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## Major General James Patton Anderson: An Autobiography

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MAJOR GENERAL JAMES PATTON ANDERSON:  
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

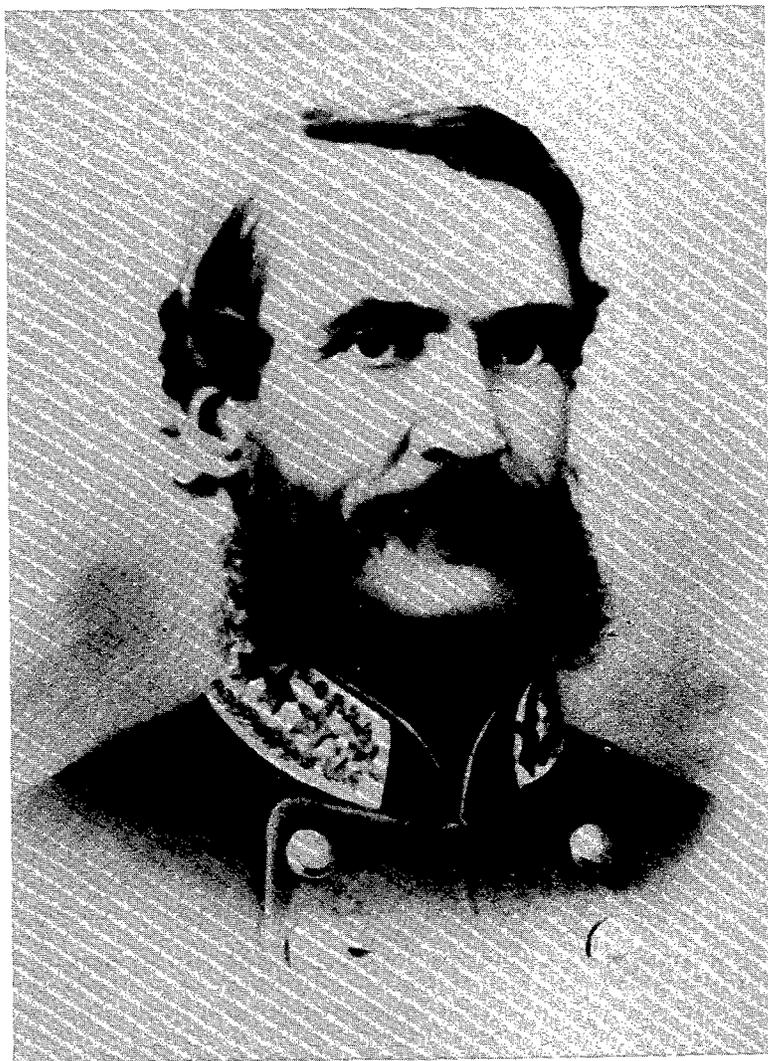
by MARGARET UHLER

**A**LTHOUGH James Patton Anderson has received relatively little historical recognition, the contributions he made to Florida's Civil War effort are worthy of historical study.

Many incidents of Anderson's life are revealed in letters of his wife, Etta. In fact, their combined reminiscences complement each other to form a compelling narrative of romance, adventure, and devotion.<sup>1</sup> In response to a letter from a Mister Earle requesting biographical information, Etta wrote on April 11, 1889: "I do not believe it possible for any pen to do justice to his private character, for brilliant, pure, and good as his public life was, his private life excelled it in every respect. We were married 19 years in April— he died the following September. In that time as son, husband, father & master, I never saw him do or say anything I did not admire and approve. It seemed to me every day I saw something new to admire and love. Every member of his household idolized him. He never spoke out of patience to his children or his servants. He required obedience— but he ruled with quiet firmness. His plantation was conducted with the same system that his command was in the army. He had no trouble to control. He seemed on entering home to leave his business 'outside the gate— ' and to enter fully into the amusements of his children. Sympathizing with them in their joys and their childish sorrows, directing, guiding & instructing at the same time. Every little occurrence [ sic ] of the day was 'kept to tell Father when he came.' Don't you see how utterly impossible it would be for me to write a sketch that would do to

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1. James Patton Anderson Papers (including his autobiography), boxes #64 and #64A, P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville; Margaret Anderson Uhler, "Civil War Letters of Major General James Patton Anderson," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 56 (October 1977), 150-75.



Major General James Patton Anderson.

publish? I knew him too well. And since I have lost him & have been thrown around on the world, the more perfect he seems & the farther I come from meeting any like him.”<sup>2</sup>

Even though her inability to be objective caused some hesitancy in complying with the letter writer’s request, Etta, nevertheless, provided several significant incidents absent in Anderson’s own rather modest account. During Anderson’s tenure as United States marshal of Washington Territory, from 1853 to 1856, an event took place that Etta asked Mr. Earle to keep confidential: “Genls. McClelan [ sic ] (a great favorite with us), Grant, Auger, & many other officers were our friends there; & let me tell you a little thing that for Genl. Grant’s children’s sake will be kept between us. While my husband was taking the census, way up near the Dalles, on the Columbia River, Genl. Grant, then a Lieut. paymaster with the rank of Capt., was suffering from mania\_\_\_\_\_ [delirium tremens]. Got away from his soldiers. They were all camping on the bank of the river. My husband had Indians with him. The soldiers woke him & told him of Grant’s condition & that he had gone. He woke his Indians, made them understand, & put them on the trail. They tracked him by the pieces of his outside woolen shirt on the bushes; found him crouched down under some bushes ready to plunge into the river hundreds of feet below. One false step & both would go down to certain death. The banks were solid rock hundreds of feet high & the water so cold that they could not live in it a moment without cramp. Genl. A. was strong and active. He climbed carefully until he was between Grant and the river— gave one spring against his breast— forced him back to the ground, & caught to the bushes near & held him fast until the soldiers came & helped to secure him & take him into camp. Patton rarely spoke of it. About the time of the fall of Vicksburg, it got out through some officer writing to one of his staff & his staff insisted on knowing the particulars & were much amused.”<sup>3</sup>

Devotion to duty governed Anderson’s life, and, like his Confederate commander and hero, Robert E. Lee, he was imbued with an equally strong sense of personal loyalty. Etta’s letter to Mr. Earle continues with another revealing incident:

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2. Etta Anderson to Mr. Earle, Palatka, Florida, April 11, 1889, James Patton Anderson Papers.

3. Ibid.

“He [James Patton Anderson] never recovered from his wound & died from the effects of it on Sept. 20, 1872, at Memphis, the anniversary of the battle of Chickamauga. He always remembered it & would add, ‘How we whipped them that day— poor Lytle.’<sup>4</sup> He and Genl. A. were warm personal friends. The last time they met before the war in the Charleston Convention, talking of the prospects of war, which both believed they would have— as they parted, they agreed if it came— & either was in the hand of the other, the more fortunate one would do all they could consistently with their duty as officers to alleviate the suffering of the other. Once Genl. A’s [Anderson’s] mother was left in the Federal lines. Genl. L. [Lytle] was very kind and attentive, & finally accompanied her through the lines with a flag of truce. During the battle of Chickamauga a soldier reported to my husband that a federal officer had been killed. He rode back and was shocked to find it was Genl. Lytle & that his own brigade had killed him. He secured some articles from his pockets— a lock of his hair, his ring, & pistol, placed a guard over the body & said his spurs were gone (the history of which Genl. A. knew some way). A wounded Yankee man said, ‘A rebel took them & has gone up the lines.’ My husband rode on, overtaking one of his own couriers & asked if he had seen anyone with them. He said, ‘I took them myself, Genl., & have just buckled them on Maj. Thompson’s heels. He is just ahead of you.’ My husband rode on, for his duties called him to that part of the field. He found the Maj., but he too was dead, his body stripped & the spurs gone. He tried often during the war & after, but could never hear of them. He asked as a personal favor of Genl. Bragg that he might make the effort to send Genl. Lytle’s body to his friends (I think his sisters) with the articles mentioned. The request was readily granted & his body was exchanged for Genl. Adams of La., who was behind mortally wounded.”<sup>5</sup>

General Anderson won distinction on the battlefields of Corinth, Shiloh, Perryville, Murfreesboro, Chickamauga, and Missionary Ridge. In March 1864, he assumed command of the

4. Ibid.; Brigadier General William Haines Lytle of Cincinnati, Ohio, 10th Ohio Infantry, Reginald C. McGrane in *Dictionary of American Biography*, 21 vols. (New York, 1933), XI, 538.
5. Anderson to Earle, Palatka, Florida, April 11, 1889, James Patton Anderson Papers.

District of Florida and, with a small army of 12,000 men, managed to hold the superior Federal forces beleaguered in Jacksonville. In July 1864, Anderson was ordered to report to Lieutenant General John Bell Hood in Atlanta. On August 31, during the Battle of Jonesboro, where he commanded a temporary corps of two divisions, he was seriously wounded. Etta describes the scene to Mr. Earle: "Riding close to the Federal line to reconnoiter, he was honored by a regimental salute by the enemy. Then a halt was ordered, and while riding to rejoin his command, under a hailstorm of bullets, he was shot through the Jaw, nearly cutting off the tongue."<sup>6</sup>

Not expected at first to survive his wounds, General Anderson surprisingly made a partial recovery and returned to his plantation, Casa Bianca, near Monticello, Florida. During his convalescence he wrote his autobiography in a plantation ledger book (now in the James Patton Anderson Papers, P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, University of Florida) for his children. Although not fully recovered from his injury, and against the advice of his physicians, Anderson rejoined the army in March 1865 and was assigned to a new command from Charleston, South Carolina. After the Battle of Bentonville, North Carolina, Anderson, along with Generals Edward Cary Walthall and Winfield Scott Featherston, both from Mississippi, was still unwilling to surrender. Aware of their sentiments, their superiors signed the terms of surrender before they could be present at the caucus.<sup>7</sup> Anderson was paroled at Greensboro, North Carolina, on May 2, 1865.<sup>8</sup> Borrowing a wagon and four mules from Union General John M. Schofield, he was able to return to Monticello.<sup>9</sup>

In 1856, Anderson bought Casa Bianca, a 6,000-acre plantation, from his aunt, Ellen Adair White Beatty, widow of Joseph M. White, one of the most influential men in Florida during the Territorial Period.<sup>10</sup> White had represented Florida in Congress from 1825 to 1837. In 1860, Anderson sold Casa Bianca to

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. Anderson's parole in possession of author.

9. Jerrell Shofner, *History of Jefferson County* (Tallahassee, 1976), 269.

10. Margaret Uhler, "Florida White,' Southern Belle," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 55 (January 1977), 299-309.

Robert W. Williams, a prominent Leon County planter.<sup>11</sup> However, when Anderson returned to Monticello after the war he arranged to rent Casa Bianca. He lived there until his health forced him to seek a more congenial climate. In 1868, with his wife and five children, Anderson moved to Memphis, Tennessee, where he lived until his death. Anderson refused to sign the oath of allegiance to the United States, and, unable to resume his legal practice, died in poverty, unreconstructed to the end. To have signed the oath, he felt, would have "implied a regret for what he had done & he had none. And if his life was to go over he would do just as he had unless if possible he would be more devoted to the cause."<sup>12</sup>

Anderson's death left Etta with no means of supporting herself and her children. Consequently, she lived the next ten years with her brother, Cromwell Adair, in Morganfield, Kentucky. In 1883, she and her children, William Preston, Theophilus Beatty, James Patton, Jr., Elizabeth Cromwell, and Margaret Bybee, returned to Florida and settled in Palatka. Etta organized the Patton Anderson Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy in Palatka and served as its president until her death in 1917.

General Anderson's autobiography was published in Volume XXXVIII of the *Southern Historical Society Papers*, a compilation of essays, autobiographies, and paroles published by the Southern Historical Society between 1876 and 1959. The volume containing General Anderson's autobiography was published by the Virginia State Library, Richmond, and edited by Robert Alonzo Brock. No changes have been made from the original autobiography in spelling or punctuation; paragraphing, however, has been modified for ease in reading.

11. Agreement between Ellen A. Beatty and James Patton Anderson, January 7, 1856, and Ellen Beatty to James Patton Anderson, January 12, 1856; Agreement of sale, Ellen A. Beatty and Robert W. Williams, January 10, 1860; and Agreement between James Patton Anderson and A. G. A. Godwin, February 28, 1860, James Patton Anderson Papers; Clifton Paisley, *From Cotton To Quail: An Agricultural Chronicle of Leon County, Florida, 1860-1967* (Tallahassee, 1968), 20.
12. Etta Anderson to Earle, Palatka, Florida, April 11, 1889, James Patton Anderson Papers.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I was born in Winchester, Franklin County, Tennessee, on the 16th day of February 1822. My father, William Preston Anderson, was a native of Botetourt County, Virginia, and was born about the year 1775 [ sic ], during the second term of General Washington's administration. He received from the President a commission of Lieutenant in the United States Army. About this time, or soon after, he removed to Tennessee and at one time was United States District Attorney for that Judicial District, and was subsequently Surveyor General of the District of Tennessee. In the War of 1812 he was Colonel of the 24th United States Infantry and was accidentally with Col. Crogan in his defense of Fort Harrison.<sup>13</sup> During this war he married my mother (Margaret L. Adair) who was the fifth daughter of Maj. Gen. John Adair of Mercer County, Kentucky.<sup>14</sup> He had previously been married to Miss Nancy Belle, by whom he had three children, Musadora, Rufus King, and Caroline. In the second marriage there were Nancy Belle, Catherine Adair, John Adair (who died in infancy), James Patton, John Adair (who died in 1858), Thomas Scott, and Butler Preston. When I was an infant my father removed from the town of Winchester to his farm Craggy Hope, about six miles distant, where he resided until his death in April 1831.

When about eight years old I was sent, for a short time, to a country school near home, where I learned the alphabet and began to spell and read. Soon after my father's death my mother returned with her six children to her father in Mercer County, Kentucky. My brother John Adair and myself were soon after sent to the house of Charles Buford (who had married my mother's youngest sister) in Scott County, Kentucky, and remained there about a year attending a country school taught by a Mr. Phillips— this was in 1831-2. In 1833 I returned to my grandfather and went to school to a young man named Van Dyke who taught in the neighborhood. Afterwards to Mr. Tyler

13. Possibly Colonel George Croghan. Fort Harrison, on the Wabash River, was attacked by the Indian leader, Tecumseh. Though the attack was repulsed, the Indians burned a large part of the fort. Reginald Horsman, *The War of 1812* (New York, 1969), 82.
14. John Adair was governor of Kentucky, 1820-1824. James Barnett Adair, *Adair History and Genealogy* (Los Angeles, 1924), 68.

and still later on to a Mr. Boutwell, who were successively principals of Cone Burr Academy in Mercer County.

I was then sent to the house of Judge Thomas B. Monroe in Frankfort. Mrs. Monroe was also a sister of my mother.<sup>15</sup> Here I remained for about a year, perhaps more, attending a select school taught by B. B. Sayre. About this time my mother was married to Dr. J. N. Bybee of Harrodsburg, Ky. I was taken to his house and went to school in the village to a Mr. Rice and afterward to a Mr. Smith. In October 1836 I was sent to Jefferson College at Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania. I remained there a year when pecuniary misfortune compelled my stepfather to withdraw me. In the winter of 1838 I kept up my studies with a young man named Ferry then teaching in Harrodsburg. During this winter I boarded at the house of my Uncle John Adair three miles in the country.

In the spring of 1838, I was sent up to the Three Forks of Kentucky River in Estill County, where my stepfather had established a saw mill and had opened a coal mine. During this year, too, I made a trip with my mother to Winchester, Tennessee, on horseback, where she went to close up some of the unsettled business of my father's estate. In the fall of 1838 my stepfather determined to remove to North Mississippi, then being rapidly settled, the Indians having been removed west of the Mississippi River. I accompanied him from Harrodsburg, Ky. to Hernando in DeSoto County, Miss. I remained here during the winter of 1838-9, assisting in building cabins, clearing land &c. for the comfort of the family. In April 1839, I was sent back to Jefferson College. I entered the Junior class and graduated in October 1840. I returned to DeSoto County, Miss. and began the study of law in the office of Buckner & Delafield, and was admitted to the bar by Judge Howry in 1843. In the summer of 1844 and 1845 I spent three months of each year at the law school of Judge Thomas B. Monroe at Montrose over near Frankfort, Ky. I have always regarded these months as more profitably spent than any others of my life.

Having no money with which to support myself and the bar being crowded with the best talent of Tennessee, Alabama and other states which had been attracted to this new country by its

15. Eliza P. Adair was the third daughter of Governor Adair.

great prosperity and promise, I accepted the position of Deputy Sheriff of DeSoto County, under my brother-in-law, Col. James H. Murray, who had been elected to that office in 1843. I held this position, from which a comfortable support was derived, till 1846, when the prospect seemed favorable to commence the practice of law. In 1847 I formed a partnership with R. B. Mayes, a young lawyer of the State about my own age. (During the time that I discharged the functions of Deputy Sheriff I also practiced law in partnership with my former preceptor— E. F. Buckner— whenever I could do so consistently with the duties of the office).

In October 1847, I received an earnest appeal from Gov. A. G. Brown of Mississippi, to organize a company in response to a call from the President of the United States for service in Mexico. (I had previously made several efforts to enter the military service during the war with Mexico, but all the organizations from DeSoto County had failed to be received by the Governor - their distance from the capitol making them too late in reporting). In a few days I organized a company of volunteers from the Regiment of Militia in the County, of which I was then a Colonel. I was elected Captain of the Company without opposition. H. Car Forrest was elected 1st Lieutenant - my brother John Adair was elected 2nd Lieutenant and my brother Thomas Scott, Orderly Sergeant. The Company repaired hurriedly to Vicksburg, the place of rendezvous. Two other companies had already reached the encampment. After waiting a fortnight or more for the other two companies of the Battalion called for by the president to report, the five companies were sent to New Orleans for equipment and organization. Having received arms, clothing &c. they embarked about 2nd January 1848 for Tampico, Mexico. On the 22nd February 1848, I was elected at Tampico Lieutenant Colonel to command the Battalion. I remained at Tampico till the close of the war, when I was mustered out of the service along with the battalion at Vicksburg, Miss. and reached my home at Hernando on the 4th of July 1848.

I resumed the practice of law in partnership with R. B. Mayes. Our prospects were flattering as the business of the firm was gradually increasing. In the fall of 1849 I was elected one of the members of the Legislature from DeSoto County, after a very heated and closely contested canvass. In January 1850 I took my seat in the Legislature. Gen. John A. Quitman was at

the same time inaugurated Governor of the State. The celebrated Compromise Measures were then pending in the Congress of the United States and the country much excited on the topics then being discussed.<sup>16</sup> Jefferson Davis and H. S. Foote were then the United States Senators from Mississippi. I took the same view of the question with Davis and Quitman—voted for a resolution in the House of Representatives of Mississippi, requesting Senator Foote to resign his seat inasmuch as he did not reflect the will of the State in voting for the Compromise Bill. I sustained cordially and sincerely all the prominent measures of Governor Quitman's administration, and believed great injustice and wrong was done the South in the passage of the Compromise Bill by the Congress of the United States.

In 1851 I was renominated by the Democratic Party for a seat in the Legislature. My health (from my service in Mexico) at this time was very bad, which precluded me from making a thorough canvass of the County. The contest was an exceedingly warm one and in many portions of the state was even bitter. It has passed into history. Mr. Davis was defeated for Governor by General Foote. The whole Democratic Party was left in a minority. With the rest I was defeated by over a hundred majority in an aggregate vote of about eighteen hundred. Resumed practice of law, succeeded as well as could be hoped; health still bad from fever and ague.

In 1853 Jefferson Davis was tendered the position of Secretary of War in Mr. Pierce's Cabinet. In answer to a letter of mine in February of this year, he advised me to proceed to Washington City, where he would use his influence to procure me a commission in the new rifle regiment then about to be raised by Congress for frontier defense. My health by this time became so bad from the effects of sedentary habits and the agues engendered in a miasmatic climate that friends and physicians advised me to remove from Mississippi, to a colder and dryer climate. I accepted Mr. Davis' proposition and repaired to Washington City, where I arrived on the night of the 4th of

16. The Compromise of 1850 provided that California would come into the Union as a free state; that the remainder of the Mexican cession would be organized as territories without restrictions by Congress, allowing popular sovereignty to rule; that the slave trade would be abolished in Washington, D.C.; and that a more effective Fugitive Slave Law would be passed.

March 1853, in time to learn that the bill to raise a rifle regiment had failed for want of time to receive President Fillmore's signature. I remained, however, a fortnight without making any effort or application to receive any other position. The bill to organize the Territory of Washington had become a law on the 3rd of March. My Uncle John Adair, who had removed to Astoria, Oregon in 1848, was now in Washington City and extremely anxious for me to remove to that distant region, where my brothers John and Butler had gone in 1850.<sup>17</sup> Through his instrumentality and the kindness of Mr. Davis (now secretary of war) I was appointed United States Marshal for the Territory of Washington. I accepted it and set out making preparations for the journey. Two difficulties were in the way— 1st: the want of money, and— 2d: I was engaged to be married to my cousin Henrietta Buford Adair, and I doubted the policy of taking her into such a wild and new country with no other help or dependence for a support than my own exertions. I returned to Memphis, where she was, consulted her, and we agreed to try our fortunes on this unknown sea. Her father gave her eight hundred dollars, and by borrowing six hundred from Stephen D. Johnston of DeSoto County, I raised the same amount. We were married in Memphis on the 30th of April 1853 and in an hour afterwards were on our way to the Pacific Coast aboard a steamer bound for New Orleans. We embarked at New Orleans on the 7th of May on board a steamer bound for Graytown in Nicaragua. The first day at sea my wife was taken very ill of fever. For several days her life seemed to be suspended by a thread. Those were the most anxious days of my life. Happily she was better by the time we reached Graytown. Taking a small river steamer there we commenced the ascent of the San Juan River. After several days of toil we reached Virgin Bay, only to learn that the steamer from San Francisco, on which we had expected to reach that city on her return trip, had sprung a leak and was compelled to go on down the coast to Panama for repairs and that she would probably not return for a month. This was a great disappointment to the eight hundred passengers at Virgin Bay, who were eager to reach the gold fields of Califor-

17. John Adair, son of Governor Adair, was customs inspector for Astoria, Oregon, 1848-1860.

nia, but to me it was a matter of rejoicing, since a few weeks rest in Nicaragua would probably restore my wife to health before undertaking another long sea voyage. We remained at Virgin Bay nearly a month. My wife recovered, we embarked at San Juan del Sud the first week in June. Reached San Francisco in fourteen days, where we had to stay near a fortnight in waiting for the steamer which was to take us to the Columbia River.

At the expiration of this time we set sail on the steamer "Columbia" bound for Astoria, Oregon. Among the passengers were my uncle, John Adair, and his eldest daughter; Captain George B. McClellan, U.S.A.; Major Larned, U.S.A. and several other officers of the Army besides two companies of [4th.?] infantry. After passing the bar at the mouth of the Columbia, a reckoning was taken between myself and wife, of the state of our finances. It was ascertained that the sum total on hand was exactly one [worthless paper] dollar. It would not pay for landing our trunks at Astoria which place was then in sight and was our present destination. I threw the dollar into the raging Columbia and began to whistle to keep my courage up. My health had not improved. An officer came up on deck whom I had not seen at table or elsewhere during the voyage. He inquired if Colonel Anderson was in the crowd. I replied and introduced myself to him. He made himself known as Lieutenant Rufus Saxon, U.S.A. and said he had left New York on the steamer that came out a fortnight after I had left New Orleans and that he had an official communication for me from the Secretary of the Interior, at the same time handing me a paper in a large official envelope. Taking it in my hand, I began depositing it in my coat pocket without breaking the seal, when he requested that I would open it and see whether he had brought it and contents safely to hand. On opening it I found that it contained instructions for me as U.S. Marshall to proceed at once to take a census of the inhabitants of the new Territory of Washington and also a Treasury Draft for a thousand dollars to defray my expenses in the work. This was a piece of good fortune in the nick of time, for in two minutes more the steamer dropped her anchor off the city of Astoria and soon we disembarked.

My wife remained at the house of our Uncle, near Astoria and I started in a few days to Puget Sound to commence the official labors assigned me. I reached Olympia on the 4th of July and on the 5th started through the territory to take the

census. The only mode of travel then known in the country was by canoe with Indians as watermen, or on foot. For two months I was constantly engaged this way, frequently walking as much as twenty-five miles per day and carrying my blankets, provisions and papers on my back. My health was already robust and the work was a pleasure.

On completing the census my wife accompanied me in a canoe &c. up the Cowlitz River, to Olympia where the capital of the Territory was likely to be established and where I had determined to settle. At first we rented a little house and then bought one in which we lived very happily and pleasantly during our stay in the territory. In addition to my duties as U.S. Marshall I practiced law in the Territorial Courts, whenever the two duties did not conflict.

In 1855 I was nominated by the Democratic Party of the Territory for the position of delegate to the U.S. Congress. My competitor was Judge Strong, formerly U.S. District Judge in Oregon. We began a thorough canvass of the whole Territory as soon as appointments for public speaking could be distributed among the people. I was successful at the election which came off in June. Soon thereafter the report of gold discoveries near Fort Colville on the upper Columbia reached the settlements on Puget Sound and several persons began preparations for a trip into that region. Not desiring to start for Washington City before October, in order to be in Washington City on the 1st Monday of December, the meeting of the 34th Congress, to which I had been elected, I determined to go to Fort Colville to inform myself about the gold deposits of that and other unexplored regions of the territory, the better to be able to lay its wants and resources before Congress and the people of the states. I started with seven other citizens of Olympia the latter part of June, on horseback, with pack animals to carry our provisions. Our route lay over the Cascade Mountains through what was then called the Na-chess Pass across the Yakima River and valley striking the Columbia River at the Priest's Rapids, where we crossed it and taking the Grand Coulee to the mouth of the Spokane River thence up the left bank of the Columbia by Fort Colville to the mouth of Clark's Fork, where gold was reported to have been found, which we proved by experiment to be true. The trip from Olympia to the mouth of Clark's Fork as thus described occupied us about twenty-four days. Other parties followed us

soon after. The Indians on the route became alarmed lest their country would be overrun with whites in search of gold and commenced hostilities, by killing a man named Mattice, who was on his way to the mines from Olympia. A general Indian war was threatened. I had not been at the mines a week till Angus McDonald of Fort Colville sent an express to inform me of the condition of affairs between me and home. We were unarmed, except with two guns and one or two pistols in the party. Our provisions were being exhausted and the appointed time for my return had arrived; so the miners concluded to return with me. To avoid the most hostile tribe led by the Chief Owhe, we made a detour to the east in returning, crossed the Spokan about forty miles above its mouth, passed the old Whitman Mission, crossed Snake River about ten or twenty miles above its mouth, took down the Pelouse to Walla Walla, thence across the Umatilla near the Mission and "Billy McKey's," crossing the Deo Shuttles at its mouth, then down to the Dalles, the Cascades, Fort Van Couver, and up the Cowlitz back to Olympia, which we reached in safety about 1st October.

During that month my wife and I took steamer to San Francisco, thence to Panama, Aspinwall and on to New York. We reached Washington City a few days before the meeting of Congress. This (34th) Congress will be long remembered as the one which gave rise to such a protracted and heated contest for speaker - to which position Mr. N. P. Banks of Massachusetts was finally elected. This was the first triumph of importance of that fanatical party (now called Republican) which led to the disruption of the Union four years later. Before this struggle for speaker had been decided, and during the Christmas holidays my wife and I repaired to Casa Bianca, Florida, by invitation of our aunt, Mrs. E. A. Beatty. While there I entered into an agreement with her for the conduct of her plantation under my supervision &c. My wife remained at Casa Bianca and I returned to my duties at Washington City, only coming out to Florida during the vacation.

My term of service in Congress expired the 4th of March 1857. The same day Mr. Buchanan was inaugurated President for four years. He appointed me Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs of Washington Territory but I did not accept, wishing to take my wife's advice on the subject. On consultation with her I determined not to return to Washington Territory,

believing firmly that the days of the Union were numbered and not wishing to be absent from the land of my birth when her hour of trial came. I resigned the position tendered me by Mr. Buchanan and devoted myself exclusively to planting at Casa Bianca.

In 1860 when it became certain that Mr. Lincoln was elected President of the United States, the people of Florida feeling alarmed for the safety of their rights and institutions, began to hold primary meetings to a general Convention of the State. In December 1860 I was elected a delegate from Jefferson County to a general convention of that State which assembled at Tallahassee the 1st of January 1861, and passed the ordinance of secession on the 10th day of the same month— which received my hearty approval. While the convention was yet in session the Governor deemed it prudent to seize such forts and ordnance stores as he could belonging to the United States within the limits of the State.<sup>18</sup> For this purpose a force was sent to Pensacola, to seize the Navy Yard, Forts Barrancas, McRee, and Pickens. A Volunteer Company of young men of Jefferson County, of which I was captain, came through Tallahassee en route to Pensacola to assist in taking Fort Pickens, to which all the U.S. troops then at Pensacola had now retired. At the request of the Company, signified to me in Tallahassee while they were awaiting transportation to St. Marks, I agreed to command them in this expedition.

Another company under Captain Amaker from Tallahassee was also going on the same errand.<sup>19</sup> We failed at St. Mark's to get steamboat transportation. Returned to Tallahassee, and started overland by Quincy, Chattahoochie, &c. Captain Amaker's commission as Captain was older than mine (by one day) but at his urgent request and that of Governor Perry, I consented to assume command of the two companies. Having marched to Chattahoochie Arsenal, we were stopped by a dispatch from Governor Perry directing us to remain there till further orders. In about a week it was decided by the officer in command of the Florida troops at Pensacola not to attack Fort

18. Governor Madison Starke Perry.

19. Captain A. P. Amaker, First Regiment Rifles; U. S. War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 53 vols. (Washington, D. C., 1880-1901), Ser. I, XIV, 512.

Pickens, and he accordingly dispatched Gov. Perry to disband my detachment.

In the meantime the Convention of Florida had determined to send delegates to a convention of such southern states as had seceded from the Union, which was to meet in February in Montgomery, Alabama. These delegates from Florida were to be appointed by the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Convention. Governor Perry dispatched me at Chattahoochie Arsenal that he had appointed me one of the three delegates to this general convention and directed me to return to Tallahassee with my two companies where they could be disbanded, which was done.

In February I repaired to Montgomery and took part in the proceedings of the convention, which formed a provisional government for the seceded States. All the principal measures of that body, passed or proposed during its session and while I was a member, met my support. I was on the committee of Military Affairs, and favored the raising of troops &c. I also proposed to have the cooks, nurses, teamsters, and pioneers of our army to consist of slaves. After having adopted a provisional constitution and inaugurated a provisional president, the convention or Congress adjourned about the first of March.

On the 26th of March, while at my home near Monticello, the Governor wrote me that he wished to send a regiment of Infantry to Pensacola for Confederate service. My old company was immediately reorganized and on the 28th of March started for Chattahoochie Arsenal, the place appointed for all the companies to rendezvous and elect officers.

On the 5th of April I was elected Colonel of the 1st Florida Regiment (Infantry) without opposition, and that night started with the regiment to report to General Braxton Bragg at Pensacola. We reached Pensacola on the 11th or 12th of April, went into camp and commenced drilling and exercising the troops. On the nights of the 7th - 8th of October, I commanded one of the detachments which made a descent upon the camp of Billy Wilson's Zouaves under the guns of Fort Pickens and Santa Rosa Island. The expedition consisted of about a thousand men, divided into three detachments, respectively under Col. J. R. Jackson, 5th Georgia Regiment; Col. Jas. R. Chalmers, 9th Mississippi Regiment, and myself. Chalmers had the right, Jackson the centre, and I the left; the whole under command of

Brigadier-General R. H. Anderson of South Carolina. My command consisted of 100 men from the 1st Alabama and other commands. My loss in this fight was eleven killed, twenty-four wounded and twelve captured. (I speak from memory.)

On the 10th of February 1862, I was appointed a brigadier general in the Provisional Army of the Confederate States and in March was ordered to report to General Bragg then at Jackson in West Tennessee. Soon after reporting I was assigned to the command of Brigadier General Ruggles then at Corinth, Miss. This brigade consisted principally of Louisiana troops to which the 1st Florida and 9th Texas Regiments were soon after added. I was immediately ordered to the front of Corinth in the direction of Monterey and Pittsburg Landing. At the battle of Shiloh my brigade consisted of the 17th, 19th, and 20th Louisiana Regiments, the 9th Texas, 1st Florida and Clack's Louisiana Battalion, with the 5th Company of Washington Artillery from New Orleans.

Soon after the battle of Shiloh, Hindman was assigned to the command of Ruggles' Division but only exercised it a few days when he was ordered to Arkansas and the command devolved upon me as senior brigadier. I commanded the Division in the retreat from Corinth till we reached Clear Creek near Baldwin, where I was taken ill with fever and Major-General Sam Jones was assigned to the division. I rejoined the division at Tupelo, Miss. where the army was reorganized, and commanded a brigade in Sam Jones's division till we reached Chattanooga, Tenn., in August of that year, preparatory to the Kentucky campaign. In August 1862, while encamped near Chattanooga, the division was reorganized and was composed of Walker's, Adams', Anderson's, and Richards' Brigades. About the middle of August Major-General Sam Jones was assigned to the command of the Department of East Tenn., and the command of the division devolved on me. On the 1st of September I crossed Walden's Ridge with my division following Buckner's division - the two comprising Hardee's Corps, Army of Tennessee. Throughout this campaign, I continued in command of the division, having Brigadier-General Preston Smith's brigade of Cheatham's division added to it in the afternoon of the day of the battle of Perryville.

We returned from Kentucky through Cumberland Gap, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Bridgeport, to Allisonia in

Franklin County, Tenn., where my division was halted for a fortnight. During this time I visited for the first time in many years the grave of my father at Craggy Hope - the old farm. From Allisonia the army proceeded to Shelbyville, where we halted ten days and thence to Eagleville, where in December my division was broken up and I was assigned to the command of a brigade in Withers' division of Polk's Corps. This brigade was the one formerly commanded by Brigadier-General Frank Gardner. I was only in command of it a few days when Rosecrans advanced upon Murfreesboro where General Bragg determined to give him battle, and for this purpose took his line of battle on the 27th of December about a mile and a half from Murfreesboro on the Nashville and Wilkinson Pikes.

The morning of the day on which the line was taken up, I was transferred to the command temporarily of Walthall's Brigade of Mississippians. This was in consequence of Walthall's sickness, and because the brigade was composed entirely of troops (Mississippians) who had been under my command, either as brigade or division commander since March, 1862. This brigade won many laurels in the battle of the 31st of December, and on the 2d of January, 1863, was sent to reinforce Breckenridge on the right, who had been roughly handled that afternoon by superior numbers. We reached the scene of conflict about sundown and after the heaviest fighting was over - in time, however, to have several officers and men of our skirmish line severely wounded; and by interposing a fresh line between the victorious enemy and Breckenridge's shattered columns, gave time for the latter to rally and resume a line they had held in the morning.

This affair gave rise to much bitter feeling between General Bragg and Major-General Breckenridge, Bragg in his official report having animadverted very seriously upon Breckenridge's conduct and having attributed (I think) more to my brigade than it was entitled to. On the other hand, Breckenridge hardly did us justice, or rather his friends who discussed the matter in the public prints did not give me due credit for our conduct or operations on that occasion. They rather contended that I reached the ground after the fight was over, and although we came with good intentions, and doubtless would have rendered efficient service if it had been necessary, yet there was nothing to be done after our arrival, &c. The facts are, however, as I

have stated them here, and as I stated them in my official report on that occasion, a copy of which I sent to General Breckenridge, whereupon he wrote me a very complimentary note characterizing the report as one "that was truthful and manly." I think General Bragg founded his report upon exaggerated statements of some partial friends of mine, and hence attributed to me more than I deserved. I allude to it here because both Bragg's and Breckenridge's statements may become matters of controversy and dispute hereafter.<sup>20</sup>

After the battle of Murfreesboro, during the illness and absence of Major-General Withers, I was in command of the division for over a month. In the meantime Brigadier-General Chalmers, who commanded a brigade of Mississippians in the division, was transferred to the cavalry service in Mississippi, and upon Withers's resuming command of the division I was assigned permanently to the command of Chalmers' brigade, which I exercised without interruption while the army was at Shelbyville, Tenn., and during our retreat from that place to Chattanooga in June-July, 1863.

In July, 1863, I was sent with my brigade to hold the Tennessee River at Bridgeport and vicinity while the balance of the army was at Chattanooga and above there on the river. This duty was performed to the entire satisfaction of General Bragg. In August Withers was transferred to duty in Alabama and Hindman was assigned to the command of the division. Shortly before evacuating Chattanooga, my brigade was withdrawn from Bridgeport by order of General Bragg and rejoined the division in the neighborhood of Chattanooga.

I commanded the division in the McLemore's Cove expedition in September— for which Hindman, who commanded the

20. Mrs. Anderson added a note in her handwritten copy of the autobiography: "I was up at the army when this discussion was going on. . . . The note Genl. A refers to— I was in the room when Genl. Breckenridge returned to my husband's report, with this note. Genl. A. threw it into my lap saying 'You will value that'— and I did. But it was burned two years after the war— with most of his official correspondence in his private desk— at St. Marks, Fla. in a warehouse.... Genl. Breckenridge would not send in his report until he had seen Genl. A's. They were intimate friends and distant relations. There is no use talking— Genl. Breckenridge was drunk at that battle & Genl. Bragg would not stand drinking in any of his officers."

whole expedition, has received much censure. He certainly missed capturing eight or ten thousand of the enemy, which would have left the balance of Rosecrans' army at Bragg's mercy. Soon after this, or rather while in McLemore's Cove, Hindman was taken sick and the command of the division again devolved upon me.

On the night of the 19th of September, after the division had crossed the Chickamauga Creek and while it was getting in position for the next day's fight, Hindman resumed command and continued in command of the division until the close of the battle after dark on the night of the 20th; so I commanded my brigade in the battle of Chickamauga.

In the advance to Missionary Ridge, begun on the 21st, I was in command of the division. Soon after reaching Missionary Ridge, Hindman was placed in arrest by General Bragg, and the command of the division devolved upon me. I commanded it at the battle of Missionary Ridge, but on that morning protested against the disposition which had been made of the troops (see my official report), which was the worst I have ever seen. The line was in two ranks - the front rank at the foot of the hill and the rear rank on the top!! And the men were over three feet apart in line! Thus the front rank was not strong enough to hold its position, nor could it retire to the top of the ridge so as to be of any service there. The consequence was that the troops made no fight at all, but broke and ran as soon as the enemy's overwhelming columns advanced. About the 1st of December Hindman was released from arrest and assumed command of the Corps as senior Major-General, and I remained in command of the Division.

In February, 1864, Major-General Breckenridge having been transferred to a command in Southwestern Virginia, I was on the 9th day of February appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, a Major-General in the Provisional Army and assigned to the command of Breckenridge's Division in the Army of Tennessee. Before receiving these orders, however, I received a dispatch from the President ordering me to Florida to assume command of that district. The Army of Tennessee was at this time at Dalton, Georgia under command of General Joseph E. Johnston.

I reached Florida the 1st of March 1864, ten days after the battle of Olustee, and assumed command of the district with

headquarters in the field in front of Jacksonville. Remained there operating against the enemy at Jacksonville and on the St. Johns River all summer, or until I was ordered back to the Army of Tennessee. We were able to confine the enemy closely to their entrenchments around Jacksonville, and by blowing up two of their armed transports above Jacksonville and one below, put a complete stop to his navigation of the river above the city, and caused them to evacuate Palatka, and to use the river below Jacksonville with the greatest caution.

On the night of the 25th of ~~July~~, 1864, I received a telegram from General Bragg at Columbus, Georgia, directing me to report to General Hood at Atlanta, without delay, for duty in the field. I started to Atlanta on the morning of the 26th of July and reached there on the night of the 28th. On the 29th I was assigned to, and on the 30th assumed command of, my old division composed of Deas', Brantley's, Sharp's and Manigault's brigades. I remained in command of these brigades until the evening of the 31st of August, when I was seriously wounded in the battle of Jonesboro, Georgia, which compelled me to leave the field, and has resulted in my absence from the army up to the present time.

There are many incidents connected with my experience which would be interesting to my children, if I had time to record them, but I have not. I have hurriedly written some of the prominent facts for their edification hereafter.

This is a dark day in the history of the present war, but I believe a brighter will soon dawn upon us. If dissention and faction does not distract us, we will certainly achieve our independence. The course of some prominent men in Georgia just at this time, is much calculated to grieve the spirit of all true Southerners.... It is to be hoped that they will desist from their

21. Mrs. Anderson added another comment in her copy of the autobiography: "Toombs and Governor Brown.... I would have been glad to have known they were hung." Governor Joseph Brown and Robert Toombs of Georgia were leaders of opposition to Confederate policies of President Jefferson Davis. Frequently referred to as "anarchists," Brown, Toombs, and other prominent Georgians opposed such policies as military conscription and exemptions, the appointment of general officers, the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, and food impressment. See also, James C. Banner, *The Georgia Story* (Oklahoma City, 1959), 302.

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factious teachings and practices and soon unite with the patriots of the land to prosecute with unanimity and vigor the war which our enemies are determined to wage against us.

Patton Anderson  
Monticello, Fla.  
February 28, 1865