

ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Richmond, June 11, 1863.

GENERAL ORDERS, }
No. 81. }

I. A Court of Enquiry having been convened, by direction of the President, on the application of Lieut. Colonel Eugene E. McLean, Assistant Quartermaster General, under Special Orders, No. 282, paragraph XV, of 1862, "to examine into and report upon the conduct of the quartermaster's department of the Army of the Mississippi, whilst under the control of Lieut. Colonel, then Major McLean;" and having made the required examination and report, the result is, by direction of the President, published for the information of all concerned.

II. The Court having maturely considered the evidence adduced, *report*, as the

SUMMARY OF FACTS

Regarded by the Court of Enquiry in the case of Lieut. Colonel E. E. McLean, as proved by the evidence elicited, and of record:

1. That the Army of the Mississippi, as commanded by General Braxton Bragg, was an organization separate and distinct from the Army of the West, commanded by Major General Earl Van Dorn—both these armies, when concentrated at Corinth and Tupelo, being under General Beauregard, as commander of the forces.

2. That the Army of the Mississippi was composed of three army corps, commanded respectively by Generals Bragg, Polk and Hardee, and of a Reserve Corps commanded by General Breckenridge.

3. That the evacuation of Corinth by the confederate forces under General Beauregard, was first fixed for the 28th of May 1862.

4. That the evacuation of Corinth was postponed to the 29th of May 1862.

5. That the evacuation of Corinth was accomplished during the night of the 29th and morning of the 30th of May 1862.

6. That General Bragg relieved General Beauregard in the command of the forces at Tupelo, in the latter part of June 1862.

7. That Lieut. Colonel, then Major McLean, was acting as chief quartermaster of the Army of the Mississippi, about the 12th of March 1862.

8. That Major McLean was appointed chief quartermaster of the Army

of the Mississippi by General A. Sidney Johnston, on the 30th of March 1862.

9. That Lieut. Colonel McLean was relieved from duty as chief quartermaster of the forces, by General Bragg, on the 4th of July 1862, at Tupelo, Miss.

10. That the Army of the Mississippi, whilst Lieut. Colonel McLean was its chief quartermaster, both at Corinth and Tupelo, was amply supplied with money, clothing, camp and garrison equipage, wagons, public animals, field transportation in general, and with all quartermaster's stores, with the exception of full rations of forage at Corinth and of certain other articles which were applied for, and subsequently obtained by the quartermaster's department, or the parties requiring them at the time.

11. That there were throughout the army occasional complaints of the want, for a short time, of certain quartermaster's supplies, which the evidence shows were sufficiently accounted for, or promptly supplied, as far as possible, and the circumstances would permit of its being done.

12. That the supply of forage at Corinth was sufficient, though not full, and for a time restricted in amount and kind, owing to the nature of the surrounding country and other circumstances. Whilst at Tupelo it was ample, the army then being located in the vicinity of a country abounding in forage.

13. That there was but little forage within reach of Corinth by wagon transportation, and that little was consumed at an early day of our occupation of that post and the adjacent counties.

14. That the facilities afforded by the rail roads concentrating at that point, especially after their partial abandonment to the enemy, were not sufficient for the transportation of a full supply of forage for the army at Corinth, and at the same time to supply that army with all other quartermaster's, commissary's and ordnance stores required, and at the same time meet the sudden and unexpected demands for the transportation of large numbers of troops, the sick, &c.

15. That an abundant supply of corn, and as much long forage as could be found, was purchased by the quartermaster's department, and deposited along the lines of the different rail roads for shipment to Corinth; and when cars could be obtained, they were generally kept loaded with such forage, ready to be attached to the passing trains.

16. That the rail roads were worked to their utmost capacity, but that many cases occurred, where, from inability to transport them, the cars found ready loaded with forage, were left by the passing trains on the

side tracks of the rail roads, and thus detained or delayed in arriving at their place of destination.

17. That all side tracks required for the efficient working of the different rail roads were laid down by the quartermaster's department wherever found insufficient for the accommodation of the increased business of the rail roads.

18. That a competent military superintendent of the rail roads (a major in the quartermaster's department) was selected by the presidents of the rail roads, and with their concurrence, appointed by General Beauregard, to take upon himself the entire and exclusive control of all the army transportation by rail road, under the immediate supervision of General Beauregard, then commanding the forces.

19. That the quartermaster's department, whilst under the control of Lieut. Colonel McLean, established, and had in successful operation throughout the district of country under his charge, many and extensive manufactories for the supply of the army with quartermaster's stores.

20. That hospitals were erected and otherwise supplied for the use of the army, including that of the Mississippi, and were in many instances furnished and supplied from the stores of the quartermaster's department, whilst under the control of Lieut. Colonel McLean.

21. That artesian wells were, under the direction of Lieut. Col. McLean, successfully bored at Corinth, to supply the army at that place with water.

22. That corrals were established by the quartermaster's department of the Army of the Mississippi, in the rear of the army, for the disabled and worn down public animals, where they were in large numbers, properly attended and successfully recruited for the service.

23. That for ordinary purposes, a sufficient and permanent force of negro laborers was employed by the quartermaster's department for loading and unloading the cars at the rail road depots.

24. That in cases of emergency, sufficient assistance was obtained by details from the army, upon the application of the parties desiring them, as was the case of the post and ordnance department at the evacuation of Corinth.

25. That there was a sufficient number of competent and efficient officers of the quartermaster's department at all times at the rail road depot at Corinth, to superintend and control the rail road transportation of the army during the evacuation of that place.

26. That the transportation operations on the occasion of the evacuation of Corinth, were expeditiously and successfully conducted by energetic and competent officers of the quartermaster's department, assigned

to the special duty of superintending the transportation of army stores and troops from that place by rail.

27. That material aid was rendered by General Bragg and several members of his staff, and some members of the staff of General Beauregard, also by other officers, as well as by Col. Benton's regiment, and other details from the army.

28. That there was no public property left in Corinth upon the evacuation of the place, except a few tents and broken wagons, some old harness, and some few shells and other ordnance stores; most of which property appears to have been damaged or condemned, or not worth the cost of its transportation under the attending circumstances.

29. That there was a loss of a number of rail road engines and cars loaded with army stores, upon the Memphis and Charleston rail road, on the morning of the 30th of May 1862, occasioned by the burning of the rail road bridges across the Hatchie and Tuscumbia rivers, in obedience to specific orders given the officers in command at those bridges, to destroy them at a certain hour.

30. That the quartermaster's department had no notice that the bridges were to be destroyed; otherwise the trains lost might have been dispatched in time to have passed the bridges, or turned down the Mobile and Ohio rail road, and thus saved.

31. That there was a loss of a train of cars containing certain government property, at Booneville, whilst standing on the track of the Mobile and Ohio rail road, on the morning of the 30th of May 1862, occasioned by a raid of the enemy's cavalry, over which the quartermaster's department had no control.

32. That Lieut. Colonel McLean was, at one time during his administration of the quartermaster's department of the Army of the Mississippi and other forces, afflicted with a disease, which was local, and not of a nature permanently to disable him from attending to all the duties required of him as chief of his department.

33. That with the exception of a few days' illness at Corinth, about a week previous to the evacuation of that place, Lieut. Colonel McLean was not unable, at any time while chief quartermaster of the army, to attend to all the duties which were required of him, and that he did so attend promptly to all the duties devolving upon him at the time.

34. That Lieut. Colonel McLean is shown by the evidence to have been prompt, energetic, efficient, courteous and considerate in the discharge of his duties as chief quartermaster of the army, successively under Generals Johnston, Beauregard and Bragg, and especially solicitous

for the welfare and success of the department entrusted to his charge, and for which he was responsible.

OPINION OF THE COURT.

It is the opinion of this Court, that from the facts elicited in the investigation of the conduct of the quartermaster's department of the Army of the Mississippi, whilst under the control of Lieut. Colonel, then Major Eugene E. McLean, it appears that the department was managed with all the energy, efficiency, forethought and success which could have been expected under the difficult circumstances attending the sudden concentration of our armies; the unexpected occupation by the enemy of our principal fields of supply; the scarcity of the means of field transportation; the inability to obtain forage within reasonable reach of the army by means of wagon transportation; the failure or inability of the rail roads of the country to transport from a distance, when purchased, forage to the army; the closing of the great markets of New Orleans, Memphis and Nashville; the interference by agents of other branches of the service, with the departments of purchases of forage, and of transportation, under Lieut. Colonel McLean; the original scarcity throughout the country of all supplies needed; the continuance of such scarcity in consequence of the existing blockade of the ports of the Confederacy; and the inexperience of nearly all quartermasters' agents in the beginning of the war.

It further appears from the evidence, that in the arduous duties attending the evacuation of Corinth by the Confederate Army under General Beauregard, the quartermaster's department was fully represented by able and efficient officers, present at the rail road depot day and night, and to their activity and judgment is the successful removal of the public stores, for which the quartermaster's department was responsible at that place, mainly attributable. That the quartermaster's department during the day and night preceding the evacuation was efficiently aided by the personal exertions of General Bragg and several members of his and General Beauregard's staff, and by the exertions of Col. Benton's regiment, together with other details from the army.

It also appears from the evidence, that the evacuation of Corinth, so far as the quartermaster's department was concerned, was a complete military success, and that although so short a time was allowed to remove the stores, but little property was lost, and that but of small value, being mostly worthless or condemned stores. The severe losses of the engines and cars, together with the public property contained in the latter, de-

stroyed on the morning of the evacuation on the Hatchie and Tuscumbia bridges, on the Memphis and Charleston rail road, by our troops, and on the Mobile and Ohio rail road, at Booneville, by a raid of the enemy's cavalry, are shown from the evidence to be in no way attributable to the quartermaster's department.

The Court is also of opinion, that the investigation has further shown, that in the conduct of the department committed to his charge, Lieut. Col. McLean was prompt, energetic and efficient in the discharge of all the duties of his office whilst chief quartermaster of the army, and that whilst in the execution of those duties, his instructions to and teachings of his subordinates, contributed much to the success attendant on their exertions, and to the introduction and maintenance of the proper system and order in the various branches of the department entrusted to his supervision and control.

III. The Court of Enquiry, of which Col. M. Lewis Clark was president, is hereby dissolved.

By order.

S. COOPER,

Adjutant and Inspector General.