

1861

HISTORY

1865

OF THE

SEVENTEENTH REGIMENT,

FIRST BRIGADE, THIRD DIVISION, FOURTEENTH CORPS,

ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND,

WAR OF THE REBELLION,

COMPILED BY

C. T. DEVELLING.

COMPANY B, SEVENTEENTH REGIMENT, O. V. V. I.

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ZANESVILLE, OHIO:

E. R. SULLIVAN, PRINTER AND BINDER, 36 SOUTH FOURTH STREET,  
1889.

tember 7th, and camped on vacant lots in rear of Military Academy. September 9th we guarded a bridge across the Cumberland river; we were relieved by the Eighteenth U. S. I. September 11th, moved camp to South-west side of the hill, where there was plenty of shade. September 15th, we started for Louisville, Kentucky; Major Wards horse got loose last night, run over some stacked guns and run a bayonet into himself, killing him. Only 1 wagon allowed now, to 2 companies. After passing through Bowling Green, Kentucky, where we got a good wetting, as all tents were left at Nashville, Tennessee, crossed Barren river, Kentucky, and camped near Cave City, Kentucky; on the 20th, we were ordered at night, to have 3 days cooked rations in our haversacks, and be ready to march at day-light in the morning. We had but little meat, no salt or bread, had some coffee, fresh beef and flour issued to us, which was to be made into bread some way. The boys mixed the flour with water, then old tin plates, boards, flat rails and chips were used to bake, (or rather dry,) the dough on. Some twisted the dough around the iron ram-rods of their guns and dried it in the fire. No salt, plenty of dirt, half dried or burned, the boys called the stuff sinkers, and it was an appropriate name for it. The beef was cut in pieces, put on the ram-rods, or forked sticks and broiled; some was raw, some burned. It was midnight before the boys got through with it, and it was all we had to eat until September 23rd, when at night, the same experience was repeated with flour and water but no meat. Passing through Elizabethtown, Kentucky, September 24th, camped 3 miles north of town, and September 25th, camped on the Ohio river, below Louisville, Kentucky, and on the 26th, camped in suburbs of city. On this same march green field corn was a luxury, roasted with husks on, and apple-jack was found occasionally and enjoyed. September 27th, Chaplain Fullerton, having resigned, started for home. September 28th, we received 4 months pay. Started south October 1st, with only 1 wagon for the regiment. October 2nd, 2 companies of each regiment of our brigade, were detailed as skirmishers, our Company B., one, and when near Shepherdsville, Kentucky, they encountered the rebels, driving them through town, and then taking shelter in the houses, until the brigade arrived. October 3rd to the 8th, we were going towards Perryville, Kentucky, weather was very hot and roads dusty. The battle of Perryville was fought on the 8th, we were in sight of it but not actively engaged. Water was very scarce; the boys took turns in going about 5 miles to a spring, loaded with canteens, and fighting the rebels away from the spring; both federal and rebel troops got water there. October 10th, Company B. were on patrol duty in Perryville, Kentucky. October 15th, a barrel of whiskey was captured at Crab Orchard, Kentucky, and issued to the boys. October 26th, in the night, while we lay on Rolling Fork, a branch of the Kentucky river, without tents, it snowed about 5 inches. November 9th, at Tunnel Hill, our first recruits came. From November 11th, when we went into camp near Gallatin, Tennessee, until December 16th when we left, the following occurred. Nov. 13th, Mrs. Col. Connell, Mrs. Col. Moore and Miss Butterfield visited us. Nov. 22nd, Company C. and others, went on a scout towards Lebanon, Tennessee, and back; November 26th and 27th, we went on a scout to Pilot Knob, Sumner County, Tennessee, and back. December 4th, Mrs. Col. Connell and Mrs. Col. Moore started for their homes in Ohio. December 16th, 2 companies from each regiment in our brigade, detailed to guard a wagon train to Nashville, Tennessee, Company B. was one of the two from our regiment, the balance of the brigade went by cars. December 23rd, we went out foraging towards Gallatin, Tennessee, and back, had about 400 wagons, all were loaded with hay, oats, corn and corn blades. December 24th, at night when all were asleep, the boys tied a bell to an old gray mare's tail, she ran through camp badly scared, and badly frightening every one. December 25th, Whiskey was issued and some of Company C. and K. boys got into a fight, using hatchets, axes, picks, spades, and clubs. One of Company C. and Amos Shesler, Company K., had their heads badly cut. December 28th, we started toward Murfreesborough, Tennes-

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see, on Nolensville Pike. December 29th, we marched all night, through the rain part of the time, through cedar woods, over stony roads, across the country to the Murfreesborough pike, arriving at 3. a. m. December 30th, 3 1/2 miles south-east of La Vergne, Tennessee. Colonel Walker, who commanded our brigade, came riding into camp, with his hat off, yelling at the top of his voice, "get ready my lads." In 5 minutes the brigade was in line and quickly formed in battle line across the pike facing to La Vergne, skirmishers were thrown out in front and on the flanks, the brigade moved forward to La Vergne hoping to capture the rebel cavalry who were burning a train of 132 wagons, loaded with camp equipage and stores belonging to General McCooks corps, but the enemy had flown. The Battle of Stone River began to-day. December 31st, we moved towards the battle field, at Stewarts Creek we halted and formed a hollow square, expecting to be attacked by rebel cavalry, coming from the woods on the right of the road beyond the creek, but they did not come. During this forenoon, there was a perfect stream of stragglers, and wounded from the battle field, and the road was full of teams retreating, many teamsters and soldiers panic stricken, all going towards Nashville, Tennessee; Major Ward tried to stop the panic stricken soldiers, they could not be stopped however and he told them in a loud voice, "Go home and tell your sweethearts that you ran off of the battle field," he also told them "I would not give a cup full of cold water for a million such soldiers." Major Ward did not know what fear was, and did not understand it in others. We reached the battle field about 2:30 p. m. taking our position on the right of the Murfreesborough pike, in the woods, where the heaviest fighting had been done. The general engagement had ceased, but more or less firing by the artillery of both sides continued. During the forenoon the whole right wing of our army, commanded by Major General Alexander McCook, had been driven back with heavy loss. About sundown, the rebels charged on some of our forces, on our right, but were repulsed with considerable loss; this occurred in plain view of us and not far off, some of our regiment went over and took part in routing the rebel cavalry. We bivouacked on the stony ground, without fires most of the night, among the slain, no tents, but few blankets, night very cold and much suffering among the men. All baggage and stores had been ordered to Nashville, leaving the army without food.

1863.

We threw up breastworks January 1st, and were on picket, the men nearly froze, as it was very cold, and no fires permitted on picket line. Aspect of affairs rather gloomy. Preparations for a retreat, we act only on the defensive. 1 pint of beans and 2 spoonsful of molasses only, was issued to each of us, during the night. January 2nd, nothing to eat but a few beans, which we cooked in tin cups, and a little molasses. To our left flesh was cut from horses and mules that had been killed in battle, cooked and eaten by the hungry troops. About 9 p. m. we received 2 days rations from Nashville, Tennessee. This afternoon the left wing of our army, and part of the center, drove the charging rebels from the field with great slaughter, with grape and canister from our batteries, and musketry; the cannonading was most terrific, seeming to shake the earth to its center. At sun down our brigade advanced about 500 yards, laid down on our bellies and crawled a few yards, our artillery firing over us all the time; we fired on the enemy as we lay on the ground, then returned to our breastworks. "No. 9" was the rallying cry. About twenty men wounded to-day, in our brigade, none killed. In the night Captain Inskeep, Company C. and Captain C. L. Williams of the Thirty-first Regiment O. V. I. with 3 men, went out between the picket lines, near the rebel pickets, and got one Wallace of the Forty-fourth Indiana Volunteers, who was wounded and had lain on the field for 4 days, chilled and starved nearly to death, and carried him back within our lines. January 3rd, rained all day until night, then ceased. A brigade on the left center,