

*Report of Brig. Gen. John C. Brown, C. S. Army, commanding
Hindman's division, of operations July 28 and 29.*

HEADQUARTERS HINDMAN'S DIVISION,
July 31, 1864.

MAJOR: I have the honor to submit the following as the part taken by this division in the action of the 28th of July in front of Atlanta:

On the afternoon of the 27th I moved from the position on the Augusta railroad, which I had fortified and held since the investment of the city, and marched to the left of Peach Tree street almost to the Marietta road, and was going into position near night-fall, when I received orders to march immediately to the Lick Skillet road, reaching which point after dark I was ordered into bivouac, where I remained until 10 o'clock next morning (28th), when the lieutenant-general commanding corps gave me verbal orders to move with the utmost dispatch upon the Lick Skillet road until I reached the Poor-House, a mile in front of our line of intrenchments, where I would find General Jackson's division of cavalry. I preceded the advance of my column; and arriving at the point indicated learned from General Jackson that his command was being rapidly pressed back to the road, and that his information indicated the enemy's infantry to be small. The lieutenant-general commanding arrived almost simultaneously with the head of the column, and directed me to form rapidly in rear of a commanding position in the road in advance of the Poor-House, so that my right might rest upon and at an angle of about forty-five degrees with the road, holding one brigade in reserve. I was directed to attack and drive the enemy to Ezra Church and hold that position. I formed, with Johnston's (formerly Deas') brigade on the right, Brantly's on the left, and Sharp's in the center, with Manigault in reserve, and instantly moved forward. The enemy's skirmishers were encountered at the road and his advance line a little beyond, moving rapidly to possess the road. It was routed and driven 500 or 600 yards and took refuge behind intrenchments. The woods were so dense that these works were not discovered until my line was upon them. In many places the works were carried, but the enemy re-enforced so rapidly and with such an immensely superior force, that my troops were driven with great slaughter from them. Brigadier-General Johnston in the first onset was severely wounded. Colonel Coltart, upon whom the command devolved, was in a few moments afterward also wounded, and Col.

B. R. Hart, Twenty-second Alabama Regiment, the next in command, was wounded immediately after assuming command. The command then passed to Lieut. Col. H. T. Toulmin. At this juncture I relieved it with my supporting brigade, but behaving badly, its demoralization was so great it could not be made effective. My left brigade being outflanked was compelled to retire, which made the withdrawal of the center indispensable. I succeeded in rallying a greater portion of the division on a ridge, when it again became necessary to charge the enemy, who, becoming emboldened by our failure to hold his works, was advancing upon us. The effort, as before, resulted in only partial success, and the enemy pouring fresh troops upon our front and flanks compelled us again to retire. After this we were content to rally and form line on the crest of the ridge between the Lick Skillet road and the enemy's position, so as to hold that road. Temporary defenses of rails, &c., were constructed and the position held until the arrival of Stewart's corps, when we were relieved by Walthall's division and retired to the right and rear to support Clayton. About midnight we moved and took position on the prolongation of the defenses of Atlanta, about two miles west of the Lick Skillet road.

During the 29th we constructed a strong line of works, and in the evening of that day Major-General Anderson having arrived I turned the command over to him.

In the action Sharp's and Brantly's brigades acted with great gallantry. The major portion of Johnston's brigade behaved well. But justice to these commands which bore their parts so nobly compels me to state that the greater portion Manigault's brigade behaved badly.

We found the enemy in overwhelming numbers, and if additional evidence were wanting to prove the fact his own reports of his force show we were engaging four of his corps.

For details of the part performed by the several commands, I beg to refer to the accompanying reports of brigade and regimental commanders, accompanying which will also be found lists of casualties.

I must be pardoned for bearing testimony to the conspicuous gallantry of Brigadier-Generals Brantly, Sharp, and Johnston, all of whom had received notice of their promotion a few moments before going into battle. Lieut. Col. H. T. Toulmin was no less gallant and efficient.

To the gentlemen [who] were with me as staff officers I am indebted for valuable services. All of them behaved with great gallantry.

I have the honor to be, major, with great respect, your obedient servant,

* JNO. C. BROWN,
Brigadier-General. Commanding.