

Soldier History

William Tomlinson

Residence was not listed; 32 years old.

Enlisted on 9/25/1861 as a Private.

On 9/25/1861 he mustered into "Batty A" Co. OH 1st Light Artillery
He was Mustered Out on 7/31/1865 at Camp Cleveland, OH

Promotions:

* Corpl

Sources used by Historical Data Systems, Inc.:

- Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio
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1st Oh. Lt. Artillery - Our Finest Murfreesboro Battle Letter!

Corpl. William Tomlinson, Battery A of the Ohio 1st Light Artillery, writes from "Camp 4 miles south of Murfreesboro" home to his brothers and sisters, describing the bloody battle of Murfreesboro or Stone's River. The letter is on legal size paper, 4 pages, written in ink. Tomlinson enlisted in September of 1861 and fought all 4 years with the 1st Ohio Light Artillery.

- *"...we began to skirmish with the Rebels. McCook's Corps. was all that was on this pike & we had to fight everyday to keep the Rebs ahead of us. Lost some men everyday & took some prisoners & one gun from the Devils..."*
- *"Gen. Jeff Davis was engaged with the enemy when we reached the field. Here I see a splendid artillery duel one of our Arty. was shelling the woods ahead of our skirmishers when the Rebs put a battery in position & opened on ours. Our men had to change position quick to the right & then they went at it again by this time we had another ready for them & 20 had a crossfire on Mr. Rebs after firing a few rounds our infantry took 3 guns & fell back as it had got to be night."*
- *"...the Rebs began fire into us at about 100 yds. They came on 4 Divisions deep firing into us, balls flew like hail. Our men were falling fast, some shot dead in their beds. Our horses were off after water, the first order we got was from Col. Libsan of Ohio to get our guns out of the way as quick as possible, some of the horses came back & hitched on. I was putting my blankets on one side of the caisson & the Rebs were on the other. We were all together Rebs & Yankees. I see if I must get out alive I must get out of that & out I started up through a corn field. I made good time & the balls made as good time to men fell that were running with me but I kept on expecting to fall next."*
- *"For I knew most of our guns were taken most of the horses were killed before I left parks, the rebels had drove our right round some 3 miles. Things began to look dark. The battle raged hard all day..."*
- *"I slept that night close to Generals Rosecrans head quarters. At 3 AM Gen. McCook's & Escort came around & told us to get under arms for the Rebs were marching on us. ...We put out our fires so they couldn't get range on us with artillery & shell before light. Orderlies & Generals were riding every way putting every man & gun in its right place, the right was ready for them this time. But the center had got to do the fighting this time."*
- *"The Rebels had put their battery in position in the night. Rosecrans had 8 batteries ready for them all out of sight 6 guns. These the rebels thought they could easily take soon. We heard the devils yell and on they came. It was a dear charge to that Brigade for our guns opened fire on them at short range & but few got back to tell the tale, then the Rebs opened their artillery & now commenced a noise I never shall forget. You would have thought hell had broke loose for noon this fight lasted about 3 hrs. & then the Rebs began to find out that they couldn't*

Battery A, 1st Ohio Light Artillery

Transcription:

Camp 4 miles south Murfreesboro, Jan. 26th, 1863

Dear Brothers & Sister,

I received your last letter after we left our camp at Nashville for Murfreesboro on the morning of the 29th of Dec. As we received orders to strike our tents & put our things into the wagons to go back into the entrenchments & put 3 days rations in our haversacks & be ready to march in 2 hrs. All was confusion now to get ready to be up for some place we knew not where but expected for this place, at 10 AM. We left camp on the Nolenville pike. We had gone but 6 miles before we began to skirmish with the Rebels. McCook's Corps. was all that was on this pike & we had to fight everyday to keep the Rebs ahead of us. Lost some men everyday & took some prisoners & one gun from the Devils. We drove them beyond Trynue some 10 miles & then took over back tracks some 2 ½ miles & took a mud road for the Valley pike leading to Murfreesboro. We reached the front the 30th. Gen. Jeff Davis was engaged with the enemy when we reached the field. Here I see a splendid artillery duel one of our Arty. was shelling the woods ahead of our skirmishers when the Rebs put a battery in position & opened on ours. Our men had to change position quick to the right & then they went at it again by this time we had another ready for them & 20 had a crossfire on Mr. Rebs after firing a few rounds our infantry took 3 guns & fell back as it had got to be night. After dark we were ordered to take our position on the extreme right & went to bed without any orders. I had charge of the guard from 2 till morning & told some of the boys we would catch in the morning for the camp fires of the Rebels were very bright at 3 o'clock, but no orders came to be ready for a fight at day light.

Just as day began to break, our Infantry made fires & were getting coffee ready. I got some before light for fear something might turn up. I had put on my haves such & was rolling up my blankets when the Rebs began fire into us at about 100 yds. They came on 4 Divisions deep firing into us, balls flew like hail. Our men were falling fast, some shot dead in their beds. Our horses were off after water, the first order we got was from Col. Libsan of Ohio to get our guns out of the way as quick as possible, some of the horses came back & hitched on. I was putting my blankets on one side of the caisson & the Rebs were on the other. We were all together Rebs & Yankees. I see if I must get out alive I must get out of that & out I started up through a corn field. I made good time & the balls made as good time to men fell that were running with me but I kept on expecting to fall next. I soon got out of reach & sat down to rest for I was some tired by this time. After I rested I made up mind not to run any further & went back more to the left to find some of our Battery boys. For I knew most of our guns were taken most of the horses were killed before I left parks, the rebels had drove our right round some 3 miles. Things began to look dark. The battle raged hard all day & when night came our men had checked them & got a good position. Here our guns over 50 were masked in Cedar bushes & the Infantry made themselves as comfortable as they could for the night. I slept that night close to Generals Rosecrans head quarters. At 3 AM Gen. McCook's &

Escort came around & told us to get under arms for the Rebs were marching on us. We got our coffee & ate our hard bread & put out our fires so they couldn't get range on us with artillery & shell before light. Orderlies & Generals were riding every way putting every man & gun in its right place, the right was ready for them this time. But the center had got to do the fighting this time. The Rebels had put their battery in position in the right. Rosecrans had 8 batteries ready for them all out of sight 6 guns. These the rebels thought they could easily take soon. We heard the devils yell and on they came. It was a fearful charge to that Brigade for our guns opened fire on them at short range & but few got back to tell the tale, then the Rebs opened their artillery & now commenced a noise I never shall forget. You would have thought hell had broke loose for noon this fight lasted about 3 hrs. & then the Rebs began to find out that they couldn't break the center. No more fighting this day but a continual firing by the skirmishers. Friday our men changed position & the Rebels tried the left & here the fight lasted about 5 hrs. when the Rebels gave away again. Saturday still most all day to what a general engagement is. Gen. Rosecrans said it was always still before a gale. After dark the silence was broke by yells from 50,000 devils on they came to whip as yet whipped. This was the hardest of all for it was very dark. You could see nothing but a wall of fire from their guns. Our men lay still till they got in range of canisters & then our artillery let them have a taste of what was waiting for them. Our men fixed bayonets & started on a charge to meet them. Our Infantry made 6 charges before they would run. The last one made them run like the devil for the town. Our men fell back for the night. All was still. The Rebs left satisfied that the troops from the North West could whip them every time. We saved 3 of our guns. I lost all my clothes, blankets, everything I had. I haven't received the box yet you sent. My name is on the books at the express office. The rebels tore up the rail road in KY. & all goods were sent back to Louisville. I think I shall get it before you get this. I am sorry I couldn't have got before I left Nashville for I would like to had a feast on what is in it. Write often.

Burt is well. This paper is dirty but is the best I have got. Write often as you can & I will answer as often as I can.

Love to all from your Brother,
Wm. Tomlinson

Corporal

P.S. Direct same as you did last. Yours etc. W. T.

I go to the city tomorrow morning. 34 miles from Nashville.

1863
Jan 20th

Camp, 4 miles South, Murfreesboro, Tenn.
Near Brothers & Sisters.

I received your last letter after we left our Camp at Nashville for Murfreesboro, on the morning of the 29th of Dec. we received orders to strike our tents & put all things into the Wagon to go back into the entrenchments & put 3 days rations in our haversacks & be ready to march in 2 hrs, all was confusion now to get ready to be off for some place we knew not where, but expected for this place, at 10. A.M. we left Camp on the Millville pike, we had gone but 6 miles before we began to skirmish with the Rebels, Mc Cooks Corps was all that was on this pike & we had to fight every day to keep the Rebs ahead of us, lost some men every day & took some prisoners & one gun from the Rebs, we drove them beyond Tipton some 10 miles & then took our back track some 2 1/2 miles & took a mud road for the Valley pike leading to Murfreesboro, we reached the front the 30th. Gen. Cef Davis was engaged with the enemy when we reached the field, there I see a splendid Artillery Duel, one of our Btys was shelling the woods ahead of our skirmishers when the Rebs put a Battery in position & opened on ours, our men had to change position quick to the right & then they went at it again by this time we had another ready for them & so had a cross fire on the Rebs, after firing a few rounds our Infantry took 3 guns & fell back as it had got to be night, after dark we were ordered to take our position on the extreme right & went to bed without any orders, I had charge of the guard from 2 till morning & to let some of the boys we should catch in the morning for the Camp fires of the Rebels were very bright at 3 o'clock, but no orders came to be ready for a fight at daylight.

We got our coffs & ate our hard bread & put out our
fires so they couldnt get range on us with artiller
& shell before light. Artillies & Generals were ride
Every way putting every man & gun in its right place.
The right was ready for them this time. But the Cent
had got to do the fighting this time. The Rebels
had put their batteries in position in the night.
Rosecrans had 8 batteries ready for them all and
of eight guns. These the Rebels thought they
could easily take. soon we heard the shells fall
& on they came. It was a dead charge to that Brigades
for all guns opened fire on them at short range
I but few got back to tell the tale, then the Rebs
opened their Artillery & now commenced
a noise I never shall forget. You would
have thought it had broke loose for noon
this fight lasted about 3 hrs & then the
Rebs began to pick out that they couldnt
break the center. No more fighting this
day, but a continual firing by the Rebels.
Friday, our men changed position & the
Rebs went the left & here the fight lasted
about 5 hrs when the Rebels gave away again
Saturday, it still most all day to what a general
engagement is. Gen Rosecrans said it was
always still before a gale. After dark the
silence was broke by shells from 50,000 de
on they came to whip us yet whipped. This was
the hardest of all for it was very dark. You
couldnt see nothing but a wall of fire from
their guns, our men lay still till they
got in range of Cursties & then our
Artillery let them have a taste of what
was waiting for them, our men fired by
units & started on a charge to meet them

just as day began to break our Infantry made fires
& were getting coffee ready. I got some before light for fear
something might turn up, I had put on my haversack
sack & was rolling up my blankets when the Rebels
began fire into us at about 100 yds. they came on
4 divisions deep firing into us, balls flew like
hail, our men were falling fast. Some shot dead in
their beds, our horses were of after water the first order
we got was from Col Libson of Ohio, to get our guns
out of the way as quick as possible, some of the
horses came back & fetch on, I was putting my
blankets on one side of the Cassion & the Rebels were
one the other, we were all together Rebs & Rebels,
I see if I must get out alive I must get out
of that & out I started up through a corn field,
I made good time & the balls made as good
time to: men fell that were running with me
but I kept on expecting to fall next. I soon
got out of reach & sit down to rest for I was
some tired by this time, after I got rested
I made up mind not to run any farther
& went back more to the left to find some
of our Battery hox for I knew most of our
guns were taken, most of the horses were
killed before I left Park, the Rebels had
drove us right round some 3 miles. things
began to look dark, the battle raged hard all
day & when night came our men had checked
them & got a good position, were our guns over
50 were masked in cedar bushes & the Infantry
made breast works of rails stone & earth &
made themselves as comfortable as they
could for the night, I slept that night close
to Generals Rosecrans head quarters, at 3 am
Gen Mc Cook & Escort came around & told us
to get under arms for the Rebels were marching on

Our Infantry made 6 charges before they
would run, the last one made they run
like the devil for the town, our men fell
back for the night. all was still the Rebs
left satisfied that the troops from the
North West could whip them every time,
we saved 3 of our guns, I lost all my
clothes, blankets, everything I had, I haven't
received the box yet you sent. My name
is on the books at the Express Office, the
Rebels tore up the Rail Road in Ky &
all goods were sent back to Harrisville,
I think I shall get it before you get
this, I am sorry I couldn't have got
before I left Nashville for I would like
to had a feast on what is in it, Write often

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