

Kentucky's Civil War: Greenup County's Camp Swigert



Historical Marker #2247 in Greenup County commemorates Camp Swigert, a Union recruiting camp.

In December 1861, the 22nd Kentucky Union Infantry Regiment organized at this camp. Recruits came from Louisville and Greenup, Franklin, Carter, Lewis, and Boyd counties. Soon after organizing, part of the regiment fought at the Battle of Middle Creek, near Prestonsburg. There, they turned the tide of battle by launching a bayonet charge, which

Col. James Garfield called “determinate of the day.”

After Middle Creek, the regiment was posted at the Cumberland Gap before serving in West Virginia. These troops then suffered heavily at the Battle of Chickasaw Bayou, losing nine killed, 72 wounded, and 26 missing. After the fight, their division commander noted that their flag, pictured here, was “torn” and “dripping with blood.”

The 22nd Kentucky then fought at Arkansas Post, Port Gibson, Miss., the siege of Vicksburg, and more. The regiment's experiences were aptly described by soldier John T. Harrington, who noted “I have seen war in all its horrors.”

Photo: This unidentified member of the 22nd Kentucky Infantry displays his regiment's colors after the Battle of Chickasaw Bayou. After the fight it was said that these flags were “torn” and “dripping with blood.” From the collections of the Kentucky Historical Society.