

Private

George Cummings

21 Aug 1862- 28 Mar 1863

Civil War

Died in Service

George Cummings was a Great Grandfather of Mina D. (Mauer) Cape

On-Line:

<http://www.ourpast.org/genealogy2/getperson.php?personID=I518&tree=Cape>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/36th_Iowa_Volunteer_Infantry_Regiment

Not very much is known about George Cummings' military service or death.

He enlisted in the 36th Iowa infantry, Company C, on 21 Aug., 1862 and died in a hospital in Memphis, Tennessee on 28 Mar 1863.

From the following history, the unit spent 40 days in February 1863 wading through waist deep ice-cold water in northern Arkansas, and lost many soldiers to disease. He was 40 years old when he entered the service.

George Cummings Military Unit:

Company C

Iowa 36th Infantry

This regiment mustered out at Duvall's Bluff, Ark., Aug. 24, 1865.

Colonel Charles W. Kittredge

Company C Officers:

Lieut. Col. Francis M. Drake,

Commissioned. Sept. 5, 1862,

wounded. and captured. at April 25, 1864.,

Feb. 22, 1865, Commissioned. colonel.

May 11, 1865, bvt. brigadier general U. S. V., but no vacancy.

Surgeon Sylvester H. Sawyer,

Commissioned. asst. surgeon Sept. 16, 1862,

promoted. surgeon April 1, 29, 1863,

resd. Dec. 10, 1864.

Capt. Allen W. Miller

Commissioned 1st lieutenant. Nov. 13, 1862,

promoted to Captain March 7, 1863,

captured April 25, 1864, died at home Sept. 17, 1864.

Capt. K. P. Morrison

Commissioned. 2d lieutenant. Oct. 4, 1862,

promoted to. 1st lieutenant. March 7, 1863,

promoted to. captain. Oct. 11, 1864,

reported resd. Jan. 11, 1865, and discharged. for disability. Feb. 2, 1865.

Capt. Jas. G. Philip,

Commissioned. Oct. 4, 1862,

resd. March 6, 1863.

Capt. Wm. F. Vermilye,

Enlisted as sergeant. Aug. 19, 1862,

promoted to. 2d lieut. March 7, 1863

captured. April 25, 1864,

promoted to. 1st lieutenant. Oct. 11, 1864,

promoted to. Captain. Feb. 3, 1865.

First Lieut. Claudius B. Miller,

Enlisted. as sergeant. Aug. 22, 1862,

promoted. 1st lieut. Feb. 3, 1865.

Second Lieut. Marion H. Skinner,

Enlisted. as sergeant. Aug. 20, 1862,

promoted. 2d lieut. Aug. 2, 1865,

captured. April 25, 1864,

Mustered Out. as sergeant.

Sergeant. Geo. W. Dean,

Enlisted. Aug. 19, 1862,

wounded. and captured. April 25, 1864.

Sergeant. Abraham McKeever,

Enlisted. Aug. 19, 1862,

discharged. Jan. 1, 1863, disabled.

Sergeant. Alex. C. Raynolds,

Enlisted. Aug. 22, 1862,

discharged. Feb. 9, 1863, disabled.

Sergeant. Benj. C. Stauber,

Enlisted. Aug. 20, 1862,

discharged. Feb. 23, 1863, disabled.

Sergeant. Benj. S. Vierling,

Enlisted. Aug. 22, 1862,

wounded. and captured. April 25, 1864.

36th Iowa Infantry Regiment, US Volunteers

The 36th Iowa Infantry Regiment, US Volunteers, was one of several Midwestern volunteer regiments raised in Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin in the late winter, spring and summer of 1862 by Illinois Congressman (Lincoln friend and later General) John McLernand. Companies A and K consisted of men from Monroe County, while Companies B, C, D, E, F G, H and I were made up of men from Appanoose and Wapella Counties. The first recruits were mustered into state service in February 1862. The ranks were filled out with additional recruits by early September, and the regiment was officially designated the 36th Iowa Infantry Regiment. Colonel Charles W. Kittredge of Ottumwa Iowa was placed in command. Colonel Kittredge had previously served as a Captain with the 7th Iowa Infantry Regiment in Missouri during the first year of the war and was an experienced combat veteran.

All companies rendezvoused at Camp Lincoln, Keokuk Iowa where, on 4 October 1862, they were sworn into United States service for a term of three years. The men were first issued old Austrian and Belgian smoothbore muskets with "sword" bayonets, but these antiques were eventually replaced with more effective Enfield rifled muskets. Following four weeks of basic training at Camp Lincoln, the regiment departed Keokuk on 1 November 1862 aboard two steamboats for St. Louis to await corps and division assignment and to continue training.

ST. LOUIS, MEMPHIS AND HELENA

At St. Louis, the regiment went into garrison at Benton Barracks. The 36th was attached to the 13th Corps, Army of Tennessee, and commenced drill by brigade and division. On 20 December 1862 they embarked by steamer for the federal garrison at Helena, Arkansas. The vessel halted at Memphis when the local citizens hailed it from shore with an alarming report that Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest and his cavalry were in the neighborhood and were preparing an attack on the city. That night the men of the 36th slept with their arms stacked nearby in Jackson Square. The regiment eventually moved to some old vacated mule-sheds and remained in Memphis performing guard duty at Fort Pickering until 1 January 1863, when it resumed its movement to Helena.

At Helena, the regiment became part of the 1st Brigade, 13th Division, 13th Corps under General Benjamin Prentiss. The regiment was initially quartered in tents but later moved into winter quarters at Fort Curtis in semi-permanent "half-cabins" consisting of log walls with canvas ceilings and dirt floors. These billets had formerly been occupied by the 47th Indiana Infantry. According to Captain Seth Swiggett of Company B, the ex-Postmaster at Blakesburg, Iowa, the Iowans devised an efficient central heating system in these cabins by burying a length of stovepipe beneath the dirt floor and running it the length of the cabin from a small tin stove on one end to an exhaust pipe on the opposite end. With 5 to 8 men occupying each cabin, the regiment passed the month of January 1863 in as comfortable a manner as could be expected under the circumstances.

THE YAZOO PASS EXPEDITION AND FIRST ACTION AT SHELL MOUND, MISSISSIPPI

In February 1863, the 36th Iowa, 600 strong, embarked with other elements of the 13th Corps for Mississippi to take part in the Yazoo Pass, or Fort Pemberton Expedition. This operation was conceived by General Grant and entailed blowing an opening through the east bank of the Mississippi River near Moon Lake below Helena to open a channel connecting with an inland water route that would enable Grant to encircle the Confederate stronghold at Vicksburg from the north. Sergeant

Michael Hittle of Company A, a 21-year-old farm boy from Lovilia, Monroe County, recalled years later that during this expedition the regiment had to wade in ice-cold water waist-deep. The regiment saw its first action at Shell Mound, Mississippi where, after witnessing a fierce artillery duel between federal and rebel batteries, Captain Swiggett noted that the 36th Iowa had a "sharp exchange" with the rebels.

The regiment was engaged on this march for 40 days. They found no unguarded route to Vicksburg and the expedition was abandoned. The men suffered greatly because of almost continuous exposure to the elements on this campaign, including freezing rain and high winds that blew their tents down. The constant cold and dampness thus took a heavy toll with dozens of soldiers brought down by cold, flu and fever.

Returning to Helena, the 36th commenced a physically demanding daily regimen of drill and building fortifications in anticipation of a Confederate attack expected with the arrival of spring weather. The 36th Regiment was assigned to build breast works and trenches in support of Battery A at Fort Curtis, Helena, Arkansas, on the northern most end of the Union defenses. The federal line ran in a semi-circle around the town with the Mississippi River being their east flank.