

Study Guide with links for History of the 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry including some letters and diary entries

In all of these files, RIGHT CLICK on the links and tell them to open either in a new window or new tab, Also, understand that links change & pages disappear.

National Tribune articles are quoted here with permission of Stars and Stripes.

Muster Roll records can be found at: openlibrary.org

<https://archive.org/stream/compiledrecordss0160unit#page/n7/mode/2up>



How this research began.....

I was contacted in 2001 by Kerry Day, friend of Dean Montanye who was the owner of the flask pictured here. Dean wanted to know about the original flask owner, James Taylor. As requested, I researched Captain James B. Taylor who had started the Smithville Academy, Smithville, Ohio, just before he joined the war. I became interested in the students who followed Taylor to join in the fight to preserve the Union. My interest grew to include the other men of the regiment. As I researched the men, I began to collect a history of the regiment which grew as great contributors sent me information about their ancestors and even original pension records from the National Archives. I have gathered

together the pieces of that collection here. I expanded the research to include many old sources.

Wooster Republican, Thursday, 8 Sept 1870, page 3, at Wayne County Public Library, Wooster, Ohio. Resolution to complete a history of the regiment. The "historians" were to be Fraunfelter, Captain Jones and Lieut. Rouch. Later in 1871 Col. John F. McKinley was added. In 1881 the list was cut down to Capt Fraunfelter and Capt. B. T. Jones of Akron. Talk of a history continued at the 21st reunion in 1889, but to my knowledge no history was ever written by the men of the 120th.

Chapter 1 Organizing - Camp Mansfield 1862



Men, such as Captain James Taylor [Photo contributed by Nina Bledsoe Rippee], organized companies for the 120th. Taylor organized Company H in Wayne County, Ohio. So, Company H was the first company researched. The others came later as interest grew.

Taylor went to Mansfield, 29 Aug 1862. James left the war at the time of consolidation with the 114th. He went home and studied medicine and the law.



Charles T. Sherman of Mansfield, Richland County OH, was the father of Henry Sherman of Company B. He was appointed Commandant of Camp Mansfield by Governor of Ohio, David Tod. Charles was a United States Judge for the Northern District of Ohio, 1867 - 1873. He was the brother of General Wm T. Sherman and Senator John Sherman.

[Photo contributed by his descendant David S. Carter.]

Compiled records of volunteer Union units is available here for the 120th Ohio.

<https://archive.org/stream/compiledrecordss0160unit#page/n7/mode/2up>

The soldiers were signed up for three years unless sooner discharged. That was dated 17 Oct 1862 by mustering officer, Alex E. Drake, Captain USA.

Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1866

<https://archive.org/details/officialrosterof08ohio/page/240>

Five companies from Wayne County go to Mansfield.

Wooster Republican, OH, 4 Sep 1862, Thursday, page 3, available at Wayne County [Ohio] Public Library or pay site

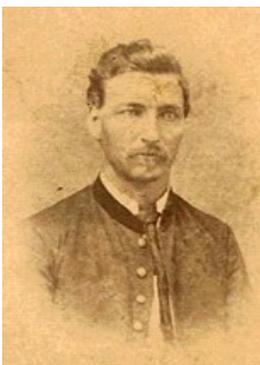
Youngest soldier: Lewis Hull, Co B of Lucas, Monroe Twp, Richland Co OH, age 13.

Oldest soldiers, it is harder to tell who was the oldest: Pvt Charles Cornell, Holmes Co OH. Age 57 ; John Hughes, Co B, Richland Co, age 58; shoemaker Henry F. Peters, Company I, Wayne County, probably about 54, but kept claiming he was 44 when he signed up again in Co B 60th Ohio.

Wooster Republican , 11 Sept 1862, page 3, Wayne County Public Library

Lieut. Col. French of Millersburg, Holmes county Ohio, Major John W. Beekman of Plymouth, Richland county Ohio; Adjutant Willard Slocum of Ashland, Ashland county Ohio; Quartermaster Ezra V. Dean of Wooster, Wayne co OH; Chaplain William Alfred Griffith Emerson of Worthington Twp, Ashland county Ohio. In addition to those officers was Surgeon, Dr. W. W. Taggart of Green township, Wayne county, Ohio. Taggart had to resign November 13, 1862 because of ill health. Byron Stanton took over as Surgeon on December 26, 1862, and eventually served with the 114th OVI upon consolidation with the 120th. "Col. French resides in Millersburg, and is very highly spoken of as a gentleman of talents and much experience, having been in service from the commencement of the war until recently."

Wooster Republican 18 Sep 1862, page 4, Wayne County Public Library or online pay sites: Great description of Camp Mansfield, picnic, and "readiness to march" in letter by George Gardner **written on 10 Sep 1862.**



This photo and letter were contributed by Nina Bledsoe Rippee, descendant of Isaac Mylar.

Wagoner, Isaac Mylar, a farmer of Green Township, Wayne County Ohio, Co H, enlisted in the regiment at age 28. He rose to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. He was wounded at Port Gibson, MS. He finished the war as a 2nd Lieut in the 114th OVI and returned home. Later he moved to Caldwell County, Missouri, where he taught school, farmed, and was township assessor and collector.

September 12, 1862, Friday, excerpts from a letter sent by Isaac Mylar to his friend Elisabeth Stevenson, whom he later married. "Our boys have been pretty well since we have been here except Noah Yoder, Jno Bear, Ben. Norris, and a boy by the name of Venie. They have all been in the

hospital but we attended to them as best we could, and they are all out now and all well except Noah. He is still quite unwell but I hope that he will be well in a few days. The Boys have a regular jubilee in our Barracks to night. They could be heard all ove[r] the camp every one singing his own tune. We have had plenty to eat all the time such as it is. We have plenty of bread meat and potatoes but they are done up in rather a poor shape sometimes for we have a great variety of cooks, but it so happens that they are all of rather an under grade, but what is the difference just so we get home with our lives is all that we care about, but if it should happen to be otherwise we will have one consolation and that is that we died in a good cause. Our countrys prospects appear rather gloomy at present but I still live in hopes that there will be a change before long. The Rebels are now gaining ground every day and of course getting more bold. But I hope ere long that we will have men enough for the field to put an end to this Rebellion."

"I have been on guard but one day since I have been here and that was last Saturday. I came off at six o'clock on Sunday morning. It is an excellent place for meditation. A person can think of almost all that ever happened during the whole period of his existence in a single night. It is the most lonely task that I ever was called to perform. But I still live in hopes that ere long that I will see better days when it will not be necessary to guard soldiers or enemies. Our Camp is situated about ten miles north of the City of Mansfield in a very pleasant place indeed. There is a nice [word left out here] on each side of it and one running through it. Consequently we have an abundance of water of the purest quality." "...every man and woman within ten miles of this camp is doing every thing in their power to get what little money the poor soldiers have. We cannot get to ride to town on a farm waggon even when they are going empty for less than a dime. This whole community is engaged in nothing else than trying to gull [gull=cheating or tricking] soldiers. Such men should be shot before we go south to shoot rebels."

[John Bair and Ben Norris survived the war. Joseph Yoder and the two Venie brothers all died in January 1863.]

United States Pension file, Charles E. Jackson, mother Nancy JACKSON filed. 27 Jan 1864, Application 43766, Certificate 68402.

Author of the following letter, Private Charles E. Jackson, Company B, was in Mahaska County, Iowa in 1860 where his mother was living. They had previously lived in Muskingum County, Ohio. A letter in his pension file says Charles had worked for John C. STROUGHN in the winter of 1860 on his farm in Mahaska County. Stroughn on 20 Oct 1864 wrote: "I know that when he worked for me he took part of his wages in flour and other eatables and took them to his mothers house for her to live upon and I know of his providing wood and other things for her out of his own labor, and that he said to me when he went to volunteer that he intended to send money to his mother and I further know that but for him his mother could scarcely have got along." Charles died of smallpox on 6 Apr 1863 at Milliken's Bend, Louisiana.

A range of emotions are in this Camp Mansfield letter that was **contained in the pension file of Private Jackson**. The letter was written to his mother in Iowa. He had older brothers named George and William to whom he refers in the letter. [The spelling remains the same; punctuation was added for clarity.]

September 15, 1862, Monday

"Camp Mansfield Sept 15, 1862

Dear Mother

It has bin a good while since I heard from you but I think I wrote the last letter bu you never ansurd.

Now I will write you one more and if you dont answer it I will think that you have forsakend me but I hope you have not for I don't think that I have ?afended you fer y to make you do it. I am well at present and in joying my self vary well. I have inlisted in the one hundrad twentieh regment ohio vollentear. We are in Camp Mansfield ohio but don't know how long we will stay hear. We are looking for orders to leave every day. I got ?? letters from George last frida and had two? before that and he is well and says he is fat as a hog and I am glad to hear that from him. I wrote to Will yesterday. He is in ottowa illinois. I inlisted

the 5 of August last for three years or the war. I hope when the few lines reaches you it will find you all in good helth. when I get my Bounty I will send you some money. We draw one hundred dolars bounty and I will send you all of mone to keep till I come back only what you want to live with and I will send you my minature in the next letter that I send to you. But if you don't ansure this I wont send you any more letter for there is no use of me writeing when I cant get no ansure. George and I write regular to each other. we get letters evry week from each other. Well Mother have not much to write but I want you to tell me evry thing that is going on and give my respects to all of my inquirerig friends and tell them if I don't get kild I will see them some time but don't know how it will be but I hope not long. Mother I want you to think of me on yours prayers and pray that I mite see you once more before I die. tell the girls that I will send them my minetur when I get my bounty.

So no more at this time

from your nonduteful son

Charles E Jackson

Direct to Camp Mansfield.

one hundrade and twentieh regmen ohio volentears

in care of R M Bryaton"

Wooster Republican, OH, 25 Sep 1862, page 3, Wayne County Library or online pay sites: Marriage at the camp of George W. Gardner, Co E, and Adaline Stanley, both of Congress Twp, Wayne County, OH.

September 24, 1862, Wednesday

Proclamation by the President of the United States.

Whereas, It has become necessary to call into service, not only volunteers, but also portions of the militia of the States by draft, in order to suppress insurrection existing in the United States, and disloyal persons are not adequately restrained by the ordinary processes of law from hindering this measure and from giving aid and comfort in various ways to the insurrection; now therefore

Be it Ordered, 1. That during the existing insurrection, and as a necessary measure for suppressing the same, all rebels and insurgents, their aiders and abettors with in the United States, and **all persons discouraging volunteer enlistments, resisting militia drafts or guilty of any disloyal practices, offering aid and comfort to the rebels, against the authority of the United States, shall be subject to martial law and liable to trial and punishment by court martial or military commission.**

2d. That the writ of habeas corpus is suspended in respect to all persons arrested or who are now or hereafter, during the rebellion, shall be imprisoned in any fort, camp, arsenal, military prisons or other place of confinement, by any military authority or by the sentence of any court martial or military commission.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington this 24th day of September, 1862, and of the independence of the United States the 87th.

Abraham Lincoln

by the President.

Wm H. Seward, Secretary of State.

Wooster Republican [Ohio], 9 Oct 1862, page 7, Letter from George W. Gardner at Mansfield, mentions arrival of Wayne co Militia at Camp Mansfield.

Perhaps the most important thing that happened for the 120th while at Mansfield was their assignment to attend to draft resistance in Stark County, OH. One of their assignments was to go from camp in Mansfield to Canton, Stark county, Ohio, to take

into custody some men who had been giving speeches against participation in the war and were promoting resistance to the draft. You don't want to miss this story. It shows what was going on in Ohio during the war. Archibald McGregor was the editor of the Stark County Democrat. He was held at Camp Mansfield. Later he took an oath of allegiance so he could go home. Spiegel and John Sexton are two who were included in the assignment. Otherwise, I don't have a list.

The testimony is in the Appendix to House Journal, Report of Select Committee on Military Arrests.

You have to go to that first for the page numbers to get you to the testimony. Be sure to read the Report on pages 1 through 6 which explains the reasons for handling the "arrests" the way they did. P 5 "A citizen engaged during rebellion in exciting resistance to the military authorities, or holding out to the people motives and inducements to refrain from enlisting, endangers the public safety. The seizure of such a citizen, when the public safety thus requires it, can not be deemed unreasonable by those who love their country, its institutions, and its welfare, more than they do the cause of the rebellion."

Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio, Vol. 59.

Testimony before the Select Committee on Military Arrests, Ohio House of Representatives. 1863.

At Google Books: <https://books.google.com/books?>

[id=fUgwAQAAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=fUgwAQAAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)

"A STRUGGLE FOR THE LIFE OF THE NATION"

This was a fight between the Democrats who were against the war and against Lincoln and the Republicans whom they considered to be abolitionists.

There were never any actual charges brought against anyone. The House Journal explains that there was previously no need to pass a law for what went on here. "The American citizen was deemed incapable of such disloyalty, and the proposition to enact statutes for its punishment would at any time previous to the existing rebellion have been spurned as dishonorable to the American name." "Consequently when disaffected citizens arrayed themselves against the call of the Government in its great emergency, and attempted to demoralize and exasperate the people, upon whose patriotism its existence depended, it was compelled either to restrain them by military authority, or fall a prey to insubordination, sedition and violence." [page 2]

The day in question was 6 Oct 1862 when a meeting of the drafted men was held in Canton, Stark Co OH. This was the day that 541 men from Stark county, OH, were supposed to report for the draft. They assembled at the court house at 10:00. Benjamin F. "Frank" Roher was the drafted man who was speaking against obeying the draft. Roher did not want to support an "abolition war." [There was a Benjamin F. Roher, age 19, OH, living with Michael and Mary Roher, farmers, at Canton Twp, Stark Co OH in the 1860 Census.] A message was sent from the meeting to the Governor requesting a ten day extension before the drafted men had to report so that they could take care of business at home before leaving for the war. Archibald McGregor was the editor of the Stark County Democrat. According to Mr McGregor, Roher was being very racially inflammatory in his speech and was not going to obey

the draft to free the blacks and called Lincoln a tyrant. The crowd ate it up. Mr. Pease tried to convince Roher to stop talking, but McGregor told him not to interfere with Roher. The crowd rushed at Pease and Pease backed off. Anson Pease was the Deputy Provost Marshal for Stark county at the time. Pease also testified that McGregor was in the crowd listening to Roher and that McGregor said, "Don't let that abolitionist get up there; go on with your speech; he has no right to interfere with you..." McGregor was saying this in reference to Pease's attempt to talk to the crowd and calm them down. Roher, according to a witness, did allow Pease to speak and Pease was the only speaker who told the crowd to obey the draft.

J. Frease was a witness who saw through McGregor and Reitzell's language. He said that Reitzel used "indirect and artful phraseology" to get the crowd to go home that day to consider whether they would or would not obey the draft.

Peter N. Reitzell said that he would address the men at 3 in the afternoon giving time for a response from the Governor. He did speak, avoiding giving advice on the question of obeying the draft, but gave his negative opinions on the Government, the Administration of Lincoln, freedom of speech and the suspension of habeas corpus. McGregor had nothing to add when Reitzell finished, but he liked what Reitzell had said.

Two resolutions were adopted:

"Resolved, That if any of our citizens are hereafter arrested without due process of law, for exercising the right of an American citizen, that we will arrest and hold two of the party causing the arrest until our man is released."

and "Resolved, That we will, one and all, return home; believing that we can best serve our country by helping to provide for a portion of the suffering white people of our distracted land." George W. Schilling was the secretary of the meeting and a draftee.

Anson Pease and a squad of armed soldiers arrested Peter N. Reitzell on 12 Oct 1862 on a charge of treason. He was taken to be prisoner at Camp Mansfield along with Archibald McGregor who was arrested the same day. Reitzell remained prisoner until 5 Nov 1862 when he took the Oath of allegiance to the Constitution. Reitzell testified that the draftees originally were coming to town to cause trouble and "commit violence" on the "abolitionists."

McGregor was released 5 Nov 1862 upon taking the Oath of allegiance to the United States and to the State of Ohio.

p 16: Col. Charles Sherman: "to detail 200 picked men of the 120th Regt. O. V. I., then in camp, to be placed under the command of a discreet officer, provided with musket and ball cartridges, and send them that night to Canton, on a special train" Pease testified that "Reitzel and McGregor were severally arrested upon the charges that they had, on the 6th day of said October, encouraged and incited resistance to the draft, and counseled and advised drafted men not to respond to the draft." Pease was assisted in his arrests by Lieut.-Col. Spiegel, of the 120th Regiment O. V. I. And a detachment of soldiers from the 120th.

Anson Pease testified: "Over two hundred drafted men refused for one week to respond, many of them swearing they would never go to Camp Mansfield alive---they would die at home." As for how many eventually reported: "A portion of them never did go forward. I should say from twenty to thirty up to this date are absentees." Most to that group had fled the State. 350 "of the drafted men went forward...to

Camp Mansfield. 35 were arrested on 12, 13, and 14 October. A few others were arrested and sent to Mansfield after that. His authority for the arrests was the proclamation of the President of the United States and orders of the War Department. He had been sent to make the arrests by Judge Brinkerhoff [special Provost Marshal of the district under Col. Charles Sherman].

Alexander Bierce, the Draft Commissioner: Spiegel reported to him with about 200 men on the 11th Oct. The next day Bierce "sent out squads of soldiers to arrest the drafted men who refused to obey the call." After talking with some of the men Bierce blamed the speeches for some of the men returning home and resisting the draft.

John Sexton, Co H, is the only soldier I have found who was in the group sent to Ashland County.

One newspaper report said that Roher had been arrested, apparently for not reporting for the draft. [15 Oct 1862, Canton Repository, page 3] ends at page 90

Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio, Appendix to House Journal, Report of Select Committee on Military Arrests, volume 59, publisher The State, 1863. Ohio General Assembly, House of Representatives. Pp 15 & 17. Names to watch for were Pease, McGregor and Reitzel, Frank Roher

Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio, Vol 59, Appendix to House Journal, p 16: Col. Charles Sherman: "to detail 200 picked men of the 120th Regt. O. V. I., then in camp, to be placed under the command of a discreet officer, provided with musket and ball cartridges, and send them that night to Canton, on a special train"

Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio, Vol 59 Appendix to House Journal, p 21; names to watch for, Spiegel, George W. Henning, reasons for refusal to report for draft. "Lieut. Col. Spiegle [sic], with about 200 men, reported to me that night. "

Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio, Vol. 59 Appendix to House Journal, p 84. Reitzell testimony

page 91: Charles T. Sherman was Aug thru part of Dec 1862 Provost Marshal of Van Wert, Putnam, Allen, Auglaize, Mercer, Hardin, Logan, Marion, Morrow, Wyandot, Crawford, Seneca, Richland, Ashland, Holmes, Wayne, Stark, Columbiana and Carroll counties. Was at the same time Commandant of Camp Mansfield, "a camp of rendezvous for volunteers and drafted men."

Daily Ohio Statesman, 26 Oct 1862, page 3, first column Library of Congress: Chronicling America : Names to watch for: Pease, Spiegel, McGregor, Reitzel, Henning

Daily Ohio statesman. (Columbus, Ohio), 26 Oct. 1862. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84028645/1862-10-26/ed-1/seq-3/>

Captain Brayton, Co B, 120th OH, arrested Rev. Goerge W. Henning at Osnaburg twp, Stark Co OH. He had with him a squad of five soldiers. 14 Oct 1862.

Daily Ohio statesman. (Columbus, Ohio), 12 Feb. 1863. Column 5 *Chronicling America: Historic*

American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84028645/1863-02-12/ed-1/seq-1/>

The spirit of democracy. (Woodsfield, Ohio), 12 Nov. 1862. Page 3 *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers.* Lib. of Congress.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038115/1862-11-12/ed-1/seq-3/>

The Stark County Democrat. (Canton, Ohio), 14 June 1877, p 4. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers.* Lib. of Congress.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84028490/1877-06-14/ed-1/seq-4/>

Response to the Stark Co Dem: Canton Repository, 22 June 1877, page 1.

Wooster Republican, 28 June 1877, p 2. Stark county still angry. At Wayne Co Library, Wooster, or pay site

Canton Repository, Monday, 10 Dec 1923, page 8: John Sexton at Canton, Co H. on pay site

Cleveland morning leader. (Cleveland [Ohio]), 16 Oct. 1862. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers.* Lib. of Congress. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83035143/1862-10-16/ed-1/seq-2/> Arrests in Stark Co., Column 4

Canton Repository, 15 Oct 1862, page 3. pay site

Daily Ohio statesman. (Columbus, Ohio), 12 Feb. 1863. page 1, Column 5, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers.* Lib. of Congress. Squad of soldiers.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84028645/1863-02-12/ed-1/seq-1/>

The Cadiz Democratic Sentinel, OH, 29 Oct 1862, page 2:

[reprinted from the Ashland Union]

"Writ of Habeas Corpus suspended in Ohio by Gov. Tod.

[Charles T. Sherman, our Henry's father and Wm T.'s brother, was appointed commandant of the military camp in Mansfield. Charles was resident of Richland county.]

Upon the allowance of this 'Writ of Right' by a Judge of our Court, and served by the Shreriff of Richland County, the Military Officer in command sends back to the Judge the following answer; 'Under the order of the Governor of Ohio, I must respectfully state I shall disregard this Writ and will not obey its requirement.'

C. Sherman, Col. Com.

Camp Mansfield, Oct. 15th, 1862.

It seems that Tod has assumed to be 'Dictator' instead of Governor of Ohio. - We have known better men than our egotistical Governor to stretch hemp for attempting what he is now doing, to deprive citizens of their Constitutional rights. Tod may succeed; if so the American people are serfs instead of freemen."

END CHAPTER 1

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