

CW/VFM-131: General Ira Coray Abbott, 1st Michigan Infantry, Co. G & C

Abbott was commissioned into the 1st Michigan Infantry, Co. G on May 1, 1861. He was only in the company for a short time, transferring to into Co. B on September 12 of that year. The reason for this was because the original tour of duty of each soldier was only to last three months, and his transfer date coincides with reenlistment. He was wounded three times during combat, twice at Fredericksburg (12/13/1862) and once at Gettysburg (7/2/1863). During his service he was promoted four times. In April of 1862, he was promoted to Major. In August of that same year, he earned the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. In March of 1863, he had become a full colonel. Two years later he was given the title of Brevet Brigadier-General. He was mustered out of service on December 22, 1864.

The 1st Michigan was originally created on May 1, 1861. Three months later, it was reorganized in Detroit on September 16, 1861. This regiment saw action at such major engagements as Second Manassas (8/30/1862), Antietam (9/16-17/ 1862), Fredericksburg (12/12-15/1862), Chancellorsville (5/1-5/1863), Gettysburg (7/1-3/1863), Spotsylvania (5/ 8-12/1864), Cold Harbor (6/1-12/1864), Petersburg (6/16-17/ 1864), and Appomattox Court House (4/9/1865).

Diary of General Ira Coray Abbott:

Overall this diary is extremely detailed and gives good accounts of most of the fighting that Abbott engaged in. He also spends quite a bit of time describing troop movements and camp life. Abbott was extremely active during the war, and thus this first-hand account is extremely valuable.

10/8/1861: mentions that men in one of the companies have freed a few fugitives, and continue to take them as “contraband” (continued in the next few pages).

6/ 27/1862: extremely detailed account of close combat at the Battle of Mechanicsville. During this time, he seems to have proven himself very courageous.

7/1/1862: the Battle of Malvern Hill was also extremely heated. At one time, Abbott even found himself running out of ammunition.

4/27/1863: detailed account of crossing the Rappahannock into Chancellorsville, some skirmishing.

*margin of page 39 mentions move into Pennsylvania

7/2/1863: mention of his bravery in battle, and thus he was recommended for a promotion.

*entry is continued on page 43 to mention the fact that he was wounded.

In the back of this journal is an overview of the war, and pasted in the front are various newspaper articles that are relevant to the war (specific articles on the battles of Bull Run and Gettysburg).

Original document: 42pp.
Typed transcription 71pp.

Soldier History of Ira Coray Abbott (web printout):

Original document: 2pp

Soldier History of Charles H. Salter (web printout):

Salter was a member of the 1st Michigan Infantry until he was mustered out in early August of 1861.

Original document: 1pp.

Photo of Abbott (web printout-2):

Original document: 1pp.
Original document: 1pp.

Union Regimental Histories for Michigan (printout):

1st Sharpshooters
Hall's Independent Battalion Sharpshooters
Brady's Independent Company Sharpshooters
Dygert's Independent Company Sharpshooters
Jardine's Independent Company Sharpshooters
Company "C" 1st United States Sharpshooters
Company "I" 1st United States Sharpshooters
Company "K" 1st United States Sharpshooters
Company "B" 2nd United States Sharpshooters
1st Infantry (3 mos)
1st Infantry (3 yrs)
1st Colored Infantry
16th Infantry (Stockton's Independent Regiment)-2 copies

Original document: 8pp.

Keywords: Union – East – Michigan – 1st; Diaries; Army – Infantry;
Soldier – Generals

Related Entries in MusCat:

These Men Have Seen Hard Service: the First Michigan Sharpshooters in the Civil War
If I Am Found Dead: Michigan Voices from the Civil War

Original documents: 2pp

Location: Civil War Vertical File Manuscripts, Special Collections & College Archives,
Musselman Library at Gettysburg College.

See also: [Civil War Sources in Special Collections](#)