

somewhat similar to that followed during the first occupation—attacking outposts, pickets, foraging parties, etc. There was some loss of life on both sides. Surgeon Meredith (C. S. A.) was killed on March 11th.

On March 17th, Colonel McCormick (C. S. A.), by direction of General Finegan, notified Colonel Higginson to remove the women and children from Jacksonville within 24 hours, or that after that time they would remain in the town on his (Higginson's) responsibility. Colonel Higginson immediately ordered his wagons to convey all those who wished to leave to the brick yard church, where they were met under a flag of truce by a Confederate escort. Thus all the women and children, except a few families, were removed from Jacksonville and sent to Lake City.

March 22d and 23d two white regiments arrived, Eighth Maine, Colonel John D. Rust, and the Sixth Connecticut, Colonel John L. Chatfield. Colonel Rust being the ranking officer took command of the troops here.

Skirmishing now became more frequent and heavier. About this time Lt. T. E. Buckman devised the plan of mounting a cannon on a flat car, coupling on a locomotive and running it down the track to within range of Jacksonville. The railroad battery became celebrated for its effectiveness. Francis Soillee, of Jacksonville, commanded this gun, and he was commended in the highest terms for bravery and skill in serving it. This battery figured also in the battle of Olustee afterward.

The medical officer of the Eighth Maine describes the damage done by the railroad battery of the Confederates as follows:

Wednesday, March 25, 1863: At 3:30 this morning the rebels came down on the railroad and opened on the town with an 8-inch rifled gun. The first shot went through an unoccupied house next to our medical headquarters and exploded, turning us all out in a hurry. Just as I got out of doors the second one broke over our heads. The third one struck the roof of a house where a Union man and his wife were sleeping; the shell passed through the side of the house and imbedded itself eight feet in the ground without exploding. Several of us dug out the shell and found it to be an 8-inch rifle of English manufacture. They got seven of these shells into the town before our gunboats got a range on them, when they beat a retreat.

After guard mounting this morning four companies of the Eighth Maine, three of the Sixth Connecticut, and three of the negro regiment started out to tear up the railroad track to prevent the rebels from