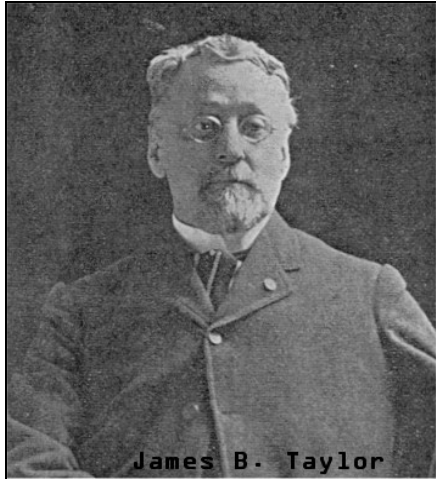


Organizing 1862



According to Captain Taylor of the Smithville Academy in a speech he gave in 1920 at one of the [Smithville Academy](#) reunions, he "applied to the Military Commission of Wayne County for authority to enlist a company, and on Aug. 13 authority was given and.....on the morning of August 15 at the opening exercises [at the school] announced to the assembled students that the call of patriotic duty under the appeal of the President had become irresistible and that [he] had enlisted in the 120th Ohio Vol. Inf....." He became part of Company H. Taylor said that "quite a number of the boys of the school followed me in their enlistment" and he recalled these names.....Bair, Baker, Bricker, Bushong, Keiffer, Miller, Myers, Mylar, Norris, Orr, Starn, Stauffer, Stutzman, Yoder, Martin, Foltz, and Wilson. He made special mention of Isaiah N. Kieffer, of Company A, who had become a Lutheran minister and reentered the service for the Spanish American War. According to Taylor,

five companies got on the train at Wooster on 29 August 1862 to go to Mansfield, OH for encampment.

"Four companies, and a large part of a fifth company, in the 120th Regiment were raised in Wayne county...." Hardesty's Wayne = Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia (Wayne County version) 1885

Hardesty's Richland = Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia (Richland County version) 1885

The five Wayne county companies were recruited in August, 1862, and rendezvoused at Camp Mansfield on the 29th of August...."

[History of Wayne County, Ohio by Ben Douglas, c. 1878]

The other counties involved in the regiment were Holmes, Ashland, Richland and a few from Summit. In addition there were men from other counties in Ohio and from other states who also joined the regiment.

[Wooster Republican 21 Aug 1862]

Five new Companies in Wayne county

"Five more new military companies have been organized in Wayne county under authority from the Governor, and are now fast filling up, some of them having very nearly the minimum number."

"All these companies ought to be immediately filled up; and will be by draft if not by volunteers.

The officers are all good men for the positions and every able bodied young man in the county should at once place his name on one or another of these companies, until they are full."

Wooster Republican, **28 August 1862**, page 3:

"The 120th regiment to be raised in Richland, Ashland, Wayne and Holmes counties, is fast filling up, and there is now no doubt but it will be filled up by volunteers. Wayne County has one company already full, with two others nearly full, and two more far advanced, in all five companies from old Wayne for the 120th. The regiment will go into camp at Mansfield."

[Wooster Republican, **11 Sept 1862**, page 3, available at GenealogyBank]

"The Military Committees for Richland, Ashland, Wayne and Holmes counties, have recommended to the Governor for appointment the following field officers for the 120th regiment:

Lieut. Col French, of the 65th Ohio, recently resigned, has been recommended for Colonel.

Capt. E. W. Botsford, of the 16th Ohio, for Lieut. Colonel.

John W. Beekman, of Plymouth, Ohio, for Major.

Willard Slocum, of Ashland, for Adjutant.

Ezra V. Dean, of Wooster, for Quartermaster,

And W. A. G. Emerson, of Ashland for Chaplain.

The recommendations are equivalent to appointments, as the Governor uniformly appoints those recommended by the Military Committees.

The only one doubtful of the list is Captain Botsford, as it is not known whether he will accept, or if he accepts whether he will be transferred by the War Department. [Botsford did not join the 120th.]

Col. French resides in Millersburg, and is very highly spoken of as a gentleman of talents and much experience, having been in service from the commencement of the war until recently."

"Surgeon of the 120th Regiment. In publishing the list of field officers of the 120th regiment last week, we inadvertently, (by copying the list from the Mansfield Herald) omitted the name of the Surgeon, Dr. W. W. Taggart, who is a resident of Wayne county. The appointment is one of the best in the list, and Dr. Taggart is not only well qualified for the position, but will make one of the best Surgeons in the service."

Published in Wooster Republican, 18 Sep 1862, page 4.

[Note: Lewis Hull signed up 10 August 1862. His birthday was 7 August 1849. He was Musician in Co B.]

"Mansfield, O., Dec. 3. [Special.] - Mansfield makes claim to one of the youngest if not the youngest soldier[s] of the war on the union side. The young soldier is Lewis O. Hull, now a resident of Fort Wayne. The fact that he was 13 years and 3 days old when he enlisted has been discovered of late by the Chicago papers. The comrades of the One Hundred and Twentieth O. V. I., in which he enlisted as a drummer boy, remember him very well. He still has relatives in the neighborhood of Lucas, O. Hull was in the battles of Vicksburg, Red River, Shaggy [Snaggy] Point and other conflicts, was never wounded and was honorably discharged at Houston, Tex., October 14, 1865." [Plain Dealer [Cleveland OH], 5 Dec 1887, pg 5.]

"Who is the youngest Union soldier? A Columbus (Ohio) man proved that he was thirteen years and eleven months old when mustered in, when along came a young soldier from Allegheny, PA., who showed that when he signed the roster of the recruiting officer he was but thirteen years and twenty-one days old. This last claim was decided as settling the matter until the discovery was made in Fort Wayne [IN] that a citizen of that place enlisted at an earlier age than any person for whom the distinction of extremest youth has heretofore been claimed. His name is Lewis O. Hull, and he is a prominent business man. At the beginning of the war he was living at his father's house, in Mansfield, Ohio. He was just thirteen years and three days old when he became a member of the One Hundred and Twentieth Ohio Volunteer Infantry."

Published in Juneau County Argus [New Lisbon, Wisconsin], 22 Dec 1887, page 2, available at GenealogyBank.

Letter from Private Charles Jackson, Co B 120th OVI, to his mother from pension files at fold3.com . Charles died 6 Apr 1863 at Milliken's Bend, LA, of smallpox. He did have older brothers named George and William. In 1860 his mother was living in Mahaska Co IA, with ties to Muskingum Co OH, and there is evidence in the pension that Charles was living there too.

[punctuation added for clarity]

Camp Mansfield Sept 15, 1862

Dear Mother

It has bin a good while since I heard from you but I think I wrote the last letter bu you never ansurd. Now I will write you one more and if you dont answer it I will think that you have forsakend me but I hope you have not for I don't think that I have ?afended you fer y to make you do it. I am well at present and in joying my self vary well. I have inlisted in the one hundrad twentieh regiment ohio vollentear. We are in Camp Mansfield ohio but don't know how long we will stay hear. We are looking for orders to leave every day. I got ?? letters from George last frida and had two? before that and he is well and says he is fat as a hog and I am glad to hear that from him. I wrote to Will yesterday. He is in ottowa illinois. I inlisted the 5 of August last for three years or the war. I hope when the few lines reaches you it will find you all in good helth. when I get my Bounty I will send you some money. We draw one hundred dolars bounty and I will send you all of mone to keep till I come back only what you want to live with and I will send you my

minature in the next letter that I send to you. But if you don't ansure this I wont send you any more letter for there is no use of me writeing when I cant get no ansure. George and I write regular to each other. we get letters evry week from each other. Well Mother have not much to write but I want you to tell me evry thing that is going on and give my respects to all of my inquirerig friends and tell them if I don't get kild I will see them some time but don't know how it will be but I hope not long. Mother I want you to think of me on yours prayers and pray that I mite see you once more before I die. tell the girls that I will send them my minetur when I get my bounty.

So no more at this time

from your nonduteful son

Charles E Jackson

Direct to Camp Mansfield

one hundrade and twentieh regmen ohio volentears

in care of R M Bryaton

From the 120th Regiment. Camp Mansfield, Ohio, **Sept. 10th, 1862.**

Mr. Editor -- Dear Sir: -- As Wayne county is fully represented in the 120th regiment, it may be of interest to some to know how their friends in camp fare. We arrived in camp on the evening of the 20th ult. We found the camp pleasantly situated two miles north of town, with plenty of good water, well arranged barracks, kitchens convenient, rations of beef, pork, rice, hominy, sugar, coffee, potatoes, &c. of the best quality and plenty. All moved on smoothly and pleasantly. The boys were all in the best spirits, enjoying their time, when off duty, in writing letters, studying military tactics, &c.

Yesterday the five companies from Wayne county had a grand picnic, prepared by the good friends at home. The tables were literally loaded down with the good things of our productive county, such as turkeys, chickens, pies, cakes, and all kinds of vegetables, which gave proof that we were held in kind remembrance by our friends at home. Such manifestations of regard inspire soldiers with new energy and determination to preserve to their friends the liberty they now enjoy.

Nothing transpired to disturb the quiet of the camp till yesterday, when an order came from Gov. Tod to hold our regiment in readiness to march at an hour's notice. Then there was commotion -- there was hurrying to and fro -- every one was busy settling his business preparatory to starting. We were ordered to prepare four days' rations, and the camp was astir nearly all night; passes were refused to go outside the camp, the guard was doubled, and this morning when the excitement was at a maximum, every one expecting to be speedily transferred to a closer proximity to the enemy, it was found that we would not go. Then there was a relapse -- a reaction took place, leaving the regiment more quiet than before, and from the appearance of the boys to-day, there were a good many sleepless eyes last night. The health of the regiment is good.

Yours, &c. G. W. G. [Note: **George W. Gardner**, Co. E]

P. S. Since writing the above, Capt. Eason's company has been examined and none were rejected. It was pronounced by the examining Surgeon the best company in the regiment." [Published in Wooster Republican, 18 Sep 1862, page 4.]

"From the 120th Regiment -- Reception of the Wayne County Militia.

Camp Mansfield, **Oct. 7th, 1862.**

Mr. Editor-- The 120th regiment is still in Camp Mansfield. The boys are orderly, full of life and enthusiasm. We live well and are growing fat--think we are making great proficiency in drilling-- have regimental drill every day, and the boys begin to walk and look like soldiers. All are anxious to enter the field of active operations. Since we have been in camp one man has died. He was a member of Capt. Falan's company, and from Wayne county.

Business is lively. Barracks are being enlarged and new ones built. The camp can soon accommodate six thousand soldiers.

Last night the militia from Wayne county came in. They are a good looking set of men and the first in camp of all the counties. Instead of meeting with jeers and taunts, as some predicted, they met with a warm welcome.--The regiment marched out to meet them, and they were greeted with loud and prolonged cheers, and that *better* passport to a hearty welcome, a smoking hot supper.

Today they have poured in by thousands. -- They are all lively, and seem well satisfied with their

new condition. We hope by their assistance to soon crush this rebellion, and hasten the time when the clash of resounding arms, the sullen booming of artillery will be heard no more; when the crimson tide shall cease to flow; and prosperity shall again be restored to our country.

We shall perhaps leave here very soon, as all seems ready now.

Yours G W G [Note: **George W. Gardner**, Co. E]

[Published in Wooster Republican [Ohio], 9 Oct 1862, page 7.]

[Note: No soldier that I have listed in Captain Phelan's company H died that early. So I don't know who this soldier who died would be.]

Gathering up draft evaders. The reader will see later that the Democrats never gave up their attempts to turn the soldiers against fighting for the Union.

John Sexton, Company H [Canton Repository, Monday, 10 Dec 1923, page 8 available at GenealogyBank] This article gives a short account of John's Sexton's first active duty which was to collect up draft evaders in Canton. He was armed to do his duty.

120th sent to Canton:

[**16 Oct 1862**, Cleveland Leader, page 2]

"Arrests in Stark County. By the following special telegram from Mansfield yesterday morning, we hear of the arrest of two notorious sympathisers [sic] in Stark county, for counseling resistance to the draft. Others are likely to be made, and no doubt ought to have been made before this. At a crisis like the present, men who counsel resistance to the draft, who excuse the rebels, and educate other men to commit overt acts of treason, ought either to go south where their sympathies lead them, or be restrained, at least so far as to compel them to observe an

external Loyalty:

Mansfield, O., Oct. 23?? [should be 13?].

H. C. Johnson: --A. McGregor, editor of the Stark County Democrat, and a man named Reitzel, were arrested in Canton yesterday for counseling resistance to the draft, and are now in Camp Mansfield.--Other arrests are likely to be made. A detachment of the 120th Regiment are now in Stark county, arresting the ringleaders and gathering up the deluded stragglers, about 150 of whom remain behind. B."

"Drafted Men. About 400 of the 571 drafted men of this county left for Camp Mansfield according to orders. Others of them to the number of about 50 went next day. On Sunday morning last 200 soldiers of the 120th Regiment came here to hunt up those who would not go. Some 15 or 20 have been arrested and sent off, among them Rev. Henning and young Roher who had made speeches to the drafted men, advising them to resist. Some have moved west, some are sick, but about all have been or will be arrested.

Peter N. Reitzell and A. McGregor were arrested on Sunday for advising drafted men to resist.

They were taken to Camp Mansfield on a special train the same day. They both protested against their arrest, and denied the constitutionality of the proceedings." [**15 Oct 1862**, Canton Repository, page 3]

A squad of soldiers of the 120th had been involved in this: [Daily Ohio Statesman (Columbus OH), 12 Feb 1863, page 1] Canton, Ohio, **October 12, 1862**. To Col. Sherman, Commanding at Camp Mansfield: With the bearer hereof, I send you as prisoners Archibald McGregor and Peter N. Reitzell, whom I have caused to be arrested for disloyal actions and speeches tending to excite resistance to the authority of the Government of the United States and encourage active and passive resistance to its orders and authority by men who have been regularly drafted into its service. Everything here now seems to be going on well. Very respectfully, Jacob Brinkerhoff, Deputy Provost Marshal." [**A. McGregor was the editor of the Stark County Democrat. He was arrested two days before the election and was taken to Camp Mansfield. He was held under harsh conditions and kept demanding a trial. He was released 5 Nov after taking the oath of allegiance.**] [**Reason for arrest:** "The President in his September proclamation says, that all persons guilty of any disloyal practice or offering aid or comfort to the rebels against the authority of the United States, shall be subject to martial law and liable to trial

and punishment by court-martial or military commission." [An article in the Stark County Democrat, 6 May 1875, page 1, does put Col Spiegel with a detachment of the 120th on the square in Canton in October 1862.]

Apparently the Democrat Cantonites took exception to the activity of the 120th in collecting up the draft dodgers because years later they still sound angry about it:

[The Stark County Democrat, 14 June 1877, page 4, available at GenealogyBank.] The 120th O. V. I., of fifteen years ago --what's left of it, and could go, -- met at Chippewa lake on the 5th and had a reunion, speeches being made by those gallant Captains, Slocum, Myers and McClure. We well remember that Sunday morning, October, 1862, when a detachment visited Canton, captured the town and took two prisoners. They returned to camp in great glory after their first victory. Ex Judge Jake Brinkerhoff was commander-in-chief, assisted by several gallant civilian volunteers. We became attached to that gallant regiment also, and obtained preferment, but *health* not permitting, we did not continue in the service, in this aspect resembling Captains McSweeney, Myers and others. We trust the gallant braves remaining enjoyed the ???tual [mutual] admiration." [Editorial: I think that this is in reference to the troubles the 120th had with some of its leaders when first organized. Some officers quit the 120th.]

And the Canton Repository countered with this comment which probably refers to the fact that McGregor took the oath of allegiance and then returned to Canton:

[Canton Repository, 22 June 1877, page 1, available at GenealogyBank]

"That was a very touching reference to the meeting of the 120th Regiment at Chippewa Lake, by the venerable McGregor, in the last *Democrat*. His enlistment in its ranks, and his march with it to the camp at Mansfield, where after a few weeks of service, he returned to the bosom of his constituents, and his reflections on the gallantry of his comrades were worthy the pen of an abler, if not an older man. How sad, that his domestic troubles prevented his attendance on that occasion with the boys."



From the Diary of **John Summerfield Petty**, at that time a Private in Company C, 120th OVI. Contributed by David Robinson, descendant of Summerfield.]

Wednesday, **22 Oct 1862**: "Our regiment is now in a 'ready mood.' We are under marching orders. Tomorrow we leave for the South. A squad of us were up to Mansfield and had a good dinner at the Walden. I made a few purchases and do think Mansfield the meanest place to purchase goods I ever was in. There is less civility among the merchants than I ever before saw. Our knapsacks are now packed and we expect to move at six tomorrow." Thursday, **23 Oct 1862**: "There is a great crowd here expecting to see us leave. We have just heard that we are not to leave until Saturday morning in consequence of failure to get cars."

From the Diary of John Summerfield Petty, at that time a Private in Company C:

Saturday, 25 Oct 1862: "Camp Mansfield At 8 o'clock A. M. with knapsacks strapped across our shoulders, haversacks filled with two-days' rations and canteens filled with cider (just from the press) we marched out on the parade ground and formed a

straight line as if for dress parade, but satisfied that a more arduous duty lay before us. The heavens bore an ominous aspect. The snow and rain that had fallen through the night made the walking disagreeable. A cold wind caused the chills to pass through our veins while we remained standing on the hill above the depot waiting for the cars to move up to take us on. Our departure being so uncertain, there were but few persons to see us off and say 'good-bye.' Those who were there shed a good many tears as the car hid the 'loved ones' from their view. After many delays we arrived in Columbus at 3 and one-half o'clock P. M. ... Our car being near broken down we got

another car much better than the former and were joined to the remainder of our company from whom we had been separated since we left Mansfield. We had a very pleasant ride to Cincinnati at which place we arrived at one and one-half o'clock. All along the road we received demonstrations of joy, waving of handkerchiefs, etc."

Research by Susie Holderfield 2001-2018

120researcher@gmail.com

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

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