

## 75th OVI Notes

My notes about the “Notes”: At the risk of contradicting myself when I previously said I was not trying to promote any particular unit, on two recent occasions I have given presentations about the 75<sup>th</sup> to illustrate the challenges and sacrifices encountered by a regiment from Ohio. As I was researching other matters I kept encountering references to the 75<sup>th</sup> Ohio and decided it would be interesting as well as useful to compile such a presentation. As usual I over prepared to the extent that these notes contain far more material than I could have possibly presented within an hour’s presentation; on the other hand these notes do not attempt to tell a full, comprehensive story of this regiment. Googling produces at least a half dozen other sources, some of those links being shown at the bottom of this article.

**Purpose** – To review the history of a regiment of volunteers that served over and beyond the typical responsibilities of civilian soldiers. Certainly not the most famous of regiments but at we shall see their sacrifices were matched by few other regiments, especially on the Union side. There might be as many as 40 veterans of the 75<sup>th</sup> buried in Athens County cemeteries.

**March 1857** -- John McLean, a long serving U.S. Supreme Court Justice, wrote a blistering dissent in the *Drew Scot vs Sanford* case. As a result Justice McLean was adopted by Northern abolitionists as their champion.

**November 7, 1861 to January 8, 1862** – Nathaniel McLean, an Ohio lawyer and son of John McLean, recruited and organized the 75<sup>th</sup> OVI.

Area enlistees, i.e. those from Athens, Hocking and Vinton Counties, initially sent to Camp Wool before being transferred to Camp McLean near Cincinnati where the 75<sup>th</sup> was finally organized. The 75<sup>th</sup> also included contingents from Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati. Four companies also came from the 79<sup>th</sup>. Began with 984 soldiers, including a future Congressman, Henry Lee Morey from Butler County.

**January 28, 1862** – Began active service at Huttonsville, at the foot of Cheat Mountain western Virginia, under Robert Huston Milroy, 46, who had attended the Norwich Military Academy before fighting in the Mexican War. Milroy, a former judge, was an aggressive Indiana abolitionist described as a general who “will hunt up the enemy and fight him wherever found.”<sup>1</sup>

**April 12, 1862 – Monterey, VA** – The regiment displayed bravery and gave evidence of its fine discipline while sustaining the brunt of the enemy’s attack. After two hours of hard fighting the 75<sup>th</sup> cleared out the Rebels. (This is the same day as the great locomotive chase.)

**May 8, 1862 --McDowell, VA** – When Stonewall was ordered to create a strategic diversion to draw Federal troops away from McClellan’s Peninsula campaign against Richmond, Stonewall decided to strike first against Fremont. Both sides hurried to get the jump on the other. Robert Schenck, 53, led his brigade on a 34 mile march in 23 hours.

Schenck – a graduate of Miami of Ohio --was an Ohio lawyer and former Congressman who had made perhaps the first speech endorsing Lincoln before helping to deliver important votes for Lincoln in 1860. Very early in the war he led a brief reconnaissance outside the Washington defenses but had to fall back in disorder after being ambushed by Confederates near Vienna, VA. Schenck also fought at 1<sup>st</sup> Bull Run.

Jackson’s lead units encountered Fremont’s advance unit under Milroy’s field command, Milroy, seldom hesitant about throwing the first punch, at 3 o’clock p.m. launched an improbable two-regiment – the 25<sup>th</sup> OVI and 75<sup>th</sup> OVI – uphill attack led by Col. Nathaniel McLean against Jackson’s numerically superior forces as they were still preparing their positions.<sup>2</sup> During the following night Milroy withdrew from the field and began a retrograde movement through and away from McDowell back toward Franklin, Virginia (now WV).

Milroy warmly congratulated McLean on the gallantry of the regiment. Stonewall Jackson reported the fight at McDowell as “Bloodiest of the war for the number engaged.”

Lost 87 men.

**May 12, to June 1, 1862** –Franklin, VA – Pursuing with difficulty, Stonewall reached Franklin on the 12<sup>th</sup> before withdrawing behind the screen of Ashby's cavalry.

**June 8, 1862 – Cross Keys, VA** – Prior to this battle the so-called Ohio Brigade, consisting of the 57<sup>th</sup>, 73<sup>rd</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup> & 82<sup>nd</sup> OVI, was formed under Schenck's command.

Although the Yanks had failed to trap Jackson at Strasburg, they nevertheless continued to chase Stonewall on either side of the Massanutten. Jackson barely won the race, being able on June 7, 1862, to occupy two key locations: Cross Keys, a crossroads near a rural tavern seven miles southeast of Harrisonburg, and Port Republic, a village three miles further southeast of Cross Keys.<sup>3</sup> A single bridge – which Jackson could control – spanned the North River between these two villages. Jackson decided to stay to once more engage the pursuing Federal forces still separated on either side of the Massanutten. Toward that purpose Jackson deployed Ewell to Cross Keys to prevent Fremont from reinforcing Shields at Port Republic.<sup>4</sup>

Sunday, June 8, 1862, also saw one of the great near misses of the Civil War. A Union raiding party of approximately 100 dragoons supported by a couple artillery guns broke through the unburned bridge to roam through Port Republic where Jackson had slept the previous night. Jackson, who was wearing his old blue coat from his VMI days, charged straight toward the Union detachment before it broke off to get out of its precarious position in the village. Jackson narrowly escaped although a couple of his staff members were captured. It was probably Stonewall's closest brush with being either capture or killed.<sup>5</sup>

The next day Ewell engaged and “covered” Fremont astride the road leading from Cross Keys to Port Republic.<sup>6</sup> Late in the afternoon Fremont – who outnumbered Ewell by two to one – withdrew to new defensive positions but Ewell, in accordance with Stonewall's orders, declined to advance.<sup>7</sup> Instead, during the night Ewell retreated to Port Republic, his rear guard burning the bridge, thus impairing Fremont from being able to help Shields at Port Republic.

After Cross Keys, Schenck was given command of a division with McLean being promoted to Schenck's old brigade command along with a promotion in rank.

**August 9, 1862 – Cedar Mountain, VA** – The Federal administration decided to create a new army, John Pope commanding, to advance upon and hopefully seize Richmond. As elements of Pope's army were advancing slowly toward Culpeper, Stonewall thought he saw an opportunity to attack the first units to arrive. But Banks struck first and was driving Winder and Ewell back before A.P. Hill came to the rescue. Banks failed by attacking without reserves or asking for reinforcements.

**August 23-27, 1862 – Freeman's Ford, VA** – This was one of a series of relatively minor skirmishes constituting the First Battle of Rappahannock Station. A Union brigade, apparently not including the 75<sup>th</sup> OVI, was sent across the river to reconnoiter but realized it was threatened by ambush by a much larger unit than had been anticipated. The significance of Rappahannock Station was that it pinned Pope to the river while Stonewall marched around the flank to Manassas Junction via the Thoroughfare Gap, much to Pope's surprise. Apparently the regiment lost heavily.

**August 30, 1862 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Bull Run, VA** –

Col. Nathaniel McLean, 37, commanded the so-called Ohio Brigade consisting of the 25<sup>th</sup>, the 55<sup>th</sup>, the 73<sup>rd</sup>, and the 75<sup>th</sup> OVIs. The 25<sup>th</sup> was raised primarily in eastern Ohio, including companies from Steubenville, St. Clairsville, and Woodsfield. The 55<sup>th</sup> came from the Ohio's North Coast while the 73<sup>rd</sup> was raised almost from Chillicothe and surrounding areas.

Shortly after noon John Reynolds dispatched a reconnaissance that discovered "the enemy is turning our left."<sup>8</sup> Franz Sigel, the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps commander, sent the 55<sup>th</sup> OVI to Chinn Ridge to further bolster the defense of Chinn Ridge. However the 55<sup>th</sup> was detained at the northern end of Chinn Ridge to cover the five hundred yards between the Warrenton Turnpike and Reynolds's position on the ridge. Schenck, the division commander, sent the rest of McLean's brigade –25<sup>th</sup>

OVI, the 73rd OVI, and the 75<sup>th</sup> OVI -- along with an artillery battery of four guns – to Chinn Ridge.

Chinn Ridge is an elongated hill with its northern-most tip a half-mile almost directly west of the Henry House. While the Henry House Hill had a commanding view of the Warrenton Turnpike as well as the Stone Bridge, Chinn Ridge likewise overlooked the pike but more significantly was a geographic barrier to the Henry House Hill, especially if approached from Longstreet's launching position. Another prominence, Bald Hill, was east of Chinn Ridge and south of Henry Hill but did not have the same terrain features for defensive positions. Additionally Chinn Ridge was closer to Dogan Ridge, across the Warrenton Turnpike, where Sigel's headquarters and artillery were positioned.

At the same time when McLean was positioning his regiments on Chinn Ridge the attacks ordered by Pope against Jackson behind the unfinished railroad embankment were once again repulsed. Upon being repulsed and as Longstreet launched his counterattack, the Federals fled in disarray to the northeast along the Warrenton Turnpike toward Dogan Ridge where Sigel's headquarters was located.

As McDowell saw Porter's men retreating toward Dogan Ridge McDowell committed "the most fatal mistake of [his] ill-plagued career" when, in panic, he ordered Reynolds to remove his troops off Chinn Ridge.<sup>9</sup> Reynolds' redeployment left just McLean's three Ohio regiments and an artillery battery to defend the vital Chinn Ridge. McLean then did the only thing he could do under the circumstances: He readjusted his three infantry regiments into the positions previously occupied by Reynolds entire division. Scott Patchen observes that "McLean's decision to remain on Chinn Ridge proved pivotal and is all the more commendable given the atmosphere of distrust and intrigue that existed among the various factions of Pope's force."<sup>10</sup>

Longstreet directed Hood to head toward Henry House,<sup>11</sup> about a mile and half distant, the same focal point of First Bull Run, "...in order to cut off the [Federal] retreat at the crossing of Young's Branch."<sup>12</sup> Once again Henry House Hill was deemed important because it overlooked the Stone Bridge where the Warrenton Turnpike crossed Bull Run. Capture of Henry House Hill would give the Rebels' exceptional leverage to impede, if not sever, Pope's retreat. Conversely the Federals had to hold Henry House Hill to maintain possession of the Stone Bridge, once again their most feasible means of escape from the Bull Run battlefield.<sup>13</sup>

At one point Franz Sigel ordered Milroy to take his brigade to reinforce McLean's four infantry regiments on Chinn Ridge. But before Milroy could deploy Pope countermanded Sigel's order by directing Milroy to move his brigade to Henry Hill; accordingly at least for the time being McLean's Ohio Brigade would defend without reinforcements. Even while witnessing the collapse of Federal resistance below along the Warrenton Turnpike the three Ohio regiments with their single battery were aligned in a battle line facing westward hoping to buy enough time for Pope to shift more units to Henry Hill and save his army from irreparable damage.<sup>14</sup>

One immediate consequence of Hood's failure to maintain command continuity was that two Rebel infantry regiments charged up Chinn ridge without any artillery support only to be unmercifully cut down by the score by the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> OVI's.<sup>15</sup>

Both sides began to bring artillery to bear against their adversaries, the Northerners positioning substantial metal on Dogan Hill across the way. Federal guns from Dogan Hill and Chinn Ridge hurtled a variety of ordinance upon Evans' Carolinians as they advanced toward their objective, but by cautious maneuvers the Palmettos eventually reached the open ground on McLean's front.<sup>16</sup> About the same time the 55<sup>th</sup> OVI arrived and began to fall in line with McLean's other regiments, adding badly needed reinforcements to McLean's beleaguered rear guard. But although the Buckeyes' muskets wreaked havoc upon the Confederates the numerical superiority of several Rebel brigades began to outflank and overwhelm the Chinn Ridge rear guard.

The 73<sup>rd</sup> OVI, on the Buckeye left wing, was the first regiment forced to retreat to Henry Hill which in turn caused the 25<sup>th</sup> likewise to seek the same refuge with the gunners forced to follow suit.<sup>17</sup>

Fortuitously Irvin McDowell began to fully understand the dynamics of the Confederate pursuit, finally realizing the importance of holding Henry House Hill along with its buffer, Chinn Ridge. McDowell personally brought reinforcements, led by BGen. Zealous Bates Tower, 43, who had graduated first in his West Point class before serving on Winfield Scott's staff in the Mexican War, up on Henry Hill before sending Tower and his soldiers further down to Chinn Ridge to relieve what was left of McLean's brigade. After double-quicking to take their new positions on Chinn Ridge these soldiers, mostly from New York and Pennsylvania, along with the

55<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> OVI, had to hold long enough until Pope secured Henry Hill with other troops.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand it was imperative for the Rebels to drive the Union rear guard off Chinn Ridge and to take Henry Hill if Longstreet were going to achieve his objective.

Although the Confederate attacks were uncoordinated and disorganized, by the same measure they were fierce and relentless. Time and again the outnumbered Federal regiments fired devastating volleys before grudgingly giving ground to new defensive positions. Not to be outdone, the artilleries created mutual havoc with their exchanges of shot, shell, and grape. As regiments were being decimated commanders reformed with the remnants of other regiments, or in some cases, with newly arriving regiments. As he was bringing up reinforcements General Schenck, the division leader, was struck three times, the third bullet shattering his right forearm. Schenck refused to be carried from the battlefield until someone could retrieve his sword.<sup>19</sup>

Eventually the last of McLean's brigade, the 55<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> OVI, were also forced to withdraw from Chinn Ridge. As he was leaving McLean complained to his adjutant "We had been sent up there and sacrificed." But even as they withdrew the Union soldiers halted, turned, and fired at the approaching Confederates whose artillery continue to wreak havoc. A five foot four 18 year old color bearer was mortally wounded as the 75<sup>th</sup> was withdrawing. When knocked to the ground the gallant boy quickly sat upright to hold the flag aloft. Although mortally wounded the young man refused to release his grip, forcing Andrew Harris to pry the lad's fingers off the staff.

McLean lost nearly one-third of his men while Tower lost almost one-half but between them they gained nearly a precious hour for Pope to finally reinforce his left. Perhaps more important, the Federal resistance on Chinn Ridge punished the Confederate so much that they could not continue until they received further reinforcements.

Lost 113 men.

Note: The regimental colors were dropped in order to save the national colors.

The 11<sup>th</sup> was so badly decimated by illness and casualties that Henry Halleck kept it in Washington during the Maryland campaign to rest and refit.

November 28, 1862 – Nathaniel McLean promoted to BGen. and had a series of division commands until he resigned at the end of the war.

January 1863 – Colonel Constable resigns.

**March 1863** -- O.O. Howard succeeds Franz Sigel as commander of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps. Not a popular move. Unlike most West Point graduates or other Regular Army officers, Howard as “an abolitionist and devout Christian without ... martinet mannerisms,<sup>20</sup> but who was unhappy with Sickles’ appointment to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps command.<sup>21</sup> But neither was the appointment of Howard a good fit with the German “freethinkers” who began calling Howard “Old Prayer Book” and began resenting his attempts to “make a Sunday School class of a military organization.”<sup>22</sup> Col. Robert Reily, 43, who had amassed a small fortune in the silk importing business, became commander of the 75<sup>th</sup>.<sup>23</sup>

**May 2-3, 1863 – Chancellorsville, VA** – By now Joe Hooker had been appointed to command the Union Army of the Potomac succeeding McClellan. After Hooker crossed the Rapidan River Lee had prudently kept most of Stuart’s cavalry close at hand to scout and to protect Lee’s flanks. While scouting Stuart discovered Hooker’s left flank was hanging in the air, in other words it was not anchored against a natural barrier or reinforced by artillery. Stuart also discovered the absence of Union cavalry that would otherwise be able to detect any threat against these exposed positions. Lee promptly acted upon Stuart’s intelligence by sending Stonewall’s corps on a looping 16 mile flanking movement that put Jackson’s foot cavalry in position to attack the Union’s unsuspecting 11<sup>th</sup> Corps.

Howard failed to have his units dig in although Hooker had ordered them to do so. Contrary to Hooker’s instructions, most of the regiments, the 75<sup>th</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup> OVs, the 58<sup>th</sup> NY, and the 26<sup>th</sup> Wisc excepted, failed to stay in any state of readiness, having stacked arms. Even though he had been warned by Hooker to be alert, Howard falsely assured Hooker, “I am taking measures to resist an attack from the west.”<sup>24</sup>

Late in the afternoon of Saturday, May 2, Stonewall was able to catch Howard’s infantry almost by complete surprise. Reily had warned of an impending



attack but was ignored. Nevertheless Reily had his men lie down and rest with their weapons. Most of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps broke and ran without firing a shot. For ten minutes early in the fight the 75<sup>th</sup> OVI – now down to approximately 400 officers and men – stoutly confronted two Rebel brigades accompanied with two artillery pieces. The 75<sup>th</sup>'s commander, Robert Reily, was mortally wounded and captured before dying. The Rebels continued rolling up the unprepared Federals for a couple miles before the Rebels were too exhausted and too disorganized to continue.<sup>25</sup>

As a result of their stampede to the rear the German element became known as the Flying Dutchmen, despised by other native born regiments in Howard's command. Later Howard admitted, "I wanted to die. ... That night I did all in power to remedy the mistake, and I sought death everywhere I could find an excuse to go on the field."<sup>26</sup>

In addition to Reily, within a half hour the 75<sup>th</sup> lost 150 men killed or wounded.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Corps, with its large ethnic component, took the most abuse from the rest of the army and from the public. "Flying Dutchmen." There had been a large influx of German immigrants from the German revolution of 1848.

Andrew Harris – a future governor of the State of Ohio -- was promoted to replace Reily as the 75<sup>th</sup>'s commander.

McLean's Ohio Brigade incurred the heaviest loses of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps. The officers and soldiers in the Ohio Brigade developed additional ill feelings toward Howard when he failed to accept any responsibility for the debacle. The Ohio Brigade tried to sever its ties with the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps but Howard refused to approve that move.

**June 30, 1863** – Both armies are headed north, perhaps to collide at Gettysburg. George Meade has just recently replaced Hooker as head of the Army of the Potomac. That evening the three divisions of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps camped just outside Emmitsburg.

Note: The Ohio Brigade now consists of the 17<sup>th</sup> Conn, the 25<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, 107<sup>th</sup> OVIs, and is commanded by Adelbert Ames. This brigade is part of Francis Barlow's 1<sup>st</sup> Division while the 55<sup>th</sup> & 73<sup>rd</sup> OVIs are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. The 107<sup>th</sup> was a relatively large regiment consisting of a huge number of German immigrants.

**July 1, 1863 – Gettysburg, PA** -- Early that morning orders were received to support Reynolds' 1<sup>st</sup> Corps. On the move by 8:30 a.m.

When Reynolds was killed, Howard, as ranking general, assumed command of Gettysburg leaving German-born Carl Schurz to take command of the 11<sup>th</sup> Corps.

When the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps was in danger of being flanked on its right, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Divisions were sent north of Gettysburg to Oak Hill to protect that flank. However Ewell's corps, advancing from the north, was already taking Oak Hill.

Barlow's 1<sup>st</sup> Division –which had double-quickened the final two miles in mid-day heat to Gettysburg – deployed to the right of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division along the Harrisburg Pike. The 75<sup>th</sup> brought 150 men to the field after leaving another 103 detached for other duties that morning.

Barlow posted his division too far forward exposing it to attack against its flanks as well as from the front. The 75<sup>th</sup> was put into reserve. When the 25<sup>th</sup> and the 107<sup>th</sup> teetered Ames ordered the 17<sup>th</sup> Conn and the 75<sup>th</sup> OVI to move up to check the Rebel advance. Harris ordered fix bayonets.

William Southenton, of Company B, likened the falling of his comrades to cornstalks being scythed on his Athens County farm. When half his officers were dead or wounded Harris ordered the 75<sup>th</sup> to withdraw to the Almshouse. Barlow was badly wounded and left for dead on the battlefield.

The 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Divisions became fragmented and disorganized as they tried to get through Gettysburg trying to get to Cemetery Hill. If a man straggled he was likely to be captured but many stayed with injured friends.

75<sup>th</sup> aligned along Brickyard Lane along the base of East Cemetery Hill facing the northeast. They were reinforced when its 103 man detachment returned.

Notwithstanding their initial overall success, by the end of July 1 the Confederates nevertheless committed a failure of pursuit, specifically the failure to capture either Cemetery Hill or Culp's Hill. Allen Guelzo characterizes this failure "as the most sensational Confederate misjudgment of the war, ..." <sup>27</sup> Scott Bowden and Bill Ward go even further to determine that "Ewell's failure to pursue the foe he and his troops had vanquished was one of the most costly errors in American military history." <sup>28</sup>

**July 2, 1863 – Gettysburg: Day Two** --By the time the Confederates' attack finally was launched additional Federal corps had arrived to be placed in critical positions in the Union defenses along Cemetery Ridge. Noah Andre Trudeau notes that Day Two was one of the Civil War's most intense battles.<sup>29</sup>

Harris was forced to defend his brigade "at all hazards" with fewer than 500 men. Because the alignment of Federal regiments was shuffled, there was a gap between the 75<sup>th</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> that was not closed. The area defended by the 75<sup>th</sup> was attacked in the late evening by the Louisiana Tigers, one of the most storied units in the Civil War.

When the Johnnies got to within 150 paces the 75<sup>th</sup> opened a destructive volley that thinned the Rebels' ranks. Nevertheless the Rebels reached the Federal lines where much of the fighting was hand-to-hand plus with bayonets. Although the 107<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> were driven back, the 75<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Conn remained in place along Brickyard Lane. The intensity of that battle was reflected by a 75<sup>th</sup> sergeant who was confronted by a Confederate officer carrying a revolver and his regimental colors. The sergeant wrote a couple days later: "I had no pistol nothing but my sword. Just as I was getting ready to strike him one of our boys run him through the body so saved me."

The Confederate attack was eventually repulsed but the Confederate commanders blamed the failure upon Rodes 's division for failing to give support.

The National colors were lost at Cemetery Hill but the 75<sup>th</sup> also captured a Rebel flag, most likely the 6<sup>th</sup> NC

(In a related action that day, George Nixon, III, 42, of Elk Twp in Vinton Co, great grandfather of Richard Nixon, and a member the 73<sup>rd</sup> OVI, was killed on Taneytown Road to the east of the 75<sup>th</sup>'s position. Musician Richard Enderlin was awarded the MOH for his attempts to rescue Nixon from the field of fire.)

**July 4, 1863** – The 75<sup>th</sup> mustered with 80 fewer effectives. Only two officers left. 96 soldiers from the 75<sup>th</sup> were captured at Gettysburg, the highest number of any Ohio regiment. The 75<sup>th</sup> helped to "liberate" Gettysburg. Barlow emerged from his safe house. The 75<sup>th</sup> together with the 25<sup>th</sup> are honored with two monuments at Gettysburg.

**August 6, 1863** – The 25<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, & 107<sup>th</sup> were transferred to the Department of the South near Charleston, SC. By that time the size of the regiment was reduced to 150 men.

**August 14, 1863** – Ft Wagner, SC – An isolated redoubt that was the principle land defense for Morris Island, defending Charleston

**August 19, 1863** – Morris Island, SC – It doesn't appear that the 75<sup>th</sup> was actually involved in this battle, which was the basis for the movie "Glory."

**December 1863** – 27,000 Federal troops were encamped on Morris and Folly Island as part of the siege of Charleston, SC.

**February 7, 1864** – Jacksonville, FL – The Federals occupied Jacksonville prior to the Battle of Olustee (Ocean Pond). Union forces intended to disrupt the movement of Confederate supplies, recruit Blacks, and help establish a pro-Union state government.<sup>30</sup> Feds marched 20 miles inland to Baldwin. Shortly after taking possession the Federals were hit hard and withdrew after taking heavy losses. Proportionately it was one of the bloodiest of the Civil War.<sup>31</sup> Again I can't find any reference to show that the 75<sup>th</sup> took part. After the battle of Olustee several wounded Black soldiers were either shot by Rebel soldiers or had legs needlessly amputated.<sup>32</sup>

**February 22, 1864** – The 75<sup>th</sup> was transferred to Florida where it became mounted infantry.

**April 18 to May 6, 1864** – Jacksonville, FL – Operated along Indian River

**July 21, 1864** – The last major action in the immediate vicinity of Jacksonville was launched. After a night march of 30 miles, the 75<sup>th</sup> destroyed the great railroad bridge over the South Fork of the Saint Mary's.<sup>33</sup> This was part of the operations that forced the Confederates to abandon Baldwin on July 26, and secured the Federal portions of Jacksonville for the remainder of the war.

**August 9, 1864** – Federal troops under MGen. John P. Hatch (USMA graduate, former Indian fighter and MOH recipient) began occupation of Magnolia, upriver from Jacksonville. The rich stores at Gainesville were a prime target. Col. William H.

Noble was in command of a brigade that included the 75<sup>th</sup> Ohio and the 17<sup>th</sup> Ct., Noble's old regiment.

**August 17, 1864 – Gainesville, FL** – Under the command of Col. Andrew L. Harris, tried to cut through a superior force but only partially succeeded. Apparently the 75<sup>th</sup> was surprised while looting private property at Gainesville.<sup>34</sup> Hatch issued a severe reprimand to Harris for allowing his men to pillage. 16 killed, 30 wounded, and 72 captured.

**August 20, 1864** – Ft Gaines, FL

**September 21, 1864** – Remnants of the 75<sup>th</sup> captured an entire company of 2<sup>nd</sup> Florida Cavalry along with horses, arms, etc.

**October 1864** – Three companies sent to Camp Chase to be mustered out.

**November 1864** – Three more companies mustered out.

**December 30, 1864** –Waldo, FL

**January 26, 1865** – Jacksonville, FL

**February 5, 1865** – Dunn's Lake, FL

**May 1865** – By this point the remnants of the 75<sup>th</sup> were reorganized into a veteran battalion under the command of Capt Wm. J. Rannells of Vinton County. Purportedly this battalion seized part of Jeff Davis' baggage (at Waldo?).

**July 15, 1865** – Tallahatchie, FL – 75<sup>th</sup> finally mustered out. The 75<sup>th</sup> fought in three of the four deadliest battles of the Eastern theater fought prior to being transferred south, missing only Antietam. Not only was the 75<sup>th</sup> engaged in such battles, but it was smack dab in the middle of three of the most dramatic events, Chancellorsville, Chinn Ridge, and Cemetery Hill, of the entire Civil War.

Because its most important battles were fought on the defensive side, and I suppose because it did not have a catchy nickname, the 75<sup>th</sup> never received the acclaim or fame of other regiments, and its record probably warrants much more research and recognition than certainly I've given it in these notes. But undoubtedly its home counties and the descendants of its soldiers have every reason to be proud of its many accomplishments.

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<sup>1</sup> Patchan, *supra*, pg 80

<sup>2</sup> Farwell, *supra*, pg 262 Patchan, *supra*, pg 13. McLean, an Ohio lawyer, was the son of John McLean the long serving U.S. Supreme Court Justice who wrote a blistering dissent in the *Drew Scot vs Sanford* case in 1857. As a result Justice McLean was adopted by Northern abolitionists as their champion. Nathaniel McLean had recruited and organized the 75<sup>th</sup> OVI.

<sup>3</sup> Alexander, *supra*, pg 84. While retreating up the Valley Jackson had hoped Richmond would send him reinforcements so that he would be able to initiate an invasion of Maryland, a dream Jackson had held almost since the beginning of the war. However shortly before reaching Port Republic Jackson received word that Richmond would not be providing the requested reinforcements.

<sup>4</sup> Farwell, *supra*, pg 318.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, pp 320-22.

<sup>6</sup> Alexander, *supra*, pg 86.

<sup>7</sup> Eicher, *supra*, pg 266.

<sup>8</sup> Patchan, *supra*, pg 9.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, pg 14.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, pp 14-15.

<sup>11</sup> Henry Hill and Henry House Hill are used interchangeably.

<sup>12</sup> Wert, *supra*, pg 177

<sup>13</sup> Alexander, *supra*, pg 201.

<sup>14</sup> Patchan, *supra*, pp 30-31

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, pg 37

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- 16 Patchan, *supra*, pg 43.  
17 *Ibid*, pg 48.  
18 *Ibid*, pg 52.  
19 Col. Fletcher Webster, the last surviving son of Daniel Webster, was another Chinn Ridge casualty, being mortally wounded as his regiment was being overrun by a Mississippi regiment.  
20 Taaffe, *supra*, pg 89.  
21 *Ibid*,pg 89  
22 Wert, *supra*, pg 221.  
23 Baumgartner, *supra*, pg 17  
24 Wert, *supra*, pg 239.  
25 Castle and Simpson, *supra*, pg 176.  
26 *Ibid*, pg 241.  
27 Guelzo, *supra*, pg 216.  
28 Bowden & Ward, *supra*, pg 515; Porter Alexander had a contrary opinion stating that “I think any attack we could have made that afternoon would have failed. ... Gen. Ewell thought the position too strong for assault, & Lee and Col. Long [an aide to Lee] agreed in this opinion.” *Supra*, pg 233.  
29 Trudeau, *supra*, pg 420.  
30 Claxton, Mark & Mark Puls. *Uncommon Valor: A Story of Race, Patriotism, and Glory in the Final Days of the Civil War* (2006) Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, pg 99.  
31 *Ibid*, pg 101.  
32 Schafer, *supra*, pp 188-89  
33 *Ibid*, pp 228-29.  
34 *Ibid*, pg 231.

*Some links:*

75<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry, Co A/Facebook [[https://www.facebook.com/75<sup>th</sup>ovi](https://www.facebook.com/75thovi)]

Recruiting – The 75<sup>th</sup> OVI [<http://www.75thOVI.net/3.html>]

75<sup>th</sup> OVI – Ohio in the Civil War [[www.OhioCivilWar.com/cw75.html](http://www.OhioCivilWar.com/cw75.html)]

Experience of a 75<sup>th</sup> Veteran [[www.OhioCivilWar.com/stori/75thstory.html](http://www.OhioCivilWar.com/stori/75thstory.html)]