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Leaving Home in Dark Blue: Chronicling Ohio's Civil War Experience through Primary Sources and Literature

Curt Brown

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Leaving Home in Dark Blue

CHRONICLING OHIO'S CIVIL WAR EXPERIENCE
THROUGH PRIMARY SOURCES & LITERATURE

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THROUGH PRIMARY SOURCES & LITERATURE

CURT BROWN, EDITOR

BUCHTEL BOOKS • AKRON, OHIO



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Publisher's Remarks

Many collections have been published about the Civil War. Over one hundred and fifty years after the war began, interest has not waned in the rebellion that pitted states and families against each other. What you are about to read is not a comprehensive look at the war, or even a comprehensive look at Ohio's role in that war; this collection brings together a variety of sources to provide a broad, personal picture of historic events. A range of resources—including personal letters, government resolutions, poetry, fiction excerpts, and more—touch on areas that are not always covered by battle reports and standard histories. The material is, by and large, created by Ohioans and remains contemporaneous to the events of the war.

Passages in this collection were transcribed as closely as possible to the original documents. Therefore, they may contain language and usage that is considered offensive today. The publisher and editors do not condone such language and have only reproduced such material in keeping with the book's broad, personal scope; this is a book of historical pieces and the language, usage, spelling, and grammar reflect that.

Foreword

The material collected in this book describes the immediate, human experience of Ohioans during the Civil War. The authors of the majority of these documents were individuals who lived through the war, both on the battlefield and on the home front. The documents often refer to specific historical events, but remain timeless because of the individual, human element. The result is an intensely readable, chronological overview of how Ohioans were affected by and involved in the war of the rebellion. Far from comprehensive, the focus in *Leaving Home* is on the common individual (although more prominent or recognizable characters also make appearances). These are the stories of men, women, and children from various walks of life and economic conditions who took part in military service or served on the home front.

Introductions and annotations are included to clarify the material and help modern audiences relate to these historical works. Prominent events are noted in the “A Nation at War” features, which provide a timeline to help contextualize the pieces. Much of the material is collected and published here for the first time; other material is republished for the first time since the initial publication

over one hundred years ago. This collection serves as reminder of the roles that Ohioans played in the war and details the war on an intimate level through an overall emphasis on personal experience.

Many people helped see this project through from idea to completion and without their help this book would not exist. Special thanks to Nick Sturm, Abby Thompson, and Michael Goroff for meticulous research, compilation, writing, and editing. In addition, thanks to Zac Bettendorf for the design and Nathan Kemp, Kaana Lewis, Katelyn Mertz, David Poole, and Krystal Williams for research assistance. Thank you to the staff of The University of Akron Press—Thomas Bacher, Amy Freels, and Carol Slatter—for directing, refining, and guiding this book to completion. Most importantly, thank you to the authors of these materials for documenting their experience and allowing us an unparalleled view into the past through their words.

Curt Brown, Lead Editor

Introduction

From "Ohio in the Civil War" by General John Beatty

Source: Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio: In Two Volumes, An Encyclopedia of the State*. Columbus: Howe, 1889.

It would be impossible to make an exact estimate of the number of men who entered the National army from Ohio during the war for the preservation of the Union. Those embraced in regimental and company organizations of the State can, of course, be enumerated, and, with some degree of accuracy, followed to the time of their death, discharge, or final muster out; but these organizations did not by any means include all the patriotic citizens of Ohio who left peaceful homes to incur the risks of battle for the maintenance of national authority. Five regiments credited to West Virginia were made up in large part of Ohio men; the same may be said of two regiments credited to Kentucky; also of the Fifty-fourth and Fifty-fifth Massachusetts Colored Infantry, and of two regiments of United States colored troops [the 5th and 27th U.S.C.T.]. In addition to those enrolled in regiments credited to other States, thousands entered the gun-boat service, of whom Ohio has no record, while other thousands enlisted in the regular army.

According to Ohio General J. Warren Keifer, "From the best prepared statistics of the Provost Marshal-General and Adjutant-General of the U. S. A. and the Adjutant-General of Ohio, excluding reenlistments, 'squirrel-hunters' and militia, and including a low estimate for regular enlistments in the army and navy not credited to Ohio, it is found that Ohio furnished of her citizens 840,000 men of all arms of the service for war; reduced to a department standard, they represent 240,000 three-years soldiers."

The State contributed in organized regiments:

26 regiments of infantry	.....	for three months.
43 regiments of infantry	.....	for 100 days.
2 regiments of infantry	.....	for six months.
27 regiments of infantry	.....	for one year.
117 regiments of infantry	.....	for three years.
13 regiments of cavalry	.....	for three years.
3 regiments of artillery	.....	for three years.

To these should be added twenty-six independent batteries of artillery, and five independent companies of cavalry.

6,536 Ohio soldiers were killed outright in battle.
 4,674 were mortally wounded and subsequently died in hospital.
 13,354 died of disease contracted in the service.
 In brief, 84 Ohio soldiers out of every 1,000 enlisted men lost their lives in the war of the rebellion.

General Keifer also notes, "The total losses in battle of all kinds in both the American and British armies in the seven years' war of the Revolution, excluding only the captured at Saratoga and Yorktown, is 21,526. This number falls 4,000 below Ohio's deadlist [*sic*] alone during the late war. . . . The loss of Ohio officers is known to have reached 872, nearly ten per cent, of the grand total of officers. . . ."

No army ever had a more abundant and sympathetic support than that accorded by the loyal men and women of the North, who carried forward with intense energy the ordinary business of civil life, while sons, brothers and husbands were in the field. Indeed, when we consider that more than one-half of the adult male population of Ohio was in the army, and that probably one-half of those who remained at home were unfitted by age or physical infirmity for military service, and that very many others were held to their farms and offices by business obligations, which could not be honorably disregarded, or family ties it would have been cruelty to sunder, we shall be at some loss to determine whether those who by their industry and liberality made it possible for an army to live, are entitled to less or more credit from the country than those who fought its battles and won its victories. . . .

The population of Ohio probably represented more nearly than that of any other State, the people of all the older sections of the Union. Settlers from New England and New York predominated in the Western Reserve. Pennsylvania had peopled the eastern counties; Virginia and Kentucky the southern and southwestern; and so we find that [Ulysses S.] Grant's father and [William S.] Rosecrans's came from Pennsylvania; [William T.] Sherman's and [David] Tod's from Connecticut; [James B.] McPherson's and [James A.] Garfield's from New York; [Irvin] McDowell's, Kentucky; [William] Dennison's, New Jersey; [Quincy A.] Gillmore's, Massachusetts; [Edwin M.] Stanton's, North Carolina; while [Salmon P.] Chase was born in New Hampshire, and [Jacob] Ammen, [Benjamin] Brice, and [John C. Tidball] Tibball were natives of Virginia.

INTRODUCTION

It was thus on Ohio soil that the people North and South first met and fraternized, and by their united and harmonious efforts transformed, within less than half a century, an unbroken wilderness into a rich and powerful State.

Editor's Note: General Beatty's introduction provides a brief but comprehensive overview of Ohioans' roles in the Civil War. Through these numbers and lists, it is possible to gain a view of exactly how encompassing and momentous the war was. With Ohio as microcosm, the ubiquitous transformation that the country underwent is clear, as are the devastating effects of war on a personal level. The individual's experience is the central theme of this book and is reflective of the experiences and accounts that are collected here.