

Stones River National Battlefield

3501 Old Nashville Highway
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
Phone: (615) 893-9501, Fax: (615) 893-9508

Regimental File Donation Form

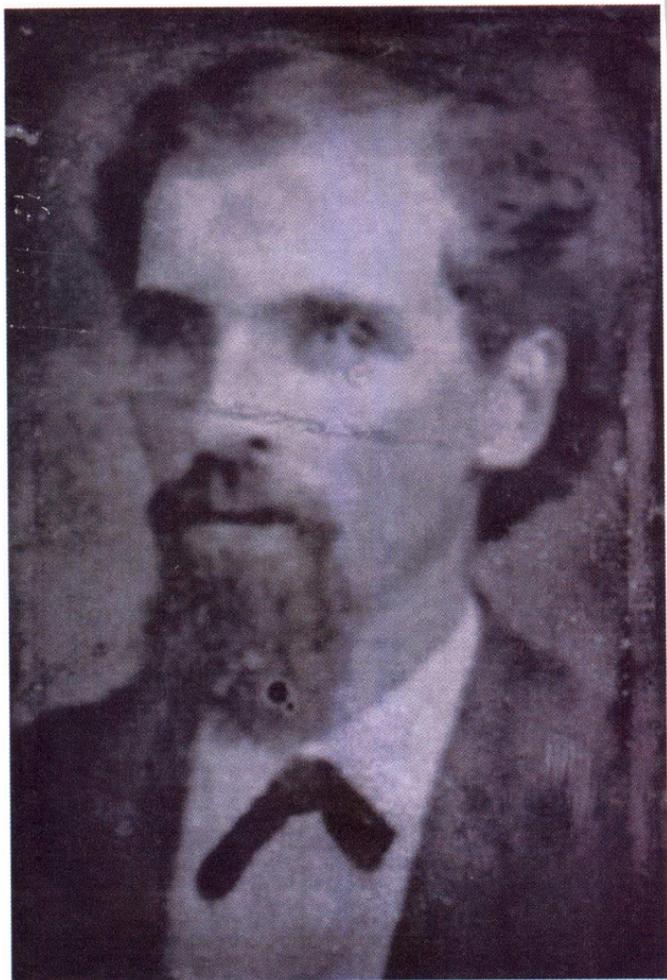
Donor Name: Brian McMurdo
Address: P.O. Box 2347
City: Valley Center State: CA Zipcode: 92082
Phone: 760-742¹⁶⁹⁴~~16~~ Fax: —
email: delrikki@gmail.com

Significant Person's Name: Wilson M. Gamble

Unit: Pioneer Brigade 1st Bn, Co B at Stones River
mustered in w/ 69th OVI Co K

List Contents of Donation Below:

2 copies photo (wedding photo, probably)
c. 1870 of Wilson McKnight Gamble
also family compiled word document
of Gambles service from Nov 1862
± Feb. 1863 w/ Pioneer Brigade
Gamble, aka "Gambol", "Gambles"



“... Among the lesser commands which deserve special mention for distinguished service in the battle is the pioneer corps, a body of 1,700 men, composed of details from the companies of each infantry regiment, organized and instructed by Captain James St. Clair Morton, corps of engineers, chief engineer of this army, which marched as an infantry brigade, with the left wing, making bridges at Stewart’s creek; prepared and guarded the ford at Stone [sic] river on the nights of the 29th and 30th; supported Stokes’s battery, and fought with valor and determination on the 31st, holding its position till relieved on the morning of the 2nd; advancing with the greatest promptitude and gallantry to support Van Cleve’s division against the attack on the evening of the same day [Confederate General Breckenridge’s assault] , constructing a bridge and batteries between that time and Saturday evening.

“The efficiency and *esprit du corps* suddenly developed in this command, its gallant behavior in action, and the eminent services it is continually rendering the army, entitle both officers and men to special public notice and thanks, while they reflect the highest credit on the distinguished ability and capacity of Captain Morton, who will do honor to his promotion to a brigadier general, which the President has promised him.”

January 20, 1863 or so. Lt. Hugh Norvell of the Pioneer Brigade was convicted of fleeing his post of duty in the face of the enemy at Stone’s River. He was convicted of the charges, and was sentenced to be brought before the entire Pioneer Brigade, and stripped of all his badges and ranks and dismissed from the service of the army. Wilson Gamble may have witnessed this.

1863 February, Wilson M. Gamble is listed as a private in Company B of the First Battalion of the Pioneer Brigade, “... on duty to work on Bridge at Stone River near Murfreesboro”.

1863 March. The Army of the Cumberland Pioneer Brigade had been issued shelter tents, small to say the least. The brigade came to intensely dislike these tents, calling them dog tents and dog pens. Derisive names often appeared on the tents including “Doghole No. 1” and “Sons of Bitches Within”. One day, General Rosecrans and his staff rode through camp and heard a crescendo of bowwows. The men were on their hands and knees, stretching their heads out of the end flaps, barking noisily. The general promised to rectify the situation. In performing these acts, though, the Pioneer Brigade had a hand in naming the “pup tent”.

April and May of 1863 Gamble was with the Pioneer Corps as a Mechanic (I think skilled position of some sort).

May through November, 1863 On the muster rolls of the 69th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Wilson Gamble is listed as absent and serving with the Pioneer Corps.

In June of 1863 a list of all older men up to age forty five was created in the Union eligible for military service. The Harrison County Ohio list recorded Samuel H. Hatheway, age forty four, a merchant, and Nathan Hagerty, Samuel’s brother in law and

“Our relative loss was as follows:

Right wing, 15,933 musketry and artillery; loss 20.72 percent.

Centre, 10, 866 musketry and artillery; loss 18.4 percent.

Left wing (of which Wilson Gamble was part of), 13,288 musketry and artillery; loss 24.6 per cent.”

November 28th, 1862

Every regimental colonel in the Army of the Cumberland was ordered to choose the best two infantrymen from every company to be assigned to the newly formed “Pioneer Brigade”. Each regiment would provide on average, about twenty soldiers. The caliber of the soldiers was assured by essentially lying to the colonels, telling them that these soldiers would remain with their regiments until needed to form for pioneer work. In reality, the pioneers worked apart from their regiments for months or years at a time.

On November 28th, 1862, Wilson Gamble, age eighteen, was a private in Company K of the 69th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He was one of two men chosen from his company to be sent to the newly organized Pioneer Corps. He would remain with the Pioneers until 1864.

Wilson Gamble was sent to Company B of the 1st Battalion of the Pioneer Brigade. The Pioneer Brigade had been formed by Union General William Rosecrans to create a force of men who would operate in advance of the main Union Army of the Cumberland (Gamble’s army), repairing or building bridges, roads as needed, railroad trestles, and fortifications for the main force.

The unit was capable of operating as an infantry unit as well. Rosecrans’ orders to his army were for regimental colonels to provide the two men from each company that they considered the most intelligent or skilled. The brigade was divided into three battalions, the First Battalion consisting of men from the 14th Army Corps of the Army of the Cumberland. The Pioneer Brigade (also sometimes known as the Pioneer Corps or as Morton’s Engineers) were separated into two general categories of laborers and mechanics. Gamble was a mechanic. These men were more skilled in the use of tools and at times were used for surveying.

Almost completely forgotten in our time, historian Phillip Shiman explains the Pioneers as follows:

“... The regimental colonels detached their best, most talented men, in the expectation that they could use their pioneers as they saw fit. It should be considered to be quite a compliment to your great grandfather that he should have been selected for the Pioneer Brigade. It meant that his colonel thought highly of him...”

The First Battalion, of whom Wilson M. Gamble was a member, was under the command of Captain Lyman Bridges. The Pioneer Brigade—made up of three battalions, was under the command of Captain James Saint Claire Morton, an army engineer. Wilson Gamble was present in this company through December of 1862 and continuing with it on in to March of 1864, when he returned to Company K of the 69th. He also served in details attached to Army Headquarters, surveying units and the Corps Commissary.

The First Battalion was comprised of soldiers from the 14th Army Corps of the Army of the Cumberland, the Second Battalion from the 20th Army Corps and the Third Battalion from the 21st Army Corps. These were divided into ten or twelve companies of eighty or one hundred men, based on the strength of those brigades from which they were drawn. The senior ranking lieutenant served as lieutenant colonel commanding the battalion, the next ranking lieutenant as major, and the ranking lieutenant in each company served as captain of that company. This model applied to non-commissioned officers. The ranking sergeant served as sergeant major, etc.

Unlike the volunteer and regular engineer organizations, the pioneers were directly subject to infantry command. When a company of pioneers was attached to a brigade, corps, division or army, its place in formations was adjoining and immediately following the skirmishers, in advance of the main force. They assumed the same place in the advance of division, corps and army formations.

This Pioneer Brigade was the only unit on either side in the Civil War that was specifically created to serve as a unit of combat capable infantrymen whose first purpose was to provide engineering and construction for the army.

December 7, 1862 The Pioneer Brigade was officially designated and put under the command of Captain James Saint Clair Morton, second in his class at West Point in 1851.

“... Under Morton's direction, the most skilled infantrymen were selected from each regiment and organized into the three battalions according to Rosecrans orders...”

December 7 through mid December: The Pioneer Brigade completes two weeks training under St. Clair Morton, then rejoins the Army of the Cumberland at

December 17, 1862 The weather was pleasant in middle Tennessee. It was described as “balmy and delightful”.

December 20, 1862 A Union artillery battery originally sponsored by the Chicago Board of Trade, under the command of Captain James H. Stokes, a West Point graduate, is attached to the Pioneer Brigade. It is commonly referred to as “Stokes Battery”.

December 28, 1862 New Hagerstown, Ohio. Sarah Jane Hatheway turns seventeen.

December 31, 1862 to January 2, 1863 The Battle of Stone's River

December 29 and 30. The First Battalion of the Pioneer Corps built two bridges over Stewart's Creek between the hours of 4 p.m. and 4 a.m. on the march from Nashville to Murfreesboro, TN. This seems to be to the south of Smyrna, Tennessee and north of Murfreesboro. The weather on December 29—a Monday, is chilly, clear with a heavy frost. That night a cold north wind blows in. Soldiers use fence rails, cedar snags or any other wood they can find to make fires. The early morning of December 30 a thick mist arises, but the rain stops. That evening the weather was bitter cold.

December 29th and 30, 1862. Wilson Gamble with the Pioneer Brigade is probably bivouacked in a field three miles west of Murfreesboro, Tennessee near the Stones River.

December 30, 1862, Stone's River, Tennessee, between 8 and 9 pm. This is an incident that Wilson Gamble probably witnessed or participated in:

“... Stone's River was important for both sides, and there were about 81,000 soldiers on both sides, and before the battle was over 23,000 of them were killed or wounded.

But at about 8 pm on the evening of December 30, 1862, something special happened that soldiers from both sides would tell their grandchildren. The two generals had gotten together and agreed upon a truce of sorts, before the battle resumed the next day. The Union band started playing songs, a common occurrence and a pick-me-up for northern soldiers. The Confederates were close enough to hear and would yell across the empty fields. In the cold and damp winter, mostly shoeless Confederates who would yell “That's a great one,” across the field and finally “Play some of ours!!” to remind them of home. The songs were “*Dixie*” and “*Bonnie Blue Flag*.” Finally, the Union band broke into “*Home Sweet Home*,” a national favorite. As the band played, nearly every single one of the 81,000 soldiers began singing along. On the eve of a day that brought certain death to so many. This is still called the biggest choir ever in history.”

December 31, 1862 The Pioneer Brigade in advance of the Army of the Cumberland prepared three fords across Stone's River, and guarded one of them. (WOR Series 1 Vol 20 Pg. 191)

December 31, 1862 about 7 am. The Pioneer Brigade is positioned on a knoll about 4 or 500 yards behind Stokes Union Battery, and to the west of the Murfreesboro Turnpike. Soldiers of the Army of the Cumberland were up and about preparing breakfast and coffee. At this time, from the distant right came the sound of battle.

December 31, 1862 8 A.M., the whole right wing of the Army of the Cumberland out of the fight, and the center of the army are desperately engaged.

December 31, 1862 Early in the battle, Stone's River. Early on this day, as fighting began, Colonel Cassily, the commander of the 69th Ohio Volunteers, which Wilson Gamble had left a month before, was reported by his brigade commander to be “... so

drunk as to be unfitted to command, so I ordered him to the rear in arrest, and placed Major Hickox in command, who soon after was injured by the concussion of a shell, so as to be unfit for duty, and thus the regiment was left without a commander. I, however, knew nothing of this for some time after; but members of my staff found them scattering, rallied them and directed the senior officer present, Captain Putnam, to take command. Captain Brigham, the senior captain of the regiment, had been out with skirmishes and was not at this time with the regiment. The regiment did but little service in the action, but the company officers did what they could, and in that way helped us some.

“I recommend the dismissal of Colonel Cassilly from the service. I cannot for a moment tolerate or pass over such flagrant conduct. I saw nothing of him after the action, but have learned that he was wounded and gone to Nashville. A man who will come to the field of battle, having the lives of so many in his keeping, in such a situation, no matter what his social position, is totally unfit for any command.”

Cassilly was dishonorably dismissed from the army, according to a temperance publication of the time.

December 31 Captain St. Clair Morton places the Wilson Gamble's First Battalion in a thicket of woods to the left of Stoke's Union Battery (the "Chicago Board of Trade Artillery")

Report of Capt. James St. Clair Morton, USA,
Commanding Pioneer Brigade,
Army of the Cumberland

The link:

http://books.google.com/books?id=fY_I-NFQIG8C&pg=PA147&lpg=PA147&dq=%22december+31%22+%22pioneer%22+%22stokes%22&source=bl&ots=p-xLL7WoBr&sig=OZEpg7dS7Ski2-z7A7v-R9RCKk4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=F7syU6TGOtW1sATm2IHgAw&ved=0CCsQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22december%2031%22%20%22pioneer%22%20%22stokes%22&f=false

“On the morning of the 31st, the brigade was engaged in improving the fords at Stone's River, in which the right battalion sustained the fire of some rebel cavalry, when I was ordered to take position in the line of battle, and formed my brigade, by the orders of the commanding general [Rosecrans] in person, fronting toward the right, where the enemy appeared on a rise of ground in front of us, from which they had driven one of our batteries. I immediately opened fire with canister from Stokes' battery and drove them back. I then, by order of the commanding general in person, advanced to the said rise, and held it under fire of three rebel batteries. I supported the battery by the First Battalion on the left [Wilson Gamble's battalion], posted in a thicket, and by the Third Battalion on the right. The Second Battalion was placed in a wood still farther to the right.

“Shortly after I had formed my line, the enemy appeared across the field, preparing to

charge upon some of our troops, who were retiring, but had been rallied by the commanding general. I opened fire upon these from Stokes' battery, which played over the head of the commanding general and our troops, and arrested their advance. My right battalion was soon after attacked, the object of the enemy being to penetrate through the line under cover of the woods. Said battalion changed front so as to obtain a flanking fire, and a single volley repulsed the enemy, composed of the Eleventh and Fourteenth Texas Regiments. In this the battalion was aided by the Seventy-ninth Indiana, which had rallied on its right. "

"...debourching from the death-masked cedars, the enemy [came] in pursuit of the retreating blue. The [Stokes] cannoneers were at their posts, the General [Rosecrans] on the right in line. The order rang out, "load"; before the word "fire" came he raised his hand and plunged down the declivity in front. He had seen the approaching routed mass of soldiers, who at once would swarm on the front, over and through the battery, followed by the victorious foe; a moment's delay, and the capture of the Battery would be inevitable. On came the exultant yell. The artillerymen stood with lanyard tightly drawn, until to longer wait all was lost. As from one gun six death-dealing shells passed over the head of the commanding General into the mass of "grey"-beyond, and from thence thirty per minute until the front was clear.

"... a double line [of Confederates] was seen to emerge from the woods in a southeasterly direction, advancing across the fields, and they were soon followed by heavy columns of infantry battalion front, with three batteries of artillery. The line advanced steadily [under the fire of Stokes' lone Union battery] to within 100 yards of Union General Van Cleve's division when a short and fierce contest ensued. Van Cleve's division, giving way, retired in considerable confusion across the river, followed closely by the enemy.

"General Crittenden immediately directed his chief of artillery to dispose the batteries on the hill on the west side of the river so as to open up on them, while two brigades of Negley's division, from the reserve, and the Pioneer Brigade, were ordered up to meet the onset. The firing was terrific and the havoc terrible. The enemy retreated more rapidly than they advanced. In forty minutes they lost 2,000 men."

"...The enemy's artillery opened with deadly precision, and so admirably was it masked that their guns could be located. The infantry, formed in from of the forest, delivered a volley, and charged across the open field. Then canister was the cry,-within thirty yards the foremost went down, when all not disabled sought shelter in the rear. This was thrice repeated. By 11 o'clock in the morning the enemy had learned that neither bravery nor numbers could carry the battery in their front, and all was quiet. Three of our men lay dead by their disabled guns. Then wounded were taken to the rear. The Battery having held its ground, it became the pivotal point on which the right and centre rested..."

December 31 Captain St. Claire Morton reported: "...Toward sundown, the enemy appeared on my left, I brought two sections of Stokes' battery to the left of my First Battalion, and repulsed a brigade of the enemy which attacked that battalion in the thicket. They left their dead within 59 paces of my line. In this affair both the battalion

and the battery behaved very creditably.

“The brigade slept on their arms the night of the 31s. Early on the 1st instant the enemy appeared on my left (in front of Wilson Gamble’s position) apparently to advance through the gap between it and the pike. I changed my front and occupied the gap and sustained and returned their volleys of musketry, playing upon them from the battery and preventing their advance beyond the edge of the woods. We held this position till after nightfall, when the brigade was relieved and formed in reserve...”

1863

January 2, 1863 Near Murfreesboro TN St. Claire continues his report:

“... On the morning of the 2nd, part of the Pioneers were engaged in making road crossings over the railroad, when the enemy opened a cannonade, which reached our camp. I brought out Stokes’ battery and returned the fire. The battalions advanced, supporting it under a fire of solid shot and shell. The cannonade having ceased, I received orders to fall back to my assigned position in reserved and remained till late in the afternoon, when the commanding general in person ordered me to the left as a re-enforcement. I then marched my command at a double quick and arrived on the live, occupying a gap in it under the fire of a rebel battery, which was however, soon silenced by Stokes’ battery, which was worked with exceed ing vigor and skill.

“General Negley now approached me and requested me to re-enforce his troops, who, after a violent contest, had gained ground on the opposite side of the river. I accordingly moved my command there at a double-quick, and formed the Third Battalion in second line behind General Davis’ command, the First Battalion [Wilson Gamble’s] extending beyond it and throwing out its own advance, occupying the space between it and the river. The battery was posted on a knoll between the First and Third Battalions, the Second Battalion being in second line on the extreme right. In this position we remained till after nightfall, when I received orders to recross the river and again assume a position in reserve, and to furnish the Second Battalion to construct rifle-pits in the front and near the pike and also on the extreme right. The said battalion worked all night in the rain.

<http://ebooks.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/pageviewer-idx?c=moawar;cc=moawar;q1=pioneer%20brigade;rgn=full%20text;idno=waro0029;didno=waro0029;view=image;seq=0259>

January 3, 1863 At Stone’s River, St. Claire Morton’s report continues:

“... On the 3d, the Third Battalion relieved the First, on duty in the trenches...”

January 4, 1863

At Stone's River "...on the 4th the Second and Third Battalions began two lunettes on the north bank of the river, and the First Battalion [Gamble's] began a trestle bridge across it. On the 5th the said work was continued, and the Third Battalion, with the advance of the army, in pursuit of the enemy."

Captain Bridges, the commanding officer of Wilson Gamble's First Battalion, was wounded during the battle of Stone's River but remained with his command, according to the report of Capt. Saint James Morton.

Morton also wrote: "...During the engagement, the Pioneers behaved as well as could be wished, and, when required, worked zealously by night and day, although insufficiently provided with rations, in spite of inclement weather, and under fire.

The Report of Wilson Gamble's Commander Lyman Bridges after the Battle of Stone's River

The following is the report submitted to Saint James Morton by Captain Lyman Bridges, the battalion commander of the Pioneer First Battalion, of which Wilson Gamble was a member. Bridges would have been Gamble's most immediate commander above company rank.

"Report of Capt. Lyman Bridges, commanding First Battalion

HDQRs. First Battalion, Pioneer Brigade, Department of the Cumberland
Stone's River, near Murfreesborough, Tenn., January 5, 1863

Captain: In compliance with your order, I herewith furnish a report of the part this battalion took in the recent battle at this place.

I have the honor to report that on the morning of December 30, 1862, having completed the bridge at Stewart's Creek at 4 a.m., I received orders to hold my command in readiness to march at a moment's notice. At 8 a.m., by your order, I moved seven companies, 600 strong, forward upon the Murfreesborough pike, throwing out an advance guard and flankers upon either side, three companies being upon special duty. At 10 a.m., in accordance with orders received from you, I moved to the front and halted, awaiting your order. At 2 p.m. I moved my command to the river, taking position upon the left of Captain Stokes' Chicago Board of Trade Battery, and built an abatis [abatis—a field fortification for an obstacle formed (in the modern era) of the branches of trees laid in a row, with the sharpened tops directed outwards, towards the enemy, a precursor to barbed wire] from the river toward General Rosecrans' headquarters, as directed by you.

[December 31, 1862]

"At 4 a.m., December 31, I improved a ford across Stone's River.

"At 7 a.m. our right wing having been overpowered, and the enemy's advance being

within 80 rods of my camp, I fell in with my command and followed Stokes' battery, as previously ordered by you. The battery having been ordered into position on the ridge between the pike and the railroad, I forwarded my command inline of battle upon the left of Stokes' battery, the enemy having possession of the parallel ridge upon the opposite side of the pike, about 20 rods distant.

[Brian's note: a rod is sixteen feet. So the Confederates were a little over 100 yards distant]

Continuing the report:

"... At that crisis General Rosecrans rode along our line, and ordered me to charge and take the knob along the opposite side of the pike, he sending the same order to Captain Stokes' battery. I moved one wing upon either side of the battery to the hill in good order. Soon after reaching the hill, General Rosecrans ordered me to occupy the skirt of the woods upon my left. I moved my entire command upon the left of the battery, the Third Battalion of this brigade relieving my right wing, changing position to the left.

"The enemy continues a heavy fire of grape, canister, and musketry upon us as we advanced and they fell back. After gaining our new position, General Rosecrans rode to our front, and rallied the Twenty-first Ohio, First Kentucky, and Seventy-eighth Pennsylvania, which had fallen back upon our right.

[About noon, December 31, 1862]

"At 12 m. (sic—mid day?) the enemy, General McCown's division, came down, upon the double-quick, with their standards flying in splendid order. They were allowed to come within 300 yards, when the musketry of the entire brigade and the battery opened with grape and canister a most deadly ire, which he returned as earnestly. The [Confederate] column reeled and fell back in disorder, their colors struck down and barely rescued. Lieutenant Ritchie, Company A of Third Ohio Detachment, was here wounded while encouraging his men. The number of killed and wounded left on the field tells of how severe was his [the Confederate] loss. Many of his wounded reached our lines during the day and night. All declaring that the 12 o'clock charge was an expensive one for them.

Note: Whiskey Rations. From the Civil War Trust website, an organization dedicated to preserving Civil War battlefields: "The opposing lines at Stones River spent the night of December 30 unusually close together. In some places the two armies were separated by less than four hundred yards. As part of Bragg's attack force, John McCown did not want to reveal his position by the light of cook-fires on the morning of the 31st. Instead, he distributed a whiskey ration—most welcome in the freezing weather—and ordered his men forward at dawn. The furious assault caught some of the defenders while they were cooking their own breakfast and shattered the Union line. McCown was drawn away from the Wilkinson Turnpike as his men pursued the scattering Federals.

[About 5 p.m., December 31, 1862]

Note: *The next part of the report is especially fascinating, as it may reveal the only specific instance of an incident at close level where Wilson Gamble seems very likely to have been present during the Civil War. Wilson Gamble's war record at the National Archives in Washington, DC shows that he joined the Pioneer Brigade on November 28 1862 and served with them into 1864. He was assigned to the First Battalion, Company B. This First Battalion was also at times referred to as Bridge's Engineers. Here the report continues:*

“ The enemy again rallied his forces at 5 p.m., advancing a brigade upon my left flank through a skirt of wood attempting a surprise. My pickets [skirmishers deployed some distance in front of Bridges' main line of troops] being fired upon by the enemy, who took advantage of a train of ambulances being in the vicinity, fired upon ambulances and pickets indiscriminately, I ordered this battalion to change front and commence firing. Lieutenant Stevens, of Stokes' battery, opened fire upon him simultaneously with grape and canister. Our new line fortunately rested upon the crest of the hill. Each volley by us thinned his ranks. He advanced perhaps 40 paces, discharging repeated volleys of musketry, but his repulse was complete, and they fell back to the wood, 1,000 yards in the rear, cursing their fate. Dozens of their wounded men, found within our lines of skirmishers, all corroborated each other in stating that a brigade was repulsed in attempting to take our position. He left 60 of his men upon the field.

“...Lieutenant Smith, of Company B [of the First Battalion], in charge of my skirmishers, with his company captured 1 major, 1 captain and 30 men. I received a slight wound in my left leg, above the ankle, not so severe as to require me to leave the field. My command laid upon their arms during the night, holding the ground early in the morning.”

This would seem to have been an incident that Wilson Gamble was involved in. It also suggests that he was a member of the picket line that was referred to above in Captain Bridges' report.

[January 1, 1863]

[Daybreak]

Captain Bridges report of the activity of the First Battalion continued:

“...Lieutenant Froelich, Twenty-second Illinois, at daybreak the next morning, January 1, while in charge of the skirmishers of and in front of my command, reported a large force of the enemy assembling near to the left of the position to which he returned the previous evening. I rode to the front and left flank of my line of battle. The fog being very dense, the enemy could not be seen, but I could distinctly hear his commands, and being satisfied that he was advancing on my left, and there being no support between my left and the Murfreesborough pike, I informed you of my information and position. Receiving orders from you, I immediately changed front, my left resting upon the Murfreesborough

pike. Captain Stokes moved his battery promptly upon my right. The sun had just risen, but the fog had not yet cleared. We took our position without accident. The enemy advanced within 500 yards and opened fire, as he supposed, upon our flank. A few moments' return fire convinced him that we were not unaware of his movements. In half an hour he fell back behind his intrenchment [sic], remaining there during the day.

[January 1, 1863, 10 p.m.]

“No demonstration was made upon our front during the day. At 10 p.m. Colonel Buell relieved my command, and I moved, by your orders, 1 mile to the left and rear, having held the one position upon the front thirty-six hours without relief.

[January 2, 1863, about sunrise]

“At sunrise, January 2, the enemy charged upon our left center, capturing a section of a battery one-half mile in our immediate front, and were forcing our position. I moved my command, as ordered by you, to the left and front, my right resting on the Third Battalion of this brigade, and my left upon an open field near the river; remained an hour in line of battle;

[January 2, 1863 early morning]

“... was then ordered to take a position at the bend of the river, 40 rods farther down; remained in position until 3 p.m., when, by your orders, I moved forward in good order to the support of Stokes' battery in the charge upon the hill, above the bend of the river, recently held by our left wing. “

The “charge upon the hill at 3 p.m. seems to refer to the charge of Confederate General John C. Breckenridge at about that time and place. Breckenridge had been the Vice President of the United States under Buchanan, and was from a prominent Kentucky family. He joined the Confederate Army at the beginning of the Civil War and served as a field commander in the West. Breckenridge's charge at Stone's River is considered to be one of the deadliest infantry assaults of the Civil War, in a similar category to the charge at Marye's Heights by Union troops at Fredericksburg, and surpassed only by Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. His assault was actually launched against the Union about 4 p. m. into the face of fifty seven Union cannon. Within minutes, over 1,800 Confederate soldiers were dead or wounded, not one reaching the Union lines. This was about 36% of the approximately 5,000 men the Confederates sent forward in the assault, making Breckenridge's attack the most statistically costly in the Civil War with the exception of Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. The Pioneers moved forward in counterattack in the aftermath of Breckenridge's assault.

Captain Bridges continued : “...Lieut. E. S. Dodd, acting lieutenant-colonel, was wounded in the leg with a 6 pounder ball while the battalion was taking its position. By your order, I moved forward in double-quick, forded the river, and charged up the hill; formed line of battle over the crest of the hill, my left wing occupying an oak ridge, as

indicated by you. I remained in position an hour, until the several regiments that had done such gallant service rallied and formed in line of battle again.

“By your order I changed position, my right resting upon the river, my left occupying a front of woods, and supported by Stokes’ battery. Remained in position until 12 p.m., when I was ordered to move across the river.

“January 3, by your order, this battalion commenced building a military bridge at the lower bend of Stone’s River, which, I have the honor to inform you, is now completed and in use.

“It is with pleasure that I mention with the highest regard and praise the officers and men of this battalion, who all did their duty so promptly and nobly during the past terrible week. To Lieut. George Turner, adjutant, I am under many obligations for repeated and timely assistance.

“Annexed is a list of the killed and wounded of this battalion.

“I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
Lyman Bridges
Captain, Commanding

End of his report.

Union General Negley in his report concerning Stone’s River made reference to the Pioneer Brigade, as well:

“...I feel permitted to speak in complimentary terms of the gallant Morton and his Pioneer Brigade, which marched forward under a scathing fire to the support of my division.”

<http://ebooks.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/pageviewer-idx?c=moawar;cc=moawar;q1=pioneer%20brigade;rgn=full%20text;idno=waro0029;didno=waro0029;view=image;seq=262;page=root;size=100>

The failure of Breckinridge’s assault marked the effective end of Confederate activity of any meaning at Stone’s River, and by January 3 the Confederate army had marched away, leaving Rosecrans’ Army of the Cumberland in command of the field.

At Stone’s River, the strength of the Pioneer Brigade was about 1,700 men. They reported 30 men killed or wounded—a 1.75% casualty percentage. Wilson Gamble’s First Battalion lost four enlisted men killed, three officers and five enlisted men wounded.

Rosecrans 1863 report to the US Senate wrote further about units due special mention:

a cavalry raid into Ohio. Forrest was known as one of the greatest Confederate cavalry generals, and later, for being a founder of the Ku Klux Klan. Wilson Gamble would still have been serving with the 69th Ohio at this time, according to his military records.

November 1862. Nineteen year old William Gamble is listed with the 43rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry as a "Company Cook".

The Pioneer Brigade

From December 31, 1862 to January 2, 1863, the Union Army of the Cumberland, under General William Rosecrans, engaged the Confederate Army of Tennessee, under General Braxton Bragg, in one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War a short distance to the south of the town of Murfreesboro, Tennessee. By a strange coincidence, the battle plans of the opposing generals were almost identical—to send an overpowering blow of their right wing smashing into the left wing of their opponent. Stones River, or Murfreesboro as it was known in the South, produced some of the most savage fighting in the entire Civil War. After three days, the Confederate army disengaged and moved further south. A few weeks later, Rosecrans prepared and submitted a report to the United States Senate on the battle. Here are some of his findings:

The Union Army fought with 43,400 men—37,977 of whom were infantrymen.

The Union Army lost in killed:

Officers, 92; enlisted men, 1,441 for a total loss in dead of 1,533.

The Union Army lost in wounded:

Officers, 384; enlisted men 6,861 for a total loss in wounded of 7,245

The total Union loss in killed in wounded totaled 8,778 resulting in a 20.03% loss of the entire Union Army at Stone's River.

Rosecrans was unsure of the number of his men who were made prisoners by the Confederates or who were missing, but said they "fell short of 2,800".

He believed he had engaged a Confederate army 15% larger than his own.

Rosecrans reported that his soldiers had captured Confederates from 132 regiments of infantry, calculating that this would represent a rebel force of over 62,000 men.

Other statistics were revealed in Rosecrans grim parsing of the battle:

"...Of 14,560 rebels struck by our missiles, it is estimated that 20,000 rounds of artillery hit 728 men (in three days fighting).

2,000,000 rounds of musketry hit 13,832 men; averaging 27.4 cannon shots to hit one man; 145 musket shots to hit one man.

G 69 Ohio.

Wilson M. Gambel
Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on
Company Muster Roll
for Jan. & Feb., 1864.
Present or absent absent
Stoppage, \$ 100 for
Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: Detached in
Pioneer Corps,
from Nov. 25, 62,
D. H. S. 10. G. Nov.
24, 62.

* Comd'g Co. 1st
Book mark:

Orborne
Copyist.
(558)

G 69 Ohio.

Wilson M. Gambel
Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on
Company Muster Roll
for Mar. & Apr., 1864.
Present or absent Present
Stoppage, \$ 100 for
Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: Trans. to 2nd Reg.
Co. No. 14. 2. 1. "Dir.
14" ac. Mar. 11, 64.

* He chosen on roll.

Book mark:
Orborne
Copyist.
(558)

G 69 Ohio.

William M. Gambel
Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on
Company Muster Roll
for May & June, 1864.
Present or absent absent
Stoppage, \$ 100 for
Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: Detach in
Pioneer Corps,
from 28th Nov.
62, G. O. No. 31, D. O.
Nov. 24, 62.

Book mark:
Orborne
Copyist.
(558)

G 69 Ohio.

Wilson M. Gambel
Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on
Company Muster Roll
for July & Aug., 1864.
Present or absent Present
Stoppage, \$ 100 for
Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks:
Summe appear
in Rec. Co. as
Gambel.

Book mark:
Orborne
Copyist.
(558)

Wilson M. Gambel
Priv., Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

for May & June, 1863.
Present or absent Present

Stoppage, \$ 100 for

Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: Detached in
pioneer corps from
28 Nov. 1862

Book mark:

Tolson

Wilson M. Gambel
Priv., Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

for July & Aug, 1863.
Present or absent absent

Stoppage, \$ 100 for

Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: Detached with
pioneer corps from
28 Nov. 62,
G.O. 31, D.C., Nov.
24, 62.

Book mark:

Orbome

Wilson M. Gambel
Priv., Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

for Sept. & Oct., 1863.
Present or absent absent

Stoppage, \$ 100 for

Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: Detached with
pioneer corps from
28 Nov. 62, G.O. no. 31, Reg't,
D.C. Nov. 24, 62.

Book mark:

Orbome

Wilson M. Gambel
Priv., Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

for Nov. & Dec., 1863.
Present or absent absent

Stoppage, \$ 100 for

Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: Detailed in
pioneer corps from
28 Nov. 62, G.O. no. 31,
D.C. Nov. 24, 62.

Book mark:

Orbome

W. M. Gambol
Priv., Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on
Company Muster Roll

for Sept & Oct., 1862.

Present or absent *Absent*

Stoppage, \$ 100 for

Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: *Detached with
pioneer corps from
28 Nov 1862*

Book mark:

Tobman

Wilson M. Gambol
Priv., Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on
Company Muster Roll

for Mar & Apr., 1862.

Present or absent *Absent*

Stoppage, \$ 100 for

Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: *Detached
service Pioneer Corps since
Pioneer Corps*

Book mark:

Tobman

Wilson M. Gambol
Priv., Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on
Company Muster Roll

for Jan & Feb., 1863.

Present or absent *Absent*

Stoppage, \$ 100 for

Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: *Detached in
Pioneer Corps since
28 of Nov.*

Book mark:

Tobman

Wilson M. Gambol
Priv., Co. A, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on
Special Muster Roll

for dated April 13, 1863.

Present or absent *Absent*

Stoppage, \$ 100 for

Due Gov't, \$ 100 for

Remarks: *Detached with
pioneer corps from
28 Nov 1862*

NET TOLL OF THE JUNE 1863.

Subscribed to Special Muster
for April 10, 1863.

Book mark:

Tobman

Pioneer Brigade,
1 Battalion. *Ohio*

Wilson M. Gambol
Co. K, 69 Reg't Ohio Inf

Appears on
Company Descriptive Book
of Co. *B*, 1 Battalion Pioneer Brigade.*

DESCRIPTION.
Age *18* years; height *6* feet *6* inches.
Complexion *Sandy*
Eyes *Gray*; hair *sandy*
Where born *Harrison Co. Ohio*
Occupation *Farmer*

ENLISTMENT.
When *Mar 14*, 186*4*.
Where *Bowlington*
By whom *G. M. Jones*; term *3* yrs.
Remarks *Transferred to Co. I 1st Battⁿ Pioneer Brigade & Gen Order No 5 XI Htl In 1st Battⁿ Pioneer Brigⁿ ad. Mar 27 1864*

* This Brigade was organized by details of twenty men each from all Infantry regiments in the Army of the Cumberland, per G. O. No. 3, dated Department of the Cumberland, November 3, 1862, and instructions from Headquarters 14 A. C. of November 21, 1862. The Brigade was broken up and men having more than one year to serve were transferred to the 1 Reg't U. S. Veteran Engineers and the remaining men sent back to their respective regiments by S.O. No. 231, dated A. G. O., July 8, 1864, and G. O. No. 132, dated Department of the Cumberland, September 1, 1864. - A. 597-V. S.-1864.

J. Murchant Copyist.
(383g)

Pioneer Brigade,
1 Battalion. *Ohio*

Wilson M. Gambel
Co. *C*, 69 Reg't Ohio Inf

Appears on
Company Descriptive Book
of Co. *D*, 1 Battalion Pioneer Brigade.*

DESCRIPTION.
Age *18* years; height *6* feet *5 1/2* inches.
Complexion *sandy*
Eyes *Gray*; hair *Sandy*
Where born *Warren Co. Ohio*
Occupation *Farmer*

ENLISTMENT.
When *March 10*, 186*2*.
Where *Boyersford, O.*
By whom *G. M. Jones*; term *3* yrs.
Remarks.

* This Brigade was organized by details of twenty men each from all Infantry regiments in the Army of the Cumberland, per G. O. No. 3, dated Department of the Cumberland, November 3, 1862, and instructions from Headquarters 14 A. C. of November 21, 1862. The Brigade was broken up and men having more than one year to serve were transferred to the 1 Reg't U. S. Veteran Engineers and the remaining men sent back to their respective regiments by S.O. No. 231, dated A. G. O., July 8, 1864, and G. O. No. 132, dated Department of the Cumberland, September 1, 1864. - A. 597-V. S.-1864.

O. T. Jaylor Copyist.
(383g)

69 mo
Pioneer Brigade,
1 Battalion. *Ohio*

Wilson M. Gambel
Co. *B*, 1 Batt'n Pioneer Brigade.

Appears on Returns as follows:

Feb 1863 On duty
to work on Bridge
at Stone River
near Murfreesboro
April & May 1863 On
duty Detached as
Mechanic

April 1863 Absent surgeon
at Dept. Htl. Dep.
Jan 1864 Absent U.S.
Coast survey & Dept

X Same appears also
as Wilson Gambell

Book mark:
L. A. Poynter Copyist.
(646)

gade,
on.

Ohio.

69

Ohio.

Army of the
Cumberland.

Wilson M. Gamble

Gamble

Reg't Ohio

Co. 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on

Company Descriptive Book

of the organization named above.

ioneer Brigade,*

June 1864

ent

or

Complexion *Sandy.*
Eyes *Green*; hair *Sandy.*
Where born *Warren Co. O.*

for

Occupation *Farmer.*

ENLISTMENT.

recipitate
does not
date of

When *Mich. 10*, 186

Where *Bowenston.*

By whom *G. M. James*; term *3* yrs.

Remarks:

* details of twenty men each from
y of the Cumberland per G.O. No.
erland, November 3, 1862 and in
A. C. of November 21, 1862. The
aring more than one year to serve
U. S. Veteran Engineers and the
i O. No. 127 listed Department
1864. - A. 597-V. S. 1864.

D. M. Muzzey

Copyist.

Ohio.

69

Ohio.

Wilson M. Gamble

Put *Co. A*, 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.

Appears on Returns as follows:

Nov 1862 Absent - detailed in

Pioneer Corps

Jan 1863 to Feb 1864 Absent

Detached in Pioneer Corps

since Nov 28 62 to 31

to Nov 2 62

Mich 1864 Loss Mich to 1862

Transf to 2 Ohio V S O 62

Mich 11 64 Ad gns 1 Div

14 A C

May 1864 Gain by transfer

Mich to July 1864 Absent in Pioneer

from Nov 28 62

Nov 1864 to Feb 1865 Absent

Detached in Pioneer Corps

Sept 2 1864 to Dec 1864

Mich 1865 Loss Mich 17 65

staged at Millville to be Discharged

by reason of expiration

of service

+ Also Gamble

Book mark:

Wilson

Copyist.

(545)

Ohio.

Allen M. Gamble

Co. *K*, 69 Reg't Ohio Inf.

NOTATION.

Book mark: *Mad. 196. 1867.*

War Department,

Adjutant General's Office,

Washington, *May 18th*, 1867.

Lost on board Steamer General Taylor

March 31. 1865.

A. M. Muzzey

Copyist.

(488)

Wilson W. Gamble
 69 Reg't Ohio Infantry.
 Age 18 years.

Appears on a

Detachment Muster-out Roll

of the organization named above. Roll dated
Newaygettaville N.C. Feb 16, 1865.
 Muster-out to date
Feb. 16, 1865.
 Last paid to
Aug 31., 1864

Clothing account:

Last settled *Dec 2, 1863*; drawn since \$ *200.75*

Due soldier \$ *100*; due U. S. \$ *100*

Am't for cloth'g in kind or money adv'd \$ *100*

Due U. S. for arms, equipments, &c., \$ *100*

Bounty paid \$ *None* *100*; due \$ *100* *100*

Remarks: *Application of term of services*

Transportation and subsistence to be furnished to place of enrollment

Book mark: *Vol. -196-1867 (over)*

Hezquias Copyist. (349)

Pioneer Brigade, 1 Battalion. Army of the Cumberland. Ohio

Wilson Gamble
 Capt., Co. H, 69 Reg't Ohio Vol

Appears on

Muster Roll

of Co. B, 1 Batt'n, Pioneer Brigade,*
 for *Nov 1 Dec* 1863.

Present or absent *Absent*

Stoppage, \$ *100* for

Due Gov't, \$ *100* for

Remarks: *On duty at*
Ad. P. S. Engineers troops

From Second Auditor's Roll

*This Brigade was organized by details of twenty men each from all Infantry regiments in the Army of the Cumberland, per G.O. No. 3, dated Department of the Cumberland, November 3, 1862, and instructions from Headquarters 14 A. C. of November 21, 1862. The Brigade was broken up and men having more than one year to serve were transferred to the 1 Reg't U. S. Veteran Engineers and the remaining men sent back to their respective regiments by S. O. No. 231, dated A. G. O., July 8, 1864, and G. O. No. 132, dated Department of the Cumberland, September 1, 1864, -A. 597-V. S.-1864.

Book mark:

Hezquias Copyist. (368)

Pioneer Brigade, 1 Battalion. Army of the Cumberland. Ohio

Wilson Gamble
 Capt., Co. H, 69 Reg't Ohio Vol

Appears on

Muster Roll

of Co. B, 1 Batt'n, Pioneer Brigade,*
 for *Jan 7 Feb* 1864.

Present or absent *Present*

Stoppage, \$ *100* for

Due Gov't, \$ *100* for

Remarks:

*This Brigade was organized by details of twenty men each from all Infantry regiments in the Army of the Cumberland, per G.O. No. 3, dated Department of the Cumberland, November 3, 1862, and instructions from Headquarters 14 A. C. of November 21, 1862. The Brigade was broken up and men having more than one year to serve were transferred to the 1 Reg't U. S. Veteran Engineers and the remaining men sent back to their respective regiments by S. O. No. 231, dated A. G. O., July 8, 1864, and G. O. No. 132, dated Department of the Cumberland, September 1, 1864, -A. 597-V. S.-1864.

Book mark:

Hezquias Copyist. (358)

Pioneer Brigade, 1 Battalion. Army of the Cumberland. Ohio

Wilson Gamble
 Priv., Co. H, 69 Reg't Ohio

Appears on

Muster Roll

of Co. A, 1 Batt'n, Pioneer Brigade,*
 for *March 1 April* 1864

Present or absent *Present*

Stoppage, \$ *100* for

Due Gov't, \$ *100* for

Remarks:

*This Brigade was organized by details of twenty men each from all Infantry regiments in the Army of the Cumberland, per G.O. No. 3, dated Department of the Cumberland, November 3, 1862, and instructions from Headquarters 14 A. C. of November 21, 1862. The Brigade was broken up and men having more than one year to serve were transferred to the 1 Reg't U. S. Veteran Engineers and the remaining men sent back to their respective regiments by S. O. No. 231, dated A. G. O., July 8, 1864, and G. O. No. 132, dated Department of the Cumberland, September 1, 1864, -A. 597-V. S.-1864.

Book mark:

Hezquias Copyist. (358)

