

PATRIOTIC PALS TAILS OF THE CIVIL WAR

By Chris Stuckenschneider

CHAPTER 7: Harvey, Top Dog with His Troops

Welcome back—Walt and I barked up the right tree when it came time to research Harvey, a canine of the 104th Ohio, a rough-and-tumble bunch of Union soldiers dubbed “The Barking Dog Regiment,” mustered at Massillon, Ohio.

Those men had a virtual menagerie, three dogs, two raccoons and two squirrels. But Harvey, their bull terrier, was the pick of the litter. Harvey meant as much to the Ohioans as Sallie did to the regiment we learned about in our Gettysburg chapter.

The “Barking Dogs” were the top dogs in the Battle of Franklin on Nov. 30, 1864, a fight that pretty near drove the last nail in the coffin of the Army of Tennessee. It made the South feel licked for sure, especially when the Northern leader, Gen. John Schofield, and his army slipped out of the South’s hands and escaped to Nashville.

The battle at Franklin lasted five hours and proved devastating for the Rebels. Six Confederate generals were killed and more than 7,500 soldiers were killed, wounded or missing, compared to a little over 2,000 casualties for the Union.

At Franklin, when the Union soldiers were waiting for the Rebels to attack, Harvey was beside them—a combat cur, for sure. No one could pull the wool over that bullie’s eyes. He was cunning, a General Patton-like pooch.

In an earlier battle in the Civil War, Harvey had been hit and taken prisoner by

the Rebels, but he was returned when a flag of truce was raised. Once his wounds healed, it was back into battle for this action figure.

The war injury endeared the old boy to the Union’s 104th regiment. But they had already grown fond of Harvey because of his campfire antics and squirrel high jinks. When he was catching 40 winks and one of the regiment’s pet squirrels started gnawing on his ear like it was a piece of corn, Harvey wanted to have rodent on rye.



Harvey with the 104th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Band. A bass drum of the 104th and other artifacts are part of an exhibit at the Massillon Museum. Photo courtesy Marcus and Justin McLemore, Poland, Ohio.

A mighty chase ensued the likes of which would have impressed General Sherman, known for his historic “march to the sea.” Do some learnin’ on Sherman; he was quite a guy.

Lest you think Harvey was all ruff, rifle, and romp, let me stress he had a soft side too and

a gifted ear for music. When the Union guys broke out in song around the campfire, Harvey would sway to the tunes.

The mighty mascot’s favorite was “When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again” ’cause like all the guys he served with, Harvey would do what he could for his country, but he sure missed his missus and offspring, family he left behind on his beloved Ohio homestead. That bullie relished the idea of home more than a meaty hambone.

Though the entire 104th considered Harvey their personal pet, the bull terrier

officially belonged to Union Lt. D.M. Stearns, and he had a collar inscribed to stake his claim, “I’m Lt. Stearns dog. Whose dog are you?” No one knows where the collar is, but there are paintings and photos of Ol’ Harvey because the regiment wanted to remember him.

At the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland, Walt and I saw a picture of Harvey with his troops. It’s believed his men had his portrait painted as well, just like Sergeant Dick from Chapter One. Both dogs must have been important because portraits were prized back then. People, and animals, had to sit for hours while an artist captured their likeness on canvas.

Harvey may have been as lucky as a cat with nine lives. Some believe he made it through the war, despite being injured at the Battle of Franklin. Other research suggests that Harvey died in a fall from a supply wagon, but I’m doggone sure he went marching home again, “hoorah, hoorah!”

PAPER TRAINING



Some of the dogs in “Patriotic Pals” meant so much to their regiments that the men commissioned portraits of the pups. Find an example in the newspaper of a portrait. What is the difference between a portrait and mug shot? Don’t know what a mug shot is? Make like Chuck—look it up.



Photograph of Harvey. Courtesy Marcus and Justin McLemore, Poland, Ohio.