

Headquarters Military Division of the Mississippi, in the Field, near Savannah, December 16, 1864. Lieutenant-General U.S. Grant, *Commander-in-Chief, City Point, Virginia*.

GENERAL:

. . . [I have] made all the arrangements which I deemed essential to reducing the city of Savannah to our possession . . .

Fortunately, also, by **liberal** (*generous*) and **judicious** (*sensible, wise*) **foraging** (*raiding for food and supplies*), we reached the sea-coast abundantly supplied with forage and provisions, needing nothing on arrival except bread . . .

We started with about 5,000 head of cattle, and arrived with over 10,000; of course, consuming mostly turkeys, chickens, sheep, hogs, and the cattle of the country . . . I have no doubt the State of Georgia has lost by our operation, 15,000 first-rate mules. As to horses, Kilpatrick collected all his remounts, and it looks to me, in riding along our columns, as though every officer had three or four led horses, and each regiment seems to be followed by at least fifty negroes and foot-sore soldiers riding on horses and mules. . . . I know the Government will never receive full accounts of our captures, although the result aimed at was fully attained, viz., to deprive our enemy of them.

. . . in the meantime will act as I have begun, as though Savannah City was my objective, namely: the troops will continue to invest Savannah closely, making attacks and feints wherever we have fair ground to stand upon; and I will place some 30-pound **Parrotts** (*a type of large mounted gun*), which I have got from General Foster, in position near enough to reach the center of the city, and then will demand its surrender. If General Hardee is alarmed or fears starvation he may surrender; otherwise, I will bombard the city, but not risk the lives of our men by assaults across the narrow causeways by which alone I can now reach it. If I had time, Savannah, with all its dependent fortifications, is already in our possession, for we hold all its avenues of supply . . .

There must be 25,000 citizens -- men, women, and children -- in Savannah that must also be fed, and how he is to feed them beyond a few days I cannot imagine . . .

Our whole army is in fine condition as to health, and the weather is splendid; for that reason alone, I feel a personal dislike to turning northward. I will keep Lieutenant Dunn here until I know the result of my demand for the surrender of Savannah; but, whether successful or not, shall not delay my execution of your order of the 6th, which will depend alone upon the time it will require to obtain transportation by sea.

I am, with respect, &c., your obedient servant,
W.T. Sherman, *Major-General, U.S. Army*

Source: U.S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1893, reprinted by The National Historical Society, 1971), Series I, Vol. XLIV, pp. 726-728. (<http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/shrmltr.htm>)

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