

Confederate Veteran

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BATTLE OF SECESSIONVILLE.

The following report of the battle of Secessionville was made by Gen. Nathan George Evans, in command of Confederate forces, immediately after the battle:

Headquarters of the Second Military Division of
South Carolina, Adams Run, S. C., June 19,
1862.

Major: I have the honor to submit the following report of the action of the troops under my command on James Island on the 16th of June.

On the afternoon of the 15th instant, I was informed by Col. T. G. Lamar, 1st Artillery, that, from his observations of the movements of the enemy, Secessionville would doubtless be attacked on that night or on the morning of the 16th inst. I directed him to hold his position, that he would be reënforced, if necessary. At two o'clock of the morning of the 16th, I received a note from him informing me that the enemy were advancing.

I repaired to Clark's house as soon as possible, where I arrived at fifteen minutes to four o'clock, A.M., and where I found Col. Johnson Hagood had, in his untiring vigilance, ordered three regiments to be in readiness for an immediate attack and had already sent a detachment of Colonel Goodlett's regiment to the support of Colonel Lamar. Watching closely the movements

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of the enemy in front of Secessionville, I determined to reënforce the place to two thousand strong and immediately ordered the 4th Louisiana Battalion and Colonel Goodlett's to repair at double quick and report to Colonel Lamar at Secessionville. Lieutenant Colonel McEnery arrived just in time to receive the second assault of the enemy and to materially aid in repulsing the enemy.

At this time I received a message from Colonel Hagood that the enemy were approaching on the right, and asking for reënforcement. I directed him to attack the enemy and immediately directed the 5th Georgia and Colonel Williams' regiment to repair to his assistance. The engagement now became general on both wings. Col. C. E. Stevens was killed. Colonel Hagood, seeing that the twenty-four-pound battery near Clark's house was not being fired, directed Colonel Capers, of his regiment, to take command of the battery and to fire on the enemy. With which the one piece was dismounted. He did gallant and effective service, firing constantly into the flank of columns of the enemy. On the third assault of the enemy, Lieutenant Colonel Capers was very successful with his piece, piercing the columns of the enemy eleven times. For the details of the gallant defense of the work at Secessionville, I would respectfully refer the Major General Courney to the official reports of the immediate commanders herewith submitted.

Three times did that heroic band, and often at the point of the bayonet, attack a force twice their strength under the fire of three gunboats and four stationary land batteries. About ten o'clock the enemy retreated in great confusion, leaving their dead and wounded on the field, a number lying in our trenches. The loss of the enemy, I have been unable to ascertain, but, from what I saw, was at least four hundred killed and wounded. The dead of the enemy immediately in front of the Secessionville work numbered 168, while 42 more had been brought within the work. The dead I directed to be immediately buried, and the wounded to be removed to the hospital. A considerable number of muskets and accouterments were captured, a partial return of which will be found in the paper marked "G." A full report of these arms I directed Captain McCrady, Ordinance Officer, to make to the Chief of Ordinance in Charleston.

At 12 o'clock I received a note from the Major General Courney that he was at Big Creek headquarters, asking if I wished reënforcements, that

they were ready. I replied through my aide-de-camp that I thought the enemy were leaving their position, as they were burning the houses he had just occupied. I then joined the Major General Courney and accompanied him to Secessionville to inspect the work as well as to ascertain our loss and the situation and condition of our troops. After giving instructions relative to the wounded and dead, also as to the arms captured, I returned to my headquarters, and in accordance with instruction from Major General Courney, ordered Colonel Colquitt's Georgia regiment to repair as soon as possible and relieve Colonel Goodlett in command of Secessionville. Colonel Goodlett and his command were completely worn down and exhausted. I would here state that I directed Colonel Lamar to send all of his exhausted men to the rear on the arrival of Colonel Goodlett's command, which order left him but one hundred and fifty men for duty. The troops at Secessionville on the morning of the 16th were much fatigued, as they had been engaged at work on the entrenchments during the entire night and were entirely worn out when the action commenced in the morning.

In reference to the action on our right, I would respectfully refer you for particulars to the reports of Colonels Hagood and Stevens, herewith inclosed. To my personal staff, 1st Lieut. W. H. Rogers, Special A. D. C., Capt. R. Elliott, Samuel I. Corrie, and A. W. Carr, I am much indebted for their untiring executions in transmitting my orders under fire. Assistant Surgeon James Evans, of my staff, rendered material aid to the wounded, who were brought to the rear. In conclusion, I want to add that at eight o'clock in the morning Brig. Gen. W. D. Smith joined me at Clark's house, where I directed him to take command of the right wing and attack the enemy vigorously. I have received no reports from him, but take it for granted the reports of Colonels Hagood and Stevens cover the action of the troops on the right.

To the dauntless Lamar and to the troops under his command, at the commencement of the assault, the Charleston Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Gaillard, Lieutenant Colonel Smith's battalion, and companies of Lamar's regiment (engaged), the country and South Carolina in particular owe a debt of gratitude and thanks, which I know a grateful people will acknowledge. For the gallant dead the country will ever mourn. The intrepid Reed fell whilst charging his men to victory and the enemy were repulsed. The reports herein inclosed will give the casualties on our side: Thirty-nine killed, ninety-three wounded, and two missing. No report has been secured from Lieutenant Colonel Smith's battalion. Colonel Lamar's report will be forwarded as soon as received. I also inclose a copy of a letter from Brig. Gen. Isaac Stevens, commander of Federal forces, and also of my reply.

