

president of a great railroad, he had previously sent into Baltimore that all the available transportation of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was concentrated at Locust Point, and that the Nineteenth Corps and part of the Sixth Corps were on transports from Grant's army, and expected every hour on their way to Washington.

This information General Johnson immediately forwarded to General Early, and then moved in the direction of Washington on his way to fulfill his hazardous mission of releasing the prisoners at Point Lookout.

In the meantime, after defeating Wallace at the Monocacy River, General Early marched direct to Washington, and appeared before the outer defenses of that city on the morning of the 11th, but owing to the extreme heat and the broken-down condition of the men the column was not closed up and the troops in position before late in the evening of that day. It was then impossible to put the men in, and the attack was postponed until the next morning for that reason, and because General Early had seen as he rode forward large bodies of troops filing into the fortifications.

In his "Last Year of the War" General Early thus speaks of his appearance before Washington :

"Under these circumstances, to have rushed my men blindly against the fortifications, without understanding the state of things, would have been more than folly."

After a consultation with Generals Breckinridge, Rodes, Gordon and Ramseur, General Early determined to make the assault next morning, unless some unforeseen circumstance should arise. And the unexpected did arise. General Early says :

"During the night a dispatch was received from General Bradley T. Johnson, from near Baltimore, informing me that he had received information from a reliable source that two corps had arrived from General Grant's army, and that his whole army was probably in motion. This caused me to delay the attack until I could examine the works again, and, as soon as it was light enough to see, I rode to the front and found the parapets lined with troops. I had, therefore, reluctantly to give up all hopes of capturing Washington, after I had arrived in sight of the dome of the Capitol and given the Federal authorities a dreadful fright."

While these events were transpiring, General Johnson was moving rapidly through Howard and Montgomery Counties. After passing Triadelphia, Johnson struck the Washington Branch near Beltsville, and after halting a short time to feed he turned the head of his column toward Upper Marlboro, on his way to Point Lookout, but had not proceeded far before he was overtaken by a courier from General Early, with orders to report at once to him at Silver Spring, on the Seventh Street (Washington) road. After driving back toward Washington a strong force of Federal cavalry, Johnson moved in the direction of Silver Spring,