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Ohio Soldiers and Sailors Orphans Home, Xenia, Ohio

William C. McCracken, son of William McCracken, Co D 120th OVI, was a resident at the Home in Xenia. In 1878 after he turned 16 he was discharged from the Home as an inmate but was still employed there. The soldier's pensions papers said that the son was a very intelligent boy. By 1900 William C. was working in Columbus as a stationary engineer. By the 1930 census he is the Superintendent of the Ohio State University Maintenance, and in the 1940 census is listed as the buildings and grounds engineer at The Ohio State University.

Frank and Minnie Dunham, children of James W. Dunham, Co B 120th OVI, also lived at the Home in Xenia.

Clark and Adolf Yarnell, sons of Elijah Yarnell, Co C 120th OVI, were listed as school pupils at the Home in 1900.

[Pension papers] Matthew Morrow was a corporal in Company I who had spent time in prison camp at Tyler, Texas. He died in 1885. This is a letter written by his widow, Jennie Morrow.

Spelling left as it was:

Denver Colorado, 1019 South 9th St, **May 21st / 91**

The Hon Benjamin Harrison
President of the United States.

Dear Sir

On the 12th day of this month I stood in the crowded street to see the vast concorse [sic] of the people pay their respects to the representative Ruler of this worlds greatest Government. I am the widow of Mathew A. Morrow. He was pensioned for disease contracted in the service of this government in the line of his duty of which disease he died. He died more than six years ago. I spent thousands of dollars of my estate nursing him, the governments viligent [sic] soldier, untill[sic] his wonderful manhood, worn to voice went out in death. Over six years ago I made my application to be placed upon the rolls as his widow, from that day to this in sickness, in trials, in losses and disapointment [sic]. I have furnished proofs looked for and wanted to get the pension that was the promise of the Government to the fighting lines of loyal men in blue, on those fearful fields of death, and in prison pens. My husband was thirteen months in prison at Tyler Texes [sic]. General you have not forgotten [sic] the private soldiers who made your command and other commands in all those grand armies. Mr. President as I seen you I did not believe you would forget his widow growing old, unable to do the labor of former years. Deceased. Absolute want nerves me to address you Mr. President. Once too General of the marching and fighting men. Commander in chief of those people that you have seen from one ocean to the other. Who at your command would protect the lands over which you have passed from wrong and outrage. No word (but from the assured justness of your great heart would induce me) to write you. For I am only one of the millions that seen you to honor you in the long and tiresome journey. Comes nearer to call you General I am your humble petitioner. I pray you for justice the fullfillment [sic], of the Governments promise to the widow. As well of the private soldier.

Very Respectfully

Subscribed Mrs. Jennie Morrow
Application for Pension No 332.732
address. No 1019 South 9th st
Denver Colo.

[The National Tribune, 8 March 1906, page 3]

"Return of the Rebel Flags. Comrade J. Bear, Co. H, 120th Ohio, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, writes to enter his protest against the return of the rebel flags to the men who carried them in the war of the rebellion. He says he protests 'without hesitation or equivocation,' and characterizes the return of the captured flags as 'a gross insult to all old soldiers who have one drop of patriotic American blood coursing through their veins, and who so freely shed their blood to maintain the life of the Nation in the '60s.'

The writer says he has in his possession a brass spear-head that he took from a rebel flagstaff in Texas, and he adds that 'perhaps Congress would like to vote to send it, too, across Mason and Dixon's line.'

Comrade Bear says he will never get tired of reading The National Tribune, and adds, 'long may it

wave all over this land of the free and home of the brave.'

'The two charts you sent me,' he concludes, 'came in fine shape. I had them framed, and gave one to each of my boys as birthday presents, and I am glad to inform you they were appreciated by the receivers.' "

This may be the charts that Mr. Bear ordered.

The National Tribune, 13 Sep 1906, page 6:

[Army Charts](#)

"Each Chart contains a careful epitome of the histories of that particular Army and of its component Corps. Also, a chronology of its more important battles and engagements. A great deal of accurate history is compressed into a comparatively small space, where it can be read at a glance. It has fine half-tone portraits of Army commanders and Corps Commanders set upon a beautiful embellishment of the National Colors. It is printed artistically and upon fine, heavy paper, suitable for framing."

"These Charts are not for sale. Any comrade renewing his subscription, or any new subscriber, sending \$1 in payment for a year's subscription, may have his choice of any one of the eight charts as a premium. State plainly what Chart is wanted, and give full name, company, regiment and corps, in order that the certificate may be filled in correctly. If your regiment served in more than one Army, you can, if you prefer, leave the selection of the proper Chart to the national tribune. In this case you will get the Chart of the Army in which your regiment saw the most service. The Charts are mailed in stout tubes--not folded."

The choice of Army for the 120th OVI would have been the [Army of the Tennessee](#).

[The National Tribune, 23 Dec 1909, page 8]

"The Ex-Prisoners. Editor National Tribune: It does seem to me that the time has now come when some definite and certain action should be taken by Congress to in some measure recompense the ex-Union prisoners for their sacrifices and sufferings. Ever since they returned, some 43 years ago, they have been at a disadvantage because of those trials and disabilities endured behind the enemy's stockades. The country was saved, the Flag was maintained and great prosperity has come to the land; but, as a rule, the ex-prisoners have had very little share in this. May we not justly appeal to Congress and a grateful people for some compensation to those who suffered all but death and have since borne patiently the trial of their faith and patriotism? Surely it is time they should be remembered. ___ W. E. Montgomery, Co. A, 120th Ohio, Macon, Mo."

[Wooster Daily News, 2 Aug 1918, page 6]

"Capt. Taylor Favors Young. Capt. J. B. Taylor, chairman of the local board of Wayne county, today forwarded to Senator Atlee Pomerene the following letter:

Wooster, Ohio, Aug. 1, 1918. Hon. Atlee Pomerene, U. S. Senator, Canton, Ohio.

My dear Senator:

I assume that I do not need any introduction to you, but as I am going to ask you to send a copy of this letter to the Hon. Julius Kahn, M. C., the real head of the military committee, you can give him some assurance that my experience would indicate that I know what I am talking about.

I notice that you are opposed to including any draftees under the age of 21 years, and if I can give you any facts which might otherwise influence your opinion, or sentiment, in this matter, I will feel repaid for my effort.

You will recall that I entered the army for three years service, in the summer of 1862, in the 120th Ohio Volunteers, and that my Regiment throughout the opening of the Mississippi was in the same division of which your Uncle Joel Pomerene was the Chief Operative Surgeon. True when I was helping to recruit the company, of which I became a second lieutenant, I was not yet 22 years of age, yet I went from an Academy, I had organized, and took with me into the service, many of the students and other young men.

I have before me an entire roster of that company as it was mustered into the service at Camp Mansfield, in the summer and autumn of 1862, and I find that the company was one of the smallest of the regiment, with but 91 members. Of these I find that there were 36 who were then 20 years of age or under. 14 over 30 years of age, 39 between 21 and 30 years, and the remaining members were our commissioned officers. Of the above 36, I find that 19 of the company were not over 18 years of age. I hope that I am not losing my modesty when I write you that having started out with one of the smallest companies of the regiment, the most of the companies being recruited to a maximum of 120 members, after we had been in service for six

months, and at which time I had become the captain of the company, my company was the largest company in the regiment, and so continued through the war.

I account for all this because of the fact that I had so large a proportion of young men, or boys, in that company. The older men among the 14, could not stand the exposure or the labor, as could the boys, and were soon mustered out of service on Surgeon's certificate of disability. I found these boys so much more tractable; they learned more rapidly; kept themselves and their clothing tidy and clean; submissive to discipline; did not think that they knew it all, and still willing to be led.

During the service a larger proportion of them were found ready for duty; fewer of them on the sick list, and in battle they were fighters and in the performance of every duty their initiative was in evidence. In the end a larger proportion of them came home, and today the few survivors are chiefly of those who were under 21 years of age, and they have proved to be as good citizens as they were soldiers.

With my army service, and over 50 years in the practice of law, I have spent nearly fifteen months as chairman of the local board, and now feel that I have a right, and it is my privilege to speak in behalf of the boys from 18 or 19 to 21 years of age, and the foregoing is my argument.

All men between 33 and 40, or even 45 should be registered and classified and under control of the boards, and subject to state of national service as occasion might arise.

With my kindest regards, my dear Senator, I am
very truly yours,
James B. Taylor, Chairman Local Board."



[Sketch from the book Battles and Commanders of the Civil War : a graphic and pictorial history prepared directly from the government records in the Departments of War and Statistics, by Frank Leslie and Marcus J. Wright, 1902 and 1906, page 445]

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