

Peter Kumler Bonebrake - Excerpts From "History of the 33rd Iowa Infantry"

Loose Excerpts from "Hist of the 33rd Iowa Infantry Volunteer Reg't 1863-6"

by A.F. Speery, Des Moines, Mills & Co, 1866


"The 33rd Iowa Infantry Regiment was organized under the Presidential call of June, 1862 for additional volunteers to aid in putting down the Great Rebellion. . . A, I & G Companies were from Marion County; B, F & H from Keokuk County; and C, D, E & K from Mahaska County. . . Persons more than ordinarily patriotic or ambitious obtained recruiting commissions from the Governor, . . . Public meetings were held, and the already deep & intense patriotic excitement was fanned & strengthened by speeches, songs, martial music, and all other available & proper means. . . Samuel A Rice, then Attorney General of the State, was appted it's Colonel. (The men built barracks, one per company, and began to practice drilling 4-8 hours/day. Meanwhile there were frequent parties of visitors to camp - and the good cheer & delicacies that so abounded were remembered many a time afterward. . . The guns provided were smooth-bore muskets which some months afterward were replaced with Enfield rifles. A brass band was organized, & cont'd to play until the commencement of the Yazoo Pass Expedition (chpt 4) when it failed entirely.

On Thursday morning, the 20th of November, cheerfully, buoyantly, the regiment marched away, strong in the consciousness of a great & noble cause. The march to Eddyville, ten miles over muddy road under knapsacks which bore down heavily on unaccustomed shoulders was one of the hardest we ever had (then took railcars to Keokuk & steamer to St. Louis). So passed our brief period of 'fine soldiering'. . . . But this state of things was not to last forever. . . . (thus begins the story of the Yazoo R Pass Expedition.)

from Chpt XII 'The Battle of Jenkins' Ferry'. . . . Worn down as we were with fatigue, fastig ans loss of sleep, we saw ourselves now almost surrounded by an evidently overwhelming force of the enemy who certainly had good rason to expect a full & easy triumph. . . Soon the battle commenced with heavy musketry fire in the rear. The rebels had swung their long lines of regiment after regiment around a swampy, heavily timbered semi-circle of river bottom where we lay & were now closing in to press us, unprepared, to the brink of the Saline river & insure our total rout & capture. Our regiment was ordered back into the thickest of it and was soon part of that gallant line of defense which for seven mortal hours repuled every charge of the maddened foe - one undistinguishable & unbroken roar. . . . A dense cloud of powder-smoke settled so closely down that at a few feet distant, nothing was distinguishable. It seemed almost impossible to fire otherwise than at random, but our men soon learned to stoop down and look under the smoke sufficiently to discover the precise position of the rebel masses and then fire at the level of the breast. . . . Of the more severely wounded, some were born from the field, but most had to remain unheeded. . . The battle was one of musketry alone. . . . About two o'clock in the afternoon, the day was won.

 **Date:** 1862-4

 **Place:** Iowa/Arkansas

 **Description:** Interesting book describes all of the service of the 33rd. I have selected a few small bits that especially pertain to Peter Kumler Bonebrake who was slightly wounded in the shoulder in the Battle of Jenkins Ferry, but returned to service later.