

Introduction

A History of the 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry from Old Sources

Collection by Susie [Sara] Holderfield



Commemorative Flask



Kerry Day



Dean Montanye

I was contacted in 2001 by Kerry Day, friend of Dean Montanye who was the owner of the flask pictured here. Dean wanted to know about the original flask owner, James Taylor. So I researched Captain James B. Taylor who had started the Smithville Academy, Smithville OH, just before he joined the War. I became interested in the students who followed Taylor to join in the fight to preserve the Union. My interest grew to include the other men of Company H and what became of them during and after the war. But why stop there? I listed the other men of the regiment and continued researching their lives too. As I researched the men and the 120th, I began to collect a sort of history of the regiment which grew as great contributors sent me information about their ancestors and even original pension records from the National archives. I have gathered together pieces from that collection here.

The basics:

The 120th regiment first served unattached, Army of Kentucky, Department of the Ohio, to November 1862. 1st Brigade, 9th Division, Right Wing, XIII Corps, Department of the Tennessee, to December 1862. 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, Sherman's Yazoo Expedition, to January 1863. 1st Brigade, 9th Division, XIII Corps, Army of the Tennessee, to July 1863. 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, XIII Corps, Department of the Tennessee, to August 1863, and Department of the Gulf to November 1863. Plaquemine, Louisiana, District of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Department of the Gulf, to March 1864. 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, XIII Corps, to June 1864. 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, XIX Corps, Department of the Gulf, to August 1864. 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, XIX Corps, to November 1864.

Mustered in 14 Oct 1862 at Camp Mansfield, Ohio, by Alexander E. Drake, Captain 2nd Infantry, USA.

Consolidated with the 114th OVI on 27 Nov 1864.

The 120th Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry took part in these battles:

[Union forces failed to take Vicksburg December 1862]

Chickasaw Bayou, Miss. 28-29 December 1862

Arkansas Post, Ark. 11 Jan. 1863

Thompson's Hill, Miss. (Port Gibson) 1 May 1863

Big Black River, Miss 17 May, 1863

Siege of Vicksburg, Miss. 18 May to 4 July 1863

Jackson, Miss. 9-16 July 1863

Transport "City Belle" 3 May 1864

On my list of soldiers of the 120th OVI there are 1093 men listed including Officers and Staff.

A summary:

[Published in Cincinnati Daily Gazette, 6 Jun 1879, page 3 available at Genealogy Bank]

"Wooster. The following notes gleaned from the history of the 120th O. V. I. may be of interest: The regiment was organized in August, 1862. The various companies were raised in Wayne Ashland, Richland, and Holmes counties, and on the 17th of August was equipped, having an aggregate of 949 men. October 25th the regiment started to the front, down the Ohio to Memphis. The regiment was then assigned to the right wing of the Army of the Tennessee, commanded by Gen. Sherman. The 120th participated in the unsuccessful attack upon Vicksburg at Johnson's Landing, losing great numbers by sickness. It took part in the seizure of Fort Hindman, at Arkansas Post, and was the first regiment to unfurl the stars and stripes over the captured fort. At Young's Point, above Vicksburg, the boys suffered much from sickness, and many died. Here Gen. Grant became their commander. The next important engagement took place at Thompson's Hill, Miss., April 29, 1863. The loss of the 120th at this battle was one-eighth of the number which entered. The regiment took active part in the attack against Jackson, Miss. [Note: against Vicksburg and Jackson]

While going up Red River, for the purpose of joining Gen. Banks, they were attacked by the rebels and compelled to surrender, after losing many brave comrades. Two hundred were carried to the prison pen called Camp Ford, near Tyler, Texas, where they remained until the close of the war. The remainder of the regiment joined Gen. Banks at Alexandria and followed him until Nov. 25, 1864, when the 120th and 114th regiments were consolidated. This ended the career of the 120th as a regimental organization. Only 440 of the original number remained, the others having fallen as victims upon their country's bloody altar."

Request for a history:

[Wooster Republican, Thursday, 8 Sept 1870, page 3 Available at Genealogy Bank]

Grand Reunion Of The Soldiers! Of The 23d, 42d, 102d, and 120th Regts. O. V. I.

"On motion, it was resolved that Capt's Franufelter [Fraunfelter], Jones and Lieut. Rouch, be appointed to prepare for publication a complete history of the regiment. In addition to the narrative of the events of a regimental history, they are instructed to ascertain the place, residence and occupation of every member of the regiment, this history to be read at the next reunion."

Now, imagine that you were living back in August, 1862, and you decided to follow activities of the 120th OVI because the men and boys from your neighborhood were a part of that regiment.....

Research by Susie Holderfield 2001-2018

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[Index to History of the 120th OVI](#)

[Link to Main page for the 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry](#)