

Governor Tod to the People of Ohio

The State of Ohio,
Executive Department,
Columbus, July 26, 1863.

To the People of the State:

The exciting and important events which have transpired within the past two weeks, make the present moment a fitting one for the Chief Executive to address you.

Late in the night of the 12th instant I received reliable information that a well organized rebel force of cavalry and artillery, supposed to exceed five thousand in number, under the lead of the notorious John Morgan, was about to enter the Southwestern portion of our state. Availing myself of the power given me by the Constitution and Laws, I at once, by Proclamation, called out for the defense of the State, that portion of its organized militia forces residing within the counties supposed to be in danger. As these organizations were only consummated by the election of company officers n the 4th instant, but few returns had been made; hence, it was quite uncertain what actual number embraced in the call would be. The route the enemy would take was also uncertain. It was believed, however, that the capital of our State was altogether the most attractive point for the enemy. This point afforded a richer field of plunder than any other within his reach, and in addition to this there was at Camp Chase over a thousand rebel prisoners, many of whom, including his Chief of Staff, had been captured from Morgan's band. Hence to this point was ordered a larger force of the militia than to any other.

The other points named, outside of Cincinnati, for the assemblage of the militia, were Camp Dennison, Chillicothe, Portsmouth and Marietta. The response to the call, at all the points, was most gratifying. With but very few individual exceptions, the men called into service, forgetting everything but duty, promptly and cheerfully repaired to the camps assigned

them, and when en route for camp, while there, and when returning to their respective homes, conducted themselves in a manner most creditable. The people of the State should ever hold in grateful remembrance the men who thus won so much character for our State. The few who endeavored to escape a full performance of duty will be frowned upon and despised by all good citizens, and this is the severest punishment that can be inflicted upon a fellow citizen.

The large militia force assembled near Columbus, kept the enemy from attempting upon this place. All the other points indicated for the assemblage of the militia were felt of by the enemy, and, but for their presence, would have been sacked and pillaged.

From these several points, large numbers of the militia moved promptly out and participated with the Federal forces in the numerous skirmishes and engagements that took place with the enemy; and in every instance, save one, behaved with great gallantry and bravery. The exception referred to, was the surrender of about three hundred and fifty, under command of Col. Sontag, near Portsmouth. The men comprising this command are all indignant at the conduct of their commanding officer, and are in nowise responsible for the disgrace that attaches to the surrender. The conduct of Col. Sontag, although a volunteer officer without appointment or commission, shall be inquired to. I am now in possession of information which would enable me to do justice to all the officers in command of these various organizations.

I can, however, bear testimony to the zeal and efficiency of the several military committees of the counties traversed by the enemy; their services were invaluable to the State. When in possession of full information, I will, at a future day, do justice to the many gallant officers, who so generously devoted themselves to the interests of the State in this Crisis.

The enemy entered the State on the night of the twelfth instant, in the north-west corner of Hamilton county, closely pursued

by a large Federal force, and passing through the counties of Butler, Warren, Clermont, Brown, Adams, Pike, Jackson, Gallia, Meigs, Vinton, Hocking, Athens, Washington, Morgan, Muskingum, Guernsey, Belmont, Harrison and Jefferson, was finally captured near New Lisbon, in Columbiana county, this day, about three o'clock P.M. More or less skirmishing and fighting took place all along the route – but the two principal engagements were near Buffington island, in Meigs county, on the nineteenth instant, and near Salineville, Columbiana county, this morning, at eight o'clock A.M. At the first of these engagements, our forces, consisting of a cavalry and artillery force of regular troops, and of the militia there assembled, were under the command of Generals Hobson and Shackelford, aided materially by a naval force on the river at that point. At the second engagement, near Salineville, our forces, consisting of the 9th Michigan Cavalry, and our militia forces, were under the command of Major Way.

In the first of these engagements the enemy lost in killed, wounded and prisoners about twenty-five hundred; in the second, about three hundred. The final surrender to General Shackelford took place without an engagement, and embraced Morgan himself and the remnant of his command, the number not now known. Thus was captured and destroyed one of the most formidable cavalry forces of rebels, a force that has been a terror to the friends of the Union in Tennessee and Kentucky for about two years. Well may every loyal heart be proud of this achievement.

The losses upon our side have been trifling, so far as numbers are concerned; but I am pained to be compelled to announce that a few gallant spirits have been taken from us. Prominent among the number is the brave Major Daniel McCook, the honored father of the heroic boys who bear his name, and who have won so much glory and renown for our arms in this great struggle. Major McCook, although advanced in years, has periled his life, as a

volunteer, upon many of our battlefields; believing that he could be of service in ridding the State of her invaders, he volunteered with his trusty rifle as a private and fell in the engagement near Buffington's Island. His memory will be cherished by all; and the sincere sympathies of all true patriots will be given to his widow and children.

Throughout the entire contest, I was in constant communication, both night and day. With Maj.—Gen. Burnside, who had command of the entire forces; and I take great pleasure in testifying to the zeal, fidelity and ability with which he has conducted the campaign.

The damage to property will necessarily be large in dollars and cents, but insignificant when contrasted with the beneficial results to our State and country.

Prompt measures have been taken to ascertain the names of the sufferers, and the amount of damage sustained, all of which will be communicated to the next General Assembly. Steps have also been taken to adjust and pay for all service rendered by the militia, ample provision for which was made by the last General Assembly.

And now, fellow citizens, do not for a moment doubt but that this raid of Morgan will ultimately prove a benefit to us as a people. It has taught an insolent foe, that however so well provided, or however so large, he cannot with impunity invade our State. It has demonstrated to ourselves that when acting in concert, the people of Ohio are a tower of strength – remember, that our military organizations had never mustered; the officers were not even yet commissioned; still, thus fresh and unknown to each other, they were able to do such efficient service.

Let me say, then, to the military forces of Ohio, both volunteers and militia, go vigorously forward with your organizations. This raid has taught you the lesson, that you have something to do, and that your trainings are not mere idle ceremonies – you are to be the conservators of peace – upon you, the people of the State depend to

maintain and preserve quiet and order in every neighborhood – be prepared, at once, to do your duty fully.

In some of our sister States, serious riots, resulting in the loss of many lives, and large destruction of property, have occurred on account of the efforts of the Federal authorities to enforce the laws for the preservation of our Government.

I am happy to announce to the people of the State, that there is no just cause for apprehending such disturbances within our border; but, be this as it may, ample provision has been made to quell any such disturbance, should any be attempted.

Thank God, we have but few bad men in Ohio; and the good and virtuous of every neighborhood are able to preserve the peace and dignity of the State.

The State authorities have but little to do, directly, with the enforcement of the draft. They have looked to it, however, in season, that honest and faithful agents, citizens of the State have been selected by the Federal authorities to execute the draft. Fairness and justness, therefore, are guaranteed to every citizen. Additional troops are required to maintain our glorious government. Our brave and gallant boys in the field require assistance in men, from home, and they must have it. I have, therefore, cheerfully given to the Federal authorities all aid in my power to enforce the draft soon to be made; and I earnestly implore the assistance of all food men throughout the State in this necessary work.

The brilliant achievements of our forces, during the present month, resulting in the destruction and capture of over a hundred thousand of the enemy, together with their strongholds, give us the hope that the war will soon terminate – the drafted man, therefore, need not anticipate a three year's campaign. He may safely depend upon his neighbors at home, and the law making power of the State, to take care of those dependent upon him during his absence.

Let us all then, fellow citizens, with one heart, and with one voice, cheerfully stand by our Government, in this its hour of

trouble. The reflection hereafter, that we have done so, will cheer and sustain us on our way through life; our children will love us and cherish our memories, and God will bless us for so doing.

DAVID TOD - Governor