

Samuel Welch was born February 8, 1837 in Union Township Tuscarawas County Ohio. He died June 3, 1918.

The 51st Inft. Ohio was organized at the Tuscarawas County Fair grounds during the months of September and October 1861. It is well for us that our destiny is hidden from us. Here were a thousand men in one train of cars starting away to take part in the hardest fought war of modern times. One of my brothers who had driven that dark Nov. morning to bid me an affectionate farewell and wish me a safe return was himself buried in a soldier's grave within a year. Our train arrived at Wellsville, Ohio at 1 P.M. We marched to the square where we remained till 4 O'clock when three steamboats-Commodore Perry-Florence-and Margo-landed, and we marched aboard.

We were the first troops that had passed down the Ohio. The day was warm and pleasant and in order to get a good view we filled the upper decks of the boat. Our brass band made the water ring with national airs. At Cincinnati we marched through the city to the river and took passage on the Jacob Strader and at Daybreak the 17th we found ourselves at Louisville, Ky. We had left Tuscarawas County November 3, 1861 and arrived at Cincinnati on the 5th. From here we marched to the Little Miami Depot and took the train to Camp Dennison. Camp Dennison was situated twelve miles northeast of Cincinnati on the Little Miami. The camp was established there for a rendezvous for Ohio troops preparatory to moving on southern soil. When the 51st Ohio Regiment reached Camp Dennison the evening of Nov. 5, 1861, we found comfortable barracks already provided. We drew arms and equipment and commenced a regular system of drill. We soon found our Colonel to be right for the office he held. Colonel Mathews was one of the few regimental commanders who was known as a very strict disciplinarian and who held the confidence and good will of every man in the regiment. We remained in this camp ten days. When we arrived at Louisville on the 17th, we carried off our camp equipage, loaded our wagon train and marched through the city and encamped four miles south at Camp Jenkins. Here we pitched our tents for the first time. We remained in this camp for twenty-one days organizing a division for an advance into Kentucky, and taking lessons in the art of war.

Nashville was a very important military point to the rebels, and just as important to us. In the fall of Nashville the enemy lost all hope of winning Kentucky to their cause, and east Tennessee was liberated from the tyranny of secession.

The 51st Ohio regiment was provost guards of Nashville from the 27th of February to the 3rd day of July 1862, when we were relieved by the 69th Ohio.

We were relieved from provost duty at Nashville July 3. We moved out to the commons where we encamped till the 10th. That day we started to join our division at the front. We moved back through the city to give the people a farewell march. As we marched down Church and Summer streets we stepped to the tune "Red White and Blue". On Broad street we gave them "Hail Columbia", and as we moved out of the city on College street we tramped the dust of the city off our shoes to the beautiful tune, "The Girl I Left Behind Me".

The flag was always in the center of the line. The color-bearer was supported by four guards, and the color bearer and guards were excused from all guard duty. The regiments always camped, marched and fought in this order. In time of battle when the regimental line got temporarily broken the drill soldier redily found his place in the line by watching the flag. In case the color-bearer got killed or wounded it was the duty of the guards to raise the colors immediately.

We passed through the city at 4:30 P.M. July 11, and camped near a large spring on the Wartrace road. We moved out early the morning of the 12th and camped seventeen miles south where we remained until sunset the 13th. While in this camp we could hear the cannonading at Murfreesboro, and it has always been a mystery to me why we were not sent back to help Lt. Sargent out of his trouble. During the next seven months we camped frequently near Murfreesboro. We had started from Nashville July 10th, to join our division at McMinnville and the interceding time had been spent in moving from place to place trying to head off Forrester's cavalry. We pitched our tents in good camp style and commenced a regular system of drill. Our division was

commanded by Gen. Nelson. His headquarters were in a fine college building north of town. We had not seen our division commander since we were detached from the command Feb. 27 to do provost duty at Nashville. Aug. 4th at 4 A. M. we moved and took the road leading to Sparta. Soon after we started a bright young colored man joined the column and asked the privilege of going with us. His request was granted with the promise of full rations. His master followed him and went with us a half mile trying to persuade his "property" to go back with him, but all in vain. We made an early start for Sparta on the 5th and marched seven miles when our orders were countermanded. We all arrived safe at McMinnville at 11 P. M. having marched 27 miles during the day. From the 6th to the 11th we got much needed rest in camp. At this date it was reported that John Morgan's cavalry was at Liberty, 35 miles north of McMinnville, with the evident design of assisting Gen. Forrester in detaining Gen. Buell from moving on Chattanooga. We started at daybreak the morning of the 11th, and camped at sunset near Smithville and reached Liberty at 11 A.M., the 12th. Morgan gave up Liberty during the night of the 11th and we took possession where we remained till the evening of the 13th. We left Liberty at 4:30 P. M. the 13th and arrived at an old camp at McMinnville at 5:30 on the 14th.

On the 20th our company was detailed to guard a supply train to Murfreesboro and return. We arrived at Murfreesboro at 10:30 A.M. and when we got there we learned that the enemy had destroyed our railroad north of town and we were put on half rations for the first time.

Our train was loaded and started back the evening of the 22nd. We passed through Woodbury at noon the 24th and when we reached the top of the hill south of Woodbury we met our cavalry coming back, who reported that the enemy was between us and McMinnville, preparing to attack the train. Our train was ordered back and we turned and moved back to Woodbury and parked the train. On the 25th we started at daybreak and arrived at Murfreesboro at noon and parked the train near the depot. We had a good garrison force at Murfreesboro at this time and the rebels followed us to within three miles of the town evidently with the intention of attacking the garrison and destroying our supplies. On the 30th our scouts reported that the enemy had given up the attack and had gone and at 4 P.M. of that date we started again for McMinnville. We arrived at McMinnville at 7 P. M. September 1st, and were surprised to find that our division had gone from there and when we arrived at our camp we found that our tents had been burned.

During our absence our whole division had gone from there and been sent to Sparta on a reconnoissance in force, and our camp left in charge of the convelescents who could not march. The next morning after the reconnoissance started the town was threatened by the Confederates, and our camp equipage and stores burned to prevent them from falling into the possession of the enemy. Our division returned to its burned camp on the 2nd and reported that Bragg's army was moving north on the east side of the Cumberland range. General Nelson had been ordered to Louisville to take charge of the new call for 300,000 troops and we had orders to prepare to move north at daybreak September 3rd. We were put on half rations, and started at daybreak the morning of September 3rd, without the least idea of our destination. Camp rumor told us that Bragg's army was moving on Murfreesboro and that the army of the Ohio was falling back to that town, and that the conflict would likely take place near Stone river. We moved early the next morning and with bands playing and colors unfurled we marched through Murfreesboro in good style at 2 P.M. and encamped on the Lytle farm. Here we met the whole army of the Ohio for the first time since we were detached at Nashville February 27th. On the morning of the 6th we started at 5 A.M. Before we broke camp we were told to fill our canteens as there was no water for the next nineteen miles. We reached Lavergne at sun-set and encamped for the night. Here is where our supply trains had been captured and burned ten days before and judging by the ruins of burned cars and torn-up tracks it is very easy to understand why we were on half rations. On the 7th we moved at sun rise and after a hard forenoon's march we stacked arms at Mill creek with instructions to prepare dinner hastily. About the time we got our coffee boiling we were called in line and marched back to the pike and turned towards Nashville. We entered the town at 2 P. M. and marched through on "quick time". We camped five miles north of Nashville.

When the great movement of the Army of the Ohio commenced on the 3rd day of September, no one had an idea that we would fall back (275) miles to Louisville, Ky. without a conflict with the enemy. On the part of the enemy it was the most daring venture of the war. There is no parallel in history that I know of where an army of 50,000 men left its base and moved 300 miles through a country that had been held by the enemy, and within striking distance of an army of the same size, and where a conflict was likely to take place any day.

No through trains had been running on the L&N Railroad for two weeks, and hence our short rations. Our supply of crackers was all gone, and our supply of flour almost so. We marched without equipage. Our tents had been burned, and we made the whole trip to Louisville without shells of any kind. Our teams had been reduced to three for each reg. and what few cooking utensils we had we carried with us. The war department issued an order to muster out all the brass bands except one for each division. It was hard for us to part with these men. Their "Dixie Land" and "Listen to the Mocking Bird" had driven away discouragement from us on many a weary march. I think of the light steps we took to their sweet music in the valleys of Kentucky and Tennessee.

On September 8 we moved to Edgefield Junction, and on the 9th to Tyaree Springs. On the 10th we moved at 5 A.M. and encamped at Mitchellsville south of the Tennessee and Kentucky state line.

The 11th we started at daybreak and crossed the state line and marched fifteen miles and encamped. During the 12th we rested in camp and on the 13th we camped at "Sinking Springs". We remained in camp here three days, and while we were in this camp the advance of Bragg's army reached Mumfordsville and attacked our garrison. Mumfordsville is situated at the point where the L&N Railroad crosses Green River. This was the first time since February 16th that we had camped on Kentucky soil. The garrison at Mumfordsville had surrendered to Bragg's army. We moved at 3 P.M. on the 16th and passed through Bowling Green and encamped one mile from town. On the 17th we started at daybreak without rations, and marched 20 miles and encamped at 2 P. M. the road was crowded with troops and our team did not come in till 10 o'clock at night. We went to bed without supper, and before day we were awakened and received half rations, but before we could eat the bugle sounded the march, and we were ordered to "fall in" At sunrise on the morning of the 19th our captured garrison passed through our camp to the rear. Gen. Bragg was so far away from his base he had no use for prisoners of war. We remained in this camp for three days, and while here drew rations for two days with instructions that the rations now issued were to last eight days. On the morning of the 21st it was discovered that Bragg had evacuated Mumfordsville and moved to Bardstown. This opened the road to Louisville via Elizabethtown. We moved at 4 A.M. and waded the Green River. We arrived at Elizabethtown at noon on the 23rd, rested and moved on ten miles farther. On the 25th we started at 9 A.M. reached the Ohio river at 2 P.M. At daybreak on the 26th we found ourselves on the common south

of Louisville, Ky.

A five days' rest in camp at Louisville, full rations, new uniforms, new equipage and the army of the Ohio doubled in force we were again ready for an advance south, confident of our ability to meet and crush Bragg's army and restore Kentucky and Tennessee to the Union.

October 1, 1862 was a bright clear day. The army of the Ohio 100,000 strong was in line at sunrise and moved south on the different roads leading south from Louisville. At noon we moved out of the city and took the Bardstown pike, the same road we had taken ten months before when we moved to Camp Wickliffe. At 4 P. M. we went into camp twelve miles south of Louisville. The 51st Ohio regiment had been in active service one year. We moved as a regiment by rail, water, and on foot 2,500 miles, and for the last ten weeks we had been almost constantly on the move from place to place and nearly all the time within a day's march of the enemy and yet as a regiment we had never fired a gun in action.

On October 2 we made slow progress. The enemy's cavalry contested our advance manfully and we went into camp the night before. On the 3rd we moved eight miles and encamped at Salt river near our camp of December 11, '61. We reached Bardstown on the 4th and found that the enemy had evacuated the town and gone east. On the 5th we moved to Glenville and at sunset on the 6th we camped near Springfield. We passed through Springfield at 9 A. M. on the 7th and took a by-road to Perrysville.

October 8 is a memorable day to the 1st and part of the 3rd army corps of the army of the Ohio. McCook's corps moved from Louisville in the direction of Frankfort, Ky. at the same time that we moved towards Bardstown. On their approach to the city October 6th the Confederates evacuated Frankfort and fell back along the line of the Kentucky river in the direction of Harrodsburgh. Bragg's army was concentrated at Perrysville on the 7th and the night was spent in preparation for an early attack the 8th. The action commenced at day break by the skirmishers of the enemy attacking the 85th Illinois. During the forenoon the action on both sides had become general and terrific along the whole line of both armies, and at three o'clock General Bragg brought his infantry into action. He held the charge in person against Russeau's division. Russeau maintained his position

with a terrible loss to himself and a terrific slaughter of the enemy. At the same time General Buckner led an assault against Jackson's division with better success. This division was driven back some distance. There Generals Jackson and Ferrell were slain. Later in the day Russeau's division was again assaulted and the fighting continued at regular intervals until darkness closed the scene. The union loss in this battle was 916 killed, 2,943 wounded, and 489 missing. Rebel loss was 2,500 killed, wounded and missing.

Our pursuit of Bragg's army was slow and tedious. Skirmish firing with his rear guard was heard almost every hour in the day. We reached Danville at 10:30 A. M. the 13th and marched through the town and encamped. At 1 P.M. we were ordered out on a reconnoissance in force. We moved east six miles and found that the enemy had their artillery in position ready to contest our advance. Our artillery moved up and fired a few shots, and their replies convinced us that the enemy was there in force, and we moved back to Danville. October 14th we moved at 9 A.M., passed Standford at 3 A.M. and encamped on a hillside a half mile from town and at 11 P. M. we moved out. It was an unpleasant time of night to start in pursuit of the enemy, especially when we had been in such slow pursuit for 14 days. The night was very dark. The 51st Ohio took the advance. We came in contact with the rebel pickets two miles from camp. The enemy fired a volley and fell back. We formed a line of battle and advanced five miles. As we would pass over the hill our artillery would move up and form a position on the hill tops and threw shells over us at the retreating enemy. At daybreak the 15th we stopped in line long enough to cook breakfast when the movement continued. We encamped at 8 P. M., having driven the enemy ten miles during the day. On the 16th we passed through Mount Vernon at 11 A.M. and encamped at 3 P. M. near a big cave. On the 17th we moved to Rockcastle river and halted four hours and returned to our camp of the night before. On the 18th our brigade was ordered out on a reconnoissance force. We moved back through the woods. The 8th Ky. was in advance. Our movement was entirely unexpected by the enemy, and at the foot of the hollow we captured thirty-two prisoners, eleven horses and one wagon. The 7th Nov. we crossed the state line into Tennessee.

As the army of the Ohio passed out of Kentucky into Tennessee on this march Gen Don Carlos Buell was relieved of his command, and Gen. W. S. Rosecarnes was appointed in his stead. At this time the name of our army was changed to the army of the Cumberland. Gen Rosecarnes had distinguished himself at Rich Mountain, at Corinth, and at Iuka, and henceforth we were to be led by a general who had the energy, courage and disposition to meet the enemy wherever he could be found. Nov. 8th we moved 23 miles

south and encamped near the Cumberland river. The Confederates vidette posts were on the opposite side of the river and during the 9th we remained quietly in camp. The 10th we were quietly awakened at 1 A.M. and ordered to get ready to march. We started at 2 o'clock, moved down to the river, crossed, drove in the Confederate pickets and followed them 10 miles to Lebanon. Lebanon is the county seat of Wilson county, and is situated 25 miles east of Nashville. We reached Lebanon before breakfast, and formed a line west of town where we remained until 3 P. M. During this time our cavalry drove the enemy several miles towards Murfreesboro. We then marched back and connected with our division at Silver Springs having marched 25 miles during the day. We camped nine days at Silver Springs. The 19th we moved at 3 A. M. passed the Jackson Hermitage and camped at 8 A. M. where we remained till the afternoon of the 15th when we moved to camp at Nashville three miles south of the city. Here we spent four weeks preparing for the Stone river campaign. December 9th the 51st Ohio, the 35th Indiana and the 8th and 21st Kentucky regiments were detailed to guard a forage train to Dobson's Ferry, ten miles southeast of camp. Colonel Mathews was in command of the expedition. Near Dobson's Ferry there is quite a bend in Stone river, and in this bend there was a large corn field. General Wheeler of Alabama was a cavalry commander, and had made preparations to capture the first expedition that undertook to steal this corn field. Our train moved into this corn field without detecting any signs of the enemy. The 51st Ohio took position near the ferry. The 8th and 21st Kentucky were helping unload the wagons and the 35th Indiana was drawn up in line to guard the road on which we had moved in. While we were unloading the wagons Wheeler's cavalry attacked the 35th Indiana. Colonel Mathews rode up to the 35th and immediately sent back for the five right companies of the 51st. The 35th held its ground until Lieut. Col McClain with the right wing of the 51st joined it when Colonel Mathews ordered a charge. The enemy resisted the charge, but finally fell back and gave possession of the road. While the action was going on a squad of the enemy took position behind a stone fence on the hill and fired a volley at the left wing of our regiment, wounding two men. The 51st Ohio lost 13 wounded, the 35th Indiana lost 5 killed and 19 wounded. The Adjutant of the 35th was killed and the Colonel had his arm broken. Colonel Mathews was thrown from his horse during the action and severely hurt, but kept in command until the expedition returned to camp. This was the first introduction to the confederates. We had been in the service 15 months and had never fired a volley in action until December 9, 1862.

December 23rd the 51st Ohio was sent out towards Lebanon to guard a forage train. December 25th we received our Christmas gift at a late hour of the day. It came at 9 P.M. in the form of marching orders. We were to start south at 8:30 A.M. on the 16th. Marching orders at this time meant conflict. We had become so accustomed to marching orders that many of us thought but little of it, but the thinking soldier realized that we had reached a point when a great battle must be fought for the possession of middle Tennessee. Bragg was firmly situated at Murfreesboro with 50,000 well drilled soldiers. Rosecrans had about the same number at Nashville, and the last four weeks had been spent in drilling for the conflict. Both commanders had a good fighting record, and it was reasonable to conclude that neither would yield without a terrible struggle. The morning of December 26th the reveille sounded at 4 o'clock and at 8 o'clock the 51st Ohio moved out on the Murfreesboro pike, and relieved a picket post two miles from camp. The advance of the army soon came in sight, and the column kept marching rapidly past us until 3 P.M. when our division came up and we took our place in the column. McCook's corps moved out in advance, then when it reached the Nolansville turnpike it diverged right and moved towards Nolansville while our corps (Crittenden's) moved directly towards Lavergne on the Murfreesboro pike. Our advance found the enemy in strong force at Lavergne. We camped late in the evening within one-and-one-half miles of the town. McCook's corps camped that night near Nolansville. His advance that day was stubbornly resisted by "clouds of horsemen". On the morning of the 27th a fog so thick that no man could tell whom he was firing at prevented a fight between McCook and Hardee. Under its friendly cover Hardee burned the bridge over Wilson's creek and retreated toward Murfreesboro. Crittenden's advance drove the enemy out of Lavergne and fought its way through the fog and rain all day. Our brigade moved at noon and advanced six miles and camped at 6 P.M. On the 28th our regiment was sent out on a reconnoissance. We advanced as far as Stewart creek, and our skirmishers crossed and advanced some distance when the pickets of our 14th brigade, mistaking them for the enemy, fired at them. They fell back to the line and we returned to camp. During the 28th McCook's corps advanced to Triune. General Thomas (Rock of Stone river as well as Chickamauga) was closely following Crittenden's corps. The 29th we moved back to Jefferson turnpike, marched three miles turned to the right crossed Stewart creek formed in line of battle within three miles of Stone river. December 30 was a long day of suspense. We were kept standing in line awaiting orders, while reconnoitering parties were skirmishing with the enemy and ascertaining his true position. He was found in a line of battle in strong force two miles west of Murfreesboro with his right on the east side of Stone river. During the evening our line was formed a mile west of the line of the enemy. McCook's corps with Johnson's, Sheridan's and Davis' divisions were formed on the right. General Thomas' corps with Rousseau's and Negley's division were placed in the

center, and Crittenden's corps with Wood's, Palmer's and Van Cleve's division were placed on the left. VanCleve's(our) division was formed in line after dark when we moved into position. It was so dark that we could scarcely see our file leaders, and when our line was formed we found ourselves in a corn field near a short bend in the west branch of the Stone river. In front the Confederates were strengthening their picket line, and we were near enough to hear the sound of their voices. We stood under arms a long time-I don't know how long. The veteran soldier, who has been in a position of this kind, knows that time passes very slowly. When the picket lines were formed all we could hear was an occasional shot on each side, seemingly to notify the enemy that we were ready. Near the hour of mid-night the order was passed along the line, "Rest on arms at will." My bunkmate(John Taggert) and I cut off an armful of corn stalks and placed them between two corn rows and fixed down our blankets and with our arms by our side we went to bed together for the last time. An hour before daybreak we were quietly called into line, where we stood under arms waiting and watching for daybreak and the enemy. It would indeed have been well for the Army of the Cumberland if its right wing had been as vigilant as its left wing on that fatal last morning of the year 1862. It is a strange coincident that each commander had laid his plans to attack the right wing of his adversary at almost exactly the same time on the morning of December 31st. Breakfast at daylight and attack at 7 o'clock were Rosecarns orders. Breakfast in the dark and attack at daybreak were Bragg's orders. to the Confederate army. There was perhaps thirty minutes difference in the time that these two orders were to be executed, and the sequel shows that Bragg's success on the morning of the first day's battle at Stone river was due to this important thirty minutes. Soon after daylight our division(VanCleve's) crossed Stone river to make the attack on the Confederate right. We formed our lines on the opposite some distance when suddenly we heard the rattle of muskets on the extreme right of our line. The battle had commenced. We halted until our other brigades that were quietly crossing the river could form and move with us. Suddenly one of the McCook's staff officers rode hurriedly to the commander and told him that the right wing was hard pressed and needed assistance. Rosecarnes merely sent back word to McCook to hold to the last. In a few minutes another messenger arrived, telling the commander that the whole right wing was in retreat. Van Cleve and Wood were

ordered to cease crossing the river and move back in double quick. Our brigade moved back and formed in line near the position that held during the night. The right wing of McCook's corps was completely surprised. Their line formed in a cedar thicket, and when the attack was made many of them were some distance from their gun stacks quietly cooking their breakfast, Kirk's brigade, Johnson's division, was the first attacked. Kirk called Willick's brigade on the extreme right for aid. Willick's brigades had no commander, as Willick himself was away at Johnson's headquarters and no attempt was made to respond to the call. In fact there was no time to respond, as the attack was so sudden and unexpected. These two brigades were shattered to pieces almost instantly, nearly half of their men being killed, wounded or captured. Willick was taken prisoner while hurrying back to his brigade, and Kirk fell mortally wounded. Colonel Baldwin's brigade, of Johnson's division, was on reserve at division headquarters. This brigade was quickly formed and fought gallantly, but overpowering numbers forced them back. McCook's corps went to pieces when Johnson's division was driven back, the next to receive the force of the advancing wave was the division of General Jeff C. Davis. The Confederates were elated with their success so far and met Davis' lines with the well known "rebel yell". This division made a gallant resistance and drove back the advancing enemy. The Confederates formed and charged again and again, but were driven back. They reformed and charged again and succeeded in driving Davis back into the cedar thicket. The next division to receive the shock of the battle was Sheridan's. The advancing enemy had passed to the flank of Sheridan's position, but that gallant commander formed this division in three sides of a hollow square. Three times the whole force of Hardee's and Polk's corps dashed against it, and each time the Confederates were repulsed. Sheridan held his position until his ammunition was exhausted, and then fell back through the cedars to the Murfreesboro pike, leaving one-fourth of his men killed and wounded on the field. General Thomas with Rousseau's and Negley's divisions held the center of the line. When Sheridan fell back Thomas' right was exposed, but he arranged his lines to meet the coming storm. Calmly and firmly he rode along the lines, cheering and encouraging his men. A dead silence pervaded his steady columns, while frantic yells sounded from the advancing foes. The critical moment at last arrived. The stern word of command was given. Instantly dazzling sheets of flame burst from the firm ranks of Thomas' line, which penetrated the lines of the enemy. It was quickly followed by the roar

of numerous and well served artillery, which shook the earth and crushed into fragments the thick masses of the enemy. Then came the awful confusion, the sudden recoil, the broken flight of the Confederates who till then had exulted in the success of the day. Whole regiments were swept from the field by the terrific fire of Thomas' men. When the heavy mantle of smoke arose after a few minutes from the scene it displayed an appalling spectacle. The ground was literally covered with killed and wounded, so terrible had been the destruction. General Palmer's and Wood's divisions of Crittenden's corps were on the left of Thomas' corps and late in the day several unsuccessful attempts were made by the Confederates to break their lines at a place called "Round Forrest". During one of these assaults General Rosecrans and his staff were riding along the line when a shell burst near them. A piece grazed Rosecrans just missing him, and took off the head of his chief-of-staff, Garasche. The victory of this day's battle was indecisive. The enemy had driven our right wing almost two miles and occupied the ground, but our center and left had repulsed every assault with a terrible loss of life. Thus ended the first day's battle of Stone river in the last day of the year 1862. The brigade in which the 51st Ohio regiment was a part was the only brigades in the army of the Cumberland that was not engaged in the action. We were quietly standing under arms in the front line in the extreme left near the bend on the river where we had crossed in the morning. As night came on the rattling of musketry and the roaring sound of cannonading ceased and everything became calm and still. Our wounded on that part of the field that we held were removed, but the dead were still where they fell. We slept on our arms in line of battle on the same ground that we occupied during the day.

January 1, 1863 broke without a cloud in the sky. Everything was calm at intervals, while every few minutes the stillness was broken by a shot along the lines. Our division crossed the river advanced a half mile and took position on the top of a hill where we remained all day. During the day there was no fighting. Each army seemed to be content to bury the dead and await an attack from the enemy.

The position that VanCleve's division occupied on New Year's day was a very important one, and if the Confederates thought worth while to continue the conflict we were sure to be attacked. On the opposite side of the hill there was a gentle slope to a

valley several hundred yards wide. On the piece of woodland and in these woods the Confederate pickets were posted. Our picket line was posted on the slope of the hill spoken of in plain view of the confederates, and during the day were not molested. During New Year's day Rosecrans was busy preparing for an attack on his left, which he thought was sure to be made. On the opposite side of the river a half mile from our position declining to the rear was a hill and on this hill he ordered 50 guns planted. When this was done the hill was literally covered with artillery. The day wore away slowly and no attack. We slept on our arms as usual, and long before day light on January 2 we were formed in line to stand under arms. Our second line of battle was formed 200 yards, and our third line 400 yards in our rear. On the opposite side of the river near where we crossed, Negley's division of Thomas' corps was formed in massed column as reserves. Early in the morning of January 2 our pickets began to exchange shots. Near the hour of noon the enemy were seen moving into the woods and forming in massed column. At 3:30 P. M. this massed column emerged from the woods and moved forward rapidly across the valley towards the hill. Our picket line opened fire and the enemy's skirmishers line returned the fire. Our pickets were soon driven in and as they took their places in the line they would say "Boys, they are coming. The woods are full of them." We were ordered to lie down flat on the ground, so that the enemy's first volley when they reached the top of the hill would pass over us. Lieutenant Colonel Mc Mlain passed quietly along the line telling us to hold our fire until we were sure that we could make every shot tell. "Don't rise" said he "until you can see their hats, and then rise right up and fire." On came the enemy in steady massed column. When their first line was almost to the top of the ridge they raised the rebel yell, "yep!yep!yep!" that was always heard when they made a charge. All at once we saw their hats. They were then within twenty yards of us. Suddenly we rose and fired a volley from the front line. Twenty-four of the 51st Ohio fell dead, and twenty-one fell mortally wounded in this volley.

If there is any satisfaction in getting even with the enemy I will say that I found thirty dead rebels in front of where we fired our volley when I returned an hour afterward. When the sudden shock of this double volley was over it seemed to me that both lines of battle were annihilated, and before I had time to notice who had fallen their second line came over the ridge. Here is where our men were taken prisoners, and while I thought the chances were against my getting away safely I thought I would try it. I ran as fast as I could, and when I got almost to our second line of battle I found one of my company badly wounded in the side. I thought I would try to help him off the field, but I soon found that he was utterly helpless and that it was impossible to do anything for him. Comrade Cornelius was never heard of after this.

I then fell in with our second line of battle and fired several shots, but the enemy came down through the woods line after line. We fell back to Stone river and crossed. The river where we crossed was about sixty feet wide and two feet deep. On the opposite side the bank was a rocky bluff twenty feet high. As we were climbing up the bluff we could hear the enemy's balls striking the rocks. We had no idea that help was so near. My idea was that the army of the Cumberland was rapidly passing out of existence. When we reached the top of the bluff we found that General Negley's whole division was quietly lying in massed column in a corn field ready to move into action. Suddenly the fifty guns that were planted on the hill to our right opened fire on the field. In all my experience during the war I never heard such a terrific artillery fire as I did just then. The rebel column was checked and driven back through the woods. Rosecrans had directed Gen. Negley to move his division to the river bluff, but not to cross. Colonel John Miller commanding Negley's right brigades took the liberty to order his brigade across. Said Miller, "If I don't charge them now they will soon charge us." After Miller had crossed and engaged the 26th Tennessee and took their colors, Hazen's brigade and Davis' division crossed and drove the confederates back nearly a mile beyond the woods where they had formed to attack us. Soon after Colonel Miller had crossed the river I found several 51st Ohio men. We went back to where we had been attacked and found the dead were lying where they fell. The dead bodies of four of my company (John Taggart, John Dutton, George Fatters, Franklin Miller) were lying near by each other. Details had been made to remove the wounded and during the night the ambulances were constantly passing over the battle ground and when morning broke January 3 all that was left to do on that bloody field was to bury the dead. During the night of the 3rd the enemy fell back toward Tullahoma and left us in quiet possession of the field. January 4th was a beautiful day. The rain had ceased as well as the terrific sound of cannonading and musketry. This was the first day since Christmas that we had ~~had~~ not heard the sound of musketry and artillery. There is an indescribable joy and pleasure in victory that to some extent overcomes the sad picture of the battlefield of Stone river January 4, 1863 when we buried the dead. I was not on the detail, but got permission to go to the grounds so that I could see to it that the grave of my bunkmate was properly marked. I had prepared a head board. In the grave in which he was buried there were six others. This grave was probably three feet deep. The bodies were laid side by side with the capes of their overcoats laid carefully over their faces. When the ground was filled in a

neat mound was made over each body to indicate the number that was buried in the grave. I had prepared a head board. Cut into the board was his name, company, and regiment. Seven weeks after this James Wilcox, Edwin Ferguson, and R. L. Dunning of Urichsville came to Murfreesboro for three bodies that fell at Stone river of which this was one. We were in camp two miles southwest of the battle ground. February 25th we took up the body of John Taggart. It was sent home and buried in the Urichsville Cemetery. On the monument is inscribed these lines:  
Dear brother, now rest: thy toil is done  
Thy conflict is past, thy warfare is o're.  
No more shalt thou go at the sound of the  
drum  
Or dream of the battle field covered with gore.

I never pass this grave in our beautiful cemetery that I do not think of January 2, 1863. The Union loss at the battle of Stone river was 1,533 killed 7,245 wounded, 2,800 missing. Confederate loss was 14,560 killed, wounded and missing.

The battle of Stone river was fought in the open field, neither side being protected by works of any kind. The survivors of the Army of the Cumberland who were in the battle agree that the enemy fought hard, while the fact that the enemy left us in possession of the field proves that we fought equally hard. The Confederate loss in killed and wounded was much greater than ours, but they were the attacking army, and this accounts for their greater loss in killed and wounded. After the battle of Stone river both the Union and Confederate armies were left in a condition of exhaustion from which it required several weeks to recover. General Bragg fell back to Tullahoma, located his headquarters there along Duck river and east to McMinnville. The main body of Rosecrans' army went into camp from Murfreesboro to Franklin, while his reserves fell back towards Nashville. January 7 VanCleve's division crossed Stone river, marched through Murfreesboro and went into camp one mile northeast of town. Our wagon trains were sent to us from Nashville, and we received our camp equipage set up our tents in regular camp order and commenced a regular system of camp and picket duty. January 20 the 51st Ohio was detailed to guard a supply train to Nashville and return. We started at daybreak and arrived at Nashville at 6:30. Before we broke ranks we were instructed that the train would start back promptly at daybreak the 22nd, and that every man would be expected to answer to roll-call before starting. At roll call on the morning of the 22nd our orderly sergeants reported, "All present or accounted for." Our train moved out on schedule time and arrived at camp at 9 A.M. on the 23rd. The next seven weeks were spent in camp without incident. The dull weary monotony of camp life in winter is a very slow process of killing time, and seemingly in order to break this monotony we received marching orders the morning of March 9th. We tore down our camp

packed our camp equipage in our wagon train and started south at 9 A. M. Seven miles south of Murfreesboro we drove in the Confederate outposts and formed a line of battle on each side of the road. We remained in this position during the evening and night of the 9th and until 10 P.M. the night of the 10th. During the 10th it rained all day. At ten o'clock at night we started back to Murfreesboro, and the next morning we raised our tents in our old camp of the last two months. April 2<sup>d</sup> Reville at 3 A.M. and we moved at 4 and marched out to Liberty pike where we halted until the 3rd, the 4th and 10th Ohio, 4th Michigan, 7th Ind. battery passed us. We then started, and at sunset we camped nineteen miles northeast of Murfreesboro. At midnight we were quietly awakened and told to get ready to march. We started at 1 A.M. Our cavalry drove in the rebel outposts at daybreak and skirmished with them for a mile, when the enemy fell back beyond Liberty and made a stand on Snow Hill, three miles on the other side of town. Our brigade passed through Liberty at eleven o'clock, marched two miles, formed in line of battle and advanced in line up the first hill. Our skirmish line fired a volley at the skirmish line of the enemy and drove them back to their main line. We advanced to the top of the hill and found that the confederates were retreating on the opposite side. We remained in line two hours when we were ordered back. We passed back through Liberty and camped one-and-one-half miles on the west side of town near our camp of the 12th and 13th of August 1862. The 4th we moved at 8 A. M. arrived at Alexandria at 11 and surrounded the town, where we remained till 2 P. M. when we started again and moved seven miles towards Lebanon. The 5th our cavalry started at sunrise. We moved at 8 towards Lebanon at 1 P. M. our day's march was through a splendid country called "Cherry Valley." Our cavalry captured quite a number of prisoners and horses during the day. We passed Lebanon, turned towards Murfreesboro and camped at the junction of Chicken with the Murfreesboro pike. The 6th we started at 7 and arrived at our old camp at 3 P. M. making in all a march of ninety miles during our trip.

June, 1863, the 51st Ohio received a general treat. It was a very uncommon thing for the regimental officers of a regiment to treat the private soldiers in a body, but three important promotions were made at the same date, and these three worthy officers felt so exceedingly good that they couldn't rest until they imparted their happiness to every member of the regiment. Col. Mathews had resigned his office April 11th, and this resignation caused three vacancies. Lieutenant Col McClain was promoted to colonel, Major Wood was promoted to Lieut. Col. and Capt.

Marshall to major, to date from April 14, 1863. The regiment was drawn up in line on the parade ground and details were made to carry the beer along the line in buckets.

At this date the authorities in Washington were getting very impatient at the inactivity of the Army of the Cumberland. More than three months had passed since the battle of Stone river, and no movement had been made to drive Bragg away from Tullahoma. To tell the truth, Rosecarnes was just like the rest of us. He wasn't as enthusiastic on "movements" as he was several months before. We had learned to our entire satisfaction that there was such an organization as the rebel army, and that rebels would also fight when it came to the test. On the other hand the rebels had also added something to their stock of knowledge by sad experience. They had given up the idea that "One southern man could whip five Yankees," and conceded that man for man was all they could count on. There was no case during the war where the fighting qualities of the two armies were tested so well as at Stone river. The number of each army was about equal to the other. Neither side was protected by works. Each army seemed willing to attack the other. The losses were about equal. When both commanders were confident that the other was whipped, and both tarried on the field and waited for the other to retire. When Bragg did retire Rosecarnes was too badly exhausted to follow. When Bragg fell back to Tullahoma and established his lines fifty miles south of Murfreesboro, Rosecarnes seemed to be perfectly willing to allow him to stay there, and history shows that Bragg was satisfied to be let alone. Gettysburg is regarded by many as the turning point of the war, but this is a mistake. Stone river decided that inferior numbers could never conquer, and after January 2, 1863 the rebellion was down.

During the spring and early summer of 1863 the weather was so wet that it was almost impossible for an army to engage in active operations. The Army of the Cumberland remained in camp near Murfreesboro for five-and-a-half months after the battle of Stone river. General Garfield had been appointed chief of staff to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Col. Garasche. Garfield insisted that an active forward movement ought to be made to drive Bragg's army out of Tennessee. In the first week in June Rosecarnes called a council of war to consider the question of an advance and out of eighteen generals whose opinions were asked seventeen were opposed to it. Garfield prepared a paper showing the prospect of success and the advantage to be gained by a

forward movement. This paper was drawn June 8th and after presentation and a full canvass of the situation an advance was agreed upon. June 23rd orders for a general movement were issued. The reveille sounded at midnight, and the advance started at 2 A.M. the 24th. Our brigade was detailed to stay at Murfreesboro and guard the "cracker line". During the afternoon we marched over to the fort on the opposite side of town and went into camp. The 28th a supply train of three hundred wagons loaded with ammunition and rations left Murfreesboro for the front, and in the evening 500 Confederate prisoners were sent back. The 30th General Granger's reserve corps arrived at Murfreesboro and relieved our brigade, and we camped at Cripple Creek at nine o'clock at night. The same evening the army of the Cumberland was in a position in front of Bragg's army at Tullahoma, and General Rosecarns issued orders for an attack the next morning; but during the night of the 30th Bragg's army evacuated its position and fell back towards Chattanooga. The losses of the army of the Cumberland in this movement were 586 killed and wounded and 13 missing. The Union troops captured 1634 prisoners, 8 cannon and several hundred small arms.

July 1st we started at sunrise, arrived at Woodbury at noon and encamped. The day was exceeding warm, and the troops gave out by the score. We camped here for five days. The 3rd we were on picket duty near a brick college building on the north side of town. The morning of the 4th I took breakfast with Rev. Bethel of the Baptist Church. This was the first time I had sat down at a table for a year. July 6th we moved from Woodbury at 5 A.M. marched 15 miles and encamped at 4 P. M. The 7th we arrived at McMinnville at 9 A.M. Our regiment was left in town for provest duty, moved out of town, camped one month and one day, and excepting camp Migs, it was the most pleasant camp we ever had. Every day (Sunday excepted) was market day at the picket line. The citizens came in with wagon-loads of potatoes, apples, cider, cakes, pies, and as long as our greenbacks and "shin-plasters" lasted we could buy anything to eat we wanted. July 23rd the line officers of the regiment presented Colonel McClain with a sword and belt and Major Marshall with a revolver on dress parade. This was in the public square. The presentation speech was made by Captain Moore. We received a month's pay, and for several days greenbacks were plenty though not very equally divided.

At this date the administration at Washington was again impatient at the inactivity of the army of the Cumberland. The Commander in Chief and Secretary of War were urging General Rosecarns to follow up the advantages gained by the Tullahoma campaign. Rosecarns' chief of staff was also impatient at the slow pursuit

of Bragg's army.

At the close of the Tullahoma campaign the confederates occupied Chattanooga and the mountain passes above and below it. Rosecarn's army lay along the western base of the Cumberland mountains, its right above Winchester and its left at McMinnville. Here General Rosecarns commenced at once the most vigorous preparations for another campaign for the occupation of Chattanooga.