



## 2nd MINNESOTA BATTERY

# “ACTION FRONT”

Circular No. 304

February 2023

## On This Date-160 Years Ago

### Remarks for the Month of February, 1863

(Numbers indicate the day of the month)

- 6 Corps. Christian Denlinger, William Kinkead & Privates Henry A. Siamonds, Fordis Averill, James M. Lane & Francis Flint Captured by rebel cavalry
- 7 L. F. Benge, E. R. Mack, A. W. Jackson, J. C. Ramsey, Jno. Street & Chas. West of the 21st Ill. Vols Detailed for duty in this Batty reported for duty
- 8 Silas B. Anway, Anson B. Douglas, Adam Dilling of the 101st Ohio Vols & Henry Hanson, Neils Olaus, Christopher Muller of the 15th Regt Wis. Vols. -- reported for duty in this Batty --
- 9 Wm. Green, A. J. Brady, J. P. Allen, G. Culbertson, Wm. Lord & R. Benefield of the 38th Ill Regt Vols Reported for duty in this Bat.
- 13 Private J. A. Hovey returned for duty from Gen Hospital.
- 18 Sergt C. N. Earl ret'd from Hosp. to duty. --
- 19 Received official notice of death of James McKinney in Hosp at Nashville Jany 14, 1863. Silas Howard discharged in Dec. 1862 on surgeon's certificate of disability has been 1 year inadvertently reported "absent sick" to date from off. notice thereof being mislaid.
- 20 Lieut Woodbury & Geo. C. Townsend rejoined for duty
- 21 The 18 men attached to the bat. (as above) returned to their Regts. for duty there -- Special order No. 4 of Col. Carlin
- 24 Received Official notice of the death of Gilbert Gaslin -- at Hosp. No. 10 in Nashville Feby 22 1863 of Erysipelas.
- 25 Received Notice of the discharge of John Arnold
- 28 Capt. Hotchkiss left on recruiting service in Minn. Special order of Rosecranz No. 53 : Feb 25
- 31 Jesse F. Byam restored to duty

*Do note that in 1863—at least in the Morning Reports of the Battery, February had 31 days!! Record keeping was clearly not a strong suit for our Battery!*

## Upcoming Events

### February 17-18 Civil War Book Sale, Lake City

The Friends of the Lake City Public Library received a wonderful donation of Civil War books previously owned by an avid collector. The condition of this collection is amazing! Many books have never been `opened`; they were purchased by the previous owner in order to complete his various Time Life Collector Sets. The condition of the `vintage` sets and vintage individual volumes is also truly amazing! Many have copywrite dates from the mid-1800s. This collection also has a vast number of individual books or two volume sets. This sale will offer approx. 230 books as well as a few VCR tapes, which could possibly be converted to DVD. Included with this email are pictures of a few of the books offered, however, the beauty of this collection can only be appreciated by seeing it in person. Prices range on individual books and sets from \$2 to \$175.

**This will be a two day sale, Feb. 17th and 18th, 10 am-3 pm, at 209 So. High Street, Lake City, MN.**

## Paid Your Dues Yet?

Battery 2023 dues are due now! There is a membership form on the last page of this newsletter. Please do fill out the form completely if any of your information has changed since last year. Fill it out if you can't remember what email or phone number you put down last year. Fill it out you can't remember if something changed since last year. Just fill out the form! We want to have an accurate and up to date list of all phone numbers, addresses and emails. Thank you!

### Next Meeting

**February 25, 11:00 am**

Elks Club, 306 W 4th Street, Red Wing,  
Contact Ken Cunningham with questions or agenda items.  
651-388-2945.



# **Battery Profile**

## **Henry St. Cyre**

War can so dramatically change the course of anyone's life and, from what few records are left to tell the story, it appears to have changed Henry's life for the worse.

Little is known about Henry before the war. His name cannot be found in the 1860 census, but marriage records indicate he married on June 1, 1850, in St. Paul, Minnesota. His bride was Marie Hermione Lemay, born in Canada in 1834. They began a family and records indicate there were at least five children born in St. Paul.

Henry's time in the Army began when he enlisted during the draft rendezvous at Fort Snelling in the late summer of 1864. He enlisted on August 31 and was mustered into the Second Minnesota Battery of Light Artillery on the 10th of September as a private. He received \$33.33 as his enlistment bounty with the balance of \$66.67 to be paid at a later date. On his muster sheet, Henry said he had been born in Crawford County, Wisconsin, was 36 years old and was a farmer. The description recorded for him noted that he had hazel eyes, black hair, dark complexion and stood 5' 4" tall. Though he likely never set foot in the place, his name was credited to the town of Centerville in Anoka County for the draft quota.

Significant are two other men who enlisted in the two days before Henry. They were brothers Louis Lemay on the 29th of August and Ferdinand on the 30th. The Lemays and Henry all lived near Mendota and it is believed that Marie may have been Louis and Ferdinand's sister—the Marie who married Henry St. Crye. Henry did not enlist in the Second Battery without knowing at least two of his comrades and they were very likely his brothers-in-law.

There was not a lot of fighting during the time Henry served with the Battery as the unit spent most of their last year in the war doing garrison duty. That did not mean it was easy service, nor was it without risk. Records from the Battery show Henry was among those injured in a train accident in Tennessee. The Battery was moving north from Knoxville to Loudon, Tennessee, when several train cars derailed near the bridge crossing the Tennessee River. Some of the men riding in them jumped, fearing they would be crushed or drowned if they rode the car off the rails. Henry jumped and broke his ankle. He appears not to have gone to the hospital, instead being cared for by men in the Battery, but he never went back to active duty. He returned to Minnesota with the Battery and was discharged from Fort Snelling in July of 1865.

Where Henry went or what he was doing after the war is unknown as he left few records. By 1870, Henry was living in Wadena, Minnesota, living alone, and working as a laborer. The two youngest of his children were living with their maternal grandparents in Eagan, Minnesota. No record has been found of Marie or the older children.

The pension papers filed on Henry's behalf in 1880 briefly mention that he was injured during the war and focus on his being declared "insane." His sister, Julia Brown, filed an affidavit stating she had been caring for him since his discharge in 1865 and that she was his legally appointed guardian. This conflicts with the census records, but there were fifteen years between these events and memories may have been confused about the dates. She also stated that Henry had been declared "insane" during one of the battles the Battery participated in. No Battery records note this, however it is known the officers of the Battery were notoriously bad at keeping records.

Henry was committed to a state hospital by a judge of probate in Morrison County on October 15, 1881, having been judged insane. A letter to the pension department stated that Henry was sent to the hospital at St. Peter, Minnesota.

Conflict arose in 1882 as Henry's daughter, Marie, appeared before the pension board stating that she was the proper guardian for her father. Subsequent pension papers indicate Charles Barnhart, Henry's son-in-law took over as Henry's guardian in 1887. Other children, especially his daughters, continued to be involved in Henry's welfare throughout his life.

The commitment papers for Henry provide a few more details about him. He was Roman Catholic, was a widower and was the father of six children. He told everyone he had been born in Wisconsin and was a "half breed." One question asked about Henry's habits and it was answered that at times, he had been "intemperate," but no longer. More questions indicate that this commitment was at least the third time he had been sent to a hospital for his condition, the first being in 1875. The condition was diagnosed as "manic." The admitting papers said he suffered from "delusions of pride and grandeur, he has interminable wealth and vast armies at his command." In describing Henry's condition it was stated that he had suffered "abuse by others," had "exalted delusions and hallucinations." Another time, it was said Henry believed he was 300 years old and that he was "commander of a large army that is to conquer ¼ of this continent for him." That was followed by a notation that Henry was "sincere" in his confusion.

Henry, however, appeared to be a model patient. He was noted as "very neat and careful" of his person. He had never tried to harm himself or others, though his "countenance was dull and depressed."

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He was described as having strong likes and dislikes, "is harmless and is quiet if he has a pencil and paper. Escaped twice, but not for three years."

Physically, Henry was in good health, though he had lost toes due to frost bite and eventually, he had one foot amputated. Detailed notes were made about the size of his head, the shape of his head, and any lumps or protrusions on it.

Henry's last home was the Asylum at Fergus Falls, Minnesota. He died there on January 25, 1893, and was laid to rest in the Asylum cemetery.

What had Henry experienced that crushed his spirit in such a painful way? We will never know, but the bits a pieces of his story seem to indicate he was suffering from what was then called "soldiers heart." Today we call it PTSD.

Perhaps in death, Henry found the peace he could not find in life.

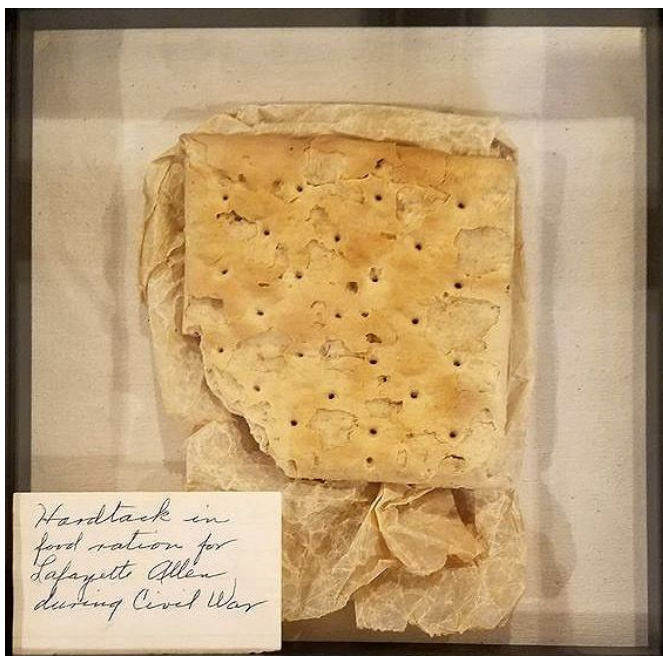
Sandy F., A volunteer searching through the names of those buried in the hospital cemetery at Fergus Falls found a reference to Henry's military service with the Second Minnesota Battery. She contacted the reenacting group who portrays the Second Minnesota Battery and together with the Otter Tail County Historical Society, they were able to order and set a military marker on Henry's grave in the summer of 2016.



Note: Henry's marker is in a corner of the cemetery and for the guests to see the flags and flowers, they had to be placed on the back of the stone, the side that faced guests. The engraving on the marker faces the corner and fence.

## ***Hardtack DOES Last Forever!***

Many museums have collections online and include photographs of their objects. These are images of authentic hardtack from the 1860s! These are documented as having been issued to soldiers—one is even identified—during the war, but not eaten. These men must have kept the hardtack as a souvenir from their time in the army. It may have been in a haversack that was saved and never found until many years after the war and was then seen as a curiosity. That, or perhaps they wanted to see how long it really would keep!



# **SHY'S HILL, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, DECEMBER 15-16, 1864**

By John Cain

Ever since our visit last spring to Shy's Hill in Nashville, Tennessee, and a short visit with one of the caretakers, I've become interested in the location of the hill and the Minnesota monument now located on the northeastern slope of the hill. It prompted some research on the Federal attack on the Confederate defenses on top of the hill.

After a futile look online for battle maps of the hill showing regimental locations, I did find two showing action on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of December, 1864. It turns out that the both maps were created by Mark Zimmerman and Ross Massey connected with the Battle of Nashville Preservation Society, however, there were no regimental locations in the Brigades. So, I turned to the trusty "Minnesota in the Civil and Indian Wars", a once upon a time history book in the Minnesota School System.

My intent in this endeavor was to find out what regiment a small company of men from Red Wing was in because that entire small company was wiped out during the assault by the 10<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, or 7<sup>th</sup> Minnesota regiments. Another goal was to try to locate the direction/angle that Howard Pyle used in the painting which still hangs in Minnesota State Capitol.

The weather on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of December was extreme for the Nashville region. It had been on and off rain with freezing temperatures including an ice storm during that period. The type of soil in this region lends itself to mud that becomes slick, soft and sticky that would cling to the boots of the men crossing the fields. There are references to knee deep mud and horses sinking up to the knees. This situation also affected the reserve artillery and baggage trains held behind the Confederate lines as they too were bogged in mud.

There are three maps showing the disposition of troops in McArthur's 1<sup>st</sup> Division. Map #1 shows in order, the 10<sup>th</sup> Regiment was in the McMillan's 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, the 9<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Regiments were in Lucius Hubbard's 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade and the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment was on the right of Marshall's 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade. This configuration staged all four regiments in the front ranks, shoulder to shoulder in the Division assault. In addition the 93<sup>rd</sup> Indiana filled out the extreme right and the 35<sup>th</sup> Iowa (records elude me) may have filled out the extreme left of the Division Front. It was Lucius Hubbard who raised a small company of men from Red Wing and later found himself as a brigade commander in this action.

After much maneuvering of the Brigades in the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>, the division was formed with its supporting artillery about 1:00 pm. There they remained in place within musket range, lying prone and enduring an artillery exchange with Confederate artillery well protected behind a stone wall along the length of Harding Place Road.

At 4:00 pm, the artillery exchange stopped and the sound of a single bugle, perhaps behind the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, brought the infantry to their feet and into formation. The 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade stepped off, then the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade and then the 3<sup>rd</sup> brigade advancing across the open ground in an echelon right formation, the mud beginning to take effect. Behind the stone wall Confederate artillery began to use solid shot, case and canister opening gaps in the Federal ranks, but the advance continued as best they could. There were no shirkers in the Minnesota lines.

Map # 2 shows the initial contact of the 1st Brigade. The 10<sup>th</sup> Regiment was the first to reach the stone wall going over the top, overrunning the artillery and beginning its climb up the hill. They were able to reach almost to the top without taking many casualties from musket fire because the crest of the hill protected the advance of the 10<sup>th</sup>, the Confederate trenches being occupied on the top of the hill. Once they were up and able to rush the top trenches, the order was given and Color Sergeant O'Neil planted the Regimental Flag on top followed by the rest of the regiment. The following troops began to fire into the backs of the rebels in adjacent trenches causing a reaction that began a surrender and rout of the Confederate forces on the hilltop. There were some casualties on the way up the slope because the left of the regiment was exposed to flanking fire from Jackson's troops in the adjacent trench.

Things were not much better with the 9<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Regiments in Hubbard's 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade. They too crossed that muddy field in echelon and were trying to catch up and close with the 10<sup>th</sup>. They charged the stone wall where artillery had shattered the front ranks and went over the top driving off the cannoneers. Because of the slope, the 9<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> regiments, in their effort to close with the 10<sup>th</sup> regiment took their route up the Northeast slope of the hill. They advanced up against the Confederate troops of Jackson, Sears and Canty entrenched near the top, overrunning and joining it the rout of the enemy. Map #3

Marshall's 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, of which the 7<sup>th</sup> Minnesota was part, was the third brigade to advance as the 2<sup>nd</sup> had done. In their movement, they faced the extended line of artillery behind the stone wall as well as that muddy open field. Their luck brought them in front of four Napoleons of the Point Coupee (Louisiana)

Battery, firing solid, case, and canister, which they captured. An incident occurred during the assault in which Colonel Marshall rode his horse “across the field with his men guiding the colors and was among the first over the rebel works. He rode on to a rebel gunner that tried to run away and captured him. One of our men said that he wished the Colonel would not so expose himself. A rebel officer standing with his back against a cannon wheel said: “H\_\_\_L, any man that is brave enough to ride a horse across that field will never be killed” The 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade also joined in the rout of Confederates who had begun to run minutes earlier from the top of Shy’s Hill towards the Granny White Pike.

Captures and Casualties are listed as given by reports from regimental, brigade and division commands.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Regiment captured an unknown number of guns at the base of the hill but there were at least four cannon on top of the hill when they over ran the works. The regiment began their assault with 300 muskets and lost 8 officers and 20 to 77 men killed or wounded.

The 9<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Regiments captured 3 battle flags, one of which was from the 4<sup>th</sup> Mississippi CSA, 700 men, Brigadier General Henry Jackson and 3 officers along with four “brass” guns initially and during the pursuit. Casualties of the 9<sup>th</sup> regiment were two officers killed and three officers wounded, 16 men killed and 37 wounded. The 5<sup>th</sup> regiment lost 106 killed and wounded.

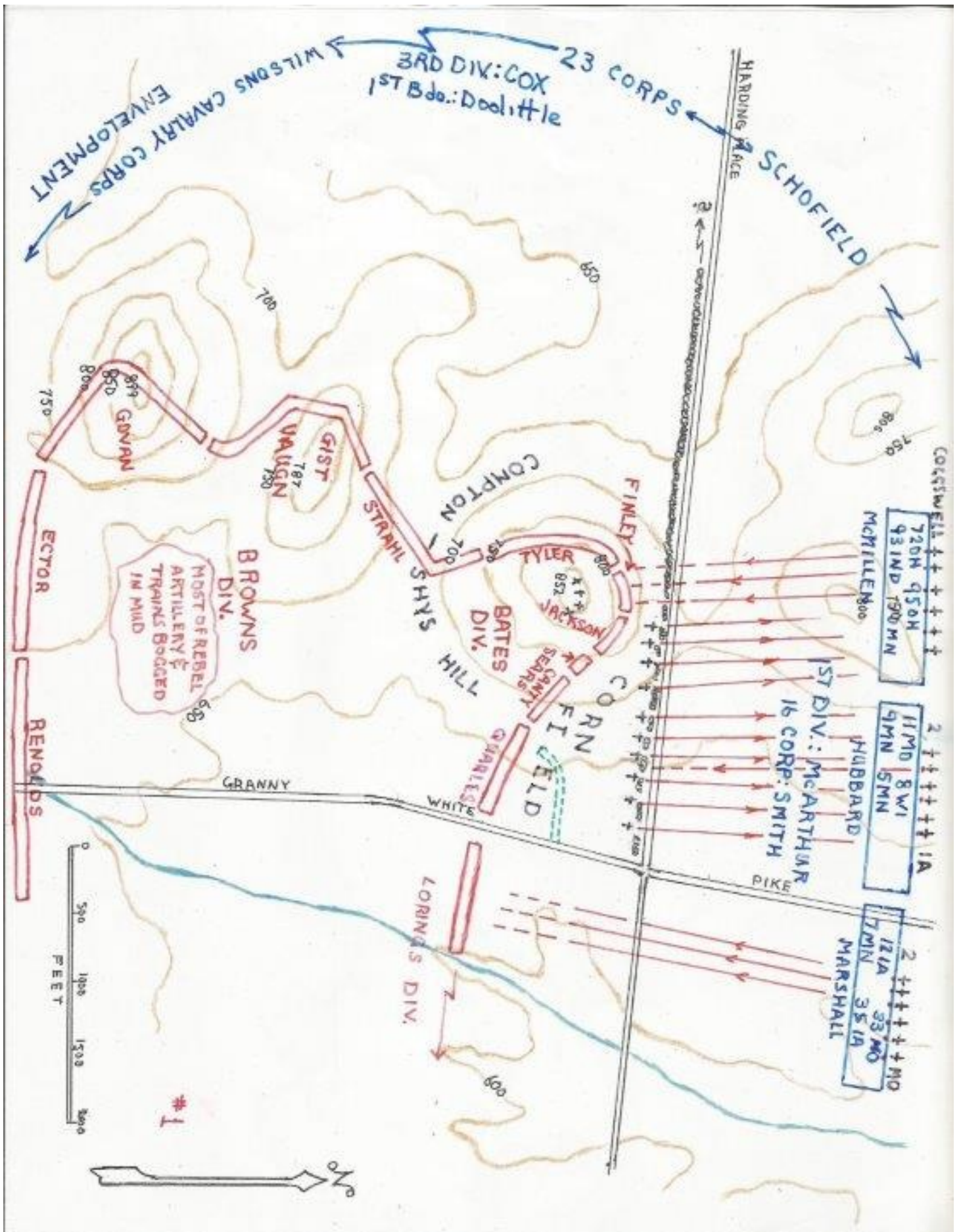
McArthur’s First Brigade reported 16 cannon and 2000 prisoners captured on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December.

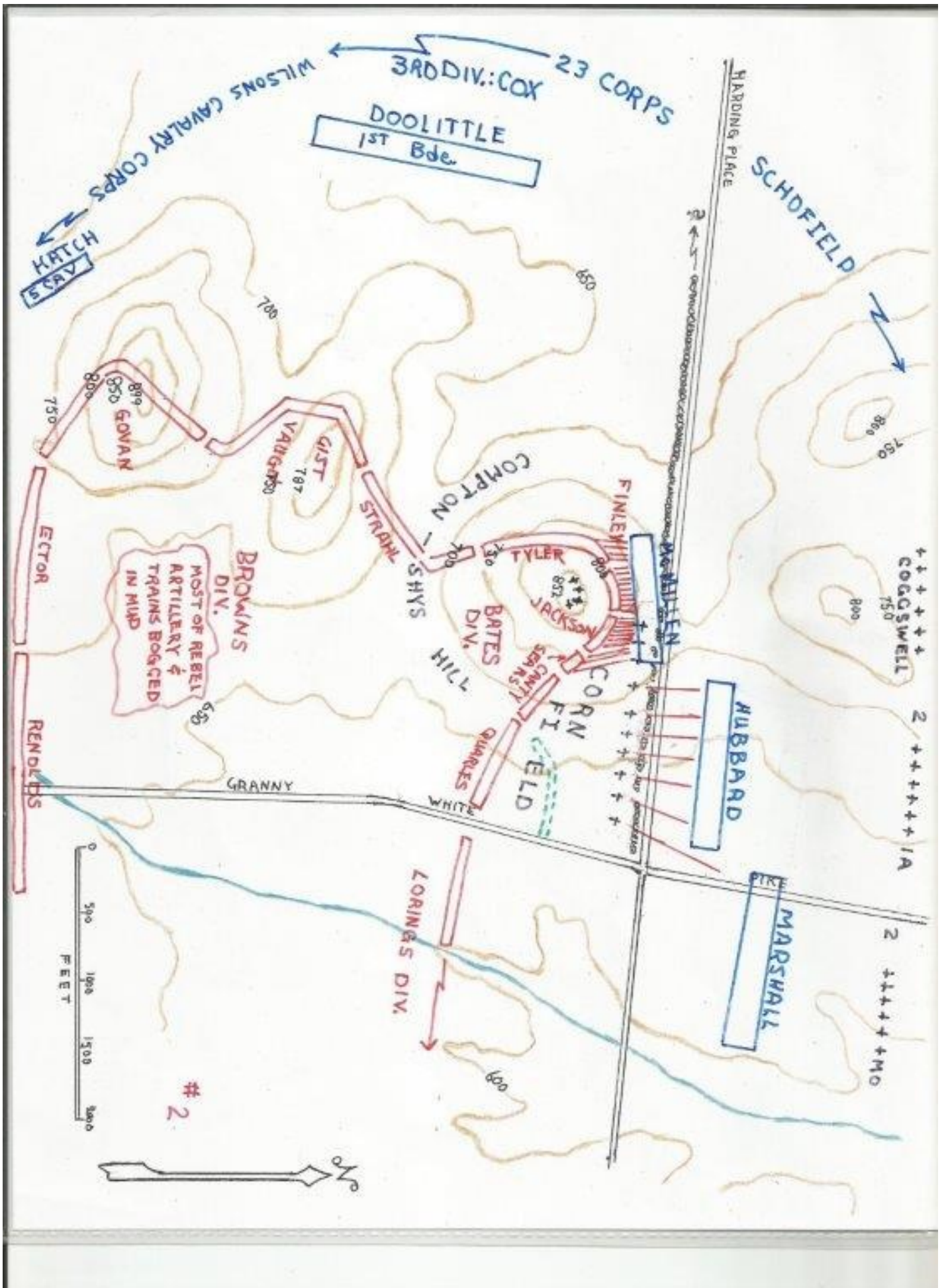
Hood’s Confederate Army had been in a defensive position begun on the 15<sup>th</sup> after the being outflanked by Federal Forces defending Nashville. Although in a strong position, they too faced the same weather conditions as Federal Troops, but their numbers had been depleted on the 15<sup>th</sup> as a result of the flanking attack. The Confederates had placed their reserve artillery and baggage/field trains on the low ground between the hills and the Granny White Pike. The First Division reported Hood’s losses were about 3500 men killed and wounded, 51 of 60 artillery pieces and about 9000 prisoners along with an “immense number of small arms and a great deal of baggage” Hood’s Army had been utterly destroyed.

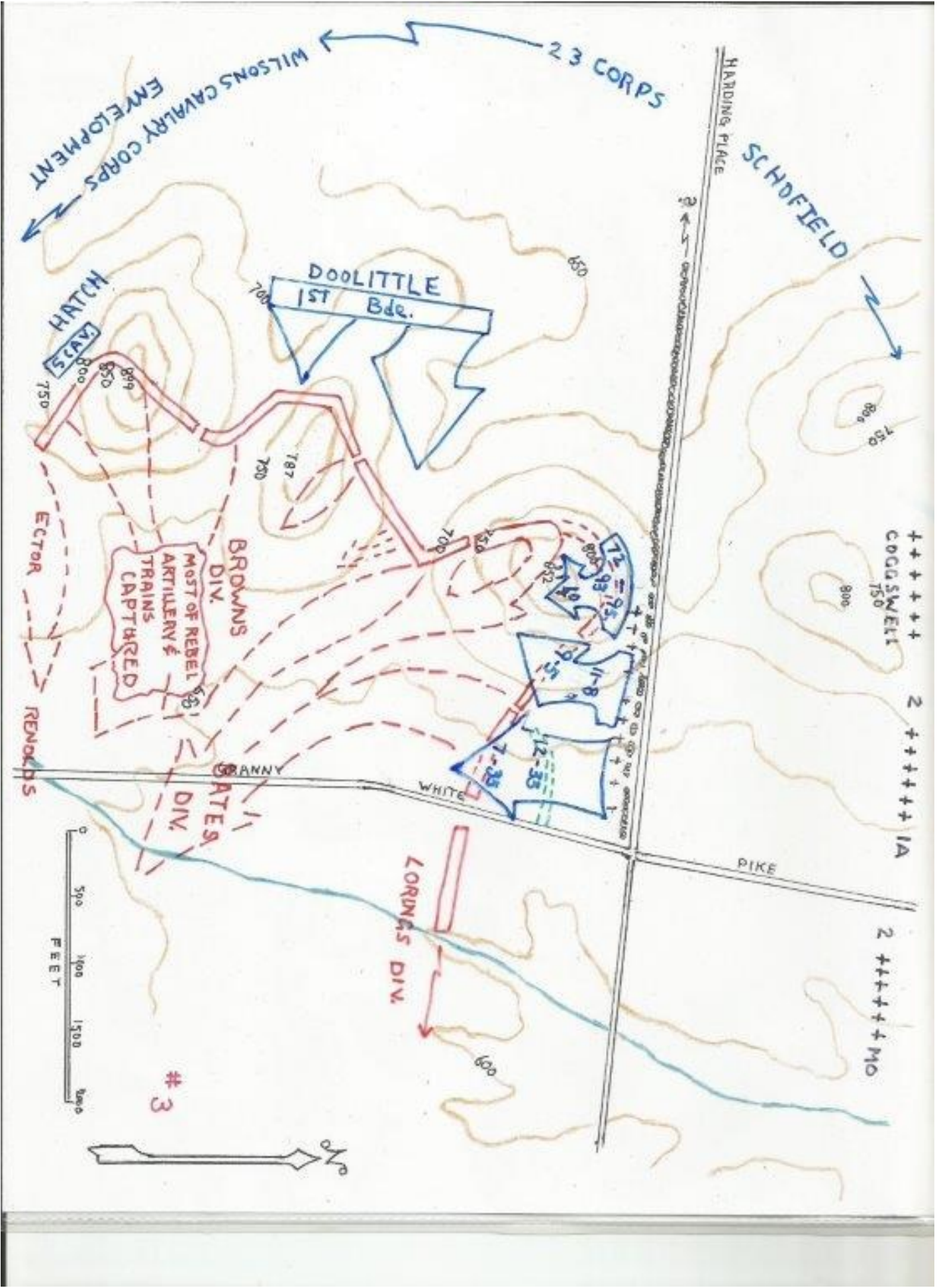
P.S. There is noted on the maps a green marked road. It is named McArthur Ridge Court. I believe this is the area where Howard Pyle chose to do the painting in the State Capitol.

Maps referenced in article appear on pages 5-7











# Recap



On January 5, Vickie Wendel was invited to speak with about 20 students in the theater department students at the St. Michael-Albertville High School. They are preparing for a competition play and have chosen a play that features a disguised soldier during the Civil War. The play is *The Man She Was* by Ric Averill and they will be performing it for the public on January 28 and February 3-4.

Dressed in her work dress, Vickie shared stories about the different roles of women in the 1860s and the war as well as advising students (and teachers) on the costumes that had just arrived that day. The costumes were pretty bad, but could be improved with a few modifications easily adopted by the students. It was hard for her to remember that this is high school THEATER and she could not turn into a stitch-counter! Their image should be much improved over what is represented in the photo, even if it still didn't really get much better than "tried hard, but still farby!"

On the other side, these kids were well prepared with excellent questions and knew their Civil War history. It was fun to share their enthusiasm for history and a delight to talk with students who actually knew something about the Civil War!

***The Second Minnesota Light Artillery Battery*** is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Civil War history by living it.

Membership is \$12 per year. Non-member newsletter subscription rate is \$6.00 per year.

For information on the Battery, please contact:

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**<http://www.2mnbattery.org>**



**Your Country Needs You!**  
**And so does the Battery!**

**2023 dues are DUE !!** To remain on the active member list, your dues are:

Civilian Member	\$12.00
Military Member	\$12.00
Associate Member	\$ 6.00
Junior Member (14-17)	\$ 6.00
Junior Member (under 14)	Free

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form and your check to:

Daryl Duden  
1210 West 4th Street  
Red Wing, MN 55066

Please do fill out the form completely and return it with your dues as email addresses and cell numbers change. We need an accurate contact list in case of last minute event changes or emergencies.

Thank you!