

Chapter 9 Continued Controversy

Published Thursday, 30 Apr 1863, Wooster Republican, pg 3, available at Wayne County Library, Wooster, OH.

Written 2 Apr 1863 George W. Gardner letter. He explains that even he was unhappy and down on the war during the worst of the conditions at Young's Point. He admits that even he had written "peace letters." He explains that attitudes are improving. Lack of support from northern states [anti war Democrat newspapers and letters] was discouraging to the troops. Apparently there had been rumors that the regiment was not up to par, "worst regiment in the field." [Consider the anti-war writings of the Democrats at home as being to blame for this!] He was in support of the new conscription law and hoped that men would join in the fight.

This kind of talk at home and in the regiment on the part of the Democrats gave rise to the notion that the regiment was not up to par. It certainly improved after some of the rats like Dean left the war. Dean wrote a letter saying that the Black Republican officers 'were caught skulking in both their battles and that no Democrat had done so. [Wayne County Democrat of March 26th, 1862] H. BUCK. Rowsburg, April 4, 1863. [Note: Captain Henry Buck, Company F] refuted Dean's charges [Wooster Republican, 9 April 1863, page 2] Buck charged Dean with "political demagogism a withering curse to any regiment." E. V. Dean spoken of in the letter was Regimental Quarter Master. Dean resigned 27 Oct 1863.] **Wooster Republican news article, Published in Wooster Republican, 9 April 1863, page 2** Letter from officers denouncing E V. Dean "as an unmitigated liar and slanderer." Signed by Capt Myers Co G, Capt Brayton Co B, Lieut Strickler Co B, Lieut Zuver, Co F, and Lieut Stanley, Co G who was present only at Arkansas Post. Capt Henry Buck, Co F, said of Dean's charges: "But I am of the opinion that Adjutant Slocum's fieldglass did not contain lenses of sufficient magnifying powers to have allowed the Quartermaster [Ezra Dean], in the use thereof, from his general stand point to have witnessed a stampede of the entire army corps." Buck also said: "Lieut. Col. Speigle [sic] after the battle of Vicksburg, where the 120th was first tried on, said on a certain occasion, if anybody says the 120th won't fight, tell them they lie d__n 'em. Gen. Morgan rode up to Col. French and complimented him in person for the bravery not of a certain political class of officers or privates, but of the 120th Regiment."

Written 25 Jan 1863 and published 2 Apr 1863: Company G, in a letter, made it clear that Capt Myers had taken over the Chippewa Company because John McSweeney, who had raised the company, had then abandoned it and had come home. Myers had been told by his doctor not to join the regiment, but Myers did anyway. Some at home made it seem that Myers had "run away." Ezra Dean, a big trouble maker in the regiment, had made that charge. "And we further certify that the Captain has never tried to intrude his political views upon any of us." [Thursday, July 9, 1863 Paper: Wooster Republican (Wooster, OH) available at Genealogy Bank]

John McSweeney was a supporter of Vallandigham [Democrat] in the campaign for Ohio Governor.

Wooster Republican newspaper, pg 2, Thurs. 7 May 1863, Wayne county library or pay site. Captain Myers wrote his own letter to Abraham Harshey of his company on 6 April 1863. He seemed to think that E.V. Dean and Col. Spiegel were against him. He made it clear that he was against slavery but that he would, in order to save lives, compromise on the question of ending it entirely.

Wooster Republican, 9 April 1863, page 2 said that Dean would read copperhead newspapers to the boys with speeches by men such as Vallandigham. The article also hinted that Dean had something to do with the disappearance of a large quantity of cheese that the 120th had guarded on the way south from Cincinnati to Memphis and were then blamed for its disappearance.

Wooster Republican newspaper, pg 2, Thurs. 7 May 1863: "And we here desire to say that whatever remarks we have at any time made, reflecting on Col. Spiegle, were caused by the belief that, by his presence and silence and without reproof, he allowed Dean and his assistants to circulate these treasonable documents which were denounced and prohibited by other loyal Commanders. We are now most glad to know that a different policy was adopted by Col. Spiegle, as soon as he was in Chief Command of the Regiment..."

END CHAPTER 9

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