



The Art at Chickamauga: 125th Ohio Infantry Monument

Norm Dasinger, Jr., May 24, 2021

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125th Ohio Infantry Monument at Chickamauga | NPS

On September 18, 1894, the monument honoring the service of the 125th Ohio Volunteer Infantry was dedicated along with other Ohio memorials on the Chickamauga battlefield. The keynote speaker that afternoon was Ohio governor and future U.S. President William McKinley.

The unique shrine for the 125th differs greatly from other Ohio monuments at Chickamauga. In 1891, the General Assembly passed a bill to fund the erection of memorials honoring the service of Ohio soldiers at the Georgia battlefield. Each unit that served there would be honored with an allocation of \$1,500. The men of the 125th, however, not only supplemented this amount with their own money in order to hopefully construct a more memorable commemoration, but they also demanded a proposed submission by a member of their own unit be utilized. Their requests were approved, and 125th Ohio veteran Charles H. Clark's very creative growling tiger design would become part of the legend of the regiment and also be considered one of the most distinctive symbols on the former Chickamauga battlefield.

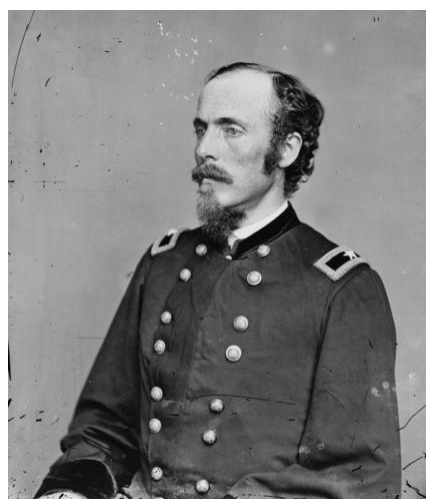
Emerson Opdycke was the colonel and the commander of the 125th. He was born in Hubbard, Ohio, and his father had served in the War of 1812 and his grandfather in the Revolutionary War. Emerson enlisted in the U.S. Army in the summer of 1861 and eventually became the senior officer of the 125th by early 1863.

This regiment was first organized at Camp Taylor, in Cleveland, Ohio, and not only fought at Chickamauga but also Missionary Ridge, Tennessee, in 1863; all of Sherman's Atlanta Campaign; and Franklin and Nashville, Tennessee, in 1864. It ended the Civil War in Texas in 1865 and had gained the nickname "Opdycke's Tigers" due to a soaring reputation for its fighting qualities, which can be attributed to its very competent commander.

Colonel Opdycke was made a brigadier general after the end of the Civil War and would die from a gunshot wound to his stomach in 1884 while living in New York. He is buried in Warren, Ohio.



The Tiger Band | The Photographic History of the Civil War



Col. Emerson Opdycke | LOC



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