

Platt Pearsall, Corp 30th OH Inf Co C

| NAME | RANK | UNIT | ACTION | ENLISTMENT LOCATION | BIRTH / LOCATION | DEATH / LOCATION | CEMETERY LOCATION | MOH MARKER PRESENT | CITATION |
|-----------------|----------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Pearsall, Platt | Corporal | 30th OH Inf Co C | Vicksburg, MS 22 May 1863 | Dowington OH | Meigs Co, OH 27 Dec 1841 | Farmington MO 18 Jun 1831 | Pendleton Cem., Farmington, MO | Yes | Gallantry in the charge of the "volunteer storming party." |

Corporal Henry Platt Pearsall and the "Forlorn Hope"

By Randal A. Burd, Jr., PDC



Among the many brothers in blue with connections to Missouri who received the Medal of Honor in the American Civil War, several received their award for conspicuous service during the Vicksburg campaign in the late spring and summer of 1863. A majority of these were recognized for their deeds in a single charge; in fact, no single military action in U.S. military history has precipitated more such recognitions of courageous acts than the pre-siege attack on Vicksburg, Mississippi, on the 22nd of May 1863. The citation on these awards: "gallantry in the charge of the volunteer storming party," understates the precarious situation in which these men volunteered to place themselves to achieve victory for Union forces.

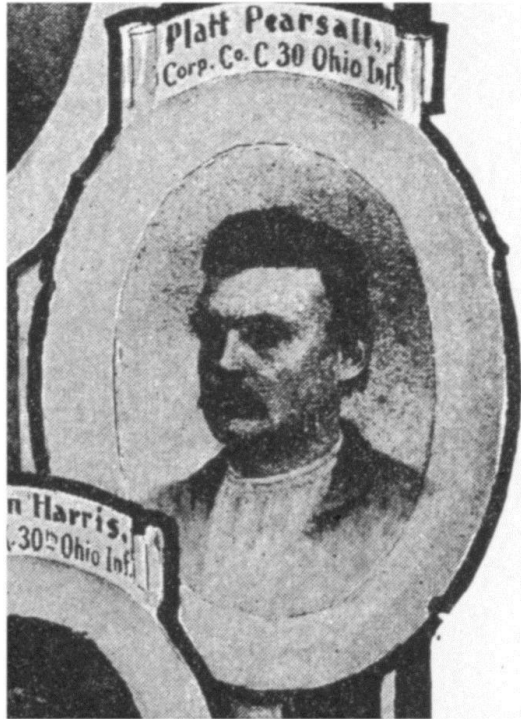
Corporal Henry Platt Pearsall of Company C, 30th Ohio Infantry, was one of seventy-eight volunteers who received the Medal of Honor for gallantry as part of an advance force charged with placing boards and logs across an eight-foot-wide, water-filled ditch and ladders on 17-foot-high earthen walls to prepare the way for a Union attack on the "Stockade Redan," a particularly troublesome section of the Confederate defensive line. This "storming party," as it was officially designated, later became unofficially nicknamed the "Forlorn Hope."

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|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| NAME: <u>Pearsall Platt</u> | | ACT OF MAY 11, 1912 (3-P. A. 1.) | | | | | |
| Certificate No. <u>157820</u> | ARMY INVALID. | | LAW: GENERAL LAW | | | | |
| Service: <u>Co. C 30th Ohio Inf</u> | ACT OF MAY 1, 1920 | | | | | | |
| Disability: <u>Loss of arm</u> | | | | | | | |
| ISSUES. | | | | | | | |
| CLASS. | RATE. | DATE OF COMMENCEMENT. | DATE OF CERTIFICATE. | CLASS. | RATE. | DATE OF COMMENCEMENT. | DATE OF CERTIFICATE. |
| | | <u>Dec 27 1889</u> | <u>3 Feb. 1890</u> | Inc. | <u>30</u> | <u>Dec 27, 1916</u> | <u>Jan 8, 1917</u> |
| | | ACT OF MAY 11, 1912 | | | <u>40</u> | <u>JUN 10 1918</u> | |
| | | <u>Dec 11 1912</u> | | Inc. | <u>50</u> | <u>May 1, 1920</u> | |
| Fees: | | | | | | | |
| Transferred from: | | <u>TOPEKA, KANSAS.</u> | | Transferred to: | | | |
| Died: | | Bureau notified: | | | | | |
| Remarks: | | | | | | | |
| Former Roll No. <u>1107</u> | | | | Home: | | | |

In three detachments of 50 unmarried men each, the 150 chosen men of 300 volunteers from Tennessee's 15th Army Corps, 2nd Division, began their fateful

mission. With two men to a log under intense enemy fire, the first detachment crossed 1,000 yards of open ground to lay the groundwork across the ditch for plank bridges. Their casualties were so heavy that the storming party was unable to complete the bridges as too few log bearers survived to deliver their essential cargo. In his article on *Ohio's "Forlorn Hope" Medal of Honor Heroes*, brother Frederic C. Lynch of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War notes that 85% of the 150-volunteer storming party were killed or seriously wounded in the charge of May 22, 1863.

Brigadier General Hugh Ewing, under whose colors the storming party attempted their unsuccessful task, had nothing but praise for these brave volunteers under his command: "The troops bore



themselves throughout with gallantry and spirit. Their general commanding believes nothing but the broken and entangled nature of the ground over which they charged, with a want of previous knowledge of its condition, prevented them from successfully entering the enemy's works."

Doe Run, Missouri, is a small rural community in southeast Missouri which formed in the 1880s as a lead-mining town. In 1931, it became the final resting place of Corporal Pearsall following his death at age 89. Unlike so many of his comrades, Corporal Pearsall survived the bloodshed of the American Civil War and returned to civilian life. His U.S Veterans Administration pension payment card lists him as an invalid, having suffered a gunshot wound to his right arm. A newspaper obituary fills in some of the more mundane details of his life: he married Martha Ann Parks, who preceded him in death on June 2, 1913; he had three children, two of which survived him; he died on the same farm in Missouri he had made his

home since 1866.

The Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) work tirelessly to keep the memory of soldiers like Corporal Henry Platt Pearsall alive. From articles such as the aforementioned piece written by brother Lynch to gravesite dedications and memorial ceremonies, the SUVCW recognizes the sacrifices made by Union soldiers who survived as well as the ultimate sacrifice made by those who perished to preserve the United States of America. March 25th marks National Medal of Honor Day, set aside by Congress in 1990 to honor those throughout history who have received this nation's highest honor. To observe 2019's National Medal of Honor Day with the Department of Missouri, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, contact Past Department Commander Randal A. Burd, Jr. at raburdjr@gmail.com.

Aged Civil War Veteran Dies

Farmington and vicinity sustained the loss of one of its best-known and most highly respected old citizens in the passing of "Grandpa" Pearsall at his home near Farmington at 8 o'clock on Thursday evening, following an illness of several months. Aged 89 years, 5 months and 18 days. Funeral services were conducted at the Pendleton Baptist Church at two o'clock Saturday afternoon by his pastor, Rev. Joel Lewis. Interment was at the Pendleton Cemetery.

Henry Platt Pearsall was born in Wilkesville, Ohio, on December 27, 1841, son of the late Ira and Margaret Smith Pearsall. In January 1867 he was united in marriage to Martha Ann Parks who preceded him in death on June 2, 1913. A daughter, Maggie passed away at the age of 13 months. He is survived by one son, Ira L. Pearsall and one daughter, Ruth Jane (Mrs. R. L. Welker) of Farmington, also seven grand children.

In the spring of 1861 when the first call for three year volunteers came he enlisted with Company "C" 30th regiment of Ohio. His company was sent to Wheeling, West Virginia. The first skirmish in which he took part was at Corning-Fox-Fair. After this followed the battles of Bull Run, Antietam, South Mountain and Vicksburg.

At Vicksburg, Miss., in 1863 in the battle of Vicksburg the call was made for volunteers to attack the fortifications. He was one of the one-hundred sixty-two to volunteer. After hard fighting, under the leadership of General Grant, the victory was theirs. He was among those wounded. During this battle his cap was shot from his head. For bravery shown here Congress awarded him a medal for gallantry and he received the rank of Corporal on May 22, 1863.

His Company was then placed under command of General Sherman and they began the famous 2,000 mile march thru Kentucky and Tennessee. During this March they fought 100 days to gain 100 miles. They next fought at Corinth, Chattanooga and Rocky Face Ridge. Immediately after crossing the Elk River in Tennessee the bridge over which they crossed collapsed.

He had re-enlisted for 3 years and the last battle in which he took part was at Bentonville, N. C. He had served his country for 4 1-2 years, being discharged in September 1865 at Little Rock.

After the close of the Civil War in the spring of 1866 he came to Missouri to make his home. He was the last member of his father's family, his last brother having died about 3 years ago.

In 1874 he united with the Pendleton Baptist Church and remained a faithful member until death.

The farm on which he died had been purchased in 1866 and had remained his home when first coming to Missouri from that time. He was very alert to things pertaining to his country and much concerned about his family. Truly a good man has passed out from the community, but the influence of his life remains as a benediction to his family and to all who came in contact with it.