

HISTORY OF THE SERVICE
OF
THE THIRD OHIO VETERAN
VOLUNTEER CAVALRY

IN THE
WAR FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE UNION
FROM 1861-1865

COMPILED FROM THE OFFICIAL RECORDS AND FROM
DIARIES OF MEMBERS OF THE REGIMENT BY
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REGIMENTAL HISTORIAN

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OUR OLD COMMANDER



COL. CHARLES B. SEIDEL
MEMBER OF THE HISTORY COMMITTEE

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November 27th—The division under Colonel Kennett went out on the Franklin pike, encountered a force of the enemy and routed them, driving them fifteen miles. He captured a number of prisoners and horses.

December 11th—General Stanley with a strong force of cavalry went out on the Franklin pike, the First division in the advance; marched within four miles of Franklin and bivouacked for the night.

December 12th—Moved forward at daylight, attacked the enemy, driving them. Killed one officer and four men, captured twelve prisoners and a large number of horses, wagons and supplies. Returned to camp at night. The regiment camped on the Nolensville pike about three miles from Nashville.

December 14th—The division reviewed by General Stanley. During the month of December the regiment was constantly engaged scouting, doing picket duty and foraging. We were compelled to get forage for our animals from the country most of the time. While at Nashville we were obliged to go long distances, and take strong guards with the trains. Very frequently the foraging parties were attacked and our men had a number of skirmishes on these occasions.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BATTLE OF STONE RIVER

December 25th—We had received orders to pack up and after we were all ready to move the orders were countermanded, and the brigade wagon train with a strong guard was sent out after forage. The train was attacked by the enemy's cavalry, who captured two wagons and eight men of the Fourth Ohio. The remainder of the wagons were brought in safely, loaded with forage.

December 26th—Orders to send all camp equipage to the city; to take no wagons only such as were necessary to carry rations and ammunition. Zahm's brigade moved out on the Franklin pike. It was a rainy, disagreeable day; skirmishing in front most of the afternoon. The enemy made a stand about half a mile from Franklin. Colonel Zahm formed his lines, threw out skirmishers, and moved forward, driving the enemy, when the Third Ohio was ordered forward, charging through the town and driving the enemy several miles beyond, when darkness stopped the pursuit. A number of the enemy were killed and wounded. We captured some prisoners, also a number of arms, horses and mules. We returned to camp late at night.

December 27th—The brigade advanced toward Triune. One battalion of the Third Ohio sent to Franklin found the enemy in the town;

attacked them, but were unable to drive them out; rejoined command in the evening.

December 28th—The brigade moved forward to Triune; met with no opposition.

December 29th—Moved forward toward Murfreesboro. Found the enemy's pickets; they fell back as we approached. Encountered the rebel cavalry, driving them several miles to the protection of their infantry and artillery supports. At night we fell back some distance and camped.

December 30th—Advanced toward Murfreesboro, skirmishing with the enemy's cavalry all day. Lay on our arms in line of battle all night. Everything indicated that we were in the immediate presence of the main rebel army and that a great battle was imminent, and could not be delayed much longer.

December 31st—We were early astir and in line, waiting for reports from the patrol sent out in our front. It was scarcely daylight when the sound of artillery and infantry firing off to our left and front brought the tidings that the battle had commenced. The roar of cannon and the rattle of musketry was terrific, showing that on one side or the other a desperate assault was being made, and we soon learned that it was the enemy that had commenced the attack, and that the troops on the right of the Union lines were being driven from their position, closely pursued by their victorious enemy. We were compelled to fall back to prevent being cut off by the enemy. At this point the ammunition train of General McCook was in great danger of being captured, when the Third Ohio was rallied for its protection, and repelling the repeated assaults of the enemy, held them at bay until the wagons moved out to a place of safety.

As we came up to the Murfreesboro pike we found the rebels had attacked another of our wagon trains, the regiment driving off the enemy and saving the train. The fighting on this part of the line continued until nightfall, but the enemy was unable to drive us any further, although they made frequent attempts to do so. The day's battle closed with the right of the Union army occupying a position parallel to the railroad and Nashville pike and at right angles to that held when the battle commenced.

January 1st—The brigade started with a large train of wagons for Nashville. A short distance west of La Vergne we were attacked by General Wheeler's division of cavalry, who made several desperate attempts to stampede and capture the train, but were finally driven off with considerable loss. We arrived in Nashville late at night, remaining at Nashville one day, and on the 3d started for Murfreesboro in charge of the train. We were again attacked by Wheeler near La Vergne, who was again repulsed with loss. Arrived at Murfreesboro soon after midnight, Jan. 4th. While we had been absent at Nashville the undecisive

battle of the 31st had been renewed. On Jan. 1st, 1863, neither commander was desirous of renewing the conflict. Each was in hopes that the other would retreat. January 2d the conflict was renewed in the afternoon, but this time it was between the left wing of the Union army and the right of the Confederates—the advantage being on the side of the Union army. Bragg thought it prudent to withdraw. This was the first battlefield, in the West at least, where the Union cavalry had been used in large bodies. The Confederates had had the advantage of us in that they had consolidated their cavalry so that they were able to use it with effect, while the Union cavalry had been scattered in small bodies, and never were strong enough to accomplish any great results heretofore. But under the new order of things they proved themselves the equals of the Confederates in this arm of the service. The losses of the brigade, the First, Third and Fourth Ohio Regiments, at Stone's River were killed, 18; wounded, 44; missing, 59; total, 121. Among the killed were Colonel Milliken and Major Moore of the First Ohio.

When General Bragg was forced back out of Kentucky he knew that the Union army would in all probability be concentrated at Nashville, which had been successfully held by the Union troops against the Confederate forces under General Breckenridge during Bragg's invasion. He had therefore selected Murfreesboro as the most available point for the concentration of his army from which to threaten Nashville, and block the way of the advance of the Union army toward Chattanooga. The Battle of Murfreesboro had been the result, and General Bragg had been forced to retire, leaving the Union army in possession of the field. The annals of the war do not record a more stubbornly contested battle, the contesting armies being of nearly equal strength. General Rosecrans marched out from Nashville to give battle. General Bragg selected the ground upon which to fight. Each commander had his own plan of battle, and singularly enough the two plans were entirely similar. The plans involved the massing of troops on the left flank of the battle line of each army; an attack by the left, followed up along the line from left to right, the right holding its position as a pivot while the army made its right wheel, forcing its opponent back and getting possession of his line of communications. On the morning of the 31st of December General Bragg took the initiative and made a fierce attack on the right wing of our army, and it was soon evident that here was the point where Bragg was going to force the fighting. The Confederate left extended far beyond our right, which was compelled to fall back to prevent the enemy from getting in their rear. Slowly and stubbornly contesting every foot of ground, the right wing was driven back until they reached the Nashville pike and railroad, occupying a position at right angles with the one they held in the morning when the battle commenced. The left and center had held their ground.

Two assaults were made by the enemy on our right wing in their new position along the Nashville pike, but they were repulsed. January 1st, 1863, was spent by the Union army in strengthening their position. On the 2d Bragg determined to drive back our left, but his attempt only resulted in the loss of about 2000 of his best troops, therefore he determined it was best to retreat. He fell back to Tullahoma, his right occupying Manchester, and his left strongly posted at Shelbyville with cavalry on his right at McMinnville and on his left at Franklin and Columbia.

Reports of Col. Lewis Zahm, Third Ohio Cavalry, commanding Second Brigade, including skirmishes at Franklin, December 26-27, Wilkinsons's Cross-Roads, December 29, Overall's Creek, December 31, La Vergne, January 1, Cox's Hill, January 3, and on Shelbyville Pike, January 5.

HDQRS. 2D CAV. BRIG., IN CAMP ON WILSON'S PIKE,
NEAR NOLENSVILLE CROSSING, *December 27, 1862.*

GENERAL: In compliance with orders received, I moved from our old camp at Nashville yesterday morning at 8 o'clock with the First, Third, and Fourth Ohio Cavalry Regiments, 950 strong in all. I crossed over on the Franklin pike, south of General Thomas' headquarters, as I afterward learned. I passed the immense trains and troops on the Franklin pike, beyond Brentwood. I halted my command, as I had not seen General Thomas yet. I supposed he was on the move with the troops in front. I kept inquiring along the column, and was told that he was in the advance. I proceeded myself on the Wilson Creek pike some two miles, almost to the head of the column, but then learning from General Rousseau that General Thomas was in the rear, I immediately started back some six miles; there ascertaining that General Thomas had cut across the country to the Nolensville pike, I thought further pursuit would be useless. I started back to join my command and to carry out the remainder of my instructions. I proceeded to Franklin; encountered the enemy's pickets two and a half miles out; drove them in. Skirmishing continued until within half a mile of Franklin, when a sharp skirmish ensued, we driving the rebels. They then made another halt in town. I dismounted some six companies to act as skirmishers on foot; came round on both flanks with mounted skirmishers, and their reserves finally charged through the river into town, where some considerable firing ensued; drove the rebels out; drove them some two miles beyond town; the lateness of the day prevented further pursuit, for by this time it began to be dark. The enemy was taken by surprise; could not get their forces together before we were upon them; therefore made it rather an easy task

CHAPTER X.

SIX MONTHS AT MURFREESBORO

Immediately after the Army of the Cumberland took possession of Murfreesboro it commenced to fortify and put it in shape for defense. The troops went into winter quarters and made themselves as comfortable as possible. We were destined to remain at Murfreesboro six months. It seemed a long time to the people of the North, who wanted to see the army move—it seemed long to us, who wanted to see the war ended—but there are so many things to be provided for and looked after in connection with a large army that the average person does not think of—transportation, subsistence, clothing, arms, ammunition, etc. Really the needs of a large army are never completely supplied. It was necessary first of all to open up our line of communication. The enemy had played havoc with the railroad between Louisville and Nashville. It was not opened until February, and it was the middle of the month before the cars got to Stone's River, and March before the bridge was completed and the cars were running into Murfreesboro, when the army was put on full rations, and then before an advance movement could be made it was necessary to accumulate sufficient surplus rations and ammunition for the movement.

Then comes the animals necessary—horses for the cavalry and artillery, and horses or mules for the wagon train. The army is hard on men, but it is terrible on horses. The waste and losses were fearful. We always wanted horses and were always on the lookout for them. The government was buying horses all the time, yet we were always calling for more. To show the difficulty of obtaining horses while we were at Murfreesboro, on April 19th Lieutenant Brown and a detail from the regiment took a lot of worn-out, unserviceable horses to Nashville and put them in a corral there and as there were no horses to be had at Nashville, they got on the cars and went to Louisville. Arrived at Louisville April 21st. On May 27th they got a bunch of horses, loaded them on the cars, and arrived in Murfreesboro May 29th, only to have their horses taken from them and given to a Tennessee Regiment, while they carried their saddles back to camp, having been gone just forty days. The weather was very cold, wet and disagreeable a great part of the time we lay at Murfreesboro, but we were not idle. That is the cavalry were not. We were kept busy scouting, picketing and patrolling the roads, gathering forage, drilling, etc. The Second Battalion was stationed at Readyville with Hazen's Brigade of Infantry, the left of the Union Army, while the First and Third Battalions were in Camp Stanley, near Murfreesboro. The Second Kentucky Cavalry was added to our (Second) Brigade; the Chicago Board of Trade Battery to the division. Colonel Zahm resigned,

Lieutenant-Colonel Murray taking command of the regiment, and Colonel Paramore being placed in command of the brigade.

February 3d—The brigade, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Murray, went out on a scout with five days rations; passed through Auburn, going as far as Prosperity Church; coming back to Auburn to camp.

February 4th—Marched at daylight in the direction of Liberty; found a few small bodies of the enemy. Camped near Alexandria. The next morning went in the direction of Rome; brought in some prisoners; passed through Lebanon and camped at Baird's Mills. The next day forded Stone's river and returned to camp.

February 22d—Preparations were made to celebrate Washington's birthday, but for some reason there was delay in the arrival of some of the supplies, and the festivities were not held until the 24th. There were speeches by Generals Stanley, Garfield, and others, and then there was a feast of roast ox, chickens, ducks, and pigs, followed by beer and cigars. The band of the Fourth United States Cavalry furnished the music. The regiment went on picket at night.

February 28th—The always welcome paymaster visited us.

March 1st—Went on a scout with three days rations. Found the enemy in the afternoon at Bradyville, attacking them. They held their ground for about fifteen minutes, when we charged, driving them several miles and capturing about 100 prisoners and a lot of horses. Three men of the regiment were wounded. Camped near Bradyville, returning to Murfreesboro the next day.

March 4th—Cavalry went out with five days rations. Came onto the enemy's pickets near Unionville; charged them, driving them and following them so closely that the enemy did not have time to form, but got right out, leaving all their camp and garrison equipage, which we destroyed. We captured about fifty prisoners. Marching to Eagleville, we halted for the night. We did not unsaddle our horses, but lay on arms in line of battle to guard against surprise. We remained at Eagleville until afternoon of the 5th, when we marched to Chapel Hill, but finding no enemy we returned to our camp at Eagleville. The next morning we started for Murfreesboro, but after marching a few miles we received orders to go to Franklin, marching by way of Triune. We camped about nine miles from Franklin, which place we reached about noon of the 8th and went into camp.

March 9th—We took up the march southward, the Third Ohio in the advance. Found the enemy strongly posted covering the fords at Spring creek; after some skirmishing, fell back to our camp. The next morning we advanced to the creek and attacked the enemy; dismounted, drove them from the ford, but did not cross at that point. Crossing at another

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we followed the retreating rebels as far as Columbia, where they fled to the south side of Duck river. We returned to Spring creek camp about midnight. The next day we marched to Franklin. On the 14th, marched to Triune and camped.

March 14th—The command returned to Murfreesboro, arriving in the afternoon, having been in the saddle for ten days. The men of the Battalion captured at Lexington returned to the regiment after an absence of more than four months. On March 17th, grand review by General Rosecrans.

March 20th—A courier came into Murfreesboro bringing a message from Colonel Hall, commanding a brigade of infantry at Milton, saying he was attacked and likely to be surrounded by General Morgan with a force of cavalry, and asking for a reinforcement of cavalry to come to his assistance. The First and Second Brigades, under General Minty, left Murfreesboro about 2:30 p. m. and arrived at Milton about 10 o'clock and found that the infantry had repulsed Morgan, who was heavily in the fight. We remained at Milton for the night, guarding an infantry camp with a strong line of pickets. The next morning the cavalry went out on the different roads, endeavoring to locate the enemy.

The Third Ohio, under Lieutenant-Colonel Murray, went to the front and found a small body of the enemy, and chased them for two miles, capturing two prisoners. In the afternoon we started back to Murfreesboro where we arrived about 8 o'clock p. m. The loss in the infantry was five killed and thirty-eight wounded.

March 26th—Delos Ashley of Company I wounded at Bradyville, died yesterday, and it was decided to send his body home. The body was led by the Fifteenth United States Infantry band, escorted to the train and sent them to his friends at home, his brother accompanying them.

March 28th—The cavalry started out with five days rations and sixty cartridges on a scout after Morgan in the direction of Liberty. We met with the enemy in the afternoon, driving them about two miles from our arms in line of battle. The next morning we moved forward and found the enemy in position near Liberty. We attacked and drove them back. The next stand was at Snow Hill, where they were in a strong position, their battery being posted at a point where it commanded the pike for half a mile in its ascent up the mountain. After a vain attempt to silence this battery, General Stanley sent the Third and Fourth Ohio Cavalry to their left and rear. After climbing the hill, we were under cover of the woods on the summit, the Fourth Ohio dismounted, the Third mounted. Our skirmishers found the enemy in line, and the attack by the dismounted men was made with a short time the enemy commenced to give way, and the Third

was ordered forward, charging the enemy's line, it gave way and broke. As far as the fighting had all been under cover of the woods, but we soon came out of the woods and in sight of the pike, which was filled with the demoralized troops of Morgan, rushing madly toward Smithville. As far as we could see the road was packed with horsemen, intent on nothing but getting away. We charged them for about two miles, when the recall was sounded and we returned to the brow of the hill. The enemy's loss was very heavy in killed, wounded and prisoners, although many of our prisoners escaped in the woods during the charge. Our loss in the brigade was three wounded.

Mosgrove, one of Morgan's officers, winds up his account of the fight at Snow Hill as follows: "Morgan's command was worse demoralized in the affair at Snow Hill than upon other occasions where it had fought several battles and sustained serious defeat. Some weeks elapsed before the fugitives returned and reported for duty, none of them being able to satisfactorily explain why they rode away from the battlefield and 'kept going'."

We returned to a point about four miles northwest of Liberty and entered into camp. The next morning we took up the line of march, passed through Alexandria and camped about twelve miles from Lebanon.

April 5th—Passed through Lebanon and camped at Baird's Mills, returning to camp at Murfreesboro the afternoon of the 6th.

April 10th—Drew five days rations and started out on a scout. The next day we found the enemy in force at Franklin. After we had crossed the river we received orders to fall back. Just then the enemy charged our line of skirmishers and they were driven back through our lines. We fell back to the ford, which we were ordered to hold. We camped near the river and the next day returned to Murfreesboro.

During the latter part of April the division was formed in a hollow square for the purpose of seeing the sentence of a court martial for desertion carried into effect. The man was marched by his guards into the center of the square and in the presence of the division stripped of his uniform, dressed in citizens clothes, branded on the cheek with the letter "D," and then between two guards and followed by the drum corps playing the "Rogue's March," he was paraded in front of the lines all around the square and then drummed out of camp.

To us the punishment seemed terrible. General Rosecrans no doubt thought the example was needed and would have a tendency to check desertions.

April 20th—We started out with six days rations by the way of Readyville and Woodbury for a raid on the McMinnville & Tullahoma Railroad. After leaving Woodbury, we took cross-country roads, striking the railroad early in the forenoon of the 21st, capturing two trains of cars

and a lot of supplies, which were burned, tearing up the railroad and destroying bridges as we moved toward McMinnville, where we formed a junction with the troops under General Reynolds, capturing many prisoners. General Morgan escaped, but it was a close call for him. We started back by the way of Smithville and along the pike where Morgan's troopers went in their wild flight from Snow's Hill. Passing through Alexandria and Milton, we returned to our camp on the 26th. During the raid we had had numerous skirmishes with the enemy and captured a large number of prisoners and suffered no serious loss.

May 3d—We started out with sixty rounds of ammunition and one day's rations. Comparing our ammunition with our rations, we concluded that we were expected to do more fighting than eating. But after marching all day over the highways and by-ways, we returned to camp at night with our ammunition intact, but out of rations. We had one lone prisoner to show for our day's hunt.

About the 10th of May, our leaders believing that Wheeler was about to make another raid on the railroad, the regiment was stationed near La Vergne, from which point we patrolled and guarded all the fords and crossings of Stone's river. We remained about a week, but all was quiet—no enemy came, and we were ordered back to Murfreesboro.

May 19th—We moved camp about four miles out on the Lebanon pike, where we had plenty of good water near camp. Our new camp was called "Turchin," in honor of our division commander.

May 21st—We organized a little surprise party, planning to make an early call on the Johnnies encamped at Middleton. We marched nearly all night to get there, for we did not want to be late. We got there in time to catch them before they were up. They did not seem to enjoy our visit, for they lit out without saying good-bye. We captured and destroyed all their camp equipage, took seventy-nine prisoners and a large number of horses. Returning to Murfreesboro the next day, we were followed by the enemy, who attacked the rear guard a number of times, but were repulsed by the Third and Fourth Cavalry. Our regiment lost two men wounded, one man captured.

About the last of May, C. L. Valandigham was sent through our lines. He had been arrested by General Burnside for making speeches, encouraging resistance to the government, in its efforts to raise troops to put down the rebellion, inciting treason, etc. He had been tried by court martial and sentenced to be sent through the lines. President Lincoln approved the sentence, although he would have preferred that no notice had been taken of Mr. Valandigham's treasonable utterances. He was taken through the lines in a carriage. From Tullahoma he was sent to Richmond and wined and dined and feted and hailed everywhere as the friend of the South. He was put on a blockade runner at Wilmington,

went around through Canada to Windsor, opposite Detroit. He was nominated by the Democratic party for governor and received over two hundred thousand votes from the Copperheads of Ohio.

June 3d—We started out on a scout over in the direction of Morgan's bailiwick. On the 4th we passed through Liberty and over Snow's Hill. Striking the rebels about three miles from Smithville, driving them for five miles, we returned and went into camp near Liberty. In the afternoon of the 6th ten rebels apparently thinking that we had all gone (as part of the command camped outside of us had moved and our pickets were not posted) came trotting down the pike and almost to our camp before they saw us. They fired their guns, wheeled their horses and started back at a gallop, but some of our men were quickly in the saddle and after them and in an exciting chase of seven miles succeeded in capturing six of them, the remainder leaving their horses and taking to the woods. The next day we returned to Murfreesboro by the way of Milton.

June 10th—Colonel Paramore was superseded by Colonel Eli Long as commander of the brigade. Lieutenant Colonel Murray left the regiment. His farewell address was read at dress parade. Most of the boys were sorry to see him go. The men liked him in spite of his fondness for old Scotch—but he would allow it to get the best of him sometimes.

June 23d—Orders to break camp and be ready to move at a moment's notice. All excess baggage to be sent inside the fortifications. Three days rations in the haversacks and nine in the wagons; it looks like business—guess we are going after Bragg.

OFFICIAL REPORTS OF SCOUTS AND SKIRMISHES OF THE THIRD OHIO
CAVALRY DURING THE TIME THAT THE ARMY
OCCUPIED MURFREESBORO

JANUARY 19, 1863.—Skirmish near Woodbury, Tenn.

Report of Captain Thomas D. McClelland, Third Ohio Cavalry.

HDQRS. SECOND BATTALION, THIRD OHIO CAVALRY,

CAMP NEAR READYVILLE, TENN., *January 20, 1863,*

SIR: In accordance with instructions, the Second Battalion, consisting of Companies E, F, A, and D, reported to Colonel W. B. Hazen, commanding Second Brigade (January 10, 1863), and were marched to this place, a distance of twelve miles. Our time since has been fully occupied in patrolling and scouting, with an occasional skirmish with the enemy's pickets and scouting parties, until yesterday we had quite a brilliant little affair with a portion of Morgan's command, under Colonel Hutcheson. About noon, picket firing was heard to the front. The colonel commanding ordered me to send out and see what it meant. I