

## 2021 Hastings After Action Report

We took a really great step in the right direction this past weekend after the Covid hiatus from the hobby. It was really good to see everyone. We (most of us at least) arrived Friday in some afternoon rain which stopped in time for most of us to get set up without getting too wet. As I was making my way from fire to fire, it was really nice to see old pards catching up like we hadn't lost any time between events. Unfortunately, some pretty heavy rain and lightning forced most people into tents or under cover for the night around midnight. We did wake up to dry weather on Saturday morning though.

Saturday morning saw Lt.Col. Scott Lawalin move his right wing out onto our picket line with orders to prevent a Confederate advance into the town. About mid-morning, a message came that the Confederates were advancing in force towards our camp. We had to break our battalion drill and dispatch the 3rd MI under Lt Ryan VanMaldegen to the end of the trail where they were successful in preventing the enemy advance. Unbeknownst to the Confederate infantry advancing, we also had the combined Indiana company led by Cpt. William Behrman moving in behind them to cut off a retreat. It was a very successful engagement which prevented the capture of the camp. In the early afternoon, Maj. Marty Walker moved his left wing out to replace the right wing and posted companies on the picket line. They made a determined probe ahead into the enemy camp to scout out the enemy size. A couple of hours later, a determined push from the Confederate forces, joined by the 114th PA under Cpt. Scot Spiekerman, forced the left wing to withdraw into the town where their retreat was covered by Cpt. Kevin Yeager and the members of the Michigan Cavalry Brigade. The engagement did not go well for us, despite some very skilled maneuvering by the company under Cpt. Russ Paul. We ended up losing significant numbers forcing us to withdraw from the town.

A slightly chilly Sunday morning opened with a skirmish which saw the cavalry engage the Confederate infantry with the assistance of Lt. Chad Johnson and his Tiger Light Guard company. The Confederates withdrew shortly after being engaged to maneuver and were caught slightly off guard by the combined unit company led by Cpt. Douglas McComas who were able to get a couple of company volleys into the disorganized rebel formation as they attempted to cross the road. The enemy reformed and charged, forcing a short retreat, but the pursuit continued down to near our camp again where the cavalry met the Confederate force where the engagement ended. Again in the afternoon, pickets were pushed out onto the line and were almost immediately met in force by the Confederate infantry forcing a moving withdrawal, again assisted by the Michigan Cavalry Brigade. The Confederates were drawn into the town where the overwhelming numbers of our battalion made for a quick victory. I'd also like to mention Brittany Frederick and Allison Schimenti who really did an amazing job by setting up an aid society on the edge of the camp which was a popular stop all weekend for the battalion to stop and grab a refreshment or snack.

It was my first time taking the field as the battalion commander and I would like to thank the company commanders and NCO's who made the weekend a success for everyone. I would also like to personally extend my thanks to Marty Walker and Scott Lawalin for each taking up a wing of the battalion and helping me, and Tom Emerick (Joan Belman Emerick) for his invaluable services over the weekend as the Adjutant. Also to Sgt. Maj. Nick Leach and Cpt. Nathan Malone for jumping in wherever necessary, and to Mark D. Heath and TJ Berlucchi for lending their musical skills to the weekend. We had just under 100 rifles present in the battalion the entire weekend which I think is a credit to all of you for coming out and attending after having such a long pause to the hobby we all enjoy, and I thank you for it. Let's keep moving forward together.

Your Obedient,  
Col. Miner