

## Report of Col. Oliver H. Payne, One hundred and twenty-fourth Ohio Infantry, including operations of Ninety-third Ohio Infantry, May 6 - August 19, 1864

Hdqrs. 124th Regiment Ohio Vol. Infantry

*Atlanta, Ga., September 13, 1864*

Captain: I would respectfully submit the following report of the part taken by the One hundred and twenty-fourth Regiment Ohio Foot Volunteers in the campaign just closed, and would also include the Ninety-third Ohio Foot Volunteers, from May 6 to August 19, it being placed during that time under my command by the general commanding the brigade:

The battalion on the 3rd of May, after a short rest of but two weeks from a hard and continuous campaign in East Tennessee, broke camp at McDonald's Station and marched to Catoosa Springs, reaching the Springs on the 4th. On the 9th, the command having moved up and confronted the enemy's position at Buzzard Roost, this battalion forming the front of the right line, with the Twenty-third Kentucky deployed as skirmishers in front, was ordered to make a demonstration on Rocky Face Ridge, where the enemy were posted in force. Obeying the sound of the bugle, the battalion advanced up the sides of the mountain, passing over the skirmish line, which had been checked by the fire of the enemy, until it reached a perpendicular ledge of rocks about forty feet from the summit of the ridge; here the battalion remained for several hours, inflicting by their firing considerable damage upon the enemy. The object of the demonstration being accomplished the battalion fell back to the foot of the ridge. The One hundred and twenty-fourth lost in this movement 2 enlisted men killed and 12 wounded; the Ninety-third Ohio, 4 enlisted men wounded. On the 10th, 11th, and 12th the battalion lay under the fire of the enemy without loss. On the night of the 12th, the enemy having evacuated his position, at daylight the command followed them up, passing through Dalton, bivouacking for the night a few miles south of the village. At daylight the next morning the pursuit was continued, and about noon of the 14th the enemy were overtaken, strongly posted in front of Resaca. This battalion, forming the left of the front line of the brigade, was ordered to relieve a battalion of the Twenty-third Corps, which, finding most miserably posted on the slope of a hill, scattered along behind the trees, and resembling more a skirmish line than a line of battle, I ordered the battalion to charge and take a ridge within 200 yards of their main line of works, which was most handsomely and gallantly done with but slight loss. This position the battalion held and during the night strengthened with fortifications, remaining here until the enemy evacuated his position.

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immediate left. At about 1 p.m., in obedience to orders from our brigade commander, the battalion moved to the attack, but this being the only brigade moved forward the enemy concentrated a murderous fire on both flanks as well as our front and easily and badly repulsed us. During the night the enemy abandoned his position and fell back to the south of the Oostenaula River. In the operations before Resaca, the Ninety-third sustained a loss of 4 enlisted men killed and 16 wounded. The One hundred and twenty-fourth, 5 enlisted men killed and 29 wounded. In the pursuit of the enemy through Calhoun to Adairsville, the battalion was constantly skirmishing with the enemy, sustaining, however, but slight loss. At Adairsville we came up to them strongly posted, and the battalion spent the night of the 17th in gaining and fortifying a position preparatory to operations in the morning, but daylight found the position in our front evacuated, and the pursuit continued to Cassville ; here a much needed rest of several days was given to the command. On the 23d active movements against the enemy were resumed, and on the 26th, the command having crossed Burnt Hickory Ridge, came upon the enemy posted near Dallas. During the night of the 26th the battalion was actively engaged in gaining and fortifying a position within a few hundred yards of the enemy's position. At daylight May 27, having just completed the fortifications, the battalion was relieved with the division and massed near Pickett's Mills preparatory to making an assault on the enemy's right flank. The column of assault was formed with two battalions front, this battalion occupying the left of the front line, with skirmishers thrown out from both regiments ; thus formed at about 12 m., the movement commenced.

Advancing to the left of our army about two miles, encountering only the cavalry of the enemy, which were easily driven before us, we came up to their fortified position. Expecting that we were now near their right flank, we were moved back some forty yards, and about 1,000 yards farther to our left, when the lines were rectified preparatory to making the assault. At 4 p m. the final attack was made. This battalion moved briskly forward through a thick woods, coming up with the skirmish line at the foot of a deep ravine, where it had been stopped by a rapid fire from the opposite hill, the sides of which were thickly covered with an almost impenetrable thicket and in many places were almost perpendicular. Here, stopping long enough to rectify the lines, I ordered them forward, the battalion gaining the hill, and had advanced a few yards from the crest to within about thirty paces of the enemy's works, when it was met with such a withering fire from the front and each flank that it was checked and compelled to find shelter behind the crest of the hill. So rapid and close was the fire, that seeing that it would be impracticable to make another effort. to carry the works with the battalion now much depleted, I ordered the battalion to cover themselves as well as possible and hold the position, expecting every moment to re-enforced by the second line. It not making its appearance, I sent an officer to find it and to communicate to the general commanding the brigade my position. Still the line did not come, and not until I had held the position for nearly an hour did any re-enforcements come up to the position the battalion occupied, and then only the left of one of the lines of the First Brigade, which indifferently lapped the right wing of my battalion, reached me in strength so weak that a feeble effort to advance beyond my position was easily repulsed by the enemy. Not hearing from the general, I now dispatched another officer to him for orders, but he, as well as the officer I had previously sent, I learned afterward, failed to find any one -in authority. A little before dark the Ninety-third Ohio and Companies I and B, of the One hundred and twenty-fourth, seeing the left give way, and supposing

that the whole line had been ordered back, fell back with them, and reformed with the brigade which had been relieved and ordered to the rear. Not receiving any order myself, I maintained my present position with the rest of my battalion until 7.30 o'clock; when it becoming quite dark, and feeling apprehensive that should the enemy make an offensive movement, the position could not be held, I started myself to report the situation, but had just reached the rear when the rebels suddenly and in large force attacked the battalion, which, seeing that it would be impossible to maintain their position, fell back before them into the new line already established, where the battalion was collected and placed in position on the line, not being again engaged while the enemy occupied the position in our front, though constantly under fire, on account of the close proximity of the lines. This attack, though unsuccessful, was made by the battalion with spirit and marked bravery, and I venture to say no more honest or bold attempt to carry the enemy's works has occurred during the campaign. Every officer and enlisted man in this battalion, as far as my observation extended, behaved with great gallantry, and, if valor and heroism could have gained the point, would most assuredly have succeeded. At no time did the battalion become in the least disorganized, and had orders reached me at the same time the brigade received them to retire, the battalion could have withdrawn in order, bringing off all its wounded and dead; as it was, some were of necessity left on the field. In the operations of the day the Ninety-third sustained a loss of 11 enlisted men killed, 32 wounded, and 6 missing. One hundred and twenty-fourth, 1 officer killed, 3 mortally wounded, and 3 severely wounded, 14 enlisted men killed, 41 wounded, and 10 missing.

The loss in officers to the One hundred and twenty-fourth Ohio was irreparable. Major Hampson, temporarily serving on the staff of the general commanding the division, an officer, who by his kind disposition, dash, and efficiency, as well as possessing all those finer qualities which distinguish one officer above another, had become greatly beloved and endeared to the regiment, was mortally wounded, early in the morning while superintending the construction of epaulements to a battery. Lieutenant-Colonel Pickands, commanding the regiment, was severely wounded and his distinguished services taken away from the regiment for the rest of the campaign. Captain Irwin and Lieutenant Waldo, model soldiers, whose bravery had been conspicuous on every battle-field the regiment had been engaged in, were mortally wounded; Lieutenant Stedman, a stranger to fear, killed; Lieutenant McGinnis, a very gallant officer, severely wounded, and Captain Wilson, slightly wounded.

On the night of June 5, the enemy evacuating the position in our front, the battalion at daylight occupied their works, and following them up to within three miles of Acworth, went into camp, where it remained until the morning of the 10th, when it took up position confronting the enemy at Pine Knob. On the 15th the enemy evacuated our immediate front. The Ninety-third Ohio was thrown out as skirmishers, drove in the enemy's pickets, and took up position within a few hundred yards of their works. On the morning of the 17th, the works in our front being evacuated, I was ordered to develop their position; threw out a few companies of the Ninety-third as skirmishers, advanced about two miles, driving in the enemy's skirmish line and establishing our line about 1,000 yards from their works. During the day the Ninety-third sustained a loss of 1 enlisted man killed and 5 wounded. On the night of the 19th the enemy evacuated our front, falling back to their last line in front of Marietta. On the

following morning a skirmish line from the One hundred and twenty-fourth was advanced, driving the enemy into their works. On the 21st the battalion was moved to the right, and relieved a battalion of the Twentieth Army Corps. On the 23d the Ninety-third, deployed as skirmishers, charged and drove back the enemy, advancing our lines about 1,000 yards, with a loss to the Ninety-third of 1 officer killed, 2 enlisted men killed, and 37 enlisted men wounded. The battalion was no further engaged, with the exception of constant picket-firing, in which both battalions suffered, the One hundred and twenty-fourth having 1 officer slightly wounded, until the enemy evacuated their position, which they did the night of July 3. In the pursuit of the enemy to the Chattahoochee River, the One hundred and twenty-fourth, on the morning of the 5th, was deployed as skirmishers, and vigorously pushed the rear guard of the enemy to and across the river, with a loss of 1 enlisted man killed and 5 wounded. On the 12th the battalion crossed the Chattahoochee and took up position on the south side of the river. On the 17th the battalion moved down opposite Vining's Station; details from both regiments briskly skirmished with the enemy, without loss. That evening the battalion returned to its former position. From the 17th to the 21st of July the battalion was more or less engaged in obtaining the position before Atlanta which it afterward held, with but slight loss, until August 25. On the night of August 25 the battalion joined in the movement to the right, and rear of Atlanta; on the 29th ultimo assisting in the destruction of the Montgomery railroad; on the 1st instant marching to Jonesborough, and on the 2nd to Lovejoy's Station, where the battalion remained till the night of the 5th, when it joined in the retrograde movement to Atlanta, which place it reached on the 8th instant. But few casualties occurred during this movement, as the battalion was at no time engaged.

My thanks are due to Lieutenant-Colonel Bowman, commander of the Ninety-third Ohio Volunteer Infantry, for the able manner which he handled his regiment; and I desire to make honorable mention of the subordinate officers of his regiment, as well as those of the One hundred and twenty-fourth Ohio Volunteer Infantry, all whom did their duty most gallantly from first to last. Accompanying this report I send a list of casualties, to which I call the general's especial attention.

I have the honor to remain, your obedient servant,

O. H. PAYNE,  
Colonel 124th Ohio Volunteer Infantry

Capt. JOHN CROWELL, Jr.,  
Asst. Adjt. Gen., 2d Brig., 3d Div., 4th Army Corps.

[Inclosure.]

List of casualties of the One hundred and twenty-fourth Ohio Volunteer Infantry

| Place            | Date   | Killed   |     | Wounded  |     | Missing  |     |
|------------------|--------|----------|-----|----------|-----|----------|-----|
|                  |        | Officers | Men | Officers | Men | Officers | Men |
| Rocky Face Ridge | May 9  |          | 2   |          | 12  |          |     |
| Resaca           | May 14 |          | 4   |          | 19  |          |     |
|                  | May 15 |          | 1   |          | 10  |          |     |

|                   |         |          |           |          |           |  |           |
|-------------------|---------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|--|-----------|
| Dallas            | May 27  | 2        | 13        | 5        | 41        |  | 10        |
|                   | May 31` |          | 1         |          | 2         |  |           |
|                   | June 4  |          |           |          | 1         |  |           |
| Marietta          | June 22 |          |           |          | 1         |  |           |
|                   | June 23 |          |           |          | 2         |  |           |
|                   | June 24 |          |           | 1        |           |  |           |
| Pace's Ferry      | July 5  |          | 1         |          |           |  |           |
| Peachtree Creek   | July 19 |          |           | 1        |           |  |           |
|                   | July 20 |          |           |          | 1         |  |           |
| Lovejoy's Station | Sept 5  |          |           |          | 1         |  |           |
| <b>Total</b>      |         | <b>2</b> | <b>22</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>95</b> |  | <b>10</b> |

*Source:*  
 Documents of the War of the Rebellion, vol 38, pp 440-444. (Available in Marist College library)

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