

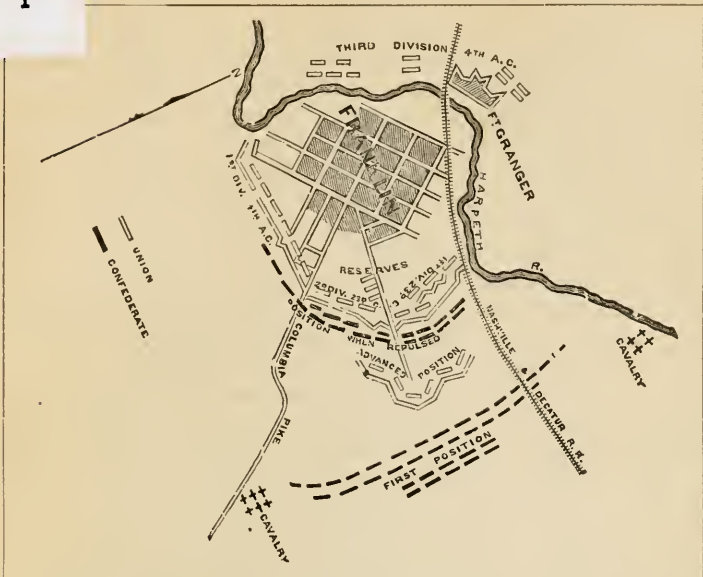
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Reference - supplementary to the  
Battle of Franklin  
by  
William Henry Newlin



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WILLIAM HENRY YEAZ



Supplementary to what appears in the annual address relative to the battle of Franklin the following is furnished, viz.:

Lient. Lawrence, Company C, in his account of experiences early in 1863, sets forth as follows as to developments at Atlanta, Ga., where union officers were confined in a lodge room in third story of a large brick building:

"Confederate officers were frequent visitors. Their talk was largely devoted to the project of forming a Northwestern Confederacy. It was argued by them that the people of the northwestern States and those of the south were natural allies; that the Mississippi was the natural and should be the free highway for these two sections of the country. These views, however, met no favor among the prisoners. Facts have since come to light that show the same views were entertained by a class in the north, who at that particular time were noted for disloyalty to the government and who were in close communication with the enemy in the south."

From this it appears there was an agitation started, and kept up for many months, having for its object a rearrangement of boundaries which should include but few, if any, of the original States.

-Refer to page 131 of your report-  
I made no allegation that project for a Northwestern Confederacy was considered by the prisoners nor does ~~nor does~~ Lawrence's words above warrant such allegation.  
W. H. Newlin

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New England at least was to be left out and New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey as well. The "Yankees" and all territory dominated by them were to be excluded from the proposed Northwestern Confederacy. The southern States and all territory drained by the Mississippi and its tributaries, deemed to be peopled mainly from the south, were presumably to be embraced in the new alignment. At any rate the plan carried out was to accomplish the breaking up of the old union. Primarily the movement was meant to weaken the union armies, prevent enlistments therein and keep the people of the border States in a ferment and state of excitement. As a result of this agitation and reverses, drawn battles and other causes, there came to the union armies in 1863 the gloomiest period of the war. The agitation, however, and all speculation and currents of thought were in large measure subordinated and lost sight of by reason of increased and prolonged activity in the field, resulting in the battles of Gettysburg and Vicksburg, the siege and surrender of the latter place, the Tullahoma-Chattanooga campaign, and the battle of Chickamauga. These three extraordinary campaigns and engagements afforded not only a fair but severe test of the courage, patience, persistence and powers of endurance of the American soldier and of his "sticking" qualities, whether northern or southern. Later on came the siege of Chattanooga, the battles of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, and the Knoxville campaign, soon to be followed by the carrying out of the perfected plans for combined operations of all armies east and west in the year 1864. Under Grant in the east, the armies of the Potomac and of the James fought with great persistence, valor and varying success, many hard battles, the names of which are prominent in history, becoming household words. Sherman in Georgia also waged a determined, relentless and skillful campaign and warfare, achieving results brilliant and decisive, fairly comparable to those wrought by Grant in the east, adding names of many conflicts with the enemy that are and will forever remain memorable, adorning historic pages.

Late in 1864, in time *short* enough, the "*shift*" of Hood's army from Georgia to Tennessee was executed. On inner lines, equally *strenuous*, if not equally *rapid*, movements were made by the union force—the 4th and 23d corps—in concentrating to interpose defensive operations to prevent a threatened great disaster to the union cause, which disaster if not prevented would have revived hope of realization of the dream of a "Northwestern Confederacy." It was claimed, too, this proposed Northwestern Confederacy *meant* the undoing of the Southern Con-

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federacy; meant *secession* from SECESSION as Colonel Jaquess suggested to Jefferson D. This brings the statement down to the point where Hood exclaimed: "MEN, *break that line, and THERE IS NOTHING to withstand you this side of the Ohio River.*" "That line" was broken, but Opdycke's Brigade was at the right place at the right time and the gap was closed, the line restored, and the union force was not only enabled to save itself, but with the closing—and keeping closed—of that gap was forever blighted and *snuffed* out the only glimmer of hope there ever was of launching a Northwestern Confederacy. By maintenance of that breach in the federal line, the confederates expected to secure the surrender of all the union force south of the Harpeth River, the capitulation of Nashville, the control of Tennessee and Kentucky, including Louisville.

Opdycke's Brigade was right there "in the *nick of time and on the very spot where it was needed,*" the breach was repaired and the line restored, made stronger than before, by a *counter charge*, with result as already intimated to the dim and vanishing prospect for a Northwestern Confederacy. How nearly confederate success at Franklin would have realized that dream is matter of conjecture. The facts herein stated, in so far as they relate to the battle of Franklin, and the part performed therein by Opdycke's Brigade, are based on personal knowledge and observation of the writer. Being at the time commander of Company C, color bearer and guards of the 73d regiment, Illinois, I was in a position to see and learn something of what was actually accomplished and by whom in the *immediate* vicinity of the *breach* that afternoon of November 30, 1864.

So Lient. Lawrence, if he had been with his company at the battle of Franklin, would have been "*right in*" at the annihilation of all or any prospect there ever was of launching a Northwestern Confederacy, as well as being where he heard some of the very early if not the *very first* suggestions in regard to it.

For convenience, I make a few references; the first to page 435 of History 73d Illinois for the purpose of saying that George Hollingsworth, of Chrisman, Ill., is the man, who, with a furlough in his pocket, with his Company C comrades, nobly bore his full share in the perilous work of mending the "*breach,*" going home later. The other references are as follows, all in chapter six:

- For "Stop that Regiment," see page 444, 73d Illinois.
- For "Opdycke's Testimony," see page 466, 73d Illinois.
- For the "First Brigade Forward," see page 471, 73d Illinois.



For page entitled "Yankee Reserve," see page 477, 73d Illinois.  
 For page entitled "Vivid Recollections," see page 478, 73d Illinois.  
 Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM H. NEWLIN,

First Lieutenant Company C, 73d Illinois.

D. R. Gooch, Secretary and Treasurer:

Dear Comrade—I desire to state that the 73d Illinois infantry, rallying on its colors at the battle of Franklin, did pre-empt, first occupy ground in the "breach" made by the enemy in our line of men. The works remained intact and were precisely the essential thing to be recovered, and were recovered by Opdycke's Brigade in a counter charge. In the very essential initial steps to secure that end the 73d Illinois was the important factor, notwithstanding repeated cries to "stop that regiment." "Self preservation, the first law of nature," was the principle which wrung from the 36th, 44th, 73d, 74th and 88th Illinois, and 24th Wisconsin and 125th Ohio regiments that "intense energy," sufficient and effectual in blasting all hope or prospect of a Northwestern Confederacy. Very truly yours,

W. H. NEWLIN,

Historian 73d Illinois.

Springfield Ills  
 Dec. 16. 1907.

I hereby acknowledge with  
 thanks the receipt of the annual  
 official reports of the Librarian  
 of Congress and the Supt of Library  
 Building and grounds year 1907.

Very Respectfully

W. H. Newlin  
 -not Newlin-

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