

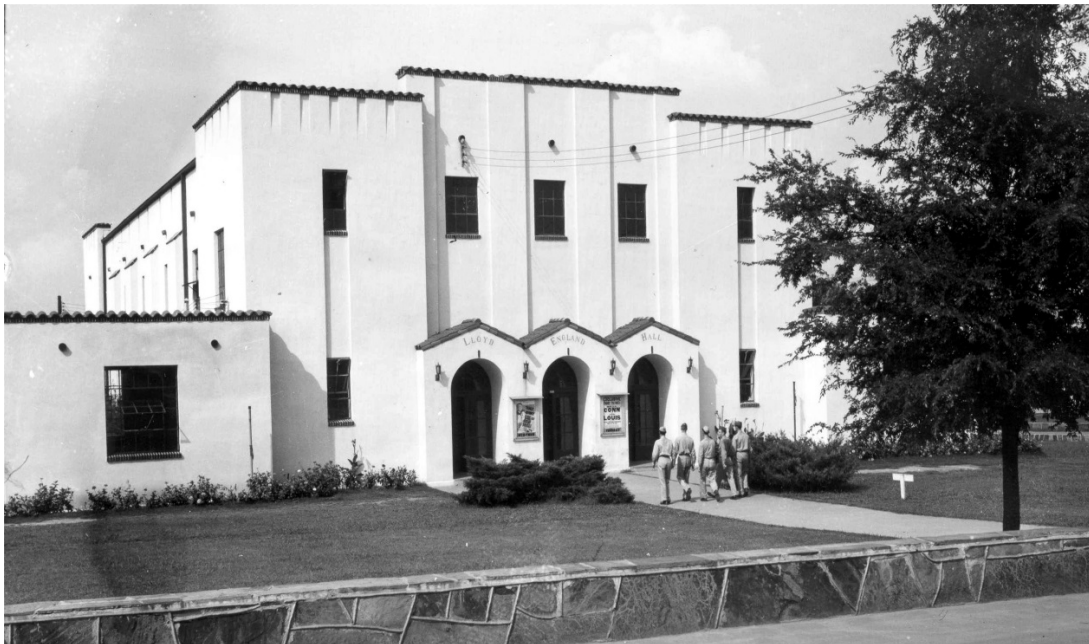
Arkansas Military History Journal

A Publication of the
ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD MUSEUM INC.

Vol. 10

Winter 2016

No. 1



**Arkansas in the Civil War:
The Battle of Brownsville**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman

Brigadier General Keith A. Klemmer
Ex-Officio

Vice Chairman

Major General (Ret) Kendall Penn
Ex-Officio

Secretary

Dr. Raymond D. Screws (Non-Voting)
Ex-Officio

Treasurer

Colonel Damon N. Cluck

Board Members

Ex-Officio. Major James Holifield
Ex-Officio. Captain Barry Owens
Historian – Major Anthony Rushing
At Large – Lieutenant Colonel Clement J. Papineau, Jr.
At Large – Chief Master Sergeant Melvin E. McElyea
Major Matthew Anderson (Non-Voting Consultant)
Deanna Holdcraft (Non-Voting Consultant)

Museum Staff

Dr. Raymond D. Screws, Director/Journal Editor
Erica McGraw, Museum Assistant, Journal Layout & Design

Incorporated 27 June 1989 Arkansas Non-profit Corporation

Cover Photograph: Lloyd England Hall, Camp Robinson, during WWII. This is the Arkansas National Guard Museum today.

Message from the Chair

Congratulations to the Arkansas Military History Journal staff and contributing writers! In reviewing articles for this inaugural issue, I am reminded of what Abraham Lincoln wrote in context of the American Civil War, "Human nature will not change. In any future great national trial, compared with the men of this [Civil War], we shall have as weak and as strong, as silly and as wise, as bad and as good. Let us therefore study the incidents in this as philosophy to learn wisdom from and none of them as wrongs to be avenged." Likewise, we have much to learn in our study of history since that Great War.

It is my vision that this journal, as well as the Arkansas National Guard Museum programs, will spark interest in our history and further strengthen the bond between past, present, and future generations of Arkansas National Guard service members. Additionally, I encourage you to take a more active role in the museum programs and help contribute to future editions of the journal with your own original articles.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Arkansas Military History Journal!

BG Keith A. Klemmer
Chairman, Arkansas National Guard Museum Foundation

Message from the Editor

After a 15 year hiatus, the *Arkansas Military Journal*, renamed the *Arkansas Military History Journal*, has returned with this issue. We decided to begin this new volume at the place the last one ended. So with the resurrection of the journal, we start with Volume 10. Arkansas National Guard Museum board of directors decided to provide a quarterly publication that will focus mainly on military stories and other articles of interest connected to Arkansas, although there will be some subjects that expands the scope.

We are starting fairly small, so the first issue includes one long article and two shorter informative pieces. Subsequent issues might include more articles. This issues includes an article by Lieutenant Colonel Clement J. Papineau, Jr., about the Civil War battle in and around Brownsville, Arkansas. There is also an informative piece on Federal property by Major Matthew Anderson. MAJ Anderson has also written a short article about a federal artifact held at the Arkansas National Guard Museum, and this might be a recurring feature.

We hope you enjoy the new *Arkansas Military History Journal* and please let us know your comments.

Dr. Raymond Screws
Editor/Arkansas National Guard Museum Director

Table of Contents

The Battle of Brownsville	1
Historical Federal Property in the Arkansas Army National Guard	30
Featured Artifact: US Rifle, Caliber .30, M1 Garand	32
Featured Photograph.....	38

The Battle of Brownsville

Lieutenant Colonel Clement J. Papineau, Jr.

August in Arkansas is brutal, and August, 1863 was no exception. The drought had persisted for nearly a month. Even now, with the month almost over, there seemed to be no relief in sight. This did not bother



Robert C. Newton (Wikipedia n.d.)

the troopers of Shelby's "Iron Brigade" (CSA), which numbered at roughly 700. Shelby's Brigade was camped about five hundred yards east of Brownsville, Arkansas in a pasture owned by a family called Anderson. Brownsville was surrounded by springs and wells so the troopers of Shelby's Brigade had plenty of water. Likewise, the troopers were treated well by the people of Brownsville. Most of the men from Brownsville were under the command of COL Robert C. Newton's 5th Arkansas (CSA). The 5th Arkansas, which was commanded at this time by LT COL B.F. Gordon, was part of Walkers Division as was Shelby's Brigade. Likewise, on the morning of the 25th of August

1863 the men of Shelby's Brigade were content in their surroundings and the people of Brownsville felt safe with the troopers protecting them.

Brownsville, Arkansas was a thriving community at this point with a population of over 2,500 people. At the time of the impending battle, the town was in Prairie County and was the fourth largest



Courtesy of Lonoke County, Arkansas

city in the state of Arkansas. The town consisted of two hotels, a blacksmith, saddle shops, merchants, whiskey salesman, church, three doctors, three lawyers, a newspaper, miller, three saloons and various other businesses. A town, community, or settlement doesn't just appear overnight, there is usually a reason for the establishment of the community. Brownsville was no different, due to the proximity of an ever increasing causeway across Arkansas, settlers chose the location that became Brownsville. In 1819, the federal government needed a way to move the Indians to the new Indian Territory north and west of the Arkansas

River. To facilitate this movement of people a highway was developed. It was known as the "Military Road" from Memphis, Tennessee to Little Rock, Arkansas. In the 1820's a man named Samson Gray received a government contract to construct a road from the White River to the North Shore of the Arkansas River. This road was used extensively and was also the route used to remove Indians from the East and resettle them in the West. People from the tribes of the Choctaw, Creek, Cherokee and Chickasaw used this road. Not only did the road move the Indians, but during the war in Mexico in 1846, troops were moved to Mexico using this road.

The Memphis to Little Rock Road, was authorized on 31 January, 1824, when the U.S. Congress passed an act for construction of a road opposite Memphis, Tennessee, through the swamps of east



Arkansas, to the territorial capital of Arkansas at Little Rock¹. Surveyors Joseph Paxton and Thomas Mathers and Memphis contractor Anderson B. Carr were hired to lay out the route for the proposed road.² Paxton and Mathers (Carr resigned from the team amid disagreement with the others about the best route to follow in crossing the White River) reported to Secretary of War John C. Calhoun on February 12, 1825, that they had selected the best possible route through eastern Arkansas, including the point where it would cross Crowley's Ridge, a loess soil ridge towering over the miasmal swamps of east Arkansas:

“Passing up the valley of Village creek, this road rises the hills of St Francis. On a fine slope and passes without any difficulties through the rich, Military Lands to the river Languelle.”³

¹ Jennova Meals, “Paths of the Past: The Old Military Road in East Arkansas.” Research Paper 2.

² Julia Ward Longnecker, “A Road Divided: From Memphis to Little Rock Through the Great Mississippi Swamp.” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XLIV, No 3 (Autumn, 1985) 205.

³ Clarence E. Carter, comp, and ed., *Territorial papers of the United States, XIX, Arkansas Territory, 1825-1829* (Washington, D.C., 1954), 769.

Lt. Frederick L. Griffith was appointed superintendent of the Memphis to Little Rock Road on January 27, 1826, with instructions to make a road “at least twenty four feet wide throughout” with all timber and brush removed and stumps cut as low as possible, marshes and swamps to be “causewayed with poles or split timber,” and ditches four feet wide and three feet deep to be dug on either side of the road. “The hills on the route are to be dug down and wound round in such a manner as to make them practicable for carriages or loaded wagons,” Griffith was instructed.⁴

In 1846, pioneers traveling westward established a settlement between branches of the Bayou Two Prairie River on the Military Road. The location was perfect for several reasons, one of them being an adequate supply of fresh spring water and the very fertile prairie from which to grow crops. It was also a natural stopping point on the journey between DeValls Bluff and Little Rock for weary travelers. That same year Prairie County was created and the settlement that became known as the town of Brownsville was formed. The town was named for Major Jacob Brown one of the first casualties in the Mexican War, who was killed at the siege of Ft. Brown, Texas. In 1849, Brownsville became the seat of Prairie County. Brownsville did not have the advantage of being a port town located on the Arkansas and White Rivers, where steamboats running from Napoleon carried the mail three times a week from the Arkansas River to the White River. However, Brownsville was located on the stage line, which ran daily from Little Rock to DeValls Bluff on the White River. Travelers stopped at Brownsville and stayed at William England’s or Gullett’s Tavern. County Surveyor, William McIntosh, of Pulaski County was commissioned to survey the town plat on July 24, 1849, by the county commissioners. The town was subdivided into lots and blocks, which contained twenty-five acres. Circuit Clerk, Edwin M. Williams, filed the plat in the Prairie County court records October 17, 1851, and again on October 25, 1854. A fire destroyed all the early records prior to September 16, 1854. Due to the growth in population and the steady stream of travelers on the Military Road, a post office was established for Brownsville in 1854. An ad in the *Arkansas Gazette* dated August 10, 1849, stated, “Persons wishing to invest in town property in or near a thriving county are invited to attend the sale of lots in the town of Brownsville, which is the newly elected Seat of Justice of Prairie County.” According to the 1860 census, Brownsville had four physicians, S.W. Sorrels, George Fiddler, John Wright and J.N. Parham. Walton Harris, W. E. Blankston, J.C. Hicks, W. J. Rogers and John Hopper owned mercantile businesses. E. A. Gullett, Else Jackson and Thomas Gray operated the taverns. John Graver had the blacksmith shop, and E. A. Sharp and D. A. Sheet were the saddlers. The bustling town had bricklayers, lawyers, seamstresses, churches,

⁴ Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XX, 187-8.

newspaper and a schoolhouse. Elbert H. English organized Masonic Lodge 51 on November 4, 1852. M.E. Williams taught reading and writing upstairs at the lodge for \$1 a month.

Upon hearing of the firing upon Fort Sumter in 1861, the citizens of Brownsville surrounded the courtyard with candlelight, and began the preparations for war with the North to include creating and manning several units to fight for the Confederacy.

Many consider July 4, 1863, as the turning point of the American Civil War. Two important and famous, well documented battles resulted in Confederate defeats: the Battle of Gettysburg (Pennsylvania), July 1-3, and the fall of Vicksburg (Mississippi), July 4. However, two other major, lesser known events resulted in two additional Confederate defeats. Both losses, one in Tennessee and one in Arkansas, were influenced by the Vicksburg campaign.⁵ In an effort to lift the siege at Vicksburg, Confederate leadership in Arkansas decided to attack the Port City of Helena, with the intent to draw Union troops away from Vicksburg to deal with the possible loss of the all-important port on the Mississippi River. At Helena, Arkansas, Confederate forces under Lt. Gen. Theophilus Holmes attacked the strongly entrenched federal garrison there, suffering serious losses.⁶ This latter attack decimated Confederate forces in Arkansas, while the former event freed thousands of Union troops for use elsewhere. As the result of the loss of Vicksburg by the Union forces under General U.S. Grant, the Mississippi River opened up to untrammelled Federal River traffic.

The chain of events that resulted in the Battle of Brownsville, which was the first major engagement in the Little Rock Campaign, began with the capture of a Rebel Lieutenant in Missouri in early July 1863. He reported an impending invasion of Missouri by nineteen thousand troops under Maj. Gen. Sterling Price. Brig. Gen. John Wynn Davidson, commanding Union cavalry in eastern Missouri, took the bait, reporting to Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield that "Price crossed from Jacksonport to Crowley's Ridge, by a

⁵ Egon Hatfield, July 4, 1863: *Turning point in the Civil War*, www.army.mil/article/106837, July 3, 2013.

⁶ On July 4, Lt. Gen. Theophilus Holmes had mounted a four pronged attack on well entrenched Union positions in that Mississippi River port. Holmes had issued vague orders for complicated coordinated attacks on the series of Union hilltop fortifications at Helena (Battery A, NR 8-18-92; Battery B, NR 8-18-92; Battery C, NR 12-1-78; Battery D, NR 9-17-74). From the attacking Confederate forces of 7,646, 173 were killed, 687 wounded and 776 missing or captured a total loss of 1,636 or some 20 percent of the men involved—decimating some of Holme's best infantry regiments. Conversely, Prentiss's defending force of about 4,000 effective troops lost only 57 killed, 146 wounded and 36 missing, or 239 total casualties. The mauled Rebels slunk away from Helena by mid-morning. Thomas A. DeBlack, "1863: 'We Must Stand or Fall alone,'" in *Rugged and Sublime: The Civil War in Arkansas*, ed. Mark K. Christ (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1994), 78-84.

good road, 40 miles,”⁷ with the intent to attack Davidson’s division at Bloomfield, Missouri. Schofield duly reported this phantom movement to General in Chief Henry W. Halleck, who saw an opportunity to crush the troublesome Price and his Confederate army. In a terse note to Maj. Gen. Benjamin Prentiss in Helena, Halleck reported Price’s northern movement and ordered that “all available forces should immediately move on his rear so as to cut off his retreat. The forces in Missouri will prevent his penetrating very far into the state and, if he is cut off in his rear, his forces must disperse or surrender.”⁸

Coupled with the disastrous losses at Helena, the Trans-Mississippi Rebels were stunned, too, by the news of the Confederate defeats at Vicksburg (the relief of which was the reason for the assault on Helena); Port Hudson, Louisiana; and Gettysburg. Lt. Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith, overall commander of the region’s Southern troops, succinctly summed up the strategic situation in a letter to the Confederate governors of the Trans-Mississippi states: “Vicksburg has fallen. The enemy possess[es] the key to this department.”⁹

Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant, with his characteristic overview of the region’s strategic situation, pledged to immediately send a division of troops now idle at Vicksburg, to Helena to release that stronghold’s garrison to pursue Price. Despite this action he bluntly told Maj. Gen. Stephen Hurlbut in Memphis that, “I cannot believe any portion of your command is in any danger from anything more than a cavalry raid.”



Major General Frederick Steele
(Battlefield and 11367-A n.d.)

Grant requested Frederick Steele, then under William Tecumseh Sherman’s command, to lead operations in Arkansas. Steele, a West Point classmate of Grant’s, was no stranger to the Trans-Mississippi having commanded troops at Wilson’s Creek, Pea Ridge, and Arkansas Post.¹⁰ Grant considered Steele “a first rate commander of troops in battle” – an assessment that would be proved in the coming campaign – and “a splendid officer... fully capable of the

⁷ Kenneth P. Williams, *Lincoln Finds a General* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1959), 322.

⁸ *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 70 vols. In 128 books and index (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1890-1901) Ser. I, 22, pt. 2: 376, in the Civil War CD-Rom [CD-ROM] (Carmel, IN: Guild Press of Indiana, 1996), (hereafter referred to as OR; all references to Ser. I)

⁹ OR, 935.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 384,385,387,389; DeBlack, 89; Ezra J Warner, *Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commander* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 474.

management of the Army of the Potomac or any of the Departments.”¹¹

The Union invasion of Arkansas began on July 19, when a reconnaissance force of fifty Missouri horsemen swam the St. Francis River at Chalk Bluff. Merrill sent the First Missouri Cavalry (U.S.) to Gainesville further down Crowley’s Ridge on July 20, with plans to move the rest of his command in their support the next day.¹² Col. S. G. Kitchen retreated before them, reporting that “their entire force is estimated at 12,000, with some twenty pieces of artillery and 800 infantry.”¹³

Sterling Price, being put in command of the Confederate forces in Arkansas, feared the movements on Crowley’s Ridge predicted a move on Little Rock. He immediately began shifting the limited forces he had at his disposal. Price ordered Brig. Gen. Daniel Frost to bring his artillery to Little Rock from Pine Bluff, Brig. Gen. James F. Fagan to move his infantry division from Searcy and Des Arc to Bayou Meto east of Little Rock, Marmaduke to set up base at Jacksonport and harass Davidson’s column, and Brig. Gen. L. M. Walker to set up a screen of cavalry scouts outside of Helena. Even with these moves and construction of earthen works near and around Little Rock, Price nonetheless stated, “while I should attempt to defend Little Rock, as the capital of the state and the key to the important valley of the Arkansas, I did not believe it would be possible for me to hold it with the forces then under my command.”¹⁴

By late July, the Confederate horsemen in Northeast Arkansas were certain that Davidson’s incursion was no mere feint. A paroled Rebel cavalryman of John Q. Burbridge’s command took advantage of his captive tour of Bloomfield, Missouri, and Chalk Bluff to count “not less than 10,000 Federals this side of the Saint Francis, and about 2,000 infantry... 250 wagons and eighteen large field pieces... [with] 8 horses, and not under 24 pounders.” Davidson’s troops were in force at Gainesville by that time, leaving Burbridge “satisfied that this is no raid of the enemy, but that it is their intention this time to march to Little Rock.”¹⁵

¹¹ Ulysses S. Grant, *Memoirs and Selected Letters: Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant, Selected Letters 1839-1865* (New York: Library of America, 1990), 1045.

¹² OR, 382-3.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 937. Kitchen’s estimate was about twice Davidson’s actual strength, which on Aug.11 was 6000 cavalry and three batteries of artillery. Leo E. Huff, “The Union Expedition Against Little Rock,” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, 22, (Fall, 1963):228.

¹⁴ Leo E. Huff, “The Union Expedition Against Little Rock,” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, 22, (Fall, 1963): 384.

¹⁵ Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Gray: Lives of the Confederate Commanders* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), 520.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 944.

Davidson left Wittsburgh on August 1, and his advance elements arrived at the L'Anguille River near present-day Marianna on August 3, with some elements not reaching that point until August 6. The Yankee cavalry commander then sent his supply wagons into Helena in search of supplies while the rest of his division headed west for Clarendon and, ultimately, the state capital.¹⁶

On August 9, Davidson's division arrived at Clarendon where they met a small flotilla under Lieutenant George M. Bache, U.S. Navy, who reported "the river is bank full, and entirely clear of guerillas as far as we have been." Here, too, the Union cavalymen were met by the first foot soldiers to join the spearhead of the union advance, Maj. G. A. Eberhardt's battalion of the Thirty-second Iowa Infantry, which Davidson reported was "attached to my division as the guard to my batteries."¹⁷

On August 12, Bache led three gunboats, the *Cricket*, *Marmora* and *Lexington*, along with Eberhardt's contingent of the Thirty-second Iowa Infantry, up the White River to ascertain the whereabouts of "the ubiquitous Marmaduke" and his horsemen.¹⁸ Leaving the *Marmora* at the mouth

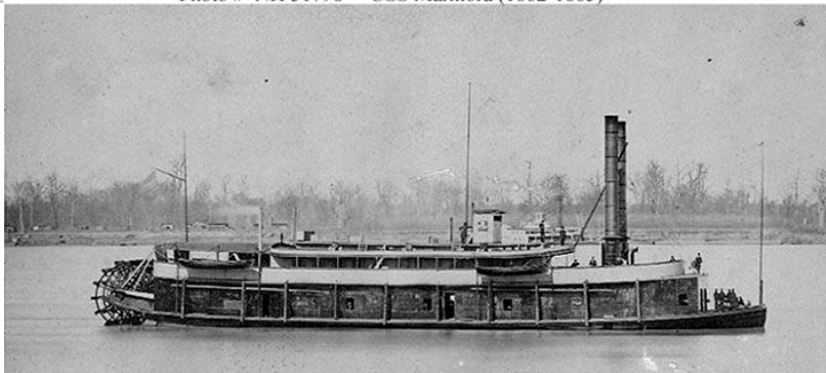


Photo # NH 55524 USS Cricket (1861-65) during the Civil War

of the Little Red River at 3 p.m., Bache and the *Lexington* steamed upriver in search of the *Cricket*, which had not yet returned. The *Cricket* had been busy. After leaving the Augusta-bound troops, the *Cricket's* skipper learned that one of the rebel steamers had lain near the shore of the Little Red River the night before and was about an hour and half ahead of the pursuing bluecoats. Moving upriver forty miles, they

"came in sight of the town of Searcy, the two boats, and a good pontoon bridge across the river" over which much of Marmaduke's force had crossed to the western shore. The union

Photo # NH 51798 USS Marmora (1862-1865)



¹⁶ OR, 483-4.

¹⁷ *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, 30 Vols.* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1894) Ser.I, 25: 353, in *The Civil War CD-Rom II* [CD-ROM] (Carmel, IN: Guild Press of Indiana, 1999), hereafter referred to as *ORN*; all references to Ser.1); OR., 483-4; Frederic H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion* (Des Moines, IAQ: Dyer Publishing Company, 1908; reprint, Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1994), 1178 (page citations are in reprint edition).

¹⁸ Citation missing.

infantrymen “piled up the bridge and burned it, leaving part of Marmaduke’s force yet on the east side of the river.” The Yankees seized the steamers *Tom Sugg* and *Kashakia*, and the infantrymen joined prize crews aboard the steamers for a triumphant journey back down the Little Red to meet their comrades.¹⁹

Davidson was “tickled wonderfully at the unexpected success of the expedition.” The veteran cavalryman wrote a gleeful report to Steele in which he told not only of the capture of the hapless steamers but of intelligence gathered by the expedition. Davidson reported erroneously that Kirby Smith was at Little Rock, but correctly noted that the rebels were concentrating at Bayou Meto twelve miles north of Little Rock with their left anchored at the hamlet of Brownsville on the prairies east of the capital. The Yankees now knew that Marmaduke was on the south side of the Little Red River. “I think, my dear general, every hour is precious to us now, and that you should have another brigade, at least, of infantry.” Steele agreed, writing on August 16 that “the rebels know exactly what force I have, and if they make a stand, they will be well prepared for it.”²⁰

Steele took command of the overall expedition to take Little Rock on his arrival in Helena on July 31, as Davidson’s horseman headed west toward Clarendon. From Helena, Steel finished assembling the infantry and artillery column that would join the cavalry in the assault on the capitol.²¹

On the morning of August 10, Steele started his column of six thousand infantrymen and sixteen artillery pieces westward. Charles Musser of the Twenty-ninth Iowa expressed the confidence of many of Steel’s troops, writing “we will find no enemy on our march worthy of notice, only the myriads of Nats and Mosquitoes” and that “we are all in good spirits and are ready for the tramp.” The Yankees would soon discover that eastern Arkansas held foes deadlier than gnats, mosquitoes or Confederates as they faced the blistering heat of an Arkansas August and the debilitating diseases that awaited them in the region’s miasmic swamps.²²

In selecting DeValls Bluff as a base of operations, Steele had two gunboats to protect the river side of town, while “an entrenchment can be thrown up in the rear that will make the place tolerably secure against any force that will likely to annoy us while we are pushing the enemy to the front.” He

¹⁹ Ibid., 511, 483.

²⁰ Ibid., 512, 483.

²¹ Mark K. Christ, “As Much Humanity Can Stand, The Little Rock Campaign of 1863,” in *The Earth Reeled and Trees Trembled-Civil War Arkansas 1863-1864*, (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, Nov 9, 2012), 154.

²² Charles O. Musser, *Soldier Boy: The Civil War Letters of Charles O Musser, 29th Iowa*, ed. Barry Popchok (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995), 76-7.

also found the Memphis and Little Rock Railroad in good shape, and immediately requested that rolling stock be dispatched from Memphis.²³

With a strong base established on the White River, the Yankee army now headed west toward its prize, moving through the flat, waterless prairies that separated DeValls Bluff and Little Rock. As with the march from Helena, the trek across the prairie was a miserable experience for the Union troops. “This country is as famous for the fever and ague as the White River ever was and Rattle Snakes, Lizards, ticks and chiggers are beyond calculations so that rest is next to impossible,” a miserable Indiana infantryman confided in a letter home. Nor were mounted troops immune from the rigors of the march, as three Illinois cavalymen were left “dropping suddenly from their horses as if shot....All three had been repeatedly warned to abstain from drinking the water out of the bayous, but would quench their thirst with the greenish-looking fluid. They were put in ambulances, when congestive chills set in, of which they died within a few days.”²⁴

In late August, not only was the temperature heating up outside but the Federal Troops, under the command of Major General Frederick Steele, were increasing the pressure on the Confederate Army in the Little Rock area. On August 22, 1863, Lt. W. T. McCutchan, the officer in charge of the Courier Lane, sent a dispatch to Brigadier General Marmaduke.²⁵

General,

Colonel Gordan has taken up the line of march for Brownville. The federals drove in his pickets again this morning. He is going to Brownsville by be-roads. Then enemy are moving towards Brownsville; they are already ahead of him (Colonel Gordon); there are three brigades of them, two of cavalry and one of infantry. Colonel advised me to break up this line of couriers and re-establish it on the Des Arch and Brownsville road. The federals have a very large train, supposed to be between 500 and 600 wagons.

General, I will report to you in person tonight or as soon as possible.

W. T. McCutchan
*Lieutenant in charge of Courier Lane*²⁶

²³ OR, 472; Leo Huff, “The Memphis and Little Rock Railroad During the Civil War,” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, 23 (Autumn 1964): 267.

²⁴ S.T. Wells to “My Dear Lizzie,” Samuel T. Wells Collection, The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, KY; Frederick Behlendorff, *The History of the Thirteenth Illinois Cavalry Regiment Volunteers U.S. Army From September 1861 to September, 1865* (Grand Rapids, MI: May 1888), 16.

²⁵ LTC Robert N. Scott, “The War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies,” Series I Vol. XXII Part II, 975.

²⁶ LTC Robert N. Scott, 975.

On August 23, 1863, Brigadier General Frost issued General Order No. 14 to all Confederate States of America (CSA) units. It stated:

The different brigades of this division will be at once put in motion in the direction of Little Rock, and will take position in front of the town. Brigade commanders as they arrive will report in person at these headquarters for specific instructions.

*By command of Brigadier General Frost: L.A. MacLean
Major and Assistant Adjutant General²⁷*



Early in the morning of 25 August 1863, General Lucius Marshall Walker, the 35-year-old nephew of President James Polk, an 1850 graduate of West Point, was just getting to his headquarters located in the courthouse of Brownsville. Walker was the newly named commander of a Division that included Marmaduke's, Shelby's, and Dobbin's Brigades. The division also included a wagon train, under the guard of Green's Regiment from Marmaduke's Brigade. His artillery consisted of Bledsoe's four-gun battery and Lieutenant Bell's two-gun *Little Teaser* battery. Only the day before, Walker had placed Marmaduke in command of both his and Shelby's Brigade. Walker ordered him to guard the approaches of Little Rock in the vicinity of

Brownsville.²⁸ He then took his pen and issued General Marmaduke a new order:

"... You will continue to make preparations to receive the enemy here to the best of your advantage. The right brigade of your division will be considered as having the railway station, especially in charge, and must advance pickets to the front on railroad and wagon road leading to the front, near the rail road. You will find Dobbins' Brigade about 7 miles south of you, and on lower Pine Bluff Road, which is the route for your courier line to that brigade.

*Yours, respectfully, L. M Walker
Brigadier General, Commanding*

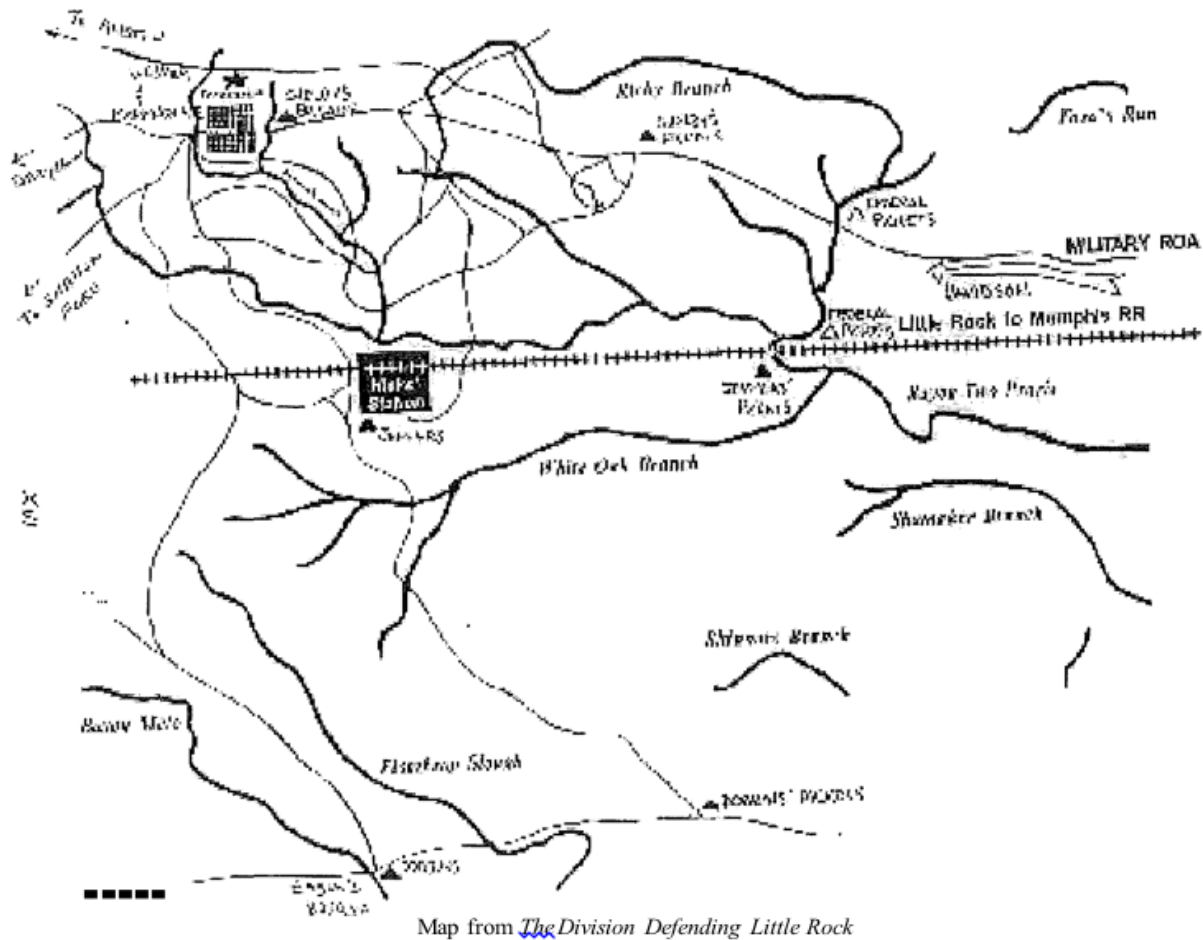
[P.S.] I will be absent from these headquarters this forenoon, examining roads.²⁹

²⁷ LTC Robert N. Scott, "The War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies," Series I Vol. XXII Part II, 978 General Orders No. 14.

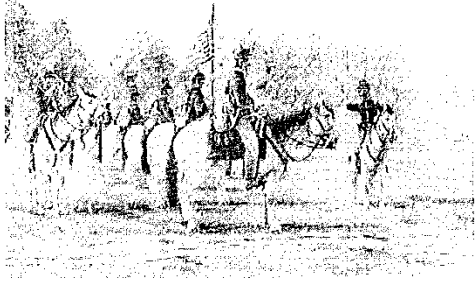
²⁸ Burford and McBride, *The Division Defending Little Rock, August 25th - September 10th 1863* (WireStorm Publishing, 2000), 42. Burford got this information from Arkansas Historical Association, *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Spring 1964, Vol. XXIII, No. 1; 48-49.

²⁹ John Edwards, *Shelby and His Men*, 1867, 144.

General Walker then donned his jacket, and with his staff in tow, rode west on the Military Road towards Graytown. He was not yet aware that the Union Army was at the doorsteps of the sleeping community of Brownsville.



With the Union Army led by Brig Gen. Davidson fast closing on Brownsville with close to nine thousands soldiers, the Confederates under the command of Gen. Lucius Walker were spread out all over the vicinity of Brownsville, but quick acting on the part of Brig. Gen. Marmaduke got everyone moving quickly to Brownsville. Lt.Col Gordon moved Shelby's Brigade about one mile west in front of the Brownsville Pickets. Marmaduke's Brigade located at Hick's Station about two and one half miles to the south were ordered to move quickly to Brownsville, which they did on the Prairie Road. Dobbins Brigade was ordered to stay and guard Eagles Bridge, and all Confederate supply wagons were ordered to move east on the Military Road past Bakers Farm, which was the headquarters of General Walker.



About three miles to the east of Brownsville, as the sun was beginning its ascent, the Confederate pickets were just beginning to see the first Union Scouts. When the Union scouts were able to see the Confederate pickets they spurred their mounts, and with sabers drawn, charged towards them intent on driving the Confederates from the battlefield. The

Union Scouts rode hard while at the same time the Confederate pickets dispatched a rider to Brownsville to report that the Union Army had arrived. The Confederate pickets then mounted up and turned west with the Union Scouts in pursuit. About one and three quarter miles from Brownsville the Confederates crossed a small stream and dismounted on the bank covered by thick vegetation. Here they waited with shotguns, carbines, rifles, and pistols for the Union scouts to arrive. However, the Union scouts, a detachment of the Merrill Horse, were very well trained. Seeing the thick brush and stream they pulled up out of rifle range and made the decision to not engage until more troops could be brought up.³⁰ In the report of COL. Washington F. Geiger, Eighth Missouri Cavalry, Commanding First Brigade, wrote of the approach to Brownsville:

Sir: I have the honor to report that on the morning of the 25th instant, in compliance with orders from division headquarters, I moved from Two Mile Prairie Bayou with my brigade, in the direction of Brownsville, on the Military Road. One Battalion of the Merrill Horse was ordered forward as advance guard and skirmishers, under command of Major Rogers, who, after marching a distance of some 6 miles, came upon the enemy's outpost, driving them back into the dense underbrush bordering on the prairie. The Merrill Horse and Seventh Missouri Volunteer Cavalry were immediately formed in order of battle and moved forward.

The Eighth Cavalry Missouri Volunteers, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel [J W] Lisenby, forming the left wing of the brigade, was pushed forward to the timber to flank the enemy, if possible.³¹

COL. Geiger's report goes on to report on the actions which followed as the battle to take Brownsville continued to develop.

³⁰ LTC Robert N. Scott, "The War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies," Series 1 Vol. XXII, Serial number XXXII, Chapter XXXIV, 527.

³¹ LTC Robert N. Scott, "The War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies," Correspondences, Series I, Part II, Serial number XXXII, Chapter XXXIV, 978.

At the same time that the Union Scouts were driving in the Confederate pickets, Brigadier General John Sappington Marmaduke, the son of a former Missouri Governor, was getting his staff assembled.



Confederate general John Sappington Marmaduke; circa 1864. For several months, he camped with his troops in Greene County, where the town named for him now stands.

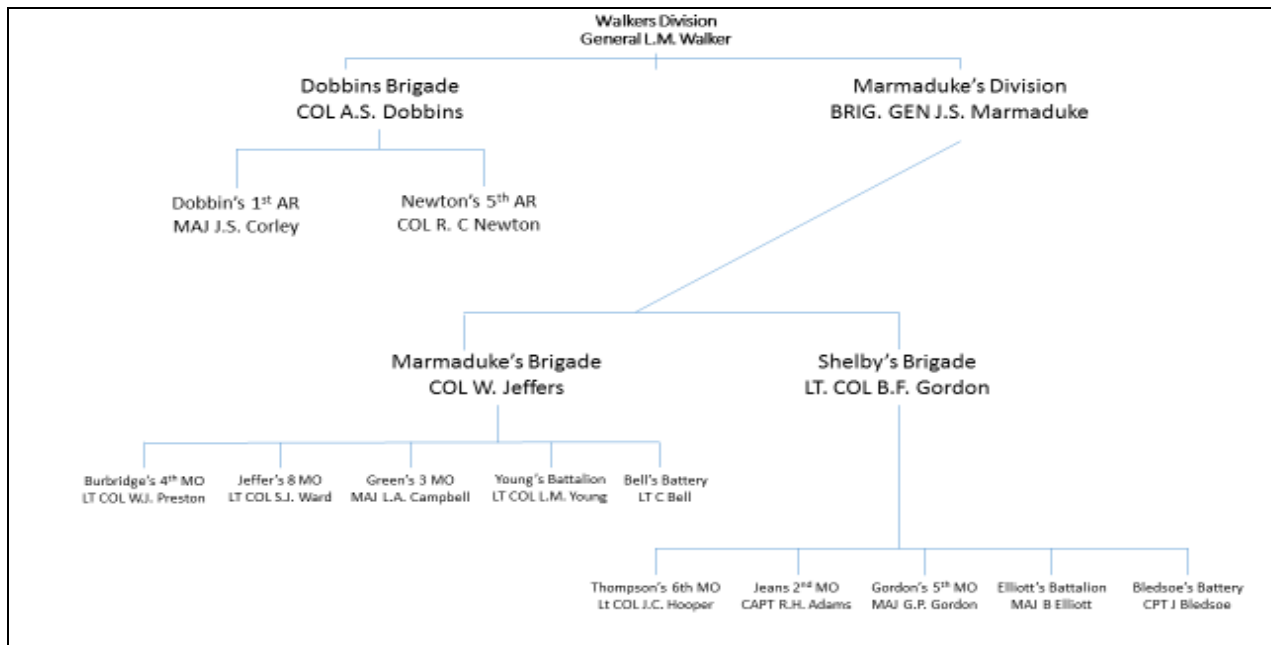
Courtesy of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System, Paul Dolle Civil War Collection

A student of both Harvard and Yale, he was also a graduate of West Point. Already a veteran of many battles, Marmaduke had been wounded at Shiloh while serving with the 3rd Arkansas Infantry. He was promoted to Brigadier General and led a brigade at the siege of Corinth. General Marmaduke was preparing to inspect the front when news came that the Union Army was at his front just 6 miles east of Brownsville. Gathering his staff, and escort, Marmaduke jumped on his horse and rode to the front. Messages were sent to inform both Dobbin's and Shelby's brigades of the location of the Union Army, and the early morning developments. LT Colonel B.F. Gordon was in command of Shelby's Brigade because Colonel Joseph Shelby³² had been wounded during the Battle of Helena and was still recuperating at Camp Martin Greene.³³ Gordon rushed his troops forward and deployed them about one mile west of the lonely pickets. At the same time that Gordon was moving his troops into position, a courier raced to Marmaduke's Brigade, which was located at Hick's Station two and one half miles

south of Brownsville (Lonoke Army National Guard Building). When the courier arrived he delivered the message of the Union approach to Colonel William L. Jeffers, who was in charge at that time. With message in hand, Colonel Jeffers put his troops into the saddle and set the 600 men of Marmaduke's Brigade in the direction of Brownsville.

³² LTC Robert N. Scott, "The War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies," Geiger's Report, Series I, Part I, Vol. XXII, Serial number XXXII, 491.

³³ Ibid., 491, Part of Col. Washington F. Geiger, Eighth Missouri Cavalry report on the battle of Brownsville, AR.



As Jeffers received the message, so was Brigadier General Walker, now located at Bakers Farm about four miles west of Brownsville. Walker knew that Marmaduke would be able to handle things at Brownsville so he set up his new headquarters at the farm. The farm was located at a crossroads of sort with the Military Road being cut by a road that led to Eagles Bridge. Walker felt that the presence of troops in Brownsville might just be a feint to open the road to Little Rock via Eagles Bridge. Hence, he ordered the wagon train on the road to Bakers Farm to move as soon as possible. He informed Dobbins who was located at Eagles Bridge, to hold his position and defend the bridge.³⁴ Colonel Robert C. Newton, Fifth Arkansas Cavalry gave the following account of these actions³⁵:

MAJOR: I have the honor, in obedience to orders, to submit the following report of the operations, camps, marches, of my command from the day of the battle at Brownsville to the time of the arrival of General Marmaduke's Division at Rockport.

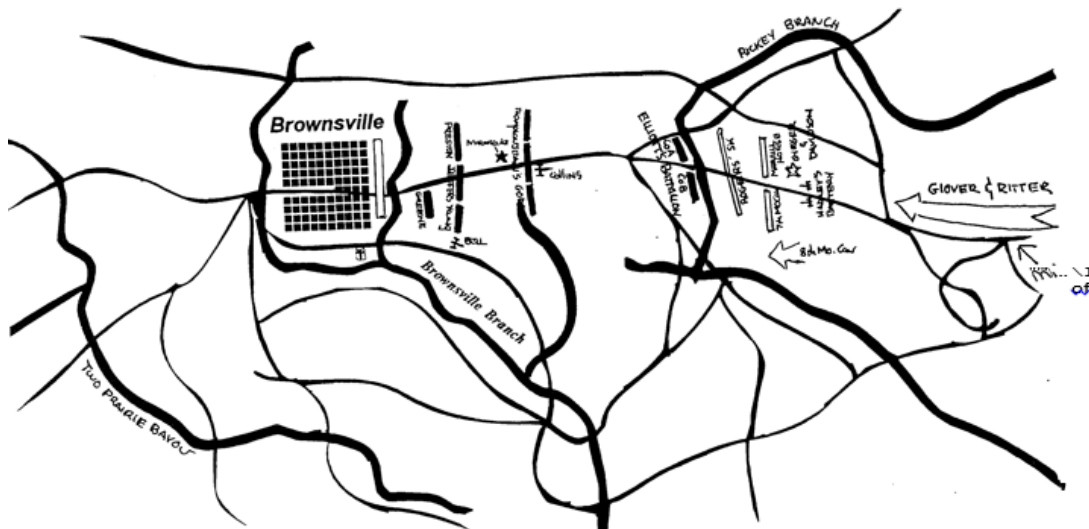
The engagement at Brownsville occurred on August 25. Colonel [A. S.] Dobbin's brigade (composed of Dobbin's and [Robert C.] Newton's regiments) was encamped at Legates Bridge on Bayou Meta. At about 7 a.m. scouts reported the enemy moved upon Brownsville and near the town. By Colonel Dobbin's order I moved my regiment, in rear of his, out into the prairie a mile from Legate's, the brigade trains being sent on the Prairie Road to get upon the main Military Road at Bakers.

³⁴ Ibid., 530. Report of Lieut. Col. B. Frank Gordon, Missouri Cavalry (Confederate).

³⁵ Ibid., 535. Report of Col. Robert C. Newton, Fifth Arkansas Cavalry.

Marmaduke was surveying his front. The Yankee troops had been pushing him further west towards Little Rock since the Battle of Helena in July. Marmaduke did his best with what he had to delay the Union forces until the defensive positions in and around Little Rock were completed. But this day was different. Marmaduke was ordered to make a firmer stand just west at Bayou Meto. His job this morning was to buy more time so that the troops in and around Little Rock could get into position.

Located about twelve hundred yards east of Brownsville, Shelby's Brigade formed as skirmishers in a single line abreast. The brigade was mounted covering a front of some twelve hundred yards.³⁶ The left wing was occupied by Thompson's Regiment (7th Missouri Cavalry Regiment, C.S.A.), under acting Commander Lieutenant Colonel J. C. Hooper. On the right stood Gordon's Regiment (5th Missouri Cavalry, C.S.A.), under the command of Colonel B. Franklin Gordon. In the center, and under the immediate protection of Colonel Beal G. Jean's Regiment (2nd Missouri Cavalry), Lieutenant Dick Collins of Bledsoe's Battery placed his lone six-pound Napoleon smoothbore, in a position commanding the road at the very top of the rise.³⁷



AUGUST 25th

Map Courtesy of "The Division Defending Little Rock"

³⁶ Burford and McBride, *The Division Defending Little Rock, August 25th – September 10th 1863* (WireStorm Publishing, 2000), 9. The Author did state in his notes that he was placing the troops by where he thought they would logically go.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 45, number 56. The author got his information from the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Autumn 1963, Vol. XXII, No. 3. He stated that the guns were captured from the Federals at Lone Jack, in Lafayette, County Missouri on August 16, 1862.

While the troops under Shelby were getting into position, Marmaduke's Brigade arrived on the field. They had come to Brownsville from Hick's Station. Wheeling to the right through the intersection at the edge of Anderson's Field, they hustled to the crest in the prairie and deployed along the low flung ridge about five hundred yards behind Shelby's Iron Brigade.

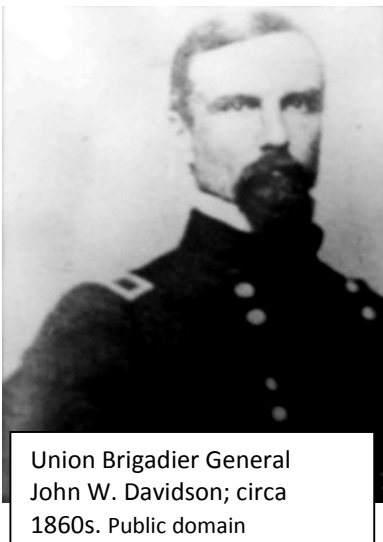
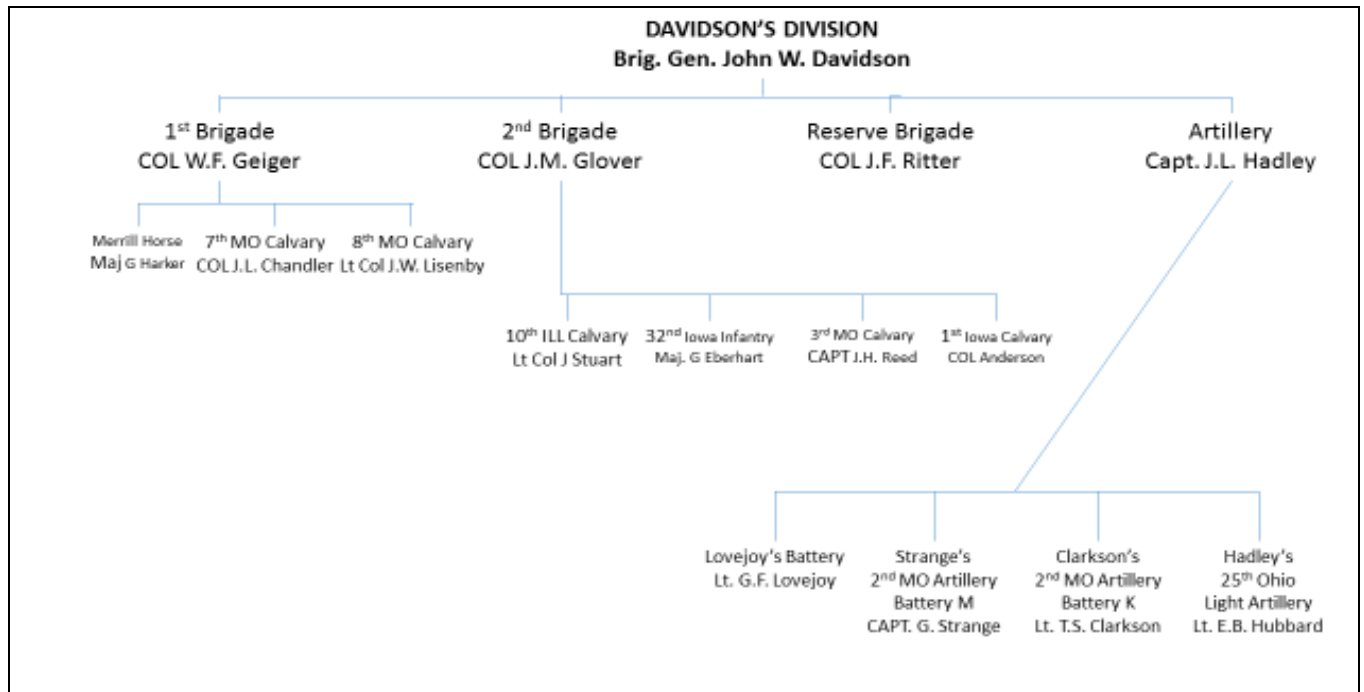
To the front, and the east of the Brownsville Cemetery by two hundred and fifty yards, Lieutenant Charlie O. Bell's men placed into position the six-pounder, *Little Teaser*. To Bells immediate left was Young's 11th Missouri Battalion, with Jeffer's 8th Missouri Cavalry regiment, to the left of them. Burbrige's 4th Missouri Cavalry Regiment, under Lieutenant Colonel William L. Preston held the extreme left. Greene's 3rd Missouri Cavalry Regiment, formed the Brigade Reserve.

As all the men under the command of Brigadier General Marmaduke stood ready for action, Major Benjamin Elliott's Battalion of Sharpshooters moved forward at a gallop to fall into place one mile to the front in the same position now held by the pickets. The intent of this move was to lure the enemy into charging this position early. It called for the men of Elliott's Battalion to be out front with no covering fire. However, if it worked the retreating men could lead the Union Troops right into the cannon fire. If it failed, and the men could not leave their positions, they would be on their own without support. In front of them was the whole Union Army, but in reality driving towards them were fellow Missourian men from their own state. However, they did not know this and even if they had, it would not have made any difference. Therefore they waited, and waited, as the U.S. 2nd Missouri Cavalry thundered towards them.

The Union forces were in battle formation stretched across the Arkansas prairie. Formed in a double spaced line abreast, Merrill's 2nd Missouri *White Horse* regiment moved forward at steady pace, under the command of Major Garrison Harker (Lewis Merrill being ill in DeValls Bluff). To the left of Merrill's Horses was the U.S. 7th Missouri Cavalry, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel J. L. Chandler, who occupied the center of the federal line. To the extreme left of the first two regiments, and acting as the brigade's flankers, rode the U.S. 8th Missouri Cavalry under the command of Lieutenant J. W. Lisenby. The 8th Missouri followed the tree line that ran along the banks of Two Prairie Bayou, and the Merrill Horse scattered about five hundred yards to the fore.³⁸ To the rear, and at the right center of the brigade, rode Colonel Washington F. Geiger and his command staff. To the front the 7th Missouri, with the 2nd Missouri at their side, pushed forward. Behind this impressive front of Union Cavalry came the

³⁸ Ibid., 46, number 69. According to the author this streambed is east of the Brownsville branch and about a mile southwest of Chambers Church.

25th Light Artillery Battery under the command of Captain Julius Hadley.³⁹ The 1st Division pulled up just short of Confederates line of fire. Colonel Geiger waited for his commander, Brigadier General John W. Davidson, and his staff to join them. When they arrived Colonel Geiger explained his plan of attack. Geiger would have the 2nd and 7th Missouri engage the enemy directly while the 8th covered the flank on the extreme left.



Union Brigadier General John W. Davidson; circa 1860s. Public domain

General Davidson concurred with the plan and sent dispatches to the commanders of 2nd, 7th, and 8th to prepare for attack. The Union Cavalry, numbering about 3,000, waited for the command. They had been up since dawn and were anxious to start.

The Confederate Skirmishers waited and waited. They knew only too well that they were way out front and that no help was coming. But they also knew they had a job to do, and they were ready.

The command was given and 3,000 Union Cavalrymen charged forward. Private William Karn of A Company Elliot's Battalion of the Confederate skirmishers, looked on in desperation as the Union Army advanced. He, and the men around him, waited for what seemed an eternity for the order to fire.

³⁹ Ibid., 46, number 72. The author gives a lengthy talk on artillery here.

As the Union Forces closed within two hundred yards, Captain Washington McDaniel looked towards Major Benjamin Elliott pleading with his eyes to give the signal to fire. When they were within the two hundred-yard range Major Elliott raised his arm and yelled "fire"! They fired with every expectation that their volley would stall the attack. As the Union Army raced forward, the men of Merrill's Horse Battalion saw the puffs of smoke and braced for the expected balls of lead. With the first rounds passing by, the cavalry men raised their own carbines and returned fire while at full gallop.

Hadley's Battery was now on military Road and getting into position. His crewmen were each laboring to unload and put his gun into action. To the left of this action, the men of Lisenby's 8th Missouri pressed forward, crossing the stream to the southeast of the rebel's position. They found a trail that afforded them easy access to the enemy's flank and rear.

As the intensity of the battle increased, Colonel Harker commanding the Merrill Horse, ordered them to charge the thicket with sabers drawn.

The Confederate skirmishers knew that now was the time for them to abandon their positions. The Federal *White Horse* were bearing down on them even as smoke from their weapons was hanging on the field. It was time to reach their mounts and rush back to the safety of Brownsville. As the men rushed through the thickets and streambed, the carbine fire of the Union Cavalry peppered them. Men dropped, but there was no time to stop and help them as each was intent on reaching their horse for the retreat to Brownsville. As they reached their mounts, a mix of horse and mule, they jumped on and spurred them as fast as they could go. However, some were not fortunate enough to get a mount and there was nowhere to run. These dismounted men stopped and threw their hands up in surrender. The men of the Merrill Horse paid them no mind as they thundered by in pursuit of the fleeing Confederate soldiers. Up to this point, the Confederate plan was working. Marmaduke had been ordered to delay and his plan thus far was working to perfection.

Lieutenant Collins kept a close eye on these developments. He was waiting for the chance to unleash the fury of his six-pound cannon. When the Union troops were in range he yelled "fire!" The shot sailed over the heads of the men of Elliott's Battalion and landed true to target right in the middle

of the Union Cavalry. When they heard Collin's gun, the men of Thompson's Cavalry surged forth with pistols and sabers in hand aimed directly at the Union Cavalry.

Harker, of the Merrill Horse, seeing that his troops were in cannon range, and were being counter

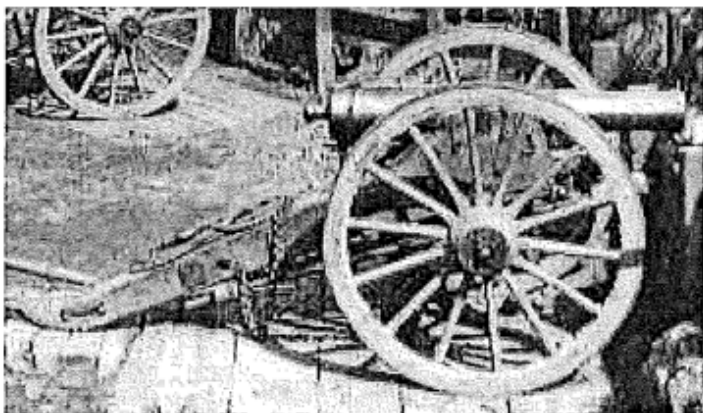


Photograph Courtesy of
www.myhome.shinbiro.com

attacked by rebel cavalry, ordered his troops to withdraw. His rear guard took position and drew their pistols to give their comrades time to retreat beyond the range of the confederate cannon. The rear guard fired as one towards the galloping 7th Missouri Cavalry (CSA) and then turned their mounts eastward and joined in the retreat. The 2nd Missouri dismounted at the creek bed and started to fire upon the advancing confederates. But the 7th Missouri (CSA) pulled up as they were met with the heavy fire of the 2nd Missouri (US) and retreated to reorganize and prepare to attack again.

Geiger surveyed the scene that was unfolding in front of him and did two things. First, he ordered Harker and his men to pull back to allow the artillery the chance to do its job. Secondly, he ordered the artillery to pull up and shell the rebel positions.

General Marmaduke also surveyed the developments before him. With the terrain on hand, and with his forces outnumbered, he knew that if he fought the battle here he would be enveloped. He gave the order to hold up the Union approach and not to engage in a pitched battle. With the Federal cannon shelling the previous position held by Elliott's Battalion, Marmaduke knew that in a short time they



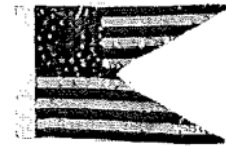
Photograph Courtesy of
www.myhome.shinbiro.com

would begin their advance towards Brownsville. He ordered his command to leave the field. Thompson's Regiment, with captured prisoners from the Merrill Horse, moved into Brownsville with them. The other units also left the field, sharply moving west through the town of Brownsville, which would soon be in the hands of the advancing Union Army. Marmaduke turned over command to

General Walker at Bakers Farm. He would command the rear guard, which consisted of about 125 men trying to hold back the advancing juggernaut of 6000 Union troops.

On the Union front the four 6-pound and two 12-pound guns of the 25th Ohio Light Artillery were soon joined by the four 12-pound Mountain Howitzers of Lovejoy's Battery. With the guns massed together they hurled forth barrage after barrage of shot and shell. Soon after the barrage Geiger called a halt to the fire and ordered his men to advance forward. As Harker's men made their way forward they could see in the distance the Confederates leaving the field. They urged their mounts forward trying to engage the rear elements of the fleeing Confederate army. However, Marmaduke had left a rear guard and they now did their job. They unleashed a round of fire that drove Harker's men back to join Chandler's 7th Missouri (US) which was forming in the prairie behind them.⁴⁰

While the battle raged in Brownsville, Colonel Archibald S. Dobbins moved his brigade out onto the prairie about one mile east of Bayou Meto. He placed his own regiment, the 1st Arkansas, Cavalry out in the front, with Colonel Robert Newton's 5th Arkansas to the rear as a reserve.⁴¹ To the center he placed the three guns of Bledsoe's Battery. His orders were to hold the bridge in case the federal attack on Brownsville was merely a ploy. Following the orders of General Walker, he ordered the wagon train to Walker's position at Bakers Farm. Hadley observed that the rear guard of Marmaduke's forces had taken a position in the tree line just east of the edge of the town. He concentrated his fire on the tree line working his way from the southern side of the loop in the Brownsville Branch to just north of the Military Road.⁴² Marmaduke's troop's defensive position was located in the tree line just east of Anderson's field and in direct contact with the shells coming from the Union artillery. Marmaduke, therefore, ordered his troops to mount up and fall back into the town.



Ai:3
:I;H:-
**7A -

Flag of 25th Ohio Light Artillery

⁴⁰ LTC Robert N. Scott, "The War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies." Company "F" Report, 2nd Missouri Cavalry (Merrill Horse), Supplement, Record of Events, Vol. 35, 368.

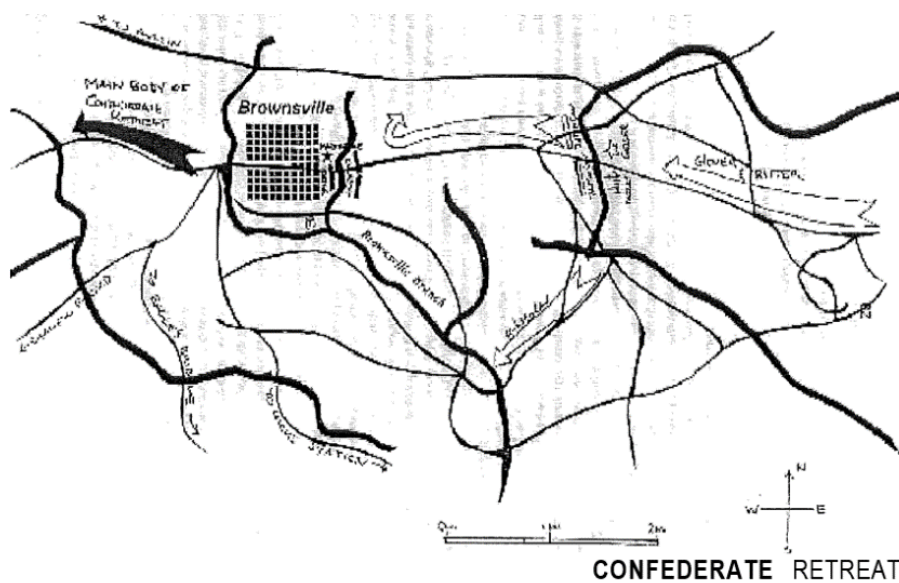
⁴¹ LTC Robert N. Scott, "The War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies." Report of Col. Robert C. Newton, Fifth Arkansas Cavalry, Series I, Part I, Vol. XXII, Serial Number XXXII, 535.

⁴² Burford and McBride, *The Division Defending Little Rock, August 25th – September 10th 1863* (WireStorm Publishing, 2000), 48, number 105.

Southeast of Brownsville. Marmaduke and his staff took a position in the center of town and watched the Federal Army shell the tree line. Meanwhile Elliot's and Collin's men went through town and took up positions on the western bank of the Brownsville Branch.

Lisenby's 8th Missouri (US), which was flanking the Confederates on their right, reached the road that ran between Hick's Station and Brownsville just about one quarter mile southeast of Brownsville. At this point Lisenby divided up his scouts and sent them to scout all three roads. When Lisenby himself reached the forward area near the wooded intersection his scouts from the northern road advised him that the Confederates had left the town of Brownsville and were moving west on the Military Road. With this information Lisenby took his 5th Missouri (US) and followed the west branch of the road to stay on the enemy's right flank.⁴³

When the artillery had ceased firing Harker ordered his *White Horse* forward to the north and parallel with the Military Road, with a mission to find the enemy's left flank. To the right of Harker's men were Chandler's troops. They moved forward to the tree line just east of the town. Here they formed on the east edge of Anderson's field. Chandler then sent *Company-A* forward as skirmishers. *Company-A* galloped forward and dismounted a safe distance from the edge of the first homes of Brownsville. They kept a keen eye out for trouble, checking the windows to make sure there were no Confederate sharpshooters watching them. As the first of the troops entered the town the rest of Chandler's men moved forward slowly, anxiously anticipating trouble that might come from within the town itself. When the



Map from *The Division Defending Little Rock*

⁴³ Ibid., page 48 number 111. The author states that the road led to the south.

rest of Chandler's command reached the edge of Brownsville he ordered them forward into the town. No townsfolk came out to greet them. The troops moved cautiously through each street, checking for signs of the enemy. Chandler urged his men to move carefully, he felt that the Confederates had left the town but could not be sure if they had left any surprises for his men.

In the center of town, near the church by the courtyard, Marmaduke and his staff watched as the Union troops entered Brownsville. Porter, of Marmaduke's staff, positioned some of the rear guard as skirmishers and had them hold their fire. The men of Porter's command waited and watched as the Union troops crept closer and closer. When they got close enough Marmaduke ordered them to fire, and fire they did. As the men of *Company A* left in a retreat west bound from the center of the town, the

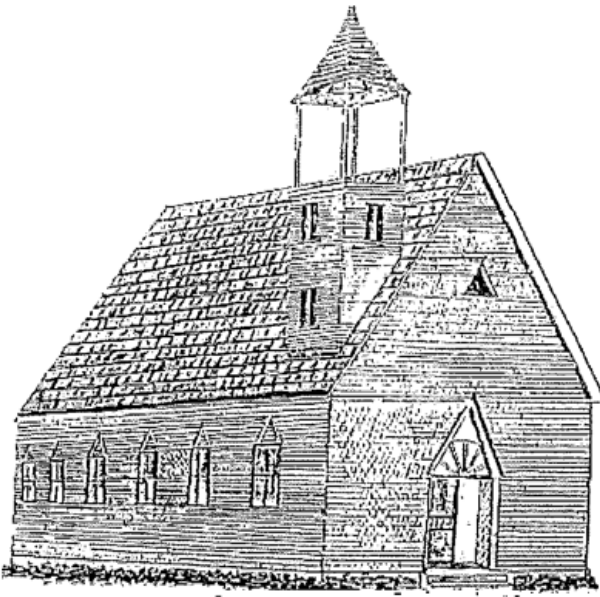


Photo Courtesy of Leno County Historical Society

officers of Marmaduke's staff jumped on their horses and fired one more time at the Union troops with their pistol and then returned to the safety of the buildings. In the excitement and chaos, acting Brigadier General J. Q. Burbridge, did not get to his mount quick enough and the horse fled with the other staff members retreating. This left General Burbridge with no ride and the Union troops upon him. General Burbridge seeing that he had nowhere to go put his pistol in its holster and took off his hat. In an instant, he was facing the barrel of a Union carbine and was

captured by Private Scott of *A-Company*, 7th Missouri Cavalry (US).⁴⁴

Marmaduke and his staff, minus General Burbridge, made it safely across the west branch of Brownsville Creek. Dismounted, and crouched in the bushes as were the men of Elliott's Battalion. They covered a front of about one hundred and fifty yards since there were only 60-70 of them. About one quarter mile to the south- southwest of Elliot's men were the men of Porter's Company. This position afforded them the ability to protect Elliot's Battalion from rapid encirclement, and to keep an eye on the

⁴⁴ Ibid., 49, number 117. The author explains why he believes that Private Scott captured General Burbridge at Brownsville.

Union men under Lisenby. Lt. Dick Collins positioned his artillery about 800 yards behind Elliott's men and 100 yards off the Military Road. With this position, he was able to cover both Porter and Elliott.

With the excitement of the capture of General Burbridge over, the men of the U.S. 7th Missouri returned to sweeping the town of Brownsville. The men of the 7th took their job seriously and moved through the town slowly, looking for any other rebels that could be captured. As they neared the edge of the western side of town, they closed ranks and proceeded even slower. When they emerged from the town they were met with fire from the tree line of the Brownsville Creek. The men of Chandler's 7th Missouri (US) ran for cover and returned fire as quickly as they could, firing volley after volley into the tree line. The men of Elliott's Battalion tried to match the men of the 7th Missouri (US) volley for volley, while simultaneously picking out their escape route and preparing for retreat.

While watching the action unfold in front of him, Lt. Dick Collins scanned the battlefield to the south, in the bend of the Brownsville Branch. Here he saw the Union Cavalry emerge from the tree line. He ordered his men to swing the cannons and fire at the new threat to the South. His soldiers, experienced artillery men, moved the gun with ease and in a matter of moments had the weapon sited, and fired. Hearing the sound of cannon, General Marmaduke looked in the direction of Lt. Collins' gun and followed the direction of the shell. He also observed the Union cavalry emerging to his southern flank. Marmaduke knew that it would only be a short time until he was encircled and immediately ordered his men to disengage and move to a new position farther west. Elliott and his men were perhaps glad of this order as the 7th Missouri (US) had pushed forward to the edge of the creek, and now there was a new threat of Union Cavalry to the north. Both Porter and Elliott moved their men west to a position near a tree line on Two-Prairie Bayou. Collins let off one more shell and also joined in the movement west.

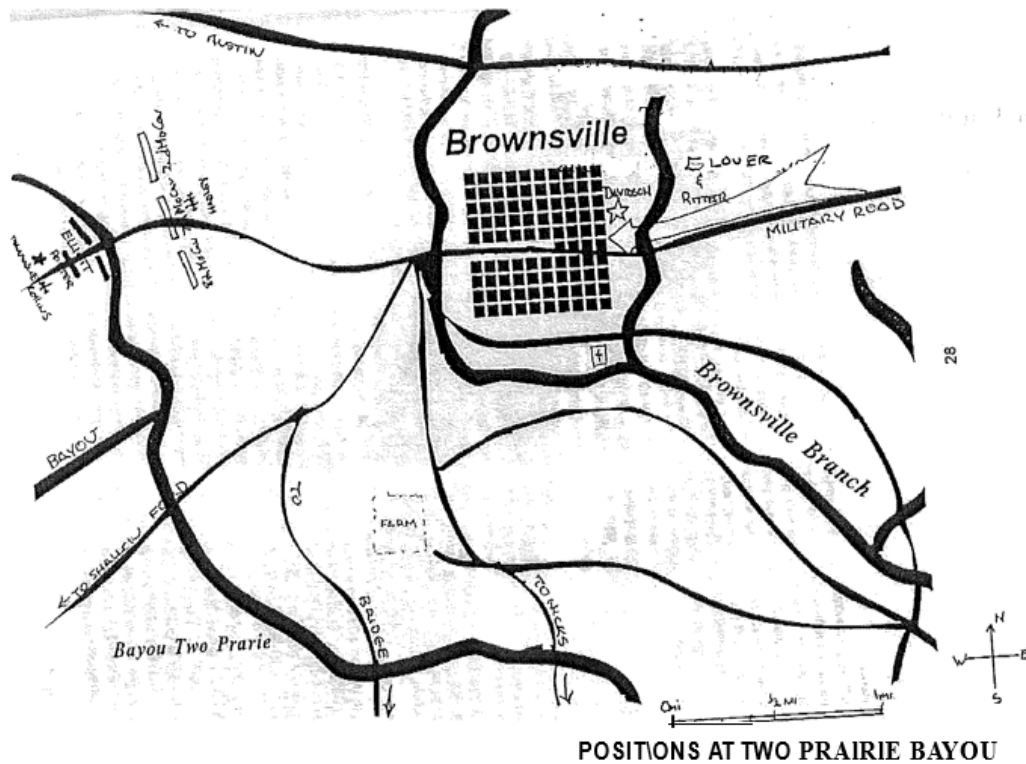
The Union Army paused just west of Brownsville near the Brownsville Branch. Geiger called up Hadley's Artillery and had them shell the last known position of the rebel army. As the artillery peppered the tree line, Geiger's Brigade prepared for an all-out assault of the Confederate line.

At the time that Geiger was preparing to push on, General Davidson and his staff entered the town of Brownsville. General Davidson went straight to the town hall and accepted the surrender of the fourth largest city in Arkansas from the mayor with no fanfare whatsoever.

General Walker, who had made his new headquarters at Bakers Farm, heard the gunfire in the distance and knew that his men were being pressed further and further west. He also knew that General

Marmaduke would make another stand at Two-Prairie Bayou to give him more time to prepare at his current position. Walker had Shelby's men east of the farm, and to the rear of them were the men of Marmaduke Brigade, under the command of Jeffers.

At Legates Bridge, which crossed the Two-Prairie Bayou, Marmaduke had Elliott's and Porters' men, along with Lt. Dick Collins' gun, protecting the bridge. He knew he could hold this position for only a



Map Courtesy of 171e Division Defending Little Rock

short time, as the intensity of the fire was beginning to increase. When he heard the boom of Union cannon he knew it was time to fall back. Marmaduke issued the orders, and once again his rear guard moved back.

Under orders to follow the brigade, Hadley called for more ammunition from the reserve batteries. His four 6-pound smoothbores, two 12-pound rifles and four 12-pound howitzers were aligned across Military Road. Shot and shell struck the distant tree lines; the last known location of the Confederate troops.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Ibid., 50, number 130. "The old black oak west of Brownsville beyond the crossing of Bayou Two Prairie on Military Road yet shows the scar where it was struck by a six-pound rifle ball..." *Lonoke Democrat*, September, 1899.

With the noise of the Union artillery in the background, Marmaduke and his staff planned their strategy for his next move. He moved his men and cannon back to the main body located at Baker's Farm. Marmaduke made his way to General Walker's headquarters, and updated him on the progress of the Union Army.

The *Merrill Horse* was formed up and ready. The thunder of the cannon had since subsided and they now awaited the order to attack. Geiger ordered forth some skirmishers to check the tree line for any Confederate opposition. The men of Rodgers' command moved cautiously through the dense brush checking for the rebels. When they came to the clearing, they saw the rebel army in the distance, formed and ready for battle.

As the last of the cannon fire disappeared, Colonel Dobbins and his brigade approached the junction of Prairie and Military Road. Dobbins rode off to Baker's Farm to meet with General Walker. When he arrived he was told to keep the wagon train on the move to Reed's Bridge, and his brigade was to form up at Long's Station to cover the withdrawal of the division.⁴⁶ Dobbins sent the rest of Bledsoe's Battery to join Walker at Baker's Farm.

Lieutenant Charlie O. Bell and his battery were located north of the Military Road where the woods stabbed into the prairie. His job and that of his cannon crew was to ambush the Federals, thus signaling the main battery to fire.⁴⁷ Located a half mile to the front of Shelby's Brigade, and in a small gully, Elliott and Porter positioned their men to meet the federal attack. Colonel Benjamin Franklin Gordon who occupied the Confederate right peered into the distance looking for the first signs of the Union Army. It was not that long before he saw them making their approach.⁴⁸

When the lead elements of the Union Army saw the Confederates in battle formation they spread their columns. The *Merrill Horse* wheeled to the right. Lisenby led his 8th Missouri (US) to the left and Chandler placed his regiment in the center. Lt. Bell saw the Union Army approaching knowing that they had not seen him or his gun, he waited and waited as they got closer, he checked one more time to his rear to make sure that everything was in proper order to commence his little trap. When he saw that all was in order he yelled "Fire", and was immediately followed by the fire of more guns from Bledsoe's

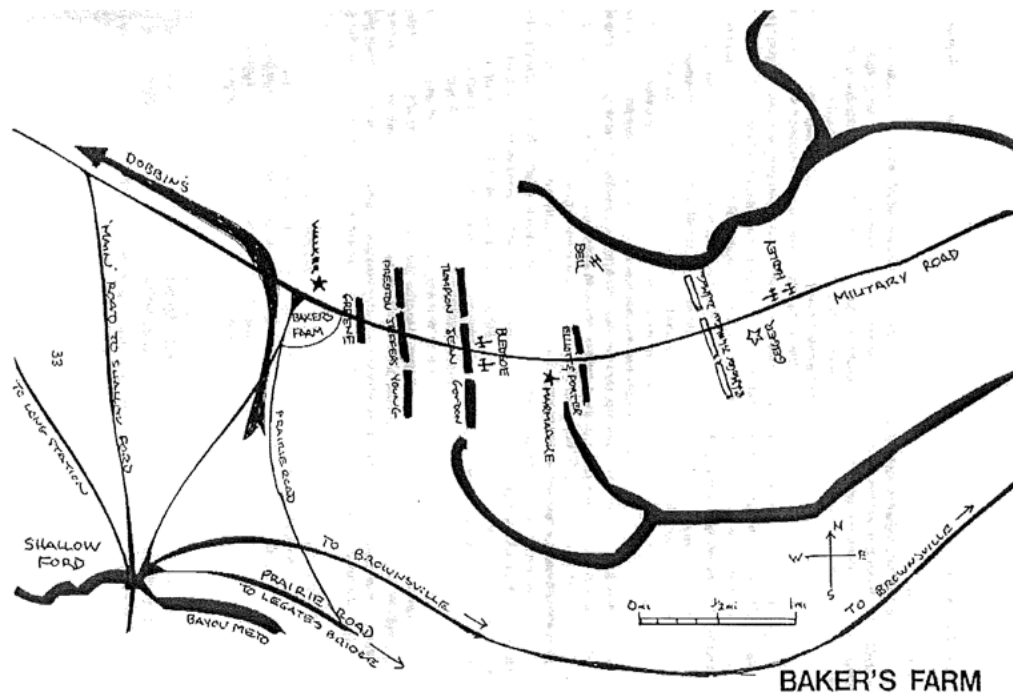
⁴⁶ Ibid., 50, number 132. Present day the community of Furlow.

⁴⁷ LTC Robert N. Scott, "The War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies." Series I, Part I, Vol. XXII, Serial number XXXII, 530, Report of Lieut. Col. B. Frank Gordon Missouri Cavalry (Confederate).

⁴⁸ Ibid., 530, Report of Lieut. Col. Benjamin Franklin Gordon Missouri Cavalry (Confederate), 50, number 136, in *The Division Defending Little Rock*.

battery located to the rear. The shots from Bell's and Bledsoe's gun threw the Federal Cavalry into a moment of confusion and as more rained down on them they moved back out of range. This gave Lt. Bell the time to load up his gun and crew from their hiding place and rush to the protection of his own cavalry.

When the Confederate artillery started, Hadley and his Union cannons moved up and into position, and as soon as they could, they returned fire. General Walker looked over the action and realized that given the terrain available, his men were no match for the assembled forces and would not withstand



Map Courtesy of *The Division Defending Little Rock*

the unfolding Union Attack. He gave the order for his men to fall back. The men of Elliott's and Porter's Company saw that their army was falling back, and they could also see the Union Army deploying to their right and left. The order was given to mount up and move, lest they become prisoners of the Union Army. General Marmaduke once again took command of the rear guard and recruited Bell's Battery to assist him. General Walker and his division left to form again in the woods at Two Prairie and Bayou Meto. Colonel Dobbins heard the commotion behind him and saw the men of Walker's Division approaching at a trot. In a short time, General Walker met him and advised him that the division would

continue on to the rifle pits at Reed's bridge. Dobbins kept his men at Long's Station to cover the retreat, and Marmaduke was in charge of the rear guard and keep an eye on the advancing Union Army.⁴⁹

Geiger had been fooled twice now by Marmaduke and he would not have it happen again. He ordered his scouts to advance slowly as he was sure, based on the last two surprises, that the Confederates were waiting for them in the tree line ahead. As soon as the Federal skirmishers came into the clearing by the tree line Elliott's men let loose with all they had. They missed their targets, as did the return fire of the Federal troops. Marmaduke had his men mount up and they left the area with no casualties.

Walker cleared the first set of rifle pits and cleared the rise at the McGraw House.⁵⁰ He had decided not to engage the Union Army here but move them into stronger positions located near the bridge. Walker though, failed to send off a courier to Marmaduke explaining his new plan, he also neglected to tell Dobbins. Walker continued on to Greytown and made his headquarters at J. B. Grey's House.⁵¹

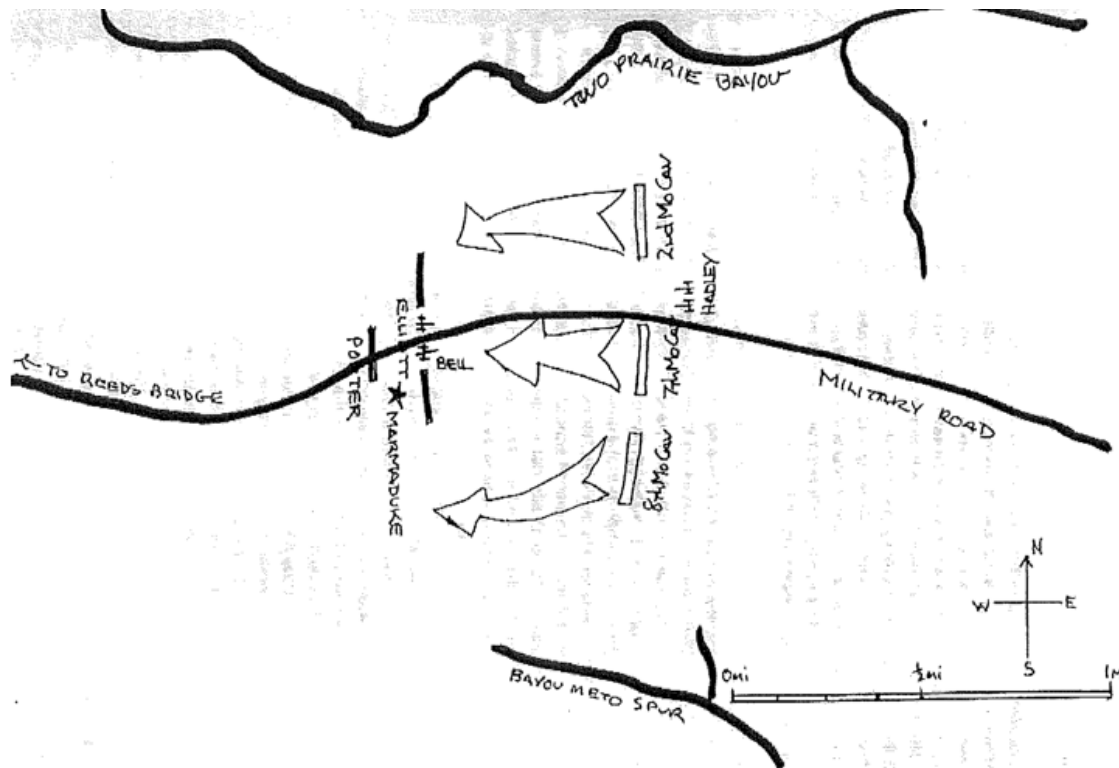
Dobbins passed through the woods between the two bayous and continued west, with no new orders from Walker and with no knowledge of any orders that Walker may have given Marmaduke. The skirmishers of both Marmaduke and Geiger continued their games in the woods leading to Greytown. The Union was being cautious, but was relentlessly pushing. The rebels were growing tired and their resistance grew weaker by the hour.

Late the afternoon of the 25th, Marmaduke and his rear guard reached the area near a set of springs between the two bayous. This area was perfect for defense and was the location that Walker had told Marmaduke that they would defend. Not finding Walker, Marmaduke ordered his scouts to locate the division. He placed his rear guard in a good defensive position and placed the two guns of Lt. Bell's Battery where they would cover the Military Road.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 532. Report of Col. Robert C. Newton Fifth Arkansas Cavalry, 50, number 144, in *The Division Defending Little Rock*.

⁵⁰ Burford and McBride, *The Division Defending Little Rock, August 25th – September 10th 1863* (WireStorm Publishing, 2000), 50, number 146. The McGraw house is just east of and on the rise above the corner of Military and J.P. Wright Loop in present day Jacksonville. It is on the south side of Military Road.

⁵¹ Ibid., 51, number 148. The author describes the history of the home of J.B. Grey.



POSITIONS AT SOUTH BEND

Map Courtesy of "The Division Defending Little Rock"

The 7th Missouri (US) came upon the rebel positions and pushed them to see their strength. The 2nd and 8th Missouri (US) attempted to find the flanks but, because of the brush and the cannon fire from the Confederates, were not having any luck. Geiger grew tired of this and brought forward Hadley with his cannon. With his cannon in place Hadley had all his guns fire. They tore up the rebel lines and the trees around them but did no real harm to the rebels themselves. However, they did accomplish their mission, as Lt. Bell had to withdraw his two cannons or risk losing them. Without the bother of cannon fire, the 2nd and 8th Missouri (US) were free to find the flanks of the rebels and circle them. Marmaduke knew that as soon as he lost his cannon it would just be a matter of time until the Union cavalry found his flanks. He was still not sure where Walker and his division were but he had to move so he gave the order to mount and leave the area. Elliott's men gave one last volley of fire and mounted their horses to leave the area.

Geiger was aware that he could push on but he was beginning to lose the daylight, so he ordered his men to fall back to Brownsville where they would camp for the night and continue on the next day.



Small Civil War Cemetery with 6 Unidentified Headboards

Marmaduke went through the first and the second set of rifle pits and went straight to Walker's headquarters. He was going to find out why the General had not seen fit to send a courier with new orders.

In DeValls Bluff, headquarters of the Union Arkansas Expeditionary Force, General Fredrick Steele sat with his staff and studied the maps of the approaches to Little Rock. He had been getting dispatches all day on the action at Brownsville but had no real concrete news. In an effort to understand what lay before him, he met with Doctor John Wright of Brownsville, who relayed

the locations of all the defensive positions at Little Rock and, more critically, gave Steele information which might show a path around those positions.⁵²

It was early evening in Brownsville and General Davidson and his staff were located in the courthouse. He was going over the day's activities and was pleased with what had occurred. The Union losses were one dead and two wounded. He was particularly pleased with the capture of General Burbridge.

The Battle of Brownsville, though not a large battle with enormous loss of human life, was of particular importance for both sides. For the Union side, they captured the fourth largest town in Arkansas and based on the minimal resistance they met were very confident that they would have their prize, the City of Little Rock, with no problem. The Confederates only lost one killed and five captured and were driven from the field by a superior force. They could only hope that they would hold the Union Army back long enough for the men in Little Rock to get into position. They were confident that if they succeeded they would show the Yankees that they could fight and win in Arkansas.

⁵² LTC Robert N. Scott, "The War of the Rebellion Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies." Series I, Part I, Vol. XXII, Serial number XXXII, 473.

Historical Federal Property in the Arkansas Army National Guard

By Major Matthew Anderson

As you look around armories and posts in the National Guard, you will find on display arms, armor and artillery that were once the latest technological advances in Americas “arsenal of democracy”. Now they stand silent, as historical reminders of the Soldiers that served. Some were used with devastating effect while others never fired a shot in anger, instead peacefully helping to keep others in check. Each has a story to tell, but before featuring these historical artifacts we will look at how these items are obtained, tracked and maintained.

There are many different ways in which artifacts are obtained but most commonly the process is for a unit to submit a memo to the museum board requesting what artifact you would like to request, what justification you have for displaying it, and where it would be put on display. If the museum board approves your request, they will send it to the United States Property and Fiscal Officer (USPFO) who serves as the Artifacts Responsible Officer (ARO). With USPFO approval, it will go to the Property Management Officer (PMO) who serves as the artifacts custodian for historical federal property. The PMO will then submit a request to the donations office at the Tank and Automotive Command (TACOM). It may take many months or even several years to locate the requested artifact. TACOM will look at its existing inventory, post closures, museums, and civilian organizations who may no longer wish to maintain an artifact in their collection. Once the artifact is located, it is transferred to the Center of Military History (CMH) which is the Artifacts Accountable Officer (AAO) who in turn issues it to the USPFO ARO. The PMO coordinates transportation to bring it into the state.

Another way in which artifacts have been obtained in the past have been through donations by private individuals. When this happens, the museum board has to determine whether to maintain it as state property or to request through USPFO to CMH for it to be tracked as federal property. The advantage to adding it to federal property is that federal funds can then be applied to maintain the artifact. The disadvantage is that if the museum no longer wants it, it can only be turned in to CMH. If maintained as state property the museum has greater flexibility as to what can be done with it but must look to other sources of funding for its maintenance.

For historical federal property, the CMH has an online system of record for accountability called the Army Historical Collection and Accountability System (ACHAS). ACHAS allows the PMO to edit descriptions, update locations, upload photos, submit requests, track loans and transfers, submit requests, and conduct inventories. Currently, there are 37 federal artifacts in Arkansas being tracked with several others expected to be added in the near future. The PMO annually conducts an inventory and photographs each item. Small arms are inventoried more frequently.

Photographs are used to present to the museum board for determination of the priority of restoration.

Once the board has established the priority of restoration, items are rotated through as time and funds permit. Coordination is made between the museum board, PMO, DCSLOG and CSMS. The unit or transportation office may be involved in the movement of vehicles. Regulations require that vehicles on exhibit will be painted in correct colors and markings based on documented research.

Units receiving a new artifact for display are required to meet certain regulatory requirements before being permitted to place an item on display. For vehicles outdoors, do not climb signs and concrete pads are required. For indoor displays, secure display areas.

If you would like to know more either contact the Property Management Officer at 501-212-4468 or reference AR 870-20.



M40, 155mm SP Howitzer assigned to Able Battery, 937th Field Artillery in the Korean War "The Kumsong Salient" 13 – 20 July 1953

M40, 155mm SP Howitzer at the Armory in Mena, AR

Featured Artifact: US Rifle, Caliber .30, M1 Garand

By Major Matthew Anderson



General Patton called it “the greatest battle implement ever devised”. His assessment succinctly describes the impact that John C. Garand’s design, the M1 Rifle, had in giving advantage to the US Infantryman in accuracy, reliability and increased rate of fire during World War II. The United States was the only nation in World War II to issue a semi-automatic rifle as its standard infantry rifle. While other nations had developed semi-auto rifles, for example the Russians had the SVT-38 and SVT-40 and the Germans the G41, G43 and StG 44, no nation was able to produce reliable and significant numbers to entirely replace World War I era bolt action rifles in service. By the end of World War II, two manufacturers produced the M1 Garands: Springfield made 3,526,922 and Winchester produced 513,880. The M1 went on to serve in Korea and Vietnam with additional rifles built in 1953 to 1957 by International Harvester, Harrington and Richardson, and Springfield.



Photo shows US Soldiers on landing craft heading to the beach at Oran on 08 November 1942 for Operation Torch the invasion of North Africa. While the MP carries a M1903 the Soldiers behind him in the center all carry M1 Garands.

Following many tests and trials starting in 1924, the M1 Garand emerged as the winner and was standardized in January 1936, with the first deliveries to the Army in September 1937.

Springfield initially produced only 10 per day but in two years was producing 100 per day and by January 1941, was producing 600 per day. By the end of December 1941, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, 398,664 M1 Garands had been delivered to the US Army and had already established the M1 Garand as the standardized infantry rifle. The M1903 and M1917 bolt action rifles were now issued as limited standard to units other than infantry, for combat support, training and specialized use such as grenade launchers and sniper rifles. Even so, many more would be needed for the rapidly expanding military.

The M1 Garand is loaded with an en bloc clip that contains 8 rounds of M2 Ball 30.06 Springfield ammunition. The en bloc clip was the result of design constraints by the Army. The Army cited issues with detachable magazines in which they were prone to getting dirty, damaged or lost rendering the weapon useless. The closed design kept dirt out and did not require the Army to modify the drill regulations. The en bloc clip did allow for the rapid loading of eight rounds. However, if you had seven or less to load there was no easy way to do so. Another issue was "M1 Thumb" which occurred by not properly positioning your hand to block the operating rod handle while loading the en bloc with the pressing of your thumb. By not following proper loading procedures your thumb will get caught by the bolt against the receiver resulting in a painful yell and a few expletives. It is interesting to note that in 1957, the Army did go back and modify the M1 to accept a detachable 20 round magazine. This change along with a shorter piston stroke, flash suppressor, re-chamber to 7.62x51mm and an auto fire selection, the rifle was designated the M14.



With the M1 Garand loaded, the Soldier was able to fire eight rounds without having to break their firing position to chamber each round. This allowed an increased sustained rate of fire over bolt action rifles. As the round left the barrel expanding gas was forced into the gas cylinder below the barrel by way of a small gas port drilled into the bottom of the barrel where the front sight is located. The gas then pushes a long stroke piston on the end of the operating rod back. The operating rod connected to a lug on the bolt rotates and drives the bolt rearward ejecting the spent cartridge, locking the hammer to the rear and chambering the next round as

the bolt returns to the original closed position. Following the ejection of the last round, the en bloc clip also ejects locking the bolt to the rear, ready to accept the next loaded en bloc. Ammo issued to combat units was already packaged in en bloc clips and in bandoleers so there was no need to retain en blocs to reuse.



The rifle in the Arkansas National Guard Museum collection is serial number 3,123,523 built at Springfield Armory. On 01 Jul 1944, the 3,000,000th M1 Garand was built. This came at a time following the successful allied invasion of Normandy on 06 June 1944. Factory workers had a renewed sense of purpose and production numbers remained high. By September 1944, serial number 3,123,523 was built while allied forces had established another front in Southern France in August and allied forces advancing from Normandy had reached the Netherlands. Many back in the states began to think at this rate the war in Europe might be over by Christmas. From this point it is difficult to say what happened to this rifle. It may have remained stateside for training or served overseas.



One clue that remains a mystery is the barrel which is dated 1-45. Surviving examples of rifles which have not been through an arsenal rebuild have a barrel date within a month or two prior to the date of the serial number on the receiver.



Another clue is found on the left side of the stock above the trigger, which is the commanding officers cartouche that signified the acceptance of the completed rifle. The cartouche is a stamped box outlining two rows of letters. The first row has the letters "S.A." for Springfield Armory. On the second row are the letters "N.F.R." which are the initials of Brigadier General Norman F. Ramsey who served as Commanding Officer from 08 October 1944, to 16 November 1945. Next to the cartouche is the belt and crossed cannons of the ordnance department.



Another stamp found on the bottom of the stock just behind the trigger is a "P" within a circle, which signified that the rifle passed the proof fire test. On the bottom of the pistol grip a unit armorer hand painted at some point during its service a rack number of "41." It is more likely that this weapon had its barrel and stock changed with another rifle at some point in its history.

The barrel and stock likely came from the same rifle, while the receiver is from an earlier rifle. The rifle retains original sights and other parts that would have been replaced in a rebuild program. Also there are no markings to indicate that the rifle went through an arsenal rebuild program so it may have been done at a lower level ordnance shop or even in a rear area if the weapon made it overseas.

A sling and bayonet are displayed with this M1 Garand so I will briefly discuss these accessories. The attached sling was manufactured in the 1960s, which can be identified by the shade of olive drab used on the webbing and the buckle has a raised area on the back for added strength, features not found on WWII era web slings.



There were four models of bayonets used on the M1 Garand, the M1905, M1905E1, M1 and the M5A1. The bayonet on display with the M1 Garand is the M1905E1 manufactured by Union Fork & Hoe in 1943, then later shortened to 10 inch spear point blade by Utica Cutlery. The M1905 was first designed for the M1903 rifle but also fit the M1 Garand rifle. Originally manufactured as a 16 inch blade, it was discovered during WWII that the long blade was awkward for Soldiers climbing in and out of vehicles. The ordnance department determined that the bayonet could be shortened to 10 inches, which was a balance between convenience and utility. Approved in February 1943, existing contracts were changed in April 1943, to produce the new 10 inch bayonet designated the M1. M1905 bayonets already in inventory were rotated back to the manufacturers starting in September 1943, to be converted to the 10 inch blade which was re-designated the M1905E1. These modified bayonets can be distinguished from the later manufactured M1 bayonet by the fuller, which is interrupted and fades into the knife or spear point on the M1905E1 bayonet. Bayonet scabbards were also modified. However, the scabbard on display was originally manufactured as a 10 inch scabbard designated the M7.

The M1 Garand did receive a few complaints from the field. One complaint was the weight. Soldiers use to the M1903, which weighed a little over 8 pounds, found the nearly 10 pound M1 Garand to be a little too heavy when on the move. This complaint seemed to be less of a concern for those who appreciated eight round semi-auto fire capability and reliability in

combat. Another complaint was concerning the en bloc clip. A Soldier firing less than eight rounds will want to reload a full eight rounds before the next attack. This caused Soldiers to waste ammo and possibly giving away their position by firing off the remaining ammo rather than saving it since there was no practical means to replenish or replace with a full en bloc clip. During the Korean War, in temperatures well below zero, Soldiers experienced the bolt face freezing to the barrel chamber. The remedy was to set the butt of the rifle on the ground and strike the operating rod handle with the heel of your boot. Once free the weapon functioned flawlessly while firing. In many cases Soldiers in front line units that were issued other individual weapons acquired an M1 Garand the first chance they got.

Today the M1 Garand is highly sought after by collectors and shooters. Those interested in the M1 Garand can purchase one through the Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP). The CMP also holds a number of competitions throughout the US that are for the M1 Garand. Those who have a historical or collectors interest in the M1 Garand should consider joining the Garand Collectors Association (GCA). References for this article and for further reading:

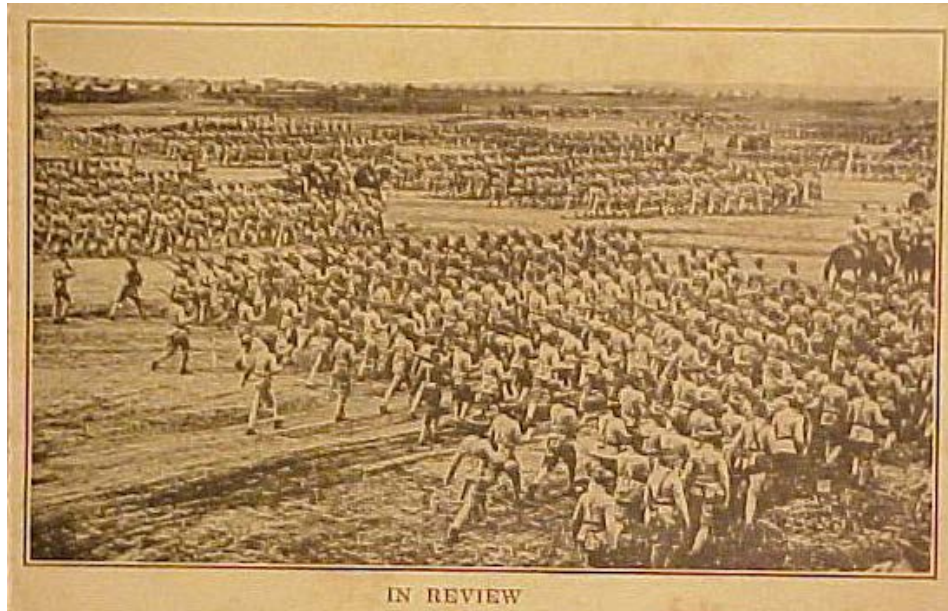
FM 23-5 Basic Field Manual, US Rifle, Caliber .30, M1.

Canfield, Bruce (1998). *The Complete Guide to the M1 Garand and the M1 Carbine.*

Duff, Scott A. (1996). *The M1 Garand, World War II: History of Development and Production, 1900 Through 2 September 1945.*

Featured Photograph

Camp Pike, Arkansas during WWI



The Army announced plans to build 32 camps to train soldiers. States were asked to submit proposals and Little Rock decided to pursue one of the camps. The Board of Commerce took the initiative and found suitable ground north of the river. The Army sent a lengthy questionnaire, which the board completed and returned it to Washington. After receiving this, the Army sent an inspection team to examine the proposed camp sites in the Southeast District – Little Rock and Fort Smith in Arkansas, Hattiesburg and Holly Springs in Mississippi, and Alexandria and Shreveport in Louisiana.

The inspectors raised three concerns about Little Rock's proposed site, which included mosquitoes, lack of an adequate water supply and lack of adequate rail service. The Board developed a plan with the state health officer to eradicate the mosquito problems in Pulaski County, which cost the city about \$50,000. Missouri Pacific railroad guaranteed completion of rail service in three weeks. Finally, the board hired water well experts and were able to locate an underground stream capable of supplying the 2,500,000 gallons of water a day that the Army required.

The Army awarded the post to Little Rock on June 11, 1917, contingent on Little Rock's ability to raise the funds needed. The Board of Commerce raised a sum of \$230,000 in two days; a total of \$325,000 was raised by the end of June 1917. These donations and funds were all collected from private citizens and were used for the following purposes:

- Purchase 3,000 acres of land - \$187,000
- Lease of 10,000 acres of land - \$60,000
- Mosquito Control - \$50,000
- Water Wells - \$5,000
- Contingency - \$23,000

Major John R. Fordyce was appointed construction quartermaster and arrived on June 15, 1917, and the new camp was named Camp Pike in honor of General Zebulon Pike, the western explorer who discovered Pike's Peak.

Prior to construction starting, there was an attempt to stop the project. A group of officers from Fort Roots made an adverse report about the location, but their plans failed and work started in July 1917.

Here are some interesting construction facts of the camp:

- The work force, at its peak was 10,000 men
- Payroll averaged \$300,000 a week
- 1,500 workers were imported from Puerto Rico
- At the peak of construction, 1,000,000 board feet of lumber arrived each day by train and was loaded onto horse drawn wagons and taken to the job sites

The first troops arrived on September 5, 1917, to begin their training. As soldiers arrived, they were quarantined for 10 days to prevent the spread of disease.

Arkansas Military History Journal
A Publication of the
Arkansas National Guard Museum, Inc.

Located at:
Camp J.T. Robinson
Lloyd England Hall
Building 6400, Box 58
North Little Rock, AR 72199-9600
Phone: 501-212-5215
Fax: 501-212-5228