

The Union's story "Excerpt from the 48th Ohio Regimental History"

Good read about a few days as a Union Soldier near our families

www.civilwaralbum.com/misc8/moscow_48th1.htm

We remained in camp [near Corinth] until June 2d, when we took up our line of march to Memphis, leaving behind Capt. Frazee, who was sent home on sick-leave, which left Capt. Peterson in command of the Regiment. We were delayed a short time by a heavy shower. Passing through Corinth, we bivouacked on the road-side for the night.

Early the following morning, we were ordered to Chewalla on double-quick, a distance of eight or ten miles. Why we were ordered to that place on a run, with no enemy near, has never been satisfactorily explained.

On June 9th, Thomas Peale, Esq., of Lynchburg, Ohio, made us a visit, and remained with us on the march to Lafayette, Tenn. From here he went with the supply train to Memphis, and from there home. He had quite an experience of army life.

June 9th, we resumed our march to Memphis, and camped at Tuscumbia river in the evening, where Lieut. Col. Parker, who had been sent home on sick-leave shortly after the battle of Shiloh, rejoined and took command of the Regiment. The following day, we repaired the bridge, which had been destroyed by the enemy. We left June 11th, marched through the richest portion of West Tennessee, and arrived at LaGrange June 14th. We left LaGrange on the 16th, and arrived at Moscow in the evening. Our chief employment, during our stay at Moscow, was to rebuild the railroad bridge over Wolf river.

On the 22d, we were ordered to Lafayette, eight miles below, on the Memphis & Charleston R. R., where we arrived in the afternoon. The following day a portion of the Regiment went on picket. - During the night quite an amusing incident occurred on one of the picket-posts. Thomas Newton was startled by a snake crawling up inside his pants. He raised the alarm and danced a lively jig, while his comrades assisted him to release the snake, but fortunately he sustained no other injury than a big scare, which he will never forget.

After we returned to camp the following morning, we learned that our brigade had been ordered back to Moscow. This proved to be the hottest and sultriest day of the season, and our march back to Moscow will be as long remembered by us as the one from Moscow, mentioned in history, will be remembered by the French. The blinding dust and intense heat were terribly severe on both man and beast. The roadside was lined with soldiers overcome by heat, and quite a number of artillery horses dropped dead in their traces.

Arriving at our destination, we camped on the banks of Wolf river. During our stay here we had a pleasant time, our duties being light and the bathing facilities excellent. On the 29th several took "French leave," taking the overland route for home, where they arrived safely, and in due season were safely returned to the Regiment again. On the 30th of

June, our Division was ordered on an expedition to Holly Springs' twenty-two miles south. We arrived in sight of Holly Springs at noon on the following day, while the cavalry was having a hot skirmish with the enemy. Our Regiment and the 4th Indiana Battery were ordered forward in the engagement, but a few well-directed shots from the artillery started the rebels in full retreat. We remained in our position until dark, when we fell back about three miles, and camped in the woods on the road-side. Here we lay in ambush, awaiting the return of the enemy, until July 5th, but they did not appear.

We started on the expedition with only one day's rations, and expected a supply from Memphis, by the supply-train, but the train had been attacked by the rebels and delayed. As foraging was almost unknown at this stage of the war, we were compelled to subsist entirely on blackberries and apples. We soon stripped the orchards in the vicinity, of their green fruit, and lived a few days on the refuse from a cavalry camp.

On the 6th we started back to Moscow. We marched until midnight, when we met the supply-train. A halt was ordered, and through the energy of H. C. Stewart, Quartermaster Sergeant, the rations were soon distributed to the hungry soldiers. At day-break on the following day, we were on the march reaching Moscow at noon.

Up to this time, the slaves were still at work for their masters, and none were allowed to follow the army. On the Holly Springs expedition the Regiment Engaged several of them as cooks, but they had scarcely been initiated when an order was issued to exclude all slaves from camp. Thus ended our first attempt at putting them to work to assist in putting down the Rebellion. But "De Year ob Jubilo," as the slaves called it, was fast approaching. In less than two months, there was a complete change. The slaves came into camp in droves, and were put to work as cooks, teamsters and laborers. At one time nearly every soldier in the Regiment had his private servant!

On the 18th of July, we took up our line of march once more for Memphis, camping at Collierville the first night, and at White's Station the second, where we remained the succeeding day - the Sabbath - and being short of rations, we spent nearly the whole time in cooking green corn. A field of twenty acres did not quite supply the demand for our Division.

The following day, July 21st, we resumed our march. Our Regiment guarded the wagon-train. When within a few miles of the city, we were ordered forward on double-quick, to rejoin our brigade, and make our entrance into the city with our Division. As it was an exceeding hot day, and the dust almost suffocating, it was with great difficulty that we succeeded in picking our way through the immense wagon-train that obstructed the entire road. On reaching our brigade, we entered the city of Memphis, with bands playing, colors flying, and the troops cheering. We marched to the south end of the city, and camped in a peach-orchard, in Fort Pickering, on the banks of the Mississippi river. It had been nearly six months since we had left Ohio, and in that time we had been constantly on the move, and had seen soldiering in nearly all its phases, and now we had reached a haven that promised us rest for a short season at least.

Memphis is a handsome city, built on a high bluff, 420 miles below St. Louis. It had a population of 20,000 before the war, and was the center of a vast trade. Gen. Jackson's equestrian statue is in a beautiful park, in the heart of the city, but the rebels had obliterated the inscription, "The Union must and shall be preserved." Shortly after arriving here, Dr. Boon, Hospital Steward, was discharged, and Jos. A. Gravatt appointed in his place.

August 1st, Col. Sullivan, with a large number of officers and soldiers, who had been home on sick-leave, returned for duty, which made the Regiment look like its former self again. On the 2d, the Paymaster arrived, and paid us two months pay. It came when it was most needed and was highly appreciated.

Sept. 2d, Adjutant McGill and Lieut. Posegate were sent to Ohio, with a recruiting party, consisting of one sergeant from each company. The day following, Major Wise resigned.

On the 4th, the Regiment was ordered on provost-guard duty in Memphis, companies C, H and G being stationed at the military prison in Irving Block. It contained one hundred rebel prisoners and a number of disorderly Union soldiers. Our duties were very severe, as we had to be on guard every alternate six hours, both day and night.

The Memphis Argus, of Sept. 7th, contained the following: "Cincinnati, Ohio, has surrendered to Gen. Kirby Smith." This was startling news to our Regiment. Out of the ten companies, one was raised in the city, and seven within a circle of sixty miles. Our only consolation was that it might turn out to be a false report, which fortunately proved to be true, as it was contradicted in the same paper a few days later.

Sept. 8th, Lieut. John Kean was discharged for disability. On the 11th, the rebel prisoners were sent to Vicksburg for exchange, and we returned to our camp in Fort Pickering. Before leaving, they were all furnished with new rebel uniforms by their friends.

Toward the latter part of the month, the duty of the Regiment became very laborious. Large details were made daily, to cut down all the timber within one mile of the fort, and to demolish all buildings within a half mile, in addition to regimental and brigade guards. On the 20th, the Regiment was sent twenty miles down the river, on a boat, to guard one hundred contrabands, while cutting and loading cane, which grew in abundance in the river bottoms, and was used by us in constructing fortifications.

When the weather got cooler, in October, our brigade and division drills occurred more frequently, including a "grand review " every Wednesday.

Oct. 17th, Lieut. Posegate and his recruiting party returned, with a number of new recruits for the Regiment. On the 18th, we enlarged our streets and prepared more comfortable quarters for the winter.

After the discharge of our cornet band at Shiloh, efforts were made to make our drum corps more efficient, but it was not successfully carried out until it was placed under the leadership of George McMahon, after arriving here. From that time forward, at intervals on a march and on entering towns and cities, the band struck up some patriotic air, which always elicited a hearty cheer from the Regiment.

Sept. 22d, Capt. Frazee took command of one hundred and fifty men of the Regiment, and went up the Mississippi river on a steamer to Randolph, to reinforce a regiment of cavalry that had left Memphis a week previous, on a raid. We disembarked and remained all night. During the evening the cavalry made their appearance. The next day we returned with the cavalry to Memphis.

On the 1st of November, the Regiment was ordered again on provost-guard. Companies B and C were stationed at the wharf, and guarded the Government stores. We occupied the Bradley Block, near the landing, for our quarters. During our stay the building took fire under the hearth, in the second story. The alarm was given, but before the engines arrived we had the fire under control. On the evening of the 4th, a strong guard was ordered out on patrol duty, in anticipation of a disturbance at the Warsham House. We patrolled the streets in that vicinity until midnight, but everything remained quiet; and after partaking of a free lunch at the hotel, and receiving tickets for breakfast, we returned to our quarters.

On the 7th, the Regiment was relieved and we returned to camp. Troops, under the President's last call, were now arriving, and by the 16th of November quite a large army was concentrated here, which was formed into divisions. Our Regiment was placed in the 3d Brigade and 3d Division, under orders to be ready to march on the 26th of November, but on the 24th we were ordered on provost duty in the city, to relieve the 46th Ohio.

On the 26th all the troops, except four or five regiments left for Holly Springs, Miss. We remained in the city until the 29th, when we returned to camp. In the evening Companies A, B and C went on picket-duty, on the Pigeon Roost road, running south from Memphis, and remained two days.

The rebel cotton-burners, who had been at work, destroying all the cotton within the vicinity of Memphis, to keep it from falling into the hands of the Government, caught a drayman of the city, who had been engaged to go beyond the lines, to haul cotton from the neighboring plantations. The cotton was burned, and his mule and dray were confiscated. When he came through the picket-lines he informed us of his loss, when eight of the pickets volunteered to go with him and recapture his property. A barouche passing along was pressed into the service. About two miles out the property was found at an old plantation, and returned to the drayman, who, with many thanks, returned home, a happy man.

Dec. 5th, H. C. Stewart, Quartermaster Serg't., was discharged. He afterward served in the Q. M. Department until the close of the war.

Another expedition was now organized, under Gen. Sherman, for Vicksburg, to proceed by boats down the Mississippi river. As we were not yet assigned to any Division, we had concluded that we would spend Christmas at Memphis, and had written home to that effect. But on the 19th of December Lieut. Col. Parker made a request of Gen. Hurlbut, Commander of the Post, to have the Regiment

relieved of garrison duty, so as to join the expedition. Such requests are always granted, and on the following day we were ordered on board the steamer "City of Alton." We were placed in the second brigade, with the 19th Ky., 77th, 97th, 108th and 130th Illinois regiments, commanded by Col. W. J. Landrum, of the 19th Ky., and in the Division commanded by Gen. A. J. Smith.