

6 July - 8 August 1863 Battle at Jackson

[The 120th then moved east towards Jackson, MS, the state capitol. Jackson is about 47 miles to the east of Vicksburg. The regiment was involved in fighting at Jackson where Col. Spiegel and Lieut Totten were both wounded by Union shells on July 12. Spiegel survived, but Hiram Totten died of his wounds at home in Wooster about 12 weeks later on 6 Oct 1863.]

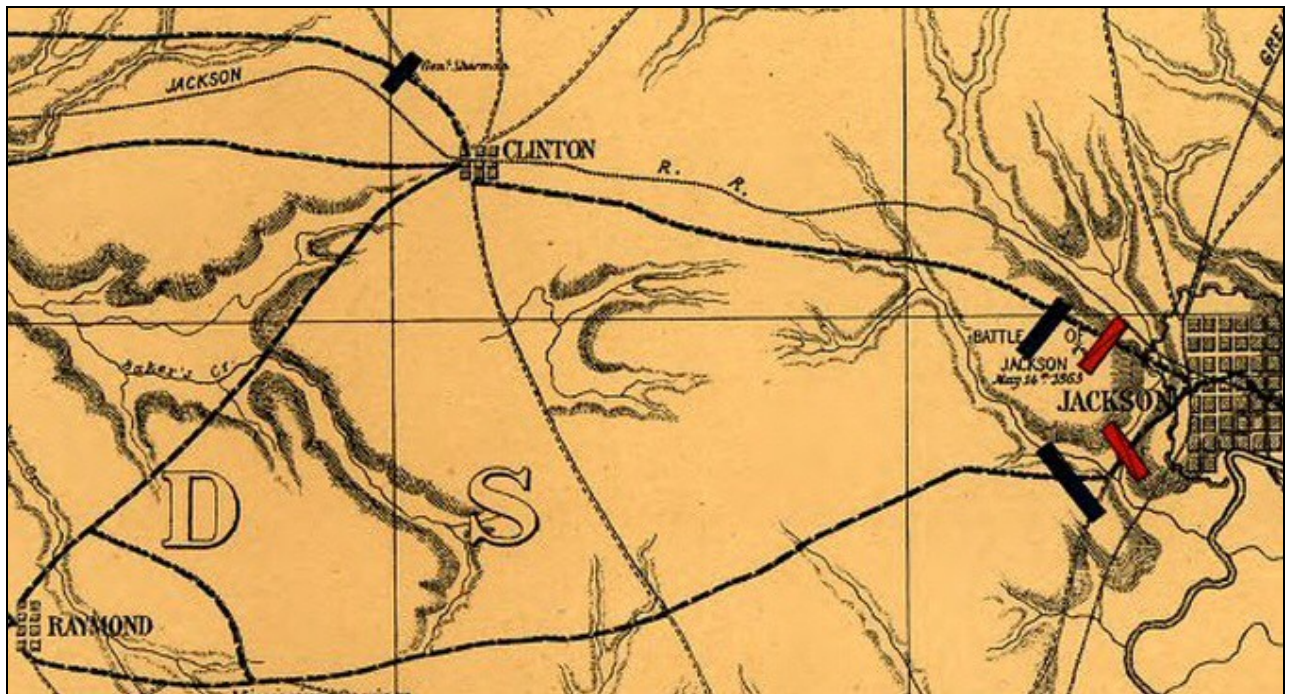
Action against Jackson, Miss. 6-16 July 1863

Back to Black River Bridge 20 July, and back to Vicksburg 21 July - 8 Aug, 1863

Ohio in the War: her statement, generals, and soldiers, Volume 2, by Whitelaw Reid, The Robert Clarke Co, 1895 **Section on 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry** pp.616

On the 6th of July the regiment led the advance of the Thirteenth Corp in the expedition against Jackson, Mississippi, moving along the line of railroad between that city and Black River. The intrenchments [sic] in front of Jackson were reached on the 10th of July. The Thirteenth Corps formed the right wing of the attacking column. **The One Hundred and Twentieth was actively engaged in this attack from the day the investment began until the 17th of July**, the day on which the enemy evacuated the place and retreated across the Pearl River. During the investment the regiment was under an almost constant fire of artillery and infantry. **Its casualties of officers were Colonel Spiegel and Lieutenant Spear severely, and Lieutenant Totten mortally wounded.**

The regiment returned with the army to Black River Bridge, arriving there on the 20th of July, and on the 21st was en route for Vicksburg, where it went into camp.



United States Congressional serial set, Issue 2762. 1891, page 585

Report of the First Brigade in the Jackson Expedition under command of Major-General Sherman, by Col. James Keigwin, Forty-ninth Indiana Infantry, commanding First Brigade.

The brigade consisted of 49th IN volunteers; 69th IN Inf.; 120th OH Spiegel commanding; 7th KY; 118th IL Infantry mounted.

The brigade started out **6 July** but before reaching Amsterdam [north of Edwards Depot], they bivouacked for the night.

July 7 resumed march and bivouacked in woods: right along the Bolton and Raymond Railroad and left along Jackson road.

Bivouacked 4 miles from Clinton on 8 July.

Page 586: "July 9....passed through **Clinton** about 9 o'clock. When about 2 miles from Clinton, our cavalry had quite a skirmish with the enemy. I was ordered forward, and deployed the brigade by battalions in mass on the right of the road, throwing skirmishers well forward. Captain Lamphere's battery followed and took position on my left. We had not advanced far until we discovered quite a number of the enemy's cavalry on a hill in front of us and in a large corn-field on our right. We advanced, and while so doing the battery threw a few shells amongst them, when they beat a hasty retreat. We remained at this point the remainder of the day, and bivouacked for the night about 5 miles from Jackson, with orders to be ready to leave at 3 o'clock of the following morning."

"July 10, did not leave our bivouac until 6 o'clock, and marched in advance. We left the Clinton road, and marched through the woods about 1 mile to the Raymond road."

"The one hundred and eighteenth Illinois was ordered to move through the woods on our left as flankers; one company of the Forty-ninth Indiana for the same purpose. We did not go very far on the Raymond road until our advance found the enemy, who stubbornly resisted our advance. I was ordered forward with the brigade, and crossed the creek, when I was ordered to deploy the brigade into line of battle and advance. I deployed the Forth-ninth on the right of the road, the Sixty-ninth Indiana, One hundred and twentieth Ohio, and Seventh Kentucky on the left. Throwing my skirmishers well forward, we advanced and passed the cavalry, and when within about 1,000 yards of the enemy's works, I found quite a force of Infantry, who were posted on a ridge in front of their works, who seemed to intend to stop our advance. My skirmishers went boldly forward, and were soon hotly [page 587] engaged. I then ordered the line forward, and they charged up the hill and into the houses in front of us, driving the rebels toward their works."

Skirmishing continued through July 15. On July 16 the brigade moved to the rear. On the morning of July 17 Col. Keigwin learned that the Confederates had evacuated Jackson.

"The regiments in the brigade suffered a great deal on the expedition from sickness, cause by the heat and exposure, quite a number of cases of sunstroke having occurred, a few only proving fatal. A large number of men were taken with chills and fever..."

[Page 588] "Colonel Spiegel and Lieutenant Totten, of the One Hundred and twentieth Ohio, were severely wounded by a defective shell from one of Captain Lamphere's guns."

[Oct 1907 Cleveland Plain Dealer, page 3]

Makes Ring of Own Bone

Man Wounded in Civil War Carved Ornament From His Thigh Bone.

Columbus, O., Oct. 4.--- A. W. Cousin of Terre Haute, Ind., presented to the relic room of the statehouse today a peculiar and grewsome [sic] relic of the civil war.

It is a finger ring made by Sergeant **Peter Heckert of Co. F**, 120th Ohio Volunteer infantry, from the head of the thigh bone of his own left leg. He was **wounded in the left thigh at Jackson, Miss., July 11, 1863**, necessitating the amputation of the leg. The ring is highly polished so that no one would suspect from its appearance of what material it is.

[Note: The Ohio Historical Society in Columbus OH still has possession of this ring. Its number is H70407.]

Page 545: United States Congressional serial set, Issue 2762. 1891

In the Jackson campaign, the 120th had 4 officers and 9 enlisted men wounded.

First, Jacob H., Co D, wounded 10 July 1863 in battle of Jackson, Mississippi

Spear, Wesley W., Co D, wounded 11 July 1863 in the battle of Jackson, Mississippi

Swackhamer, James, Co D, wounded in hand 16 July 1863 in the battle of Jackson, Mississippi

Heckert, Peter, Co F, wounded on 10 July 1863 in the battle of Jackson, Mississippi [See story above]

Reichard, Michael, Co F, wounded on 12 July 1863 in the battle of Jackson, Mississippi

Rickel, William, Co F, wounded 10 July 1863 in the battle of Jackson, Mississippi; **died on 5 Sept 1863 at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri of those wounds**

From roster and pension records:

Beveridge, John, Private, Co H, Wounded 12 July 1863 Jackson Miss.

Long, Davidson, Co H, , Wounded at Jackson Miss.

Colonel **Spiegel**, wounded 12 July 1863, severely wounded by a defective shell from one of

Captain Lanphere's guns.

Lieut. Hiram Totten, Company E, wounded 12 July 1863 at Jackson, MS, died of those wounds 6 Oct 1863 at home. Severely wounded by a defective shell from one of Captain Lanphere's guns. **Lieut. Wesley W. Spear**, Co D, wounded 11 July 1863 at Jackson, MS. Shot in right groin with minie ball.

Meanwhile back home in Ohio:

[Wooster Republican, 3 Sep 1863, page 3, available at GenealogyBank]

"At Columbus, Ohio, **July 19th, 1863**, John McDowell [Co D], [died] of a disease contracted while in defense of his country at Vicksburg, Mississippi. He was sent with others to Columbus, Ohio, in order that he might recover his health. He became weaker and weaker until the day of his death. His father, John McDowell, of Wayne county, went four times to Columbus in order to get him home, but all he could say to the Surgeons was of no avail, they would not give him his discharge, until the last and fourth time he went, he had his discharge from the court of heaven. J. McC."

Back at Vicksburg:

Mahlon Rouch, Co A, **wrote home to his father about Clement Vallandigham of Ohio who sided with the South. Vallandigham was a part of the Copperhead group within the Democrat party. Vallandigham lost the election for Ohio governor for which he was running in absentia from Windsor, Ontario, Canada.**

"Headq'rs 120th Reg't O.V.I., Vicksburg, Miss., **July 31st, 1863.**

Dear Father: - This evening I again seat myself to write you a few lines. Capt. Moffit rejoined our regiment yesterday, and I received the boots you sent to me by him, and also the letter, both of which were very acceptable. - The boots are excellent, just what I wanted, only a mite too large, but will do very well for a soldier. I believe I have nothing particular to answer in your letter this time except the question about Vallandigham. I do not wish to enter into politics, because I consider that this is no time to discuss that question. About the contents of that letter which a young man from this regiment is reported to have written home, I know nothing, neither do I particularly care. This much I can assure you, that Vallandigham is not going to carry the vote of the army, neither do I believe he will get five votes out of a hundred. I have been in the army too long and think I know the sentiments of our soldiers too well to believe such trash. And when I say this I not only speak my own belief but the opinion of many. Any man must be troubled with softness in the brain who thinks that soldiers will give their voice for a candidate for such an honorable and responsible position, who has always been doing everything within his power against the cause for which they have so long been and still are battling. - Does any one think that they would suffer as they have from exposure, hard marches and hard fought battles, and then after having erected an unblemished monument of honor and glory by their untiring zeal and endurance, that they would turn their faces toward that monument and with their own hands raze that mighty fabric to the earth by committing such a notorious deed of shameless disgrace as supporting that hell-doomed traitor? Ah, no! there yet courses too much pure patriotic blood through the veins of Columbia's noble sons. - They know too well that the protection of their Government and country is the protection of their all. Give us an opportunity of speaking through the ballot-box, and Val. need not wait to hear the result, but may as well at once seek his dominions of retirement and disgrace. His supporters may hold their meetings in secret, or they may rave throughout the country like bulls of Bashan, they cannot effect the hearts and minds of true Union loving soldiers. I speak this plainly, because I know whereof I speak. But I have already written more than I intended to write, and will say no more. - Some of our boys will start home on furlough to-morrow. My health is good. James Wallace was here yesterday and to-day; he started for Milliken's Bend this evening to see after his brother William, who is still here sick.- Adieu. Yours, as ever, Mahlon Rouch."

[Published in Wooster Republican, Thursday, 10 Aug 1863, page 3, available at GenealogyBank]

[Note: Pvt. William WALLACE, Co A, was discharged 31 July 1863 on a Surgeon's certificate of disability.]

Died in July - Aug 7 1863, 120th OVI, died of disease unless otherwise noted

Moore, Charles, Co A, drowned 5 July 1863

Ray, John, Co A, died 10 July 1863 at Columbus, OH

Watson, William W., Co A, died 26 July 1863 at Vicksburg, MS

Mower, Levi, Co A, died 3 Aug 1863 at Vicksburg, MS
Harter, Jacob, Co B, died 25 July 1863 in gov't wagon on road between Jackson, MS and Black River, MS
Henry, Martin L., Co B, died 26 July 1863 at Milliken's Bend, LA
Wisner, Hiram B., Co D, died 4 July 1863 at St. Louis, MO
Reinhard, Wendel, Co D, died 5 July 1863 at St. Louis, MO
Weddle, Jesse, Co D, died 16 July 1863 at Columbus, OH
Shaner, Henry S., Co D, **wounded 1 May 1863, battle of Thompson's Hill, MS; died 16 July 1863 at Milliken's Bend, Madison Parish, LA**
McDowell, John, Co D, died 19 July 1863 at Columbus, OH
Funk, Isaac, Co D, died 7 Aug 1863 at Cairo, IL
Nisewender, Benjamin J., Co E, died on 4 July 1863 at Memphis, TN
Yergan, Amos, Co E, died on 28 July 1863 at Vicksburg, Miss.
Menter, George H., Co F, died 4 July 1863 at General Hospital, Jefferson Barracks, MO
Link, Joseph, Co G, died 12 July 1863 at Black River, MS
Springer, Norman, Co G, died 1 Aug 1863 at Regimental Hospital, Vicksburg, MS
Dague, Cyrus C., Co G, died 5 Aug 1863 at Vicksburg, MS
Hunter, Lemuel, Co H, died 8 July 1863 at Milliken's Bend, LA
Robinson, James A., Co H, died 8 July 1863 on a hospital steamer "R. C. Wood".
Troyer, Elias, Co H, died 22 July 1863 on the road from Jackson Miss. to Vicksburg, MS
Crownor, Thomas, Co H, died 22 July 1863 on the road from Jackson Miss. to Vicksburg, MS
Witmer [Witwer], Henry, Co H, discharged on 24 July 1863; died General Hospital, Benton Barracks MO, 25 July 1863
Coleman, Arthur, Private Co I, died at General Hospital Jefferson Barracks MO, 7 July 1863
Palmer, Eli F., Private Co I, died 21 July 1863 on hospital steamer "Nashville" at Vicksburg, MS
Pierce, Samuel, Private Co I, died 2 July at Black River Bridge a day after receiving his discharge
Blanc, Augustus, Private Co K, died 26 July 1863 on hospital steamer "City of Nashville" at Vicksburg, MS

August 8, 1863, the Regiment left Vicksburg for New Orleans.

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