

**Book Notice: *Redemption: The 71st Ohio Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War*, by Martin Stewart**

Written by Dan Reigle, for publication in *Ohio Civil War Genealogy Journal*.

By Martin Stewart. Troy OH: Published by author, 2010. The book is available at local bookstores in Miami, Mercer, and Auglaize Counties as well as by contacting Martin directly at <Mstewart4@woh.rr.com>. 356 pages including 15 page index, many photographs and maps, and appendices on the unit roster, Roll of Honor, Hardesty history, 1890 veterans' census, and Nashville casualty list.

*OCWGJ* readers are familiar with author Martin Stewart's knowledge and research skills, from his successful attempt to identify the photograph of the 71st OVI reunion provided to *OCWGJ* by Sheri Taylor Bockelman in 2008. Through his research on every reunion of the 71st, he was able to identify the photograph as one taken at the unit's 35th reunion on 20 Jun 1907 in West Milton OH (*OCWGJ*, XIV, 2010, #1, pages 32-34.) This is an example of the depth and quality of research that is the basis for Martin Stewart's new comprehensive history of the 71st during and after the war.

Drawn from several counties in southwestern Ohio, the 71st OVI had a rough start in their war experience at Shiloh. As part of Sherman's division in the center of the fighting on the first day, the 71st was one of several Union regiments accused in the post-battle war of words of "breaking for the rear" without giving adequate resistance to the Confederate assault. With a thorough 42-page review of the regiment's role in the battle, the author concludes that "the 71st OVI as a group could have had a better showing, but most of the individual officers and soldiers certainly did their duty as best they could."

The book devotes chapters to Clarksville, Fort Henry and Fort Heiman, Gallatin, Atlanta, and Nashville, where the 71st suffered its most extensive losses during the war, 21 killed and 101 wounded with several of them mortally wounded. Each of the chapters is heavily based on primary sources from contemporary newspapers, soldier letters, and diaries. Maps are plentiful and simple but effective in illustrating the subject.

The "Aftermath" chapter contains biographical sketches of some members of the 71st, giving additional "life" to the names of many men in the book. As always, these sketches are fascinating glimpses into the lives of the people whose experiences we now struggle to know and understand. This chapter of the book by itself is worth reading by anyone interested in the war.

In general, this book is an important contribution to the history of the 71st, the locations in which it served, and the battles in which it fought. Importantly, it is also an important contribution to the history of the war effort in Ohio, and to the local history of Miami, Mercer, Auglaize, Clark, Montgomery, and Hamilton Counties, some of whose citizens became the 1343 men of the 71st OVI, including the 200 who died of wounds or disease during the war.