The Road to Murfreesboro: The Eleventh Michigan Volunteer Infantry from Organization Through Its First Battle

Wayne C. Mann

Western Michigan University

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THE ROAD TO MURFREESBORO:
THE ELEVENTH MICHIGAN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY
FROM ORGANIZATION THROUGH ITS FIRST BATTLE

by
Wayne C. Mann

A thesis presented to the
Faculty of the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Master of Arts

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
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INTRODUCTION

This is a history of the Eleventh Michigan Volunteer Infantry. It was never a famous regiment; it never did much out of the ordinary, and participated in few major battles. If there is anything to distinguish this regiment, it is that it is not distinguished. What happened to the Eleventh Michigan happened to countless other regiments both North and South. In a sense a study of one regiment provides a study of all.

The Eleventh tried to be different. It almost caught John Hunt Morgan in Kentucky. At Murfreesboro it made a desperate charge to retake the Cedars. It was the first to march into the valley south of Chickamauga. It claimed to be the last to leave the Chickamauga battlefield, and that after dark. This regiment swore with its dying breath that it was the first to reach the top of Missionary Ridge. But try as it might, the Eleventh wasn't much different from its brother units.

In the years after the war, as one by one the veterans departed this life, the survivors began to sense their true place in history. They realized their single deeds meant nothing - that they had all been part of one massive army in which individual identification had been lost. And here was where they realized their importance. They were little people in a large army, but without the little people, there never would have been an army.

So the regimental reunions gradually became reunions for all the old soldiers. It was no longer really important what had been a
man's unit. Although the old men would still gather with their regimental comrades of the past, others were welcomed, until in time the reunions became simply the coming together of old soldiers.

All the men who fought the Civil War are now dead. In the last years of their lives, many of them sat down to write their memories. These accounts usually took the form of regimental histories, hundreds of which now gather dust on the shelves of our major libraries.

Today, if one finds a recently written regimental history, it is almost always because this particular unit was somehow noteworthy. But the Eleventh Michigan Infantry was not a famous unit, and no old soldier ever wrote its history. This account is an attempt to remedy that omission.

The Eleventh Michigan was originally known as Colonel May's Independent Regiment, and later was absorbed into the State forces. This paper is not a chronicle of its entire life. It examines the regiment's history from its birth in the spring of 1861 through the conclusion of its first major battle at Murfreesboro.

The Eleventh Michigan knew frustration. After its organization in early August, 1861, it waited more than sixteen months for its baptism of fire - sixteen months of agony and uncertainty as to how it would perform in battle. But when battle finally came it acquitted itself well, and brought great credit to Michigan.
CHAPTER I

IT WAS NOT EASY TO GET IN THE ARMY

The history of a regiment cannot start with the first recorded information about it. Its ancestry must be examined. Such is the case with the Eleventh Regiment Michigan Volunteer Infantry.

The beginnings of this regiment date from the firing upon Fort Sumter. This act of violence against the flag of the United States united previously divided Northern opinion; to the loyal people of the North, there was now one common goal toward which they could all strive. Somehow or other, and no matter what the cost, the Union must be saved. This over-riding determination was the driving force which resulted in the formation of the Eleventh Michigan.

On April 15, 1861, President Lincoln called upon the governors of the loyal states to furnish him with 75,000 three-month volunteers, and on May 3, for 42,000 to serve three years. No one in Washington or in any state capital was prepared for the overwhelming response to these calls. Northern enthusiasm brought in so many volunteers that the War and Treasury Departments were faced with the unexpected necessity of discouraging enlistments. It was not so much a question of how many would go to the fight, as who would get the chance.

In almost every sizable village or township, local military companies were formed. As soon as they had any semblance of organization, they would appeal for a place in the proposed regiments.
The state adjutant generals' offices were deluged with these requests; they had the difficult problem of deciding which companies to accept. The companies not chosen would clamor for the next chance. As one Wisconsin soldier put it, "We thought the rebellion would be over before our chance would come."¹

Most of the states filled their early regiments with existing militia companies. Each regiment required only ten companies, and Michigan's quota under the three-months call was one regiment. But even when the Second, Third, and Fourth Michigan regiments were formed after the call of May 3, there were many disappointed units.

Michigan's governor, Austin Blair, was a loyal Republican. He was quite willing to accept the volunteer companies as fast as they were offered. Unfortunately, the War Department did not support this policy. On May 11, 1861, Secretary of War Simon Cameron instructed Governor Blair to reduce the number of regiments then being formed. Cameron wrote: "Let me earnestly recommend to you, therefore, to call for no more than four regiments, of which only three are to serve for three years, or during the war; and if more are already called for, to reduce the number by discharge."²

Governor Blair did not follow the War Department's recommendations. Not sharing Secretary Cameron's belief that the war would require so few troops, the Governor took it upon himself to


recruit three additional regiments in addition to the required four. These three became the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Infantry.

Even with Blair's liberal policy, more companies were volunteering than there were regiments to accommodate them. The State Adjutant General's Office was compelled to spend much of its time deciding which companies to accept. The experiences of four companies will illustrate the frustration men encountered in their attempt to join the fight. Parts of these companies, and others like them, formed the nucleus of May's Independent Regiment, which would in turn become the Eleventh Michigan Volunteer Infantry.

In Three Rivers, Michigan, the President's first call arrived by telegraph on April 16, 1861. The wires had hardly stopped humming before Samuel Chadwick, lawyer, politician, and former officer in the Mexican War, was displaying the flag on the street. Confident that his help would be accepted, Chadwick at once began to organize a company. On April 18 he wrote to Governor Blair that he had forty men enrolled and would soon have a full company. He wanted to know what he should do with them. Receiving no response (the Governor was out of town), he wrote on April 22 to Adjutant General John Robertson at Detroit for instructions; his men were anxious. Robertson's office answered on April 24 that the two

3Ibid., p. 221.
regiments called for were already filled. But if Chadwick offered a full company later, it might be accepted.\(^5\)

Apparently no formal call was ever sent for the Three Rivers company. But when a call was sent to Constantine, Chadwick released his men to join that unit. Soon after he went to Washington to work as a clerk in the War Department.\(^6\)

On April 25 the Adjutant's office received a letter from William L. Stoughton, a Sturgis lawyer and captain of the local militia. He had a company, most of them new recruits, not drilled, but anxious for a chance. They had forty musketoons,\(^7\) unfortunately not in the best condition. Stoughton's letter was carried to the Adjutant General by Sergeant Homer H. Packard, who was empowered to answer any questions the General might ask.\(^8\)

Communication between Sturgis and Detroit was certainly fast, for on the next day Stoughton wrote to General Robertson that he was sorry to learn his company couldn't become a part of the first two regiments, but perhaps they might be needed later on.\(^9\) Time passed and no call came. On May 15 Stoughton telegraphed to ask if the Peninsula Guards would be accepted. He said he couldn't hold the

\(^5\)Heber LeFavour to Chadwick, Apr. 24, 1861, Ibid.


\(^7\)Musketoons are short muskets.

\(^8\)William L. Stoughton to Robertson, Apr. 25, 1861, Regimental Service Records.

\(^9\)Stoughton to Robertson, Apr. 26, 1861, Ibid.
company together much longer without some encouragement.\textsuperscript{10} Five
days later General Robertson accepted Stoughton's company in the new
Fourth regiment. For some reason Stoughton did not enter the service
with his company.\textsuperscript{11} Perhaps he was holding out for a higher rank than
captain.

At Quincy, Melvin Mudge was organizing a company. On July 22 he wrote: "A better Company of boys never was raised. If there is
or as soon as there is a place, give it to us and oblige the Quincy Rifles."\textsuperscript{12} The news of Bull Run must have reached him soon after,
for the next day he wrote: "Some of our brothers and neighbors of
this place were in the late battle and we must avenge their deaths.
Let us in if there is a possible chance."\textsuperscript{13}

Time passed and no chance came. On July 29 Mudge wrote
asking why his company couldn't be accepted: "A better set of men
never was brought to-gether. Tough hardy farmers all of them." He
complained that while he had received encouragement on a visit to
Detroit four weeks earlier, he hadn't heard anything since then.
"We think there will not be much chance for us for the fact that we
have no Ex Governor \textsuperscript{sic} or Congressman or any other wire working
politician to interceed \textsuperscript{sic} for us. Yet we did cast our vote for
Governor Blair ..."\textsuperscript{14} A few days later, Captain Mudge and his
Quincy Wolverines joined Colonel May's Independent Regiment.

\textsuperscript{10}Stoughton to Robertson, May 15, 1861, Ibid.
\textsuperscript{11}Michigan in the War, p. 222.
\textsuperscript{12}Melvin Mudge to Robertson, July 22, 1861, Regimental
Service Records.
\textsuperscript{13}Mudge to Robertson, July 23, 1861, Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14}Mudge to Robertson, July 29, 1861, Ibid.
Writing from Morenci on June 3, Sylvester B. Smith offered a company that had already found the Fourth Michigan full. The Morenci volunteers wanted to keep their organization and to be informed when new regiments were planned. On June 4 the Adjutant General advised Smith to keep up his organization for later call.

On June 18 Captain Smith wondered why he had not heard something when the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh regiments were being organized. Was there a place for his company in the Seventh? The Adjutant General's Office replied that the three regiments had the needed companies, and it was impossible to say whether more troops would be needed.

The persistent Captain Smith again wrote on June 24. He realized he had to be patient, that other men understood the situation better than he; nevertheless, the Morenci Guards did not feel they had been treated justly. If an eighth regiment was formed, they certainly expected to be part of it. Smith now offered the services of "... an excellent Brass Band ..., that would like an opportunity to go into one of the Regts as a Band. There are but few better in the country. They are uniformed in good style, Blue Broad Cloth frock Coats, Blue caps same style as the military fatigue caps."

On June 25, Captain Smith was told what specifications his

15Sylvester B. Smith to Robertson, June 3, 1861, Ibid.
16LeFavour to Smith, June 4, 1861, Ibid.
17Smith to Robertson, June 18, 1861, Ibid.
18D. Garmon Jones to Smith, June 19, 1861, Ibid.
19Smith to Robertson, June 24, 1861, Ibid.
company must meet. It must have one captain, one first lieutenant, one second lieutenant, one first sergeant, four sergeants, eight corporals, two musicians, with between sixty-four and eighty-two privates. The muster roll must state the rank and age of each commissioned and non-commissioned officer, the date and place of enlistment of each volunteer, and show the captain's certification of the correctness of the roll.20

The prospects seemed brighter. Smith sent his muster roll on July 6, commenting that he could have done this sooner, but hadn't thought it necessary since other companies had been accepted with hardly enough men to fill the officer positions. Since he had fulfilled the requirements, he certainly expected to be "reckoned in" when the next regiment was called.21 After more than three weeks with no word, Smith lost patience with the Adjutant General's Office. On July 31 he wrote to Governor Blair that friends in the county were signing a petition asking that his company be accepted.22 The Morenci Guards changed their name to the Hudson Riflemen, and were accepted by May's Regiment.

In all of these and other cases, impatience marks the recruiters. These men couldn't wait to get their companies in the army. Most of them believed that the fight would be over before they had a chance at glory.

While Captain Smith's friends were signing their petition,

20 Jones to Smith, June 25, 1861, Ibid.
21 Smith to Robertson, June 6, 1861, Ibid.
22 Smith to Austin Blair, July 31, 1861, Ibid.
Governor Blair was getting the unlimited authorization he had long needed. During July Congress had given Lincoln the power to enlist 500,000 instead of 42,000 three-year volunteers. Michigan's quota under these laws was large enough to absorb all who were asking for a chance. But the machinery of government was running too slowly, and to men like Mudge and Smith the delay was unbearable. If the Governor couldn't help them right away, then they would go elsewhere. If the State couldn't authorize their regiments, they would have them anyway. And so May's Independent Regiment was born.
"No better opportunity to enlist has yet been offered."

Since state regiments had more than enough men to fill their ranks, many leaders of local militia tried to have their groups recognized as independent units by the War Department. What might have been the outcome of these efforts cannot be known, because independent units were discontinued in September, 1861. Apparently an independent regiment was organized to join a particular army. Presumably such a unit would accept men from all parts of the country; in practice, recruiting was usually limited to the area adjacent to its rendezvous. This was true of the proposed independent regiment in St. Joseph County, Michigan.

Samuel Chadwick, later adjutant of the regiment, had been called to Washington to work as a clerk in the office of Secretary of War Simon Cameron. On August 4, 1861, there appeared in Chadwick's office Dr. S. L. Herrick of Three Rivers, Michigan, who told him William J. May of White Pigeon wished to raise a regiment. Chadwick, who approved of May, obtained authorization for the regiment, and instructions were immediately telegraphed to Colonel May by Secretary Cameron.¹

¹Reporter, Aug. 21, 1869, p. 1. Stoughton in a letter to Robertson, Apr. 28, 1880, refers to this article: "I enclose you printed history of the 11th as desired. I have penciled out some of it which were interpolated by Adj. Chadwick." As Stoughton's edited copy is missing, it is not known whether he was referring
On August 14, 1861, this notice appeared in a Three Rivers paper:

We are informed that Col. Wm. J. May, of White Pigeon, so well and favorably known to the travelling public as proprietor of the White Pigeon Dining House, is making an effort to raise an independent regiment to serve under Gen. Fremont, in the West. He has enlisted the names of over five hundred volunteers from the villages of Sturgis, White Pigeon, Constantine, and the surrounding country.²

With his authorization from the War Department, Colonel May began recruiting in earnest. At first he confined his efforts to St. Joseph County; then, after the first rush of enthusiasm, he reached into the surrounding area in southern Michigan. Although his regiment ultimately included men from several southern counties, it was recruited chiefly from St. Joseph County. Of its ten companies, three came from that county, and most of the remaining seven reported at the rendezvous so under strength that their ranks were filled with local men. When the regiment left for the south, its rolls bore 610 names from St. Joseph County.³ The company organization was as follows:

Company A, St. Joseph County Guards of Centreville, St. Joseph County, Captain David Oakes.

Company B, Quincy Wolverines of Quincy, Branch County, Captain Melvin Mudge.

to this particular incident as related by Chadwick. In the face of strong evidence that Stoughton did not have a good opinion of his adjutant, and that Chadwick's influence in securing appointment for Colonel May is not verified elsewhere, the story merits further investigation. Stoughton to Robertson, Apr. 28, 1880, Regimental Service Records.


Company C, Sturgis Light Guards of Sturgis, St. Joseph County, Captain Calvin Hood.
Company D, Bronson Guards of Bronson, Branch County, Captain Benjamin Bennet.
Company E, Three Rivers Light Guard of Three Rivers, St. Joseph County, Captain Henry Spencer.
Company F, Hudson Riflemen (formerly Morenci Guards) of Hudson, Lenawee County, Captain Sylvester Smith.
Company G, Schoolcraft Rifle Rangers of Schoolcraft, Kalamazoo County, Captain Charles Moase.
Company H, Coldwater Tigers of Coldwater, Branch County, Captain John Hackstaff.
Company I, Chandler Horse Guards of Monroe, Monroe County, Captain Nelson Chamberlain.
Company K, Lenawee Lions of Adrian, Lenawee County, Captain William Phillips.4

Colonel May was authorized to raise a battery of artillery in addition to an infantry regiment. This battery of six pieces was organized by Captain John Andrews of Coldwater and was known as the Coldwater Flying Artillery.5 It later became Battery F, First Michigan Light Artillery.6

In the first weeks of August, 1861, Colonel May's Independent Regiment began to take shape. Volunteers enlisted at eight different offices in St. Joseph County. According to The Three Rivers Reporter, an "unprecedented number" came forward.7 The war was young and


5Chronicle, Sept. 25, 1861, p. 3. This article clearly states that Andrew's Battery was encamped at White Pigeon.

6Andrew's Battery is credited with being organized at Coldwater, and left for Kentucky, March 3, 1862. Battery D under Captain Alonzo F. Bidwell is reported to have been organized with the Eleventh Infantry, and left its rendezvous at Coldwater for Kentucky, Dec. 9, 1861. Michigan in the War, pp. 526-27, 529. Apparently at one time or another, two artillery units were involved in the organization of May's regiment.

7Reporter, Aug. 8, 1861, p. 3.
enthusiasm was high. In their shock and indignation after Manassas, the people of southern Michigan, as elsewhere in the North, were in no mood to allow the southern states to destroy their beloved Union. If the battle of Manassas accomplished anything, it awoke these people to the reality and imminent danger of the threat. The men who joined May's Independent Regiment were the true 1861 volunteers. They joined simply because they believed it their duty to defend the Nation's honor and preserve the Union. At the time they enlisted, they expected only their pay as a soldier, which for many was less than they made as civilians. The issue of slavery was to them of minor importance; a regiment raised to free the slaves would have brought few recruits in Michigan. The only issue was the Union.

Recruiting was handled in different ways. Usually a local citizen of repute would announce his intention to organize a company. Since this involved expense, it was usually understood that he would be elected captain of the company when it was mustered into service. It was necessary to advertise to induce recruits into the ranks. One method was to print handbills announcing the new company and distribute them freely. Another was to secure favorable publicity in local newspapers. Thus, readers of The Three Rivers Reporter learned that:

There are a number of important considerations tending to induce volunteers from this section to join the Three Rivers Company Col. May's regiment. They will be in the ranks with those they are best acquainted with; have surgical and medical attendants whose reputations are well established in their own neighborhood, and officers whom they have known for years; while the facility with which communication may be had to and from friends at home will be reliable and direct. No better opportunity to enlist has yet been offered. Office of enlist-
Knowing that men would respond most favorably to the personal appeal, the organizer used public meetings to present his case. On the platform, or near it would be seated the town dignitaries, the local band, future company or regimental officers, and, if possible, several privates who had already enlisted. The audience would hear several strong patriotic speeches, the soul-stirring martial music of the band, and, if they were lucky, a talk by some man with military experience. Seldom would these efforts fail. The close of the meeting would find the company officers happily in the possession of several new names for their muster roll.

An especially active recruiter was County Treasurer David Oakes, with his St. Joseph County Guards. Forming his company at Centreville, he traveled to several small county towns. For example:

A meeting was held at Parkville, on Monday evening, for the purpose of raising recruits for Col. May's Independent Regiment. The occasion was enlivened by the presence of Capt. Oaks [sic] with several members of his Company, and Martial Music. The meeting was addressed by Drs. Beck and Howard, and Messrs. Oaks, Crossett and others. Several names were added to the Muster Roll. The feeling throughout the county is decidedly in favor of having Col. May's Regiment, at the disposition of the War Department in as short time as possible. Meetings are being held all over the county. A meeting was held in Cass County last night, which was attended by several persons from Three Rivers.

One of the best recruiting speakers was Benjamin G. Bennet of Burr Oak. As a first sergeant in the First Michigan Infantry, he had taken part in the battle at Manassas. People who came to hear

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8Ibid., Aug. 17, 1861, p. 3.
9Ibid.
10Chronicle, Aug. 21, 1861, p. 3.
him expected a first hand account of the war in which they were about to take part. At Constantine, on August 31:

Pursuant to notice, there was a public meeting held at Case's Hall, in this village, on Saturday evening last. The meeting came together at seven o'clock and was organized by electing B. G. Bennet, chairman, and L. T. Hull, secretary. Hon. H. H. Riley addressed the meeting upon the matters now agitating the country and the duty of all loyal citizens in the present exigency. He was followed by B. G. Bennet, who gave a brief and graphic account of the battle of Bull's Run, July 28th {sic}, at which he was present and an actor. His remarks were listened to with the utmost attention. At the conclusion he made a statement of the facts relative to Col. May's commission from the U. S. War Department to raise an independent regiment. That it was a reality, and could not fail of being filled up if the people acted in as good faith and as earnestly as the War Department and Col. May were acting.11

August recruiting brought such good results that by early September public meetings were dropped. Most of the local companies were full, or nearly so, and could rely upon less elaborate practices to fill their ranks. When word went around that Captain Bennet's company lacked a few men, The Three Rivers Western Chronicle came to his aid:

We understand that Capt. Bennett [sic] - "Grove Bennett" - wants a few more good men in his company. Everybody knows "Grove," and hence it is useless for us to say anything in his favor. We apprehend that when his friends (and their name is "legion") throughout the county know that he wants a few men, they will be forthcoming. "Grove" is "one of 'em" and has been through the mill - he was at Bull Run; yet as he avers, he was not one of the Running Bulls, although he gave some good specimens of tall walking.12

Should the humorous approach fail, the patriotic appeal could be expected to produce results. In late September, when Calvin

12Chronicle, Sept. 11, 1861, p. 3.
Hood was completing his company, The Sturgis Journal exhorted:

Capt. Hood, of the Sturgis Guard, Col. May's Regiment, informs us that he wants ten or twelve more industrious and able-bodied young men to fill up his ranks. Young men, now is the time to serve your country. She has need of your services and it is your duty to obey her call. You can never serve a better cause; can never fall, if fall you must, in a more glorious struggle, a struggle for the maintenance of the liberty our fathers established. Let it not be said that our Government was dismembered and broken in pieces for the lack of men, but come up to its support against the mighty, and united strike a blow at the traitor's heart that will toll the death nell [sic] of treason.

And The Journal reminded its readers that any person joining the company would draw pay from August 24.13

With the ranks of the companies rapidly filling, it was necessary to select an assembly point for the regiment. The village of White Pigeon was chosen, apparently for no other reason than that it was the only town with a building large enough to accommodate about 1000 men. The first company to reach the rendezvous was the Quincy Wolverines, who left Quincy on August 22.14 Most of the units arrived in September. The last to be assigned the regiment was the Chandler Horse Guards, who left Monroe on October 5.15

When a company left its home town the citizens would do their best to give them a grand send off. Nothing was too good for the home-town boys on their way to preserve the Union. Everyone had relatives or close friends who would be leaving, and though they did

---

not then realize how long the war would last, they sensed that some
would not be coming back. When the Centreville company left, it
traveled to White Pigeon by way of Constantine. On September 2, The
Constantine Mercury noted that:

Capt. David Oakes' Company, from Centreville, went into
rendezvous at Camp Goodwin, White Pigeon, on Monday last, with,
as we are informed, one hundred and sixteen men. On their way
they paid our village a visit. They were in wagons, accompanied
by a large number of their friends and neighbors, and with their
banners and two good bands of music made a sight worth seeing.
The Company is made up of the very best material - strong, robust
men, used to labor - they will go into camp and be easily trans­
formed into the very best soldiers. The size and apparent
strength of the men was the admiration of everyone.16

When the Three Rivers Light Guard marched to the railroad depot on
September 9, they were accompanied by a large crowd of relatives and
friends, then escorted to White Pigeon by the Three Rivers band, which
did its best to enliven the occasion with good music.17

The numbers at White Pigeon continued to increase until by
September 28 over 700 had arrived.18 By October 19 there were more
than 1200 in camp, including 150 in the artillery company.19 There­
after the number in camp remained about the same; new recruits con­
tinued to arrive, but others were discharged as unfit for military
duty.20

In the fall of 1861, as throughout the war, the organization

16Mercury, Sept. 5, 1861, p. 3.
17Chronicle, Sept. 11, 1861, p. 3.
18Reporter, Sept. 28, 1861, p. 3.
19Ibid., Oct. 19, 1861, p. 2.
20William J. May to Robertson, Nov. 8, 1861, Regimental
Service Records.
of volunteer troops was under the control of the governors of the respective states. Since each state received credit for the number of men it furnished, a governor was naturally anxious to retain control of all recruitment within his state. Governor Austin Blair looked with displeasure upon the rapid organization of May's Independent Regiment, for Michigan would not get credit for their service. Apparently Blair tried to slow down the organization of May's and other independent units, so that his own State regiments would have a better chance of filling their ranks. Many in St. Joseph County, failing to see the real motive behind the Governor's action, resented it.

This problem of Michigan's governor was shared by the governors of other northern states. Collectively they pressured the War Department into modifying its policy. By General Orders No. 78, of September 28, 1861, the War Department placed all volunteer regiments, batteries, and companies under the governors of the States in which they were organized.²¹ This transfer of authority caused no changes in May's Independent Regiment. Its company organization and staff appointments continued as before. The only difference was that the regiment now received its orders from the State Adjutant General's Office and its commissions from the Governor, instead of from the Secretary of War. Yet the dispute over authority probably delayed

²¹Michigan Historical Commission Archives (Lansing), Records of the Michigan Military Establishment (Records Group 59-14), General and Special Orders Issued from Adjutant General's Office, March 16, 1861 to September 15, 1866, General Orders No. 101, Oct. 16, 1861. General Orders No. 78 from the War Department was incorporated in General Orders No. 101. Cited hereafter as General and Special Orders.
the formation of the regiment by at least one month.\textsuperscript{22}

Michigan regiments were not given numbers until their formation was nearly enough complete that they would likely soon take to the field. Thus, although Colonel May's regiment came under State control on September 28, it was not until October 11 that it was officially designated the Eleventh Regiment Michigan Infantry.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{22}\textit{Mercury}, Dec. 12, 1861, p.2.

\textsuperscript{23}\textit{General Orders No. 92, Oct. 11, 1861, General and Special Orders}. 
"Those who bear it hence will never return with it dishonored."

The camp of the Eleventh Infantry was originally called Camp Goodwin. After the arrival of United States Mustering Officer Captain Harvey Tilden, it was renamed in his honor. Camp Tilden was located immediately south of the village of White Pigeon, where the roundhouse and railroad yards of the Michigan Southern Railroad were located. On the south side of the track a car-house 640 feet long was used as sleeping quarters for the entire regiment. To the north and across the tracks was the railroad eating house, now converted into the regiment's "victualing department." The use of these buildings with their adjacent grounds was donated by Superintendent Campbell of the Michigan Southern Railroad. Camp Tilden was called the "best and healthiest in the state."¹ A visiting editor wrote that:

Messrs. Shurtz, Laird and Wallis have the contract for feeding and lodging the men, and from all we have seen and can learn, are giving the very best satisfaction. The tables are loaded with good, substantial, well cooked food, neatly prepared and arranged. The lodgings are in buildings temporarily fitted up for the purpose, and are comfortable. Those who lodged upon the State fair ground at Detroit last Spring, think the lodgings at White Pigeon luxurious.²

Nearly all the men who arrived at White Pigeon were

¹Chronicle, Sept. 11, 1861, p. 3.
²Mercury, Sept. 26, 1861, p. 3.
encountering military life for the first time, and they found the experience enjoyable. The wide meadows and cool woodlands, the quiet little village next to the camp, were scarcely different from the towns and farms they had left. Although their car-house sleeping quarters resembled a huge, drafty barn, the weather was pleasant enough, and sleeping was comfortable. These men had a difficult time believing they were soldiers. There was little to indicate that Camp Tilden was anything but a large gathering of men. Uniforms, guns, tents, and other military items were in decidedly short supply.

They had, indeed, almost nothing but their willingness to go to war. In the entire Eleventh Michigan Infantry, few men had had any military training. The mustering officer, Captain Tilden, was the only regular army man in camp, and his time was taken up with paper work. The future adjutant, Samuel Chadwick, had been a lieutenant in the Mexican War, but he was spending his time recruiting. In the ranks, apparently only one man had had significant military experience. He was Private Robert Anderson of Company I, who had served twenty-one years in the British Army and two in that of the United States.3

Drill began as soon as the men arrived. Though they did not have muskets or uniforms, they did have legs, and William L. Stoughton saw to it that they used them. Company and regimental drill were almost daily events. With inexperienced officers and men, one can imagine that their early trials with intricate marching maneuvers must have been interesting. The War Department's pocket-sized book

U. S. Infantry & Rifle Tactics was a coveted prize for the officer lucky enough to find one.

Through early September, Camp Tilden was a pleasant adventure. Hardly a day passed but what new men would arrive, or rumors spread through the camp about orders to leave for the south, or about orders to stay, or about equipment soon to arrive. First Sergeant Walter Hoisington thought "everything was somewhat mixed up."\(^4\)

On September 16, Colonel May was ordered to detach three hundred men from his regiment to fill up regiments that had been stalemated in their recruiting. Naturally the Colonel protested, and the three hundred were cut to eighty. The regiment was assembled, the facts related to the men, and volunteers met this reduced quota. At 11:30 on the morning of September 17 these men were escorted to the station by the entire regiment, who watched them board the cars for Cleveland. There they joined Stockton's Independent Regiment.\(^5\)

On the afternoon of that day the regiment was assembled to elect its officers. Not unexpectedly the vote was unanimous for William J. May as colonel and William L. Stoughton as lieutenant-colonel. Colonel May was known to all as the popular proprietor of the White Pigeon Railroad Dining Hall. He was a former member of the Pennsylvania Legislature, and had some military experience. The Constantine Mercury said:

Lieut. Col. Stoughton has resided in this county for the last ten years, during which he has enjoyed the full confidence of the

\(^4\)Chronicle, Sept. 18, 1861, p. 3.

people, as evidenced by the oft times he has been called to stations of honor and trust. He is now U. S. District Attorney. He has for some years paid considerable attention to military matters, and is we believe well posted in infantry tactics. Diligent, preserving and determined, he will be a competent and popular officer. ⁶

Elected also that day were Major Benjamin F. Doughty, Quartermaster Addison I. Drake, and Adjutant Germain H. Mason. ⁷ Adjutant Mason was not mustered with the regiment, and his place was taken by Samuel Chadwick. The other staff officers at organization were Surgeon William N. Elliott, Assistant Surgeon Justin C. Elliott, and Chaplain Holmes A. Pattison. ⁸ About Mr. Pattison The Chronicle noted that he "... is just the man for the place, is well versed in theology and military science, and being stout and healthy is prepared if necessary to fight as well as pray." ⁹

One of the greatest problems in the volunteer regiments was the maintenance of discipline. This was especially true of regiments from the western states, where most of the men were products of a frontier environment that encouraged individualism. Accustomed to running their own lives, it was difficult for them to learn to obey commands of officers who a few weeks before had been their neighbors. To make matters worse, because the training camp was so close to their homes, the soldiers were constantly plaguing their officers for leaves. Walther Hoisington thought that if they could only move to some place several hundred miles away to finish their

⁶Mercury, Sept. 19, 1861, p. 3.
⁷Ibid.
⁹Chronicle, Nov. 13, 1861, p. 3.
About the middle of September an incident occurred which increased the respect of the men for their officers. For several days the soldiers had seen a sign over the washroom near the entrance to the eating house: "No soldiers allowed to wash here." This seemingly unreasonable prohibition caused much resentful talk. Finally the truth was learned:

It happened that when one of the officers began washing himself in the washroom of the Eating House, he noticed upon one of the towels, one of those "animals" that sometimes infest the uncombed heads. And when the men found that the officers were so very careful of them, as to not let them go near infections of this kind, their confidence and regard for their officers increased amazingly.11

In late September a cannon arrived at Camp Tilden. This first visible sign of the arms they were anxiously expecting excited a good deal of interest. On October 1, this cannon was fired several times in anticipation of the arrival of Governor Blair, who, unfortunately, failed to appear.12

On Thursday, October 3, the camp again prepared for the Governor. Certain he would arrive this time, the men hurried to the woods, secured the best pole they could find, planted it, and from it unfurled their best flag. The cannon was polished bright, guards placed to keep the walks clear, and the windows filled with ladies to cheer the Governor. The men donned their boots, put on clean collars, combed their hair, and took their places in line. The

10Ibid., Oct. 2, 1861, p. 3.
11Ibid.
12Ibid., Oct. 9, 1861, p. 2.
officers were with their companies. The field officers sat perfectly aligned in their saddles. The train arrived without the Governor.\(^\text{13}\)

A sudden shower forced the regiment into the mess hall, where
the men were somewhat mollified by the Sturgis Presbyterian Sabbath School teachers and scholars, come to present a sword to Captain Calvin Hood. The regiment gave three cheers for the Captain, three for the Sabbath School, and three for themselves.

Then Judge Wilson of Hillsdale was called to the stand and
made a very eloquent and patriotic speech - spoke highly of the officers and privates of the Regiment, - spoke much in praise of Capt. Hood as a citizen, and said he would make a brave and efficient officer. - Rev. Mr. Fuller was then called to the floor. He had unbounded confidence in the soldiery of Michigan, spoke highly of the Regiment as men of intelligence and integrity . . . , Mr. Dickinson of Hillsdale was called to the floor. He made a stirring patriotic speech - short, pithy and full of zeal.\(^\text{14}\)

When Governor Blair finally visited the camp five days later, on October 8, the regiment was put through its drill by Lieutenant Colonel Stoughton, reviewed by Colonel May and the Governor, then formed into a hollow square to hear the Governor speak. He assured them that he had the best interests of the regiment at heart and that he was in no way unfriendly to their efforts to complete their organization. He knew the men were among the finest the State had to offer, and called upon them to do their best when they met the enemy.\(^\text{15}\) That evening the Governor and his regimental entourage journeyed to Three Rivers, where he spoke to a large and enthusiastic crowd at Kelsey's Hall.\(^\text{16}\)

\(^\text{13}\)\text{Reporter, Oct. 12, 1861, p. 31.}\n
\(^\text{14}\)\text{Ibid.}\n
\(^\text{15}\)\text{Journal, Oct. 10, 1861, p. 2.}\n
\(^\text{16}\)\text{Mercury, Oct. 9, 1861, p. 3.}\n
Early in October the Michigan Southern Railroad announced that on Saturday, October 12, a "Grand Picnic Railroad Excursion" would travel to White Pigeon to see May's Independent Regiment. Several days were spent by the ladies in preparing pies, cakes, and other refreshments. On the day of the great event, sixteen passenger cars arrived from the east and fourteen from the west, so jammed that many excursionists rode on the tops of the coaches. Others came by teams and on foot. Perhaps 5,000 people gathered that day at White Pigeon, the largest number that town had ever seen. Yet on what should have been a joyous occasion, many of the men were unhappy and embarrassed: their uniforms had not arrived, and their civilian clothing was becoming ragged.17

The lack of uniforms and equipment was becoming serious. The Eleventh Michigan never had found it difficult in obtaining men, housing, food, or adequate grounds, or anything that could be furnished by the townspeople. The very things the regiment needed to go to war were the things they did not have. Their situation was not unique; it was shared by virtually every regiment, North and South. The country was simply not prepared for a war of such magnitude. By scrounging around most of the states had found enough of the necessary items to equip their first three-months volunteers; now, in the late summer of 1861, the shortage had become acute.

Michigan's procurement problem was like that of other states. As soon as a regiment was organized, the Adjutant General's Office

17Chronicle, Oct. 16, 1861, p. 3.
at Detroit would appeal to the War Department for the necessary equipment. The speed with which this material arrived would depend upon its availability and the efficiency of those in charge. The real miracle was that the material was supplied at all.

At last, on Monday, September 23, Camp Tilden received 800 army blankets.¹⁸ Their distribution on the following day raised the morale of a regiment that was beginning to think it was forgotten.¹⁹ The early fall weather already had touches of cold and these blankets were sorely needed. But 800 were not enough for a regiment fast approaching the 1000 mark, the people of the area sent their own blankets to relieve the shortage.²⁰

Happily a letter from the War Department soon announced that full equipment was on the way. For several days afterwards each train arriving at White Pigeon was met by a group of expectant soldiers in search of uniforms.²¹ The uniforms had been sent, but they were lost among the supplies piling up at Pittsburgh.²² When they were finally located, The Reporter wrote:

The uniforms of the Independent Regiment have at last been dug out of the immense mountain of freight which had accumulated at Pittsburgh by reason of some obstruction of the railroad. We will venture an opinion there never was a gladder set of fellows than these when the long-expected and anxiously looked for cars containing the woolen freight hove in sight.²³

¹⁸Mercury, Sept. 26, 1861, p. 3.
¹⁹Chronicle, Oct. 2, 1861, p. 3.
²⁰Ibid., Oct. 9, 1861, p. 3.
²¹Ibid.
²²Mercury, Oct. 17, 1861, p. 3.
²³Reporter, Oct. 26, 1861, p. 3.
When the uniforms came on Saturday, October 19, it was discovered that there were trousers only for the officers, and a reporter wrote "If no more trousers come, the regiment may be very respectably uniformed a la highlander."\(^{24}\)

The days went by after this premature rejoicing and still no new shipments came. Impatient, Colonel May wrote to General Robertson on November 9, asking him to look into the clothing situation.\(^{25}\) Robertson's office found that a government contractor at Philadelphia had failed to complete his order. The State then arranged with Messrs. Sykes and Company of Detroit to supply the missing equipment.\(^{26}\) Towards the end of November, the remaining uniforms, canteens, haversacks, and other items reached Camp Tilden.\(^{27}\) The uniform was a large overcoat, a dress coat with brass shoulder scales which the men called frying pans, pants, two pairs of drawers, a vest, two shirts, socks, shoes, forage cap, and a tall stiff black felt hat embellished with a plume. It was called "... the handsomest and most comfortable uniform yet furnished."\(^{28}\)

But the soldiers still lacked muskets. Of all necessary items, the State's supply of firearms was perhaps the least adequate.

\(^{24}\)Mercury, Oct. 24, 1861, p. 2.

\(^{25}\)May to Robertson, Nov. 9, 1861, Regimental Service Records.

\(^{26}\)Chronicle, Nov. 9, 1861, p. 3.

\(^{27}\)Ibid., Dec. 4, 1861, p. 3.

Consequently, General Robertson did not forward muskets to a regiment until he was sure it would soon be leaving for the front. This policy caused consternation at Camp Tilden, where men had been drilling without weapons for three months in exercises requiring weapons.

On November 22 General Robertson ordered that a thousand muskets and accessories be forwarded to the Eleventh Regiment. These arms arrived early on Tuesday, November 26, and were distributed the same morning. The make and model of these guns cannot be determined by the inadequate evidence available. A Branch County history refers to Belgian and other muskets of poor quality. Sergeant Borden Hicks identified them as Belgians. A photograph of Melvin J. Lyon, Company D, which was taken during the early months of the war, shows him with an Austrian musket. It is safe to state that these arms were of foreign make and approximately .69 caliber.

At the war’s beginning, both North and South had realized at once that the supply of arms was not adequate, and that domestic production could not supply the demand for many months to come. Both governments sent agents to Europe to buy arms. These men, their pockets stuffed with money, usually found them. Unfortunately, the merchandise they bought was not always the best.

For many years the standard weapon of most world armies had

29Special Orders No. 29, Nov. 22, 1861, General and Special Orders.
30Chronicle, Dec. 4, 1861, p. 3.
31History of Branch County, Michigan, p. 66.
32Hicks, p. 522.
33Photograph in the possession of the author.
been a smoothbore musket of approximately .69 caliber. Since all armies were similarly armed, this weapon was considered adequate. During the early 1850's the situation changed when most armies adopted a rifled arm of about .58 caliber. Rifled weapons had been in use before, but their loading had required the use of a patched bullet, a time-consuming process. Then two French captains, Minie and Tamasier, developed a conical bullet which could be loaded easily and quickly in a rifled barrel without the use of a patch. The resulting change-over in weapons left European countries with large numbers of obsolete muskets which they were only too glad to sell to the American agents.

Probably the men of the Eleventh were proud to have their foreign muskets, for they were evidence that they had at last become soldiers. But their first experience with cleaning and firing these weapons must have raised doubts of their effectiveness in battle. For these Belgian and Austrian muskets were heavy, cumbersome, and usually quite dirty from long storage. Some could not even be fired. And as for the ones that could be fired, an Illinois colonel said he could always tell which of his Belgians had fired by noting which men were lying flat on the ground. The colonel added:

One of these Belgian muskets will kick like a mule, and burst with the greatest facility. Several soldiers in our Illinois regiments have been killed in this way. The bayonet, too, is a novelty - a soft iron affair, apparently designed to coil round

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the enemy, as it is introduced, thus taking him prisoner.\textsuperscript{35}

When the Eleventh had more practice with these muskets, opinions were freely expressed. One soldier wrote: "Our guns are miserable things, and our regiment would be disgraced were they to go into action with them. - About one-eighth of the entire number are utterly useless."\textsuperscript{36} A sergeant said they feared the gun more than they did the Rebels. The buck and ball load did not always hit the target, but the recoil was sure to strike the man firing the musket.\textsuperscript{37} That his was not just the opinion of private soldiers is shown by Captain Bennet's comment:

The guns with which our regiment is armed are miserable things - absolutely good for nothing. The men have no confidence in them, and if called into action would be loth to stand fire where they knew there was not an even show. For my part, I hope we shall not go into battle until we get better arms.\textsuperscript{38}

With a soldier's training at Camp Tilden came his first realization of the responsibilities of army life. At some time or other most men wished they had never enlisted. Most of them complained and stayed on. But a few cut their military ties. In its three year history there were thirty-nine desertions in the Eleventh, twenty-seven of which occurred before they left Michigan.\textsuperscript{39} The first to leave were Isaac Holland and Orrin Simmons, both of Company


\textsuperscript{36}Journal, Jan.16, 1862, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{37}Hicks, p. 522. The buck and ball load was the normal charge of powder, and the normal round lead ball sized to the diameter of the bore, topped by three lead balls sized about half the diameter of the bore. The intention was to increase destructive power.

\textsuperscript{38}Journal, Feb. 6, 1862, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{39}Record, Eleventh Michigan Infantry, passim.
The only incident of mass desertion was on October 1, when six men of Company K departed. Relatively, however, the Eleventh never had a desertion problem.

A greater potential trouble was that many men were of minor age. As early as September 10 a private in Company B secured his discharge on the grounds that he was a minor. After two more had left in this fashion, the trick was tried on Captain Bennet, who exploded. Henry Twiford, age nineteen years, had voluntarily joined Bennet's company. His parents soon visited Bennet, and asked him to be kind to their son, for he was a good boy. And because Henry could not write, they asked the Captain to write them occasionally to report on their son's health. Bennet readily agreed. He should have asked for written permission to retain the boy. Two months later the parents tried to have Henry released on a writ of habeas corpus. Bennet wrote to Detroit, relating the facts and asking for instructions, and reminding General Robertson that this issue would have to be settled at once, since nearly half of the regiment was under twenty-one. No record has been found of Robertson's reply, but it is significant that Henry Twiford remained a soldier, and that only one other man was ever released from the regiment by this method.

40 Ibid., pp. 50, 85.
41 Ibid., pp. 11, 12, 28, 32, 48, 81.
42 Ibid., pp. 9, 51, 60.
43 Benjamin Bennet to Robertson, Nov. 9, 1861, Regimental Service Records.
44 Record, Eleventh Michigan Infantry, pp. 47, 96.
Thus, a few left without permission, and some were released by court order, but most of the men stuck it out. They had enlisted to fight, and they were determined to stay until they had. Their biggest worry was that they might never get that chance. Most of them had joined in August and had come to White Pigeon in early September. They had expected that by the end of September at the latest they would be on their way. Toward the end of November they were still at Camp Tilden. The reason was the shortage of equipment, but all that the boys in camp knew was that they weren't going anywhere. Their sleeping quarters were satisfactory as long as the weather was good, but with the cold and rain of November life became pretty miserable. Repairs could not keep the cold and dampness out of the car-house. Most of the men had a blanket, but, as one soldier wrote, "One blanket to cover a man up such nights as we have had, does not amount to much when he wants three or four heavy quilts to keep him warm at home in a tight room." 45 Men began to have colds and fevers, and with more than a thousand living in the same building, it was impossible to prevent the spread of these ailments. That they were usually of a minor nature was of little comfort to George Grather of Company A, whose death from fever on October 19 was the first in the regiment. 46

It was little wonder that spirits were depressed at Camp Tilden. For some time the local papers had reported that May's

45 *Chronicle*, Dec. 4, 1861, p. 3.
46 *Register In Roll Company A, White Pigeon, Aug. 24, 1861, Regimental Service Records.*
regiment was full and ready to leave. But as week after week brought no change, a note of impatience crept into these items, even doubt that their fine regiment was wanted. On November 28 the Constantine paper reported the rumor that the Eleventh was to be disbanded, and commented that it was certainly a shame that the efforts of so many people should be wasted when the country was desperately in need of men.47 Captain Hackstaff used the pages of The Reporter for a stinging rebuke to this rumor.48 Yet no matter how strong the denials, doubt was creeping into the thoughts of many men. Optimists were saying not to worry, but the regiment was still at Camp Tilden, and there were no signs of preparations to leave. Then, when doubts were deepest, the muskets came, and then the flag, and suddenly things didn't look so bad after all.

The night Governor Blair spoke in Three Rivers, officers with him had suggested a stand of colors for the regiment.49 Collections were started in the county, and a flag was ordered from Detroit. Early in November the flag arrived in Three Rivers and was placed on display.50

47Mercury, Nov. 28, 1861, p. 2.
49Ibid., Oct. 12, 1861, p. 3.
50The flag was described as "... a most beautiful specimen of workmanship, and perfect in its construction. It is made of red and white ribbon, with a blue field which contains thirty-five stars. It is attached to a staff by ribbons alternately red, white and blue, which is mounted by a globe, upon which is perched the American Eagle. The flag is tamboured with golden fringe, and from the top of the staff are suspended by cords two tassels of such exquisite richness that they may be looked at long to be appreciated. - There are two plates attached, on one of which is engraved 'Eleventh Regiment, Michigan Infantry, Colonel W. J. May Commanding.' and on the second, 'Presented by the Ladies Soldiers' Aid Society of St. Joseph County.'" Ibid., Nov. 16, 1861, p. 3.
On the morning of November 25, the Eleventh received its guns. In the afternoon a large crowd traveled to White Pigeon for the presentation of the flag. The regiment was drawn up in battalions at the station house. After introductory ceremonies, the colors were unfurled and saluted with five guns by the artillery.

Mr. John W. Frey gave a short talk to the men:

As the organ of your many warm friends in the County, it gives me great pleasure to present you this beautiful banner. The intrinsic value of the gift is small, but it serves in some degree to show their appreciation of you as gentlemen, and above all, of your patriotic devotion to your country, in this, in early life sacrificing all the endearments of home and friends, and going forth to battle her cause, in this her hour of peril . . . . Take it sir, and never return it permanently as long as there is an enemy of our country in arms against it, and when this unprovoked and wicked war shall have ended, and you and the brave men in your command shall return with victory perched on your proud eagle, then will we again rally to give you the welcome due to true patriots and soldiers who have nobly fought the battle between liberty and justice on the one side, and treason and rebellion on the other.

Mrs. Frey handed the flag to Colonel May, then spoke in sentiments similar to her husband's. Lieutenant Colonel Stoughton spoke in behalf of the officers and men:

In presenting us this flag you have nobly done your duty, - we will try and do ours, cheered by the thoughts that we have your sympathy and assistance. It may be exposed to the winter blast and the battle's storm but those who bear it hence will never return with it dishonored. Henceforth we shall cherish it as our own, and as we defend it and the sacred cause it represents, so may our memory live in the hearts of our countrymen.

Then the flag was presented to the color bearers, the regimental band struck up "The Star-Spangled Banner," and the crowd gave a tremendous cheer.

After the speeches, Adjutant Chadwick stepped forward and presented the men with 1010 pocket pincushions from the ladies of
LaPorte, Indiana. The sight of thousands of little pinheads caused the regiment to give forth with a cheer heard all the way to the borders of Indiana.\footnote{Ibid., Nov. 30, 1861, p. 2.}

It was on this very day that General Don C. Buell telegraphed Governor Blair to send the Eleventh to Louisville.\footnote{General Don C. Buell to Blair, telegram datelined Headquarters Louisville, Nov. 26, 1861, \textit{Regimental Service Records}.} Although no formal order was sent to White Pigeon, Colonel May was informed of it and made preparations to leave. The men were set to packing their haversacks, cleaning their equipment, and getting things in order.\footnote{\textit{Chronicle}, Dec. 4, 1861, p. 3.}

The arrival of the paymaster gave an added boost to the spirits of every man. On December 4 and 5 the entire regiment was paid for two months and ten days of service. This payment added about $37,000 to the circulating medium in the vicinity, an addition welcomed by the local merchants.\footnote{\textit{Reporter}, Dec. 7, 1861, pp. 2, 3.}

The men awaited the formal order. About December 5 it arrived:

\begin{quote}
\textbf{General Orders}

No 119

The Eleventh Regiment Michigan Infantry now stationed at White Pigeon commanded by Colonel William J. May will proceed with as little delay as possible by Michigan Southern Rail Road and thence via New Albany and Salem Rail Road to Lafayette and Indianapolis and thence to Jeffersonville. Colonel May will then cross the Ohio River to Louisville Kentucky where he will report to General D. C. Buell Commanding the Department of the Ohio.
\end{quote}
Colonel May will provide himself with the necessary provisions to subsist his Regiment on the march, and for two additional days after his arrival at Louisville, so that there may be no danger of his command being short of subsistence.

By order of the Commander-in-Chief
Jno. Robertson
Adjutant General.

"Did the Government expect us to sleep on the bare ground?"

In the evening hours of Monday, December 9, 1861, the Eleventh Michigan boarded thirty-one passenger coaches at White Pigeon, their artillery and baggage having preceded them on another train. They left the station at 12:15 Tuesday morning. It was difficult to realize that the long weeks of waiting were over, that they were on the first lap of a journey that for many of them would not end for three years - three years of drilling, marching, waiting, and fighting. They were leaving as green recruits; they would return seasoned veterans. Of the thousand who were leaving Michigan, more than two hundred would never return alive.

But on that December morning few had anything but a vague idea of how long the war would last. They were on their way to crush rebellion. If all went well, they would probably be home within a year. Certainly some must have given thought to the possibility they would not survive their experience, that they might end their life gloriously in battle. Probably most of them had the typical soldier's conviction that it would be the other fellow who would not return. But they did not put such thoughts in their letters; they wrote only of their excitement in going to war.

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They traveled southwest on the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana Railroad. It was dark, a good chance for sleep, but probably no one slept. About the time darkness was giving way to early morning light, they arrived at a point west of LaPorte, Indiana, where they transferred to the cars of the New Albany and Salem Railroad. Traveling south through Lafayette to Indianapolis, they spent most of their time watching the scenery. A heavy rain storm had recently swept over northern Indiana, and Sergeant Major Henry S. Platt wrote:

... a more dreary looking country ... one can scarcely imagine. It was one continuous line of water and marshes. The few towns we passed through seemed to be standing knee deep in mud and water, and the inhabitants were in perfect keeping with the town. They have one redeeming quality, however, they are all loyal and good union citizens, judging from the hearty cheers and waving of handkerchiefs with which we were greeted as we passed along.

The train reached Indianapolis after the supper hour. The men had been told by telegraph that hot coffee would be ready when they arrived, and after dry bread and cold meat, this was welcome news. But the coffee, when it came, was cold and without sugar or cream; and some did not get even cold coffee. At White Pigeon they had been reasonably well fed. Now they were learning how difficult it was to feed a traveling army. The officers, with their usual privileges, fared better for they were allowed to leave the train and purchase their supper. Captain Hackstaff was well pleased with

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5Ibid.
his food. But Captain Bennet, thinking more of the welfare of his men, was quite critical of his "sumptuous fare!" He wrote that he certainly wished their good friend John D. Campbell, agent for the Michigan Southern, had been allowed to make arrangements for their food.

Most of the companies accepted the cold coffee, grumbled a little, and let it go at that. But the men of Company C had different ideas. If they couldn't get coffee, they would have something else. By means known only to themselves, they managed to get a barrel of cider into their car, and between Indianapolis and Jeffersonville they enjoyed the rewards of their labor. Thus, at the expense of some unlucky saloon keeper, the Eleventh Michigan had its first taste of the fruits of foraging, an occupation at which they would soon become professionals.

On that same evening the regiment left Indianapolis for Jeffersonville. At every station applause and cheers greeted them. To Sergeant Hoisington it seemed as though the entire population of the towns turned out to welcome them with waving hats and handkerchiefs. About thirty wives had accompanied the regiment from White Pigeon, which inspired one southern Indiana newspaper to write that the Eleventh Michigan Infantry passed through their place composed chiefly of women accompanied by a large number of men. The wives

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7 Chronicle, Jan. 8, 1862, p. 1.
followed their husbands to Louisville, then returned to their homes.\textsuperscript{10}

The regiment arrived at Jeffersonville at daybreak Wednesday morning. After a hurried breakfast they marched down the main street to the river bank, where, about eleven in the morning, they embarked on ferries to cross the muddy river to Louisville. Most of them had probably never seen a river as large as the Ohio. Leaving the Indiana shore, the men had a fine view of the falls, with Jeffersonville to the north, New Albany to the west, and Louisville to the south. They could see the ladies of Jeffersonville waving farewell, and as the band played they gave a cheer to their friends in the north. Then they turned to the land that was the reason for their coming.\textsuperscript{11}

At Louisville they were in the South, no doubt about it; they sensed as well as saw the difference. Perhaps it was that most of them were seeing slaves for the first time. More likely it had something to do with years of believing that the Ohio River divided two different cultures. But the people of Louisville were not unfriendly, and the regiment received as great a welcome as it had in Indiana. Sergeant Platt wrote that the windows and balconies along the streets were crowded with cheering ladies, the walks thronged with men, boys, and Negroes. When the regiment stopped at the residence of the Provost Marshal for refreshments, the regimental band entertained the crowd with popular tunes, including "Dixie."\textsuperscript{12}

The Eleventh had marched through Louisville with a real artillery

\textsuperscript{10}\textit{Reporter}, Dec. 21, 1861, p. 3.


\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Tbid.}
battery in line. Some ranking officer, knowing how scarce these units were, had appropriated Bidwell's battery, an action perhaps not entirely unexpected, since Colonel May made no protest.\textsuperscript{13}

The men then marched to their campgrounds just outside the city, near the depot of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. Although the ground was a bit muddy, the weather was fine and clear.\textsuperscript{14}

Here each company was issued five Sibley tents. These were huge conical affairs, each built to shelter twenty men, and difficult to manipulate. After several accidents, the men managed to raise their tents in a line at least as straight as a rail fence. Sergeant Borden Hicks wrote:

\begin{quote}
\textit{... as we looked inside \ldots our future homes, we wondered what we were going to sleep on, no feather beds, not even straw. Did the Government expect us to sleep on the bare ground? One old man who had seen service in the Mexican War, assured us that soldiers in the field always slept on the ground. That settled it, and we bravely though with much discomfort, carried out his assertion \ldots\ldots}.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

That night their real army life began.\textsuperscript{16} Far from home, sleeping in tents on enemy soil, they could believe they had at last become soldiers.

The assembled regiments were not long in Louisville. The plan was to march into the interior of Kentucky in the hope that the Rebels would give battle. If they didn't, the Union men could make

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{14}Reporter, Dec. 21, 1861, p. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{15}Hicks, p. 523.
\end{itemize}
good use of the time to continue their training. As it turned out, the Eleventh participated in no important battle for many months. Neither army could strike effectively at the other, for it takes more than a few weeks to turn a mob of men into a disciplined striking force. Both sides engaged in marches and minor skirmishes to feel out the strength of the other, but neither tried to bring on a general engagement.

On Wednesday, December 18, the regiment packed its baggage for its first march. The men of Company E, remembering the discomfort of carrying their huge packs through Louisville, informed their captain he would have to make other arrangements. They had not enlisted to be government pack mules, and if the captain did not hire a farmer to haul the packs, they would smash their guns against a tree and go straight home. Correctly assessing the company's rebellious spirit, the captain "... very graciously listened to our terms and hired a team...".

Mutiny disposed of, the regiment set out the same day for Bardstown, a small village on a spur of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad about forty miles southeast of Louisville. The main turnpike was macadamized and in good repair. The days were warm and pleasant, and although the nights were cold, there was no ice in the streams or frost in the ground. As they marched to the sound of

17Chronicle, Jan. 8, 1862, p. 2.
18Hicks, p. 523.
19Chronicle, Jan. 8, 1862, p. 2.
fife and drum and the blare of the band, the sound of marching feet
brought people to the roadside to watch the soldiers pass. Adjutant
Chadwick noticed more Negroes than whites. Occasionally groups of
ladies would wave their handkerchiefs when the soldiers gave a shout
for the Union. More often the watchers held their heads down,
refusing to look directly at the passing men. The weather remained
fair and the countryside was pleasant. They saw fine houses set in
well cultivated farms, and an abundance of planted trees and shrubs.
Private Daniel Reber thought the farmers thereabouts did not have the
taste for order preferred in the North.

After ten miles the regiment made its first camp by the bank
of a small brook in a pleasant valley. An Indiana regiment camped
across the road and in the evening the regimental bands met and
played some fine pieces, which Sergeant Hoisington thought were
"... rendered more beautiful by the echoing along the hills and
among the woods."  

There is some evidence this regiment had drummer boys who
were not carried on the official roster. The Reporter, Feb. 11,
1863, p. 3, carries the following item: "Returned - The Little
Drummer Boys of the Michigan 11th, returned home on the evening of
the 11th inst: Everybody was very glad to see the brave little heroes,
and they were welcomed by a large and enthusiastic crowd. It is
understood that they have been tendered a cadetship at West Point.
We hope it is so." The drummer boys listed on the rolls of the
Eleventh would have been too old to be called "brave little heroes"
in 1863.

Ibid., Jan. 11, 1862, p. 2.

Chronicle, Jan. 8, 1862, p. 2.


Chronicle, Jan. 8, 1862, p. 2.
The first day's march had had its casualties. Never before had the men of the Eleventh Michigan carried their packs for any great distance. They found that while it was good to have the comforts of home in the army, it was not so easy to carry those comforts on their backs. Corporal Ozro Bowen thought his knapsack contained enough equipment for a year's tour through Europe. Some of the men dropped by the road too exhausted to continue. The regiment was followed by a wagon train carrying all the comforts the men hadn't put on their backs, including the packs of Company E. Room was made in the wagons for the stragglers, and all reached the campsite in good order. In the evening most of the company commanders followed the example of Company E and hired civilian teams to carry the knapsacks the rest of the distance to Bardstown.

After an early breakfast, the regiment began the second day of the march. Just beyond Floyd's Fork the long line passed through the village of Mt. Washington, where the men were greeted warmly. They crossed the Salt River about noon, and after completing sixteen miles camped on its bank. The country was broken by ravines and gullies, with limestone formations protruding from the hillsides, in places almost large enough to be called ledges.

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25Bowen's Oration.
26Reporter, Jan.11, 1862, p. 2.
27Chronicle, Jan. 8, 1862, p. 2.
28Journal, Jan. 9, 1862, p. 2.
29Chronicle, Jan. 8, 1862, p. 2.
thought the twists and turns of the road made the column look like a huge letter S, with half the men hidden from the others the greater part of the time, their column marked by bayonets glistening in the December sun.30

Early Friday morning the last day's march began. The men had covered twenty-six miles in two days, and the prospect of another fourteen did not cheer them. On the first day the countryside had been beautiful, somewhat less pleasant on the second, and on the third day, weary and footsore, they found the country "rough and rather desolate."31 South of Louisville all the land was, in fact, rocky and sparsely settled; but three days of marching may have affected their reaction to the beauty of the landscape.

Two miles north of Bardstown the Eleventh passed an Indiana regiment bivouacked in the fairgrounds. The Indiana boys, assembled in a line, greeted their northern neighbors with six hearty cheers as they marched past, and the Eleventh Michigan made an equally hearty response. About a half mile below Bardstown the Michigan men went into camp, glad to pitch their tents for a long stay. Their camp, near a large ravine, was described by Captain Bennet as "... a very pleasant spot near the finest spring I ever saw. The water comes out of the rocks in almost sufficient quantity to drive a grist mill, and is as clear as crystal."32

30Journal, Jan. 9, 1862, p. 2.
32Chronicle, Jan. 8, 1862, p. 2.
Their first long march was over. They had covered forty miles in three days and they were worn out. The time would come when the regiment would cover that distance in less than half the time, and under much worse conditions. But at this stage forty miles in three days was no mean achievement.
"... if we ever do get a chance ..., we will show that we are worthy of the name of Michigan volunteers."

Bardstown was a temporary stopover. As soon as things were better organized, the army would be moving south, and a grand battle would be fought. But orders to march did not come. The regiment was in trouble. It had smallpox.

Smallpox had appeared even before the Eleventh left Michigan. With over a thousand men concentrated at White Pigeon, there was concern lest a contagious disease get started. Fear had gripped the whole county. Every time there was an indication of illness, people thought the worst. About the middle of November a soldier was taken sick while visiting in Mottville, and a local doctor decided it was smallpox. The rumor spread that smallpox was rampant in the regiment, and in a few days the Regimental Surgeon found it necessary to make public denial. The soldier who had visited in Mottville did not have smallpox, and the only sickness in the regiment was a single convalescent case of typhoid fever.¹

Yet the rumor persisted, and shortly became reality. The sick remained in Michigan when the regiment left for Kentucky, and among them were twenty-four cases of smallpox.²

¹Chronicle, Nov. 20, 1861, p. 3.
²Reporter, Dec. 21, 1861, p. 3. Three of the smallpox victims had died previous to December 21. One of these was in the artillery company.
The regiment had moved south with the specter of disease hovering over the men. Their Louisville camp was not good. With warm days and cold nights, sleeping on bare ground was bound to encourage illness. On December 17, 1861, Private Thomas Curtis of Company I died of disease at Louisville, the regiment's first death on southern soil.

Illness was kept under control in spite of changes in the weather. What the men lacked in physical strength was offset by their determination to reach the enemy. Spirits were high when they reached Bardstown on Friday evening, December 20; they were confident their stay would be brief. Mud and water were everywhere in this camp, and on December 27 the men struck their tents, cooked rations, and packed the baggage wagons. Leaving at 9:00 the next morning, they marched to a new camp five miles south of town. Here real trouble started. To begin with, they were alone - one Michigan regiment in the midst of 8,000 troops from Indiana and Ohio - and the story started that the Eleventh Michigan was a "smallpox regiment." The report persisted in spite of indignant Michigan denials, and the other regiments wished them gone. Then someone at headquarters listed the regiment as unfit for duty because of smallpox. The brigade surgeon, an Indiana man, made a mock inspection, decided

4Journal, Jan. 9, 1862, p. 2.
5Ibid., Jan. 30, 1862, p. 2.
6Mercury, March 13, 1862, p. 2.
there was indeed smallpox, and had the whole regiment moved about a mile into the woods. The Michiganders protested, for although they did have a few cases, men were dying of the disease in other camps.  

A medical purveyor came down from Louisville. After a "thorough" investigation which did not include a visit to the regiment, the doctor agreed the charges were true. General Thomas J. Wood, another Indiana man, told Adjutant Chadwick: "You have got the small pox, and you must go into some by-place till you are quit of it - mere matter of caution, mere matter of caution, Adjutant."  

The regiment must leave and remain away until ten days after the last reported case of smallpox.

And leave they did on the morning of January 2, 1862, marching to a new campsite two miles northwest of Bardstown. This was a hard march, made more difficult because it was so short that the men carried things they would have left behind if setting out for a longer distance.

On this march disaster struck again. When the men stopped for a brief rest by one of the Indiana camps, about fifty of the Indiana sick, most of them measles cases, passed through the ranks of the Eleventh. Shortly afterward the Eleventh reported measles as well as smallpox.

Their new camp, known as the Bowman place, was not good.

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7 Ibid.
8 Reporter, Jan. 18, 1862, p. 2.
9 Mercury, Mar. 13, 1862, p. 2.
10 Reporter, Jan. 18, 1862, p. 2.
11 Mercury, Mar. 13, 1862, p. 2.
Natives said it was about the worst site in that section.\textsuperscript{12} Isolated from the war, and with no hope of an early return, the men became bitter and discouraged.\textsuperscript{13} Then they moved again, a mile closer to Bardstown.\textsuperscript{14} Captain Bennet wrote that the new camp was "... on a beautiful piece of meadow land, sloping down to a clear brook of spring water; a most pleasant and convenient camping ground."\textsuperscript{15} Adjutant Chadwick said the place had a few nice buildings and a good wood supply. They were drilling every day, and if they could get rid of their bad name, they would soon be on the move again.\textsuperscript{16}

Unfortunately, conditions became worse instead of better. About January 7 the regiment returned to the poor campground further north. The march was a reluctant one, wrote First Sergeant Aaron B. Sturgis of Company A,

\ldots and we moved more like disappointed stubborn school boys than United States soldiers obeying the mandate of their general. The rain that had previously fallen was well mixed with the clayey soil which adhered to our cowhide brogans like the Legislature of Kentucky sticking to the Union under difficulties. It is hard journeying when one has to stem a strong head wind of indisposition. The trouble was we were going from the enemy, \ldots .\textsuperscript{17}

And the men of the Eleventh Michigan, seemingly forgotten by everyone, settled in their miserable winter quarters. It appeared as though

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{12}Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{13}Reporter, Jan. 4, 1862, p. 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{14}Journal, Jan. 30, 1862, p. 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{15}Reporter, Jan. 18, 1862, p. 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{16}Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{17}Journal, Jan. 30, 1862. p. 2.
\end{itemize}
their fears were indeed going to become reality: the War would move on, and their regiment would be left behind.

Regimental morale was never lower than during its winter quarantine at Bardstown. Under normal circumstances tent life in a Kentucky winter would be discouraging, but to be confined to camp on charges the men did not feel were justified taxed their endurance almost to its limit. If weather conditions had been consistent, the men might have more easily adjusted to their routine. But there were too many days when it rained and nights when it froze, too many thaws followed by snowstorms. The rain made a tremendous amount of mud,\(^{18}\) and their boots were inadequate for the task.\(^{19}\)

With poor weather conditions and low spirits among the men, it was little wonder the sick list began to grow. Letters written by the men to their families were filled with discouragements. Echoes of these letters reached Bardstown, and men not yet discouraged believed they must be answered. Captain Bennet said the regiment must have been "... most gloriously reported by some." Others agreed that the situation was not really bad. By early January there were only a few cases of smallpox and measles. The men were more homesick than really sick, and being homesick made everything look wrong. Actually conditions were no different than in any other regiment, but the quarantine prevented the men visiting other camps to make the comparison.\(^{20}\) The sick list continued to grow, and later in

\(^{18}\) *Reporter*, Feb. 8, 1862, p. 2.


January there was sickness enough, but mostly measles, diarrhea, and colds. The regiment had had few deaths and few dangerous cases. 21 Then toward the last of January and in early February rumor became grim reality. Measles, not smallpox, proved to be the killer.

Large numbers of the men were farm boys, and living in isolated settlements, many had never contracted measles during childhood. Now they were paying the penalty, and nothing could stop the march of the disease. Bennet said the men were suffering terribly. The situation was indeed critical, but everything possible was being done.

I do not write this for the purpose of creating a panic at home - nor will I follow the example of some, and charge our surgeons with inefficiency and incapacity - but I think it will be well to let the truth be known. During the last week we have lost, on the average, near three a day, and this despite the utmost exertions of the surgeons.

He added that under the circumstances they should be thankful the mortality rate was not greater. Because of severe weather conditions, more than half the regiment had bad colds when the measles started. With so many in the hospital coughing, sneezing, and spitting, it was impossible to prevent the spread of measles, and the disease could not be controlled. There were so few in the regiment who had not had measles that Bennet believed the situation would certainly improve within a few weeks. 22

These conditions continued through the first three weeks of


February. At times more than 300 were in the regimental hospital. Burial services were held daily, and by February 13 fifty-four had died, most of them from measles. But by late February the sick list was decreasing rapidly, and the worst was over. The terrible days of sickness left with the coming of spring. Some would still die, but the men sensed their trial was finished. Complaints stopped almost abruptly. For several weeks the number one topic had been sickness. Now, as if they wanted to forget a nightmare, letter writers dropped the subject. For a few weeks comments were made about their fast recovery; then soldiers wrote about their health only as an afterthought at the end of their letters.

Complaints about the officers also ceased. An officer mustered with the regiment back in Michigan would not necessarily remain with it. Every volunteer regiment had to have its commissioned officers examined by a War Department board established to investigate the qualifications of the officers. The tests were not severe, and a lot of incompetents slipped through, but they did eliminate some of the worst. The turn of the Eleventh Michigan before the board had come during the time of its sickness. Fear of failure created unrest and bitter feelings, and some of the officers, to cover up possible failure, started stories of friction and cliques. These stories reached Michigan. On February 22, The Reporter printed under a startling heading that Colonel May had been arrested and would be

23Mercury, Mar. 13, 1862, p. 2.
24Reporter, Mar. 1, 1862, p. 2.
tried by court martial. It was not stated what the charges were, but it was the opinion of the paper that if such had been done long ago, many lives would have been saved. Adjutant Chadwick was soon to be commissioned Colonel.\textsuperscript{25} Readers of the Branch County Gazette learned from Captain Hackstaff that regimental affairs were in a bad way. Several of the officers, among them Colonel May, Captain Moase, Lieutenants Kesler and Warren, and perhaps Hackstaff himself, would resign. Captain Oakes might be cashiered, if not, he should be. Hackstaff said the whole matter grew out of bad feeling among the officers. A small group was trying to run the whole regiment, no matter what the others might think.\textsuperscript{26} This must have confused readers of The Mercury who two days before had read a communication from Captain Bennet stating that the Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel, and Major had already been passed by the examining board. The board was working on the company officers, and Bennet remarked: "... you need not be surprised if you see some of the latter coming home on account of ill health (These examinations often prove disastrous to health!) ... ."\textsuperscript{27}

A feud was brewing between Captains Oakes and Hackstaff - the cause unknown, the results obvious. Oakes remained and Hackstaff went home. Private Glidden, who had returned home, wrote on March 3:

... I have heard a great deal said against the officers of this Regiment, which I must say is false. As far as my knowledge

\textsuperscript{25}Ibid., Feb. 22, 1862, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{26}Mercury, Feb. 20, 1862, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{27}Ibid., Mar. 8, 1862, p. 3.
of the Regiment goes, the officers have acted like men, and
have been with their soldiers continually, administering to
their wants in sickness and looking after their welfare in
health.

Glidden remarked that Captain Oakes would long be remembered as a
humane and efficient officer, who showed as much interest in his men
as a father would in his children. The captain visited the hospitals
daily, doing what he could to bring comfort to the sick. "In short,
Capt. Oakes is just what an officer should be, a whole souled man." Glidden remarked that Captain Oakes would long be remembered as a
humane and efficient officer, who showed as much interest in his men
as a father would in his children. The captain visited the hospitals
daily, doing what he could to bring comfort to the sick. "In short,
Capt. Oakes is just what an officer should be, a whole souled man."28
Another soldier commented on the abuse heaped upon the Eleventh by
The Reporter, noted it was too bad the regiment had to be blamed for
the bad conduct of a few. However, the press should soon receive
more favorable reports, now that Captain Hackstaff, "... the most
virulent one of the lot has resigned and gone home, ... "29

Captain Hackstaff resigned on March 11, 1862.30 Most of the friction
among the officers disappeared with his departure.31

If there was dissatisfaction among the officers, so was there
among the men. The wonder was that the regiment survived and retained
its sanity. The Eleventh had been in service long enough for patriotic

29Mercury, Apr. 3, 1862, p. 2. This soldier identified himself as "Shorty." He was probably an enlisted man.
30Record, Eleventh Michigan Infantry, p. 44. Captain Hackstaff resigned due to failing health. He returned home in early March, was
taken sick May 5, and died May 22, 1862. Reporter, June 7, 1862, p. 3.
31Captain Moase resigned, but was recommissioned February 15, 1862. Lieutenant Kesler resigned February 14, and Lieutenant Warren
excitement to wear thin. The regiment should have been doing something long since. It would have preferred useless marches through Kentucky to the boredom of remaining at one camp. And there hadn't been more sickness in this unit than in other regiments. Sickness was the rule anyhow, after three or four months of army life. The men knew little of personal hygiene, and seemed to have forgotten that little when they became soldiers. Their officers were little better, as could be expected in a volunteer unit.

The real complaint was not sickness. The men knew well enough the officers were doing their best, that other regiments had the same troubles. The Eleventh Michigan felt it was forgotten. They had been sent away, isolated, because of an epidemic no worse than in other outfits. They saw the war leaving them behind. If they couldn't get to where the fighting was, the war would soon be over, with the Eleventh never having fought a battle. Theirs had been the second regiment to reach Bardstown. Thirty regiments had marched through to the south, and still the Eleventh remained. 32

One soldier wrote, "... if we ever do get a chance to strike a blow for our constitution and country, we will show that we are worthy of the name of Michigan volunteers." 33

But life continued. Sergeant Platt thought that army life was not as easy as some had thought it would be. Many civilians had the mistaken idea that a soldier had an easy time. To correct this

33 Mercury, Mar. 13, 1862, p. 2.
misapprehension, he described a typical day of a soldier. At reveille, every soldier must get up, dress, equip himself with overcoat, knapsack, canteen, musket and accouterments, all strapped in their proper order, with everything ready to begin a long march. Roll was called and each company inspected by its officers; then tents were cleaned and put in order. After breakfast came guard mount and company drill. Everyone was busy all morning. In the afternoon battalion drill lasted until 4:00 when the call was sounded for dress parade. Each company must report with every soldier looking his best. The slightest flaw would not escape an observant inspector, and the guilty man was sure to receive a reprimand and a warning. All work was organized and each duty had its allotted time. Even the shiftless soon learned to do tasks correctly. The routine was broken only by Sundays and rainy days. These were welcome breaks for the men, who read books and papers, wrote letters, and took care of personal chores. The Bardstown postmaster told the sergeant that the Eleventh was a literary regiment: it received and sent more mail than any other two regiments there.34

Chaplain Pattison held regular Church meetings each Sunday that the weather permitted, and prayer meetings twice a week. He was concerned about profanity in the army, and supposed the Eleventh had its share of this "foolish and wicked habit." He ordered 900 English and 50 German Testaments and applied to the American Tract Society for other religious materials "...in order that we may be

34Journal, Jan. 30, 1862, p. 3.
Private Fonda was happy about his promotions. After weeks of being merely a private in Company E, he had become Cook of squad number one. After five days in that position, he had accumulated so much extra pay he decided to retire and spend the rest of his days in ease. "But I had won the favor of the populace! and again I was called into public notice." He was assigned to the hospital as a nurse. After a two day tour of duty, he was promoted to the lucrative office of Chief Cook, Company E. With this rank he had charge of a staff of two, kept the key to the mess chest, supervised the bringing of water and wood, and the cooking and distributing of rations. Unfortunately, he had to work with his staff from five in the morning until eight in the evening, and endure the grumbling and cursing of men who thought the food was too fresh or too salty, too raw or well done, too sweet or not sweet enough. Nevertheless it was quite an honor to have rank in the army, and he expected another promotion soon. 36

On February 11, Companies D and E were assigned to Bardstown as Provost Guard, 37 with Captain Bennet as Provost Marshal and Captain Spencer head of Provost Guard. 38 Their departure with tents

35 Reporter, Feb. 8, 1862, p. 2.
36 Ibid., p. 1.
and camp equipage was saddening to the regiment,\textsuperscript{39} but to the men of those companies it was a welcome escape. The regimental band was detailed as Post Band,\textsuperscript{40} and the Bardstown paper commented:

Every evening at sun set the band of the 11th Mich. Reg. attracts a large crowd of our music loving citizens to the public square to listen to its soul stirring martial airs. This is one of the best bands we have ever heard discourse "a Sweet concord of harmonious sounds," and is under the leadership of that accomplished and skillful musician Hiram Wheeler.\textsuperscript{41}

Encouraging developments came with the end of the month. On February 27, General Buell sent orders to Colonel May to march to Munfordville as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{42} And on February 28, the regiment turned out for inspection by Post Commander Colonel William H. Lytle, who was impressed by their fine appearance.\textsuperscript{43} Someone had remembered there was a Michigan infantry regiment at Bardstown.

After inspection, the regiment left its old campsite to move nearly a mile closer to town, on the grounds of Dr. Jackson.\textsuperscript{44} To Sergeant Platt it was the finest camp thus far in Kentucky, with tents pitched in front of the house on a hill which sloped gradually to a clear stream.\textsuperscript{45} Another soldier remarked the camp was free from

\textsuperscript{39}Journal, Feb. 27, 1862, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{40}Reporter, Mar. 1, 1862, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{41}Mercury, Mar. 13, 1862, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{43}Reporter, Mar. 15, 1862, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{44}Mercury, Mar. 13, 1862, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{45}Journal, Mar. 20, 1862, p. 1.
the mud which had been their worst trouble before. Any new location would have been beautiful to men who for weeks had watched about sixty of their friends die, and be buried in an orchard beside the old camp.\footnote{Mercury, Mar. 13, 1862, p. 2.}

The last of February had brought warm spring weather, with shining sun and singing birds. But on March 1 the men awoke to find the ground covered with snow, and that night there was a thunderstorm with heavy rains all the next day. On March 3, a cold, cloudy, and drizzling day; word came that the order to march to Munfordville had been countermanded.\footnote{Chronicle, Mar. 19, 1862, p. 2.} They weren't going anywhere after all. With bad weather would come the colds, and then they'd be sick again. Rumors spread that the regiment would be disbanded. But then the paymaster appeared, and the storm was over. As soon as his business was finished, the men would be marching - where, they didn't know, but it would be somewhere. This time it was definite. The stay at Bardstown was about over.\footnote{Mercury, Mar. 13, 1862, p. 2.}
CHAPTER VI

GUARDING THE RAILROAD

The Confederacy has been compared to a monstrous animal with its head in Virginia and its tail in Texas. A severe blow on the head would probably kill the animal; but when the Army of the Potomac tried to strike that blow, the Army of Northern Virginia would give the Union men a sound thrashing. It did not take long for the northern strategists to realize that if they could pounce on the animal's back and cut it in two, it would not long survive.

Tennessee was the vulnerable back of this animal: if the Union armies could control Tennessee, they could then march through Georgia and split the animal in half. Curiously enough, Tennessee was also the most vulnerable to invasion. Almost any point within it could be reached by one of two navigable rivers, the Cumberland and the Tennessee. To control these rivers would give control of the state. Entering these rivers was easy since they both flowed through Kentucky and into the Ohio opposite southern Illinois. The was had hardly begun before the North gained control of these two entrances to the Confederacy.

On February 16, 1862, General Ulysses S. Grant forced the surrender of Fort Donelson. Since Nashville could not be defended without this fort, the Confederates evacuated the town within a week. As soon as the Union army entered Nashville, the route of the Louis-
ville and Nashville Railroad became important as the only rail line which could supply the city. For the next month, the Eleventh Michigan Infantry helped guard this railroad.

On March 3, 1862, General Buell ordered Colonel May to march without delay to Belmont Furnace and there relieve the Third Minnesota Infantry. Belmont Furnace, or Belmont, was about fifteen miles west and slightly north of Bardstown. The place itself, about thirty or forty houses, a brick store, and an iron furnace, was of little importance. But this little village lay on the main line of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.

The Michigan men left Bardstown on March 6, 1862. Not many regretted leaving a place with so few pleasant memories. Yet the citizens were sorry to see them go, and when they learned that the regiment was pulling out, they petitioned Colonel May to leave behind the two companies which had acted as provost guard. He denied the petition, to the relief of the men in those companies.

Belmont was only fifteen miles from Bardstown in a straight line. But in the Kentucky hills there is no such thing as a straight line. The weather had taken a turn for the worse. In the week before their departure, there had been a great deal of rain, and on the day the regiment left, the rain was topped off with three or four inches of snow. In spite of rain, snow, mud, winding road, and steep hills, the regiment marched about ten miles on the first day. Unfortunately,

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2Mercury, Apr. 3, 1862, p. 2.
3Bowen's Oration.
ten winding miles that brought them only four straight miles nearer Belmont.

The second day was just as bad. The regiment wound around the hills, crossed creeks and ravines, and at times walked in creek beds. The men were so far back in the hills that the inhabitants did not even know there was a war. Some of them asked the passing soldiers the reason why they were all dressed alike. At the end of the second day the men were camped on the banks of Wilson's Creek, with five miles yet to go.

With the help of teams from the Third Minnesota, the Eleventh entered Belmont about noon of the third day. One soldier thought the Minnesota men were the best he had yet seen, but he may have been influenced by their help. The regiment was not long intact at Belmont. To protect the railroad, companies were sent to different points along its route, so that if the Rebels destroyed a stretch of track, there would be a fighting force within striking distance of the raiders. But there was a risk in this plan: if the Confederates attacked in strength, they had a good chance to force the surrender of the scattered companies. Later in the war, after several successful attacks of this sort had occurred, the Union men built blockhouses from which they could usually beat off the enemy. Evidently the men of the Eleventh did not fortify their positions; fortunately there were no raids on their stretch of the line. On March 24, Company E was at Sheperdsville, Company D at Nolin, Company C at Belmont, and

4Mercury, Apr. 3, 1862, p. 2.
the rest at intermediate points.\footnote{Chronicle, Apr. 3, 1862, p.2.}

Guarding the railroad became a pleasant chore. There was little hard work. At Bardstown the men had been closely confined by the weather; now they were anxious to resume their drill, having learned that daily exercises kept them in good health. Drill took only part of the day, and they could spend the rest of the day as they pleased. Soon they had scoured the country for miles around. The countryside and its people were different from what most of the men were accustomed to. They were amused to discover that many of the women smoked or chewed.\footnote{Mercury, Apr. 3, 1862, p. 2.} Camp food was good. Corporal Benjamin Wells wrote his wife on April 18:

\begin{quote}
\ldots we have been here nearly six weeks and as we have but little to do & pretty good fare for soldiers we are fleshing up. If we were to be put on a forced march & be on the battle field (of which there is not much danger) a few days without anything to eat, I think it would take some of the fat off.\footnote{Benjamin F. Wells to Wife, Apr. 18, 1862, Wells Papers (Mss. Michigan Historical Collections, University of Michigan). Typed manuscript; original in the possession of Carlton B. Wells, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Cited hereafter as Wells Papers.}
\end{quote}

The camp was visited daily by throngs of farmers from the surrounding hills, eager to sell eggs, butter, pies, and other good food at reasonable prices. The war had cut off their usual markets, and they were glad to trade with the soldiers.\footnote{Mercury, Apr. 3, 1862, p. 2.}

The men of the Eleventh needed this pleasant interlude. At White Pigeon they had longed for a chance to go to war. The weeks at
Bardstown had almost been their undoing; at no time was the morale of the Eleventh lower than at Bardstown. This tour of duty along the Louisville and Nashville gave them the chance to regain their strength and restore their morale.

But the men were eager to get on with the war. In over seven months of army service they had not heard a gun fired in anger. Daily they watched for orders to move south. They still believed the war would be over in a short time, and some feared they wouldn't get into a fight. Benjamin Wells wrote his wife that he doubted if they would be getting any further south. He had heard that both the Eastern and Western armies were getting ready for a fight which would probably end it all.9

At Belmont the regiment lost its Colonel. From the time he had entered the army, Colonel May was never a well man. In September, 1861, he had recovered from an unknown ailment.10 Whatever it was, it had caused him to rely heavily upon Lieutenant Colonel Stoughton even before the regiment left Michigan. Stoughton frequently lead the men in their drill, conducted inspections, and also played an active part in regimental relations with the public. Such would not have been the case if the Colonel had been able to take active command.

From Kentucky, reports home showed concern for the Colonel's health. On March 26, 1862, The Chronicle reported that Captain

9Wells to Wife, Apr. 18, 1862, Wells Papers.
10Chronicle, Sept. 11, 1861, p. 3.
Spencer, home on leave, had given them the news that Colonel May had resigned and was returning to Michigan.\textsuperscript{11} The next day The Journal said that Major Doughty, also home on leave, had informed them the Colonel was about to resign.\textsuperscript{12} These were premature reports, for on March 29 Colonel May wrote to Governor Blair that although he had been very sick, he would be active again soon. He could not yet leave his room, but his health was improving.\textsuperscript{13}

Nevertheless, Colonel May resigned on April 1,\textsuperscript{14} and shortly after returned to Michigan. He was seen in Three Rivers on April 27 apparently in feeble health.\textsuperscript{15} Later rumors had the Colonel returning to the Eleventh as Master of Transportation.\textsuperscript{16} But he seems never to have returned to service. Perhaps he lacked experience for field command, although this charge could have been laid upon practically every man who started his army career as an officer. The Colonel did not leave the regiment because he was not formally qualified to command, for he had passed the tests set by the examining board to determine the fitness of volunteer officers.\textsuperscript{17} He was as well liked by his men as any other officer. The most

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, Mar. 26, 1862, p. 3.
  \item \textsuperscript{12}\textit{Journal}, Mar. 27, 1862, p. 3.
  \item \textsuperscript{13}May to Blair, Mar. 29, 1862, Regimental Service Records.
  \item \textsuperscript{14}\textit{Record}, Eleventh Michigan Infantry, p. 64.
  \item \textsuperscript{15}\textit{Chronicle}, Apr. 30, 1862, p. 3.
  \item \textsuperscript{16}\textit{Ibid.}, May 7, 1862, p. 3.
  \item \textsuperscript{17}\textit{Mercury}, Feb. 20, 1862, p. 2.
\end{itemize}
likely explanation is that William May was genuinely ill. The only unfavorable criticism of him is found in the pages of The Reporter, and that expression of editorial opinion was strongly criticized by several men in the regiment.

He was succeeded by William L. Stoughton, whose appointment was welcomed by everyone. He remained in command for the next two and a half years. Stoughton promised to be a fighting officer, and the men knew he would do his best to get them into the shooting war.

Perhaps the best thing that happened to the Eleventh at Belmont was the exchange in April of their Belgian and Austrian muskets for Springfields. They had heard enough about Springfields to know their real value, and these rifles did a great deal to increase the self-confidence of the men. Nothing has been found to indicate the exact model of the Springfields. They were of full rifle length and .58 caliber. Probably they were either the United States model 1855 or 1861 rifled muskets. With the exception of a priming device located on the lock of the 1855 model, these two arms were virtually identical. They were muzzle-loading, firing the new .58 caliber conical lead bullet. They had the total length of slightly over fifty-eight inches, and with bayonet weighed almost ten pounds. A bullet fired from this rifle could hit a man-sized object at six

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18 Reporter, Feb. 22, 1862, p. 3.
19 Chronicle, May 14, 1862, p. 3.
hundred yards, and this degree of accuracy changed certain battle tactics.

In the days of smoothbore muskets, the infantry weapon had such poor accuracy that opposing lines of battle would have to approach to within one hundred yards of each other before the firepower of the guns could take a noticeable toll. Over this short distance a battle line could make a swift bayonet charge and overwhelm the enemy's position before many volleys had been fired, a tactic often used by both sides. Thus, when both sides were armed with the smoothbore musket, the weapon itself did little to determine the outcome of the battle.

By the time of the Civil War, the weapon had changed but the tactics had not. Armies still stood and faced each other. But now, with a rifle accurate up to six hundred yards, if the two lines faced each other for very long, a lot of men were going to be killed. In theory they could destroy each other. The rifled musket now gave a decided advantage to the defensive army, which now had the firepower to break up a bayonet charge before it could reach them. Moreover, if the defenders had time to construct log and earth breastworks, their position could be carried only with the greatest difficulty. Thus the only way for the offensive army to avoid the slaughter of its own men was to outmaneuver the enemy. Although the practice of building breastworks to defend a position was not universally adopted until the last two years of the war, by the spring of 1862 the men

\[21\text{Fuller, p. 115.}\]
knew it was almost imperative for a regiment to have rifled muskets. As long as a regiment armed with smoothbores fought other regiments similarly armed, they were, in this regard, equally matched. But heaven help a regiment armed with smoothbores in a stand-up fight with men armed with the new rifles. Understandably, the men of the Eleventh were elated with their new arms.

Sometime during the last week in April, Colonel Stoughton was ordered to move his regiment to Nashville. This could only mean that at last the boys were going to get close enough to the rebels for a fight. The quickest way to Nashville would have been by train down the Louisville and Nashville, but because the Confederates were raiding the line at intermediate points, the railroad was abandoned for a more circuitous route.22

After the companies had re-assembled at Belmont, they spent an entire day packing their baggage for the three-day trip. About 5:00 on the evening of Monday, April 28, the regiment boarded the cars and began the twenty-five mile trip north to Louisville.23 Owing to the length and weight of the train, it took them about ten hours to travel this short distance. Then, tired and sleepy from the tedious ride,24 the men waited on the train until sunrise, before forming in line and marching to Portland at the foot of the Ship Canal, where they began to board the steamer E. H. Fairchild at 9:00 in the morning.25 At 5:00 in the afternoon the steamer started down

22Wells to Wife, May 2, 1862, Wells Papers.
24Wells to Wife, May 2, 1862, Wells Papers.
the Ohio to the mouth of the Cumberland.26

When Andrews' Battery of Michigan artillery had moved south, it had been sent to West Point, a fort on the south bank of the Ohio some thirty miles below Louisville. Now, as Adjutant Chadwick wrote,

... great anxiety prevailed among the boys to reach West Point before dark that we might look on the face of "Norm." Andrews once more. As the papers of Louisville had advertised for proposals to move our regiment, the battery had anticipated our approach, and as the flag bearer stood on deck and waved our flag, and the whistle sounded, flash went one of "Norm's." guns, and the roar of welcome from its mouth incited our boys to cheer after cheer as we neared the bank. Thus, although we did not see our friends and take them by the hand, we heard from them, and gave them in return music from the band and cheers without number.27

About 4:00 Wednesday morning, the steamer pulled into shore for two hours to take on coal and other supplies.28 As they steamed along the Ohio, Private Henry Hall noted that

... the farmers along the banks of the Ohio river, were suffering from the effects of a severe freshet, many of them were driven by the water to the second story of their houses. Some of their grain they had managed to save by placing it on rafts, and they have platforms built for their cattle and horses, ... Yet, notwithstanding their gloomy condition, they cheered us heartily. One instance that came to our notice, was a horse hitched to a canoe, one man riding the horse while another man was sitting in the stern /Sic/, steering the canoe. The man on horse-back waved his hat and cheered us, but as the boat passed, the waves took him and knocked him off his horse, and after considerable struggling, he succeeded in getting into the canoe in safety.29

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26Wells to Wife, May 2, 1862, Wells Papers.
28Wells to Wife, May 2, 1862, Wells Papers.
On Wednesday evening the steamer entered the mouth of the Cumberland and began the trip up river to Nashville. Corporal Wells thought the river was the most beautiful he had ever seen. He especially liked the banks, which in places were several hundred feet high, with rocks and trees clinging to their sides. At 8:00 Thursday morning they passed Fort Donelson. The men were all anxious to stop and tour the battlefield, but the boat captain said they must continue to Nashville. At noon they arrived at Clarksville. From the boat they could see that part of the railroad bridge and several boats had been destroyed in a recent campaign. Business was at a standstill. Corporal Wells observed that "... the people are reaping their reward for their interest in this rebellion." At sundown they passed Fort Zillicoffer, and arrived at Nashville about 8:00 that evening.30

The regiment disembarked the next morning and marched through the city to the headquarters of General Ebenezer Dumont, who addressed them briefly, complimenting them highly on their soldierly appearance.31 Then they marched to a camp site two miles east of town where they pitched their tents. The men had thoroughly enjoyed their boat ride, and they were in the best of spirits on their arrival at Nashville. They hoped their stay at the city would be brief; they were anxious to find the Rebels.32

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30 Wells to Wife, May 2, 1862, Wells Papers.
32 Wells to Wife, May 2, 1862, Wells Papers.
CHAPTER VII

THE REBELS ALWAYS RAN FASTER

Nashville was not a Union town. For the first time the men of the Eleventh experienced hostility from the citizens of a city. Captain Bennet wrote: "You can judge something of the political sentiment here, when I tell you that Union men are as scarce as honest men were in Old Buck's Cabinet!" The soldiers returned the hostility. In the Kentucky towns, where there had been strong Union sentiment, the men had been sympathetic with the plight of the civilians. When they received cold treatment from the people of Nashville, they felt little obligation to help them.

So the Michigan men were not at all unhappy to find the business of the local merchants ruined by secession. Somehow they had managed to secure quantities of Confederate money which they were glad to force upon the store owners. Bennet noted that "... any one who refused to take this trash was deemed a traitor and punished accordingly." Under Federal rule, commercial transactions revived. Although the merchants professed loyalty to the South, they were glad to accept Northern greenbacks instead of Confederate scrip. Northern currency was so readily accepted that the store owners even took some Michigan notes as worthless as anything Confederate. They were even willing to take Wildcat bank notes issued at Constantine.
and Tecumseh.¹

After the battle of Shiloh, the Confederate army had retreated; now it was being slowly followed by a Union force under Henry W. Halleck. When the Eleventh Michigan reached Nashville, there was a promise of another great battle near Corinth, Mississippi. The regiment was eager to get to the fight. It never reached Corinth, but it did get close enough for the men to feel they had been of some use.

Opposing Halleck at Corinth was General Pierre Beauregard. If Halleck had only known it, his force was superior to anything the Confederates could place in the field. But cautious Halleck never did get a clear picture of Rebel strength. One reason was a Confederate cavalryman named John Hunt Morgan. Morgan was an obscure officer who had distinguished himself in the retreat from Shiloh. Beauregard had promoted him to colonel, with authorization to recruit a cavalry force and annoy the Union troops in middle Tennessee and Kentucky. In this Morgan was eminently successful.²

¹Chronicle, May 21, 1862, p. 2. Lieutenant Benjamin Travis, Twenty-fifth Michigan Infantry, wrote of Michigan soldiers taking worthless Michigan bank notes with them when they left for the South. These notes were left over from the days of the wildcat banks when large quantities of worthless and sometimes counterfeit money had circulated freely. For a while anything Northern looked good to the Southern store owners, and the young men from Michigan had a regular field day spending the money their fathers had been left holding at the time of the 1837-38 panic. Benjamin F. Travis, The Story of the Twenty-fifth Michigan (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Kalamazoo Pub. Co., 1897), p. 26.

A small Union force under General James Negley was stationed at Columbia, Tennessee, about forty-five miles south of Nashville. On Sunday, May 4, Negley was disturbed by frequent reports of movement beyond his picket lines. Concluding that the force on his front was large enough to threaten his position, he telegraphed Nashville for reinforcements to be sent to Franklin, about half way between Nashville and Columbia. ³

At 9:00 on the evening of May 4, the men of the Eleventh Michigan were roused and told to be ready in fifteen minutes to march to the railroad depot at Nashville. The regiment was on its way by 10:00. At midnight it arrived at the depot, but the men did not leave town until about 6:00 on the evening of May 5. The eighteen-hour wait at the depot with nothing but cold rations did little to increase the men's respect for their generals. The order to march to Franklin was changed, and the regiment continued to Columbia, where it arrived shortly after midnight on the morning of May 6. By this time the danger of attack had long since vanished, and the men were ordered into camp about two miles south to await orders. ⁴

The men left behind at Nashville had come closer to a fight than those who had gone to Columbia. Those soldiers, not able to march, had been detailed with the camp equipage, and placed in charge of Addison Drake:

⁴Chronicle, May 28, 1862, p. 2.
The night after the main body left, the camp was alarmsed by the approach of a small body of rebel pickets. Supposing the enemy about to attack the camp in force, Quartermaster Drake got out about fifty sick and convalescents, and proposed to show them fight. Of course he must form his men, and the process must be somewhat different from the formation of a wagon train. This he triumphantly accomplished by the stentorian issue of the order, "Fall in, boys, in two rows; some on one end and some on the other!"

Fortunately, no force attacked Drake's battle line.

The regiment remained at Columbia for several weeks as part of the garrison. How long they stayed at their campgrounds two miles to the south is not known; on June 7 their camp was on an elevation a half mile south of town where they could support a battery if attacked.

On May 6, companies A, D, F, H, and I were detailed to accompany a provision train of 145 wagons destined for Huntsville, Alabama. After an uneventful trip twenty miles southward, they were relieved and returned to camp. When they arrived on May 9, they found the other five companies gone to capture a Rebel force reported to be forming in Cedar Swamp, about ten miles from Columbia. This expedition returned empty handed.

The regiments at Columbia were kept on almost constant alert by Rebel activity beyond the picket lines. The Eleventh had its share of duty. Orders came into regimental headquarters at all hours of the day and night. Companies, detachments, and sometimes

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5reporter, Aug. 21, 1869, p. 1.
6Ibid., June 21, 1862, p. 2.
7chronicle, May 21, 1862, p. 2.
the whole regiment would be sent in search of the enemy. Some companies were on picket duty every night. No Rebels were captured, but the men soon learned the danger of straying beyond their pickets. On May 17, Privates Jonathan Ferguson and Kneeland Latham were surprised by seven armed Rebels while out hunting government mules. They were disarmed, marched six miles, and after being forced to take the Confederate oath, were turned loose. Thoroughly frightened, they returned to camp that night.8

These fruitless troop movements discouraged Corporal Wells. On May 11 he wrote his wife that he had expected the war to be over before this, but there were hundreds of unexpected and unavoidable delays, "and so we must learn to wait with patience for the restoration of peace & our return home."9 On May 23, he wrote that the men were going out on several expeditions against the Rebels, but the Rebels always ran faster, and no fights developed.10 Within the next three days the men at Columbia must have received glowing reports of McClellan's Peninsular Campaign, for on May 26, Wells wrote that the news of the war was good. The boys thought their work was nearly done. Once more the country would be happy and free, and they could return to their loved ones at home.11

On Monday, June 2, Andrew Johnson, the War Governor of Tennessee, arrived by train to attend a Union meeting at Columbia.

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8Reporter, June 7, 1862, p. 1.
9Wells to Wife, May 11, 1862, Wells Papers.
10Wells to Wife, May 23, 1862, Ibid.
11Wells to Wife, May 26, 1862, Ibid.
An immense and enthusiastic crowd of the military met Johnson at the depot; Adjutant Chadwick failed to see a single civilian in the group. Heavily escorted, the Johnson party rode to the Nelson house where the Governor spoke for three hours. Chadwick noted that although the talk was a good one, there were less than a hundred civilians present. He thought the people did not turn out because they feared reprisals from the Rebels.12

Lieutenant Aaron Sturgis of Company A described the crowd who heard the Governor as "immense." He wrote that the Governor's talk

... was conciliatory and peaceful, though not fawn like and gilding, as a politician begging for public favor and patronage, but like a man, bold and determined, dealing ponderous blows upon the guilty heads of Northern Abolitionists and Southern Secessionists, the known instigators of treason and rebellion. He assured Tennesseans in sympathy with the South, that they could never succeed in their nefarious scheme against the Government, and that today, but little more than a year from its open birth, their so called "Confederacy," a bastard child of the devil, was making its last spasmodic struggle for life!

Sturgis described the Governor as

... rather larger than medium, with a full and healthy development of mind and body. His ample face is a map of profound wisdom, inflexible will, and determined energy; and his keen, black eye, that lights up the whole man, indicates alike peaceful, but when aroused, a fiery soul within. Johnson is one of Nature's noblemen; and, as a statesman, is justly classed among the first in America.13

Six months of soldiering had taken its toll of the Eleventh Michigan. On June 7, 1862, of the 1029 who left Michigan, Adjutant Chadwick could report only 501 privates for duty. The entire force present and absent was 866, of which 189 were either sick or on

12Reporter, June 21, 1862, p. 2.
13Journal, June 19, 1862, p. 2.
furlough. The regiment had lost 163 through death, discharge, or desertion.\textsuperscript{14} Although the regiment had yet to hear a shot fired in anger, its effective force had been cut almost in half.

These weeks at Columbia may have had their frustrations and dangers, but for many of the men the stay was enjoyable. The men had no trouble getting all the honey they wanted from the numerous bee trees. Sheep, young hogs, and poultry continued to wander into camp, in spite of the best efforts of the soldiers to keep them away. Farmers who found products missing could always register a complaint at regimental headquarters and search the camp the following day. No incriminating evidence was ever found, since a notice of the search had preceded the farmer.\textsuperscript{15}

On the morning of June 9 the Eleventh received orders to move to Murfreesboro, a small town about thirty miles southeast of Nashville. Early in the afternoon the regiment marched to the Columbia depot where it boarded the train and returned to Nashville. After transfer to another track, it arrived at Murfreesboro after dark, and camped in a grove about a half mile from town. The men expected to remain there several weeks as provost guard,\textsuperscript{16} but the generals had other plans. There had been reports of increased Rebel activity in the mountains of middle Tennessee, and the real reason for the march to Murfreesboro was to join an expedition forming under General

\textsuperscript{14}Reporter, June 21, 1862, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{15}Bowen's Oration.

\textsuperscript{16}Wells to Wife, June 10, 1862, Wells Papers.
Dumont, composed of five regiments of infantry, parts of two cavalry regiments and ten pieces of artillery.¹⁷

On June 10, the Eleventh was ordered to be ready the next morning with six days rations, two in haversacks and four on the provision wagons. No one from the lowest corporal to the brigadier general seemed to know what was up. At least General Dumont was trying to begin the movement without the enemy knowing his purpose.

Early the next morning the column marched east on the McMinnville Pike. The regiments with their baggage wagons and provision trains extended for several miles, causing Lieutenant Sturgis to reflect that it equalled in magnitude and surpassed in splendor Washington's army when it evacuated Philadelphia:

It was the grandest military display we have witnessed since we have been in the army; and as we looked upon the forest of bright bayonets and shining firelocks gleaming fiercely in the sun; and saw the long train of artillery, and listened to the heavy tramp of infantry, and rumbling of horses, we felt an exulting defiant pride, such that, if the world had risen against us, we would have battled through to the goal of death in sustaining our military glory, and upholding our national pride.¹⁸

After twenty miles the column reached the outskirts of Woodbury, and the cavalry made a futile dash into town to catch some Rebels. The men, encamped for supper, hoped for a full night's rest; but at 11:00 that night the column reformed. Covering another twenty-two miles in an all-night march, the regiments arrived at McMinnville at

¹⁷Journal, July 10, 1862, p. 1. Wells identifies four of the infantry regiments as the Eleventh Michigan, Fifth Minnesota, Sixty-ninth and Seventieth Ohio. Wells to Wife, June 20, 1862, Wells Papers.

10:00 on the morning of June 12. General Dumont had hoped to catch a Confederate force believed to be operating out of that town. But he found it deserted, and the men enjoyed a day's rest. He permitted no civilians to leave town and arrested all who entered. About 250 were thus seized and forced to take the oath of allegiance.

Learning that the Confederates were preparing to take a stand at Pikeville, General Dumont resumed his march at 3:00 on the morning of June 14. The men soon began a three-mile ascent of a ridge in the Cumberland Mountains. It was a rough road, and many of the men were so worn out with the climb that the roadside was strewn with those who could go no further. Lieutenant Sturgis thought the roads were the "... steepest, hilliest, roughest, rockiest (superlatives don't do it justice,)... ever traveled by men." The country for miles around was an uncultivated region, with few clearings to break the monotony of the scene. The men had covered only seven miles since McMinnville when they encamped at 10:00 in the evening. Since they had left their knapsacks and blankets at the foot of the mountain with the baggage train, they had no rations. They pressed a nearby flock of sheep into service, cooked a saltless supper and slept in the brush without their blankets and with the temperature near freezing. By morning the baggage train brought hard

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19Wells to Wife, June 20, 1862, Wells Papers.
21Wells to Wife, June 20, 1862, Wells Papers.
22Ibid.
crackers for breakfast.  

The column had marched several miles in the morning, when a dispatch informed the advance guard of cavalry that the Confederates had evacuated Pikeville and could not be found. Sixty-five miles from the nearest supply base, with rations running low, General Dumont gave up the chase and returned to McMinnville. The reversed column encamped at 10:00 in the evening of June 15, on the bank of a stream about a mile from the western foot of the mountain. At McMinnville the next morning the men were fed with 5,000 pounds of bread which General Dumont had ordered the citizens to prepare to save their town from burning. The men were so hungry it made little difference that the bread was not of the best quality.

The regiments remained at McMinnville until 4:00 in the afternoon of June 17, when they resumed the march to Murfreesboro. At 11:00, the men rested a few hours, then continued to Woodbury, where they arrived at 7:00 the next morning, having been marched at night to avoid the oppressive heat and dust. Leaving Woodbury at 5:00 on the evening of June 18, the column continued westward. At dark a hard rain fell for several hours, but failed to dampen the spirits of the men, who sang and shouted all the time. The column reached Murfreesboro about 5:00 the next morning.

Exhausted by their 170 mile march, the men spent the remainder of June 19 and all of the next day in camp. As Corporal Wells said,

\[24\] Wells to Wife, June 20, 1862, [Wells Papers].

\[25\] Ibid.

there was no use in following the Rebels "... for retreat has become a science with them & they are getting so they understand it to perfection."²⁷

On June 21, the Eleventh returned to Nashville and resumed its place with the garrison.²⁸ Colonel Stoughton revived his policy of constant drill, and on June 25, almost lost his life. The regiment was drawn up in battle line with the Colonel on his horse in front of the men. As the men were being put through the manual of arms for firing formations, an accidentally discharged musket killed the horse.²⁹

On July 1, General Buell ordered the Eleventh Michigan to march at once to Murfreesboro.³⁰ This order must have been countermanded, for the next day the regiment was still at Nashville.³¹ But the folks back home knew only of the original order, and when, on July 13, Confederate General Nathan Forrest captured the Murfreesboro garrison, word reached Michigan that the Eleventh was included in the surrender. It was several days before the rumor was corrected.³²

²⁷Wells to Wife, June 20, 1862, Wells Papers.
²⁹Reporter, July 12, 1862, p. 3.
³¹Ibid., p. 91.
³²Reporter, July 19, 1862, p. 3.
"I do not know what more we could do to get into a fight."

With Rebel activity increasing north of Nashville, the Eleventh Michigan returned to Kentucky. First knowledge of a new thrust came when four companies of the Ninth Pennsylvania Cavalry encountered a large Confederate force under James B. Starnes at Tompkinsville, Kentucky, on July 9, 1862. The Eleventh Michigan was immediately dispatched and the chase was on. For five weeks the regiment pursued phantom Confederate horsemen under Forrest, Morgan, and Starnes. Only twice did they get within striking distance of the enemy, and only once was he within range of their guns. It was the same old story of the futility of sending infantry after cavalry.

Late on July 9, Colonel John F. Miller sent the Eleventh by rail to Bowling Green to assist against Morgan. The men broke camp

1Official Records, XVI, Part II, 113.

2General Buell later testified that the exact identity of the Confederate force was seldom known. Ibid., XVI, Part I, 254.

3A Branch County history states the Eleventh Michigan was supplied with horses and used as mounted infantry for a brief period while they were near Paris, Kentucky. Other sources of the action near Paris make no mention of this. Possibly the regiment was mounted at some other time during its Kentucky campaign. History of Branch County, Michigan, p. 66.

4Official Records, XVI, Part I, 753. Colonel John F. Miller was in command at Nashville. Miller, as well as most of the men in the Eleventh, usually referred to the unknown Confederate raiders as Morgan's.
in a hurry, leaving their tents, wagons and baggage behind. They arrived at the Louisville and Nashville Railroad depot about midnight. Colonel Miller supposed they were to leave immediately, but they waited five hours for the train and reached Bowling Green at noon. Morgan was nowhere in the vicinity. After time out for dinner the regiment pushed on to Cave City. No raiders were there, either. But Colonel Stoughton heard they could be found at Glasgow, and he roused his men at 11:00 at night to march through the rain and mud. When two miles from Glasgow Stoughton learned that Morgan had left the previous afternoon, and he marched the men back to Cave City.

Here the regiment was divided, one part returning to Bowling Green, the other going by railroad to Munfordville. Stoughton went with the Munfordville detachment, since he had reports that Morgan was about to burn the Green River bridge nearby. He found the bridge intact, and no Rebels in sight. He remained there overnight to prevent any destruction. Then, on the report that Morgan was forty miles to the east, the Eleventh and another regiment were ordered across country toward Columbia. After marching about three miles, the column was ordered to return, for Morgan was now reported to be

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5 Journal, July 24, 1862, p. 2.
6 Ibid.
7 James B. Fry, Chief of Staff for General Buell, ordered five companies to each town. Official Records, XVI, Part I, 732. Although no record has been found indicating which companies returned to Bowling Green, Corporal Wells wrote that the sick were left in Nashville, and about 200 were waiting in camp at Bowling Green. Wells to Wife, July 22, 1862, Wells Papers.
8 Available evidence is inadequate to establish a definite time sequence. The regiment probably arrived at the bridge the evening of July 11.
burning Lebanon. From Munfordville, the regiment was soon ordered to continue by train to Louisville, where Morgan was supposed to be heading. \(^9\) On July 14, the Eleventh was at Louisville, waiting for Morgan to come to them. \(^11\)

When Morgan had not appeared after three days, the Eleventh moved with other units under the command of Colonel Cicero Maxwell to Frankfort, where Brigadier General G. Clay Smith was organizing a force to move against Morgan, now reported near Georgetown. But Smith left Frankfort without Maxwell's units and marched toward Lexington, where he would be on Morgan's left flank. When Morgan withdrew toward Paris, Smith continued the pursuit on the turnpike from Lexington to Paris. \(^12\)

At 2:00 on the morning of July 18, Colonel Maxwell left Frankfort with a force of 1,200 and marched toward Paris. \(^13\) From Georgetown at 11:00 he sent word of his position to Smith. Just before midnight, General Smith instructed the Colonel to continue to Paris, and when within four or five miles of that town, to inform

\(^9\) *Journal*, July 24, 1862, p.2. On July 12, Colonel Miller wrote he had just received a dispatch that Colonel Stoughton and other troops were marching to intercept the enemy at Bear Wallow. Miller is probably referring to the attempted march from Munfordville to Columbia. *Official Records*, XVI, Part I, 753.

\(^10\) *Journal*, July 24, 1862, p. 2.


\(^12\) *Official Records*, XVI, Part I, 758-59.

\(^13\) Maxwell's force was the Eleventh Michigan, Fifty-fifth Indiana, one company of the Sixteenth United States Infantry, part of the Ninth Pennsylvania Cavalry, and a section of Nicklin's Battery. *Ibid.*, p. 762.
him. Maxwell recalled his pickets, reformed the column, and continued eastward on July 19. This was between 2:00 and 3:00 in the morning, and the officers had trouble starting the column, for the men had slept little since their last march. Halfway to Paris, Maxwell learned from Smith, then within six miles of Paris on the Lexington Pike, that Morgan was moving toward Winchester. Smith thought he could hold him until Maxwell arrived.\(^{14}\)

So at last the Federals had an effective force within striking distance of Morgan. Colonel Maxwell with 1,200 men was approaching Paris from the Georgetown road, while General Smith with 1,100 men was coming up from Lexington. Although they did not know the size of Morgan's forces, both Union commanders knew that together they would at least equal the Confederates. If Maxwell could arrive in time, Smith could extend his line to cover Morgan's only good line of retreat along the Winchester road. It did not matter whether the Union forces were strong enough to defeat the Rebels. If Morgan could be held in check for several hours, more Federals would arrive, and the chase would be over.

This strategy depended on Colonel Maxwell and his men. Maxwell continued until he was within four miles of Paris. Here, between 8:00 and 9:00 in the morning, a civilian told him that Morgan was still in Paris and ready to give battle. The column moved forward a short distance, halted, and scouts sent ahead. They returned, informing the Colonel that they had seen horsemen. Maxwell formed his

\(^{14}\)Tbid.
men in line of battle and waited. A message from Smith informed Maxwell that the General was about two miles from Paris on the Lexington turnpike, and directed the Colonel to move his command as quickly as possible to the fair grounds on the turnpike. Maxwell immediately formed his men and resumed the march. He reached Paris about 10:30 in the morning, but Morgan had escaped on the Winchester road.¹⁵

General Smith was in Paris when Maxwell arrived. Smith found that Maxwell's men were as tired and hungry as his own, but he determined to continue the pursuit at once. He learned that Morgan had been reinforced seven miles from Paris by 2,000 men under Colonel Williams and was returning to attack the town. A captain of the Paris Home Guard assured Smith that the informant was a reliable man and had seen Morgan's forces. Smith now deployed his troops to defend the town. He sent Colonel Leonidas Metcalfe with 250 men on a reconnaissance, from which Metcalfe returned in the evening to report no Rebels on the Winchester road.¹⁶

Pursuit was delayed until early morning because of a drenching thunderstorm which lasted most of the night. After the storm, Smith marched toward Winchester with most of the cavalry,¹⁷ followed by Maxwell, now in command of all of the infantry. After commandeering all the wagons he could find to haul his weary soldiers, Maxwell reached Winchester at 5:00 in the evening of July 20. At Winchester

¹⁵Tbid., pp. 762-63.
¹⁶Tbid., p. 760.
¹⁷Tbid., p. 761.
the men learned that Morgan had left hours before. Smith then ordered Maxwell to place 150 infantry in wagons and proceed with the cavalry toward Richmond. At Maxwell's suggestion, the order was modified; the Colonel found enough wagons to carry all of the Eleventh Michigan and parts of two other regiments. With 500 wagon-borne infantrymen, the column left Winchester at 11:00 that evening, ferried the Kentucky River, and arrived at Richmond at 10:00 on the morning of July 21. Late that evening Maxwell received orders from General Jeremiah Boyle to return to Lexington. This was accomplished on July 22, and the wagons and horses taken on the march were returned.\textsuperscript{18}

On July 25, General Boyle wrote to General Buell that Morgan had left Kentucky, and Smith ought to have captured him.\textsuperscript{19} But according to Second Lieutenant Henry S. Platt of the Eleventh Michigan, the blame for the failure at Paris was Maxwell's. Maxwell and his column had arrived near Paris when Morgan and his men were still resting in the town. Maxwell had halted the column for two hours in spite of Colonel Stoughton's request that they go on, and this delay had enabled Morgan to escape with the loss of only a few of his pickets. It was certainly unusual that Maxwell held his men in check within sight of the enemy they had been chasing day and night for almost a week.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. 763. General Boyle was in command at Louisville.
\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., p. 751.
Corporal Wells believed they might have captured Morgan and his whole force if it had not been for the "cowardly" Colonel Maxwell. Within cannon shot of Morgan he had drawn his men into line of battle and waited for Morgan to attack, although he must have known that the Confederate commander would not do so. The column remained about a half mile from the road where Morgan's whole force marched past on their retreat. The men were all anxious to move to the road and intercept the Rebels, but Maxwell would not allow it. Wells wrote that Colonels Stoughton and Maxwell "... had some pretty hard words about the affair..." Stoughton wanted to cut the road and attack Morgan, but Maxwell would not allow it, saying it would start a fight. Stoughton

... told him that was what he came there for: & there was no use marching men to death to get in sight of the enemy & then fold their arms & let the traiter get away unmolested & he for one would do it no more. Our men were much disappointed when they found that the rebels had escaped.

Wells wrote that if they had only shot Maxwell, "... they would have rid the country of as big a scoundrel & coward as Morgan himself."21

General Smith, in his official report, wrote that Colonel Maxwell arrived a short time after Smith had occupied Morgan's abandoned encampment at Paris. Then it was that Smith had learned that four miles from town Maxwell had formed line of battle and had remained there for nearly two hours22 - the two hours that Morgan

21Wells to Wife, Aug. 21, 1862, Wells Papers. Corporal Wells was not a participant in the Paris campaign, but certainly drew his information from men of the Eleventh who were. In his letter he mistakenly refers to the cowardly commander as Smith instead of Maxwell.

22Official Records, XVI, Part I, 760.
used to escape.

Though Morgan escaped because of Maxwell's hesitancy, Smith was blamed. General Smith's force was inferior to Maxwell's. Half were raw home guards without sabers; many were without pistols. Without Maxwell's troops, Smith could not hope to engage Morgan effectively. When Smith reached Paris he had no knowledge of Maxwell's whereabouts. Nevertheless he pressed forward to give battle, but could not divide his column to cover Morgan's retreat. Lacking the strength to stop Morgan, Smith was unable to reach the Winchester Pike until the Confederate had withdrawn all but a few of his rear guard.23

On July 23 the Eleventh Michigan was at Lexington waiting for a train to take them back to Louisville.24 On the 25th they were waiting at Louisville to leave for Russellville, Kentucky, to drive the Rebel bands from Logan, Christian, Trigg, and Todd Counties.25 The regiment, minus two or three companies stationed at Bowling

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23 Maxwell's column was composed of organized volunteer and regular troops. General Smith had command of 230 Ninth Pennsylvania Cavalry, 165 Eighteenth Kentucky Infantry, 100 Cincinnati police, and 100 home guards. When within six miles of Paris, he was joined by 500 additional home guards and three cannon which were too heavy for use on a chase. Smith had been ordered by General Boyle to gather a force at Frankfort, but when Maxwell arrived, he had additional orders from Boyle placing Maxwell in command at Frankfort and directing Smith to move to Lexington and take charge there. Thus Smith, who was supposed to be in charge of the Federal force was ordered to divide his men and assume command of the weaker wing. Ibid., pp. 759-60.


Green, was in camp two miles from the city toward the fair grounds. Although the men were still without their regimental band or camp equipage, their evening dress parade of July 25, "... was distinguished by the solidity of movement and soldierly bearing of the troops, and in the precision with which the officers gave their commands." On July 27, the contemplated move to Russellville was cancelled, and General Boyle was ordered to send the regiment to Nashville. It arrived by rail at the Tennessee capital on July 29. Although this move ended the service of the Eleventh Michigan in Kentucky, it was not its last action against Morgan. Captain Oakes wrote from Nashville: "You ask why we don't get into a fight and hurt somebody. Now the fact is, we ... try to do so, but have never been able to overtake the enemy .... I do not know what more we could do to get into a fight." For two weeks the regiment remained at Nashville. Then, during the second week in August, Morgan raided Gallatin, Tennessee, a point on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad some thirty miles to the northeast. Colonel Miller immediately organized the Eleventh Michigan, Sixty-ninth Ohio, and four pieces of the Fourth Indiana
Battery.\textsuperscript{30} The Federals left shortly after midnight on August 13.\textsuperscript{31} They proceeded slowly, since they feared the track might have been torn up. Within three miles of Gallatin, the train was halted at the burned-out Camp Creek bridge. Miller moved his men over to the pike. As they marched they saw the smoke of burning buildings at Gallatin.\textsuperscript{32} A few of Morgan's command, left at the fair grounds to burn the amphitheater, unexpectedly encountered Miller's advance guard. Each outfit was concealed from the other by a field of corn, and was not aware of the other's presence until they met at a crossroads.\textsuperscript{33} Three raiders were killed in an exchange of fire. Sergeant Edward Frost of Company E wrote:

Col. Stoughton saw the men fall, when he turned in his saddle, took off his hat and waved it to us, at the same time saying, "Come on boys - double quick!" and then if you ever heard loud cheering, you can just imagine what a noise our ... regiment made . . . . it was no double quick - it was a double run . . . . The way the canteens, haversacks and blankets flew was a caution.\textsuperscript{34}

At last the Eleventh had caught up with a flesh-and-blood enemy, and if the men had anything to say about it, they were not going to waste the chance. No Colonel Maxwell was in command of this


\textsuperscript{31}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{32}Chronicle, Sept. 3, 1862, p. 2. Sturgis identified the burned bridge as the one over Camp Creek. \textit{Journal}, Aug. 28, 1862, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{34}Chronicle, Sept. 3, 1862, p. 2.
sortie; both Miller and Stoughton believed in finding the enemy and hitting him hard. So up the road they ran, the Sixty-ninth Ohio in the lead, the Eleventh following, and the artillery coming so fast that when Sergeant Frost tripped and fell, he had to scramble to avoid being run over.35 "We kept up the run for about three miles, the sweat just running off the men, and we thought we were sure of Morgan; but we were doomed to disappointment, for he had skedaddled for parts unknown."36 The only Rebels were the remnants of the rear guard encountered at the crossroads. A search of every house for fugitives revealed nothing but a few firearms and some disloyal citizens, who were arrested.37

Late in the afternoon Miller ordered the column returned to the train. All were aboard except the artillery, "... when all at once we were fired into, and such a snapping and cracking, the like of which I never before heard." Part of the Eleventh was deployed as skirmishers, and they covered the hills looking for Rebels among the tall grass and blackberry vines. They saw few, since Morgan's men were hidden in the brush and in a cornfield. After a few volleys, fired mostly by Company E, the artillery unlimbered and scattered the remaining Confederates. The enemy lost about twenty-five in killed and wounded, the Eleventh none. The regiment re-embarked, and

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35 Available evidence indicates this was the order of pursuit. Thus it was the Sixty-ninth Ohio who exchanged shots at the crossroads.

36 Ibid.

reached its Nashville camp about midnight.  

This was the last time the Eleventh Michigan was involved with Morgan. Their recent adventures gave them little satisfaction. True, they had exchanged shots with the enemy at Gallatin, but they could not yet really consider themselves veterans. In over eleven months of soldiering, the supreme test of battle had as yet been denied them.

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38Chronicle, Sept. 3, 1862, p. 2. Frost wrote that the Sixty-ninth Ohio lost two killed and one wounded from the first fire.
CHAPTER IX

"We keenly and deeply feel these wanton delays . . . ."

While the regiment remained at Nashville through the rest of August and early September, small Rebel bands, constantly harassing the picket lines, forced the men to fall out for battle formation at all hours of the day and night. Sergeant Frost wrote that the regiment was engaged in a lot of hard service, with only two or three companies off duty at any time. More than once the men hastily reinforced a picket post, and then learned the dangerous thrust was a mule that had strayed too near. Corporal Wells wrote on August 29 of rumors of a large force marching on the city. They would not be caught by surprise, for the men slept on their arms every night. Wells thought the danger more contrived than real, but it was best to be ready.2

At Nashville the Eleventh lost its band. The months of campaigning had reduced the size of regiments, and maintenance of complete regimental bands seemed unreasonable. So the War Department ordered only one band to each brigade. Colonel Stoughton thanked the musicians for their skill and loyalty and ordered that the instruments be returned to the Common Council of Three Rivers, subject to the orders of the regimental commander.3 Late in August the band returned

1Chronicle, Sept. 3, 1862, p. 2.
2Wells to Wife, Aug. 29, 1862, Wells Papers.
3Reporter, Aug. 30, 1862, p. 3.
to Three Rivers where on September 4 it entertained the village with excellent music and concluded the evening with a "grand social dance."\textsuperscript{4} Later the band was hired by the newly organized Twenty-fifth Michigan, and early in October it was in Louisville, where a local paper described the band as "... an excellent one, \(\text{that}\) discourses music of such character and style as cannot fail to be a benefit as well as a delight to the regiment."\textsuperscript{5}

Unfortunately, others than the musicians were leaving. Until the end of its service, the Eleventh was faced with the problem of a constantly dwindling regiment. This was a difficulty encountered by all volunteer units. Responsibility for filling the ranks of a state's regiments should have been the job of the governors. But a state's prestige depended upon how many units it placed in the field, and not on whether it maintained the regiments at full strength. Once a regiment left for the South, replacements were its own responsibility.

As early as March, 1862, Adjutant Chadwick was in Three Rivers, trying to find 100 men for the Eleventh. On March 15 he spoke to a packed audience at Kelsey's Hall. Chadwick assured them that the regiment was now in good condition, and as soon as men could be found to fill the ranks, the Eleventh would be prepared to "... enter the battlefield, and win the distinction everywhere so meritoriously given the 'Michigan boys' for true grit and bravery."\textsuperscript{6}

\textsuperscript{4}\textit{Chronicle}, Sept. 3, 1862, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{5}\textit{Reporter}, Oct. 11, 1862, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{6}\textit{Chronicle}, Mar. 19, 1862, p. 3.
But no matter how attractive the recruiting officer might make things seem, the men knew he was not representing a real fighting unit. The boys back home were not enlisting to die of measles, or march for weeks in fruitless pursuit of guerillas; they were joining to fight, and when it came to fighting, it didn't look like the Eleventh was ever going to see any. At some time or other during its first year of service, many of the regimental officers returned for recruits, and ran into this problem. The most they could offer was the advantage of being in an organized unit with experienced officers.7 The drive for new men produced so few that in his first annual report Colonel Stoughton noted that the regiment had lost 287 and gained 15. The Colonel's statistics disclosed the regiment's difficulty. The Eleventh could report not a single man killed in action, dead of wounds, wounded, or taken prisoner. But 118 had died from other causes.8

In late August, 1862, General Braxton Bragg led his Confederate forces north from Chattanooga. Bragg was eventually to invade Kentucky, forcing Buell to follow and overtake him; but when the campaign started, the Union commander was in doubt whether Bragg intended to invade Kentucky or retake Nashville. Allowing for both possibilities, Buell concentrated his forces at Murfreesboro. The crushing defeat of General William Nelson's force at Richmond, Kentucky, let Buell to believe the next blow would be at Nashville. Early in

7Ibid., Sept. 24, 1862, p. 3.

September he withdrew to that city and prepared its defenses.  

Buell had been concerned for several weeks about the defense of Nashville, and on August 7, had ordered his Chief Engineer, Captain James Morton, to fortify the city. Morton organized a camp, impressed Negroes, and detailed fatigue parties of soldiers to work with them. Work began in the south part of the city, with Company B of the Eleventh Michigan, under Second Lieutenant Francis M. Bissell. This project soon involved most of the able-bodied men of the Eleventh, as well as men from other regiments. The completed work was named Fort Negley, and it was the principal defensive work at Nashville.

When Buell concentrated at Murfreesboro, the Eleventh left Nashville to march there. Reaching Murfreesboro, the men watched the Union column arrive, march through town, and then found themselves following in its rear back toward Nashville. On September 8 they were camped six miles from the city. Other regiments soon arrived, and for the first time they were regularly brigaded. The new brigade, known as the Twenty-ninth of the Eighth Division of the

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9 Horn, p. 166.


11 History of Branch County, Michigan, pp. 66-67. Company B's commander Captain Melvin Mudge was absent on recruiting service. First Lieutenant Jerome Bowen was on the sick list.

12 Melvin J. Lyon, Company D, later related that the whole regiment worked on this project. Interview with Arthur H. Mann, July, 1947.

13 History of Branch County, Michigan, p. 66.

14 Wells to Wife, Sept. 8, 1862, Wells Papers.
Army of the Ohio, consisted of the Eleventh Michigan, Nineteynth
Illinois, Eighteenth and Sixty-ninth Ohio.\textsuperscript{15}

Again it looked as though the Eleventh would see action.
Everyone knew that if Bragg did not attack, Buell would go after him;
either way it looked like the new Twenty-ninth Brigade would have a
fight. Soon after his arrival in Nashville, Buell realized that
Bragg was racing north into Kentucky, leaving the Union forces far
behind. On September 8, General George H. Thomas arrived and was
placed in command of the city. The next day Buell left for Kentucky.\textsuperscript{16}
The Michigan men were not reluctant to stay behind with Thomas for if
Buell left such a trusted officer and a large garrison he must expect
the city to be attacked. But on September 15, Thomas also left for
Kentucky, leaving behind the divisions of Negley and John Palmer,\textsuperscript{17}
the Eleventh being a part of Negley's division. Somewhere in Kentucky
there was going to be a battle, and the Eleventh would not be in it.

At least one member of the regiment was fed up with the way
the war was going. Writing from headquarters on the day Thomas left,
and signing himself "A Soldier," he wrote:

\begin{quote}
We find ourselves where we were nine months ago - the same
ground to be gone over again and we are fortifying at Nashville
as though England and France were invading Tennessee, . . . .
There is certainly a mystery connected with the operations of
the Federal army . . . . The soldiers who have left their com-
fortable homes, families, and everything dear, to rescue their
bleeding country from the ruthless hands of Treason and Traitors,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{15}Official Records, XVI, Part II, 989.
\textsuperscript{16}John Fitch, Annals of the Army of the Cumberland (Philad-
\textsuperscript{17}Ibid.
ask why this damnable, criminal delay? We keenly and deeply feel these wanton delays and procrastinations, . . . .\textsuperscript{18}

Most of the generals saw reasons for these delays, but to the men in the ranks they were inexcusable. Fully eighteen months after the war had begun, the North seemed to be losing. The same day that Nelson was so badly mauled at Richmond, Lee defeated Pope at Second Bull Run. In early September the Confederate armies were rapidly advancing in both east and west. There was talk Lee would assault Washington. The only organized force in front of Bragg was Lew Wallace's at Cincinnati, consisting mostly of militia and citizens impressed to build earthworks. The picture was indeed discouraging.

\textsuperscript{18}Reporter, Oct. 25, 1862, p. 1.
CHAPTER X

"I have got so I can sleep on the soft of a rock . . . ."

Nashville was an important town, and Buell believed that important places once captured should be held. So, even though it meant weakening the Army of the Ohio, Negley's and Palmer's small divisions were left behind with Negley in command.

Nashville was deep in hostile territory, and Negley had but five days provisions to stock uncompleted defenses. To protect themselves, the Union forces rushed to completion Forts Negley, Andrew Johnson, Confiscation, and Casino, and ringed the city with a picket line strengthened by rifle pits and heavy abatis.¹ But no matter how strong the defenses, without food they would soon fall. Yet food shortage may have saved the Union garrison, since it forced Negley to fight an offensive campaign. If the men wanted food they would have to get it, and this would mean carrying the fight to the enemy. For nearly two months the Union troops at Nashville were constantly engaged, either defending the city from attack or penetrating the countryside in search of provisions.

Undoubtedly the Eleventh Michigan was involved in several foraging expeditions, but one one is recorded. Colonel Stoughton was placed in charge of a forage and reconnaissance party consisting of the Eleventh Michigan, Thirty-seventh Indiana, one section of the Fifth

¹Fitch, p. 102.
Michigan Battery, and 250 wagons. On October 5, as the column marched down the Cumberland River near Fort Riley, the train was fired upon by guerillas, who were soon dispersed. Then the men came to a stretch of the road washed into the river, leaving only a narrow shelf obstructed by felled trees. After clearing the trees and bridging the gap, the column advanced, and was again fired upon from the rear. The Rebels were again dispersed, driven across the river, and the march continued. Filling his wagons with the products of the countryside, Stoughton reversed the column and marched toward Nashville.

As the troops rounded Neely's Bend they were attacked by a Confederate force stationed on the bluff on the opposite side of the river.

Wheeling his guns into position, Stoughton ordered the artillery and infantry to open fire. The Confederates were routed, and the column returned to Nashville.

Forage was not the only reason for sorties. Shortly after Negley took command, Captain Hood was sent with a detachment of the Eleventh seven miles south of Nashville to John Overton's plantation, where it had been reported large quantities of horseshoe irons and

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nails were concealed. Captain Hood announced his mission to Mrs. Overton, who assured him there was no contraband on the place; the soldiers could search if they wished. But when Hood told her his search would begin under the floor of the meat-house, Mrs. Overton admitted the horseshoes were there. Search revealed two tons of the iron.5

The foraging and raiding parties continued, but except for the attack on Lavergne, southeast of Nashville, on October 7, no real fight developed. In that action, part of the Nashville garrison routed a Confederate force training in the town. Large quantities of foodstores were captured,6 which helped to relieve a garrison subsisting most of the time on half rations.7

During the first week in November, a potentially serious threat developed. More than the usual Rebel activity had been noticed beyond the picket lines; on November 5, about 8,000 Confederates under Nathan B. Forrest approached the city from the south and east. After brief skirmishing between Forrest's cavalry and the outposts, the attacking force was suddenly withdrawn.8

On November 6, the advance units of the Union army appeared at the outskirts of the city and the siege was over.9 Alexander M.

5Fitch, pp. 635-36.
6Ibid., pp. 103-05. The Eleventh Michigan was not in this action.
7Squire to Robertson, May 28, 1863, Regimental Service Records.
McCook's division in the lead was greeted as friends and deliverers by the besieged forces. The men in Nashville had never been in great danger, but they had been harassed so long, and had lived so many weeks without news, they sometimes feared they were forgotten. On November 12 the garrison received its first mail in nearly three months.  

Bragg's invasion of Kentucky had ended, and once again the North was secure. But Perryville was a Union victory in name only. Bragg's army had not been destroyed; indeed, it was very much alive. Washington had long been dissatisfied with Buell's actions, and after he failed to bag the Rebels in Kentucky, his fate was sealed. On October 30, he was relieved, and command of the Army of the Ohio went to General William S. Rosecrans. One of Rosecrans' first acts was to change the Army's name - from now on it would be the Army of the Cumberland. The Eleventh Michigan retained its old brigade and division number, and was assigned to the Centre under the command of General Thomas.  

For almost a year the Eleventh would serve in Colonel Timothy R. Stanley's Brigade of Negley's division.

Rosecrans' army gradually assembled at Nashville. Much needed to be done. All lines of communication with the north had been destroyed; these must be reopened. Nashville was short of everything, and once the railroad was opened, vast quantities of military stores were shipped down from the north. With such a large Union force gathering, picket lines were extended. The Eleventh Michigan engaged

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10 Wells to Wife, Nov. 12, 1862, Wells Papers.
11 Cist, pp. 72, 263.
in this duty, and early in December some of the regiment found themselves on familiar ground at the Overton Plantation, now called Camp Hamilton.12

It was more than a year since the Eleventh had moved south; the glories of battle still evaded the Michigan men. They were ready. Reflecting on their first year of service, Colonel Stoughton wrote that the gallantry shown by his officers and men in the skirmishes at Gallatin and Neely's Bend convinced him that in a fight the regiment would be equal to the best.13 In many ways, the Eleventh was already a veteran regiment. The long marches were no longer so terrible, and the men now carried much lighter packs. Corporal Bowen wrote that heavy clothing was kept to the barest minimum; blankets were exchanged for rubber ponchos. Some had exchanged their Bibles for packs of cards. The packs dwindled

... until they hung over our shoulders as thin and flabby as a codfish. If you held them up towards the sun they would hardly make a shadow unless they contained one of our dirty shirts. We cared not how well our canteens and haversacks were filled, for they gave us in return for the burden both cheer and strength, but the knapsack was a back-aching, leg-wearying appendage that yielded neither meat nor drink. Yet stored away in one corner of each one, was a little package which contained perhaps a few letters and photographs from kind friends at home, that no scorching sun or wearying march could induce us to cast away.14

Though the Michigan men might look enviously upon battle-tested

12Fitch, p. 636. The exact date the regiment moved is not known. Stoughton wrote from there on December 20. Stoughton to Blair, Dec. 20, 1862, Regimental Service Records.


14Bowen's Oration.
regiments, they knew they were no longer green. When McCook arrived, some brand new regiments came with him. Corporal Wells found that some of these new men thought they were having a hard time - they hadn't had any butter for three whole weeks and had to sleep on the ground:

... poor boys, I fear they will learn many a lesson by the time they are in the service a year: They will get so they will not think of butter & of beds to sleep on: I have got so I can sleep on the soft of a rock as well as anywhere.15

The Colonel and his corporals could write with justifiable pride. True, they hadn't been through a battle, but when a man sat down and thought of the year's accomplishments, the record didn't look so bad. The past months of service had been pretty good, and it wasn't their fault they hadn't been in a fight. Anyway, there would be a campaign in the spring; maybe their chance would come then.

15Wells to Wife, Nov. 12, 1862, Wells Papers.
"Soldiers! The eyes of the whole country and nation are upon you."

Their chance came sooner than they expected. Usually Civil War armies stopped their campaigns with the winter season; but in Tennessee the winter was mild, and there was no reason why operations could not continue. No reason, that is, if you overlook the fact that the Union forces received their supplies from Louisville over a single and very vulnerable railroad. Though War Department pressure upon Rosecrans was strong, he steadfastly refused to launch an offensive until he had collected enough rations at Nashville to enable him to continue the campaign if his communications were broken. As it turned out, the single railroad was severed by Morgan on December 26, but by that time Nashville was filled with supplies.¹

Then came the big chance. In spite of strong protests by Bragg and Joseph E. Johnston, President Jefferson Davis detached 10,000 men under General Carter Stevenson from Bragg's force, and sent them to aid John Pemberton in Mississippi. When news of Stevenson's departure reached Nashville, Rosecrans decided to advance against his weakened foe. On the morning of December 26 the Union commander sent his troops along different roads, yet close enough to support each other. Rosecrans was forced to spread his columns thus because the superior Confederate cavalry had so effectively screened their army that its

¹Matthew Forney Steele, American Campaigns (2 vols., Harrisburg, Penn.: The Telegraph Press, 1947), I, 313.
STONES RIVER NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

LEGEND

BEGINNING OF BATTLE

CONFEDERATES

FEDERALS

END OF BATTLE

FEDERALS

PARK BOUNDARY

SCALE IN MILES

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1950 0-F-406322
REPRINT 1950
whereabouts was unknown. Thomas L. Crittenden marched directly along the Murfreesboro Pike. McCook followed the Nolensville Pike to a point just south of that town, where his men took a dirt road running south-easterly to Murfreesboro. Thomas marched on the Franklin Pike to Brentwood, then by the Wilson Pike to a side road which took his men through Nolensville and on to the Murfreesboro Pike. The Eleventh Michigan marched with Thomas. On December 26, General Negley began the march as the advance for Thomas's column. He followed the Franklin Pike to Brentwood, and from there the Wilson Pike to Owen's store. There Negley heard heavy firing in the direction of Nolensville. Instructing his train to follow later, he pushed ahead with the division to support General Jefferson C. Davis, whose troop's advance was being contested in the pass south of Nolensville. While Negley was encamped for the night at Nolensville, a heavy rain made the country roads almost impassable and slowed the movement of the army. With the arrival of his train, Negley left at 10:00 the next morning and moved east over an exceedingly rough road to Crittenden's right, which was at Stewartsboro on the Murfreesboro Pike. On December 28 the division remained in camp at Stewartsboro, to allow the train to catch up with the column.

2Horn, pp. 192, 196.

3On December 19, 1862, the Eleventh Michigan had been assigned to the Second (late Twenty-ninth) brigade (Stanley's), of the Second (late Eighth) division (Negley's), of the Centre (Thomas), of the Fourteenth Army Corps (Army of the Cumberland). Official Records, XX, Part I, pp. 174, 177-78.

4Ibid., p. 372.
On December 29, Negley forded Stewart's Creek southwest of the village and two miles above the turnpike bridge. Marching in support of the head and right flank of Crittenden's column, the division covered eight miles and reached a point west of Wilkinson's Cross Roads, where it camped. In the evening a cold, drenching rain began; without fire or shelter, the men of the Eleventh spent a miserable night. Realizing "... that we were just on the verge of a bloody struggle, did not tend to make our slumbers peaceful on that dark, foreboding night. Many eyes were wakeful, eagerly watching for the first dawn of the morning, ..."  

The battle did not start on December 30. The opposing armies were within striking distance, but neither side wished to begin the contest until lines were adjusted and the enemy's position determined. During the morning Negley's division moved to the southeast and took a position on the right of Palmer's division. About 10:00, Negley was joined on the right by Philip H. Sheridan's division of McCook's corps. Orders were given for the entire line to advance, and "... then with the sharp crack of musketry and an awful yelling we drove their skirmishers inside of their intrenchments." Spasmodic firing continued until dark, but the men were unable to dislodge the Confederates from their position. During this advance, First Lieutenant Joseph Wilson was killed on the skirmish line. The rear companies

5Cist, p. 93.
6Bowen's Oration.
8Journal, Feb. 5, 1863, p. 2.
were unaware of his death until the stretcher party returned with his body. "As we looked on his still form, we realized what war meant, our cheeks paled as we viewed our first sacrifice for our country."9

By the evening of December 30 the Confederate position had been determined and the Union battle line prepared. Rosecrans had his men in an approximately north-south line with the extreme right about a mile west of the left. Crittenden's corps was on the left, McCook on the right, and Thomas's corps in the center. Stanley's Brigade was to the extreme right of Thomas, with his men facing the southeast, and their right resting on Wilkinson's Turnpike. To their left was John F. Miller's Brigade of Negley's division; on their right, a short distance south of the pike, was George Robert's Brigade of Sheridan's division.

At dark these lines were drawn, and most of the men of both sides settled down to rest. Not so with the Eleventh Michigan. The entire regiment was ordered out on skirmish duty, and remained awake the whole night. It was bitterly cold and damp. A few rations were brought up, but no fires were allowed, and no man was permitted to leave his post.10

Few men of either army slept that night. Both armies had their bands, and

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9Hicks, p. 525. Lieutenant Wilson had been promoted to Captain on August 18, 1862, but died before receiving the news. Record, Eleventh Michigan Infantry, p. 105.

10Journal, Feb. 5, 1863, p. 2. Josiah Given, commanding the Eighteenth Ohio, said his regiment was relieved by the Eleventh Michigan at 5:00 in the evening. Official Records, XX, Part I, 428.
Just before tattoo they began to play their favorite tunes. The music carried clearly on the still wintry air. While the strains of Yankee Doodle and Hail Columbia drifted through the cedars from the Northern camps, the Confederate bands answered with Dixie and The Bonnie Blue Flag. After this exchange of musical bombardments had continued for a time, one of the bands struck up the air that was known and loved by all the soldiers, regardless of the color of their uniforms - Home Sweet Home. At once, as though by pre-arrangement, the tune was taken up by all the bands on both sides, and soon across the rocky glades for miles the simple melody rose in a great combined volume as Federals and Confederates joined in. The familiar and beloved words sprang to the lips of the soldiers, and the chorus of thousands of homesick voices almost drowned out the brassy blare of the instruments. The music swelled and died away, but that haunting last line - "There's no place like home" - choked in the throats of bluecoat Yankees and butternut-clad Rebels alike as they huddled shivering in their blankets, and waited for the morning and its bloody work.11

About daylight, the 400 men of the Eleventh, most of them shaking with the cold, were relieved by the Sixty-ninth Ohio and sent to the rear to cook breakfast.12 They had scarcely begun their preparations when they heard the sound of battle far to the right. They did their best to get something to eat. Some started after water to make coffee, but most decided to do without and eat what they could. After only a few quick bites orders came to form into line. Those who had gone for water had nothing.13

As the regiment assembled, Adjutant Chadwick received a dispatch from the Eighteenth Ohio. It was addressed to the troops and written by General Rosecrans. Glancing, Chadwick read:

The Gen. commanding desires to say to the soldiers of the army of the Cumberland, that he was well pleased with the conduct

11Horn, p. 199.


STONES RIVER OR MURFREESBORO BATTFIELD

Stanley's Brigade
1. 8:00 A.M. Dec. 31, 1862
2. 4:00 P.M. Dec. 31, 1862
3. Late Afternoon Jan. 2, 1863
4. Mendenhall's 58 guns
yesterday. It was all he could have wished for. He neither saw nor heard of any sulking; they behaved with the coolness and gallantry of veterans. He now feels perfectly confident, with God's grace and their help, of striking this day a blow for the country, the most crushing, perhaps which the rebellion has yet sustained. Soldiers! The eyes of the whole country and nation are upon you. The very fate of the nation may be said to hang upon the issues of this day's battle. Be true, then, to yourselves; true to your own manly character and soldierly reputation; true to the love of your dear ones at home, whose prayers ascend this day to God for your success.

Be cool! I need not ask you to be brave. Keep rank; do not throw away your fire. Fire slowly, deliberately; above all, fire low, and be always sure of your aim. Close steadily upon the enemy, and when you get within charging distance, rush on him with the bayonet. Do this, and the victory will certainly be yours. Recollect that there are hardly troops in the world, that will stand a bayonet charge, and that those who make it, therefore, are sure to win.

But the Eleventh never heard these words of their commander. Before Chadwick could have it read to the men, they were ordered to report to brigade headquarters.14

The battle was not going well for the Union forces. Rosecrans intended to cross Stones River to attack the right wing of the Confederate line. Before his men started, they were suddenly attacked on their own extreme right. This attack on Richard W. Johnson's division of McCook's corps had cost the Eleventh its hastily prepared breakfast.

Johnson's men were sent fleeing to the rear. The Confederate attack then struck Jefferson C. Davis's division. Davis, forewarned by the firing to his right, had reformed his line so that his right wing faced south and southwest. Here the Confederates met stubborn resistance, and were for a time repulsed. Continuous pressure on

Davis forced his withdrawal about 9:45 in the morning. Davis's retreat in turn forced Sheridan to withdraw and form his line on the north side of Wilkinson's Pike, with his extreme left touching Stanley's Brigade and most of his men facing southwest. Thus, the next Confederate attack, which struck the lines about 10:00, found Sheridan's and Negley's divisions formed at right angles, with Sheridan facing southwest and Negley southeast. At the apex of this angle was Stanley's Brigade.

Shortly before the attack on Negley and Sheridan, General Rosecrans rode up to Negley and said, "Sir, they have turned me back, and all depends on you. The day must be ours."

Negley replied, "Let them come, my boys are ready."

Negley's boys may have been ready, but when the shooting started they were in utter confusion. The attack did not come from the direction in which the men were facing. At least it seemed that way. Negley had most of his men facing in a general southeast direction. With Sheridan behind him facing southwest, the two lines were almost back to back. When the furious attack struck Sheridan, the storm of shot and shell crashed through his already battle-thinned lines, struck the rear ranks of Negley's division, and gave them the impression the attack was coming from the rear.

The Eleventh Michigan received its share of this false attack.

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15 It was probably at the time Sheridan was forming his new line that the Eleventh was ordered to brigade headquarters.


Colonel Stoughton had already marched his regiment to the brow of a low hill where Colonel Stanley had brigade headquarters. He now received orders to march a hundred yards south and form in line of battle under cover of a low rock ledge. Here the regiment remained about a half hour before the attack started. Misled by the unexpected direction of the fire, Stoughton ordered his men to "change front to the rear," and the movement was completed under heavy fire.\(^\text{18}\)

Lieutenant Loren H. Howard wrote that this first fire seemed to come from three sides of a horseshoe.

We . . . laid down as much between the rocks as we could to shelter us from the enemy's fire of musketry, shot and shell. Trees and limbs and rocks were flying over our heads and all around us. Our artillery, in the rear of us and on a hill in an open field, was doing good execution and firing over us. The enemy soon gave up here and passed further to the right, into the cedars, . . . . we did not suffer but little, one killed is all I know of and several wounded. It does not seem possible that half of us could have escaped. I think they shot over us.

The Eleventh, in reserve, was now facing in the opposite direction from the real attack. The Confederates had advanced to within twenty rods of Stanley's line, when the Sixty-ninth Ohio suddenly broke and retreated, because, their colonel said, he was out of ammunition. Negley desperately sought a replacement, and when Stoughton volunteered to put the Eleventh in the line Negley shook his hand heartily, and referring to the vacated position said, "Take it and hold it, you are a gentleman."\(^\text{19}\)

\(^{18}\)Official Records, XX, Part I, 426. Stanley was apparently using the Eleventh as a reserve.

\(^{19}\)Journal, Feb. 5, 1863, p. 2. Stanley wrote that Colonel Cassilly of the Sixty-ninth Ohio was drunk, so he was arrested, sent to the rear, and Major Hickcox placed in command. The Major was soon wounded, and lacking a com-mander, the Ohio regiment scattered, most
Stoughton moved the Eleventh over the top of the low hill into the gap. The men were in an open field, on the side facing towards the enemy, and exposed to heavy fire.20

On this low hill the men of the Eleventh Michigan Infantry became veterans. Anything in the past was nothing to what they went through in the next hour. Here the men stood and fired volley after volley into the Confederate ranks. Here they suffered most of the day's casualties. Their fire made the Confederates, "... drop like leaves from the trees." Their Major, Sylvester Smith, was shot through the face and led off the field by Lieutenant Faulkner; so great was the confusion that they walked into a Confederate line and were taken prisoners. Lieutenant Ephraim Hall was shot through the neck, taken from the field, and became a prisoner.21 As Colonel Stoughton moved in front of the colors, his horse stumbled and fell from under him, but the Colonel quickly regained his feet and called on his men to stand firm. Adjutant Chadwick, attempting to close ranks, had his horse shot three times and his sword carried from his hand by a cannon ball. He mounted the horse of the Colonel's orderly; it was shot from under him, and his belt was cut off by a bullet. He led mortally wounded Private James Fisher behind a clump of cedars and returned to the battle. Lieutenant Thomas Flynn, with his sword of the men going to the rear. In effect, Stanley was short one regiment when he needed it the most. Official Records, XX, Part I, 421.

20Hicks, p. 525.

21Journal, Feb. 5, 1863, p. 2. Lieutenant Howard wrote that a prisoner told him one volley from the Eleventh killed fourteen privates and two officers of his company.
raised to encourage his men, received a ball in the forehead and fell mortally wounded.22

The full fury of the battle was hitting Stanley's Brigade. They could take it, and if the only thing to worry about had been the enemy on their immediate front, their position on the little low hill probably could have been held all day. But the inconsiderate enemy nipped at both flanks and found a gaping hole: Sheridan's division was gone.

When Sheridan formed on Negley's right, General Lovell H. Rousseau placed his division on Sheridan's right flank. Rousseau was supposed to be the reserve to Thomas's corps, but his men were desperately needed to protect Sheridan, and here he formed them. When the enemy attacked, all three Federal divisions fought back with all they had. The Union position was strong, and for a while it seemed to be holding. Then, suddenly, the whole thing crumbled. Sheridan had run out of ammunition. He held his position until he was forced to retire or be captured,23 and his retreat left the inner flanks of both Negley and Rousseau exposed. Soon Rousseau was flanked on both ends and forced to fall back to the Nashville Pike.24

Negley was left alone. His troops were holding on their front, but the enemy attack was curling around his right flank, and

22Reporter, Jan. 17, 1863, p. 2. Flynn too, had been promoted to Captain, but had not received the news. Record, Eleventh Michigan Infantry, p. 37.

23Sheridan, pp. 228-32.

Confederates were rushing through the cedar thickets on his rear. Yet, though Negley's men were cut off on three sides, they retreated in reasonably good order. In the confusion the Confederates did not know they almost had a Union division surrounded. Negley gradually withdrew his men. The Eleventh Michigan fell back about one hundred yards to the north side of the little hill and south of the cedars, where Stoughton re-formed them to volley into the Confederates as they appeared over the hill. But he could not hold this position because his regiment was in a cross fire from both flanks. The Eleventh then retreated into the cedars. Here was temporary safety, as the Confederate fire slackened for lack of targets. But the other regiments of Negley's division had also fallen back, and for a while all was confusion. The Thirty-seventh Indiana of Miller's Brigade had formed a battle line, had it broken by a retreating regiment, re-formed, and then broken again as the Eleventh Michigan passed through. And then, with Confederate infantry and artillery fire increasing from three sides, order was restored, and the regiments retired north through the cedars, fighting off the attack as they retreated. The Eleventh rallied in a clearing on the north side, and held their ground for twenty or thirty minutes. Then, finding its flanks turned, the regiment retired toward the Nashville Pike.

The road to Nashville had to be held. All morning, as broken

25Ibid., p. 426.


27Ibid., p. 426.
Union forces emerged from the cedar thickets to the south, General Rosecrans and his officers had hastily re-formed them into a patch-work battle line on the turnpike. If the Union right were forced back from this road, the line of retreat would be broken and disaster could follow. General Rousseau was there now, doing his best to piece together his share of the line. Before his work was completed, Negley's retreating division came out of the cedars, and Rousseau could see disaster looming. Somehow, Negley's men would have to slow the Rebel attack.

Rousseau galloped to the scene, found the Eighteenth Ohio re-forming near the turnpike, and ordered them to retake the cedars. With Rousseau leading, the Eighteenth charged back to the woods. As the Ohio men surged southward, the Eleventh Michigan was about halfway across the clearing, heading for the turnpike; now it reversed direction and charged back into the cedars. For about twenty minutes these two regiments held the edge of that little woods. Then, when the Eighteenth Ohio found itself unsupported and almost surrounded, it fell back to the Nashville Pike. The two regiments had separated when entering the thicket, and the Eleventh Michigan didn't see the Eighteenth leave. Back at the turnpike, Colonel Stanley realized their dangerous predicament and ordered the Eleventh to retire. But only half the companies of the regiment received the order. These pulled out, leaving Stoughton and the rest fighting.

28 Ibid., p. 429.
29 Ibid., p. 426.
30 Ibid., p. 429.
Fortunately, Lieutenant Howard saw the companies leave and informed Stoughton, who ordered his men to fall back.\textsuperscript{31}

The regiment retreated across the turnpike to a position in front of the artillery by the railroad. There they prepared to meet the next attack. As the Confederates emerged from the woods, twelve cannon opened up on them and broke the attack before it reached the battle line. In this little fight the Eleventh suffered more from the concussion of their own guns than from the enemy.\textsuperscript{32}

But the battle was over for the Eleventh Michigan. In this section of the line both armies were shot to pieces - they had had all they could stand.

Off to the left of Stanley's Brigade, the fighting continued a little longer. Palmer's division was located in a small woods known as the "Round Forest." It was a strong position, and into it Rosecrans threw every available fresh force. Three times the Confederates charged this position, and three times they were repulsed. At dark the firing stopped.\textsuperscript{33}

The battle of Murfreesboro was not yet finished, but for Stoughton's men the long months of anxiety had ended. They had fought a major battle, and they could be proud of their conduct.


\textsuperscript{32}\textit{Hicks}, pp. 525-26.

\textsuperscript{33}\textit{Horn}, pp. 202-05.
CHAPTER XII

"The boys have always expressed great anxiety to be in a battle."

After the firing had stopped on that New Year's Eve of 1862, General Rosecrans called a staff meeting at headquarters. Should the army stay and fight, or should it retreat? The discussion was inconclusive, and the Commander and McCook rode out to explore the line of retreat. Mistaking some of his own cavalry for Confederates apparently enveloping his rear, Rosecrans returned to tell his generals to "prepare to fight or die."

Early on New Year's morning the mistake was discovered. Meanwhile, the Federal army having consolidated and strengthened its position, Rosecrans decided to sit tight. Neither side seemed willing to begin again the bloody work of the previous day.¹ About 2:00 in the afternoon heavy Confederate forces were seen massing on the extreme right, and Negley's division was ordered to the right of McCook to meet the new threat. The Confederate battle line, six deep, waited an hour and then retired.²

Rosecrans then ordered an offensive move which renewed the battle. On January 1, 1863, Horatio VanCleve's division, now commanded by Colonel Samuel Beatty, was ordered back to the left, crossed Stones River and occupied a commanding ridge northwest of Murfreesboro. On the morning of January 2 Bragg, finding the Federal army had not

¹Horn, pp. 205-06.
²Cist, pp. 119-20.
retreated, resolved to dislodge its center with artillery fire. For his artillery he needed the high ground controlled by Beatty's men. He ordered John C. Breckinridge to take the position, and to attack late in the afternoon so that darkness would fall before the Federals could attempt a countercharge.³

While Bragg was making these plans, Negley's division was ordered to the left on the west bank of Stones River as reserve for Beatty.⁴ After Negley was in position, Crittenden and his artillery commander, Major John Mendenhall, riding on the Nashville Pike, discovered Breckinridge's troops massing across the river. Mendenhall immediately assembled all available guns, and in a few minutes had fifty-eight pieces concentrated on the west bank at McFadden's Ford.⁵

The Confederate attack began at 4:00 in the afternoon.⁶ As Breckinridge's men charged across the open slope separating them from Beatty, the fifty-eight Federal guns on the west bank opened up with everything they had. But the powerful Confederate attack overwhelmed Beatty's division and sent it fleeing to the rear.⁷ Bragg's objective

³VanCleve was wounded on December 31. Breckinridge was emphatically against Bragg's plan. He warned Bragg that the west bank of the river commanded the ridge, and Union artillery could play havoc with his men. Nevertheless, Bragg's order stood. Horn, pp. 206-07.

⁴Cist, pp. 121-22. Colonel Miller wrote he was ordered to the left about 1:00 that afternoon. Official Records, XX, Part I, 433.

⁵Horn, p. 208.

⁶Ibid., p. 207.

⁷Cist, p. 122.
had been reached. If his men had stopped there, they might have held their ground. But when they reached the crest of the hill and saw hundreds of fleeing Bluecoats, down the hill they rushed in pursuit of their prey. This was just what Mendenhall wanted, and when the far slope was clear of fleeing Federals, he again opened fire. As the Rebels moved down the ridge, more than a thousand fell in the face of the terrific artillery and infantry fire. Yet they pressed on, to drive the Federals across the river in complete rout. Victory seemed close at hand.

But on the west bank was Negley's division, and somewhere near were Rosecrans and Negley, with Negley rushing to his men and shouting, "Who'll lead the way? Who'll save the left?" At least tradition says that Negley was there and spoke those famous words. But Colonel Miller couldn't find him, and something had to be done at once. Assuming command of his own and Stanley's Brigade, Miller ordered the men to lie on the ground to avoid the stray shot and shell flying through their ranks. There they waited until Beatty's fleeing division had passed over them. Then Miller had his line rise, move through

8Steele, I, 320.

9Horn, p. 208. In the day's battle, Breckinridge lost 1,700 out of 4,500 effectives.


11Cist, p. 122. David Donald gives Negley credit for these words, but Henry Cist agrees with the Official Records that Negley was absent. At the crucial moment, Colonel Miller was the senior officer present. Perhaps Negley had rushed away for more help.
the guns to the crest of the hill, and open fire. The Confederates halted at the ford, wavered, and the two Union brigades moved down to the water's edge to meet them. Stanley's men were on the right, but by the time they reached the river, the two brigades were fighting more as a mob than as organized units. After a few minutes of firing at the ford, Miller noticed the Confederates were retreating, and ordered a charge.12

With fixed bayonets, the cheering brigades splashed through the water and ran up the east bank, the Nineteenth Illinois and Seventy-eighth Pennsylvania leading, the Eleventh Michigan right with them, and the rest not far behind.13 The regiments fanned out. Most of the men took cover behind a rail fence, but the Eighteenth Ohio and parts of the Thirty-seventh Indiana and Seventy-eighth Pennsylvania ran up the river bank to repel an attack on the right flank. While his men were crossing, Miller had received verbal instructions from a staff officer of General Palmer that his troops should not cross. Since most were already over, Miller disregarded the instructions and crossed to the east bank himself. There he again was ordered by Palmer to withdraw to his former position. The Colonel could see three regiments off to the right driving the enemy

1^Official Records, XX, Part I, 434.

1^Donald, P. 232. In this historic charge, the Nineteenth Illinois is generally given credit for being first. Colonel Miller thought the Nineteenth Illinois and Seventy-eighth Pennsylvania were both first. Official Records, XX, Part I, 434. Stoughton wrote the Eleventh Michigan was among the first. Ibid., p. 427. But later Stoughton said the Eleventh was the first to cross and led the final charge. Stoughton to Robertson, Dec. 21, 1866, Regimental Service Records. Probably the lines were so confused that no one knew with certainty.
across a corn field. On his left the Twenty-first Ohio was climbing the bank and charging into a woods. Directly in front the Confederates were retreating. Again Miller disobeyed orders and sent his troops forward. Colonel Stoughton formed the Eleventh Michigan and moved up the slope, with the other regiments following on his left. Their line advanced through brisk artillery fire to within 150 yards of the first battery. Miller ordered the Seventh-eighth Pennsylvania to charge the cannon. As the Pennsylvania men moved forward, they were joined by the Nineteenth Illinois, Sixty-ninth Ohio, and Eleventh Michigan. The Twenty-first Ohio suddenly appeared and caught the Confederates on the flank. Their impetuous charge carried the top of the hill, captured four guns, and almost all of the Twenty-sixth Tennessee. When the charging Federals reached the crest, they had no reserves; and if they had continued the attack they would have run into the whole right of Bragg's army. Miller wasn't at the front line, but Stoughton was. The Michigan Colonel managed to halt his own cheering regiment and got the rest to fall in beside them. Colonel Miller then reached the top of the ridge. He found ammunition low and his jubilant troops in disorder. He sent for help, and as it arrived, the two brigades withdrew to reform and get ammunition. Colonel Stanley then crossed the river to take command of his own brigade, and both Colonels formed their men as support for the first line. About dark Stanley's Brigade was

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14Official Records, XX, Part I, 435. Miller does not mention the Eleventh Michigan as being in this charge, but most evidence shows they were. Stoughton reported they assisted in the capture of the guns. Ibid., p. 427. Adjutant Chadwick substantiates this. Mercury, Jan. 29, 1863, p. 1.


16Ibid., pp. 422, 434-35. Neither Stanley nor Miller mention why
Sometime after the battle, General Rosecrans visited each regiment of the division and complimented them on their bravery. These men were intensely loyal to their General, and as he came to each regiment, cheer after cheer showed the confidence they placed in his leadership.18

Rain fell after the battle, but next morning:

The smoke of the battlefield and the rain clouds in the heavens drifted away together, and the sun shone in its splendor . . . over the silent city of the dead. With spade and stretcher in our hands, we went forth to those fields where there was hardly room to tread, and commenced the saddest work of the war. We bore them away by the hundred to those long trenches, . . . .19

The regiment could lick its wounds and wait for the next battle. No clear statistics have been found to show the regiment's loss each day. The official loss at the end of the first day's battle was computed as ninety-seven: 2 officers and 21 men killed or died of wounds, 48 men wounded, 1 officer and 25 men missing. But these were the figures on the basis of what was known on January 29, 1863.20 The actual number of missing on New Year's Eve must have been much larger, for on January 7, Adjutant Chadwick gave their loss as 134 in the two day's battle,21 and the day before he had written that only 2

Stanley was absent during the attack. Miller wrote that part of Stanley's Brigade remained on the west bank. As Stanley wrote of how the two of them had worked closely together on December 31, they may have agreed that Stanley remain behind to hurry fresh support.

17Tbid., p. 422. Miller probably also withdrew, but his report does not mention it.


19Bowen's Oration.


had been killed and 7 wounded in the second day's encounter. Eventually a more complete count was compiled, and the final official tabulation was 32 killed, 79 wounded, and 29 missing, for a total of 140. Since the regiment had entered the fight with 449 men, this was a loss of thirty-one percent - a high loss for any battle.

Four days after the battle, Adjutant Chadwick found time to reflect: "The boys have always expressed great anxiety to be in a battle. To-day none wish to see another." The men of the Eleventh Michigan Infantry were veterans.

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22 Reporter, Jan 17, 1863, p. 2.
23 Squire to Robertson, December 22, 1863, Regimental Service Records.
CHAPTER XIII

EPILOGUE

Soon after the battle of Stones River or Murfreesboro, the Eleventh Michigan was detached as Provost Guard at Murfreesboro until General Rosecrans advanced on Tullahoma in June, 1863. In the subsequent campaign the regiment engaged the enemy in a skirmish at Elk River, Tennessee. Following Confederate withdrawal from the central part of the state, the Eleventh encamped at Decherd, Tennessee, until September 1 when it advanced south with the army in search of General Bragg's forces. Moving down the east slope of Lookout Mountain it was engaged in the battle of Davis's Cross Roads on September; then, marching north, it arrived at the Chickamauga battlefield in time to participate in the closing action of the first day. When the bulk of the Union forces were thrown into headlong retreat on the second day, the Eleventh, already badly shattered from a charge that morning, retreated in good order to Snodgrass Hill. Here, with the remnants of other divisions, the regiment successfully repelled repeated Confederate charges, and withdrew in the evening to Rossville Gap. Colonel Stoughton was placed in charge of the forces covering this position, and remained until early morning on September 22, when his regiments retreated to Chattanooga.

Trapped in the Chattanooga valley with the Union forces, the Eleventh shared the sufferings of the army continually smarting under the eyes of thousands of Confederates looking down from Lookout
Mountain and Missionary Ridge. Enduring disgrace as long as it could, Thomas's Corps turned a demonstration against the base of Missionary Ridge into the successful and famous charge which captured the summit. Colonel Stoughton commanded the brigade, and Captain Patrick Keegan lead the Eleventh to be one of the first regiments to reach the top. In this action Stoughton's men suffered what was probably their greatest single loss of the war when Benjamin Bennet was killed halfway up the slope.

Chattanooga now secure, the regiment moved to Rossville, Georgia where it remained through the winter until March 15, 1864 when it moved to Greysville, Georgia. On May 7 the unit entered the Georgia campaign under General William T. Sherman, and skirmished with the enemy at Buzzard's Roost, Resaca, and New Hope Church. Skirmishing continued as the enemy was pursued to Kenesaw Mountain, and beyond that point at Rough's Station on July 4, Colonel Stoughton received a leg wound which ended his active army career. Again fighting a minor action at Peach Tree Creek on July 20, the regiment arrived in front of Atlanta, and on August 7 participated in a charge on the Confederate works. Its three years of service nearly concluded, the Eleventh remained near Atlanta until August 27, when it was ordered back to Chattanooga. The return to Michigan was delayed by a fruitless pursuit of raiding Rebel forces which took the Eleventh to Murfreesboro, Huntsville, Alabama, and back to Chattanooga, where it arrived on September 13. From here the regiment again started for Michigan, arriving at Sturgis on September 25, and five days later was mustered
out of service.¹ More than 300 who had joined the Eleventh Michigan Infantry never lived to see this day.

¹Michigan in the War, pp. 316-22.
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