

Company B, 120th OVI



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

FIRST, James M. 4 Aug 1862

Sergeant First was 31 when he entered service. He was appointed 1st Sergeant 10 Sep 1862; reduced 9 Dec 1862; discharged 24 Mar 1863 on Surgeon's certificate of disability. [He reenlisted in Company H, 163rd OH Infantry on 2 May 1864 and became second lieutenant.]

Father: Jeremiah FIRST

Mother: Ruth Ann CRITCHFIELD

Birth: 11 Dec 1831, PA

Marriage: Sarah VANSCOYCE 5 Dec 1852

Death: 4 Dec 1909 Lucas, Richland Co OH

Cemetery: IOOF Cemetery, Lucas, OH

Relationship: Brother in law of Peter Vanscoyce of Company B, 120th OVI

Pension Index: James M. FIRST, Co H 163rd OH Inf, filed for invalid pension, 2 Jan 1875, Application 198647, Certificate 175631.

Centennial Biographical History of Richland Co OH, by Abraham J. Baughman [at Google Books], Lewis Publishing, 1901, pp170 to 172:

Parents were Jeremiah FIRST and Ruth M. CRITCHFIELD. Family came to Ohio when James was four weeks old. They located in Holmes Co, then Knox Co and then in Richland Co in 1846 at Madison Twp. They lived there for three years before moving to Lucas. James had brother Amos, 3rd OH Vol Cav; Caroline [William SWITZER]; Elizabeth [William A. HULIT.] James apprenticed to John MARSHALL in Lucas learning shoemaking and after two years opened his own shop in Lucas.

James joined Company B, 120th OVI, and was sent to Covington barracks in KY, then to Tennessee where the regiment was assigned to the 13th Army Corps in Sherman's division. He participated at the rear of Vicksburg, at Arkansas Post, and at Young's Point, LA. Then was discharged on disability and returned to Lucas. He joined again in Company H, 163rd OH Infantry on 2 May 1864 and became second lieutenant. He served for 100 days and was honorably discharged.

Back in Lucas, he studied Law, was elected Mayor of Lucas for 7 yrs.

James married Miss Sarah Van Scoyoc in 1852. They had 9 children. Three, Elizabeth, Lincoln, and Van Scoyoc were deceased by the publishing of the book. Still living were: Alice [Franklin GARD] of Washington; John C., electrician; Hattie [Dr. John F. CULLER] of Lucas; Ellsworth E.; Clara [Harry GATES] of Shelby.

History of Richland County Ohio, from 1808 to 1908: Also Biographical Sketches of Prominent Citizens of the County, Volume 2; S.J. Clarke Publishing Company 1908

Pages 662 - 663

"He participated in the battles of Vicksburg, Chickasaw Bluffs, Arkansas Post, and afterward returned to Young's Point, Mississippi, for the winter. While in winter quarters he aided in the construction of what was

known as the Dutch Canal. It was never completed, and in fact was started more to keep a multitude of restless men busy than for practical purposes. After serving for eighteen months of his three years' term of enlistment Mr. First was honorably discharged on account of physical [pg 663] disability and returned home to recuperate, but not being satisfied to remain quietly at home while the Union was in danger he returned to service in the spring of 1864, and was commissioned second lieutenant of company H of the One Hundred and Sixty-Third Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He was discharged with that rank in December, 1864. It was not wise that he return to the army, for four years elapsed before he was able to do any manual labor on account of disability brought on by the exposure and hardships of war.

"After recuperating sufficiently to enable him to work in any way Mr. First passed the civil service examination and became railway mail clerk, remaining in the government employ for eight years on the run from Sandusky to Newark and from Sandusky to Wheeling, West Virginia. Finally his health became so impaired that he was forced to give up strenuous labor altogether."

Children with Sarah were: Elizabeth, John, Alice [Mrs. Frank Gard], Harriet, [Mrs. Dr. Culler], Ellsworth; Clara Barton [Mrs. Harry Gates], and Joseph H.

"He was mayor of the village of Lucas for seven years; was also notary public for a number of years, and has been a member of the council at different times."

From James Tracey Thanks, James!

Census----1850 Monroe Twp, Richland County, OH p 676: Jeremiah FIRST 34 PA laborer: Ruth Ann 35 PA; James 19 OH; Caroline 13 OH; Amos 11 OH; Elizabeth 8 OH

James' father remarried in 1858.

Census----1860 Monroe Twp, Richland County, OH p 305 : Jeremiah First 45 PA Carpenter 100 75; Mary A. 31 PA; William Newman 10; Albert 1

James, having been married in 1852 was already on his own at the time of the 1860 census:

JAMES M.⁴ FIRST (*JEREMIAH*³, *PHILIP (FRANKS)*², *JACOB*¹), son of Jeremiah FIRST and Ruth Ann CRITCHFIELD, was born December 11, 1831 in East Union Twp, Wayne County, OH, and died December 04, 1909 in OH. He married SARAH VANSCOYCE December 05, 1852 in Richland County, OH. She was born April 17, 1836, and died December 09, 1904 in OH.

Census----1860 Monroe Twp, Richland County, OH p 302: James M. First 28 PA Shoemaker; Sarah 24 OH; Elizabeth 7 OH; John C. F. 5 OH; Mary E. 3 OH; Harriet 2/12 OH

James and Sarah First are buried at ODD Fellows (I.O.O.F.) Cemetery, Monroe Twp, Richland County, OH

1870 Census, Monroe Twp, Richland County OH, page 250: J M FIRST, age 38 PA, mayor and insurance agent; Sarah, age 34 OH; Elizabeth, age 16 OH; John, age 14 OH; Mary, age 12 OH; Hattie, age 10 OH; Ellsworth, age 8 OH.

1880 Census, Village of Lucas, Richland County, OH, page 118: James M FIRST, age 48 OH, insurance Agt; Sarah, wife, age 44 OH; John C F, son, age 24 OH, works on RR; Alice M, daughter, age 22 OH; Hattie, daughter, age 20 OH, school teacher; Ellsworth, son, age 18 OH, works on RR; Clara B, daughter, age 9 OH; James A, son, age 7 OH.

1883 Pensioners, Richland Co., OH, p. 292: Certificate #175,6321. James M. FIRST, Mansfield P.O., chronic diarrhea, receives \$15.00 monthly, has been receiving pension since Oct 1880. [Contributed by Kerry Kimberly]

1890 Veterans Schedule, Monroe Twp., Richland Co., OH, p. 6, Line 22, house 36, family 42: James M. FIRST, 163 Ohio Inf, 2 May 1864-10 Sept 1864. Disability: chronic diarrhea and piles. [Contributed by Kerry Kimberly]

1900 Census, Lucas Village, Monroe Twp, Richland County, OH, page 62: James M FIRST, age 68 PA, born dec 1831, married 47 yrs, capitalist, parents born PA; Sarah, wife, age 67 OH, born Apr 1836, married 47 yrs, 9 children/6 still living; parents born OH; James A, son, age 27 OH, born May 1873, divorced, RR laborer.

Death record in Ohio: File # 63870 James M FIRST died 4 Dec 1909 in Lucas, Richland County, OH. Born 11 Dec 1831 in PA. Widowed at time of death. Occupation shoemaker. Buried at IOOF Cem, Lucas, OH. Father Jeremiah FIRST. Mother's name unknown. Informant Hattie CULLER, of Lucas OH.