

Chapter 5 Chickasaw Bayou, Mississippi, December 26-31, 1862, January 1, 1863
Remember to check the maps and images for Chickasaw Bayou.

Print out the maps from the Library of Congress to follow the battle.

Map Munn, E. A. No. 1. *First Vicksburg campaign or Chicksaw sic Bayou. Dec. 27th -Jan. 3rd 1863.-No. 2. Map of battle ground of Chickasaw Bayou, Dec. 28th and 29th.* [Chicago, Woman's Temperance Publishing Association, 1892] Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress,
<https://www.loc.gov/item/99447411/>

Map: This map gives you a wide focus on most of the campaigns to take Vicksburg. For now enlarge the map and focus in on the area across the Mississippi from Young's Point where you see Vicksburg and above Vicksburg you will see an area that says "cultivated" and "W. H. Johnson." That area all the way down to Walnut Hills is Chickasaw Bayou battleground. Wilson, Js. H, Otto H Matz, and L Helmle. *Map of the country between Millikens Bend, La. and Jackson, Miss. shewing the routes followed by the Army of the Tennessee under the command of Maj. Genl. U.S. Grant, U.S. Vols. in its march from Millikens Bend to the rear of Vicksburg in April and May.* N.Y., Julius Bien & Co., photo lith, 1876. Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3981s.cw0261000/?r=0.221,0.172,0.213,0.153,0>

Also, go to pdf by Major Gray M. Gildner for more maps. One of his maps will help you locate the "boat slough" where the 120th debarked.

<https://www.ebooks.com/en-us/author/major-gray-m.-gildner/>

Pension papers of Private Charles Cornell of Company K state that he was on board the steamer "Key West" on the way down the Mississippi river to the Yazoo river and Johnson's Landing where they arrived December 26, 1862, in preparation for the attack on Vicksburg at Chickasaw Bayou.

******Wooster Republican, Thursday 12 Feb 1863, pg 3 Wayne County Library or pay site.*

Letter George W. Gardner, Co E

You will want to know who else was fighting at Chickasaw Bayou. See all the regiments listed.

Dyer, Frederick Henry, A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, Vol. 1, 492-493. Courtesy Emory University at <https://archive.org/details/08697590.3359.emory.edu/page/n497>

United States. Navy Dept, and United States. Naval War Records Office. Official Records of the Union And Confederate Navies In the War of the Rebellion. Washington: Govt. Print. Off., 1894:1922., p 564, Courtesy of <hathitrust.org> <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pur1.32754082446141>

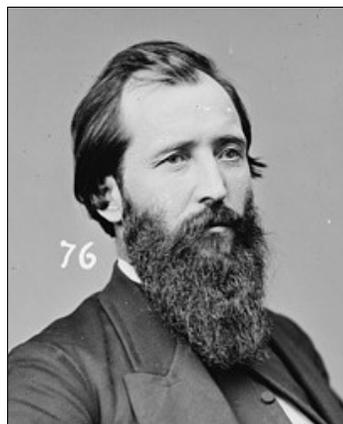
United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Series I, Vol XVII, Part I Reports, Chapter XXIX Operations in West Tennessee and Northern Mississippi, No 2, Return of Casualties, 625. Courtesy of archive.org
<https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/n5>



Gen. US Grant contributed by Nina Rippee; **Admiral Porter** from *Battles and Commanders*, p. 178; **General Sherman** from Liljenquist collection, Library of Congress: *General William Tecumseh Sherman of 13th Regular Army Infantry Regiment in uniform*. [Between 1861 and 1865] Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <www.loc.gov/item/2018651887/>



Photo: **General George W. Morgan**, commander of the 3rd Division of the 13th Corps which was the Right Wing of the 13th Corps under General Sherman. Images in the Brady-Handy collection are considered to be in the public domain. *Hon. George Washington Morgan of Ohio*. [Between 1860 and 1875] Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <<https://www.loc.gov/item/2017893609/>>.



The 120th was with the 1st Brigade under Col. Lionel A. Sheldon. Sheldon's headquarters was on board the "Jesse K. Bell." Images in the Brady-Handy collection are considered to be in the public domain. *Hon. Lionel Allen Sheldon of La.* [Between 1860 and 1875] Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <<https://www.loc.gov/item/2017893736/>>.

The 120th was commanded by Col. Daniel French. No photo found.

The Setting of the Battle

The Vicksburg side of the Bayou, the Walnut Hills side, was well defended by the Confederates. Some Confederates were on the Johnson's Landing side at the beginning of battle but eventually moved back to defend the hills leading up to the city. There were five possible routes for Sherman to take toward the Vicksburg side, but only two could be used. Sherman chose to send only the 6th Missouri to the area of Indian Mound. His main attack on December 29 was south of Mrs. Lake's house where the Bayou splits in two directions, to the right going into McNutt Lake and also continues on toward the hills on the other side of the bayou.

The National Tribune, July 21, 1904, page 3 at [Chronicling America](#)

Article written by John A. M'Gregor, 42d Ohio, Cleveland, Ohio

"... between the rebels in their trenches on the hills, and the Federals on the plain below, lay the deep bayou - at some places 80 feet in width - flanked on either side by cypress swamps, the heavy timber of which had been felled in confused heaps and windrows of logs and brush."

A description of the area

[The National Tribune, July 21, 1904, page 3, column one, at [Chronicling America](#)]

The National tribune. (Washington, D.C.), 21 July 1904. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers.* Lib. of Congress.

<<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82016187/1904-07-21/ed-1/seq-3/>>

Article written by John A. M'Gregor, 42d Ohio, Cleveland, Ohio]

"In order to comprehend intelligently the difficulties of the attack upon Chickasaw Bluffs, a clear, specific understanding of the ground is essential. The alluvial plain upon which Gen. Sherman's army had landed is a triangle, some 12 miles long by four or five in breadth. The northern line of this triangle is the Yazoo River, flowing westward into the Mississippi, which it intersects at a point nine or 10 miles above Vicksburg. Below the mouth of the Yazoo the Mississippi bears strongly to the eastward, forming an acute angle with the line of the Yazoo. **Across this acute angle, and forming the third and shortest side of the triangle, runs Chickasaw Bayou, a deep, tortuous, sluggish stream, debouching at one end into the Yazoo, and at the other into the Mississippi.**

The bayou is, in fact, the central ditch or channel of a cypress swamp (once, no doubt, the main bed of the Yazoo), extending from the Yazoo, just below Haine's Bluff, across to the Mississippi, a sort of short-cut for the waters of the former stream during the flood season. The triangular island is rich, mellow bottom land, subject to overflow, and about equally divided between heavy timber and open cotton fields, at that time soft and miry, **from the late Autumn rains. East of the bayou, and extending parallel with it, in a northeasterly direction, from Vicksburg to the Yazoo River, is a range of hills.** At the point where this line of hills intersects the Yazoo, it is called Haine's Bluff. Near the city the elevation is known as Walnut Hills; but to Sherman's army the whole ridge was known from first to last as the Chickasaw Bluffs. Along this commanding position, behind a series of intrenchments, more or less formidable, as the ground required, lay the enemy, already strong in numbers, and being **hourly strengthened by the arrival of reinforcements from Jackson, Mobile, and Pemberton's army at Grenada and Holly Springs.** Haine's Bluff was heavily and permanently fortified on its Yazoo front; and from there, along the entire ridge, to the parapets of Vicksburg, ran a system of trenches and batteries which made the naturally strong position practically impregnable against attack in front. Had the ground at the foot of the bluff been firm and solid, had no other obstacle than the high ridge, seamed

with trenches and manned from end to end by an equal force, confronted Sherman's little army, the task of capturing Vicksburg from that direction would have been a well-nigh impossible one. Add to these difficulties the fact that between the rebels in their trenches on the hills, and the Federals on the plain below, lay the deep bayou - at some places 80 feet in width - flanked on either side by cypress swamps, the heavy timber of which had been felled in confused heaps and windrows of logs and brush, and the difficulties of the assault become still more obvious."

A summary by Whitelaw Reid

[Ohio in the War: her statement, generals, and soldiers, Volume 2, by Whitelaw Reid, The Robert Clarke Co, 1895, Robert Clarke Co, **Section on 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry** pp. 614-615] [This Google book: There are no restrictions on use of text transcribed from the images, or paraphrased or translated using the images.]

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x002044840;view=1up;seq=13>

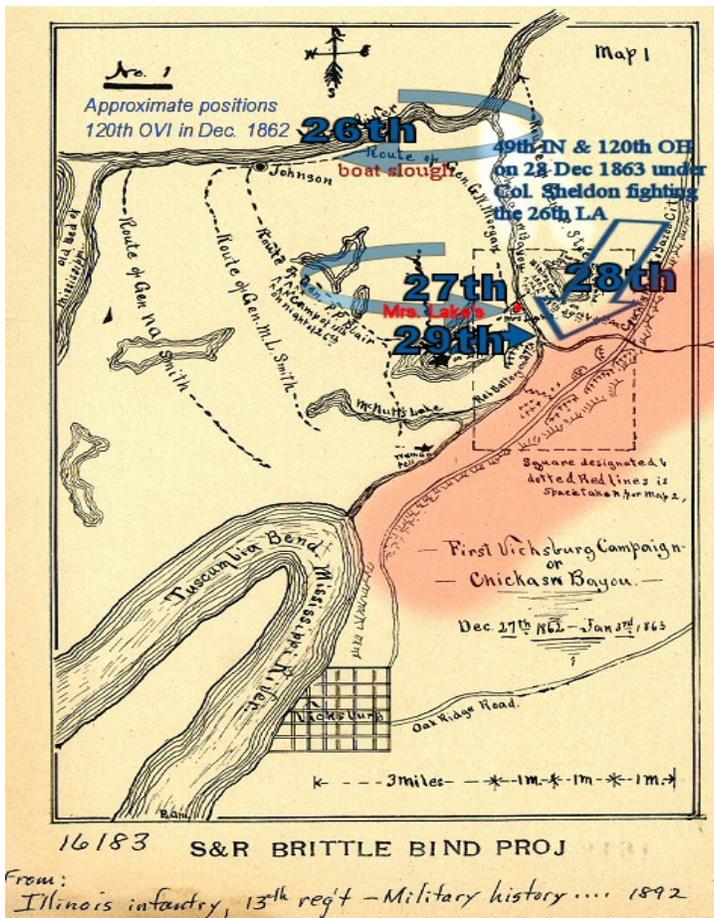
"Upon the organization of the army for the expedition against Vicksburg the regiment was assigned to Colonel Sheldon's brigade, of General Morgan's division. This, called the right wing of the Army of Tennessee, commanded by Major-General W. T. Sherman, embarked at Memphis on the 20th of December, and **moved down the Mississippi to the mouth of the Yazoo River**; thence up the Yazoo to Johnson's Landing, and there debarked preparatory to an attack on the line of fortifications defending Vicksburg.

The attack was opened by the National forces late on the afternoon of the 26th of December, and on the following day the One Hundred and Twentieth was for the first time under fire, having been ordered to the support of the First Michigan Battery near the left of the attacking column. In the afternoon of the same day **Sheldon's brigade**, consisting of the Sixty-Ninth Indiana, One Hundred and Eighteenth Illinois, and the One Hundred and Twentieth Ohio, charged upon the enemy's forces on the extreme right, and succeeded in driving them into their fortifications. A charge by the Ninth Division (General Morgan's) was now contemplated, but night coming on our troops were withdrawn to a place of safety. This charge, though unsuccessful, was made on [page 615] the following day. **The One Hundred and Twentieth had been ordered to cover a working party engaged in laying a pontoon across Chickasaw Bayou**, and hence took no part in this assault, but was exposed to the enemy's fire during the entire day. A terrible rain-storm, peculiar to that climate, raged during the whole of the ensuing night, which owing to the inexperience of the officers and men of the regiment, proved very disastrous, prostrating a large number with fevers and other virulent diseases common to the South. The fruitlessness of the attack on Vicksburg from the Yazoo being recognized, the National forces were withdrawn and taken on transports to Milliken's Bend, on the Mississippi River, where Major-General McClernand assumed command. The unavoidable use of the miserable water of the Yazoo River, the exposure in the recent storm, close confinement on crowded steamboats, and poorly-prepared food, here made its mark to such extent that more than one-half the number reported "present" were unfit for active service."

Another great account, map included:

The New York herald. (New York [N.Y.]), 18 Jan. 1863. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress pp2-3 <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030313/1863-01-18/ed-1/seq-2/>> "The rebels had a signal station on the crest of the hill overlooking the valley." Includes a map.

The Timeline of the battle for the 120thOVI



This is my estimate of the positions of the 120th in December at Chickasaw Bayou.

Private **Thomas Johnson**, Co D, died Friday, December 26, 1862, in East Union, OH. He was the younger brother of Private Silas Johnson of the same company.

Reid, Whitelaw, Ohio in the War: her statement, generals, and soldiers, Volume 2, The Robert Clarke Co, 1895 Section on 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry pp. 614 Ohio in the War: her statement, generals, and soldiers, Volume 2, by Whitelaw Reid, The Robert Clarke Co, 1895, Robert Clarke Co, **Section on 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry** pp. 614-615] [This Google book: There are no restrictions on use of text transcribed from the images, or paraphrased or translated using the images.]

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x002044840;view=1up;seq=13>

"The attack was opened by the National forces late on the afternoon of the 26th of December, and on the following day the One Hundred and Twentieth was for the first time under fire, having been ordered to **the support of the First Michigan Battery [Lanphere's] near the left of the attacking column.** In the afternoon of the same day **Sheldon's brigade**, consisting of the Sixty-Ninth Indiana, One Hundred and Eighteenth Illinois, and the One Hundred and Twentieth Ohio, charged upon the enemy's forces on the extreme right, and succeeded in driving them into their fortifications."

United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Chapter XXIX, Sheldon No. 13, 644-645,

Courtesy of archive.org, < <https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/644> > In public domain.

Work published prior to 1923.

"Report of Col. Sheldon, 1st Brigade, 3d Division under General Morgan

"About 2 p. m. of the 27th instant two of my regiments, to wit, the Sixty-ninth Indiana and One hundred twentieth Ohio (the One hundred and eighteenth Illinois having been detached to guard the boats), **moved from the point of debarkation in rear of Lindsey's brigade to the corn field on Mrs.**

Lake's plantation.” “

United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Chapter XXIX, No. 12, Capt. Jacob T. Foster, First Wisconsin Battery Hdqrs. Foster's First Wisconsin Battery, 642-643

Courtesy of archive.org < <https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/642>>

Capt. Jacob T. Foster, First Wisconsin Battery. "In public domain. Work published prior to 1923."

"Dear Sir: I herewith submit the following report of our march from the Yazoo River, at a point about 20 miles from its mouth, where it enters the Mississippi River:

On the morning of the 26th we disembarked and put ourselves in condition for any emergency. Our ammunition was carefully placed and examined. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon, hearing a heavy fire in our front, we drew up in battery and remained there during the night, every man at his post.

December 27, 1862, Saturday.—"This morning we were ordered to report to Colonel DeCourcy and immediately received orders from him to advance. We then marched in column through the woods into the field southwest of the point of disembarkation and formed in line at double intervals, advancing through the scattered trees, between logs, and through bayous until **arriving near the house of Mrs. Lake, where we halted and formed in battery, expecting the enemy on our left. We remained at this point nearly two hours, after which we formed into column and moved forward and to the left on the bank of a bayou, known as Chickasaw Bayou, passing Mrs. Lake's house on our right, where we formed in battery, and before we had completed the movement were fired upon by sharpshooters from behind a levee thrown up on the opposite side of a bayou to our left and front. This occurred at 4.30 p.m.**

The firing now increased and became galling, as it was directed almost entirely on the battery, the enemy being completely sheltered by trees and the levee in their front. Here we fired in almost all directions except to the rear, until the enemy, emboldened by the little injury they sustained, showed their heads above the levee and showered their bullets upon us like rain. Having learned of their position, we opened the whole battery upon them with short-time fuse, which seemed to somewhat distract them; but in a few minutes they were shooting at us as rapidly as ever and with much effect. We then opened with canister at short range, and in a very few minutes swept the ground clean and caused them to cease firing and retreat.

In this engagement we had 3 men wounded, 1 mortally, who died on the 29th, and 4 horses shot and rendered unfit for service. We remained there until dark, when we moved to the right and rear about 400 yards and bivouacked for the night, the men remaining actually at their posts, equipments in hand, and ready at any moment."

December 27, 1862, Saturday, Henry Sherman Diary

"Laying on the ground on the bank of the Yazoo river about 8 miles from Vicksburgh [sic]. In the course of a few hours perhaps, we may be engaged in a deadly struggle. We are awaiting an order to move every moment. Regiment after regiment have filed past us as we lie on the ground. We have been under arms since 7 this morning. Heavy firing has been heard at intervals all along our front. About 11 A. M. we moved through an open piece of timber and took up our position in an old cotton field filled with nettles, and burrs six or eight feet in height. We were deployed in line of battle on the left of 69th Ind in Col. Sheldon's brigade being the left wing of the brigade. In the meanwhile heavy firing was heard for a short period in front and on the left which afterwards turned out to be an artillery duel. After remaining in our position a short time we were marched a mile to the front where we lay on our arms all night. The firing in front was continued until dark. Occasional discharges of musketry interspersed with the noise of artillery. About 10 P. M. a train of ambulances came filing past where we lay containing the wounded who numbered 12, two being killed in the skirmishing during the day. Felt cool and collected during the whole time."

68United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Chapter XXIX Sheldon No. 13,

pp 644-645. Courtesy of archive.org < <https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/644>>
In public domain. Work published prior to 1923.

December 28, 1862, Sunday, Report of Col. Sheldon, 1st Brigade, 3d Division under General Morgan
At about 10 o'clock the next day [28 Dec]

"I moved the Sixty-ninth to the **white house and the One hundred and twentieth to the bayou about 1 mile below**. About noon I was ordered to **bring up the One hundred and twentieth and take position in rear of Lindsey. I immediately moved forward and came up with Lindsey a little in advance of and to the right of the point where a section of Foster's battery was engaged** with a battery of the enemy. There I remained some twenty minutes under a storm of shells, but received no injury.

Pursuant to orders I then moved the **One hundred and twentieth across the bayou to the left of DeCourcy's position to support the Forty-ninth Indiana [of Lindsey's second Brigade]**; the Sixty-ninth I moved to a position on De Courcy's left, on the right of the bayou. The enemy at this point very soon opened on us with infantry, and I advanced two companies of the Sixty-ninth about 150 yards and returned the fire. In the skirmishing which then ensued the Sixty-ninth lost 1 killed and 2 wounded. In the mean time I was ordered to **cross the bayou** to take command of the Forty-ninth Indiana and One hundred and twentieth Ohio and **make a vigorous demonstration on the left to attract attention while De Courcy would make a charge in front**. I threw forward a line of skirmishers, presenting a concave front to the enemy's works, over which he had his colors hoisted, and opened on him a brisk fire. Then I moved forward the Forty-ninth on the right of my position near to the line of skirmishers with its left well advanced and opened a splendid line of fire at pretty close distance. I did not intend to move forward the One hundred and twentieth until I had well established the Forty-ninth, but being separated from my staff before crossing the bayou I was compelled to give personal attention to everything, and **Colonel French, of the One hundred and twentieth, having been previously ordered by someone on General Morgan's staff to advance on the left of the Forty-ninth, which fact I did not know, moved up unexpectedly to me and opened fire, which disconcerted me in my plans**. In advancing amid obstacles in line of battle the One hundred and twentieth became crowded together in the center, and receiving a sharp fire from the enemy for the first time (it being a new regiment) some confusion occurred; but through the aid of the faithful and well-directed efforts of Colonel French and Lieutenant-Colonel Spiegel order was soon restored and the regiment put into position. The contest was very sharp for about thirty minutes, both regiments putting a well-directed fire into the enemy's entrenchments. His flag-staff was shot off and **the advanced work cleared of its occupants. I continued to advance until reaching the edge of the bayou**, when the enemy opened on us with shell and grape, to which we could not reply with any effect. De Courcy did not charge, as I was informed he would, and I did not deem it advisable to do so unsupported. After a contest of some forty-five minutes I retired, having sustained a loss of 1 captain and 8 privates killed and 53 non-commissioned officers and privates wounded."

December 28, 1862, Sunday, Diary of Henry S. Sherman

*"Passed an almost sleepless night on the ground, it being so cold and damp that it was impossible to sleep. Arose about three A.M. and remained by the fire for a short time in hopes of getting warm and then going back to bed. About 4 A.M. the fires were ordered to be put out. At 5 the ball opened. Heavy discharges of Artillery were heard on all sides and soon after the infantry opened in front of us. We were drawn up in close column of companies until 9 A.M. when we were ordered to advance. When we had approached almost within rifle range of the enemy & had literally smelt powder we were **ordered to the left by Gen. Morgan, comdg. our Division to guard against a flank attack by the enemy who were menacing us in that direction. We immediately took up a position on the left along the bayou which runs in front of the Division. Our men were formed in the woods covered by the trees on the bank of the***

bayou. Heavy firing both of musketry and artillery is constantly heard and the ambulances are hurrying to the front. Only eight are reported wounded and none killed at this hour, (11 A.M.) About 11 and a half A. M. we were formed into line and marched back to the front and were there thrown into line in the rear of Foster's Battery behind the levee. [Webmaster's note: 1st Independent Battery Wisconsin Light Artillery was led by Jacob T. Foster. See his account below these Sherman diary excerpts.] We were very much exposed to the fire of a rebel battery. The shells came hurtling over our heads in a lively manner. Oh! what terrible sights witnessed during the half hour that we were in that position. Men torn limbs from limbs in every manner by the terrible missiles of destruction hurled from the rebel battery. My first impressions on coming under fire were indescribable. I did not dare to let fear arise in my heart but it was a hard matter [to] lie still and not reply. Just as we left the levee a round shot came hurtling through the air and from the hissing sound I knew it would strike near. I fell flat on my face and the shot passed directly over me and buried itself within three short feet of me. I shuddered involuntarily and thanked God for my narrow escape. We crossed the bayou immediately with orders to attack and take a battery if possible. We deployed into line and advance cautiously throwing out skirmishers in front and flanks. We had advanced to within a short distance of the battery when our skirmishers were attacked. Through a mistake our regiment opened upon the rebels and thereby endangering the lives of the skirmishers in front. They rapidly closed to the left and fell back on the regiment. The musket balls flew thick and fast around us and our men were thrown into confusion for a minute. I was terribly excited and might have, perhaps, skulked behind the trees had not this seemingly [sic] calamity occurred. But that aroused me and I threw all fear aside in endeavoring to rally our men on the left. After this is all a blank with the exception of one or two circumstances. We were under heavy fire for an hour but seemingly only for 10 minutes. I will remember the feelings that animated my breast on seeing the first man fall in front of me. He was shot through the lower part of the neck and when I first saw the blood spurting through the hole in his clothes a dizziness suddenly came over me almost unmaning me. In about an hour the firing ceased and we lay on our arms until about 7 P.M. when we were relieved by Gen. Blair's brigade and ordered across the bayou. We took up our position some distance to the right of Foster's battery for the night."

See Selections from the speeches and papers of James Humphrey Hoyt, 1850-1917, published 1922. Cleveland, Ohio printed for private circulation; digitized by Library of Congress, The Library of Congress is unaware of any copyright restrictions for this item. **See especially pages 134-136 for an event that I believe occurred at Chickasaw Bayou.**

<https://archive.org/details/selectionsfromsp00hoyt/page/134?q=Henry+S.+Sherman>

Hall, Winchester, The Story of the 26th Louisiana Infantry, in the Service of the Confederate States, 1890. Cornell University Library page 47

<https://archive.org/details/cu31924030922649/page/n4>

*This contains a terrific drawing/map that **explains right were the 120th was fighting on December 28th at Chickasaw.** This book has been reprinted, so I don't know if I can quote it here or show the map. **Go there to read and see the map!***

United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Chapter XXIX No. 12 page 642, Report of Capt. Jacob T. Foster December 31, 1862, 642-643 Courtesy of archive.org. < <https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/642> > In public domain. Work published prior to 1923.

Capt. Jacob T. Foster, First Wisconsin Battery

Page 643 December 28, 1862, Sunday, .—"This morning we moved into a work which had been thrown up

during the night by the Forty-second Ohio on the ground which we occupied the evening previous, and where we remained until 10 a.m., when we were ordered forward in front of the levee and lagoon before mentioned and where there was not sufficient room to work our pieces. Lieutenant Webster then went forward and to the right about 400 yards, sheltered by woods, while Lieutenants Nutting and Hackett and myself remained with the four pieces, intending to silence a battery which was playing upon us severely at that time and seemed to have the range perfectly. Here the bursting of shells, the crashing of trees, the thunder of our own guns, and the showering of bullets seemed enough almost to drive us back, but bravely did our men stand their ground, and although many of them were knocked down, strange to say none were hurt, but several were severely shocked for a moment. Lieutenant Nutting had a shell to burst in the ground about 2 feet under him, raising him several feet into the air and completely stunning him for several minutes without otherwise injuring him. We continued firing at the battery until we silenced it, or at least it ceased firing. The remainder of the battery then moved forward and formed in battery on the left of lieutenant Webster, who commanded the right section. At this point we fired several rounds, when, night coming on, the noise of the battle ceased and all was silent but an occasional musket-shot."

Letter from Benjamin Eason, Holmes County Farmer, From the 120th Regiment, 29 Jan 1863, p 2, column 5. Holmes County farmer. (Millersburg, Ohio), 29 Jan. 1863. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84028822/1863-01-29/ed-1/seq-2> Portions of the letter.

On Board Steamboat Key West, Mississippi River, **Jan. 6, '63**

"Our brigade consists of the 120th Ohio, 118 Illinois and 69th Indiana, commanded by Colonel Sheldon, of Elyria, O., now acting as Brigadier-General. Ours is the Third Division, consisting of the Col. DeCoursey's, Col. Lindsey's, and our brigade, in all ten regiments, commanded by Major Gehnerl George W. Morgan, of Mt. Vernon, O. Our division is a part of the Right Wing of the Thirteenth Army Corps....under command of Gen. Sherman, and the whole corps under the command of Gen. Grant."

Timeline made from Eason's letter. Captain Benjamin Eason, Co E.

Dec 7, 1862, Landed at Memphis, Tennessee

Dec 20, 1862, boarded transports and moved down the Mississippi.

Lay over at Helena, Arkansas, to join other troops.

Arrived at mouth of the Yazoo River, **December 25, 1862**.

Moved up the Yazoo 10 to 12 miles to Chickasaw Bayou.

Dec 27, 1862, disembarked and marched toward Vickburg until arriving at cornfield on Mrs. Lake's plantation. Col DeCoursey's brigade was somewhere ahead of them.

Bivouacked for the night and slept in the cornfield.

Dec 28, 1862, moved forward toward their batter, then moved back along the bayou to protect flank. Moved back up to support Foster's 1st Wisconsin Battery. Lay down behind the battery. Capt Downing and 2nd Lt Jones were almost hit by a non-exploding shell. Ordered back again across the bayou to a thick woods to attack a Rebel battery. Ordered by Colonel "march by left flank" to be less exposed to cannonading. Passed General Morgan and staff. Capt Downing's company [Co A] moved forward "commanded by Lieut. Eberhart." Regiment moved forward still in thick woods. 300 to 400 yards when skirmishers had to fire. 49th Indiana on the right fired. Then heavy firing from the Rebels behind embankment. Over 35 minutes of firing. Rebels hid then in rifle pits behind the bank of the bayou. Charles Merrit [Pvt, Co E] was shot in hand. Relieved at dark by Gen Blair's troops. Recrossed bayou at dark.

Dec 29, 1862, Monday

Morning ordered to move forward to support 5th Iowa battery on right of Foster's battery.

Afternoon occupied line between Iowa battery and Foster's. Wisconsin battery immediately to left. Shelled by Rebels. Camp McKinley's regiment had wounded. Heavy line of skirmishers under Lt. Eberhart fired at Rebel rifle pits, but they stayed hidden. Shelling camp all night, moved 2 or 3 times. Heavy rain that night.

Dec 30, 1862, Tuesday

Quiet day. News of suffering of the 16th Ohio in their charge across the bayou. "...planting batteries and throwing up field works."

Dec 31, 1862, Wednesday

Moved forward to field works. Occasional shelling. View from the low ground, some woods and some open, of the enemy's works on the hills on the other side of the bayou.

Jan 1, 1863

Orders to board the boats at 1 o'clock next morning.

San Juan Islander Thursday 15 Dec, 1898, Courtesy of the Shaw Island Historical Society and Saltwater People Historical Society, in Washington, USA.

Soldier mentioned in the letter above from Benjamin Eason.

2nd Lieut Isaiah Jones, Co A He became very ill during the war and resigned 14 Jan 1863 and returned home. After recovering he joined the Missouri Militia and was assigned as Captain to fight the bands of marauders and bring order to northern Missouri. "...he so far recovered as to be able to re-enlist. This time in a Missouri regiment gotten up in Caldwell county, Missouri, where his parents had located during his absence. When the companies were organized he was elected captain of Co. 'B,' I think, which company he commanded till the close of the war, taking an active part in the gurrilla [sic] warfare that was so sanguinary in the southern and southwestern part of that state, as well as several general engagements." **After the war he became sheriff of Caldwell County, Missouri.**

Hardesty's historical and geographical encyclopedia, illustrated ... : containing ... maps of each state and territory of the united states, and the provinces of canada ... history of the united states, history of each state and territory of the united states ... special military history of ohio ... ohio's rank and file in the war of the rebellion ...Pub NY, Sketches of Wayne County, OH, 1885, p 510.

Private Francis Kidd, Company D

"While upon the way down the river [Mississippi] Mr. Kidd was detailed to care for the sick, and showed such fitness for the work that he was kept in that department the greater part of his army life. On the way to the south the regiment was assigned to its command and with General Sherman's army attempted to effect a landing at the Chickasaw Bayou. During this engagement Mr. Kidd was faithful in caring for his sick and wounded comrades. Near Vicksburg Mr. Kidd joined his regiment, but had only been with them two hours when an order was received from General Grant, calling him again to his post in the hospital, and from this position he was sent to the floating hospital."

Soldiers' and Citizens' Album of Biographical Record [of Wisconsin] Containing Personal Sketches of Army Men and Citizens Prominent in Loyalty to the Union: Also a Chronological and Statistical History of the Civil War, and a History of the Grand Army of the Republic, with Portraits of Soldiers and Prominent Citizens, Volume 1, by Grand Army Pub., 1888 NOT_IN_COPYRIGHT

<https://archive.org/details/soldierscitizens00brow/page/n10?q=Soldiers+and+citizens+album>

Sgt. John Baer, Company H

"At Chickasaw Bluffs Mr. Baer was in command of a detail of 26 men under peremptory orders to hold a gap. Part of the detail fell back and he, with eight others, stood to their guns until they received orders to abandon a forlorn hope and with his own hand he pulled the lanyards of the last gun fired in the repulse at the Bluffs. The little party was the last squad to board the transport in the river and, for his record of Dec. 28th, 1862, he received his first commission."

Wounded at Chickasaw Bayou, December 28, 1862

Private **Charles D. MERRIT**, Co E, is a complete mystery other than this mention in Eason's letter. Nothing but his rank is given in the Ohio Roster. Wounded in hand.

Wounded

Private **John J. A. FOSS**, Co H, was wounded at Chickasaw Bayou, 28 Dec 1862. The Initial wounded list in the Daily Missouri Republican, 12 Jan 1863, stated that he was wounded in the side His name was also spelled Fass, Fars, and Fosse.

Wounded

Private **Judson WELLS**, [Adorian J. Wells], Co A, was wounded at Chickasaw Bayou, 28 Dec 1862. He had been listed at St. Marks Hospital, Paducah, Kentucky in the Wooster Republican of 29 January 1863 as wounded slightly. He was discharged 20 March 1863 for disability.

Wounded

Private **Daniel HENNEY**, Daniel, Co C, was wounded in the right shoulder at Chickasaw Bayou, 28 Dec 1862

Wounded

Private **William ARNOLD**, Co D, was wounded at Chickasaw Bayou, 28 Dec 1862.

1st Sgt **Andrew C. Bushong**, Co H, died December 28, 1862, Memphis, TN, at Overton General Hospital. Cause: Typhoid fever. He was probably teaching at the Academy in Smithville, OH, with Captain James Taylor when the regiment was formed.

United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Chapter XXIX No. 12 page 642, Report of Capt. Jacob T. Foster, First Wisconsin Battery Hdqrs. 642-643. Courtesy of archive.org.

<<https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/642>> In public domain. Work published prior to 1923.

December 29, 1862, Monday, Jacob T. Foster, 1st WI Battery.—"The commanding was opened at 7.30 a.m. and was truly terrific to us. Shell after shell burst among us in the air just in front, sending in our midst a hail-storm of bursting shell. At this moment it seemed as if all of their artillery fire was concentrated upon my battery, and continued until about 10 a.m., at which time, not having silenced us, they turned their guns on different parts of the field. During this part of the firing one of the enemy's caissons was blown up, the rear chests of another shot off, the hind wheel of a third shot from its axle, and such a hot fire was directed upon the latter caisson that they could or did not remove it until after night of the same day. At the time of the charge upon the enemy we discovered that on our right there seemed to come from some canebrakes a galling fire upon our men, when I directed one piece to fire with short-time fuse upon the clump of brakes, which had good effect, seeming to drive them out by the hundred. We continued firing until none came out and cased at the time of the repulse.

Too high praise cannot be said of the conduct of my command, of their coolness and bravery. The gunners were particularly self-possessed, always running in front of their guns to see the result of their shot, the smoke obscuring the enemy after each discharge.

I omitted to mention that early in the engagement of the second day the vent of one of my pieces burned and partially blew out, rendering it unsafe to use only by firing very slowly. During the three days we were engaged we used 2,380 rounds of ammunition.

The condition of my men is such that they will soon be ready to enter the field, but are at present much exhausted. This could not be otherwise expected, as the guns were handled as rapidly as light artillery, whereas they are in fact siege pieces, and should have at least 175 men to maneuver them.

Trusting hereafter we may have better success, I am, most respectfully, yours,

Jacob T. Foster, Captain First Wisconsin Battery

Lieut. E. D. Saunders, Acting Assistant Adjutant-General"

Reid, Whitelaw, Ohio in the War: her statement, generals, and soldiers, Volume 2, 614.

Reid, Whitelaw, Ohio in the War: her statement, generals, and soldiers, Volume 2, The Robert Clarke Co, 1895 Section on 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry pp. 614 Ohio in the War: her statement, generals, and soldiers, Volume 2, by Whitelaw Reid, The Robert Clarke Co, 1895, Robert Clarke Co, Section on 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry pp. 614-615] [This Google book: There are no restrictions on use of text transcribed

from the images, or paraphrased or translated using the images.]

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uva.x002044840;view=1up;seq=13>

December 29, 1862, Monday, Day of Morgan's charge... "The One Hundred and Twentieth had been ordered to cover a working party engaged in laying a pontoon across Chickasaw Bayou, and hence took no part in this assault, but was exposed to the enemy's fire during the entire day. A terrible rain-storm, peculiar to that climate, raged during the whole of the ensuing night, which owing to the inexperience of the officers and men of the regiment, proved very disastrous, prostrating a large number with fevers and other virulent diseases common to the South

United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886., Chapter XXIX, No. 10, Gen.

George W. Morgan, Hdqrs. Ed Div., Right Wind, 13th Army Corps, p 640. Courtesy of archive.org

< <https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/640> >

December 29, 1862, Monday, General George W. Morgan, "...at 2 p. m. of the 29th ultimo, Captain Patterson, engineer, placed in the water and floored six boats ; but they did not extend two-thirds of the way across the bayou. In all there were eight boats provided, but two of them were so leaky they immediately filled and sank. At 3.30 p. m. of that day, convinced that to renew the assault from the center would be but to doom the charging column to certain destruction, I directed Colonel Lindsey to cease his attempts to build a bridge until further orders."

United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Chapter XXIX Lionel A. Sheldon No 13, pp 644-645. Courtesy of archive.org.

<<https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/644>>

December 29, 1862, Monday, Report of Col. Sheldon

"On the morning of the 29th instant I advance the Sixty-ninth to the front at the point where Captain Patterson was to construct a pontoon bridge, where it remained until noon, when I moved my brigade in position to support Lindsey. The skirmishers of the Sixty-ninth were sharply engaged all the forenoon and met with a loss of 1 killed and 5 wounded. During the forenoon my brigade was subjected to a continuous storm of shells, but escaped damage altogether. At 2 p. m. the One hundred and twentieth was moved to the right of De Courcy and advanced to the bayou, where it skirmished all the afternoon and sustained a loss of 7 wounded. At 9 p.m. it was moved back, leaving a heavy line of skirmishers on the bayou. My brigade was shelled all night, wounding 2 of the One hundred and twentieth at one explosion. I was compelled to change position twice in the night and once during the day."

December 29, 1862, Monday, Diary of Henry S. Sherman

"Before day light the rebel batteries opened upon us with astonishing vigor, shelling our position in the woods and all around it for quite a distance making it very uncomfortable for some time. Our batteries responded in a similar spirit but with apparently little success as the firing from our guns seemed to make very little impression upon them. The roar of the Artillery and the discharge of musketry made the place a perfect pandemonium until late in the afternoon. The discharges were incessant and the shells flew thick and fast. Our regiment was, early in the forenoon, thrown forward along the bayou and a heavy force of skirmishers were deployed along our front. They kept up an incessant fire which tended to keep the rebels down although they continued to throw shell among us almost continually. While lying in that position a shell fell in the midst of Company C. wounding 4 or 5 slightly, but none seriously. After dark we fell back a few yards to a ravine where we remained under cover for a space of two hours. After which we fell back to a position to the right of the one we occupied the night before. About dark it commenced raining and continued to rain very hard during the night making it very uncomfortable for the men who lay

in the water all night. We lay down (the Adjutant and I) at the foot of a tree and were awakened in the course of an hour or two by finding the water in our bed and ourselves pretty well soaked. We got up and took a new position at the foot of another tree where we lay shivering the remainder of the night but getting little sleep."

*****Holmes County farmer. (Millersburg, Ohio), 29 Jan. 1863. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.
<<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84028822/1863-01-29/ed-1/seq-2/>> p 2. Letter from Benjamin Eason, Co E. On Board Steamboat Key West,, Mississippi River, Jan. 6, '63. Gives positions of the regiment on Dec. 29th.

Wounded at Chickasaw Bayou, December 29, 1862.

Corporal **Henry Smith MOSER**, Co K, was wounded at Chickasaw Bayou, Dec, 1862

Descendant Michael Moser says about Henry, "He was seriously wounded and had to make his own way back to his home at Rome, OH, a community that is now known as Shiloh, OH, outside Mansfield. It took him months to make his way back home...he was 42 when he entered the war....the wound is described in a letter from one of the doctors who treated him on his journey...he went back [into the army] a year later in the U.S. Veterans Reserve Corps...and again rose to the rank of First Sgt."

Wounded

Private **Christian BUISCHLEN**, [BUSHNELL, BUSHNEL], Co I, was wounded at Chickasaw Bluffs by a musket ball according to his pension papers. He was later transferred to the 13th Co, 2d Battalion, Veteran Reserve Corps on 1 Sept 1863 because of his wound. He was 5'3" tall with a light complexion and blue eyes.

Wounded and Died of wounds

Private **Jacob BROUSE**, Co G, was wounded at Chickasaw Bayou, **29 Dec 1862** He died 12 Jan 1863 on the hospital boat "Henry Von Phul" of his wounds. Jacob was helping to support his mother and continued to send her money from his military pay check. His burial place is unknown.

Story from Jay McAfee about his distant cousins:

Corp. John McQuigg Jr., of Company A, had an older brother, Corp. **James C. McQUIGG of the 16th Ohio Volunteer Infantry**. James was severely wounded at Chickasaw Bluffs and Bayou. It was said that a Confederate Cannon blast bent James' musket to where the bayonet was nearly touching the butt stock of his musket. His fingers were severely mangled by the blast and a musket ball. He received an honorable discharge from the Army.

Wounded

Private **Amasa JONES**, Co C, was wounded **29 Dec 1862**.

Wounded

Private **John TANNEY**, [TAWNEY], Co C, had a flesh wound in his left hip at Chickasaw Bayou, **29 Dec 1862**. His name was listed in the *Wooster Republican* on 29 January 1863: In St. Marks Hospital, Paducah, Ky. L.S. Holton surgeon in charge: John Tawny, 120th, [wounded] slightly. He was discharged 20 Mar 1863 at Paducah, Kentucky.

Wounded and died later

Corporal **Samuel BUDD**, Company C, 5'10", light complexion, blue eyes, sandy hair. He died later on 15 Mar 1863 of peritonitis at Paducah, Kentucky. The widow's pension states that Major McKinley certified that Samuel had been wounded a short time before he died. A druggist, William B. FASIG, at the hospital in Paducah testified from personal knowledge that Samuel was suffering from wounds received in battle

when he came to the hospital, but he recovered from the wound only to be attacked with disease and died. L. S. Horton, Assistant Surgeon, USA reported that Samuel Budd was admitted to USA ("St. Marks") General Hospital No. 3 in Paducah KY from a hospital steamer which came from the vicinity of Vicksburg, on 13 Jan 1863 with a contusion of the right ankle. Captain McKinley said that Samuel received his wounds on **29 Dec 1862** near Vicksburg while in the line of duty as a soldier.

Wounded

Sgt **Cyrus WALTER**, Cyrus, Co A, was wounded 29 Dec 1862.

Wounded brothers

Private **Aaron BUCKLEY**, Co C, was wounded at Chickasaw Bayou, 29 Dec 1862.

Aaron's brother was Private **John E. BUCKLEY** of the same company who was wounded on the same day. He died 28 Jan 1863 in hospital at St. Louis, Missouri from the flesh wound of his leg and from disease. He was buried at home in Hayesville, Ashland County, Ohio.

Wounded

Private **Levi MOURER** [Mowrer], Co A, of East Union Twp, Wayne County Ohio, was wounded at Chickasaw Bayou, **29 Dec 1862**.

Private **Jacob Stauffer**, Co B, died December 29, 1862, back at Overton Hospital, Memphis, TN. He was 5'7" tall, light complexion, blue eyes, auburn hair. Cause: typhoid fever, and chronic diarrhoea.

United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Chapter XXIX, Sheldon No. 13, 645. Courtesy of archive.org. < <https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/644>>

December 30, 1862, Tuesday, Report of Col. Sheldon, page 645

"On the 30th I occupied the front on the right of Decourcy. Little occurred during the day except slight skirmishing. The night was quiet."

· New York Herald, Vol XXVIII, Issue: 17 Page 2-3, Sunday 18 Jan 1863, , Library of Congress, Chronicling America

The New York herald. (New York [N.Y.]), 18 Jan. 1863. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030313/1863-01-18/ed-1/seq-2/>>

wounded uncared for, criticism

Holmes County Farmer., January 29, 1863, page 2, Chronicling America

Holmes County farmer. (Millersburg, Ohio), 29 Jan. 1863. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84028822/1863-01-29/ed-1/seq-2/>>

regret over the 16th Ohio suffering on the 29th

December 30, 1862, Tuesday, Diary of Henry S. Sherman

"We lay in our position all day. All was very quiet with the exception of a little picket firing in the extreme front."

Holmes County Farmer., January 29, 1863, page 2, Chronicling America

Holmes County farmer. (Millersburg, Ohio), 29 Jan. 1863. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84028822/1863-01-29/ed-1/seq-2/>>

Benjamin Eason Jan 6th Letter, small movement forward Dec 31, no fighting, a few shells

United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Chapter XXIX Sheldon, No. 13, 645. Courtesy of archive.org. <<https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/644>>

December 31, 1862, Wednesday, Report of Col. Sheldon

"My two regiments in the field are new and inexperienced. Colonel Bennett, of the Sixty-ninth, and Colonel French, of the One hundred and twentieth, have conducted themselves with attentiveness, skill, and courage, and officers and men of both have behaved like veterans."

December 31, 1862, Wednesday, Diary of Henry S. Sherman

"The same as yesterday only a little more quiet if anything. In our same position and awaiting them to open upon us, but were very agreeably disappointed. About 5 P.M. we moved to the right a little to protect a battery. Our regiment was thrown into the rifle pit in the rear of Lamphere's Battery where they were safe comparatively speaking."

United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886. Chapter XXIX Stevenson, No. 28, 676-677. Courtesy of archive.org. <<https://archive.org/details/warofrebellion171unit/page/676>>

One the Confederate side: Maj Gen C. L. Stevenson, commanding forces in front of Vicksburg No. 28

"On the night of the 1st there were indications that the enemy was landing troops at Snyder's Mill, but early on the morning of the 2^d it was clear that there was no intention of attacking that point and that he was actually embarking his troops. Five regiments, under the command of General Lee [S. D. Lee] and Colonel Withers, were sent to harass him during this operation. One of these regiments (the Second Texas) pursued the retreating foe to the very bank of the river, and, notwithstanding an incessant and heavy fire from twelve of his gunboats, poured volley after volley into his ranks while he hurriedly embarked upon his transports and steamed rapidly beyond rifle range."

January 1, 1863, Thursday, Diary of Henry S. Sherman

".This morning early our men were set to work digging rifle pits near the edge of the bayou. When the rebels perceived this they commenced shelling them so our men desisted for the time. One shell struck within a few feet from Col. Spiegel which fortunately for him did not explode. After dark our men commenced digging again. About 9 P.M. when the Adjutant and I were just falling asleep Co. Spiegel came to us and astounded us by saying that we were ordered to evacuate our position and fall back to the boats. About 11 o'clock we quietly withdrew and commenced our retreat. We arrived at the boats about 1 A.M. after a most fatiguing march over ploughed ground of some four miles."

Holmes County Farmer., January 29, 1863, page 2, *Chronicling America*

Holmes County farmer. (Millersburg, Ohio), 29 Jan. 1863. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84028822/1863-01-29/ed-1/seq-2/>>

Letter Jan 6, 1863, Capt. Benjamin Eason, Co E, on the Key West, retreat, unknown

destination

The Highland weekly news. (Hillsborough [Hillsboro], Highland County, Ohio), 15 Jan. 1863. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers.* Lib. of Congress.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038158/1863-01-15/ed-1/seq-2/>

Telegraphic Correspondence Daily Commercial: Later from Vicksburg.

Heavy Rains Monday. Repulse at retreat by boats Marmora, Lexington, Switzerland, Monarch, Chicago Mercantile Battery; article about Chickasaw battle. Column 4.

Samuel and Henry KINSLEY [KNISELY] of Company K are on the roster as missing in action 1 Jan 1863 at Chickasaw Bayou. In 1890 Henry was listed in the Veterans Schedule as living in Shreve, Wayne County, Ohio, even though he was not listed in the pension index at that time. He was listed as having been in Co K from 1863 to 1865 and was suffering from malarial fever. Samuel's wife was turned down for a pension in 1891. Was it because of desertion?

Did the brothers ever actually return to their regiment?

End Chapter 5

Research by Susie Holderfield, 2001-2019

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