David Hopkins

Com. A 79th Regt

O V I (Ohio Volunteer Infantry)

David Hopkins served in Company A of the Ohio Volunteer Infantry 79th Regiment. His journal kept as a soldier is transcribed here. Hopkins was present in Northern Kentucky during September 1862 (bolded below). The 79th OVI regimental history is included at the end of this document.

Comments on the Diary

Hopkins was inconsistent with his spelling and sometimes used colloquialisms such as ACROST and A FORAGING. He spelled the word STOPPED as STOPED, yet he spelled STOPPING correctly. He spelled SATURDAY with two Ts, even when he abbreviated the word. He misspelled several others words with double consonants by using only one consonant (i.e. SKINED) and the words dairy (DARRY), daily (DAYLY), and company (COMPNY). Yet, for all this his spelling was remarkably free of errors throughout. He usually did not capitalize the first word in his sentences. His periods and commas looked alike so it was difficult to determine how he wanted his sentences and phrases to read. He sometimes used the archaic practice of using a lower case letter F for the modern letter S, as in crofsed. He was not consistent in this either, as he used both forms, crofsed and crossed in the diary.

He sometimes was mistaken on his days of the week, but soldiers who spend nights on duty and then march can easily mix up their days. It appears at the beginning of the diary he began to edit the first three of four entries by changing September to November; perhaps he did this in later years.

Hopkins started army life as a private and mustered out as sergeant. It is unfortunate that the entries for his diary, if he made any, were lost from the period of March 1863 through December 1864; there appear to be pages missing from the diary. His regiment fought in many battles of Sherman’s Atlanta campaign and then the march to the sea in November and December of 1864. His regiment lost 54 enlisted men killed or mortally wounded and one officer and 91 men by disease during the war. He made only one entry concerning the human cost of the war.

After the war Hopkins took up farming in Warren County. He died of tuberculosis in February, 1868 at the age of 29 and is buried in a Hopkinsville, Ohio cemetery. There are accounting entries in the diary after that date so someone had been using the diary for recording information about farming or raising beef. We know of no photograph of David.

DIARY ENTRIES

August 9th 1862

I commenced [commend?] this little book to the reader, as a narrative of some of the events that transpired in the humble life of the writer during his soldiering, it with its [word indecipherable] gives a dayly account of his whereabouts and employments. It is not written for the special benefit of anyone, but simply as a help to any [word indecipherable] (which is [word indecipherable] ) and if need be, as a friend to talk to friends of matters which have transpired, when death shall have silenced my tongue.

Aug 3rd

Went home on a furlough, came back on the 5th in a spring wagon with some of the [word indecipherable] folks.

Aug 30th

Sunday L.H. Lee came down to camp in the forenoon. in the afternoon went out in the country to a darry farm. got back to camp 4 O.clock P.M. had a bully time. Some got lost a going home.
David Hopkins Diary: Company A Ohio OVI 79th Regiment

Sept 3rd

Left camp Den [Dennison] for Camp King. We stoped at Covington and stayed all night. started for camp King about 11 O.clock P.M. was very hot.

Sep 7th

Left Camp King for Camp St. John. stayed there until 6 ½ o.clock P.M. + camped on a steep hill side.

Sep 9th

Started for camp Doan [Lieutenant Colonel of the 79th].

Sept 10th 1862

Drawn up in line of battle at 2 O.clock A.M.

Sept 11th

Also drawn up in a line of battle 2.O.cl.

Sept 12th

Ditto.

Sept 13th

ordered on a march at 3.o.clock P.M. layed on our knap sacks until daylight.

Sept 18th

Started on a reconisance [reconnaissance] out to Crittenden. got there Saturday eve. 20th.

Sept 21st

Started back. marched 23 miles. it was very dusty outing.

Sept 22nd

got back at Camp Doan in the evening.

Tuesday eve Sept 23rd

Marched to Covington. laid along the O. river all night nearly.

Sept 24th

went aboard of the Forest Rose for Louisville. arrived there some time in the night.

Novem [September] 25th

Marched out east of Louisville 2 or 3 miles and stoped on the rebel Johnsons premises. in the eve marched back to the edge of town and camped.

Nov [September] 28th

Went out on picket. was not relieved until the 30th.

Oct 3d

Saturday [October 3 was a Friday] started on march at 3.o.clock P.M. Marched 18 miles and camped for the night. in the morning it rained.

Oct 4th 1862

March to Shelbyville. distance 15 miles.

Oct 5th

Confiscated some pork + veal.

Monday Oct 6th

Marched about 2 miles the other side of Shelbyville and camped in a grove.

Wednesday Oct 8th

Started on a march for Frankfort. Marched until about 12 Oclock at night, and camped for about 4 hours. arrived there about 4 O.clock A.M. Stoped at State House yard until about 8.Oclock, and then started for camp a mile from town.

Friday Oct 10th

done nothing but rain all day and night.

Saturday Oct 11th

Went over to see Bob Coddington in the fore noon. at 12 O.clock Started out on picket.

Sunday Oct 12th

Sam Baldwin and I went out from the post to get a sheep and killed a shoat with a stone. skined it and took out the inside in a hurry. was relieved at 12 ½.O.clock P.M. Started for camp, arrived there and it was deserted so we went on towards town, and near town we found them camped in a nice locust grove.
Tuesday Oct 14th
Went out on picket with some of our compny. Sam Reeves (?) and I went to a house and got our dinner. in the morning went to Conners, got our breakfast and went to a quilting at the same place. had a bully time. we were relieved at 2.O.clock at night. we got our tents, we put them up.

Saturday Oct 18th
Started on a march at 10.O.clock at night. Marched to Versailles [KY] that night. got there about 3.O.clock in the morning. at 7 ½ o.clock we started out again without our breakfast and marched nearly to Lawrenceburg [KY]. stoped and got something to eat. got to Lawranceburg about 10.O.clock A.M. it is 26 miles from Frankfort. Went out on picket with Lt Hallam. had a good time.

Sunday 19th
Started back for Frankfort by Rough + Ready [now Alton, KY]. got back at camp about 7.O.clock P.M. distance 14 miles.

Friday 24th, 1862
Went out on picket with Lieut Thompson and we went and got supper at Paiges. it got cold about 12.O.clock at night. on Satturday it snowed about 3 inch. on Sunday Oct 26th started on a march. went about 18 miles and camped for the night.

Monday Oct 27th
Marched about 10 miles.

Tuesday Oct 28
Marched 15 miles. went through a town by the name of Chapham [Chaplin, KY].

Wednesday Oct 29
        Marched 16 miles. went through Bloomfield + Bardstown [KY].

Thursday Oct 30th
Marched from Bardstown to New Haven [KY]. distance 14 miles.

Friday Oct 31st
Marched about 18 mi. passed through a small town by the name of Hogensville [Hodgensville, KY] and camped in a sorghum patch.

Saturday Nov 1st
Marched to Beacon [Bacon] creek. the first day the cars [railroad] run. cut Sam Reeves (?) hair.

Nove. 2nd
Marched to Horse Cave. distance 14 miles.

Nov. 3rd
Marched 18 miles and crossed green river at Munfordsville [Munfordville, KY] and camped 5 miles from there.

Nov. 4th
Marched 18 miles to Bowling Green [KY]. crossed a branch of green river. camped about 9 miles south of Bowling Green in a plowed wheat field.

Sunday Nov. 9th
went to see the 2nd O [Ohio Infantry] regt [regiment]. they had started to lost river near where we were camped.

Monday Nov 10th
Had marching orders but was countermanded.

Tues. Nov. 11th
Started for Scottsville [KY]. marched 14 miles and camped in a hollow.

Nov. 12th 1862
Started at 6 O.clock. got to Scottsville about 4.O.clock.

Nov. 13th
Barbered in the forenoon. in the afternoon went out on picket south of Scottsville with Capt. Thompson.

Nov 14th
was relieved. came back to camp. C.W. Harvy [Charles W. Harvey, First Sergeant of Company B, 79th] gave me a chicken.

Saturday [Sunday] Nov 23rd
Stood in a line of battle. carried rails in the afternoon to cook with. in the morning barbered.

Nov 25th
Division left Scottsville for Gallatin, Ten. distance 32 miles.
Sunday [Monday] 24th [Hopkins must have backdated]

Went to the hospital as nurse.

Thursday Dec 11th

D. Perrine and I went to the regt which was at Gallatin. we went with Eagle [George Eagle, Company B].

Thursday [Saturday] Dec 13th


Dec 25th Christmas worked in the intrenchments in the afternon.

Jan 1st 1863

New years. worked on the intrenchments.

Jan 13th 1863

Started on a march about 12.O.clock at night for gal [Gallatin, TN]. it commenced raining a while before we started. Stoped about 4 miles from town and stayed until daylight.

Jan 14th

Started about 7.O.clock for Gal, got there about 8.O.clock. Stoped in a brick building. it rained all day.

Jan 15th

It rained all day and night turned to snowing.

Friday Jan 16th

Snowed and froze.

Saturday Jan 17th

The sun shone and a beautiful day.

Jan. 18th

Getting quite warm but still snow on the ground.

Jan 19th

Cloudy and snowing and on guard at the barracks.

20th Raining.

21st Cold + cloudy.

22nd Cloudy; cool + [word indecipherable].

23rd General + inspection. the day warm.

24th Moved to camp + it rained.

25th Warm + looks like rain.

26th Rained all day + night.

27th Raining + cold.

28th Cloudy.

29th The sun shines + nice day.

30th Clear + on picket on the red river pike.

31st Cloudy + rained all night.

Feb

1st Rained all day.

2nd A nice day sun shone.

3rd Turned cold and disagreeable.

4th Cloudy and snowed all night.

5th Snowed in the morning, clear in the afternoon.


7th Cloudy + muddy.

8th Mr. Cambell preaches in the afternoon.

9th Cloudy + rained in the night.

10th Nice over head but muddy.

11th rained like the mischief.

12th day nice + clear. General inspection in the afternoon.

13th Still clear + warm.

14th rained all day + night.

15th Rained in the morning but clear before night.
16th Day nice but it commenced raining in the eve. + rained all night.
17th day cloudy.
18th cloudy + cold.
19th beautiful day.
20th Warm + nice.
21st Rained in the after noon + kept it up all night.
22nd Cold + very windy.
23rd Cloudy in the fore noon + clear in the after noon.
24th A nice day.
25th Cloudy and commenced raining + rained nearly all day + night.
26th it rained nearly all day.
27th Nice day.
28th Cloudy + snowed some, very disagreeable + very muddy. we were mustered in for pay.

March 1863

1st Nice but little cold.
2nd Nice day but windy + cool.
3rd Cloudy + cold + snowed. cleared off before night.
4th Cloudy + cold.
5th got a letter from home. the day cool.
6th Rained all day + night.
7th Cloudy + rained in the night.
8th Sunday cloudy.

[Many pages apparently missing. The next entry may be from December, 1864]

…in the afternnon. wrote a letter home.
25th Cloudy + cool.

[Diary continues in pencil in 1865. Previous entries are in ink.]

Savannah, Ga
Jan 18th Left for South Carolina at 8.O.clock A.M. Marched 20 miles to Hardeeville [SC].
Jan 19th Laid by. Had Brig [brigade] inspection. rained about 11.O.clock. rained steady all day.
Jan Friday 20th The sunrise cloudy, has appearance of rain. Recd [received] [indecipherable] two letters from home the 19th. Rained nearly all day + night.

Saturday 21st
Still raining. took the [word indecipherable] + went to take dinner with Baldwin. rained all day.
Sunday Jan 22nd
Still cloudy + rainy. Went to church at Com [company] Is [I’s] quarters.
Monday 23rd
Still rainy. cleared off in the eve. went to spelling school at night at Co [company] Is [I’s] quarters.
Tuesday 24th
The morn [word indecipherable] and clear. Rcv’d [received] letter from A.
Wednesday 25th
The morn clear+ cool. had Brig [brigade] drill in the P.M.
Thursday 26th
The coldest morn that we have had. on picket.
Friday 27th
Was relieved from picket at 8 ½ Oclock, A.M. Beautiful day.
Saturday 28th
Beautiful day. recd a letter from home, ans. [answered] it in the P.M.
Marched at 7 ½ O'clock. Marched about 16 miles. The day was beautiful.

Monday Jan 30th

Marched to Robertsville [SC]. distance 6 miles. Beautiful day. Wrote to A.

Tuesday 31st

Beautiful day. Wrote a letter for WHB, to Bloom [?], ‘A’. Skirmish between Greg Alley + Muddy Creek Ranger. compromised.

Feb 1st 1865

Beautiful morn. Jno. [Jonathan?] C., Vanhorn Stevenson + I went out a foraging East of the camp.

Feb 2nd

Marched at 7 O'clock. Marched about 12 miles. The rebs opposed us at [blank space]. Went into camp South of the town. the rebs skedaddled.

Feb 3rd 1865

Marched 10 miles. rained.

Feb 4th Satt


Feb Sunday 5th

Marched at 8.Oclock, P.M. Marched about 11 miles. The day was warm.

Monday 6th

Train [wagons] guard. rained in the P.M. Went into camp about 8.O.clock, P.M. Crossed a big swamp at Beauforts bridge.

Feb. Tuesday 7.

Joined the Brig [brigade]. Marched acrost a big swamp. Nice day.

Feb 8th Wednes

Tore up the Charleston + Augusta R.R., 19 miles from Branchville [SC] + 2 miles East of Grahams Turnout. Came up there + went into camp. Recd orders to tear up R.R. Started got 3 miles ordered back. Marched at 5.O.clock. camped about 6 miles up the R.R.

Feb 9th Thurs

Marched at 7 ½ O.clock. marched to Blackville [SC], distance 5 miles. Went into camp. Our co [company] Provost guard.

Friday [Saturday] 11th


Sunday 12th

Had to wade a part of the way acrost the river. Marched about 18 miles toward Columbia [SC].

Monday 13th 1865

Marched about 8 miles. crossed the [blank space]. Cool raw day. Had to skirmish nearly all day. recd letters.

Tuesday 14th

Broke camp about 12.O.clock, + it commenced to rain. marched about 5 miles and went into camp.

Wednesday 15th


Thursday Feb 16th

Marched 10 miles. crossed the Augusta + Columbia R.R. Camped about 2 miles from Columbia [SC].

Friday 17th

Marched up the river. layed in line of battle. Went into camp about sundown. The day warm.

Saturday 18,

Crossed the Saluda river in the morn. Marched 9 miles. Went into camp at 8.O.clock, P.M.

Sunday 19th

Marched at 6 ½ .Oclock, A.M. Marched about 8 miles and went into camp. Moved to the river [Blank space] and camped for the night.
Monday 20th
Crossed the Broad river after sundown. guarded the Pontons [pontoons]. Marched 8 miles. got into camp at ½ past 2 O'clock.

Tuesday 21st
Marched at 6 ½ O clock. marched 13 miles. passed through Winnsboro [Winnsborough, SC]. Camped 3 miles from town.

Wednesday 22nd
Marched at 6 ½ O clock. Marched 17 miles. camped on the banks of the Wateree [Wateree] river. Had to cross it at ½ past 11 O clock at night. Camped on the opposite bank.

Thursday 23rd
Marched at 6 O clock without breakfast. Marched about 4 miles + went into camp. rained all night.

Friday 24th
Still raining. Broke camp at 12 O clock. Moved about a mile + a half. rained all night.

Satt 25th
Had marching orders to move at 6 O clock. The order was countermanded. laid still all day. Rained nearly all night.

Tuesday 28th
Marched at 9 ½ O clock. A M. Went about 6 miles. The roads bad. got into camp about 8 O clock P M.

March Wed 1st
Marched at ½ past 7 O clock. crossed Lynch creeks. camped about 2 miles from big Lynch. Marched 16 miles. Cool + cloudy.

March Thur 2nd
Marched at 7 O clock. Marched about 7 miles and the bridge broke down + we had to stop about 6 hours. Went about 3 miles farther and went into camp.

March Friday 3rd
Marched at 6.30. had to make cordory [corduroy]; passed through Chesterfield [SC]. Camped one mile from town. Our Regt [regiment] had to go out about a mile farther to guard the bridge acrost the Cheraw river.

Satt 4th

Laid by. Had Regt inspection in the P M. beautiful day.

Monday 6th

Wednesday 8th
Marched at 8 Oclock. rained all day. Marched 10 miles.

Thursday 9th
Marched at 6 Oclock. rained in the P M. Marched 10 miles, saw but one house. camped about a mile from Lumber river.

Friday 10th
Marched at 6 Oclock. Crossed the river after wading a swamp. rained in the P M. Marched 10 miles.

March Satt 11th
Marched at 6 Oclock. Struck the plank road in about 8 miles. Marched 10 miles with out stopping. camped near Fayetteville [Fayetteville, NC]. Marched 20 miles.

Sunday 12th
Beautiful day. Laid by all day. Wrote a letter home.

Monday 13th/65
Marched at 1 O clock. Passed through Fayetteville. crossed the Cape Fear river. Camped 4 miles from town.

Beautiful day.
Tuesday Mar. 14
Laid by.  Wrote a letter to Bloom for Bishop.  Wrote to (M_?).
Wednesday 15th
Marched at 6.30 A.M. on the Raleigh road.  Marched about 10 miles.  rained in the P.M.
Thurs. 16th
Marched at 6.30.  run on the rebs.  Formed a line at ¼ of 9 O.clock.  Had a fight [Battle of Averasborough].  Fought nearly all day.  Had to wade nearly all day.
Friday 17th
The enemy evacuated their works the night of the 16th.  We moved up and took possession of the works, and got breakfast.  Then started for Averasborough [near present-day Dunn, NC], distance 3 miles, to guard the cross roads.  Laid there and went into camp.
Satt. Mar 18th
Marched at 6.30, the roads bad.  Waded several swamps.  Marched about 12 miles.  Got breakfast + took a little nap.  Marched at 9.O.clock.  The day warm.
Monday 19th
Marched at 9.O.clock.  Marched 5 miles, ordered to push forward to reinforce the rest.  We formed the left flank.  A part of our corps [20th] + of the 14th had a pretty hard fight [Battle of Bentonville].

Tuesday 20th
Swung around in the P.M., formed a new line + built a new line.

Wednesday 21st
Moved back to the old line at 3.30.O.clock P.M.  Moved back to the front line about an hour +a half afterwards.  rained very hard in the P.M.

Thursday 22nd
Marched at 7.O.clock.  Marched 12 miles.  The country swampy.

Friday 23rd

Saturday 24th

Sunday 25th
Beautiful day.  Moved our tent.  [indecipherable word] came up.  P. Sherwood died from a wound recd on the 16th inst.  Wrote a letter to A.

Monday 26th
Beautiful day.  recd Three or four letters from home, + about the same from A.  One from S. + one from N.

(No break in diary pages)

Monday Apr 10th
Broke camp at Goldsboro. at 5.30.  Marched 9 miles, + camped.  rained.

April 13th
Marched at 5.30, rained and a very hot day.  Nearly all fell out + stacked arms from co. [company] A.  Marched 17 miles.

April 14th
Our div [division] in front, hot day.  marched 15 miles, + went into camp.  Started out to support the cavalry.

April 15th

April 16th
Started on our way home.  Marched 14 miles to Nuese [Neuse] river.  hot day.

May Mond. 1st
Marched to and crossed tar river, distance 28 miles.
May Tues. 2nd
Marched at 7 O'ockl. Marched 15 miles, + went into camp.

Wednesday 3rd
Marched at 4.30 cross the Roannoke [Roanoke River], + camped about a mile from it. Marched 25 miles. Passed through Williamsboro [Williamsborough, NC]. Camped for the first time in Va. [His unit must have passed through Williamsborough first and then the Roanoke River].

Thursday 4th

Friday 5th/65
Marched at 4 Ocloc. marched 19 miles. camped on the North side of Nottoway river. went into camp about 12, then struck the plank road.

May 6th 1865

Sund 7th 1865

Mon 8th 1865

May 9th 1865

Wednesday May 10th

Thurs. 11th

May 12th

Satt 13th

Marched at 6 Oclock. Crossed the South Anna [River] [blank space]. Marched about 18 miles.

Sunday May 14th

End Civil War Entries

79th Regiment Ohio Infantry -history

Organized at Camp Dennison, Ohio, August, 1862. Ordered to Kentucky September 3, 1862. Advance to Crittenden, Ky., September 7, thence moved to Louisville, Ky. Attached to Ward’s Brigade, 12th Division, Army of the Ohio, to November 1862. Ward’s Brigade, Post of Gallatin, Tenn., Dept. of the Cumberland, to January, 1864. 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 11th Army Corps, Army of the Cumberland, to April, 1864. 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, 20th Army Corps, Army of the Cumberland, to June, 1865.

SERVICE – March to Frankfort, Ky., October 3-9, 1862. Occupation of Frankfort October 9 and duty there till October 26. Expedition to Lawrenceburg in pursuit of Morgan October 10-13. March to Bowling Green, Ky., October 26-November 4, thence to Scottsville and to Gallatin November 25, and duty there till December 11.

December 1862-July 1863 - Moved to South Tunnel December 11, and duty there till February 1, 1863. Duty at Gallatin till June 1. Moved to Lavergne June 1, thence to Murfreesboro, Tenn., July 2 and to Lavergne July 29.

August 1863-December 1864 - To Nashville, Tenn., August 19, and duty there till February 24, 1864. March to Wauhatchie Valley, Tenn., February 24-March 10, and duty there till May 2. Atlanta (Ga.) Campaign May 2-


Regiment lost during service 54 enlisted killed and mortally wounded and 1 officer and 91 enlisted men by disease. Total 146. [From Dyer’s Compendium, page 1533]