Wednesday, February 15:—We started last night at dark and found the pontoons were very slow in getting up even with our lines. A division of Terry's command preceded mine, having the pontoons in charge. The train became much scattered before it reached our advanced line of works, and part of the boats did not get any farther. It was nearly midnight when the train reached the Half-Moon Battery, about a mile in front of our line, where our outer picket is placed. We got about a mile beyond this on our former trip, and on this occasion we succeeded in getting about a mile farther than then. Only eighteen of the boats would be got up, and it became evident that no crossing could be effected before daylight, even if the rest of the boats could be got up by that time. It also appeared that the enemy were on the *qui vive,* and we could see their camp fires on the other side of the sound. As we had not boats enough to make a bridge, and the appearance was that the passage would be disputed, General Schofield again determined to give up the plan, and we countermarched to camp, getting back about 2.30 o'clock in the morning. The weather was pleasanter than we had reason to expect, for it grew milder all night and ended by raining hard this morning. The clouds partly concealed the moon, but it seems to me impossible that the enemy should not have seen us, as the strip of sand is so narrow and the line of surf makes such a white background for the dark masses of the moving column. My own preference would have been to give up the movement as soon as it was evident that the pontoons would be behind time, so as not to let the enemy have any idea of the movement, which from that time was certain to prove a failure. I suspect, however, that the plan was a suggestion of Colonel Comstock, one of Grant's staff, who is with us as engineer, and that General Schofield on that account thought it best not to stop till it had been well tried. The fleet bringing our Second Division is said to have arrived yesterday. The delay of the pontoons above spoken of was owing to the impossibility of dragging a heavily loaded truck in the soft sand with scant teams.

Thursday, February 16:—Moved the command by steamboat to Smithville, on the other side of the bay, with a view to operate on that side of Cape Fear River. Baggage did not get down till dark. Orders given to move up the river at 8 a. m. tomorrow.

Friday, February 17:—March up the river, meeting the

enemy's cavalry as soon as we get three miles from the village. Drive them back till we get within two miles of Fort Anderson, where we go into camp according to orders, and open signal communications with General Schofield on his headquarters steamship, and with the fleet under Admiral Porter. Advanced ten miles today.

Saturday, February 18:—Move at 7 o'clock, driving back the enemy and establishing a line of investments on the south side of the fort. Have a lively skirmishing fight. The enemy open with artillery along their line, while our fleet opens heavily on the fort. At 1 o'clock I withdraw Casement's and Reilly's brigades (Colonel Sterl commanding the latter) and move them to the left and rear around the head of Orton Pond. Reach the head of the pond about 5.30 o'clock and find there a strong party of the enemy's cavalry, who oppose our passage. Moore's Creek, running into the pond, has wide, marshy banks, the marsh being filled with thick tangled undergrowth, through which it was almost impossible for skirmishers to make their way. The road is a narrow causeway, only wide enough for one wagon, and the enemy had rifle-pits commanding the exits from the swamps, as well as a second line a little farther back. We are delayed here about an hour. Succeed finally in driving off the rebels with a loss to us of seven men wounded and one killed. Just as we gained the opposite bank General Ames, with his division of Terry's men, came up and reported to me under General Schofield's orders, and we go into camp for the night, the rebel cavalry retreating in the direction of Fort Anderson.

Sunday, February 19:—The train of supplies which was to have come up last night didn't report till 10 o'clock this morning. We resumed our march up the west bank of Orton Pond to turn the enemy's position at Fort Anderson. March about half-way, when we meet Captain Lord of General Schofield's staff, who informs us that the fort is evacuated, the enemy having left it in the night, after hearing of our movement around the pond. General Ames proceeds to the fort with his division, whilst I go on up the river with my command, the two brigades left in front of the fort joining me. I put Henderson in advance, and press the enemy rapidly to Old Town Creek, where we find him in a strong line of works, the bridge being destroyed and the creek being both unfordable and difficult of approach by reason of the marshy banks so common in this