

WARS IN WEAKLEY COUNTY

Weakley County has contributed her share to the military history of our country. Among her citizens have been representatives of all wars. A tombstone in the Dresden Cemetery marks the grave of Luke Tipton, who distinguished himself in the battles of the Revolution under Colonel Albright of the U. S. Infantry, and who was probably the only survivor of that war who settled in the County. He died in 1855 at the advanced age of 97.

John H. Reavis, Jesse Gibbs, I. Maynard, William Porch and many other early settlers of the county were survivors of the War of 1812. Captain Hiram W. Cook and Newton S. Julin organized a company in Weakley County in 1837 to assist in suppressing the Indian troubles in Florida. Dr. P. B. Stubblefield, Reverend P. W. Cook, W. T. Harris, John R. Stallcup, William Tucker and James Umphrey, survivors of the War with Mexico, were once residents of the county.

At the approach of the Civil War a majority of the People were opposed to secession, but after the "dogs of war had been let loose," the majority sympathized with the Southern cause, while the minority remained steadfast with the Union. J. A. and J. P. Jenkins, who went to Paris to enlist were the first volunteers from Weakley County. Of the companies raised in the county the "Hickory Blues" organized under Captain Bradford Edwards at Gardner Station in May, 1861, was the first. This Company served in the Ninth Tennessee Confederate Infantry until the close of the war.

Captain B. G. Ezelle raised a company in the southern part of the county in the spring of 1861 which became a part of the Fifteenth Tennessee Confederate Infantry. The Western Stars-Company A, Captain E. E. Tansil; Company I, Captain Thomas Bell; and Company K, Captain John Elliott-were mustered into the Thirty-First Tennessee Confederate Infantry in the summer of 1861, served with that command to the close of the conflict and surrendered under General Cheatham in North Carolina.

The following companies served in the Federal Army: Company I, Lieutenant William J. Campbell; Company K, Captain Albert Cook; Company L, Captain John H. Edwards; and

Company M, Captain Holt of the Sixth Tennessee Federal Cavalry, were mustered into the service in October, 1862. These companies were raised in the spring of 1862 and followed into what was then known as the Seventh Tennessee Federal Infantry, under command of Colonel J. A. Rogers of Dresden. Not being recognized as the Seventh, they served some months before being regularly mustered and were then consolidated with the Sixth Cavalry. These companies served to the close of the war, mostly in the capacity of Scouts and pilots for other troops through northern Mississippi and western Tennessee.

The first Northern troops that appeared in Weakley County were a regiment commanded by Colonel Shafer. He was taken by surprise and killed in a sabre fight in 1862 at Lochards Mill by Colonel Valentine of the Confederate Army. In December, 1863, a Federal Army under General Smith encamped a few days at Dresden and foraged heavily on the citizens of that vicinity. Guerrilla bands and bushwhackers infested the county during the war and did much more damage than either of the armies. The guerrillas frequently made their headquarters in the courthouse. Some 15 or 20 people lost their lives in Dresden and vicinity at the hands of these outlaws. Weakley County, at a fair estimate, furnished about 1,100 men for the Confederate Army and 400 for the Federal.

"Tennesseans In The Civil War," published in 1964, gives the names and companies of some Weakley Countians who served in the Civil War. They are the following:

"This regiment was organized on order of Major General N. B. Forrest in the reorganization and consolidation of his forces after he was appointed to the command of the cavalry forces in West Tennessee and North Mississippi. Many of the men, including the Lieutenant, Colonel and Major, were members of Greys Tennessee Cavalry, which had been raised within the Federal lines in West Tennessee during the fall of 1863, but which never received recognition from the Adjutant and Inspector General's Office.

E. Thompkins Hollis, Company I. Men from Weakley County. A few men paroled in Company E, Nineteenth and Twentieth.

The Twenty-Second (Bartean's) Tennessee Cavalry Regiment, originally and usually called Second Tennessee Cavalry Regiment. It was organized June, 1862, reorganized June, 1863, reorganized again May 1864; consolidated February, 1865, with Wilson's and paroled May, 1865, as Twenty-First and Twenty-Second Regiment. The companies assigned in May, 1864, from Weakley County were Captain B. Edwards, Second Company H.

The Ninth Tennessee Infantry Regiment was organized May 22, 1861, at Jackson, Tennessee; reorganized May 8, 1862; consolidated into a field organization with Sixth Tennessee December, 1862, formed part of Company E, First Consolidated Tennessee Infantry Regiment April 9, 1865 ; paroled at Greensboro, North Carolina on May 1, 1865. Bradford Edwards, A. C. Gardner, A. M. Boyd Company G. "The Hickory Blues."

This Regiment went to camp of instruction at Union City, Tennessee, and was reported there in July, 1861, with 838 men, armed with flintlock muskets. From Union City it moved to Camp Blythe in Missouri. They wintered at Columbus, Kentucky, then moved to Corinth, Mississippi, in March, 1862. This Regiment fought in the Battle of Shiloh on April 6th and 7th.

The Fifteenth Tennessee Infantry Regiment was organized June 7, 1861; Confederate Service August, 1861; reorganized May, 1862, field consolidation with Thirty-Seventh Tennessee Infantry Regiment June 6, 1863 ; formed Company "A" Fourth Consolidated Tennessee Regiment April 9, 1865; paroled at Greensboro, North Carolina May 1, 1865. Captain B. G. Ezzell, Company A. This company disbanded May 1, 1862, and the men transferred to Companies E and G .

The Twenty-Seventh Tennessee Infantry Regiment (also called Twenty-Fifth Tennessee Infantry Regiment) was organized May, 1862; consolidated January 1, 1863, with First (Fields) Tennessee Infantry; formed part of Company I, First Consolidated Tennessee Infantry April 9, 1865, paroled at Greensboro, North Carolina, May 1, 1865. J. L. G. Matheny, S. M. Crabtree, J. F. Looney, J. M. Mull, Company "H" formerly "F". These are men from Weakley and Carroll Counties.

The Thirty-First (A. H. Bradford's) Infantry Regiment was organized October 12, 1861; reorganized May 8, 1862, formed Company "G" Third Consolidated Tennessee Infantry

Regiment April 9, 1865, paroled at Greensboro, North Carolina, May 1, 1865. Captains from Weakley County were Egbert E. Tansil, B. J. Roberts, Company "A" (The Western Stars). Other men from Weakley County were Thomas L. Bell, W. B. Sims, Company "I"; John Elliott, John A. Hatler, George C. Thomas, Company "K."

At the reorganization (May 1862) Egbert Tansil was elected Colonel, M. D. Jenkins, Lieutenant Colonel. Jenkins died in November, 1862, and Stafford succeeded him. Colonel Tansil later transferred to the cavalry, and Lieutenant Colonel Stafford was in command of the Regiment until his death in 1864. The Regiment moved with the brigade from Corinth to Tupelo to Chattanooga with General Bragg in the invasion of Kentucky, culminating in the Battle of Perryville October 8, 1862. Here the Thirty-First suffered 100 casualties. This Regiment also fought earlier this same year at Shiloh.

The Thirty-Third Tennessee Infantry Regiment was organized October 18, 1861, reorganized May 8, 1862; merged into Third Consolidated Tennessee Infantry Regiment April 9, 1865; paroled at Greensboro, North Carolina May 1, 1865. T. O. Kilgore, W. R. McWherter, T. L. Killebrew, Company "H" are men from Weakley County in this regiment. The regiment remained in camp of instruction near Union City until January, 1862, when it moved to Columbus, Kentucky; that only a few of the companies were partially armed, mostly with shotguns and hunting rifles, and that the regiment was not completely armed until a few weeks before the Battle of Shiloh, when they obtained some flint and steel muskets as a loan. This is borne out by a letter from General L. Polk to General A. S. Johnston at Bowling Green, Kentucky, dated December 30, 1861, which stated, "I ordered Colonel Campbell's Regiment to go forward, but find he is very deficient in arms, and am waiting a day or two, to see if he can be supplied." In the order of battle for Polk's army at Columbus, Kentucky, in January, 1862, the Thirty-Third was reported in the Second Division, along with the Thirteenth Arkansas, Seventh Kentucky, Thirteenth Louisiana, Forty-fourth Mississippi and the Sixth, Ninth and Hundred and Fifty-Fourth Senior Tennessee Infantry Regiments. At the Battle of Shiloh April, 1862, the regiment was in General Charles Clark's Division.

The Fifty-Second Tennessee Infantry Regiment was organized January, 1862; consolidated with the Fifty-First Tennessee Infantry to form Fifty- First Consolidated Regiment April, 1862, consolidation cancelled and regiment reorganized April 1863, merged into Second Consolidated Tennessee Infantry April 9, 1865, paroled at Greensboro, North Carolina May 2, 1865. Joseph G. Thomason, Company E, men from Oakwood, Weakley County. They enrolled November 28, 1861. D. C. Kennedy, Company "G" on January, 1862, Major General L. Polk ordered Lee's Fifty-Second and Browder's Fifty-First from Henderson Station to Danville "as soon as they are armed." The regiment was on the way to Fort Henry when the fort fell. Then they were ordered to Columbus, Kentucky, but on account of sickness in the regiment they were ordered to return to their camp. The regiment suffered greatly from the measles.

At Shiloh the Fifty-Second was engaged as part of Brigadier General James R. Chalmers' Brigade of General J. M. Withers Division. In General Chalmers report he said the men of the Fifty-Second broke and fled in most shameful confusion. After repeated efforts to rally it, the regiment was ordered out of the lines, where it remained during the balance of the engage- ment, with the exception of two companies, Captain J. A. Russell and A. N. Wilson.

The Sixth Tennessee Cavalry Regiment (also called First West Tennessee Cavalry) was organized at Bethel in August, 1862; six companies mustered in November, 1862; two companies March, 1863; four companies in July, 1863; mustered out at Pulaski, Tennessee July 26, 1865. Some of the men in this Regiment from Weakley County are Orlando H. Shearer, Stanford L. Warren, Company "I," organized in Dresden, June, 1862. Thomas H. Boswell, Albert Cook, Company "K," also organized in Dresden, July, 1862. William C. Holt, Company "M," organized at North Gibson in August, 1862, also with men from Weakley County. The regiment was at Bolivar during November and December, 1862. At the time of General Nathan B. Forrest's first raid into West Tennessee, 83 dismounted men from the regiment, under Major D. M. Edwards, were sent to Jackson on December 18 at the time of Forrest's attack upon that place. Other detachments were engaged at Trenton and Humboldt, and on January, 1863, with Forrest, as he crossed the Tennessee River at Clifton. This regiment was in many places, Middleton, Bolivar, Paducah, Helena, Arkansas, Grand Junction, Jackson and many others.

The Seventh Tennessee Infantry Regiment (also called Ninth Tennessee Infantry and First West Tennessee Regiment) was organized December 3, 1862 at Trenton, Tennessee; merged into Sixth Tennessee Cavalry Regiment about July 1, 1863. Captain Orlando H. Shearer, Company A, organized October 10 with other men from Weakley County and Henry County. John Neeley, Company "B," (also Captain) mustered in at Dresden, November, 1862, with men from Weakley, Carroll and Gibson Coun- ties. Thomas H. Boswell, Company "D," with men from Weakley became Company "K" Sixth Tennessee Cavalry.

The regiment first appeared in the Official Records on September 20, 1862, when it was reported near Jackson in the Second Division. At the time of Brigadier General Nathan B. Forrest's first raid into West Tennessee, Colonel George P. Ihrie, U. S. Army, in a report told of the attack on the railroad crossing of the Forked Deer River by Confederate Colonel George C. Dibrell on December, 1862. Colonel Ihrie was a passenger on the train from Jackson to Columbus, Kentucky, which was cut off and surrounded by the Confederate attack. Colonel John Rogers, Seventh Tennessee Infantry, was in charge of the troops guarding a construction train. " At the stockade all was confusion, and the want of a head apparent.

The Senior line officer present (Col. Rogers) was utterly at a loss what to do, and admitted his inexperience and incompetency to some of the passengers." After consultation with Colonel Rogers, Colonel Ihrie assumed command, beat off the Confederate attack and recaptured the town of Humboldt. At night "Colonel Rogers" was ordered to take his regiment and occupy the fort which commands the whole place and vicinity. About an hour later I was astonished to learn that Colonel Rogers had not only willfully disobeyed my order by abandoning the Fort and camping his regiment in the safest part of the town, but had failed to inform me of same, thereby endangering our lines, and risking the capture of my command."

A few days later, Colonel John I. Rinaker reported the Seventh Tennessee Infantry, Colonel Rogers, as part of the force with which he left Trenton in pursuit of General Forrest. He left the Seventh Tennessee, about 300 men, at Huntingdon, to guard the bridge, and with the rest of his command took part in the battle of Parker's Crossroads on December, 1862."

WEAKLEY COUNTY- CONFEDERATE

1. 7th. Tennessee Cavalry Regiment Company "H."
2. 22nd. (Bartean's) Tennessee Cavalry Regiment, 2nd. Company "H."
3. 4th. Mississippi Infantry Regiment, Company "C."
4. 9th. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, Company "G."
5. 15th. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, Company "A."
6. 27th. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, Company "H."
7. 31st. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, Company "A," "I" and "K."
8. 33rd. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, Company "H."
9. 52nd. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, Company "E"

FEDERAL

1. 7th. Tennessee Infantry Regiment, Companies "A," "B," "C" and "D," became 6th Tennessee Cavalry Regiment Companies "I" "K " "L " and "M."