

Middleburgh

**tennessee
civil war
preservation
association**

NARRATIVE

After destroying several bridges between LaGrange and Moscow, Confederate cavalry commanded by Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn attacked the 12th Michigan Infantry at Middleburgh on December 22, 1862. Van Dorn was forced to retreat when Union reinforcements under the command of Brig. Gen. Benjamin Grierson arrived to support the 12th Michigan.

HISTORICAL THEMES

Controlling Resources, Crucible for Leadership, Guerilla Warfare, Transformation in Warfare, Enlaved People, Influence on Campaign

EXPLANATION OF ATTACHMENTS/VIDEO:

Map and official reports of the engagement

LINKS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

N/A

COUNTY:

Hardeman

DATE:

12/22/1862

GEO COORDINATES:

35.197472° N,
89.087375° W

PRESERVATION

OPPORTUNITY INDEX:

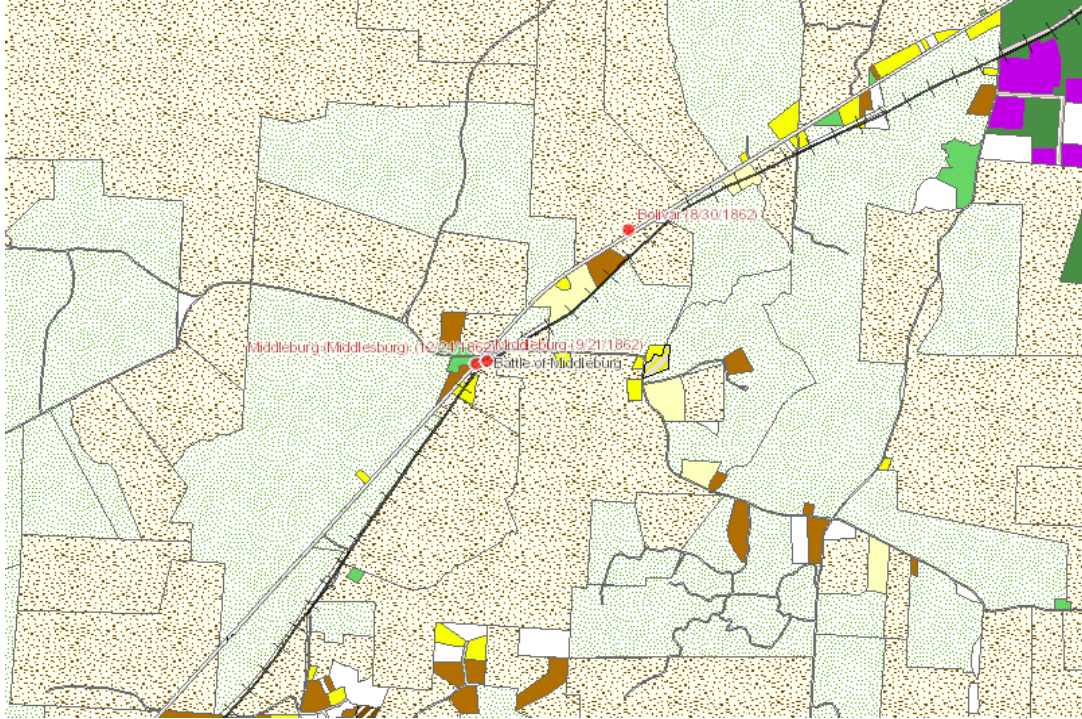
MEDIUM

CONFEDERATE UNITS:

Confederate cavalry
commanded by Maj.
Gen. Earl Van Dorn

UNION UNITS:

12th Michigan Cavalry



December 22, 1862 - Skirmish near Middleburg

No circumstantial reports filed.

GRAND JUNCTION, December 22, [1862.]

Maj.-Gen. GRANT:

Bridges destroyed between LaGrange and Moscow. Scouts sent out toward Somerville found all bridges destroyed. Courier from Maj. Moyers, Third Michigan Cavalry, reports that Twelfth Michigan Infantry were attacked this morning at Middleburg, and repulsed the enemy, taking some prisoners. Maj. Saylor, of Third Michigan Cavalry, reports a prisoner taken who states that Van Dorn expected to make a junction with Price to-morrow morning and attack Bolivar. Maj. Moyers was moving toward Spring Hill.

C. C. MARSH, Col., Comdg.

OR, Ser. I, Vol. 17, pt. II, p. 454.

December 24, 1862 - Federal correspondence relative to the pursuit of Forrest in West

Tennessee

HOLLY SPRINGS, MISS., December 24, 1862.

Maj. Gen. J. B. MCPHERSON, Oxford, Miss.:

The following dispatch is just received. Send it to Col. Hatch by to-morrow morning if possible:

NEAR BOLIVAR, December 24, 1862.

Maj.-Gen. GRANT:

I arrived in Bolivar 11 o'clock last night. Pickets at that place were driven in last night. Our presence no doubt saved the place, as it is evident they did not know of our presence until this morning.

We struck their trail on Middleburg road this morning, evidently a large force, 7,000 or 8,000. My column is now moving. Have been skirmishing all the morning; a number of the enemy killed and wounded; no loss on our side.

Later-MIDDLEBURG, December 24.

The enemy repulsed from this place by our infantry. We came up with their rear; they struck off the left toward the Van Buren road; we are in close pursuit; their number from 5,000 to 7,000. I have but 1,400 men. Cannot the Seventh Illinois, Third Iowa, and balance of the Third Michigan be sent after me. From latest information they appear to be going southeast.

Will keep you advised as well as possible.

B. H. GRIERSON, Comdg.

U. S. GRANT, Maj.-Gen.

BOLIVAR, TENN., December 24, 1862—a. m.

Gen. GRANT:

Arrived at 11 o'clock last night; pickets driven in here this morning; think only a feint; think they have gone north to join Forrest.

My column now moving east of north; will keep you advised as far as possible.

B. H. GRIERSON, Col., Comdg. Cavalry.

HOLLY SPRINGS, MISS., December 24, 1862.

Col. B. H. GRIERSON, In pursuit of Van Dorn, near Van Buren:

Your dispatches from near Middleburg and Van Buren have been sent to the commanding officer at Salem, whose forces consist of infantry and artillery and are about 15 miles east of here; also to Col. Hatch, who started last evening with his cavalry force to the mouth of Tippah Creek, on the Tallahatchie, in pursuit of a portion of the enemy near there. He may be able to join you after you cross the Tallahatchie, and may intercept the enemy's retreat. Make every possible exertion to harass and destroy the enemy.

Take Hatch with you in the pursuit if you meet with him.

By order of Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant:

SAULSBURY, December 24, 1862—after dark.

Maj.-Gen. GRANT:

GEN.: Have just arrived at this place; enemy still going southward, their rear only a mile ahead. We are constantly picking up their stragglers. Have just

learned that they talk of turning to the left a short distance. Shall throw out scouts and observe their movements, and camp to-night without camp-fires. I sent you dispatch from Middleburg and also from Van Buren.

B. H. GRIERSON, Col., Comdg. Cavalry.

SAULSBURY, December 24, 1862.

Maj.-Gen. GRANT:

GEN.: Your dispatch received this evening. I am camped within 2 1/2 miles of the enemy. I sent out scouts, who reported to me an hour ago that they had left, still going south. I start in pursuit in one hour and will follow them to their den.

B. H. GRIERSON, Col., Comdg.

BOLIVAR, December 24, 1862.

Gen. SULLIVAN:

The enemy have appeared in our front, and Col. Grierson has gone out with his entire command and I am with him, but shall return soon.

M. BRAYMAN, Brig.-Gen., Comdg.

BOLIVAR, December 24, 1862.

Brig. Gen. J. C. SULLIVAN:

Just returned from outside lines. The enemy followed and drove in our pickets and are firing on infantry pickets. I have no fear of harm; it is probably the rear guard covering their movement north to join Forrest.

Col.'s Grierson and Lee are here with 1,500 cavalry and will pursue until they overtake the enemy. I join the pursuit.

M. BRAYMAN, Brig.-Gen., Comdg.

BOLIVAR, December 24, 1862.

(Received Jackson, December 24, 1862.)

Brig. Gen. J. C. SULLIVAN:

After my last the rebels advanced in line of battle. Grierson, Lee, and the Jayhawkers [Seventh Kansas Cavalry] are now after them. I had but a dissolving view of them. If you have any information or any guides send out and intercept Grierson. They may get across the railroad, but I have no fear they will do mischief.

M. BRAYMAN, Brig.-Gen., Comdg.

BOLIVAR, December 24, 1862. Brig. Gen. J. C. SULLIVAN:

Rebels occupying a threatening position on the Bethel road. I will shell them in a few minutes; you will probably hear it.

M. BRAYMAN, Brig.-Gen.

BOLIVAR, December 24, 1862.

Gen. J. C. SULLIVAN:

The shelling had good effect; the rebels ran out of sight. Every point is guarded

well. They cannot get at us. They cut the wire twice at Middleburg. They fired the track in four places, but our men and a number of faithful negroes saved it. Please call Col. Webster's attention to the damage.

M. BRAYMAN, Brig.-Gen., Comdg.

BOLIVAR, December 24, 1862.

Gen. J. C. SULLIVAN:

Glad to find line open again. After my last the whole rebel force turned back; 3,000 went direct to Middleburg and attacked the Twelfth Michigan. I immediately sent the whole body of cavalry after them. Col. Graves held out gallantly till past noon, when the jayhawkers arrived. I have not the result, but think all is safe. They cut the wire and sent the track on fire, but it was extinguished with little damage.

A messenger is in from Col. Graves. The party that went above are in flight and will soon be attacked; no fears for the result, but you will not need a regiment from here until they get through with us. We expect to fight them tonight.

M. BRAYMAN, Brig.-Gen.

OR, Ser. I, Vol. 17, pt. II, pp. 474-476.

December 24, 1862 - Retreat of Van Dorn from Middleburgh (Middleton) ^{Note 1}

We were wakened by the bugle before daylight and fed and saddled our horses. Soon after daylight Vandorn appeared before Bolivar on a ridge one mile southeast of the town with his forces. The appearance of our two brigades of cavalry to confront him was evidently a surprise to him, and he withdrew, and fell upon Middleburgh (i.e. Middleton), six miles south, with fifteen hundred men. The place was defended by 135 men of the 12 Infantry and they held it till we came up and attacked Vandorn's rear. This compelled a hasty retreat, leaving 10 dead and 15 prisoners in our hands.

Pomeroy Diaries, December 24, 1862.

Note 1: Both Middleton and Middleburg are located in Hardeman county.

LEGEND OF TERMS:

Historical themes: Topics and subject matter that characterize the battlefield including Control of Tennessee's Resources, Crucible for Leadership, Guerilla Warfare, Transformation in Warfare, Enslaved People, and Influence on Campaign. Sites are identified that exhibit themes at moderate to high levels, and some sites may contain one or more Historical Themes.

Preservation Opportunity Index (POI): A rating assigned for each battlefield to indicate relative opportunity and potential for successful site preservation. The Index is generated by a model that evaluates ratings assigned for site significance, condition, risk of loss, protection potential, and opportunities for interpretation. Based upon the POI values for each region in Tennessee (West, Middle, East), sites are indicated as having High, Medium, or Low opportunity.

Geo Coordinates: General/central location of the battlefield area per latitude and longitude coordinates utilized in Google Earth

DO YOU HAVE INFORMATION ON A BATTLE SITE?

Please email us at info@tcwpa.org and we will reach out to you soon. If you have copies of documents or photos to share, you can include those. If you want to discuss by phone, we will schedule that too.

HELP US COLLECT INFORMATION TO PRESERVE THESE BATTLEFIELDS

TCWPA's Statewide Preservation Plan team captains are recruiting volunteers to help gather information about many of the lesser-known sites with hopes of verifying the condition of each site and identifying opportunities for preservation and interpretation.

If you are interested in helping, please contact TCWPA at info@tcwpa.org.

TCWPA will not publish nor release any confidential information, or the name of the contributor, unless you request to be recognized.

Thank you!

The logo for the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association (TCWPA) is displayed in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. It is positioned on the left side of a dark blue banner that features a background image of a Civil War-era cannon. The banner also contains contact information on the right side.

tcwpa

Have Information on a Civil
War Battlesite?

Contact our team at info@tcwpa.org