcorn was furnished information from a "reliable" citizen that a "large force of infantry, cavalry, and artillery would camp the night within ten miles" of the outpost.⁷⁷ Colonel Russell's brigade entered Camp Beauregard on New Year's Day to find the Mississippi Militia in "mortal terror" of an anticipated assault.⁷⁸ Tensions eased the next morning when returning scouts told of the enemy's retreat to Paducah.⁷⁹ With the threat of incursion quelled, the "fatigued and footsore" Twelfth Tennessee was ordered to return to Columbus later that morning.⁸⁰

General Polk, who initially had serious reservations about placing volunteer militiamen in a forward position, finally resolved to break up the camp and remove the sixty-day troops to Union City. In their place he assigned a sizable cavalry force, consisting of the First Mississippi, First Kentucky (previously the Kentucky Infantry Battalion), Sixth Tennessee, and an unassigned battalion of Alabama and Mississippi cavalry under Major Richard H. Brewer, to patrol the Kentucky-Tennessee border south of Columbus to the Tennessee River.⁸¹ On 2 January a hesitant General Alcorn ordered his men to march to Union City. They entered the town late that evening.⁸²

⁷⁶O.R., 7: 66-68, 517.

⁷⁷O.R., *Supplement*, Part I, Serial No. 1, volume 1: 513.

⁷⁸Lindsley, *Military Annals of Tennessee*, 307.

⁷⁹O.R., *Supplement*, Part I, Serial No. 1, volume 1: 514.

⁸⁰Alfred Tyler Fielder, *The Civil War Diaries of Capt. Alfred Tyler Fielder: 12th Tennessee Regiment Infantry, Company B, 1861-1865* (Louisville: A. Y. Franklin, 1996), 27 and O.R., 52, part 2, 261. The date given in the *Official Records* is incorrect and should be 2 January 1862 rather than 27 January 1862.

⁸¹O.R., 7: 808.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 7: 816-17.

Within days of their arrival, an outbreak of measles ravaged Alcorn's command leaving one-fifth of his troops unfit for duty. Murmurs of discontent arose among the troops, and a concerned General Alcorn requested permission from Polk to disband the militia. Polk denied the request and ordered Alcorn and his men to Columbus. However, by the time Alcorn received the order on 16 December, half his command had either been discharged because of illness or had deserted.⁸³

On 8 January, General Grant received orders from Major General Henry W. Halleck to march upon Mayfield and threaten Camp Beauregard; this advance was intended to divert Confederate troops from being sent to Bowling Green and to give Grant's men some experience in skirmishing.⁸⁴ Weather conditions and bad roads delayed the Federal march until the tenth, however, when over five thousand Illinois volunteers under the direction of Brigadier General John A. McClernand left Fort Holt on the road to Columbus.⁸⁵ McClernand's conspicuous advance southeastward received the immediate attention of General Polk in Columbus, who sent the Sixth Tennessee Cavalry Battalion under Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Logwood from Camp Desha to reinforce Camp Beauregard. Logwood left on the morning of 11 January. Riding through rain and sleet, they reached the camp that afternoon, but the enemy was nowhere near the outpost. Exhausted and covered with mud the Sixth Tennessee returned to Camp Desha the same night.⁸⁶ Despite the slow and passive movement of McClernand's troops, Polk sent a desperate message to General Johnston on 12 January, pleading for support to cover his right flank. He expressed concern that only Alcorn's deteriorating command and a thousand cavalymen at Camp Beauregard

⁸³*The Weekly Mississippian* [Jackson, Mississippi], 26 February 1862.

⁸⁴*O.R.*, 7: 533-34, 537-38.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 7: 68-72.

⁸⁶*Daily Appeal*, 24 January 1862.

were all that prevented the Union army from encircling Columbus.⁸⁷ Johnston had problems of his own, however, as Federal gunboats were descending the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers. He chose to ignore Polk and hold his troops at Bowling Green.⁸⁸

On the morning of 14 January, panic struck the men at Camp Beauregard after scouts reported that six thousand enemy soldiers were at Mayfield. Major Brewer, presently the commander at Camp Beauregard, contemplated removing the stores of the outpost and retreating, but the roads were in bad condition and the locomotive at Fulton was irreparable.⁸⁹ Certain that his command was going to be encircled and attacked, Polk ordered the men at Camp Beauregard and Camp Desha to Columbus on 16 January to patrol the perimeter of the city's defenses.⁹⁰ The very next day, the Fourth Illinois Cavalry under Captain Mindrat Wemple entered Mayfield to reconnoiter the fortifications at Camp Beauregard. Wemple returned on 18 January to inform McClernand that reliable sources had reported that the outpost had been abandoned. Rather than pressing on to Camp Beauregard and exposing his supply line, however, McClernand withdrew toward Lovelaceville.⁹¹ Believing that the object of the expedition had been accomplished, General Grant ordered McClernand to withdraw his command to Fort Jefferson where they embarked on steamships to return to Cairo on 20 January.⁹²

With McClernand back in Illinois, Polk ordered his cavalry back to their outposts at Camp Desha and Camp Beauregard. Lieutenant Colonel Miller entered Camp Beauregard on 21 January with a

⁸⁷*O.R.*, 7: 829.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 7: 534.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 7: 831

⁹⁰*Daily Appeal*, 24 January 1862 and *O.R.*, 7 836.

⁹¹*O.R.*, 7 68-72.

⁹²*Ibid.*, 7: 68-72, 560.

“distressingly small” force of “sickened men and unshod horses.”⁹³ He did not remain long, for on the next day he marched his men to Murray, Kentucky, which was occupied by Union troops under General Charles Smith. Miller, with a command of over a thousand cavalrymen, reached Murray after daybreak of 23 January. They found the town vacant; Smith had departed for Paducah the day before. Miller half-heartedly pursued Smith to the outskirts of Benton, Kentucky, where he decided to break off pursuit and return to Murray. Miller and his men entered Camp Beauregard on 26 January.⁹⁴

Rumors circulated in Paducah that Camp Beauregard had been destroyed on 25 January by retreating Confederate cavalry. Contrary to the rumors, however, the outpost was still operating under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Miller from the final week of December to the first week of February. Captain R.A. Pinson of the First Mississippi assumed command of the post in early February with his cavalry battalion and a portion of the First Kentucky. His assignment was to defend the post and guard the baggage and commissary stores of Miller’s patrolling cavalry units.⁹⁵ Camp Beauregard’s days became numbered when on 6 February Fort Henry surrendered to a Union flotilla under Andrew Foote. Ten days later Fort Donelson capitulated to a sizable force under General Grant. With the fall of both forts, Grant’s army stood between Columbus and the Confederacy to the east.

Acknowledging the vulnerability of Columbus, President Jefferson Davis relayed orders to General Polk to evacuate the city on 20 February.⁹⁶ Polk sent an order to Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Logwood at Camp Desha that afternoon to destroy the New Orleans and

⁹³Ibid., 7: 841.

⁹⁴Ibid., 7: 74-75 and *Daily Appeal*, 30 January 1862.

⁹⁵O.R., volume 52, part 2: 269 and Rowland, *Military History of Mississippi*, 377-78.

⁹⁶O.R., 7: 893-94.

Ohio Railroad along with any provisions and stores that might be useful to the enemy. Heavy rains made it difficult to burn trestles and bridges, but Logwood reported that he “destroyed the railroads as well as possible from within 5 miles south of Mayfield back to Fulton Station.”⁹⁷ Logwood’s mission also included moving the commissary stores at Camp Beauregard to Fulton and setting the outpost aflame. He did so on 21 February. A member of Logwood’s command wrote of the destruction of the camp:

Knowing from my own experience the severe labor by which the cabins at Beauregard were built, aside from the mortification which accompanies an evacuation, I felt an indefinable sadness in witnessing their destruction. As the flames consumed the labors of the brave boys who had built and occupied those cabins, I could not but think of them as roofless wanderers, exposed to every inclemency of weather, yet contented with a hasty bivouac, and finding their reward in the service of their country.⁹⁸

Upon reaching Fulton, Logwood destroyed the locomotive and some of the cars but chose not to burn the depot buildings that were “full to overflow with provisions.”⁹⁹ These supplies were eventually brought by wagon to Union City.

The news of the destruction of Camp Beauregard reached Paducah on 25 February when men escaping impressment into the Confederate army reached Union lines. The refugees told stories of the exploded locomotive at Fulton and the smoldering embers of log pens and private homes near Feliciana.¹⁰⁰ On 2 March the last of

⁹⁷Ibid., 7: 897-98.

⁹⁸*Daily Appeal*, 27 February 1862.

⁹⁹*O.R.*, 7: 897-98.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 7: 665.

Polk's army pulled out of Columbus. The next day Union troops entered the "Gibraltar of the West," grateful that they did not have to take the place by force. Lieutenant Colonel Logwood and the Sixth Tennessee Cavalry Battalion remained at Camp Desha until after 4 March, but his command retired southward as Union cavalry pursued Polk's army.¹⁰¹ With Logwood's departure, the last permanent Confederate outpost in the Jackson Purchase disappeared. However, a menacing Confederate presence in the region lasted for the duration of the war.

In July 1863, Camp Beauregard again served as a bivouac site, this time for Union troops who were retreating from raiding cavalry under the command of Colonel J.B. Biffle. Colonel Biffle and eight hundred cavalry soldiers entered northwest Tennessee in early July with the intention of disrupting communications and recruiting men. Biffle captured Union City on 10 July and then assaulted Jackson on 13 July; only a stubborn Union defense prevented it from being taken.¹⁰² The next day Biffle slowly retreated toward Dresden where he set up camp on 20 July. Word of Biffle's whereabouts reached Union Brigadier General Alexander Asboth in Columbus on 21 July.¹⁰³ The next morning he ordered Colonel George E. Waring to pursue and capture Biffle's cavalry before they could cross the Tennessee River.¹⁰⁴

Waring with a brigade of about three thousand men set out from Columbus on 23 July. Marching southeast he reached the small village of Jackson Pond, Tennessee, on the evening of 27 July. While preparing to advance to Fort Heiman the next day, Waring received a dispatch to retreat immediately to Feliciana. Reports had reached Columbus that General Nathan Bedford Forrest and Colonel Biffle

¹⁰¹Ibid., 7: 920.

¹⁰²Ibid., 24, part 2: 673-78.

¹⁰³Ibid., 23, part 2: 546-47.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 23, part 2: 549-50.

had joined forces and were moving to cut off Waring.¹⁰⁵ During the night, Waring broke camp and retraced his steps to Kentucky. His brigade made it safely to Feliciana on 30 July where they encamped near Morris Station upon the grounds of Camp Beauregard.¹⁰⁶ Waring remained there until 4 August when a dispatch arrived announcing that Confederate troops were moving further south and ordering him to march his brigade to Union City.¹⁰⁷

For the remainder of the war, both Union and Confederate troops moved past the charred remnants of Camp Beauregard and through the town of Feliciana. The most notable of these instances was General Forrest's expedition into the Jackson Purchase in March and Brigadier General Abraham Buford's raid in April 1864. After an assault on Paducah on 21 March, Forrest's command marched by Camp Beauregard en route to Dresden, which it reached on 27 March.¹⁰⁸ Less than three weeks later, General Buford traveled the same southerly route following the capture of horses and other supplies at Paducah on 14 April. With the departure of Forrest and Buford's troops, there were clashes between the guerrilla bands that terrorized the region.¹⁰⁹ Small Confederate cavalry battalions continued to roam the Kentucky-Tennessee borderlands until January 1865, yet their impact on the region had diminished significantly. Detachments from Union forces at Columbus and Paducah

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 23, part 2: 561. The Waring brigade consisted of the Thirty-first and Thirty-fourth Wisconsin Infantry, ten companies of Fourth Missouri Cavalry, Company L of the Second Illinois Cavalry, Company C of the Fifteenth Kentucky Cavalry, and the Ninth Indiana Battery. See *O.R.*, volume 24, part 3: 255. The Twenty-fifth and Twenty-seventh Wisconsin Infantry were reassigned prior to Waring's expedition.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 23, part 1: 827.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 23, part 2: 590-91.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 32, part 1: 547, 607-608. Forrest arrived in Dresden on 27 March taking the road south from Mayfield through Feliciana to Dresden. It would become a popular route for General Buford in the upcoming months.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 32, part 1: 549-50.

patrolled the area attempting to stem the lawlessness of guerrillas, but their efforts were for the most part unsuccessful. The looting and pillaging of the Jackson Purchase persisted until the end of the war.¹¹⁰

For the next thirty years Camp Beauregard and its place in Kentucky's history was forgotten. The forest reclaimed the hilltops of the old encampment, and the graves were hidden by undergrowth. It was not until the 1890s that an effort was made by Confederate veterans in Mayfield to have the grounds recognized as a burial site of Confederate soldiers. A committee was organized to investigate the feasibility of the recommendation, but the initiative lost momentum as the years passed and membership declined.¹¹¹ The initiative was rekindled in 1909 when the neglected condition of the graves was brought to the attention of the Kentucky Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) at their annual convention at Hopkinsville on 14 October.¹¹² At that convention, a committee was appointed to raise funds for the erection of a monument to commemorate those soldiers who lost their lives. The committee, called the Camp Beauregard Monument Committee, was chaired by Lizzie Lowe Fuller of Mayfield and consisted of ladies from Fulton and Hickman. The first meeting of the committee was held on 9 November 1909 in Mayfield where a strong base of support was organized to construct a memorial.¹¹³

The funds for building the monument trickled in slowly at first but picked up as the campaign spread beyond Mayfield and the Jackson Purchase. On 23 April 1911 over fifty UDC chapter members

¹¹⁰Hunter B. Whitesell, "Military Operations in the Jackson Purchase Area of Kentucky, 1862-1865," *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* 73 (1965): 323-48.

¹¹¹Letter from Stephen Elmore to Mrs. George T. Fuller, 24 September 1913, reprinted in *History of Camp Beauregard*, 19.

¹¹²Hopkinsville [Kentucky] *Daily Kentucky New Era*, 15 October 1909.

¹¹³Minutes of the meeting held 9 November 1909 in *History of Camp Beauregard*, 38.

from Paducah, Hickman, Fulton, and Mayfield met at Water Valley to view the site of the monument. One member of the visiting group remarked, "It was not only the most suitable, but the most elevated grounds on which to erect a monument in the county of Graves."¹¹⁴ In 1913, the committee chose a design submitted by the McNeal Marble Company of Marietta, Georgia. The design called for a fifteen-to-twenty-foot shaft. The estimated cost was \$2,500.¹¹⁵ When the Kentucky Division of the UDC met in Fulton the next year, it acknowledged the committee's work and encouraged division members to contribute.¹¹⁶ By January 1916, the committee had received \$518.57 in donations. A history of Camp Beauregard and a sketch of the proposed monument were placed in the *Confederate Veteran* magazine later the same year.¹¹⁷ The committee was optimistic about starting construction soon, but the war in Europe radically changed those plans.

As the United States entered World War I, the country's attention shifted to supporting the war effort. The campaign to raise funds for the monument was suspended until the close of the war. At the 1919 annual meeting of Kentucky Division of the UDC, a renewed effort to construct the monument was set in motion. During the conference, the UDC instructed the Camp Beauregard Monument Committee to start building the monument with the available funds. The committee was far short of its campaign goal of \$2,500, having raised only \$820. On 29 July 1920 a wealthy member of the New Orleans-based Beauregard Monument Association contributed \$457.50. With close to \$1,300, the committee signed a contract with

¹¹⁴Mayfield [Kentucky] *Daily Messenger*, 26 April 1911.

¹¹⁵*History of Camp Beauregard*, 42.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, 31.

¹¹⁷Mrs. George T. Fuller, "Camp Beauregard," *Confederate Veteran* 24 (1916): 183.

the McNeal Marble Company to chisel a sizable boulder with an inscription and appropriate adornments.¹¹⁸

The carved boulder arrived at the Water Valley railroad station in late summer of that year, but problems arose when it was removed from the train. The boulder was so massive that a team of ten horses could not drag it to the memorial site. After consulting with local railroad workers, a uniquely designed winch was devised whereby mules, ropes, and nearby trees were used to move the boulder. The tedious job of dragging it inch by inch up the dirt road to the monument site took several weeks to complete.¹¹⁹

The long-awaited dedication occurred on the afternoon of Sunday, 20 October 1920. On this warm autumn day, a large crowd assembled from across the Jackson Purchase to view the massive monument and to honor the Confederate dead. The longtime chairperson of the monument committee, the devoted and persistent Lizzie Fuller, led the dedication exercises that included speeches from veterans, historians, and members of the UDC. The ceremony lasted most of the afternoon and concluded with music furnished by a quartet from Fulton and original poems read by a young lady from Mayfield.¹²⁰ After more than a decade of promoting awareness of the site's historical importance and campaigning for funds to construct a permanent marker, the monument had finally become a reality.

Six years later, on 20 June 1926, the first memorial service at Camp Beauregard was held. The service not only paid tribute to the fallen soldiers but also recognized the completion of a foundation

¹¹⁸*History of Camp Beauregard*, 42 and "Division Notes," *Confederate Veteran* 27 (1919): 435.

¹¹⁹Oleen Pollard, Z. W. Pique, and Richard D. McClure, *Water Valley Good Old Days* (Water Valley: Water Valley Volunteer Fire Department, 1997), 25. Mr. Z. W. Pique was only eight years old when he saw the monument being inched through the streets of Water Valley in the summer of 1920.

¹²⁰*History of Camp Beauregard*, 43 and "Dedication of Camp Beauregard Monument," *Confederate Veteran* 29(1921): 314.



Camp
Beauregard
Monument
Dieter C.
Ullrich

that raised the monument an additional three feet.¹²¹ Three decades later, another movement emerged to place a marker on the national highway that ran through Water Valley. Through the efforts of state representative Lon Carter Barton, a historical marker was erected on 15 October 1960 by the Kentucky State Department of Highways along U.S. Highway 45 about one mile west of the monument.¹²² The marker read:

On the hill one mile east of this point stood Camp Beauregard Training Base for Confederate troops from six states 1861-1865. Severe epidemics caused a heavy mortality rate here.

To this day remembrances and memorial services are held at Camp Beauregard.

¹²¹*History of Camp Beauregard*, 44 and *Mayfield [Kentucky] Messenger*, 21 June 1926.

¹²²*Paducah [Kentucky] Sun*, 16 October 1960.



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Much has changed since Colonel Bonham and his men first set up camp outside of Morris Station. The town of Feliciana, once a prosperous and thriving community, slowly diminished as businesses relocated closer to the railroad. Morse Station absorbed the migrating businesses from Feliciana and was renamed Water Valley in 1872 after a scandalous affair involving the village's namesake was made public.¹²³ Ownership of the railroad changed numerous times in the decades that followed the Civil War, and by the 1970s it had run into financial problems. The Illinois Central Gulf Railroad Company, the last owners of the railroad line, abandoned the track and removed the rails in the 1980s. In the past decade a four-lane highway was completed west of Water Valley, and the last major thoroughfare through town was reduced to a quiet country road. The community of Water Valley, much like Feliciana over a century before, had become detached from its major trade artery and is currently struggling to preserve its declining population.

What has not changed are the wooded hills that drew the attention of Lieutenant Dixon over a hundred and forty years ago. Presently, a single-lane road winds along the hillsides where Confederate troops once encamped and stood guard. From atop the ridge, distant farmhouses and silos among fields of soybeans, corn, and tobacco are visible for many miles. Though many modern structures dot the landscape, the old railroad grade of the New Orleans and Ohio Railroad can still be seen meandering northward off into the horizon. Overlooking this panoramic view is the Camp Beauregard Monument, a lone testament to the many forgotten, nameless Confederate soldiers who perished there far from their families and homes.

¹²³Rennick, *Kentucky Place Names*, 310-11.