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THE FIFTEENTH REGIMENT OF INFANTRY.

BY CAPTAIN H. R. BRINKERHOFF, 15TH U. S. INFANTRY.*

THE first regiment of the regular establishment in the United States Army designated the "Fifteenth Infantry," was organized pursuant to an act of Congress approved by the President on the 11th day of January, 1812, and consisted of ten companies. Zebulon Montgomery Pike of New Jersey was appointed its colonel and served in that capacity until March 12, 1813, when he was appointed brigadier-general. He was killed in the assault upon the British fortifications at York (now Toronto), Canada, in the following month.

The officers of the regiment, as shown by the Army Register for 1812, consisted of one colonel, one lieutenant-colonel, one major, ten captains, ten first lieutenants, nine second lieutenants, eleven ensigns, one surgeon and two surgeon's mates. Thirty-two of these officers were appointed from New Jersey, and the others from New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland. In the following year the names of three third lieutenants appeared in addition to those of the other grades named. The regiment was disbanded in May, 1815, in conformity with an act of Congress reducing the army to 10,000 men.

It was again organized in April, 1847, under the provisions of an act of Congress approved in the preceding February, authorizing the organization of "an additional force for the war."

It served during the war with Mexico and was disbanded in 1848 after the ratification of the treaty of peace.

The beginning of the War of the Rebellion found the greater portion of the army serving upon the Indian frontier, occupying numerous small forts and cantonments, and covering a zone of country by its operations several hundred miles in width, extending from the "British Possessions" on the north, to the Gulf of Mexico on the south.

The military establishment at this time consisted of ten regiments of infantry, five regiments of mounted troops, and four regiments of artillery, aggregating about sixteen thousand officers and men. The services of these troops were greatly needed by the Government immediately after the inauguration of President Lincoln, at other points, where the exigencies of public affairs made the presence of well drilled and efficient soldiers necessary. It seemed impossible, however, to call in the garrisons of any of the frontier posts for duty elsewhere, without exposing the settlements they protected to the assaults of surrounding savages. Nor was it believed that the duties which ordinarily devolved upon these garrisons could be safely en-

trusted to new levies wholly unacquainted with the important responsibilities which would immediately confront them. The necessity for the immediate enlargement of the regular forces seemed, therefore, clearly apparent to the administration and the leading statesmen of the country with whom it conferred. With the view of determining to what extent this enlargement should properly be carried, and to decide upon the proper tactical organization for the proposed new regiments, an advisory board was instituted, consisting of the Hon. Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury; Major Irvin McDowell, Assistant Adjutant-General; and Captain William B. Franklin, of the Engineer Corps. The board met in Washington late in April, and after a brief consultation rendered a report recommending the addition of eleven regiments to the regular establishment, and the adoption of a three-battalion organization for the regiments then in existence, as well as for those which might be added. The President approved the recommendations of the board but subsequently limited the application of the three battalion system to the new regiments.

Following promptly upon the report of the board the President, under the date of May 3, directed the organization of nine additional regiments of infantry, consisting of twenty-four companies each; one additional regiment of cavalry, and one regiment of artillery; altogether comprising an army of not less than twenty-eight thousand officers and men. The Congress was not in session at the time, but upon assembling soon thereafter hastened to confirm the order of the President by an act approved on the 29th day of July, 1861, legalizing the eleven new regiments.

The appointment of officers for the additional regiments followed the executive order as rapidly as possible, and the work of assembling and organizing the new forces was promptly begun.

General Orders No. 33, War Department, Adjutant-General's office, June 18, 1861, announces the names and lineal standing of the field officers and many of the company officers of the new regiments.

"The newly appointed officers," are admonished in the order named that they "will lose no time in making themselves thoroughly acquainted with the army regulations, the tactics of their several arms, and the various duties of their profession. None will be nominated for commissions to the Senate who have not proved themselves, meantime, to be both worthy and capable of commanding the brave men under them. That the Department may be enabled to form a proper judgment on this delicate point, all commanding officers—those of regiments and battalions more particularly—will forward to this office, in time to reach it by the 15th of July next, a statement on honor, of the moral, mental, and physical qualifications for the service, of each one of the officers belonging to their command."

The headquarters of the Fifteenth Infantry was established by this order at Wheeling, Virginia. On the 15th of July following, the removal of the headquarters to Cleveland, Ohio, was authorized by the War Department, but shortly thereafter, under further instructions it was established at Cincinnati, practically at Newport Barracks, where it remained until August, 1862, when it was transferred to Fort Adams, Rhode Island.

General Fitz John Porter, then Assistant Adjutant-General in the army

* Under the direction of Colonel R. E. A. Crofton, 15th U. S. Infantry.

with the rank of captain, was appointed colonel of the Fifteenth Infantry, to date from the 14th day of May, 1861. His appointment to this elevated and responsible position was very favorably regarded by officers of the army in consequence of his former valuable services and his evident special fitness for the office. He was a graduate of the National Military Academy at West Point, and had served for nearly sixteen years in the line and the staff of the army. In the war with Mexico he had rendered conspicuous services, and had been breveted for distinguished gallantry in the battle of Molino del Rey, and again at the storming of Chapultepec.

Three days after the appointment of General Porter to the colonelcy of the Fifteenth Infantry he was made brigadier-general of volunteers, and immediately entered upon the duties of the latter office. He retained the colonelcy of the regiment, however, until the 21st day of January, 1863, when he was succeeded by Colonel Oliver L. Shepherd, a graduate of the Military Academy of 1840, and a veteran of the Mexican war, promoted to the office from lieutenant-colonel of the Eighteenth Infantry.

John P. Sanderson, a resident of Philadelphia, and a native of Pennsylvania, was appointed lieutenant-colonel.

Captain John H. King of the First Infantry, William H. Sidell of New York, and John R. Edie of Pennsylvania, were appointed majors to date from the 14th day of May, 1861, and were assigned to the regiment in the order named. Major King entered the service originally as a second lieutenant in the First Infantry on the 2d day of December 1837, and had been continuously in the service from that time. Sidell was a graduate of the Military Academy at West Point and entered the service originally as brevet second lieutenant in the First Artillery on the 1st of July, 1833. He left the army by resignation in October following and was a resident of New York when appointed. Edie had no previous military experience.

Fourteen captains were appointed in May, six in the following August and two in October. Among the former were First Lieutenant Peter T. Swaine, Tenth Infantry, now Colonel of the Twenty-second Infantry, and First Lieutenant Louis H. Pelouze of the Fourth Artillery. The other appointments to this grade were all from civil life. Prominent among them on account of services subsequently rendered the names of James Biddle, now Colonel of the Ninth Cavalry, Colonel Henry Keteltas of New York City, Major Thomas H. Horton, U. S. Army (retired), and Major Lynde Catlin, U. S. Army (retired), may be especially mentioned.

Nineteen first lieutenants were appointed in May and three others in August. Among the former were Second Lieutenant John T. Ritter of the Fifth Infantry, who had entered the service in July, 1856, Second Lieutenant Charles G. Harker, Second Infantry, who had entered in July, 1858, and James Curtis, who had served from July 1, 1851, to January 15, 1857, in the Second Infantry. These gentlemen were all graduates of the Military Academy at West Point. The other appointments were from civil life. Among the latter were Horace Jewett of Maine, now Colonel of the Twenty-first Infantry, George M. Brayton, Lieutenant-colonel of the Ninth Infantry, George H. Tracy, Major U. S. Army (retired), and Charles A. Wikoff, Lieutenant-colonel Nineteenth Infantry.

But two second lieutenants were assigned to the regiment during the year.

Nearly all the officers assigned to the Fifteenth Infantry in 1861 were set at work recruiting for the regiment immediately upon reporting for duty, and were sent for this purpose to Cincinnati and other cities, and to the towns and villages within a radius of one hundred and fifty miles or more about Newport. Recruiting stations were established at these places and every possible means taken to hasten enlistments.

Notwithstanding these efforts recruits were not obtained as rapidly as had been expected, and the companies filled up slowly. Previous to the war many influential persons, both in the army and out of it, had advocated the maintenance of skeleton company or regimental organizations, with the view of their enlargement in case of necessity. This theory found but little support in the experience of the new regular regiments. Volunteer regiments were frequently raised in a day, but it took months to fill up the ranks of the regular regiments. Men hastened in bodies to join the volunteer forces, but they came individually to join the regulars.

The reasons were obvious.

Social relations and the prospect for early preferment popularized the volunteer service, and thus enabled it to absorb the greater portion of available recruits.

Early in September, 1861, General Buckner, in command of a large Confederate force, entered Kentucky from the south, and later in the month pushed his way up through Bowling Green towards Louisville and threatened the capture of that place. General Robert Anderson, of Fort Sumter fame, was in command at Louisville at the time and with a meagre force under his orders found it necessary to call upon Colonel Sanderson for assistance. On the 20th of September two companies were organized from the recruits then in camp at Newport Barracks and sent by rail to Louisville on the same day. These companies were designated A and B, First Battalion, and were the nucleus of the regiment in the field. They remained in active service from this time until the close of the war.

On the day following their arrival at Louisville they marched to Nolin, Kentucky, where they remained until October 10th, when they proceeded to Bacon Creek, on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. In November they were joined by Major John H. King with Companies C, D, E and F, and the battalion as thus constituted marched to Mumfordsville shortly thereafter, where it was joined by Companies G and H in January, 1862.

Early in February Major King was directed to proceed with his battalion to join the forces under General Grant, then operating against Fort Donelson. The battalion reached Bacon Creek after a few hours marching, *en route* for Tennessee, where it learned of the fall of Donelson on the 16th, and found orders to proceed to Bowling Green. On reaching the latter place Major King was directed to continue his march and join the forces operating against Nashville, Tennessee. The battalion reached Nashville a few days after the occupation of the city and its defenses by the Federal forces, and was assigned to the Fourth Brigade (Rousseau), Second Division (McCook), Army of the Ohio. Brig.-General Lovell H. Rousseau, in

command of the brigade, was a veteran of the Mexican War and one of the most efficient and popular officers then in the service. The Fourth Brigade, as now constituted, consisted of the First Ohio; Fifth Kentucky (Louisville Legion); Sixth Indiana; First Battalion, Fifteenth Infantry; First Battalion, Sixteenth Infantry; First Battalion, Nineteenth Infantry, and Battery H, Fifth Artillery.

In the meantime the Army of the Tennessee had moved up the Tennessee River as far as Pittsburg Landing, with the view of operating against the Confederate army under Johnston at Corinth.

Late in March the division was put in motion to join the forces under General Grant at Pittsburg Landing, and after several days hard marching reached Savannah on the Tennessee River, about nine miles below Pittsburg, late in the evening of the 6th day of April. The men were hastily embarked on boats which were found at the landing, and the vanguard of the division, consisting of Rousseau's Brigade, reached Pittsburg Landing about five o'clock on the following morning.

"Out of justice to General McCook and his command," says General Grant in his Memoirs, "I must say that they left a point twenty-two miles east of Savannah on the morning of the 6th. From the heavy rains of a few days previous and the passage of trains and artillery, the roads were necessarily deep in mud, which made marching slow. The division had not only marched through this mud the day before, but it had been in the rain all night without rest. It was engaged in the battle of the second day and did as good service as its position allowed. In fact an opportunity occurred for it to perform a conspicuous act of gallantry which elicited commendation from division commanders in the Army of the Tennessee."

A little after six o'clock McCook marched to the front with Rousseau's Brigade and formed on Crittenden's right facing towards Shiloh Church, and about seven o'clock engaged the enemy in his front consisting of portions of Polk's and Breckinridge's Corps.

"When Rousseau's Brigade was formed," says General M. F. Force, in his extended narrative of the battle, "his right was in the air. McCook, however, held it in place till Kirk's Brigade arrived, when Rousseau moved forward across a ravine to a rising ground a few hundred yards in advance. A company of regulars was sent into the woods in its front as skirmishers. In less than an hour the skirmishers were driven back, followed by the Fourth Kentucky Regiment and the Fourth Alabama Battalion, belonging to Trabue's Brigade. After a fierce attack for twenty minutes the assailants fell back before the rapid and well-directed fire of Rousseau's men, and retired out of sight in the timber. Trabue's regiments rallied and quickly returned to the assault with greater vigor than before. The steady fire of Rousseau's men again drove them to retreat. Rousseau then advanced into the timber and passed through it to an open field, when Trabue once more charged furiously upon Rousseau with his entire brigade. After a desperate struggle Trabue gave way leaving two guns in Rousseau's possession. The conflict now raged about Shiloh Church with a fury surpassing any portion of the battle on the preceding day. Generals McClernard, Sherman and Wallace all speak with admiration of the splendid fighting of McCook's Divis-

ion. Wood's rebel brigade finally charged on Rousseau and was knocked to pieces and retired to the rear. McCook now pushed his lines forward and the fire became hotter than ever. General Grant called two regiments and in person led them in charge in McCook's front and broke the enemy's line."

General Grant made no official report of the battle of Shiloh, but in his Memoirs he gives an extended account of his own movements and those of the troops which participated in the battle under him. In this narrative he makes no mention of having "led two regiments" on the eventful second day of the engagement. He speaks, however, of a "conspicuous act of gallantry" performed by the troops under General McCook. This "conspicuous act of gallantry," was the charge of Rousseau's Brigade, led by the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Infantry, against the Confederate line after the repulse of Wood's command. The whole of Rousseau's Brigade doubtless joined in the movement, for General Rousseau in his official report of the battle says that he observed two regiments advancing at "double quick time." One of these regiments he says, "was the First Ohio, which had been moved to our left to wait for ammunition. I galloped to the regiment and ordered it to halt, as I had not ordered the movement, but was informed that it was advancing by order of General Grant, whom I then saw in rear of the line with his staff. I ordered the regiment to advance with the others which it did. * * * This closed the fighting of the day."

The movement had evidently gotten well under way before General Rousseau knew anything about it, and the two regiments he observed moving forward at "double quick time," were doubtless the last of his brigade to join in the advance.

"Shortly after the defeat of Wood's Brigade," says an officer who participated in the battle, in command of a company of the Sixteenth Infantry, "an officer rapidly approached the battalions of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Infantry from the rear and cried, 'Charge! Charge! by order of General Grant!'"

The Fifteenth and Sixteenth moved forward instantly to the front and swept everything before them in the grand charge which General Force says "broke the enemy's line."

The hitherto obscure spot known in the Federal reports as Pittsburg Landing and in the Confederate reports as Shiloh, is now historic as the scene of the second great battle in the War of the Rebellion. Few battles anywhere were more destructive in proportion to the number engaged, about one man in five having been killed or wounded in the battle.

In the Fifteenth Infantry four men were killed and four officers,—Captains Keteltas, Peterson, Curtis and Wikoff—and fifty-five men were wounded.

After the battle of Shiloh the Confederate army retired to Corinth where it intrenched itself and awaited the further advance of the Federal troops. General Halleck having assumed command of the combined forces of the Army of the Tennessee, the Army of the Ohio and the Army of Mississippi, began his march towards Corinth about the close of April. After several successive advances, meeting more or less opposition, the armies finally reached the main intrenchments before Corinth on the 27th day of May.

"The movement was a siege from the start to the close," says General Grant, "The National armies were thoroughly intrenched all the way from the Tennessee River to Corinth."

General Beauregard evacuated the place on the 30th of May and retreated southward.

The battalion had now been through a somewhat hard and certainly a very practical schooling. In addition to its experience under fire at the battle of Shiloh, it had been given daily practical lessons in picket duty, the construction of field fortifications and the building of roads and bridges during the slow advance upon Corinth. It had learned something of the grim business of war and was now well prepared for further campaign or battle, or siege, as might be required.

In June the battalion proceeded to Huntsville, Alabama, by the way of Iuka, Tuscumbia, Florence and Athens. The weather was extremely warm and the roads over which the battalion marched were dry and dusty. The Subsistence Department was unable to furnish full rations at any time during the march and frequently the supply was scant.

On the 1st day of June the Second Battalion left Newport Barracks and proceeded to Columbus, Kentucky, where it went into camp on the 6th of the month. It remained at Columbus until February, 1863, when it was ordered to Memphis. It remained at this place until October of the same year when it joined the First Battalion at Chattanooga.

During July and August the First Battalion was almost constantly on the march, enlivened at times by skirmishes with the enemy and the usual incidents and discomforts of active field service. On the 24th day of August it broke up its temporary camp at Cowan Station, Tennessee, on the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad, and leaving behind its camp equipage, marched through Pelham and Altamonte, down the Cumberland Mountains to Hubbard's Cave, on through Murfreesborough, Nashville and Bowling Green, reaching Louisville, Kentucky, on the 26th of September, 1862, having marched almost continuously about four hundred miles, "without our camp equipage," says Major King, "the whole time without the ordinary allowance of rations, and some days totally without any."

After four days rest at Louisville the First Battalion started on another extended march which took it through Shelbyville and Laurenceburg, Kentucky, to Chaplin Hills, where a portion of General Kirby Smith's Confederate command was encountered on the 9th of October, resulting in the loss of one man killed and two wounded in the battalion. General J. W. Sill, in command of the forces of the expedition, reports the affair as a "smart skirmish," resulting in the loss of five men killed and thirty-three wounded and missing in the command.

From Chaplin Hills the battalion marched on with General Sill's command through Perrysville and Danville to Crab Orchard, and then back to Bowling Green, where it arrived on the last day of October, having made an almost continuous march of three hundred miles, "without its camp equipage," says Major King, "and part of the time suffering for want of rations."

On the 8th of November the battalion continued its march and pro-

ceeded directly to Nashville, where it remained until the 26th of December. On that date it moved on towards Murfreesborough, Tennessee, as a part of the "Regular Brigade." This brigade, subsequently famous in the annals of the Army of the Cumberland, was organized a few days before the movement upon Murfreesborough began, and consisted entirely of regular troops, as follows: First Battalion Fifteenth Infantry, under Major King; First Battalion and one company of the Second Battalion, Sixteenth Infantry; First and Second Battalions, and six companies of the Third Battalion, Eighteenth Infantry; First Battalion Nineteenth Infantry, and Battery H, Fifth Artillery. Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver L. Shepherd, Eighteenth Infantry, subsequently Colonel of the Fifteenth Infantry, commanded the brigade.

About eleven o'clock on the 30th day of December, Rousseau's Division, to which the Regular Brigade belonged, reached its position in the Federal line before Murfreesborough, and bivouacked near the Nashville turnpike on the night preceding the sanguinary battle of Stone's River.

"At about nine o'clock A. M. on the 31st of December," says General Rousseau, in his official report of the battle, under date of January 11th, 1863, "the report of artillery and heavy firing of small arms on our right announced that the battle had begun by an attack on the right wing, commanded by Maj.-General McCook. * * * General Thomas ordered me to advance my division quickly to the front to the assistance of General McCook. * * * We consulted and agreed as to where the line should be formed. This was in a dense cedar brake, through which my troops marched in double-quick time, to get into position before the enemy reached us. He was then but a few hundred yards to the front sweeping up in immense numbers, driving everything before him. * * * The roads were almost impassable to infantry, and artillery was perfectly useless. * * * Our lines were hardly formed before a dropping fire of the enemy announced his approach. * * * Four deliberate and fiercely sustained assaults were made upon our position and repulsed." After the last assault "we made a charge upon the enemy and drove him into the woods. * * * This ended the fighting of that day. * * * From the evening of the 31st until the ensuing Saturday night (January 3d), no general battle occurred in front of my division. * * * During much of the time my men had neither shelter, food nor fire. I procured corn, which they parched and ate, and some of them ate horse steaks, cut and broiled, from horses upon the battle-field. * * * The troops of my division behaved admirably. I could not wish them to behave more gallantly. * * * The Brigade of United States Infantry, Lieut.-Col. O. L. Shepherd commanding, was on the extreme right. On that body of brave men the shock of battle fell heaviest, and its loss was most severe. Over one-third of the command fell, killed or wounded; but it stood up to the work and bravely breasted the storm, and though Major King, commanding the Fifteenth, and Major Slemmer ("Old Pickens"), commanding the Sixteenth, fell severely wounded, and Major Carpenter, commanding the Nineteenth, fell dead in the last charge, together with many other brave officers and men, the brigade did not falter for a moment. * * * If I could, I would promote

every officer and several non-commissioned officers and privates of this brigade of regulars, for gallantry and good service in this terrific battle. I make no distinction between these troops and my brave volunteer regiments, for in my judgment there never were better troops than those regiments, in the world. But the troops of the line are soldiers by profession and with a view to the future I feel it my duty to say what I have of them."

The loss of the battalion of the Fifteenth Infantry, in killed and wounded was severe. It went into the engagement with sixteen officers and three hundred and four enlisted men. One officer—Captain Bell—was killed, and three officers—Major King, Captain Yorke and Lieutenant Oceleston—were severely wounded. Ten men were killed and ninety-one men wounded and missing.

The command of the Fifteenth devolved upon Captain Fulmer after Major King was wounded. Captain Crofton, now Colonel of the Fifteenth, succeeded to the command of the Sixteenth after Slemmer was disabled, and Captain Mulligan to the command of the Nineteenth after the death of Carpenter.

General Rosecrans in his official report of the battle under date of February 12, 1862, makes "special mention" of Captain Fulmer, Fifteenth Infantry, Captain Crofton, Sixteenth Infantry and Captain Mulligan, Nineteenth Infantry.

"These three infantry captains," he says, "commanded their respective battalions after their majors had been disabled, and behaved with great gallantry and skill, although opposed by an overwhelming number."

The battle reopened on the morning of January 1st and was continued throughout the day and the two following, when the Confederate army retired southward.

On the evening of the second day of the battle, the wagon transportation of the Regular Brigade was directed to proceed to Nashville. It got away early on the following day under charge of Lieutenant Clarence M. Bailey, Sixth Infantry, now Major of the Fifteenth Infantry. The regimental band of the Fifteenth reported to Lieutenant Bailey and accompanied the transportation under orders *en route* for Nashville. A sufficient number of the wagons were furnished to the band to carry the men as well as their instruments and personal effects. The roads were rough and the jolting of the wagons often made riding in them less desirable than walking. As a result the men scattered along the way and the wagons assigned for their use were often delayed, waiting for those who had fallen behind to come up. Finally when the band with its transportation reached La Vergne, about sixteen miles from Nashville, it was suddenly surrounded by a detachment of Wheeler's cavalry and the whole concern from trombone to piccolo captured bodily.

Lieutenant Bailey had gone on ahead a short time before and fortunately escaped capture. When the officer in command of the Confederate troops became aware of the character of his capture he at once set the men at liberty after exacting the usual parole. The transportation, however, and the instruments of the band, together with the personal effects of the men, were appropriated by the captors and carried away. The Confederate

officer kindly addressed Major King by letter, entrusting his communication for delivery by a member of the band, announcing that he had paroled the men, and offering to return the instruments if their value in money was sent to his command under flag of truce. The result is not known, but it is believed that the instruments were never recovered.

The band bore an excellent reputation in 1862-63, and its friends claimed first place for it in the Army of the Cumberland. It was recruited from the members of the orchestra of Pike's Opera House in Cincinnati, and many of the performers were excellent musicians.

On the 5th of January, 1863, the battalion moved into Murfreesborough and established a camp which it occupied until the latter part of June. It joined then in the forward movement of the Army of the Cumberland and marched to Hoover's Gap and on through Fairfield to Manchester, Tennessee. After a brief delay at Manchester, it moved on towards Stevenson, Alabama, which place it reached on the 10th day of August. It left Stevenson on the 9th of September and marched through Bridgeport, Tennessee, crossed the Tennessee River and the Raccoon and Lookout Mountains, and finally on the 19th day of the month reached the historic battle-field of the Chickamauga.

The battalion at this time formed a part of the "Regular Brigade," now commanded by Brigadier-General John H. King, formerly major of the Fifteenth Infantry. The brigade consisted of the First Battalion, Fifteenth Infantry—six companies only being present with it at this time, B and D having been left behind on some detached duty—and Company E, Second Battalion, under command of Captain A. B. Dod; First Battalion, Sixteenth Infantry; First and Second Battalions, Eighteenth Infantry; First Battalion, Nineteenth Infantry; and Battery H, Fifth Artillery.

At the opening of the battle on the morning of the 19th Captain Dod was directed to take position in the rear of the battery belonging to the brigade and follow its movements.

"In accordance with these instructions," says the captain in his official report, "I was following close on the battery, moving to the front in line of battle, when I was informed that the skirmishers of the enemy were about eight rods on our right * * *."

"Upon reaching a dense thicket," says Captain Heilman of the Fifteenth, "a division staff officer cautioned us not to fire in a certain direction as there was a body of our troops in advance of us. He had scarcely gotten out of sight when a volley was poured into us, and we found that instead of our own troops we had Longstreet's Corps in our front. Our line wavered, as it naturally would under such circumstances, but soon recovered itself. In the meantime, however, one section of our battery had been captured. The battalion was immediately ordered forward again, and closing upon the enemy's lines recaptured the section and with it a large number of prisoners. It was all done so bravely and quickly that the guns were recovered uninjured. The volley that we received was a solid one, but the firing was so high that the loss of men was small. As soon as possible we gathered our prisoners together and sent them to the rear."

Continuing his report of the operations of the 20th, Captain Dod says

"I was then ordered to relieve the Eighteenth in the outer breastworks, which were only a few logs raised about a foot and a half above the ground. * * * The enemy made four efforts to take the works, but were each time repulsed with terrible slaughter, the ground in front being literally strewn with their dead and wounded."

"We resisted the assaults successfully behind our little stronghold," says Captain Heilman, "until our ammunition became exhausted, when we were driven back. The enemy were apparently determined to dislodge us and they persisted until they succeeded. In falling back we discovered that we had been almost surrounded. My company was in the centre and we hardly knew what direction to take. At length we got under cover of the woods when it was found that all the officers to my right and a large number of men had been captured. As we fell back we were heavily fired into and the ground was covered with the dead and wounded of both armies. We were crowded very closely and fell far back, being entirely out of ammunition. Darkness soon came on and closed the eventful day. On the following day we crossed Missionary Ridge and early on the 22d reached Chattanooga with Bragg's army pretty close on our heels and the Tennessee River in front of us."

The battalion went into the engagement on the 19th with fourteen officers and two hundred and sixty-two men. Its casualties included nine men killed, two officers,—Captain Meredith and Lieutenant Williams—and forty-seven men wounded, and six officers—Lieutenants Timony, Gray, Holbrook, Galloway, Kendall and Brown,—and eighty-eight men captured by the enemy.

The battalion immediately went to work after its camping ground had been determined upon to make itself as comfortable as possible with such material as could be obtained.

"Our camp," says Heilman, "soon presented a unique and rather picturesque appearance. The quarters were constructed of anything we could get in the way of canvas and sticks, and our 'dog houses,' as the structures we erected were commonly called, were a sight to behold."

In the meantime large details of officers and men were daily employed in the erection of fortifications and the building of bridges and roads, while other large details were constantly employed in watching the enemy.

For nearly two months every man in the command was kept busy night and day, either watching the enemy or adding to the means of defense against him. During all this time the supply of food and clothing was barely sufficient to meet the daily wants of the troops and much suffering resulted.

About the middle of October, 1863, General Grant was placed in command of a geographical division embracing the Departments of the Ohio, the Cumberland and the Tennessee, and General Thomas succeeded General Rosecrans in command of the Army of the Cumberland. General Grant reached Chattanooga on the 24th and operations were at once begun to relieve the siege which the Confederates under General Bragg had maintained since the unfortunate battle of Chickamauga.

"The national troops were now strongly entrenched in Chattanooga

Valley," says General Grant in his Memoirs, "the Tennessee River behind them and the enemy occupying commanding heights to the east and west, with a strong line across the valley from mountain to mountain. * * * All supplies for Rosecrans had to be brought from Nashville * * * and hauled by a circuitous route north of the river over a mountainous country * * * This country afforded but little food for his animals, nearly ten thousand of which had already starved, and not enough were left to draw a single piece of artillery, or even the ambulances to convey the sick. The men had been on half rations of hard bread for a considerable time, with but few other supplies except beef driven from Nashville across the country. The region along the road became so exhausted of food for the cattle that by the time they reached Chattanooga they were much in the condition of skeletons. Indeed the beef was so poor that the soldiers were in the habit of saying with a faint facetiousness, that they were living on half rations of hard bread and *dried beef on the hoof*."

The Second Battalion of the Fifteenth Infantry, under command of Major Edie, reached Chattanooga on the 2d day of October, 1863, and went into camp with the First Battalion. The road it had followed on the previous day was found so difficult for the wagon train by reason of mud and broken ground that the battalion became separated from it while *en route*. Some time after the separation occurred the train was captured by a force of the enemy's cavalry and was entirely destroyed, together with all the public records of the battalion, its camp equipage, and the private property of the officers and men. Lieutenant Lord and nineteen men, escorting the train, were made prisoners of war.

Major Albert Tracy, promoted from captain Tenth Infantry, joined on the last day of December, 1863, and assumed command of the First Battalion. He entered the service originally as first lieutenant of the Ninth Infantry, in 1847, and had rendered continuous service since that date.

"It was a rough winter we spent at Chattanooga," he says. "I had served in the expedition to Utah in 1857-58 and participated in the hardships, privations and starvations of that luckless march, but taking all I saw or felt in the expedition to Utah into consideration I must say that I never beheld so much suffering and misery from want of food and clothing as I saw in the camps of the Federal troops at Chattanooga from the date of my joining until the opening of February, 1864."

"I telegraphed Thomas from Washington," says General Grant, "that he must hold Chattanooga at all hazards. A prompt reply was received saying, 'We will hold the town till we starve.' I appreciated the force of this despatch later when I witnessed the condition of affairs which prompted it. It looked, indeed, as if but two courses were open; one to starve, the other to surrender or be captured."

"For tents," continues Major Tracy, "a few blackened specimens were left, but there were not wanting instances where soldiers were compelled for want of covering to burrow in the side of the hills like animals to escape the piercing inclemencies of the weather. It was only when we opened the newspapers, which now and then reached us from the North, that we felt

assured that the men at Chattanooga were amply fed and clothed and eager for battle."

On the 25th of November, 1863, the First Battalion under Captain Keteltas, and the Second under Major Edie, broke camp at Chattanooga and participated with the other regiments of the Regular Brigade in the assault upon Missionary Ridge, losing four men killed and eleven wounded. Both battalions participated in the pursuit of the enemy as far as Ringold, Georgia, but without further casualties. The First Battalion returned to its camp at Chattanooga on the 20th, followed by the Second Battalion on the same day.

No further movements of the regiment occurred until the 22d of February, 1864, when the First Battalion marched to Ringold and on the following day to Tunnel Hill. On the 26th it participated in a skirmish with a considerable force of the enemy at Buzzards' Roost, and during the following night retreated to Stone Church. Continuing the march on the 27th it reached Tyner's Station, Tennessee, on the same day and bivouacked near that place until the 2d day of March when it marched to Graysville, where it was joined by the Second Battalion on the 12th and a few days later by Companies A and B of the Third Battalion under Captains Dod and Jewett. On the 20th of April the First Battalion advanced as far as Parker's Gap to make an armed reconnaissance of the enemy's position and returned to Graysville on the 25th.

Both battalions and Companies A and B, Third Battalion, broke up their encampment on the 3d of May and joined in the forward movement of the Army of the Cumberland, forming part of the Second Brigade (General King), First Division (General Johnson), Fourteenth Corps (General Palmer). The brigade consisted of the Nineteenth Illinois; Eleventh Michigan; Sixty-ninth Ohio; First and Second Battalions and Companies A and B Third Battalion, Fifteenth Infantry; First and Second Battalions Sixteenth Infantry; First and Second Battalions Eighteenth Infantry, and First Battalion Nineteenth Infantry.

Early in the month Major Tracy relinquished command of the First Battalion owing to illness, and was succeeded by Captain Dnd. After the battle of Kenesaw Mountain, Dod resigned and the command of the battalion then devolved upon Captain Curtis. At the beginning of the battle of August 7th, before Atlanta, Curtis was wounded and the command of the First Battalion in this and subsequent battles was then exercised by Captain Jewett. The companies of the Third Battalion served with the First.

Both battalions took part in the actions with the enemy during the month of May at Buzzard's Roost, Resaca, and New Hope Church. The casualties of the regiment in these engagements aggregated one officer—Lieutenant Forbes—and ten men killed, and twenty-seven men wounded. Following the retrograde movements of the enemy the regiment participated almost constantly in skirmishing with the rear guard of the Confederate army, and during the latter part of the month of June, in preparing approaches to the enemy's position on Kenesaw Mountain.

The losses of the regiment in these skirmishes during June aggregated one officer—Captain Harker—and five men killed, and fourteen men

wounded. At the time of his death Captain Harker was in command of the Third Brigade, Second Division, Fourth Army Corps, with the rank of colonel of volunteers.

Companies C and D, Second Battalion, reached the command about the last of the month and were attached to the First Battalion.

On the 3d of July the regiment joined in the pursuit of the enemy, participating in skirmishes with the Confederate rear guard at Marietta and Neil Dow Station, finally taking position in front of Atlanta on the 20th. The losses sustained by the regiment during the month aggregated five men killed and one officer—Lieutenant Jackson—and twenty-five men wounded.

The regiment participated in the siege of Atlanta, and on the 7th day of August joined with a part of the brigade to which it belonged in assaulting the enemy's entrenched position, meeting with partial success, a number of prisoners being taken and the line of brigade advanced. On the 28th and 29th the regiment was employed in destroying the "Montgomery and Atlanta" and the "Atlanta and West Point" railroads. The casualties of the regiment during the month aggregated eighteen men killed, and one officer—Captain Curtis—and one hundred and three men wounded.

On the 1st day of September the regiment marched to Jonesborough and joined in a charge upon the enemy's works at that place on the afternoon of the same day. On the 7th it returned to its former position in front of Atlanta and late in the day entered the city, then in possession of the Federal troops, and bivouacked at White Hall in the suburbs.

The campaign up to this time had been extremely laborious, and the regiment, in common with all other troops in the Army of the Cumberland and the Army of the Tennessee, had suffered severely from numerous privations and the incessant labor attending the ceaseless operations of the Federal forces. During a considerable portion of the time rain fell with unusual frequency and its dispiriting effects upon both men and animals was often quite noticeable. The wagon-roads over which supplies were obtained soon became almost impassable, and sufficient food for the army was with difficulty procured.

"It would only weary the reader's patience," says General Howard in an article published in the *Century Magazine*, "to follow up the struggle step by step from New Hope Church to the Chattahoochee. Still these were the hardest times which the army experienced. It rained continuously for seventeen days; the roads becoming as broad as the fields, were a series of quagmires, and indeed it was difficult to bring enough supplies forward from Kingston to meet the needs of the army."

Scarcely a day elapsed after the regiment left Graysville until the Confederate army abandoned Atlanta without some casualty occurring in its ranks, resulting from the advance of the skirmish line or from contact with the enemy in battle. Outpost duty was particularly severe and constantly embraced a large portion of the command. Hasty entrenchments were invariably prepared whenever the regiment halted, and the men always slept on their arms.

"No regiment was long in front of Johnston's army," continues General Howard, "without having virtually as good a breastwork as an engineer

could plan. A ditch was sunk before the embankment and a strong log revetment established behind it, and a heavy 'top log' put in place to shelter the heads of the men. I have known a regiment to shelter itself completely against musketry and artillery with axes and shovels in less than an hour after it reached its position."

On the 28th day of September, 1864, the regiment was directed to return to Chattanooga, where it arrived by rail on the 29th. On the following day it established its camp near the summit of Lookout Mountain, where it remained until the close of the war.

The losses of the regiment during September, were seven men killed and twenty wounded.

During its entire field service the losses of the Fifteenth Infantry—largely confined to the First Battalion—aggregated three officers killed, fourteen wounded and five captured; seventy-six men killed, three hundred and seventy-five wounded, and one hundred and forty-five captured.

It participated with one or two battalions in nine great battles, as follows, and in several minor affairs and skirmishes in which casualties occurred:

Shiloh, First Battalion, April 7, 1862.

Stone's River, First Battalion, December 31, 1862.

Chickamauga, First and Second Battalions, September 19, 20 and 21, 1862.

Missionary Ridge, First and Second Battalions, November 25, 1863.

New Hope Church, First and Second Battalions and Companies A and B Third Battalion, May 2, and June 5, 1864.

Kenesaw Mountain, First and Second Battalions, and Companies A and B, Third Battalion, June 23 to 30, 1864.

Neil Dow Station, First and Second Battalions, and Companies A, B, C and D, Third Battalion, July 3 and 4, 1864.

Utoy Creek, First and Second Battalions, and Companies A, B, C and D, Third Battalion, August 7, 1864.

Jonesborough, First and Second Battalions, and Companies A, B, C and D, Third Battalion, September 1, 1864.

In August, 1865, the Regular Brigade was broken up and the regiments composing it were sent to various parts of the country. The First Battalion Fifteenth Infantry was sent to Fort Adams, Rhode Island, in whole or in part, and the Second and Third Battalions to Mobile, Alabama. In December two companies of the First Battalion were sent from Fort Adams to Mobile, and in January and February, 1866, the other companies of the battalion followed. The Second Battalion, under Major Dudley, went to Vicksburg in January, and in March the regimental headquarters was transferred from Fort Adams to Mobile, arriving at the latter place on the last day of the month.

The experience of the regiment while at Mobile was quite uneventful. It was called upon for a while after its arrival to perform the duties of watchmen and policemen in the city, but this ceased as soon as a local government was organized. After this was fully accomplished its duties were quite strictly confined to drills and guards and the other monotonous routine labors of camp life in time of peace.

On the 28th of July, 1866, the President approved an act of Congress fixing the permanent establishment at forty-five regiments of infantry of ten companies each. In carrying out the provisions of this act General Orders 92, Adjutant-General's office, issued on the 23d day of November, 1866, announced the First Battalion as the Fifteenth Infantry; the Second Battalion as the Twenty-fourth, and the Third Battalion as the Thirty-third.

The field officers and the captains of the reorganized regiment as announced in this order were, Colonel Oliver L. Shepherd, Lieutenant-Colonel Julius Hayden, Major E. McKay Hudson, and Captains Keteltas, Yorke, Curtis, Jewett, Tracy, Fetterman, Potter and Semple. Captains Cummings and Gillette were subsequently assigned to the regiment. Lieutenant Coleman was made Adjutant, and Lieutenant Buffum Quartermaster.

In July, 1866, the headquarters of the regiment was removed to Macon, Georgia, where it remained until September, when it was again established at Mobile. Owing to the prevalence of yellow fever in the latter city in the fall of 1867 the headquarters and five companies of the regiment then constituting the garrison of Mobile, went into camp at Stark's Landing on the "eastern shore" of Mobile Bay about the middle of September. In December the headquarters and the companies serving with it broke up the camp at Stark's Landing and returned to the city.

Early in February, 1868, the headquarters of the regiment was removed to Montgomery, Alabama, and General Shepherd was placed in charge of the Sub-District of Alabama. Lieutenant Hartz was assigned to duty as Adjutant-General of the District. At this time Heilman's company (A), Shorkley's (B) and Coleman's (I) were stationed at Huntsville, Alabama; Potter's (C), and Jewett's (D) at Montgomery, Hedberg's (E), at Jacksonville, and Curtis' (H), Stewart's (F), Brown's (G) and Gillette's (K), at Mobile. Some changes afterwards occurred in the stations of the companies, but it is not possible to follow these movements in this abbreviated history of the regiment.

Early in August, 1868, the regiment concentrated in Mobile, and on the 16th of the month proceeded on board the iron steamship *Morgan* for New Orleans, en route for Texas. On reaching New Orleans the regiment was divided into detachments and continued its journey in three river boats up the Mississippi to the mouth of the Red River, and then up that stream to Shreveport, from which place it was transported by rail to Marshall, Texas. Here a distribution of the companies was made for "reconstruction duty" in the eastern portion of the State. Regimental headquarters and Potter's company (C), and Jewett's (D), were sent to Nacogdoches; Heilman's (A), to Livingston; Hedberg's (E), to Palestine; Stewart's (F), to Huntsville; Curtis' (H), to Jefferson and Shorkley's (B), Brown's (G), Coleman's (I), and Gillette's (K) remained at Marshall.

Early in the spring of 1869 the question of the reduction of the army came before Congress, and for some time was a prominent subject of consideration. A clause was finally attached to the army appropriation bill, reducing the number of infantry regiments to twenty-five. The bill as thus amended passed the House and subsequently the Senate, and on the 3d day of March received the approval of the President. In carrying out the provisions of the law an order was issued from the Adjutant-General's office, on

the 11th day of March, directing the consolidation of infantry regiments, including the Fifteenth and Thirty-fifth.

The Fifteenth assembled at Austin, Texas, in the following June, and after a somewhat prolonged delay, due principally to frequent heavy rains and the consequent swollen condition of the Colorado River, got away finally on the 16th day of July, *en route* for Fort Concho, Texas, at which point the reorganization of the regiment was to be effected by consolidation with the Thirty-fifth.

The regiment reached Concho early on the following month and went into camp on the Concho River, not far from the Fort, and immediately adjoining the camp of the Thirty-fifth, which had preceded it by a few days. On the 12th day of August, the final order carrying into effect the consolidation of the two regiments, was published and on the 18th formally executed.

The field and staff officers and the captains of the regiment as now constituted were: Colonel Oliver L. Shepherd, Lieutenant-Colonel August V. Kautz, Major John S. Mason, Captains Ellis, Jewett, Whittemore, McKibben, Hedberg, Steelhammer, Shorkley, Brown, Coleman and Stewart. Lieutenant Sartle was continued as adjutant and Lieutenant Blair as quartermaster.

On the 19th day of August the regiment marched from Concho on its way to New Mexico, following the old "Butterfield Trail" across the Great Staked Plain. Two large tanks filled with water from the Concho River were taken with the command, and a limited amount of water for drinking purposes was served from them to the companies at intervals when needed. The regiment reached the Pecos River at "Horse Head Crossing" on the evening of August 25th and on the following day crossed the river in small detachments by means of a raft improvised by lashing together the water tanks, now empty. The impedimenta were taken from the wagons and crossed by the same means.

On the 13th day of September the command reached the Rio Grande River about three miles below Fort Quitman, and continuing its march up the river arrived at Fort Selden, New Mexico, on the 27th day of the same month. At this point the distribution of the companies of the regiment for their posts in the District of New Mexico began.

The last day of the month found the regiment again on the road. The headquarters and five companies continued on up the river and the other companies separated for their several posts. Hedberg's company for Fort Cummings; Jewett's for Fort Bascom; McKibben's for Fort Stanton and Whittemore's and Steelhammer's for Fort Bayard.

On reaching Fort Craig, the regimental headquarters and Shortley's and Coleman's companies took station at that place. The remaining companies continued on for their stations which they reached about the middle of October; Brown's and Stewart's companies to Fort Wingate and Ellis' to Fort Garland, Colorado.

The journey from Austin to Concho, across the Great Staked Plain, and up the Rio Grande, was admirably well conducted. With the exception of two or three long marches that involved much fatigue and discomfort, no severe physical exertions were imposed upon the troops, or privations endured unusual to ordinary marches of brief duration in effecting changes

of station. The average distance marched by the companies from their stations in Texas to their new stations in New Mexico approximated fifteen hundred miles.

On the 15th of December, 1870, Colonel Shepherd was retired at his own request under the provisions of the act of July 15 of that year, and was succeeded on the same day by Colonel John E. Smith, who in turn was followed by Colonel Gordon Granger on the 20th of July, 1870. After about five years service with the regiment, Colonel Granger died at Santa Fé, New Mexico, and was succeeded by Colonel George A. Woodward, on the 10th day of January, 1876. Colonel Woodward never joined and was finally retired on the 20th of March, 1879. Colonel George P. Buell followed and after a brief service with the regiment went to Tennessee on sick leave, where he died in May, 1883. He was succeeded by Colonel J. N. G. Whistler, who was retired in 1886.

Colonel R. E. A. Crofton, at present in command of the regiment, was promoted colonel on the 19th day of October, 1886, and has served continuously with the regiment since November 20th of that year. He entered the service as Captain of the 56th Infantry in 1861, was promoted Major 14th Infantry in 1868, and Lieutenant-Colonel 13th Infantry in 1879.

He was promoted major by brevet, for gallantry in the battle of Shiloh, and in the following year further distinguished by the brevet of lieutenant-colonel for gallant conduct at Chickamauga and Missionary Ridge.

He commanded the First Battalion of the Sixteenth Infantry after Major Slemmer was wounded early on the first day of the battle of Stone's River, and was subsequently recommended by General Rosecrans in his official report of the battle for further promotion by brevet, in consideration of gallant services rendered in that engagement.

He also commanded the First Battalion of his regiment at Chickamauga and Missionary Ridge.

The regiment remained in New Mexico a little over twelve years. At the end of that time the headquarters and six companies were sent to Fort Lewis, Colorado, and three companies to Fort Lyons, Colorado, one company remaining at Santa Fé, New Mexico.

In October and November, 1882, the regiment was transferred to the Department of Dakota, headquarters, and Brinkerhoff's company, (A); Conrad's, (C); Stafford's, (D); and Bean's (H), took station at Fort Randall; Shorkley's (B) and McKibben's (I) at Pembina; Steelhammer's (G), and Hartz' (K) at Fort Lincoln; Humphreys' (E), and Whittemore's (F) at Fort Stevenson.

After serving in Dakota for about eight years, the regiment was directed to proceed to the Department of the East. Four companies got away in May, 1890, and proceeded to their new posts, A and G (Burnham) to Mount Vernon Barracks, Alabama, under command of Major Theaker; D, to Fort Barrancas, Florida, and K to Jackson Barracks, Louisiana.

In July, 1890, companies I and R were skeletonized under the provisions of General Orders 76, Adjutant-General's office of that year, and the men transferred to other companies.

The regimental headquarters and the five companies remaining in the

Department of Dakota were assigned for station at Fort Sheridan, Illinois, in the same month, and in August companies E and H proceeded to their new post under command of Captain McKibben. Lieutenant-Colonel O'Bierne arrived at Sheridan and succeeded to the command of the post on the 2d day of October following.

Owing to the incomplete condition of the officers' quarters and the barracks at Fort Sheridan, further movement of the regiment was suspended until January, 1891, when the headquarters proceeded to its new station. The companies in Dakota, and the companies serving in the South, followed in May.

Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Owenshine joined on the 18th of March, 1891, by promotion from the Twenty-third Infantry, and Major Clarence M. Bailey on the 19th of August of the same year, by promotion from the Eighth Infantry.

On the evening of the 29th day of September, 1869, the regiment appeared in line at Fort Selden, New Mexico, for the last time previous to a long separation of its companies. It assembled again in 1891, joining by detachments from the Dakotas, Alabama, and Louisiana, and on the evening of the 29th day of May, once more united in line, at Fort Sheridan.

"The Colonel congratulates the regiment," read the Adjutant in publishing the orders at the close of the parade, "that after twenty-one years it is again united. He is highly gratified at the soldierly appearance and good behavior of the companies recently joining headquarters. This indicates regimental pride and devotion to duty, which must produce good results. The present Colonel has served with the Fifteenth Infantry both in peace and in war, and knows there is no more gallant corps in the service. He is proud of his regiment and feels certain it will keep up, if not excel, its past record."