

Chapter 3 Down the Ohio to Memphis

Cleveland morning leader. (Cleveland [Ohio]), 22 Nov. 1862, image 4, column one: *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. **Ordered to Memphis.**
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83035143/1862-11-22/ed-1/seq-4/>

The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Pub. Under the Direction of the ... Secretary of War, United States. Record and Pension Office Volume 52:1, page 300: special Orders, No. 107. Headquarters Department of the Ohio

<https://books.google.com/books?>

[id=635ZAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=One%20hundred%20and%20twentieth%20Ohio&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=635ZAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=One%20hundred%20and%20twentieth%20Ohio&f=false)

"The One hundred and twentieth Regiment Ohio volunteers (Col. D. French), now at Covington, Ky., is assigned to the First Division of the Army of Kentucky (Brig. Gen. A. J. Smith, U.D. Volunteers), and will proceed direct without delay to join its division at Memphis, Tenn."

The 120th Regiment finally got under way down the Ohio toward Memphis, TN, on Tuesday, 25 November 1862. The Right Wing consisted of Cos. A, C, D, F, H, I, K; the Left Wing, Cos. B, E, and G. The Right Wing boarded the "Silver Wave." The Left Wing was at first on the "Dunlieth" but changed to the "Fort Wayne" before leaving Covington. Henry Sherman was on the "Ft. Wayne." The trip included a number of times that the boats ran aground.

November 24, 1862, Monday, Henry S. Sherman Diary

"Got started (at last) about 3 o'clock P. M. - sailed down the river about 215 miles and then tied up for the night."

November 25, 1862, Tuesday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Started again very early. **Run aground** about noon--not off yet."

November 26, 1862, Wednesday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Got off again about 8 o'clock. Traveled about 10 miles and run aground again. Confound the luck! We will never get to Memphis at this rate. Off again about 4 P. M. Arrived at Madison, Ind. about 6 P. M. Was playing chess when P. M. Jones came in & said that an old acquaintance wished to see me up town. Went up immediately and found Dave Blymyer as editor of the M. [Madison] Daily Courier. Had a very pleasant time. Wanted me to write to the paper if anything interesting should occur."

November 27, 1862, Thursday, Henry Sherman Diary

"This is Thanksgiving in Ohio. O, how I do wish I could be at home [Mansfield] today. To meet all around the Thanksgiving Table at home would be joy beyond measure. Left Madison at 6 A. M. and after traveling some miles we came very near getting aground again. We tied up along the shore in order to send out a yawl to sound the channel. In the meanwhile accompanied by Althouse, Q M. Sgt. [Quarter Master Sgt, George Althouse, Co H] I went up on the Hills near the river. Had a magnificent view of the river and valley for a number of miles. Saw a pretty girl or rather a girl with pretty eyes. They were of the soft melting Gazelle eyes that floating seemed to melt while they float. Saw the residence of Mr. Tarleton who claims with Johnson the 'honor' of shooting Tecumpseh [sic], the noted Indian Chief. Also that of that Indian[a] Traitor and demagogue Jesse Bright, who was expelled from the U. S. Senate. Arrived at Louisville, Ky. at 4 P. M. Had a Thanksgiving supper in the evening which passed off very agreeably."

[Notes to clarify Sherman's diary entry: Famous Indian Chief Tecumseh, allied with the British, was killed in Upper Canada, just north of the border between US and Canada, at the battle of the Thames during the War of 1812. The Colonel Johnson mentioned was Richard Mentor Johnson, ninth VP of the US under Martin Van Buren. Tarleton was Ralph Tarleton who fought with the Kentucky Mounted Infantry in the

War of 1812 and lived in the area of Oldham County KY/Jefferson County IN. It is uncertain exactly who killed Tecumseh. Jesse D. Bright, Senator from Madison, Indiana, was expelled from the Senate on 5 Feb 1862, because of a letter he had written to Jefferson Davis concerning firearms.]

November 28, 1862, Friday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Left Louisville about 1 P.M. Passed through the Canal around the Falls in about three hours."

Be sure to check out the maps for the "Falls of the Ohio" at Louisville, KY. The canal is still there today.

November 28, 1862, Friday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Saw the gun & cane, &c. of Porter the Kentucky Giant. About 9 P. M. we tied up along the side of the Kentucky shore in order to let the men cook their three day rations. The boat had not been made fast before some of our men were on land and had their fires started on the side of the bluff, while others started towards the interior of the country for 'forage' as we understood. Hulligan was a leader of one party, of course, and it did not come in empty handed. From the boat the scene on shore was most picturesque indeed. The lurid glare of the fire playing upon the rocks, trees and men made a picture worthy of remembrance. The men in their uniforms lounging around the fires, some busy cooking, others gathering fuel and others replenishing the fires & broiling meat & roasting potatoes for themselves among the wild rocks & forest trees of Kentucky was truly a weird and romantic scene. A little after midnight the foraging parties began to straggle in laden with booty consisting of turkeys, geese, chickens and honey. Of course, keeping out of the way of the officers, who, of course, would be compelled to discountenance any such proceeding, but a present of honey and a couple of turkeys made the matter all straight with them."

November 29, 1862, Saturday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Arrived at Cannelton, Ind. about 1 P. M. While loading coal went through the town to see what could be seen of interest. First visited coal mine back of the town, then made a visit to the large Cotton Factory near the river. After some trouble were admitted and shown around by a guide through the whole building. It was quite a curiosity to one who had never seen anything of the kind. We were first shown through the engine room. The machinery was splendid and kept in the finest order. On the second, third, fourth and fifth floors were the looms, &c., which employ between three and four hundred operatives. They are unable to run but half the time on account of the scarcity of cotton. Left C. towards evening and after travelling a few miles laid by for the night at a little village on the Kentucky shore named Grand View. Spent a short time on the 'Silver Wave' with the right wing."

November 30, 1862, Sunday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Arrived at Evansville at 2 P.M. Stopped to permit the horses to be exercised. Rode all over the city on the Adjutant's horse."

December 1, 1862, Monday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Not feeling very well today. Got up with a bad cold and a headache. After Guard Mounting went back to bed and slept till 1 P. M. Got up feeling a little better. Stopped at a coal station for the night."

December 2, 1862, Tuesday, Henry Sherman Diary

"About 11 A. M. Run into a steamer and broke her wheel badly which detained for some time. We towed her down to Smithland where we left her for repairs. Was somewhat disappointed with the size of the Cumberland River at Smithland, Ky. When we were within 8 or 10 miles from Cairo, Ill., the 'Silver Wave', our consort, ran on the rocks and stove a hole in her bottom. We remained with her all night."

December 3, 1862, Wednesday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Landed the whole Regiment in order to pull 'Silver Wave' off the rocks. While on shore made a short journey into the interior of Ills. a mile or two. Obtained a few frozen apples to eat, as well as a few

persimmons. Rather a dull time of it, this same journey to Memphis. After a few hours work the Silver Wave was released and started down to Cairo leaving the right wing encamped for the night, (or until another boat could be obtained to carry her load) on the shore. We (the left wing) sailed down the river to Cairo."

December 4, 1862, Thursday, Henry Sherman Diary

"About noon 'Pringle' brought the right wing down. I took a ramble over the town of Cairo during the day and was somewhat disappointed in the appearance of the town. At night went up to Canterbury Hall with Col. Spiegel, Major and Capt. of our boat. Col. being exhilarated slightly. Introduced to several officers, naval & army."

December 5, 1862, Friday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Left Cairo in the morning. Arrived at Columbus, Ky. Saw the battle field of Belmont opposite Columbus. Laid by for the night a short distance below Island no. 10.

Private **David Giffin**, Co. C, age about 21, died December 6, 1862, near Hayesville, Ohio.

December 6, 1862, Saturday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Passed Forts Pillow and Randolph. Saw the remains of Randolph which was burnt by the Federals."

Douglas, Ben, History of Wayne County, Ohio, pp 444-446. **Bio of Capt Downing**

<https://archive.org/details/cu31924028848765/page/n9>

****Wooster Republican, 25 December 1862, pp 1-2-3, Wayne county OH library, or pay site
9Dec1862 Letter from Capt. Downing's Company A Important letter for the trip down the river. Nov 24 to Dec 5.

****Wooster Republican, 25 Dec 1862, page 1. Wayne county OH library, or pay site
Trip down the river to Memphis. Captain William G. Myers, co G, to Camp Oliver in Memphis TN.

Very important to the regiment! Treachery Exposed Aboard the "Ft. Wayne", letter by William G. Myers, of Chippewa Twp, Wayne Co OH.

****Wooster Republican, 25 Dec 1862, page 1 Wayne county OH library, or pay site
Myers letter of 6Dec1862 exposing traitors in their midst who want to discourage the men. Regimental Quartermaster Ezra V. Dean.

MAP Bachmann, John. *Bird's eye view of junction of the Ohio & Mississippi Rivers, showing Cairo and part of the southern states.* New York A. Rumpf, Publisher. Agent for John Bachmann's publisher, 1861. Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <<https://www.loc.gov/item/99447003/>>.

Left Cairo, IL, for Memphis, TN Dec 5.

****Wooster Republican, 25 Dec 1862, page 3
Letter of George Gardner, Co E, 11Dec 1862, river trip, at Memphis, rumors.

****Wooster Republican, 1 Jan 1863, page 4 Wayne county OH library, or pay site:
another Downing letter 16Dec1862, Grand review at Memphis; rumors.

****Wooster Republican, 1 Jan 1863, page 4 Wayne county OH library, or pay site :

George Emrich Dec. 17, 1862 letter, Co D: Camp Oliver, river trip, General Sheldon, Major Beekman, Adjutant Slocum.

Author of the following letter, **Private William Kinton**, Private, Co B, joined the regiment at age 21. His father died in 1844 and William was "employed by his grandfather from the time he was 14 yrs old.

December 19, 1862, Friday, Letter from William Kinton to his mother [contained in his pension papers.]

Camp Oliver Tenn

Dec 19th ??? [1862]

Mrs. Polly Kinton

Respected mother your letter of the 8th is just read. I am glad to hear that you are all well.

I am nearly as well as usual. I hope that all will be right in a few days. I finished writing a letter to Grandfather just after dinner. Since writing that I have seen **Hughes [John Hughes Co B]**. he reports that **L Ryder [Levi Rider, Co B]** is getting better. They are tolerably comfortablely ??situated?? and get about as good rations as in camp. If Levi was at home in his present condition he could not assist his father much. The only thing that could be done would be to make him more comfortable. As soon as his discharge can be filled he will be sent home

You said that you put some checks into a letter that you sent to me. If you put them in I did not get them. I perhaps dropped them and when I opened the letter. For just as I rec'd the letter I was ordered to report to the officer of the day immediately. And I was so anxious to hear the news from home that I opened the letter as I walked along and if they were in I dropped them and did not notice them.

I am sorry to hear that you are afraid of me deserting my religion. I have too high a sense of my honor to degrade myself thus. It is true that a large number of the members of this reg't have deserted the religion they once embraced. The joys of this world will not compensate for the glories above. I hope that you will remember us at a throne of glory.

In regard to the provisions and meat especially I will just say that I think that the pork packers must have been laying up a supply of meat for the last 3 or 4 years for we do not get any pork except ???side and ham which is not fit to eat. Some of it would eat pretty well but our cook Lt. Norrick is too lazy to prepare it in good style. We draw fresh beef twice a week which some times is cooked pretty well but too often it is so tough that we can scarcely chew it.

While in camp we have drawn bread which is sometimes hard and sometimes soft. On some occasions we sell our old pork and buy cornmeal and make mush and then fry it which eats pretty well.

When at Louisville our ??? laid in a supply of crackers for our trip down the river which did not contain a particle of salt. The boys got so sick of them that they could scarcely eat them

The weather is pretty fine. we have only had one rain since we came to camp. It is not very cold the ground scarcely ever freezes here. We sleep pretty comfortably here at night

Our gum blankets come in good play at night to spread on the ground and then make our bed on them. In speaking of the health of the reg't I should have told you that our surgeon took sick while at ??

Covington?? and resigned [Note: Dr. William Taggart resigned 13 Nov 1862.]

Since we came here one of the assistant surgeons has taken sick. Consequently our surgical aid is pretty slim.

As my time is rather limited I must close.

Hoping that we may soon meet again and enjoy the society that I love so much I will bid you good bye.

I am so ever your affectionate son

Wm. Kinton

P.S. If you direct your letters to Cairo instead of Louisville they come much quicker for the reason that they come quicker by railroad than by water. And also so many packets are engaged by Government that there is not a regular time to carry the mail.

The regiment left Memphis at about 10 P. M. on **December 20, 1862.**

END CHAPTER 3

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