

Historical Sketch of the 4th Indiana Artillery by J. C. Haddock

The spring and summer of 1861 had come and gone with its passing events, and civil war with all its accompanying horrors had broken upon this nation carrying with it desolation and bloodshed.

The call by President Lincoln for 75,000 three months [sic] troops had been nobly responded to, and the boys in blue had met the boys in gray on many a field of blood.

Co B of the 9th Indiana recruited in Michigan City, had returned from its 3 months [sic] Service in Western Virginia covered with glory, and the citizens of Michigan City welcomed with warm hearts the patriotic sentiment in its young men.

Some of the returning members of Co B. notably among whom was Lieut [sic] Bush, suggested the project of raising a battery of artillery to join the 9th Inda [sic] Regiment then in camp at LaPorte, in response to the first call of President Lincoln for 300,000 three year troops.

A meeting was called August 30 in the evening at Union Hall, at which 40 young men signed their names and volunteered their services in their countrys [sic] defence [sic], 40 young men representing the bone and blood sinew and grit of the best families of Michigan City.

Many were the hearts that ached and the tears that fell these as these 40 young men pressed their way through the audience to enlist for their countrys [sic] defence [sic], and if need be shed their lifes [sic] blood that the cause of freedom might be maintained.

Monday Sept 2nd, The company having been increased by further Enlistments, here and at Valparaiso, were [crossed out] was ordered into camp at LaPorte.

Taking the New Albany R.W. at noon for the crossing they reached LaPorte at 3 P.M. where they were mustered into the state service by Col Milroy. Thursday Sept 5th the company organization was perfected by the election of the following officers,

A.K. Bush capt. [sic]

Mark L. DeMotte Leonard R DeGroff First Lieutenants

Augustus A Starr David Flansburg Second Lieutenants

Saturday Sept 14th the 9th Inda [sic] Regiment broke camp and marched for Western Virginia. The same day the 4th battery were ordered to Indianapolis and found quarters at Camp Morton, where soon after they were mustered into the U.S. service by Col T.J. Wood.

Sept 19th the battery moved to camp Vajen where they were supplied with tents, horses, guns, ammunition, uniforms etc. etc. Here was presented to the company a silk flag by the Fire department of Michigan City, which was afterwards captured in an ambulance by the rebels at Stone [sic] River. The battery remained in Camp Vajen until November 16th learning the manly arts of war and the various duties of the soldier, the monotony of our [crossed out] camp life being varied by an occasional furlough to Michigan City, or an escape by night and a stolen ride upon the top of the cars home to see a Sweetheart [sic], a pass to the city to attend church or prayer meeting, and more often to visit a certain little Restaurant which emptied the pockets of the boys in return for its delicious treats of Ice cream and the cream cake of which we never tired.

Bugler Wards [sic] dear Mother taking pity upon the boys with colds, sent down a large amount of Maple Sugar flavored with hoar hound which greatly helped the colds, and we recall the boxes that from time to time came down from the dear hands at home, filled with certain toothsome and delicious preparations that made camp life in Indianapolis a delight. Thus passed the days with the 4th until the dread order came and reveille at 4 ock [sic] on the morning of Nov 16th called us to move to Jeffersonville. From there we crossed the river to Louisville Nov 20th and for the first time planted our feet on southern soil. The patriotic ladies of Louisville must be remembered, for providing a bountiful repast for the tired and dusty troops while passing through their city.

The company remained with in the vicinity of Louisville until Dec 17th when we were ordered to Munfordville Ky. While in camp at Louisville we were visited by our townsmen Messrs [sic] H H Roberts Leonard Woods and Charles Waiship. Here Dec 12th having come under the command of Capt [sic] Terrill battery H, 5th regular the first act of Insubordination broke out. Capt [sic] Bush fired by the example of Capt [sic] Terrill ordered the whole company into one mess, for the purpose of dispensing with an extra number of cooks.

But the raw recruits unused to the strict discipline of Military life rebelled, declared the arrangement a nuisance and a trespass upon their rights, kicked over the camp kettles, spilled the coffee, put to rout the cooks, and broke up the company mess.

For their conduct on this and other occasions they acquired from Capt [sic] Terrill the cognomen of Bushs [sic] Yahoos. Nevertheless when another similar transgression occurred, Capt [sic] Terrill returned to his quarters and sent to the boys a keg of Whiskey in token of his regard and esteem.

The battery remained at Munfordville until Feb 13, the winter being spent in drill, Target shooting, and review, with now and then a long roll and a beat to arms and a general preparation to meet the enemy who were always reported in full force just across the river.

The camp was located in a low damp spot on the edge of a cemetery, and all the drinking water for the thousands of soldiers encamped there was taken from ponds of

standing water whose color partook of the clayey soil of the region. Sickness and disease made its inroads upon the once healthy troops, and the hospitals were being filled with those who for the lack of the proper food and nourishment went down to early graves.

Here we buried Allen Billings and Edmond O Corey the first of our number.

The camp was afterward moved 2 miles from town to a high and dry location, and to this place Dr [sic] Bentley came from the city and dispensed his pills and calomel to the already reduced and emaciated troops. Feb 13th 1862 the command was ordered with others to reinforce Grant at Fort Donelson and moved out of camp in a shower of rain, which soon turned to snow. At Bacon Creek we received orders to return, Fort Donelson having surrendered, and to join the main army in its advance on Nashville.

This march was noted for its hard and almost impassable Mountainous [sic] roads and for the great scarcity of rations, the men subsisting on such scanty supplies as their haversacks contained, with a complement of old salt [illegible] obtained at Bowling Green.

John Bouchard flanked and captured a barrel of flour, out of which the boys made slapjack sinkers which would never pass muster in our Mothers [sic] Kitchens.

Nashville by the combined efforts of army and navy fell an easy prey to the union forces. here the army remained until march [sic] 29 enjoying the satisfaction of camping on the hills so recently in the enemys [sic] possession, and indulging in the pleasures and sights of the famous Capitol of Tennessee, when having been reorganized it set out for Shiloh.

Time fails me to tell of this first long march of 120 miles, over the Cumberland Mountains, down into the Valley of the Tennessee with its mud and rain, or of the many foraging parties which always returned laden with turkeys geese chickens etc.etc. Shiloh was reached one week after the battle, the sound [crossed out] report of its cannon reaching us on the mountains 40 miles away.

Signs of the dreadful slaughter was still visible in the unburied remains of men and horses.

On the way from Shiloh to Corinth we were made glad by a visit from our townsmen C E DeWolfe Esq who came down to see how we fared and to visit the battle field.

Here we recall the sutler who pitched his tent in our camp and exhibited many cans of oysters for sale, but the increasing cases of drunkenness revealed the fact that not oysters but Whiskey were the contents.

The battery participated in the advance on Corinth and its final capture without the loss of a man. From here we passed east through Florence and Tusculumbia Tennessee to Athens Alabama. July 5th the battery left Athens for Nashville 120 miles north, without escort, marching the entire distance by land, sleeping at night in the camps just vacated

by the rebel guerrillas, arriving in Nashville Aug 10th with its entire train. Aug 13th 2 sections of the battery were ordered to join an expedition under Col John Miller to Gallatin Tenn, [sic] where after a severe skirmish they routed a rebel force under Morgan. Sept 4th the company joined the main army in its northern March to Louisville, thence in pursuit of Bragg overtaking him at Perryville Ky, where occurred [one r is crossed out] the short [illegible word crossed out] but severe conflict of Chaplin Hills or Perryville. Here fell, Sergeant Isaac. E. Smith Corporal Francis, R. Hildebrant Private Thomas Neugent. Brave and gallant comrades –

The wounded were Corporal Amos Young Privates Goshan Blair, Willis F. Francis Robert H. Hainer Carl Kasebaum Belding R McClellan James H Roy Oscar Reynolds and Russel Tremaine, Thomas J. Mowery was taken prisoner and being paroled was ordered to report in person at Camp Chase Ohio, failing to find the same he sailed for England and forgot to return. 32 horses were killed in this engagement.

Bragg retreated to Murfreesboro Tenn [sic], and the Union forces under Genl [sic] Rosecrans followed, the 4th battery being in the right wing under Brig Genl [sic] Phillip H. Sheridan.

Here occurred the disastrous battle of Stone [sic] River on the 30 and 31st Dec 1862 and the 1st and 2nd Jan 1863. For partial reports of the part the battery took in this fight, I refer to the official report of Maj Genl [sic] Rosecrans Col James Barnett chief of artillery says page 15,

Genl [sic] Phil Sheridan commanding the brigade says – pages 289 to 292 and 307, The loss to the battery in this fight is officially reported as follows, Killed 6, Wounded 17 Prisoners 3 Total 26 2 [illegible] 2 Guns and 10 Horses captured 17 Horses killed, 1160 rounds of ammunition expended.

For four days the army of the Cumberland had fought against overwhelming numbers, on unknown ground amid the rain and mud of a Southern winter.

The 4th battery torn and sheltered by the [rest is written after the following list]

[illegible top line]

Following is a list of the Killed and Wounded

Sergeant Jno [sic] Young Corporal [illegible] [illegible], killed

Privates Killed

James E Date

Wm [illegible]

James Hill

Edward Nugent

Edmond Smith

Wounded

Sergeant Wm H [illegible]

Corporal Edgar J Abbott

Privates

[illegible] Lorr

James Small

Robert Haines

William [illegible]

Andrew T Mitchell

William Abbott

Elias Price

Jule Bailey

John [illegible]

Simon [illegible]

James [illegible]

Chas [illegible]

Edmond [illegible]

[last two names are illegible]

[rest of above] loss of men guns and horses went into camp with its brigade to the south of Murfreesboro to recuperate its strength and vigor.

Jan 29th 1863, Two sections of the battery were sent to Nashville and returned February 21st with 2 -12 pound smooth bore guns Horses and Harness.

The army remained in the vicinity of Murfreesboro Tenn [sic], until June 24th when orders were received to break camp and prepare 9 days [sic] rations.

Under the command of Genl [sic] Rosecrans an advance was now made which culminated in the terrible battle of Chickamauga.

On the 25th of June the battery reached Moores [sic] Gap and went into camp under fire of the rebel batteries.

The 26th the battery lay in position on the brow of a hill commanding the rebels. Towards night a forward movement was made, where the enemy fled towards Manchester Tullahoma Decherd and Cowan Station in the line of the Nashville and Chattanooga R.W.

The author of the "Annals of the Army of the Cumberland" says The crossing of the Tennessee river by our army was a remarkable feat.

Four days were consumed in the passage of the army at the various places of crossing. To effect [sic] this crossing of the larger part of our army Genl [sic] Rosecrans ordered one pontoon bridge to be laid down at [illegible] ferry, 3 miles from Stevenson, 1250 feet in length, and another pontoon bridge at Bridgeport 12 miles up the river Twenty-seven Hundred feet.

The 4th Battery being in Thomas Corps crossed the Tennessee river at Bridgeport by Pontoon, marched south over spurs of Mountains and through deep wooded gulches to the Lookout Valley, followed that narrow and meandering channel to another depression crossed through at Coopers and Stevens Gaps after toilsome marches over the roughest of Mountain roads and took position at the mouth of those gaps in Braggs [sic] rear, who occupied Chattanooga 26 miles to the north.

McCooks [sic] Corps was 17 miles further south, and Crittendens [sic] Corps on the north of Lookout Mountain and forcing his way to Chattanooga.

The rebel commander now became fully aware of Rosecrans [sic] intention to cut off his supplies, and accordingly on the 9th of Sept Bragg evacuated Chattanooga going south mainly by the Rome road.

Friday the 11th Sept the battery was in line of battle before daylight with Negleys [sic] Division.

Lieut [sic] Nichols of Starkweathers [sic] staff was killed by a sharpshooter while moving along the line, 3 PM [sic] our lines were forced back by the rebels 2 miles and went into action on the brow of a hill entertaining the enemy shot and shell, result, Henry Young wounded, one horse shot and Thomas Stearns captured, 11 P.M. we advanced one half mile and lay in this position all day the 12th, with the rebels in our front holding the cross roads. On the 18th we moved out of camp about dusk and Marched all night. The air was cold and damp, but we were cheered on the way by the light and warmth of occasional fires of burning rails. Saturday the 19th of Sept at break of day the Division fell into line of battle weary and hungry, at 8 am [sic] the soldiers were permitted to refresh themselves with coffee and hardtack, at 10 am [sic] while moving in a right oblique through a dense forest of saplings, the rebel Infantry arose as if by magic, and poured in a fire that threatened to annihilate us.

Instantly the guns were unlimbered and shot and shell and spherical case went crashing through the rebel ranks, but Division after Division poured their fire upon our line until we were forced to abandon the battery for want of support and fell back to the next line.

Here the Infantry the 1st and 21st Wisconsin rallied and drove the enemy back through our guns and half a mile beyond. The 4th following up this victorious charge found its guns safe, but 12 of its finest horses dead. To reform and remount was the work of a moment, and soon the battery was again in line of battle, which position it retained throughout the day. At night by command of Genl [sic] Starkweather to, "Take that battery to the rear", it was moved to a place of safety, but made its escape under the fire of the rebel batteries, they having overheard the order. The night was passed on the battlefield, and Sunday morning Sept 20th calm and beautiful, found the battery behind a breastworks [s is crossed out] of logs thrown up in haste by our men.

The command was given to hold its position at all hazards, Thomas [sic] Corps being the key to the whole army.

The quiet of the peaceful day of rest was broken by the whir of the sharpshooter bullet, who, located in some distant tree picked off the men at the guns. Suddenly the fire opens along the line, the terrible roar of artillery, the shrill note of thousands of leaden messengers of death, the shrieks of the wounded, the commands of the officers fill the air, the thud of a shell as it strikes a limber full of ammunition followed by the sudden explosion of the contents of the chest carry consternation into our ranks. Towards night the ammunition is expended and brave George Goodhue and Matt Huff are taken prisoners while returning to the battery with a new supply.

McCooks [sic] and Crittendens [sic] Corps had been nobly fighting all the morning "but about 1 PM [sic] by the misconception of an order, one of our divisions was moved in the wrong direction, and a gap was left open in our battle front at the point of junction between Thomas and McCook. This the enemy quickly perceived. They advanced rapidly and heavily and poured their columns in at the gap, taking both McCook and Thomas on the flank, crushing Crittendens [sic] Corps and completely changing the order of battle".

By this movement 7 brigades were completely cut off from Thomas and the main army and forced back to Chattanooga. But brave Genl [sic] Thomas held his own, and gallant Phil Sheridan succeeded by a quick movement in getting to his support, and there these two noble commanders reinforced by Genl [sic] Granger with 3 fresh brigades sustained their position till night ended the conflict, when the army fell back 3 miles to Rossville. From thence to Chattanooga a distance of 5 miles which they entered on the evening of the 21st in order, with all their material.

The loss to the battery in this engagement was 1 man killed, 11 wounded Lieut [sic] Flausburg and 3 men captured 12 Horses Killed.

The battery remained in Chattanooga the following winter taking part in the defence [sic] of the city, while hemmed in by the enemy [wh is crossed out] with supplies diminished to quarter rations, and supporting the reserve in the attack on Lookout Mountain and Mission [sic] Ridge, and the final expulsion of Braggs [sic] army from northern Georgia.

In the spring of 1864 the battery was detailed to occupy Fort "Mahalotzsky" in Chattanooga, and the summer was spent with occasional details to guard the river boats against the attacks of Guerrillas, who continually threatened the destruction of the line of supplies for Shermans [sic] Army in advance on Atlanta.

Friday Sept 3rd the long expected order for relief came.

Shouts of joy filled the air when Lieut [sic] Willits called the battery into line and read the order relieving the battery after 3 years active service. A company of recruits under Lieut [sic] B.F. Johnson had arrived from Indianapolis to take our places.

And the next day the command were under way with the 44th Inda [sic] Regiment for Indianapolis to be mustered out. With what joyous welcome we were received to our homes let these fathers and Mothers now before me speak, let these comrades in arms recall.

And now 16 years have come and gone since our return, and the fathers that were are passing away, The heads that were young are growing gray, children are growing up around us and listen to our stories of the war, and all these dreadful years of toil and suffering are as a dream in the night.

But you my brothers in arms some of whom are reminded at times of the bullets [sic] wound,

Can you tell us why,

You went forth to fight perhaps to die?

Was it from the love of fame

You went forth to earn a name?

Was it from the love of duty

All mankind owe their country?

Or, was there an Almighty power

Led us, Young and old, out to war?

Ah! the curse of slavery lay on our land

And blood alone could make amend,

The cries and groans of Africas [sic] sons

Went up to God in prayers and songs

And could you sirs, sit idly by

And hear the slave in bondage sigh

For freedom and a right to be
With all mankind on equality!
No! No! God's time had fully come
To take the black man from his bonds,
And you and I and thousands more
Stood y [~~crossed out~~] ready at the open door
Where Sumters [sic] flag was fired on,
And Southern blood was making warm
For Northern gore and Mudsills blood,
To give our lives for freedoms [sic] good.
Let then these wounds and scars recall
The weary march, the years of toil,
The nights of suffering, days of pain,
That Freedom might forever reign.
From North to South, from East to West
O'er all the land which God has blest,
And may He in His providence
Bless one and all with times of Peace.