

An Ancestor's Wound Mystery Solved

Brad Cox (previous post) shared with me an interesting story about researching the experiences of his ancestor Elwood M. Robinson (see previous post) at Stones River. Cox relates:

"After obtaining Elwood's pension records, I went through it with a fine-toothed comb. I came across one of his doctor's report. In this report was a description of Elwood's wound to his right shoulder he received at Stones River. The Minnie ball entered just above his collar bone and traveled through his body exiting just below his shoulder blade in his back. That seemed odd to me. How could that happen? Was he hit by a sniper in a tree for the ball to have this trajectory? As I mentioned before, I had arranged personal tours of different Battlefields prior to my arrival."

"At Stones River I was met with Jeremy Childs. My focus was not only the 19th Ohio, but also the 42nd Illinois. Jeremy had with him comprehensive maps of both units showing their exact movements. We headed up Nickens Road. Jeremy then stopped and said, pointing to his left, "Out there is where the 19th Ohio held their ground." I asked if we could venture out there. He informed me that it was not within the park's boundaries and was on private land. He said we would need permission to do so. Not to be deterred (I had come a long way) I continued up Nickens Road to Asbury Road, turned left and walked until I found an old dilapidated farm house. I knocked on the door and an elderly gentleman answered. I explained the reason for my visit and he granted me permission. Jeremy stayed behind. When I returned, I told him that I had been given permission. He said I was the first one ever to endeavor this. We set out across this field with grass up to our waists. It had rained all that morning. By the time we got to our destination our pants were soaked. I stood there just trying to picture what was happening back then. Jeremy started to explain the situation. Then he said, 'This is where Col. Manderson rode his horse up and down the line ordering the front line to drop into a prone position.' This is also where his horse was shot out from under him. On the front line was the 79th Indiana on the right and the 19th Ohio on the left. Behind then the 9th and 11th Kentucky."

"Then it dawned on me, this explains how Elwood got his wound. He was lying down when he got hit with the Minnie ball. It was 3:30 in the afternoon of December 31. Elwood was not recovered from the field until late that night."

References:

Personal email from Brad Cox, Feb. 26, 2021

Dixie Odyssey, Hobe, pp. 77,78. Also find a story about Manderson losing his glasses when his horse was shot out from under him on p. 82, "lost Glasses." Manderson's order to "lay down" p. 148.

Battle of Stones River, Larry J. Daniel, pp. 143, 146-152.

"The Battle of Stones River," Jim Lewis, *Blue and Gray*, XXVIII, #6, 2012. This article has several detailed position maps which would be informative for anyone following any regiment during the Battle of Stones River.