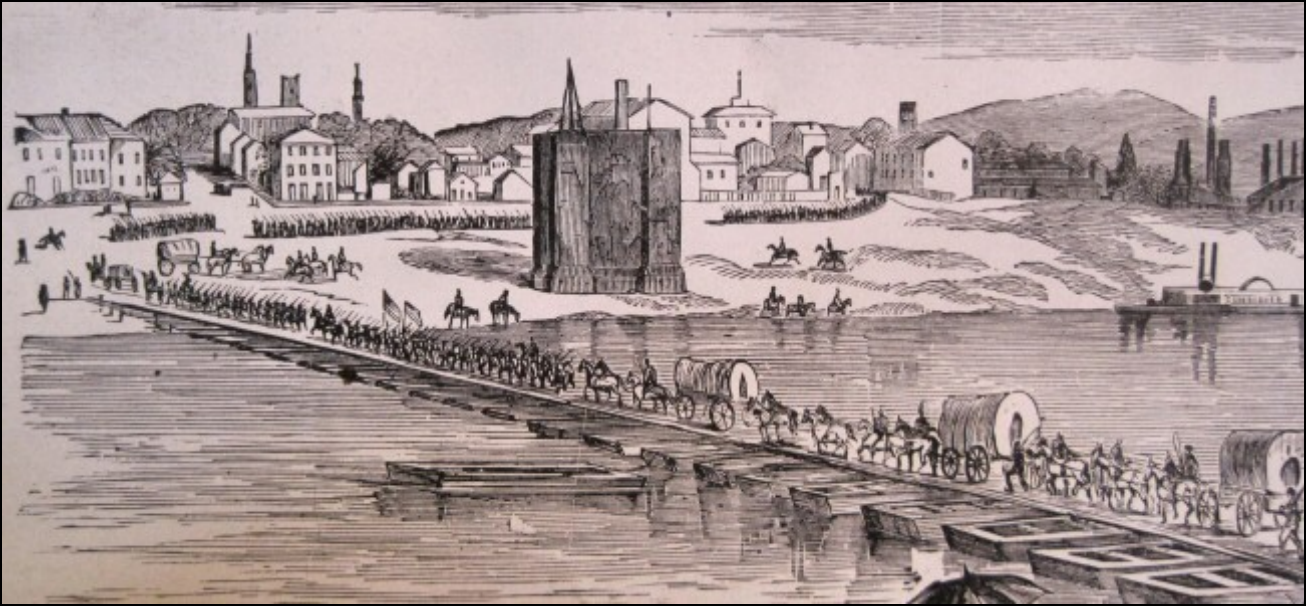


## Camp at Covington



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 191 **Crossing to Covington**

From the Diary of John Summerfield **Petty**, at that time a Private in Company C [Contributed by descendant Dave Robinson]

Sunday, **26 Oct 1862**: "Cincinnati, Ohio The ground is covered with snow which I little expected to see in this place so early in the fall. After a night's rest on the banks of the Ohio we were ordered to fall into line which we did with a will. We marched through the suburbs of Cincinnati until we came to the bridge across the river opposite Covington, Ky. Which is quite a romantic looking town. Here we reported to Gen. Jeff. C. Davis, who ordered us into camp here, called Camp near Covington. Oh! How we rejoiced when ordered to halt before some very nice looking barracks capable of holding 200 men. The bunks are rather narrow to hold 4 persons but will have to obey orders. The country here is remarkably hilly. Covington heights can be easily made impregnable but in the hands of a 'foe' I would not give much for Cincinnati. The climate here is much colder than I expected to find it. I suppose we will find warmer quarters soon. We had no prayer meeting of which I was sorry. We went to bed at 8 o'clock."

"From the 120th Ohio. Camp Near Covington, Ky., **Oct. 27th 1862** available at GenealogyBank Editor Republican--The 120th Regiment **left Camp Mansfield the morning of the 25th** about nine o'clock. The snow was falling briskly, and two hours were consumed in getting aboard the train, yet the men, though wet and cold, were jubilant at the prospect of a trip to Dixie.

The train left Mansfield at eleven o'clock, and reached Cincinnati at midnight, without any accident.

Nine miles from Columbus we saw the wreck of a train which had a few days before met with a casualty. At the time of the disaster, the 112th O. V. I. were aboard and several of the men were killed, and others seriously injured.

We lay on the cars at Cincinnati till morning when we marched to this camp. which is pleasantly situated just out of the city of Covington.

The 33d Indiana, left here yesterday. The 96th Illinois is encamped with us, and thousands of other troops are encamped near. The roads of access to the city are commanded by batteries planted on the surrounding hills which frown defiantly at our enemies, but seem to smile upon us.

We are quartered in good comfortable barracks--all is pleasant and lively--expect soon to move on South.

Yours, G. W. G." [Note: **George W. Gardner**, Co. E]  
[Wooster Republican, published 6 Nov 1862, page 3, available at GenealogyBank]

From the Diary of John Summerfield **Petty**, at that time a Private in Company C [Contributed by descendant Dave Robinson]

[Note: Fort Mitchell in Kentucky was built to help defend Cincinnati.]

Tuesday, 28 Oct 1862: "We had company drill in our barracks and was out on Battalion drill at 2 o'clock. After supper orders came for us to go out on 'picket.' After the hardest marching I ever did we came to the numerous batteries & relieved the guard. I was one of the fortunate 'twenty-two' left to guard the guns of Fort Mitchell one of the highest elevations around Cincinnati. The 96th Illinois had charge of it when we came. They gave us all the necessary information & some unnecessary. They are a fine set of boys. I shall long remember my first night on picket. Torrence and Sigler & I were together."

Wednesday, 29 Oct 1862, Fort Mitchell: "There are bright spots even in a soldier's life, and memory will revert to my stay here as one of them in mine. This is the most elevated point and affords the finest views I have ever witnessed. There are seven thirty-pounders or siege rifles at this place and command a scope of country lying on the Covington & Lexington pike ten miles in area. General Buckner's residence lies in the valley a 1/2 mile distant. It is a beautiful place though the handsome [sic] building is burned to the ground. There is great desolation in this country. Splendid mansions tenantless or left in charge of those who take no interest in their welfare. There is scarcely a fence to be seen. Agriculture belongs to the things 'that were.' "

From diary of Henry S. Sherman, Sgt. Major, Co B. [Nephew of Gen. Wm. T. Sherman] courtesy of David Sherman Carter, descendant of Henry Sherman.

### **1 Nov 1863**

"....a crowd of Tennessee refugees & parts of Kentucky soldiers came into camp numbering about 300 men. They are a rather hardy set of men and somewhat demoralized judging from their appearance. They are all for the Union come what may. Met a pretty sharp fellow among them. Rather inclined to be witty. Says the only sharp thing about him are his teeth. Confesses that they are pretty sharp & could very easily make a hole in a loaf of bread."

"From Company G, 120th Ohio, Covington Barracks, KY, **Nov. 7, 1862**"

The regiment is located one-fourth of a mile south-east of Covington, and about the same distance from Newport, twenty rods west of the Licking River. It is certainly a pleasant country here amidst the Covington heights.--We have very good quarters here, better than we had in Camp Mansfield.

Our regiment furnishes three hundred men each day for guard duty, one hundred to guard the fords, bridges, and magazine in Covington, one hundred to guard the batteries near here, and one hundred to guard the Camp. The 96th Illinois regiment was quartered here when we came, they left for Lexington a few days afterwards.

The monotony of camp life was broken the other day by the appearance of about four hundred East Tennessee Refugees. They are about to join the Union army, under General Morgan, of Cumberland Gap. To look upon their emaciated forms, their tattered garments, to listen to their tales of persecutions, cause a man possessed with patriotic blood, to convulsively grasp his weapon and mutter revenge.

"The health of the regiment is remarkably good, there being only five or six men sick in the hospital. We are fortunate in having a Medical Staff composed of gentlemen who take an interest in the sanitary condition of the camp, and health of the men; our regimental Surgeon is not one who considers it beneath the dignity of his position to listen to the complaints of a sick soldier.

Under the discipline and military experience of Col. D. French the regiment is rapidly gaining a proficiency[sic] in drill equal to any regiment in the service. Our Lieutenant Colonel has not been with us since our arrival here. He left us in Cincinnati, on leave of absence [to] Chicago. We regret his absence very much, for we have great confidence in his abilities. Our Major, although he does not make any pretensions in regard to military knowledge, yet he had shown that he is possessed of every qualification necessary to make a good officer.

Mr. E. Langley, who has many friends in your town, is still in the regiment. He was drill-master, while in Camp Mansfield, and when the regiment left he enlisted in Company G, as a private, and is now Sergeant. Company G. was raised almost exclusively in Chippewa [township, Wayne Co]. Our

gentlemanly Adjutant Slocum is always ready to perform the arduous duties devolving upon him. He always meets us with a smile, and greets us with pleasure.

It is uncertain how long we will remain here. We are well supplied in every respect to take the tented field, and nothing would please the boys better than the word 'forward,' and we believe that it will be spoken soon.

Yours respectfully, **Loyd N. Meech.**" [Then 1st Lt. Loyd N. Meech of Co G]

[Letter to Wooster Republican newspaper, published Thursday, 13 Nov 1862, page 4 available at GenealogyBank.]

[Wooster Republican, **13 Nov 1862**, page 4 available at GenealogyBank.]

"Capt. Phelan's Co, 120th Regiment. The officers of this company have sent home an allotment role assigning the second installment of the County Bounty. The friends of the members of this company can call on the Treasurer and receive the money.

D. Robison, Jr., Treas. W. C. Mil. Com. [Note: Company H]

From diary of Henry S. Sherman, Sgt. Major, Co B. [Nephew of Gen. Wm. T. Sherman]  
21 Nov 1863

"Left Covington Barracks at 9 A. M. Marched to River & embarked (three companies) in the New Duntush [steamer] for Memphis."

22 Nov

"Changed our boat for the Fort Wayne [steamer], a much larger one, but not nearly as pleasant."

From Capt. Eason's Company, Covington Landing, On Board The Steamer Ft. Wayne, **November 23d, 1862.**

Dear Republican: -- The 120th Ohio received marching orders on last Wednesday, the 19th. We were ordered to prepare four days' rations and on Friday at 11 o'clock left Covington Barracks, marched to the river, and went on board the boats, where we have remained ever since in consequence of damages received by one of the boats which had to be repaired. Our destination is believed to be Memphis, Tenn., but nothing is known certainly. While I am writing the teams are coming on board, and we will doubtless be off soon. The health of the regiment is good at present, and all are lively in prospect of a ride on the river. It was Sabbath, but no signs of a day of rest can be detected. While we occupied Covington barracks over a thousand East Tennessee refugees came there for protection, all of which have joined the army.

On Friday, the 14th inst, the 16th and 42d Ohio arrived here on their way to Memphis.-- They remained here until Sunday afternoon. Our regiment was marched down in companies to see them. The boys of Wayne seemed much rejoiced to see their friends and fellow soldiers from their own county.

If you hear of the 120th being in battle, I hope you will hear of its doing credit to itself and honor to the State that furnished it.

Yours, G. W. G.

[Note: George W. Gardner, Co. E.]

[Published in Wooster Republican, 27 Nov 1862, page 3 available at GenealogyBank.]

**Had not yet left Covington when this was written.** [Published **27 Nov 1862** available at GenealogyBank]

Letter from James B. Taylor, 2nd Lieut. From the 120th Ohio]

(To) "E. Foreman - Dear Sir:-

To fulfill a promise made you on our departure from Wooster, as well as to afford the kind friends of the 120th the pleasure of hearing from us, I have seated myself amidst the noise and tumult occasioned by the preparations which are being made for a move, to write you "a wee small letter."

Under such circumstances my epistle must necessarily be disconnected.

"Perhaps it may turn out a song,

Perhaps turn out a sermon."

You have doubtless heard that we left Camp Mansfield--that we came to Covington and have been guarding the city and fortifications against an approaching enemy, who is yet far distant--that we are comfortably quartered in good barracks &c. None of this would be news to your readers. The

health of the regiment is tolerably good, no cases of serious illness, yet many are afflicted with "mumps." --

The prospects of a move soon clears the hospital. One week ago we received marching orders for Memphis, expected to leave the next day. The order was subsequently countermanded, but to-day was again issued. We leave to-morrow morning. **The boys are exceedingly tired of Covington, and as anxious to leave.** Being well acquainted with the history of the 16th Ohio, the boys greatly feared that we would be sent in the direction of Bowling Green. By the way we had the extreme pleasure of meeting the 16th on 1st Saturday. DeCoursey's whole Brigade lay here from Friday evening until Sabbath. They left here for Louisville. They received their pay on their way down from the Kanawha Valley. ---

The boys were in fine spirits, and, as ever ready for fight. The 120th knows but little about war, nothing more than to lie on pine boards in warm barracks, live on good rations, stand guard and drill three or four hours per day. We will soon experience the reality, and in my next I may perhaps have a different picture to paint. We entered the army "for better or for worse," we have had the better, hence we will wait patiently for the "worse."

In one of your last papers I see that Capt. Downing has furnished you with a list of the names of his company. I herewith send you the names of company H, which you may publish if you deem expedient. Our 1st Lieutenant Bryan Grant, has not been with the regiment since we left Camp Mansfield, nor have we heard from him, suppose he is unable to join the regiment. *[The Roster of Ohio Soldiers shows nothing listed for Bryan Grant under "remarks," so there is no information about him.]*

I will write again when we will have marched to Memphis.

Truly yours,

Lieut. J. B. Taylor" *[Company H was then listed. Of note, Isaac S. Mylar was listed as Teamster and Charles E. Miller, as Drummer.*

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*[Advertisement in Wooster Republican, 27 Nov 1862, page 3 available at GenealogyBank]*

"PACKING DEPOT FOR SOLDIERS! 'AT THE ARCADOME.' We will pack. Goods and ship regularly to the 16th, 102d, and 120th regiments. No provisions will be packed as they will not be worth the charges when they are received.

All charges on goods must be prepaid, as the Express Company will not receive them unless they are prepaid.

We have in store a large stock of BUCKSKIN GLOVES, WOOLEN HOSE, WOOLEN DRAWERS, WOOLEN UNDERSHIRTS, KNIT COATS.

Paper and Envelopes, Port Folios, Gold Pens, and many other things that would be desirable for soldiers at patriotic prices. - You that sit by your comfortable firesides, think of your poor soldier boy standing guard, then ask yourselves, what can I send him to make him comfortable.

J. H. BAUMGARDNER & CO."

*[The Archadome was on East Liberty street on the south side next to what is now the Gallery in the Vault. Contributed by Mike Franks.]*





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 425.

Aron Z. Sinsheimer and Joseph Speigel were sutlers who provided products for the soldiers to purchase. Sinsheimer moved to San Luis Obispo, CA, after the war and was in the grocery business.

Joseph Speigel, brother of Col. Speigel of the 120th, eventually began the Spiegel catalogue business in Chicago. Sinsheimer, Speigel, and another sutler named Lewis Burger were captured on 3 May 1864 along with the 120th at Snaggy Point and spent time in Camp Ford prison camp near Tyler, TX, until 22 May 1865.

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