

Company A, 120th OVI



Photo Credit: Bill Miller at [Find a Grave](#)

DOWNING, Joseph H. 12 Aug 1862
Captain Downing was age 39 when he entered service.
He resigned 18 Feb 1863.

Father:

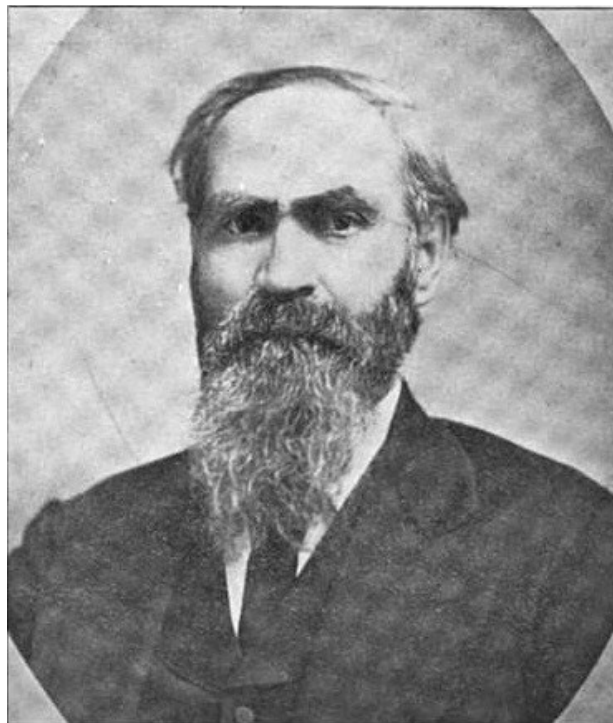
Mother:

Birth: 21 Sep 1821 [date calculator], Belmont Co OH
Marriage: Elizabeth Campbell DOUGLASS 15 Oct 1850
Death: 1 Aug 1879
Cemetery: Wooster Cemetery, Wayne County OH
[Note: 57 y, 10 m, 10 d]

Pension Index: Joseph H DOWNING, A 120th OH Inf.
Widow, Elizabeth DOWNING, filed in Ohio in 1884 Feb
4, Application 312632; no Certificate.

Portrait from History of the Lawyers of Wayne County,
Ohio, from 1812 to 1900 by Benjamin Douglas, 1900
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"He possessed an excellent English education, and was
one of the most successful school teachers in Wayne
county."



History of Wayne County Ohio by Ben Douglass
Pg 444 "Joseph H. Downing, a native of Belmont county,
Ohio, removed with his parents to Wayne county in the
autumn of 1826. The following season the family settled
upon a farm in Wayne Township, three miles north-east
of Wooster, where the subject of this sketch remained
with his parents until their deaths in 1838 and 1839."
[Note: there was a William Downing in Pultney Twp,
Belmont Co OH in 1830 census.]

Page 445 "In 1843 he entered the Canaan Academy,
where he profitably devoted two years to the study of
Latin, philosophy, mathematics [sic], etc., his
determination to take the full collegiate course only being
thwarted by a general failure of health."

"In the year 1848 he commenced the study of law, under
the care and direction of Hon. Ezra Dean, of Wooster. In
1853 he was elected to the Ohio Legislature, and was a
member of the House of Representatives during the
session of 1854 -- there being but one session during his
term. From the spring of 1854 to 1860 he was engaged
in teaching school, and during the latter year he was
admitted to the practice of law, by the Supreme Court of
the State. In May of that year he opened an office in
Wooster and began practice, forming a partnership with
Ben Douglass."

"In August, 1862, he was appointed Captain by the
Governor of the State, and commissioned to recruit a
company under one of the startling calls, for '300,000
more.' In seven days precisely from the date of his

JOSEPH H. DOWNING.

commission, his company was full and subject to orders. On the 29th of August, 1862, he took his company to 'Camp Mansfield,' Ohio, and on the 14th of October he was mustered into the United States service, as Captain of Company 'A,' 120th O.V.I."

After the battles of Chickasaw Bayou and Arkansas Post: "As a consequence of exposure and subjection to the malarial influences which decimated regiments, brigades, and divisions of the army in that locality during the winter of 1862-63, he became prostrated and so seriously diseased as to render him wholly unfit for military duty, whereupon, in the spring of 1863 he was honorably discharged from the service. He returned home, wasted and emaciated; a mental and physical wreck; a living, breathing skeleton; with an imperfect recognition of his own family and friends, and by physicians and all who saw him, pronounced a hopelessly prostrated and doomed man." [But he returned to health enough to reenter his profession, although he was bothered by malaria for the rest of his life.]

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1866 appointed to Court of Common Pleas, 3rd subdivision of the 6th Judicial District of State of OH.

1872, elected Judge of Probate Court Wayne County. 1872 - 1876

Married Elizabeth C. DOUGLASS, daughter of James DOUGLASS, of Plain Twp, 14 Oct 1850. Children Mary A. wife of William LIDDELL; Edward; and William.

"He stands six feet and one inch in height..."

1840 Census, Wayne Twp, Wayne Co OH, William DOWRY, one male 10 under 15, two males 15 to under 20, one male 20 to under 30, one female 15 to under 20, one female 20 to under 30

1850 Census, Wayne Twp, Wayne Co OH, Dwelling 114, Family 114: Paxton DOWNEY, age 24 OH, farmer; Joseph DOWNEY, age 26 OH, farmer; Robert DOWNEY, age 21 OH; Mary A DOWNEY, age 29 OH; Rebecca DOWNEY, age 22 OH.

Wayne County Probate Court record: Joseph H DOWNING married Elizabeth DOUGLASS on 15 Oct 1850 in Wayne County OH.

1860 Census Plain Twp, Wayne County OH, page 265: Joseph DOWNING, age 36 OH, attorney and farmer; Elizabeth, age 32 PA; Mary, age 8; James, age 6.

1870 Census Third Ward Wooster City, Wayne County OH: Joseph H DOWNING, age 47 OH, a judge and lawyer; Elizabeth, age 41 PA; Mary A, age 18 OH; Edward C, age 8 OH; William W, age 5 OH.

[Rutherford B Hayes site](#): Joseph died 1 Aug 1879 and is buried at Wooster Cemetery, Wayne County OH. Born in Belmont co OH.][[Gravesites of Veterans Buried in Wayne County Ohio: In Memoriam](#)]

Canton Repository, Friday, 8 Aug 1879, pg 12 [Available at GenealogyBank]

"Wooster Death of an Old Citizen Wooster, Aug. 2. - Judge Joseph C. Downing, one of the oldest and most prominent members of the Wayne county Bar, died from congestion of the bowels and liver yesterday afternoon. He was sick but little over three days. He has been a resident of Wooster for 52 years. Starting in life penniless, by his faithful and untiring industry and his firm integrity he has won a position of influence and honor in the community. He has been elected a member of the State Legislature, Judge of the Common Pleas and Probate Judge, and in each office was a faithful and efficient officer. He was widely known in the county, and everybody mourns his loss as the loss of an esteemed friend."

1880 Census, Wooster, Wayne County, OH: Elizabeth DOWNING, age 52 PA, father born PA, mother born Ireland; Edward, son, age 18 OH, at school, single, father born OH, mother born PA; William, son, age 15 OH, at school, father born OH, mother born PA.

Elizabeth died 1884.