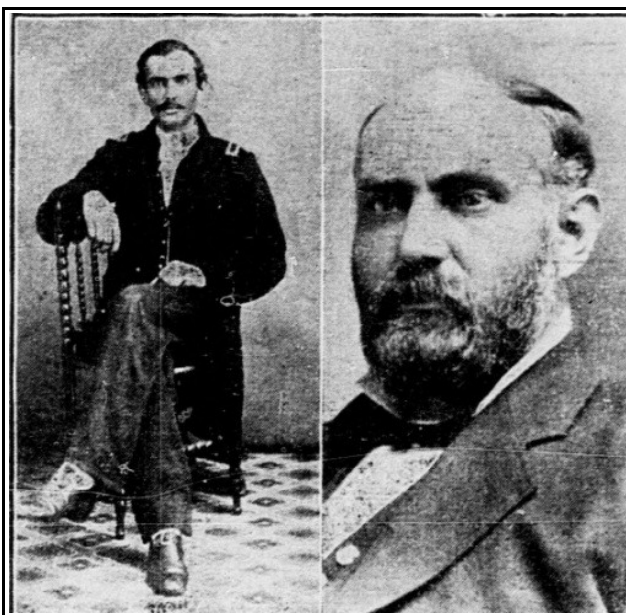
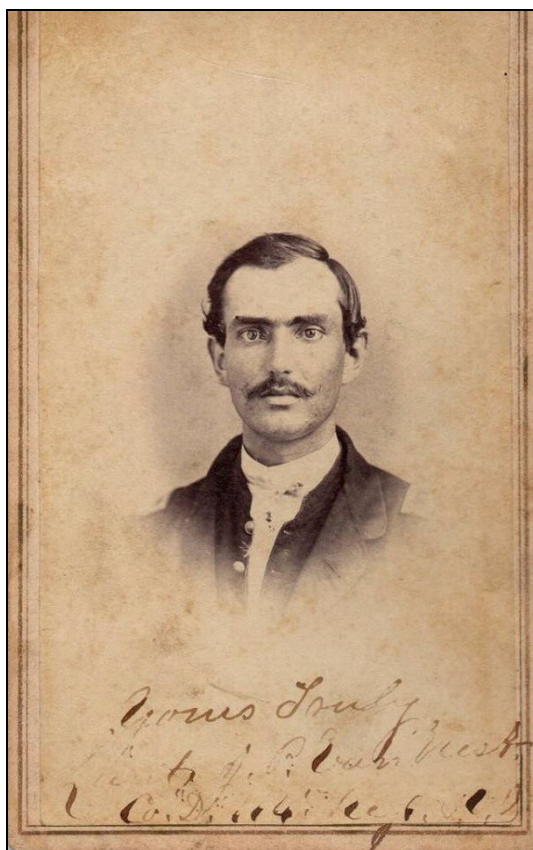


## Company F, 120<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry



J. P. Van Nest, *The National Tribune*, 17 Jan 1901  
Civil War photo and later VANNEST, Joseph P. 22 Aug 1862  
[Van Nest]

Portrait contributed by Nina Rippee.

1st Sergeant Joseph P. Vannest was age 21 when he entered service. He was appointed from private on 17 Apr 1863; transferred to Co. D, 114th OVI on 27 Nov 1864. Appointed to 1st Sergt from private April 17, 1863; transferred to Co. D, 114th OVI 27 Nov 1864. promoted to 2nd Lieut. 28 Dec 1864. Mustered out 29 June 1865 at Columbus, O by order of War Dept.

Father: John VANNEST

Mother: Sarah WEILER

Birth: ??6 August 1841, Rowsburg, OH

Marriage: Mary GARDNER, 3 Oct 1861, Ashland Co OH

Death: 23 Apr 1905

Cemetery: Wooster Cemetery, Wayne Co OH, Section 18 grave 6

Pension Index: Joseph P. VAN NEST, Co D 114th and Co F 120th applied for an invalid pension 2 July 1890, Application 790437, Certificate 931576, filed in Ohio. Widow Mary VAN NEST applied 14 June 1905, Application 830011, Certificate 600423, filed in Oklahoma. Pension Card: Joseph P. VAN NEST, Co F 120th OH Inf, Co D 114th OH Inf. Invalid applied 2 July 1890. Joseph died 1905. Widow applied.

History of Wayne County Ohio, B. F. Bowen & Company, 1910]

Pg 560 Van Nest was severely wounded by a fragment of shell at the battle at Vicksburg; wife Mary E. Gardner; children John of Wooster, M. M., Carrie wife of William L. Derr of Cleveland; Gertrude, Maud M, widow of John Griffith, living in Woo; Ellen; Charles W. of Woo; Mabel, unmarried. Son M. M. was Mayor of Wooster, elected 1903, 05 and 07

1850 Census, Perry Twp, Ashland Co OH, Dwelling 153, Family 153: John VANNEST, age 35 PA, saddler; Sarah, age 32 PA; Cathrine A, age 10 OH; Joseph P, age 9 OH; Mary F, age 5 OH; Roseanna, age 3 OH; Wiltienn? BUCHANNAN, age 17 OH, saddler.

1860 Census, Rowsburg, Perry Twp, Ashland Co OH, Dwelling 617, Family 617: John VAN NEST, age 45 PA, saddler; Sarah, age 42 PA; Catherine Ann, age 20 OH; Joseph P, age 18 OH; Mary F, age 15 OH; Roseannah, age 13 OH; Lucretia, age 9 OH; Arabell, age 6 OH; Emma F, age 4 OH. [1870 Census, Perry Twp, Ashland

Co OH, Dwelling 125, Family 118: John VAN NEST, age 55 PA, harness maker; Sarah, age 52 PA; Catherine, age 29 OH; Lucretia, age 18 OH; Annabelle, age 16 OH; Emma F, age 14 OH; Oretta, age 9 OH.] [Ohio, County Marriages: Etta VAN NEST, of Rows, married Simon R. KLINE, 18 Jan 1898, Ashland Co OH. Her parents: John VAN NEST and Sarah WEILER. His parents: John Kline and Jane SHEILDS. Simon was a farmer in Jackson Twp.]

Ashland County Data Files marriages: Joseph D VANNEST married Mary GARDNER on 3 Oct 1861.

1870 Census, Perry Twp, Ashland Co OH, Dwelling 145, Family 137: Joseph P. VANNEST, age 28 OH, harness maker; Mary E, age 27 Pa; John G, age 8 OH; Manas M. [male], age 5 OH; Carrie, age 3 OH.

1880 Census, Liberty St, Wooster, 4th Ward, Wayne Co OH, Dwelling 14, Family 14: Jno P. VAN NEST, age 39 OH, parents born PA, insurance agent/life; Mary E, wife, age 37 PA; Jno G, son, age 15 OH; Marquis M, son, age 15 OH; Carrie B, daughter, age 15 OH; Gertrude, daughter, age 9 OH; Mary M, daughter, age 4 OH; Ella B, daughter, age one OH; James, brother, age 20 OH, parents born PA, brother.

The National Tribune, 1 Sep 1887, page 4:

"Lieut. J. P. Van Nest, of Wooster, O., late of the 120<sup>th</sup> Ohio, celebrated his 46<sup>th</sup> birthday in an elaborate manner on Saturday, Aug. 6. A large number of his old comrades and their ladies were present. The presents were handsome. Serg't W. E. Montgomery, of Macon City, Mo., sent a large portrait of Col. M. M. Speigel, which was elegantly framed. The Lieutenant also carries a very pretty gold-headed ebony cane, appropriately engraved, which was presented to him by his old comrades-in-arms present through Capt. J. B. Taylor. Letters of regret were received by Lieut. Van Nest from old army friends in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Mansfield, Ashland, Loudonville, Orrville, Richmond, Va., Indianapolis and Elkhart, Ind., Houston and Industry, Tex., Chicago, New York city, St. Louis, Washington city and other places. The supper, prepared by Mrs. Van Nest and daughters, Carrie and Gertie, was splendid, as were all the features of the celebration. In the evening a large number of young folks assembled and enjoyed themselves 'hugely.' It was long after midnight when the company reluctantly dispersed."

Cleveland Plain Dealer, Saturday, 31 Oct 1896, page 5:

"To the 120th Ohio Veterans. [from J. P. Van Nest]

Editor Plain Dealer--Sir: The Cincinnati Commercial Tribune contains a letter dated Port Townsend, Wa., Oct. 11, asking the publication of the following address:

'To the Survivors of the One Hundred and Twentieth Ohio Infantry Regiment: At Thompson's Hill, Miss., called sometimes the battle of Bayou Pierre, Gen. Osterhaus sent me to you with the following instructions, in substance:

' " ' Captain, the one Hundred and twentieth Ohio, a new regiment, is in bad shape at the front. The officers and men are experiencing their first battle. You go, take charge of it; put it in fighting trim, and when I come close enough to aid you strike the enemy hard, and tell the boys not to let my two Indiana regiments, which I will bring into battle, gain all the laurels.' "

'Do you remember the dusty looking cavalry captain who came to you on May 1, 1863, and what you did that day? Only one of you, Lieut. Buchwalter, late of Xenia, O., did I see after that battle, but I now send, from the new but important state of Washington, words of cheer and greeting to you all. I am getting too old to lead, but may I not request you, one and all (no stragglers), to aid our comrade, William McKinley, in this struggle, fully as important as the one we were in at Thompson's Hill?

'Neither misfortune, want nor suffering can ever justify any of us in casting a ballot for the party of disorder, dishonor and repudiation. [McKinley was the Republican candidate] I would like to again impress the words of Gen. Osterhaus upon each man of this brave regiment: 'Do not let the Indianians gain all the laurels.'

R.H. Ballinger 'Ex-Captain of Co. A, Third Illinois Cavalry.' [end of Ballinger letter]

I [J. P. Van Nest responds] am rather inclined to think that no such person exists as this 'ex-captain,' but if such person does exist I do not hesitate one moment in pronouncing his story untrue. Gen. Osterhaus and Col. Spiegel, who commanded the one Hundred and Twentieth O. V. I. at the battle of Thompson's Hill, were especially warm personal (German) friends, both able and experienced officers. Now, old veterans of the One Hundred and Twentieth, do you believe that Gen. Osterhaus would send this 'ex-captain' of the cavalry to supplant his especial and skilled friend, Col. Spiegel, and take from him his command in the face of the enemy on the field of battle? Never! And now, old veterans of the One Hundred and Twentieth, you who survive that terrible fight at Thompson's Hill on May 1, 1863, and were present upon that bloody field, as I was, do you not know full well that no such 'dusty looking cavalry captain' came near us on that day, or interfered with, in any way, the command of our commander, Col. Spiegel? You also know that no such word as that purporting to have been sent through this 'ex-captain' to the regiment by Gen. Osterhaus, 'that the officers and men of the One Hundred and Twentieth were experiencing their first battle,' etc, could have been sent, for Gen. Osterhaus himself commanded our regiment at the battle of Arkansas Post the 11th of January before, which was our second battle, and this battle at Thompson's Hill was our third? Our first battle was

fought on the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth days of December, 1862, at Chickasaw bluffs. So the 'ex-captain' falsified the record, not, perhaps, intentionally; nevertheless, his political masters directed him so to do.

For the much needed information of this 'ex-captain' and his political masters, in all charity, I inform him that in my humble judgment more than three-fourths of the surviving veterans of the One Hundred and Twentieth regiment, O.V.I., will cast their votes, without dictation of suggestion from any 'ex-captain' or McKinley political hireling, in accordance with our constitutional rights, for that grand, un-bought patriot and statesman, William Jennings Bryan. [*Democrat candidate*]

J. P. Van Nest, Ex-Lieutenant One Hundred and Twentieth Regiment, O.V.I. "

[Note: Richard H. Ballinger 3rd Regiment, IL Cav., Co A. Quartermaster Sergeant. Rank out: Captain did indeed exist.]

1900 Census, 124 West Liberty St, Wooster 4th Ward, Wayne Co OH, Dwelling 181, Family 193: Joseph P. VANNEST, age 58 OH, born Aug 1841, married 38 yrs, parents born PA, fire insurance agt; Mary, wife, age 57 PA, born Dec 1842, married 38 yrs, 8 children/6 still living, parents born PA; Maude, daughter, age 24 OH, single, born Sep 1875; Charley, son, age 17 OH, born Sep 1882; Mabel, daughter, age 15 OH, single, born Feb 1885.

From the History of Wayne County Ohio 1910 published by B.E. Bowen and Company

"J. P. Van Nest was born at Rowsburg, Ohio, and upon taking up a business career entered upon that of insurance in which he was successful. In the spring of 1873 he removed to the city of Wooster, and here continued in the insurance business until his death, which occurred on April 3, 1905. Mr. Van Nest was a public spirited man and took a keen interest in public affairs, serving for two terms as a member of the Wooster city council. Early in the great Rebellion, Mr. Van Nest enlisted for service in the defense of his country's flag, joining the One Hundred and Twentieth Regiment of Ohio Volunteer Infantry, and served three years, taking part in battles were the following: Chickasaw Bayou, December 28-29, 1862; Arkansas Post, January 11, 1863; Thompson's Hill (Port Gibson ), May 1, 1863; siege of Vicksburg, May 18 to July 4, 1863; Big Black River, May 17, 1863; Jackson Miss., July 9-16, 1863; transport "City Belle," near Snaggy Point, Louisiana, May 3, 1864. Mr. Van Nest enlisted as a private, but, by faithful and meritorious service, he retired from the service with the rank of second lieutenant. At the battle of Vicksburg he was severely wounded by a fragment of shell. Prior to entering the military service Mr. Van Nest had followed the trade of harness-maker, but on his return home he gave that up and took up the insurance business. He married Mary E. Gardner, who was a native of Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, as were also her parents. She is still living in Wooster, at the age of sixty-seven years. By her union with Mr. Van Nest she became the mother of the following children: John, of Wooster; M.M., the subject of this sketch; Carrie, the wife of William L. Derr, of Cleveland, Ohio; Gertrude, deceased; Maud M., the widow of John Griffith and living in Wooster; Ellen, deceased; Charles W., of Wooster; Mabel unmarried and remains at home."

Wayne County Democrat, page 6, 26 Apr 1905.....died 23 Apr 1905 [Summary]

The Funeral of Lieut. J. P. Van Nest was held Wednesday afternoon at the family residence on West Liberty street. It was largely attended by relatives, friends and citizens, old soldiers of his regiment, members of Given Post G. A. R. and associated bodies, members of Masonic fraternity and Wooster Commandery of Knights Templar.

The services were under the auspices of the Knights Templar. The singing was by Mrs. J. M. Minier, Miss Cora Hoelzel, Paul Stauffer, and Will Dramer. Rev. S.E. Neikirk, of the Reformed church, assisted by Rev. Dr. H. D. Stauffer [?Henry Stauffer, Co F], first conducted the church services, and then as acting Eminent, Commander, the Impressive ritualistic Templar service.

The tributes of flowers were many and unusually beautiful from relatives, friends and organizations among which were the special pieces from family, Knights Templar, Comrades of the 120th Regiment, Fraternal Order of Eagles, City officers and employees, Rathbone Sisters, Daughters of Veterans, John Baer [Co H] of Appleton, Wisconsin who was a comrade of the 120th, and the Tashmoo Club.

Pallbearers were S H Boyd [?Samuel Boyd Co. I], Geo. A Fisher, George J Schwartz, L R Kramer, David Nice, W I McGlenen. Honorary pallbearers were members of the 120th Regiment: Capt J B Taylor [Company H], Lieut. Mahlon Rouch [Company A and Field & Staff], John R. McKinney [Co A], Albert Smyser [Co D] of Wooster: Capt N Au of Mansfield; David E Foltz [Co A] of Shreve.

"At conclusion of the services a last sad view was taken of the familiar form lying at rest in the flower laden casket. The remains were then placed in the hearse by the acting pallbearers, Sir Knights S. H. Boyd, Geo. A. Fisher, George J. Schwartz, L. R. Kramer, David Nice, W. I. McGlenen; and the honorary pallbearers, all members of the 120<sup>th</sup> Regiment, O. V. I., Capt. J. B. Taylor, Lieut. Mahlon Rouch, John R. McKinney, Albert Smyser, of Wooster; Capt. N. Au, of Mansfield; David E. Foltz of Shreve. The large funeral procession then wended to the cemetery, where with sorrow and solemnity the body was committed to the grave; and he left there to rest where over him will bend the arching sky, as in other days it did in great love when he pitched his tent and lay down, weary and foot sore by the way, or on the battlefield for an hour's sleep."

Out-of-towners present at the funeral: Capt Au [Company I], of Ontario; Wm Ambrose, Mrs. Belle Fisher, Stephen Fisher of Mansfield; Ralph Fisher of Cleveland; John Gardner and wife, Mrs. David Weiler, Mrs. Levi Gardner, Frank Gardner of Rowsburg; Wm Derr of Cleveland; Charles Lessiter of Barberton; Capt Wheeler, Urias Nolan of Creston [Company F]; Lieut Robert Wallace of Loudonville.

Research by Susie Holderfield 2001-2016 [120researcher@gmail.com](mailto:120researcher@gmail.com)  
Main page for the [120<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry](#)