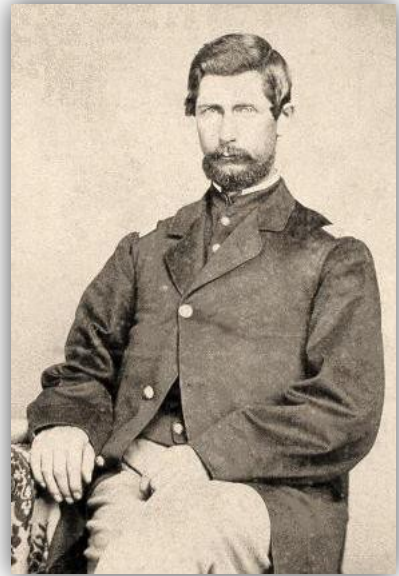


George Theodore Hyatt and the Assault of the Forlorn Hope Vicksburg, Mississippi May 22, 1863

Edited by Kim A. Hyatt, great-great grandson of
George Theodore Hyatt

George Theodore Hyatt [Theodore] was awarded the Medal of Honor, in 1894. (He was informed of the award by a letter from the Ward Department, dated, July 9, 1894; a copy is included, below.) The original medal design included a “shield”-patterned ribbon, in red, white and blue. (See the photo of Theodore wearing the medal, below.)¹ Because of many similar and confusing medal designs, Congress authorized a redesign of the Medal of Honor, in 1897. Previous recipients were sent ribbons and matching lapel pins in the new design and directed to replace the old ribbons on their medals with the new ribbon. On the occasion of the redesign, the Chicago Sunday Times Herald published several first-person accounts of the actions for which surviving Medal of Honor recipients living in the Chicago area were awarded the Medal. The following account by George Theodore Hyatt was featured as the lead story of the eight narratives published by the newspaper. (Original punctuation and spelling are preserved.)



[Possibly] First Sergeant George Theodore Hyatt ca. April 20, 1865 (date of cancelled revenue stamp on back); see footnote 1, below.

The Sunday Times Herald, Chicago, March 21, 1897 “Nearly All Were Killed”

It was the second assault on Vicksburg, on May 22, 1863, before the union troops settled down to the siege that won for me my medal of honor. I was then an orderly sergeant in

¹ The April 20, 1865 photo above *may* be of Theodore, but it has not been confirmed. The photo was found in Theodore’s personal papers, together with photos of Theodore’s five brothers, all of whom served in the Civil War on the side of the Union. The other five photos were all labeled, and since this photo was not, it was surmised that it might be of Theodore, himself, since it is unlikely that he would have needed to label his own photograph. In the photo he is wearing an officer’s frock coat with shoulder boards, but the highest rank Theodore achieved was First Sergeant. He was discharged in March, 1863, and if it is indeed Theodore, it is possible that he simply borrowed a uniform for this photo.

Company D, One Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Illinois infantry², in the second division of the Fifteenth army corps, commanded by General Sherman.

Early in the morning General Grant called for 150 volunteers³ to form a storming party⁴ against a certain portion of the walls. It was so apportioned through the division that eleven of the men were to be supplied by our regiment. When it came to me I was informed that if we could not get volunteers I would have to detail men. I replied to the officer that I wouldn't detail any man on such an expedition as was proposed, but that I would volunteer. There were three others from my company, and it would have been easy enough to raise the eleven required of our regiment. (The three others were Manley Small, Robert Atkinson Jr., and Nelson S Barner. The first two are dead and Barner, I believe, lives somewhere in Michigan.)

Well, our orders, so far as we subordinates understood them, were to scale the walls at a certain portion of the fort, get a lodgement and keep the gunners inside from firing at short range and pouring grape and canister into the troops that were to follow us. It was an awful expedition, as we well knew. We were ordered to take sixty rounds of ammunition each and a canteen of water. Somebody asked if we were not to take haversacks.

"No," replied Frank Blair of St. Louis⁵, who was temporarily in command, and who gave us our orders. "You can go without your dinners; you'll be inside the walls of Vicksburg or in hell for supper." I detested Blair to the day of his death for that remark, but it served to indicate then the peril of our undertaking.

We started about 9:30 o'clock with the understanding that the general charge was to be made within the next hour.⁶ We proceeded without trouble or interference toward our

² 127th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment, formed in Chicago, September 6, 1862 and attached to the Union Army of the Tennessee, commanded by Major General Ulysses S. Grant. At Vicksburg, the 127th was one of five regiments in the 2nd Brigade, Second Division, XV Corps, commanded by Major General William T. Sherman. A regimental history is included, below.

³ Many accounts of the Volunteer Storming Party erroneously claim that only unmarried men were accepted as volunteers. The call was, indeed, for unmarried men, but married men still volunteered and took part. Theodore was married, with four children at home. At least two other married men were part of the storming party, one of whom was killed in the assault, as reported in the *Sunday Times Herald*, March 21, 1897.

⁴ The volunteer storming party called themselves the "Forlorn Hope," in military tradition, a band of soldiers chosen to take the leading part in a risky operation. While the term itself is derived from the Dutch *verloren hoop*, which sounds similar but has a somewhat different meaning, the English "forlorn hope" more accurately describes the expected outcome of such a dangerous mission. (The term itself has an interesting history; see, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forlorn_hope.)

⁵ Maj. General Francis Preston Blair, Jr. commanded the Second Division of Sherman's XV Corps.

⁶ The coordinated general assault was to begin at 10:00 AM, the first time in military history that a synchronized assault was planned to begin at a specific hour of the day.

destination until we reached Jackson's road,⁷ but there we came squarely into the range of the enemy's guns. For a distance of about eighty rods there was nothing to protect us, and as we were the only union troops moving at the time we got all the fire. From the moment we entered Jackson's road it was swept by a perfect hurricane of shot and shell. There was a constant whizz of bullets, and it didn't seem as if a man of us could reach that fort without being shot full of holes. And not many of us did. The report issued next morning was that forty-seven of the 150 who had volunteered for the expedition were safe and sound. The other 103 were either killed or wounded⁸. I saw comrades dropping all around me in Jackson's road, and, although I was not wounded, several bullets passed through my clothing. I carried a musket for one of my comrades in order that he might carry an eight-inch plank to enable us to cross the ditch in front of the fort walls. That plank was pierced by twenty-two bullets. It didn't seem that a man could hold up a finger without having it shot off, so thick the balls were flying.

How any of us ever reached that fort I can't tell, but some of us did. When we got there the lieutenant in command asked me to give the others a lift to enable them to get on the walls. The first man I lifted went up too high. He was shot through the brain the instant he showed his head above the walls, and fell back dead in my arms. The rest, though, went up more cautiously, and inside of fifteen minutes we were all on top and had planted our flag.

It was an awful position, though, for the rebel cannon were firing directly over us into our own troops beyond. We had to lie flat on our stomachs to keep from being killed. A few men were careless enough to raise their heads and were shot to pieces in no time. Shot and shell went screeching over us, carrying death into our ranks behind, but we were safe as long as we kept down flat. That is, we were safe from rebel bullets and from everything else until they began to toss hand grenades on the wall. The first one of those that came blew the head of the second man from me clean off his shoulders. They did a good deal of destruction among us till we learned to knock them back with the butts of our guns, and then they exploded inside the fort.

Well, we staid [*sic*] there sprawled out on top of that wall from the time we reached there in the morning till darkness fell at night. For some reason or other the charge that was to have followed after we had gone on the walls was not made.⁹ The plans were changed, but

⁷ Theodore's memory, as well as that of others who reported their experiences at Vicksburg some 34 years later, is incorrect in some minor details. The assault of the Forlorn Hope occurred on the *Graveyard Road*, not the Jackson Road.

⁸ Editor's note: I cannot now (January 7, 2019) find the reference, but as I recall, the official after-action report indicated that of this number (103), 19 were killed; the others were missing or wounded – all were "casualties." For any military engagement, two-thirds casualties would normally be considered an appalling outcome.

⁹ The Graveyard Road passes through a narrow cut just 100 yards from the Stockade Redan, where soldiers could have passed only about four abreast, and would then immediately have been fully

of course we had no communication with our troops and knew nothing of it. No one came to relieve us, and no one ordered us away. We couldn't have left before darkness, anyway, and all we could do was to lie there flat on our stomachs with rebel shot and shell whistling and rushing not more than fifteen inches above us and carrying death to our comrades beyond.

It may seem strange, but it is a fact nevertheless, that under those awful circumstances one of the things we had to battle against was sleepiness. It was all we could do to keep some of the men awake in spite of the peril of the situation. But it isn't so strange after all. Added to the fatigue and excitement of getting there, we were forced to lie flat and see nothing but black dirt below or the sky above; the shells that swept over us blew terrific blasts of wind in our faces and the awful concussion of the guns was deafening. It took lots of pinching and thumping to keep some of the men awake, but we were determined that none of us would be taken prisoners, sleeping or alive.

Along toward night, when the firing ceased a little from the fort, there was a little conversation between us and the rebels inside. One fellow shouted up that if we didn't get off the wall he would send up a detachment and "gut every last one of us." A little Missourian,¹⁰ who carried our flag, answered for us.

"I'd like to see you trying to come up here," he said. "We've got 20,000 men on these walls."

But they didn't come up then. They couldn't without exposing themselves to the guns of our batteries. They came up after dark, though, but when they got there we had gone. We had gathered up our wounded as fast as we could while it was growing dark, dropped to the ground outside the walls and crawled away. The rebels followed us with bullets wherever they heard a noise, and in that way may have killed some of our number. It was impossible to tell, though, about that. All that I know is that first the captain and then the first lieutenant, who led the charge, were shot down with most of the men in Jackson's road. The command devolved upon the second lieutenant. He lived through the day to be shot down later at Kenesaw Mountain. I didn't know the names of any of them, as I had never met them before that day.

exposed to fire from the fort. It was reported that the dead and wounded of the Forlorn Hope had piled-up like cordwood at the cut, and that as men from the supporting columns tried to clear the bodies to make their way through, they, too were shot down. Finally, soldiers simply could not even make the effort without becoming casualties, themselves, and so many sought cover or retreated.

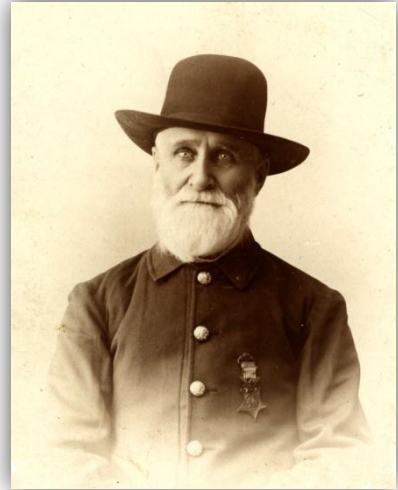
¹⁰ The "Little Missourian" was Private Howell Gilliam Trogden, Company B ("the American Zouaves") of the 8th Missouri Volunteer Infantry. Trogden's personal account provides some additional fascinating detail about the assault of the Forlorn Hope. See, <http://www.northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/663/entry/>.

Our little storming expedition didn't accomplish anything, but that was not our fault. We went where we were told to go, and if the charge had been made as we expected we would have dropped inside the walls and closed with the gunners. If we had probably not a man of us would have come out alive, but we would have gone just the same. While we were lying on the walls in the afternoon General Mower's brigade tried to make an assault up Jackson's road, through which we had passed. The fire that greeted them repulsed them in a minute.¹¹ It was the same for us when we came up, yet not a man in our party turned back.

-Theodore Hyatt

Some sources attribute the plan for the assault of the 150-man storming party, the Forlorn Hope, to General Sherman. The Stockade Redan was a strong fort, with a moat at the base of its 15- to 25-foot-high walls. The plan was for one detachment of the volunteers to carry logs to span the moat, another to carry wooden planks to lay across the logs to form a footbridge, and a third to carry siege ladders to place against the walls of the fort. All this was to enable the rest of the party, as well as the supporting columns who were to attack immediately on the heels of the Forlorn Hope, to cross the moat and scale the walls. A fourth detachment was to carry the rifles belonging to the first three, as well as their own weapons. (Editor's note: I have not been able to find references that would confirm the actual number of men in each detachment.) Although the "plan" to assault and scale the walls of the fort may have seemed folly to some, the fact that Theodore and a number of his companions made it to the top of the wall indicates that at least some of the planks and ladders were deployed as intended. Other survivors' accounts describe the planks and ladders also being used by members of the party for defensive cover.

By late May, both Confederate forces and arriving Union forces had stripped the surrounding countryside of trees and wooden structures. During the night of May 21-22, volunteers inquired of General Sherman where they should obtain the wood to be used for the proposed attack. Motioning to a small wooden shack nearby, Sherman directed the men to dismantle it and use that wood for their assault. As they began to demolish the building, a livid, bearded figure in a nightshirt stormed out of the shack and demanded to know why the men were disturbing his sleep – it was none other than General Grant! The volunteers explained their orders, whereupon General Grant, now sufficiently calmed, told them to continue and spent the rest of the night sleeping nearby on his saddle.



George Theodore Hyatt ca. July, 1894. The Medal of Honor Citation simply reads, "For gallantry in the charge of the volunteer storming party."

¹¹ Observing this action in the afternoon, General Sherman turned to his Third Division commander, Brigadier General James M. Tuttle, and ordered, "This is murder – bring those troops back!"

In 1894, all 78 survivors of the Forlorn Hope then living were awarded the Medal of Honor. More American soldiers and naval personnel received the Medal of Honor for actions at Vicksburg (150) than for any other single campaign in American military history.

The following narrative is from an autograph book, discovered in 2014 and given to the editor, wherein Theodore personally penned the story of the Forlorn Hope. This narrative is very similar to the story recorded in the Chicago Sunday Times Herald and was probably written at about the same time. This account includes some important details not recorded in the Sunday Times Herald.

Life is a warfare, and it is a grander heroism to choose and do the right, amidst its daily trials, than to face death amidst the carnage of the battlefield.

Very respectfully
Theodore Hyatt
Late 1st Sergt Co D 127th Ill. Inf.

The second assault upon Vicksburg was made May 22nd 1863. Our regiment, the 127th Illinois, belonged to the 2nd division of the 15th Army Corps. We were then lying near the wagon road leading to Jackson, in the shelter of one of the ravines.¹² On that morning, Gen. Grant called for one hundred and fifty volunteers from our division and in the apportionment eleven were to be supplied by our regiment. Our company (D) having the largest number of men was required to furnish two of these. We were informed as to the character of the service we were expected to undertake and then came the serious question "who will offer themselves?" I was sick, unfit for duty, but it was a time to forget that, and I said, "I will go," and three others from Co. D volunteered but only one could be accepted until it was known that some of the companies made no offer of volunteers. With these were to be one Captain, one 1st Lieutenant and one 2nd Lieutenant. We were ordered to take nothing but a canteen of water and sixty rounds of ammunition for each man. There was a strong fort near the place where the wagon road led through the rebel works. A number of cannons were mounted there which had complete range of the ground that the 15th Corps was expected to pass over when the assault was made. By using grape and canister shot, at such short range, these would be very destructive to our advancing columns. The object of this storming party was to prevent, as far as possible, the use of these rebel guns while the corps passed over this exposed ground.

We were to gain a lodgment on that fort and await the charge by our entire line of battle which was to take place within an hour. Where we came upon this road, in full view of the

¹² The Stockade Redan, the focal point of the assault of May 22nd, was adjacent to the Graveyard Road, and the attack of the Forlorn Hope was on the Graveyard Road, not the Jackson Road, as noted above.

rebel fort and lines, I think, a quarter of a mile distant from the fort. In much less time than one can write it canister shot and Minnie balls were sweeping the dust from the road in front of us as a hurricane might do. It seemed impossible for any to escape destruction. The only hope was to reach the fort, as quickly as we could, and take our chances at close quarters. The Captain and 1st Lieutenant fell and it was impossible to know how many of the men went down before we reached the fort. The brave 2nd Lieutenant on whom the command devolved asked me to assist the men in climbing upon the fort. The first one raised his head too high and was instantly killed. The others pressed on and we were soon all there lying flat down in the hot dust so that the infantry below could not see us and the shells from the cannons, only a few feet away, could pass over our backs. Our reception seems to have changed the order of the movement.¹³ The charge that was to have been the signal for us to attack the rebel gunners was directed to some other point and we were left to our own resources. The rebels not only annoyed us with hand grenades but killed some of our men. We could only hold our positions there through a day when the sun did not hasten to go down. After dark we crawled quietly out over the ditch and dragged ourselves along the ground only a few feet at a time for we had first to feel carefully all about us to remove any dry twigs that we might otherwise break and make a noise.

Before we were even fifty feet away the fort was covered with secesh¹⁴ who kept firing at random after us. It was reported next day that forty-seven of us came off without wounds and I have never seen any correction of that report.

Much could be written but many of the events of that day seem like the remembrance of some terrible nightmare.

Respectfully Theodore Hyatt

Neither of Theodore's personal accounts describe the following incident, which was told years later by Sgt. Leonidas Godley of the 22nd Iowa Volunteer Infantry: During the action of the Forlorn Hope, an unidentified soldier left his position of relative safety on the fort wall to go to the aid of Sgt. Godley, who was seriously wounded and lay in an exposed position below. The unidentified soldier helped him to a protected position behind a boulder, gave him water and bandaged his wounded leg, then returned to his own position on the wall. In 1996, members of the Medal of Honor Society finally identified Theodore Hyatt as the soldier who had risked his life to save Sgt. Godley. Godley also survived the War and received the Medal of Honor himself, in 1897.

¹³ As noted above, the number of casualties on the Graveyard Road forced many of the troops of the supporting columns to abandon the assault or retreat.

¹⁴ "Secesh" is a somewhat pejorative term for Southerners, or "secessionists."

Additional details of Theodore Hyatt's service include:

- Mustered in as a Sergeant, Company D, 127th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, September 5, 1862
- Promoted to 1st Sergeant, March 10, 1863
- Wounded (shot in the left foot, leading to permanent disability), August 3, 1864
- Discharged due to disability, March 10, 1865

The following is from the Report of Maj. Gen. Frank P. Blair, Jr., 2nd Division Commander of the XV Army Corps, dated May 24, 1863, to Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman, Commander, XV Army Corps, regarding operations of the 2nd Division at Vicksburg, particularly those of the 19th and 22nd of May. The complete report can be found at: <http://civilwarhome.com/blairvicksburgor.htm>. [Editor's note: Spelling and grammar are per the original posted on the foregoing webpage. Highlighted text is by me.]

Assault of May 19th:

"About midnight of the 18th, the Third Brigade of my division, commanded by Brig. Gen. Hugh Ewing, joined me before the works of Vicksburg, having marched from Grand Gulf (by Raymond) to this place, a distance of 85 miles, in three days. General Ewing's brigade was assigned position on the right of my division, his right resting on the left of General Steele's division (First Division, Fifteenth Army Corps). His left connected closely with the right of my First Brigade, commanded by Col. Giles A. Smith, who held the center of my line and occupied the ground in front of the stockade near the bastion, which commands the Graveyard road. The Second Brigade, Col. Thomas Kilby Smith commanding, held the left of my line, the right resting on the left of the First Brigade: and its line of battle extending across the Graveyard road.

"During the morning of the 19th, the entire line of skirmishers of my division was pushed forward, with a view of obtaining a closer position and of reconnoitering the ground.

"At 2 p.m. the signal was given for an assault, and my whole division dashed forward, and, wherever the nature of the ground was not insuperable, reached the enemy's intrenchments, and in several instances planted our flags upon his works. Two regiments of General Ewing's brigade, the Fourth Virginia and Forty-seventh Ohio, succeeded in approaching very near the enemy's works. The Thirteenth U.S. Infantry, Capt. E. C. Washington, and One hundred and sixteenth Illinois Volunteer Infantry, Col. N. W. Tupper, of the First Brigade, Col. Giles A. Smith commanding, pushed forward to the bastion. The One hundred and twenty-seventh Illinois Volunteer Infantry, Col. Hamilton N. Eldridge, and Eighty-third Indiana Volunteer Infantry, Col. Benjamin J. Spooner, of the Second Brigade, commanded by Col. Thomas Kilby Smith, also succeeded in reaching the same ground, but the heavy fire of the enemy, who, not being pressed in any other quarter, were strongly reenforced in our front, made it utterly impossible for them to make a lodgment in the works. They held their positions, however, with the utmost tenacity until night, when they withdrew."

Assault of May 22nd:

"On the 22d, I received an order to renew the assault at 10 o'clock in the morning. I massed my division in the ravine to the left of the Graveyard road, where it debouches upon that road as it passes across the valley immediately in front of the bastion. A volunteer storming party, consisting of 2 officers¹⁵ and 50 men from each brigade of the division, was to lead the assault. General Ewing's brigade and the brigades of Cols. Giles A. Smith and Thomas Kilby Smith were to follow in the order in which they are named, and to charge across the road by the flank.

¹⁵ Theodore refers to three officers, more than once, and the later official report bears this out. The three were Capt. J. H. Croce, 30th Ohio Infantry; 1st Lieutenant George E. O'Neal, Company G, 30th Ohio Infantry; 2nd Lieutenant W. C. Porter, 55th Illinois Infantry.

"At the signal the volunteer storming party, led by Capt. John H. Groce, of General Ewing's brigade, dashed forward in gallant style, and planted the flag of the Union, which was borne by Private Howell G. Trogden, of the Eighth Missouri, upon the bastion of the enemy. The leading regiment of General Ewing's brigade, the Thirtieth Ohio Volunteers, went forward with equal impetuosity and gallantry, but the next regiment, the Thirty-seventh Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry, faltered and gave way under the fire of the enemy, which was far from being severe on this regiment, and was, in fact, directed upon the head of the column. The men lay down in the road and behind every inequality of ground which afforded them shelter, and every effort of General Ewing and Lieut. Col. Louis von Blessingh to rally them and urge them forward proved of no avail. Both of these officers exposed themselves very much in the effort to encourage this regiment, and they were seconded in their efforts by the officers of the regiment.

"Lieut. A. C. Fisk, aide-de-camp to General Hugh Ewing, was conspicuous in his efforts to encourage and animate them to go forward to the assistance of their gallant comrades, who could be seen already upon the very intrenchments of the enemy, and Sergt. Maj. Louis Sebastian, Thirty-seventh Ohio Volunteer Infantry, went along the whole line of the regiment, exposing himself to the heaviest fire of the enemy, exhorting and remonstrating with the men and urging them forward; but it was all in vain. They refused to move, and remained in the road, blocking the way to the other regiments behind, and I was finally compelled to order the Forty-seventh Ohio and Fourth West Virginia forward by another route, to the left of the road. These regiments advanced with commendable spirit and alacrity, and reached a position to which most of the Thirtieth Ohio, so long unsupported, had been compelled to recoil and shelter themselves, and which was less than 150 yards from the bastion. I then ordered the brigade of Col. Giles A. Smith forward by the same route, to the left of the road, as that taken by the last two regiments of General Ewing, and as soon as this brigade went forward it was followed up by the brigade of Col. Thomas Kilby Smith; but this route, while it was better covered from the fire of the enemy, led through ravines made almost impassable with abatis of fallen timber, and did not admit of anything like a charge. I therefore directed Col. Giles A. Smith to go forward as rapidly as the nature of the ground would admit, and to assault whenever he found it practicable to do so, and directed Col. Thomas Kilby Smith to follow close up and support any movement Col. Giles A. Smith should make. Col. Giles A. Smith pushed forward, following the ravine to the left of the position of General Ewing, and reached a ridge about 100 yards from the enemy's intrenchments.

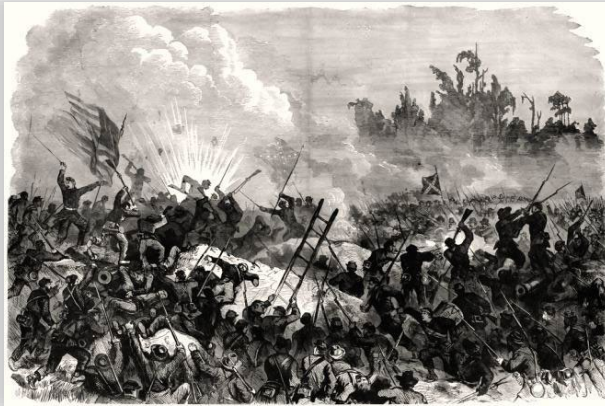
"At this point he found General Ransom, commanding a brigade of the division of General McPherson's corps, who had approached by a ravine from the left of my position, and who, from the nature of the ground, was able to advance his brigade under cover still nearer to the enemy's works than that of Colonel Smith. General Ransom and Colonel Smith communicated with each other, and determined to make a simultaneous assault. It was late in the afternoon before these brigades were able to reach the positions which I have referred to, so difficult and toilsome was the nature of the ground over which they moved, rendered still more so by the abatis and artificial entanglement thrown across it by the enemy. Both brigades went forward with a cheer when the signal was given to advance, and the sharpshooters from Ewing's brigade and our artillery opened upon the enemy at the same time with considerable effect; but, after reaching the face of the works of the enemy, they encountered a most fatal and deadly enfilading fire from the enemy's guns on the left, which came crashing through the ranks, while in front they were met by an obstinate resistance from an intrenched foe, and it was found impossible to advance. Both brigades, however, maintained pertinaciously the ground they had won, and Col. Giles A. Smith's brigade still retains it, having fortified the position, and, under orders since given by you, the position has been materially strengthened and advanced.

"I cannot speak too highly of the courage and conduct of the officers and men of the First Brigade in this desperate assault, which, however, was fully equaled by that of General Ransom's brigade, of which I think it proper to speak, as the brigade was co- operating with one of my own, and was separated by the character of the ground from the corps to which it belonged. The officers and men of both brigades displayed a courage and coolness which could not have failed to win success in a less unequal struggle.

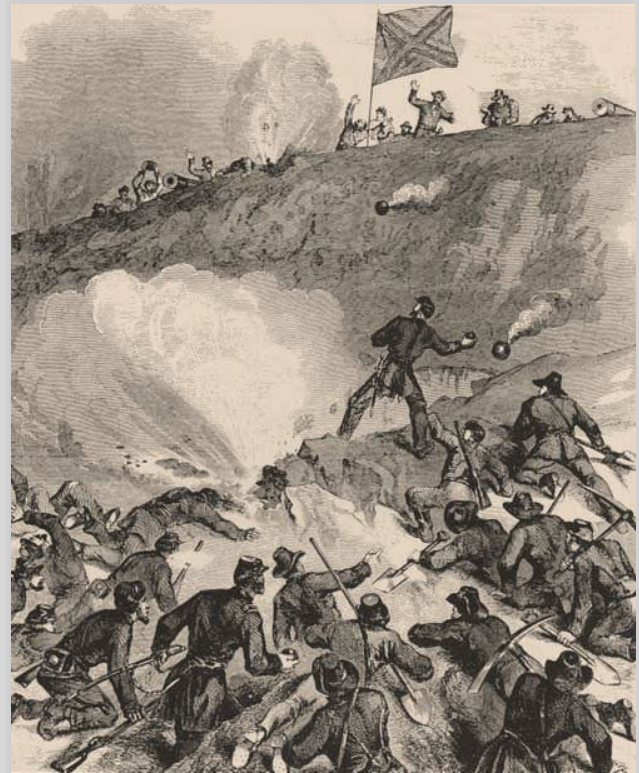
"The active operations of the day were closed by an impetuous assault of the brigade of General Mower, of General Tuttle's division, in your army corps, which rushed forward by the flank on the same road which had been attempted in the morning by the brigade of General H. Ewing. The attack was made with the greatest bravery and impetuosity, and was covered by a tremendous fire from our batteries, and by the sharpshooters of Ewing's and Giles A. Smith's brigades, and its failure only served to prove that it is impossible to carry this position by storm."

Maj. Gen. Sherman's countersigned endorsement of Blair's report includes the following statement:

"...I had this division in full view. If any troops could have carried and held the intrenchments of Vicksburg, these would...and the storming party that volunteered to scale the works, and did do so, and remain on the exterior slope amid that fierce conflict, merit not only the medal of honor, but more substantial reward."



Assault of the Forlorn Hope, May 22, 1863. Howell Gilliam Trogden is the flag bearer depicted in both images above. The drawing on the left showing Trogden carrying a saber is probably incorrect. As a private, he would not have been issued a saber, nor is it likely that he would have been able to carry the flag and brandish a saber at the same time.



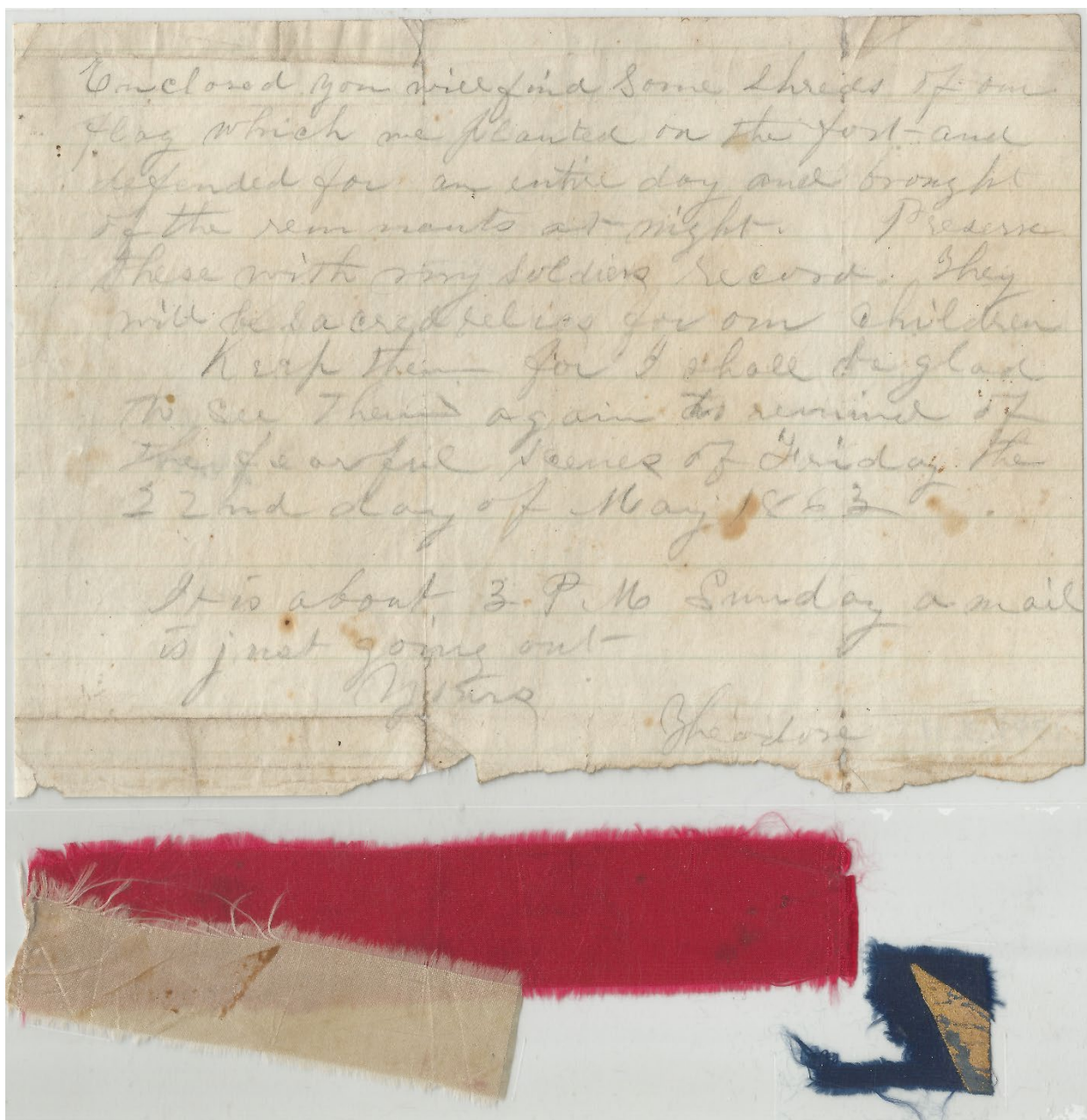
Assault of the Forlorn Hope, May 22, 1863. Both drawings above depict cannon balls being used by the Confederate defenders as makeshift hand grenades being thrown back by Union troops. That shown in the drawing on the left is a bit out of scale. An 8-inch cannon shell such as that shown, would have weighed nearly 50 pounds. A 12-pound shell (weight of 8.34 pounds and 4.52 inches in diameter) or smaller is much more likely to have been used in such a manner and is about the size of the "grenades" depicted on the right.



THE COLOR BEARER OF THE 127TH ILL. REGT. PLANTING THE FLAG ON THE RAMPARTS OF ARKANSAS POST. P. 432.

"The Color Bearer of the 127th Illinois Regt. Planting the Flag on the Ramparts of Arkansas Post." From 1867 Civil War book, The Boys in Blue. (See also the regimental history, below.)

The Battle of Arkansas Post (also known as the Battle of Fort Hindman) was fought January 9-11, 1863, by Union forces, including the 127th, under the command of General John A. McClernand. This battle was an important engagement in General Grant's Mississippi campaign. The final phase of the battle, on January 11, forced the defending Confederate forces to surrender. This scene is also reminiscent of the description of the May 22nd assault of the Fort Redan by the Forlorn Hope.



Letter written from the Vicksburg battlefield on Sunday, May 24, 1863, to Theodore's wife, Melvenia:

Enclosed you will find some shreds of our flag which we planted on the fort and defended for an entire day and brought of the remnants at night. Preserve these with my soldiers record. They will be sacred relics for our children. Keep them for I shall be glad to see them again to remind of the fearful scenes of Friday the 22nd day of May 1863.

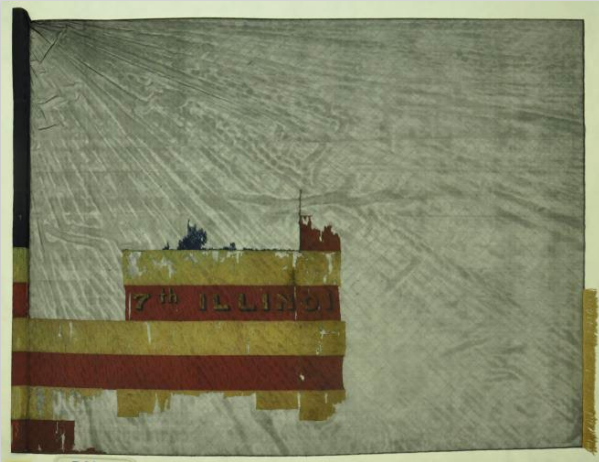
It is about 3 PM Sunday a mail is just going out.

Yours

Theodore

Family archives contain many family letters from before the war and after, until Theodore's death, but oddly, no other letters written either to or from Theodore during his service in the Civil War survive. Some family correspondence indicates that Theodore's wife, Melvenia and their four children born before and during the war were contemptuous, even spiteful of his decision to leave them and go to war, and later he spent many years away from his family. It is the editor's opinion that Melvenia may have destroyed any other correspondence from the war years out of resentment.

Theodore did enjoy a close relationship with his son, Francis (Frank) Eugene Hyatt, who was born after the war, in 1867. On a number of occasions, Theodore wrote poignantly to Frank of his sadness over his poor relationship with his family and the many burdens that he carried after the war. Today, most of us would recognize his expressions of sorrow, guilt, loneliness and depression as apparent manifestations of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).



Regimental colors of the 127th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, consisting of the “National Color,” or Stars and Stripes, and the “Regimental Color,” the blue flag with the regimental designation; photos courtesy of the Illinois State Archives.

According to Army Regulations, the sizes were specified to be “six feet six inches fly [width], and six feet deep on the pike [height].” At the beginning of the war, stars were often painted in silver by various flag manufacturers. However, the silver tended to tarnish quickly and gold soon became the color of choice for the stars, just as those of the lower National Color shown. The two flags on top were probably issued when the regiment was mustered in, on September 6, 1862, and were likely carried into battle at least until the end of the siege of Vicksburg. Those on the bottom were issued some time prior to the Grand Review of May 24, 1865, held in Washington, D.C., in which the 127th also marched and carried these colors. (The National Color shown below contains only 34 stars; West Virginia became a state on June 20, 1863, as the 35th state, so this flag was likely issued prior to that date.) Note the battle honors inscribed on the lower Regimental Color: VICKSBURG (the missing text probably referenced the assaults of May 19th and May 22nd, 1863); CHICKASAW BAYOU; ARKANSAS POST; JACKSON; MISSION RIDGE; RESACA; DALLAS; KENESAW MOUNTAIN; ATLANTA, JULY 22nd, 28th, & 3rd AUGUST; JONESBORO; SAVANAH [sic]; BENTONVILLE.

Prior to the general assault at Vicksburg of May 22, 1863, General Hugh Boyle Ewing, 3rd Brigade Commander under Major General Blair, had been issued a new National Color flag, probably identical to the second National Color Flag of the 127th shown above. That flag was carried into battle by Sergeant Trogden, and the flag remnants that Theodore sent home with the letter above must have come from that flag. (Editor’s note: I have searched for years and corresponded with others to try and locate any other remnants of the flag or stories to confirm how these remnants came into Theodore’s possession. To date, January, 2019, I have had no success in this regard.)

C
Subject: Medal of honor.

Address: "Chief of the Record and Pension Office, War Department, Washington, D. C."

392,133.

Record and Pension Office,
War Department,
Washington City,

July 9, 1894.

Mr. Theodore Hyatt,
Late 1st Sergt., Co. D, 127th Ill. Vols.,
Lockport, Illinois.

Sir:-

I am directed by the Secretary of War to inform you that, in accordance with the act of Congress approved March 3, 1863, providing for the presentation of medals of honor to such officers, non-commissioned officers and privates as have most distinguished themselves in action, a medal of honor has been awarded, by direction of the President, to you for distinguished gallantry in action at Vicksburg, Mississippi, May 22, 1863, while a member of a volunteer storming party which made a most gallant assault upon the enemy's works.

The medal has been forwarded to you by registered mail. Please acknowledge receipt.

Very respectfully,



Colonel, U. S. Army,

Chief, Record and Pension Office.

Letter informing Theodore of the award of the Medal of Honor (MoH). Note that the Medal was to be sent by registered mail. (Today's MoH recipients, if living, are usually invited to the White House and personally presented the Medal by the President!)

History of the 127th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment

Below is a summary of the regimental history, taken from the Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois, Volume VI, published in 1900. Images of the relevant pages with the complete history of the regiment from the Report follow. The full Report can be found at <https://archive.org/details/reportofadjutant06illi1/page/n5>.

One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Illinois Infantry. — Cols., John Van Arman, Hamilton N. Eldridge; Lieut. -Cols., Hamilton N. Eldridge, Frank S. Curtiss; Majs., Frank S. Curtiss, Thomas W. Chandler, Frank C. Gillette. This regiment was raised under the call of President Lincoln for 500,000 volunteers in the summer of 1862. Co. A was recruited in Kendall county; B, in and around Chicago; C, at Elgin; D, in Grundy county; E, at St. Charles; F, at Piano; G, in Chicago; H, about Lyons; I, at Elgin, and K, at Aurora and Big Rock. The regiment was mustered into the service at Camp Douglas Sept. 6, 1862. It performed a considerable amount of guard duty in Camp Douglas, where the Harper's Ferry prisoners were sent in the fall of 1862. The command drew a full complement of English Enfield rifles in the beginning of November and on the 9th of that month departed over the Illinois Central railway for Cairo, where it went on board the steamer Emerald, and landed at Memphis, Tenn., on the 13th. It reached the Yazoo in December and was engaged in the operations on the Chickasaw bluffs, during which its losses were 1 man killed and 7 wounded. It was with the expedition which captured Arkansas Post and was one of the first to plant its colors on the enemy's works. Its losses in the assault were 2 killed, 20 wounded and 9 missing. It was in the bloody assaults upon the Vicksburg lines in May, 1863, on the first day planting its colors on the glacis of the Confederate works and maintaining its position until nightfall, when the troops were withdrawn. The losses of the regiment in the two engagements were about 15 killed and 60 wounded. It took part in the series of battles around Resaca, Ga., in the spring of 1864, notably the one on the evening of May 14, when the brigade to which it was attached carried the fortified line along the slope of Conasine creek by a desperate assault with the bayonet, in which the regiment bore a conspicuous part and captured a number of prisoners. In the operations in front of Resaca the regiment lost 1 man killed and 3 wounded. In the sharp fighting among the Dallas hills it was almost constantly under fire, showing conspicuous gallantry in the actions of May 27 and 29. In the assault upon Kennesaw Mountain the regiment stood up grandly under the most terrible fire it had ever encountered, and in the bloody engagement of July 22, east of Atlanta, it was in the thickest of the fray. On Aug 3 it took part in an attack on the Confederate skirmish line to the west of Atlanta, in which it displayed its usual gallantry and lost a number of men, and it was hotly engaged in the battle of Jonesboro, its officers and men displaying the greatest gallantry and inflicting severe loss upon the enemy. The regiment accompanied Sherman's army on its grand march through Georgia and the Carolinas, and at the battle of Bentonville it was for 24 hours on the skirmish line, but escaped without loss. After the surrender of Johnston it marched to Washington, took part in the grand review, and was specially complimented for its fine discipline and military bearing. It was finally mustered out on June 17, 1865, after an arduous service of almost three years, the actual number of men finally discharged being about 240, all that remained of the 900 with which the regiment left Camp Douglas in Nov., 1862.

REPORT
OF THE
ADJUTANT GENERAL
OF THE
STATE OF ILLINOIS.

VOLUME VI.

CONTAINING REPORTS FOR THE YEARS 1861-66.

REVISED BY
BRIGADIER GENERAL J. N. REECE,
ADJUTANT GENERAL.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.:
JOURNAL COMPANY, PRINTERS AND BINDERS,
1900.

Name and Rank.	Residence.	Date of rank or enlistment.	Date of muster.	Remarks.
Duck, Robert A.....	Chicago.....	Dec. 30, 1863	Dec. 31, 1863	Died at Marietta, Ga., July 16, 1864.
Hine, William H.....	".....	Aug. 14, 1862	Sept. 6, 1862	Transferred to Co. G.....
Rains, John.....	Cairo.....	Nov. 11, 1862	Nov. 11, 1862	Wounded. Tr. to Co. B., 55th Ill. Infantry.....
Widener, Adam.....	".....	Aug. 7, 1862	Sept. 6, 1862	M.O. June 5, '65; wounded.

COMPANY D.

Name and Rank.	Residence.	Date of rank or enlistment.	Date of muster.	Remarks.
<i>Captains.</i>				
Thomas W. Chandler..	Highland.....	Sept. 5, 1862	Sept. 5, 1862	Promoted Major.....
Charles M. Libby.....	".....	Feb. 23, 1863	Sept. 26, 1863	Mustered out May 31, 1865..
<i>First Lieutenants.</i>				
Edgar M. Pike.....	Morris.....	Sept. 5, 1862	Sept. 5, 1862	Discharged Mar. 13, 1863....
Charles M. Libby.....	Highland.....	Mar. 13, 1863	May 28, 1863	Promoted.....
Whipple Brayton.....	".....	Mar. 10, 1863	Dec. 20, 1863	Mustered out May 31, 1865..
<i>Second Lieutenants.</i>				
Charles M. Libby.....	Highland.....	Sept. 5, 1862	Sept. 5, 1862	Promoted.....
Whipple Brayton.....	".....	Mar. 10, 1863	".....	".....
<i>First Sergeant.</i>				
Whipple Brayton.....	Highland.....	Aug. 13, 1862	Sept. 5, 1862	Promoted 1st Lieutenant..
<i>Sergeants.</i>				
Gideon R. Taxis.....	Gardner.....	Aug. 13, 1862	Sept. 5, 1862	Disch. Mar. 20, '63; disabil..
Theodore Hyatt.....	".....	".....	".....	1st Sgt. Wounded Aug. 3, '64 Disch. Mar. 10, '65; disabil..
John Paxton.....	Goodfarm.....	".....	".....	Died at Gardner, Ill., Dec. 29, 1862.....
Azor S. Martin.....	Highland.....	".....	".....	M.O. May 31, '65, as 1st Sgt.
<i>Corporals.</i>				
Solomon Howen.....	Allen.....	Aug. 13, 1862	Sept. 5, 1862	M. O. May 31, '65, as Serg't.
Robert C. Barber.....	Vienna.....	".....	".....	Promoted Serg't. Died at home, Nov. 8, 1863.....
Aaron Van Pelt.....	Essex.....	".....	".....	Died, Paducah, Dec. 1, 1863.
Charles H. Barnham.....	Mazon.....	".....	".....	Mustered out May 31, 1865.
William O. Finch.....	Vienna.....	".....	".....	Red. to ranks. Tr. to I. C.
John Warren.....	Essex.....	".....	".....	M. O. May 31, '65, as Serg't.
Walter C. Wait.....	Highland.....	".....	".....	".....
James E. Stitt.....	".....	".....	".....	Kill'd, Vicksb'g, May 22, '63
<i>Musicians.</i>				
Henry Parker.....	Goodfarm.....	Aug. 13, 1862	Sept. 5, 1862	Died Sept. 22, 1863.....
Flavius E. Kellam.....	Highland.....	".....	".....	Disch. Oct. 6, '63; disabil..
<i>Privates.</i>				
Adams, Samuel.....	Highland.....	Aug. 13, 1862	Sept. 5, 1862	Corp'l. Died at Paducah, Ky., Dec. 1, 1863.....
Atwood, Royal E.....	Vienna.....	".....	".....	Disch. Jan. 20, '63; disabil..
Atkinson, Robert.....	Broughton.....	".....	".....	M.O. May 31, '65, as Corp'l.
Austin, George.....	Essex.....	".....	".....	Died Jan. 31, 1863.....
Baker, Amelius.....	Highland.....	".....	".....	M. O. June 1, '65, as Corp'l.
Barber, Samuel J.....	Vienna.....	".....	".....	Mustered out May 31, 1865.
Barner, Samuel N.....	".....	".....	".....	M.O. May 31, '65, as Serg't..
Barner, George L.....	".....	".....	".....	Mustered out June 19, 1865.
Benjamin, Sylvester.....	Highland.....	".....	".....	Disch. Jan. 9, '64; disabil..
Bennett, John T.....	Mazon.....	".....	".....	Corp'l. Killed near Atlanta, Ga., July 28, 1864.....
Brayton, Hosea P.....	".....	".....	".....	Died Jan. 8, 1863.....
Brown, George.....	Highland.....	".....	".....	M. O. to date May 31, 1865.
Brewster, Edwin B.....	Goodfarm.....	".....	".....	Mustered out May 31, 1865..
Burnham, George A.....	Mazon.....	".....	".....	".....
Chappel, Francis H.....	Braceville.....	".....	".....	Killed at Jonesboro, Ga., Sept. 1, 1864.....
Chandler, Bennet.....	".....	".....	".....	Trans. to Marine Corps about Apr. 20, 1863.....
Cleel, Simeon.....	Allen.....	".....	".....	Tr. to Inv. Corps, Dec. 1, '63.
Combs, James R.....	Mazon.....	".....	".....	M.O. June 3, '65; wounded.
Denman, John M.....	Vienna.....	".....	".....	Mustered out May 31, 1865..

HISTORY OF ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH INFANTRY.

The One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Infantry was raised under the call of President Lincoln for 500,000 volunteers in the summer of 1862. Company A was recruited in Kendall county; Company B, in and around Chicago; Company C, at Elgin; Company D, in Grundy county; Company E, at St. Charles; Company F, at Plano; Company G, in Chicago; Company H, about Lyons; Company I, at Elgin and Company K, at Aurora and Big Rock. The Regiment was mustered in this service at Camp Douglas, Sept. 6, 1862.

The Regiment performed a considerable amount of guard duty in Camp Douglas, where the Harper's Ferry prisoners were sent in the fall of 1862.

The command drew a full complement of English Enfield rifles in the beginning of November, 1862, and on the 9th of that month departed over the Illinois Central railway for Cairo, where it went on board the steamer Emerald, and landed at Memphis, Tenn., on the 13th. Went into camp near the city and was assigned to the First Brigade, Second Division, Fifteenth Army Corps, then a part of the right wing of the Army of the Tennessee.

On the 26th of November, departed on the expedition under General W. T. Sherman, in pursuit of Generals Price and Van Dorn. Marched to the neighborhood of Oxford, Miss., where the command was reviewed by General Grant, and returned without encountering the enemy, to Memphis, on the 13th of December.

On the 20th of that month, embarked on the Mississippi River as a part of the expedition under General Sherman destined to operate against Vicksburg. Reached the Yazoo December 25, and was engaged in the operations on the Chickasaw Bayou from December 26 to January 1, during which its losses were one man killed (William Elmy of Company H) and seven wounded. A number of men soon after died of malignant measles.

The ~~1st~~ ^{Endnote 1} was with the expedition under General McClernand, which captured Arkansas Post, January 11, 1863, and was one of the first to plant its colors on the enemy's works. Its losses in the assault were two killed, twenty wounded and nine missing.

Following this expedition the army encamped at Young's Point, and on the peninsula opposite Vicksburg, where the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh performed picket and fatigue duty, working on the famous "canal" begun by General Butler, and during the next three months having a great amount of sickness in its ranks, and losing a large number of men by disease. At times the Regiment could report scarce a hundred men for duty.

The One Hundred and Twenty-seventh took part in the expedition to Steele's and Black Bayous in March, but, though suffering great hardships, returned without loss.

It was engaged in the movements to Grand Gulf, and in the rear of Vicksburg in May, and, when General Grant's army closed upon the doomed city on the 18th of the month, it formed a part of the line of battle of the Fifteenth Corps, on the right of the army.

It was in the bloody assaults upon the Vicksburg lines, May 19 and 22, on the first day planting its colors on the glacis of the rebel works, and maintaining its position until nightfall, when the troops were withdrawn. The losses of the Regiment in the two engagements were about 15 killed and 60 wounded.

During the siege of Vicksburg the Regiment was on detached duty at the Chickasaw Bayou until within a few days of the surrender, when it returned to the trenches, and was present at the surrender of the rebel stronghold, July 4, 1863.

On the night following the surrender all the men fit for duty, less than 50 in number, under Major Curtiss, marched with General Sherman's command, which drove General Joe Johnston from Jackson a few days later. During these operations the remnant of the Regiment was under the immediate command of Lieutenant Richmond, of Company E.

Following the defeat of Johnston, the Fifteenth Corps went into camp near Black River, about fifteen miles east of Vicksburg, where it remained until ordered, in September, to Chattanooga.

After the return of the Fifteenth Corps from Jackson, the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh was granted about twenty-five furloughs and leaves of absence. When the Regiment went into camp at Black River it had less than 100 men fit for duty, about 400 being in hospital on Walnut Hills, in the rear of Vicksburg.

On the 22d of September the Fifteenth Army Corps, under orders from General Grant, broke camp on Black River, and, marching to Vicksburg, took steamers for Memphis, from which point the troops marched overland, 300 miles, to Chattanooga, Tenn., where they began to arrive about the 15th of November. There was considerable fighting at Collierville, on the line of the Memphis and Charleston Railway, and in the neighborhood of Tusculum, A'a., but, in spite of all opposition, the Corps arrived in splendid fighting trim in front of General Bragg's army at Chattanooga, and took part in the battles of Lookout Mountain and Mission Ridge, Nov. 22 to 25, which ended in the total discomfiture of the rebel forces with heavy loss.

During the march through the mountains between Bridgeport and Chattanooga, the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh was on detached service guarding trains. Following the defeat of Bragg it formed a part of General Sherman's expedition for the relief of General Burnside, besieged in Knoxville, Tenn., by the rebel general Longstreet, marching to within a few miles of that place and returning to Bridgeport about the 18th of December.

In January, 1864, the Fifteenth Corps was cantoned along the Memphis and Charleston Railway, the Divisions occupying Huntsville, Woodville, Larkinsville and Scottsboro, in northern Alabama, the Second Division, to which the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh belonged, being stationed at Larkinsville.

During the latter part of January and the beginning of February, the Regiment took part in the forward movement of the Corps which crossed the Tennessee River near its southern bend, and made a demonstration in favor of General W. T. Sherman, then engaged in his famous raid from Vicksburg toward Meridian, Miss., at the head of the Seventeenth Army Corps.

During the encampment at Larkinsville a number of the officers of the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh sent for their wives, who visited them in camp and remained several weeks.

A sad occurrence, and one which cast a gloom over the Regiment greater than the loss of twenty men in battle, was the murder of Joseph E. Corby, of Company I, who was found dead in front of our camp on the morning of January 24, 1864.

The Regiment broke camp at Larkinsville on the first day of May, 1864, and moved with its Division toward Chattanooga, which place was reached on the 5th, and on the evening of the same day encamped on the Chickamauga battle field, with the Army of the Tennessee, then under command of General J. B. McPherson.

The One Hundred and Twenty-seventh took part in the series of battles around Resaca, notably the one on the evening of May 14, when the Brigade to which it was attached carried the fortified line along the slope of Conasahee Creek by a desperate assault with the bayonet, in which the Regiment bore a conspicuous part and captured a number of prisoners. Immediately following this successful charge came the return assault of General Cleburne's rebel Division, which made three furious charges upon our lines only to be bloodily repulsed. In the operations in front of Resaca the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh lost one man killed, and three wounded.

In the sharp fighting among the Dallas Hills from the 26th of May to June 1, the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh was almost constantly under fire, showing conspicuous gallantry in the actions of 27th and 29th. Daniel T. Lane, of Company E, was seriously wounded on the 27th.

On the 4th of June the enemy abandoned his strong works at Dallas and fell back behind the still stronger position on and around Kenesaw Mountain, and Pine Hill, where he maintained himself for nearly a month, during which period it rained almost incessantly, making active operations nearly impossible.

On the 27th of June occurred the desperate assault of the Fifteenth Corps upon Kenesaw Mountain, which frowned a thousand feet above the heads of our men, covered with rifle pits, strong parapets, and death-dealing batteries. In this marvelous affair the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh stood up grandly under the most terrible fire it had ever encountered.

On the 2d of July the enemy abandoned the defenses of Kenesaw, and fell back to the Chattahoochie River. On the 6th our advance was in sight of Atlanta, and on the 12th and 13th the Army of the Tennessee was transferred by a rapid movement from the extreme right to the extreme left, and, following Garrard's cavalry column across the Chattahoochie near Roswell, entrenched itself, and compelled the rebel commander to retreat across the river into his Atlanta lines. The One Hundred and Twenty-seventh took part in all these movements.

The whole army now crossed the Chattahoochie, and the battle of Peach Tree Creek followed on the 20th of July. General John B. Hood had been placed in command of the rebel army on the 19th, in place of General Joseph E. Johnston, relieved by Jefferson Davis, and fighting became desperate.

In the bloody engagement of the 22d of July, east of Atlanta, in which the lamented McPherson fell, the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh was in the thickest of the fray, the Brigade to which it belonged being led into the fight by General Logan in person.

A few days later the Fifteenth Corps was transferred to the extreme right of the army, where, on the 28th of July, it was furiously assailed by a Corps of Hood's army, which was repulsed with terrible loss, leaving no less than 828 dead in front of our lines. The weight of the attack fell upon the Second Division of our Corps. The One Hundred and Twenty-seventh, forming the extreme right of the army, and, being mostly on the skirmish line, came very near being captured. The timely arrival of a Brigade of the Fourteenth Corps, piloted upon the field by Robert Murphy, a drummer boy of the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh, saved the day. The losses of the Regiment on this day were Corporal John T. Bennett and William Peterson, of Company D, and Alfred X. Murdock and William Pooley, of Company A, killed, and 17 wounded and missing.

About this date Company G, Captain Sewell, was detailed at Corps headquarters as provost guard, a position which it held for several months. On the 31st of July, the morning report of the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh showed only 92 men fit for duty carrying guns.

On the 3d of August, the Regiment took part in an attack on the rebel skirmish line to the west of Atlanta, in which it displayed its usual gallantry and lost a number of men, among whom were Sergeant Ira B. Whitney, of Company B, killed, and five men, including Captain A. C. Little, wounded. Elias Smithers, of Company E, died a few days later of wounds received. *Endnote 2*

The Regiment participated in the subsequent operations around Atlanta, including the great flanking movement of August 27, by which General Sherman placed the bulk of his army in the rear of General Hood and compelled him to evacuate Atlanta on the 2d of September. During the withdrawal of the army from the lines on the night of August 26, Sergeant Major William W. Lawton, of the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh, was mortally wounded and died the same night in the ambulance. This was the only casualty in the Army of the Tennessee during the movement.

The One Hundred and Twenty-seventh was hotly engaged in the battle of Jonesboro, below Atlanta, fought by Logan's Corps on the 1st of September, its officers and men displaying the greatest gallantry and inflicting some loss upon the enemy. In this battle the killed were Sergeant J. R. Grassmire, of Company I, James Griffin, of Company H, Levi Mead, of Company F, and Francis H. Chappell, of Company D, and a number wounded.

On the 9th of September the army encamped around the captured city, the Second Division of the Fifteenth Corps occupying East Point, about six miles southwest of Atlanta. About this date Captain Gillette received his commission as Major and Lieutenant Richmond was promoted Captain of Company E.

The army remained in its cantonments until the beginning of October, during which period General Sherman exchanged 2,000 prisoners with General Hood at Rough-and-Ready Station, below Atlanta. Among those exchanged were the boys of the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh captured on the 22d of July.

General Hood began his famous raid upon the communications of Sherman's army about the 1st of October, and on the 3d of the month Sherman's army was in rapid pursuit of the rebel army which consisted of 25,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry. During the pursuit of Hood and the subsequent march through Georgia and South Carolina, the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh was commanded by Captain Charles Schryver, of Company F, the senior officer then with the Regiment. From August 14, 1864, to April 1, 1865, Colonel Curtiss was absent from the Regiment. A portion of this time he was in command of a provisional Division under General Schofield, in North Carolina. Captain Little was also absent on furlough during the same period, and was in command of 400 men under General Schofield in North Carolina during a part of the time.

The One Hundred and Twenty-seventh accompanied Sherman's army on its grand march through Georgia and the Carolinas. From Atlanta to Columbia, South Carolina, it was on detached service, during which time it reported directly to the Headquarters of the Army of the Tennessee. At Columbia it returned to the Division, and took part in the operations, thence on to Goldsboro, N. C. During the month of January, 1865, it was encamped on the great rice plantations southwest of Savannah, Ga. It was present at the capture of Columbia, S. C., and in the advance upon Fayetteville, N. C. A number of its men were engaged in a severe skirmish, in which Francis B. Imhoff, of Company B, was killed, and R. R. Parkin, of Company I, wounded. At the severe battle of Bentonville, March 19 and 20, it was for twenty-four hours on the skirmish line, but escaped without loss. At Goldsboro, N. C., the army encamped for about fifteen days, during which time it was furnished with a complete outfit of new clothing. At Goldsboro, Colonel Curtiss, Captain Little and forty or fifty furloughed men, rejoined the Regiment. Here also Sergeant James G. Naid was mustered in as Adjutant, assuming his duties on the first of April, at which time Colonel Curtiss assumed command of the Regiment. Captain Little was soon after detailed on detached duty.

The army left Goldsboro in pursuit of General Johnston on the 10th of April, and reached Raleigh, the Capital of North Carolina, on the 14th, where it went into camp in and around the city. The Fifteenth Corps was encamped during most of the time until the last of the month about one mile north of the city.

General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered the remaining armies of the Confederacy on the 26th of April, and on the 29th the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh, in company with the Fifteenth Corps, commenced the march from Raleigh to Petersburg, Va., 168 miles distant, which point was made in just six days, equal to 28 miles a day. On the 12th of May the army passed through Richmond, and on the 21st reached the vicinity of Washington, D. C., and went into temporary camp on the hills west of Alexandria. The march through Virginia took the command through Petersburg, Richmond, Hanover Court House, Fredericksburg, Stafford, Dumfries and Occoquan. A portion of the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh visited Fort Darling, below Richmond, and made a flying visit to Mount Vernon, the home of Washington.

The One Hundred and Twenty-seventh took part in the grand review at headquarters and was specially complimented for its fine discipline and military bearing. During the next fourteen days the command was encamped near Fort Slocum north of the city, where it was mustered for discharge on June 4th by Captain Potter, of the Seventieth Ohio Volunteers.

On the 7th of June the Regiment left Washington for Chicago. It was finally mustered out on the 17th of June, 1865, after an arduous service of almost three years. The actual number of men finally discharged was about 240, all that remained of the 900 with which the Regiment left Camp Douglas in November, 1862.

Endnote 1. *This appears to be the first “hot” action in which Theodore and his comrades took part. Theodore complained of respiratory problems that began on the Chickasaw Bayou during the winter of 1862-63 and plagued him for the rest of his life.*

Endnote 2. *Theodore was among those wounded on August 3, 1864, having been shot in the left foot. His grandson, Clarence E. Hyatt, later told the editor that Theodore was crippled for life, and ultimately had four separate partial amputations of his foot, all without benefit of anesthetic. In addition to his respiratory problems, this wound gave Theodore constant pain. Theodore did receive a pension; at the end of the war, the pension was \$15 per month, compared to a first sergeant’s pay of \$20 per month. However, by the early 1890s his pension had been periodically reduced until it was a mere \$7 per month. This was a common experience for Civil War pensioners, and this mistreatment of veterans eventually caused a public outcry and forced Congress to act. In part to cover the scandal, beginning in 1893, Congress instructed the War Department to review the records of veterans and award those who had committed conspicuous acts of bravery with appropriate medals (i.e. Medal of Honor). Later, some of the hastily bestowed Medals of Honor were deemed to have been given inappropriately and were rescinded by the War Department. However, none of those awarded for valor at Vicksburg were ever recalled. Upon learning of Theodore’s award of the nation’s highest military honor, his wife, Melvenia, is said to have remarked, “It would have been better if they had just increased your pension.”*