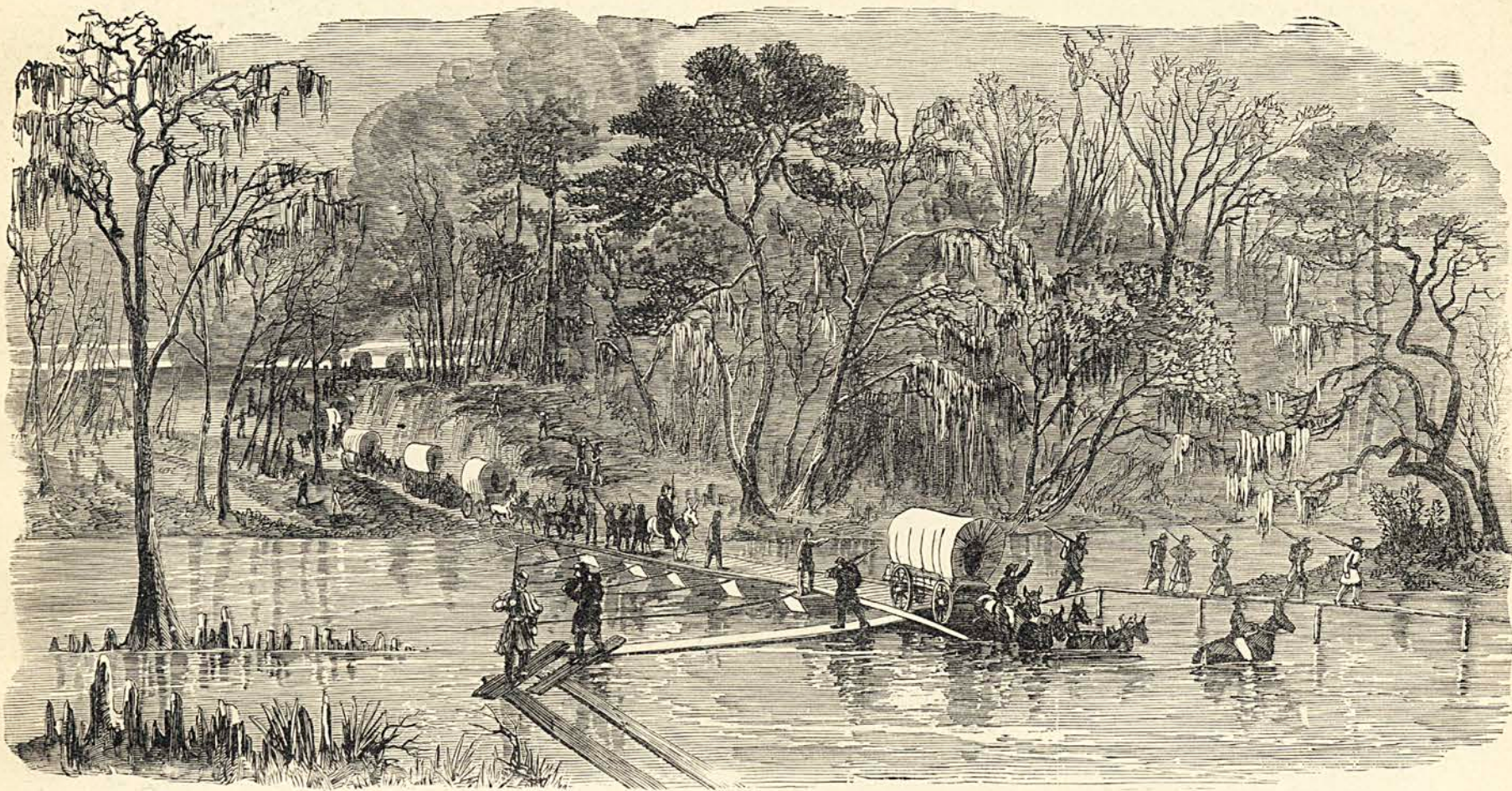
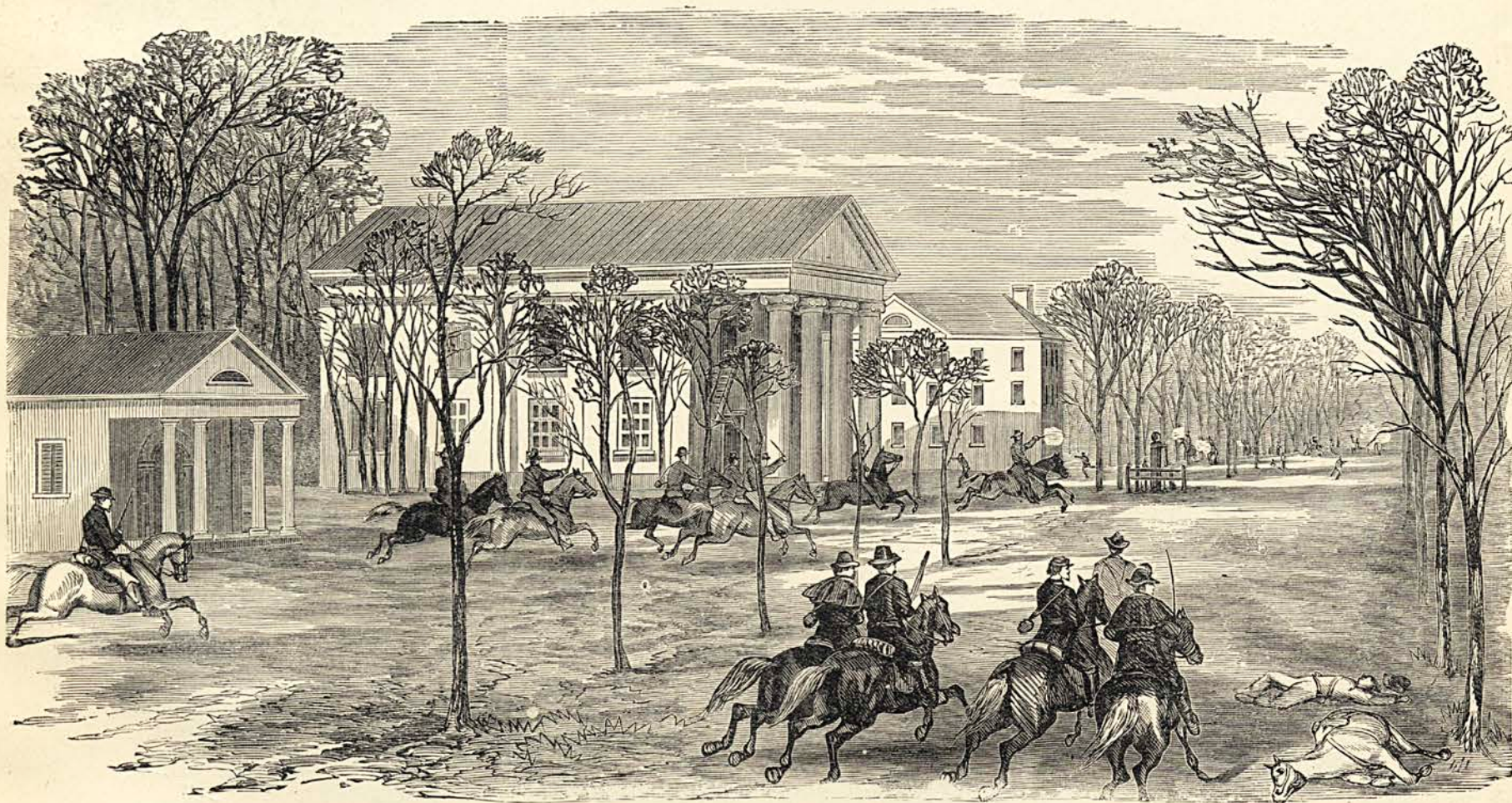




SHERMAN'S SEVENTEENTH ARMY CORPS CROSSING THE SOUTH EDISTO RIVER ON PONTOONS, FEBRUARY 9, 1865.



SHERMAN'S SEVENTEENTH ARMY CORPS ENTERING CHERAW, S. C., AND DRIVING OUT THE CONFEDERATES.

The sketch of the crossing of the Edisto by the troops of Sherman's right wing made General Howard present a common phase of army experience on the march through Georgia and the Carolinas. The so-called rivers were simply swamps, with a deep channel carrying off the surplus rainfall. Often a series of these swamps would be encountered close together, and then the name of swamp would be found attached to what might be termed a succession of rivers, namely, channels with running tides between contiguous islands; at one such there were fifteen separate channels to be spanned by pontoon bridges. The water on each side of the channel was so shallow that men and horses could ford it. It was also of crystal clearness and tempted the weary, thirsty soldiers to drink it. It was poison, however, to the human system, as countless of the unwary discovered. Soon after passing the Edisto Howard's column entered Cheraw. The town had been the refuge of Hardee's troops on evacuating Charleston. Large quantities of military stores had been forwarded from Charleston to that point, and Hardee purposed making a stand to delay Sherman's advance northward. Strong works were constructed along the Pedee River to cover the town. On March 3 Slocum's army came up on one flank and Howard's on the other, compelling Hardee to speedily evacuate the lines. So hurried was the flight of the Confederates that they left 28 cannon and 3000 stand of arms, with ammunition and stores, as trophies to Howard. The soldiers "marched into Cheraw with music and with colors flying," says a campaigner of the Twelfth Corps. "Stacking arms in the main street we proceeded to supper, while the engineers laid the pontoons across Pedee River. The railing of the town pump, and the remains of a buggy said to belong to President Lincoln's brother-in-law, Dr. Todd, were quickly reduced to kindling wood to boil the coffee." For some days before reaching Cheraw the army had suffered a ration famine. The supplies captured in Hardee's storehouses, however, and the contraband cornmeal, sweet potatoes and bacon brought in by the zealous "Bummers" soon made amends.