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Robert Watson, whose blanket received twenty-three holes while he was scaling the ridge, recalled the Floridians contested their position “until the enemy were on the top and had their flags on our breastworks.” Watson wrote “we retreated down the hill under a shower of lead leaving many a noble son of the South dead and wounded on the ground and many more shared the same fate on the retreat. We retreated in great confusion, men from different companies all mixed together.” Samuel Pasco decided the time had come to flee “when I saw half a dozen flags across the breastworks.” Pasco had not gotten far when a ball passed through his left calf which hobbled the Englishman; he collapsed after trying to mount a stray mule. Charlie Hemming, “running faster than a young deer before the hounds,” came across the wounded Pasco who “cried out ‘Charlie, don’t leave me!’” Hemming, unwilling to play Good Samaritan, never broke his stride and instead yelled as he passed: “It’s no time to stop now...” Nevertheless, Hemming soon joined Pasco as a prisoner-of-war.

Many of the men who escaped from the southern end of the ridge soon rallied just to the east, where Bate quickly forged together a line to prevent further pursuit of Bragg’s defeated force. The divisional commander put General Finley in command of this delaying force and then pulled the 6th Florida further east in order to form a reserve and second rallying point. Finley’s line held until late that evening when General Breckinridge arrived and ordered the troops to withdraw. This final retreat ended at Dalton, Georgia, more than thirty miles to the southeast. There, Braxton Bragg’s tenure with the Army of Tennessee ended at his own request, and as he departed on December 2, one of the brass bands that serenaded the disgraced commander belonged to the 4th Florida.