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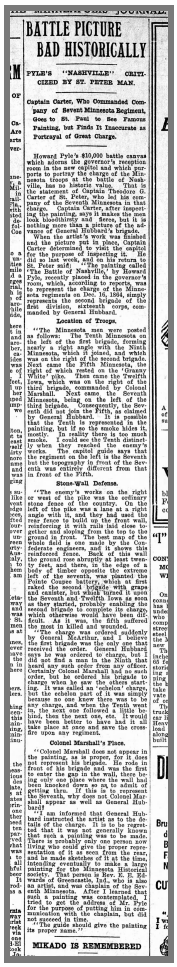

BATTLE PICTURE BAD HISTORICALLY

PYLE'S "NASHVILLE" CRITICIZED BY ST. PETER MAN.

Captain Carter, Who Commanded Company of Seventh Minnesota Regiment, Goes to St. Paul to See Famous Painting, but Finds It Inaccurate as Portrayal of Great Charge.

Howard Pyle's $10,000 battle canvas which adorns the governor's reception room in the new capitol and which purports to portray the charge of the Minnesota troops at the battle of Nashville, has no historic value. Thus is the statement of Captain Theodore G. Carter of St. Peter, who led his company of the Seventh Minnesota in that charge. Captain Carter, after inspecting the painting, says it makes the men look ridiculously and fleeing, but it is nothing more than a picture of the advance of General Hubbard's brigade.

When the artist's work was finished and the picture put in place, Captain Carter determined to visit the capitol for the purpose of inspecting it. He did so last week, and on his return to St. Peter said: "The painting called 'The Battle of Nashville,' by Howard Pyle, recently placed in the governor's reception for the Minnesota troops, is to represent the charge of the Minnesota regiments on Dec. 16, 1864, simply represents the second brigade of the first division, sixteenth corps, commanded by General Hubbard.

Location of Troops.

"The Minnesota men were posted as follows: The Tenth Minnesota on the left of the first brigade, forming nearly a right angle with the Ninth Minnesota, which is placed, and which was on the right of the second brigade. Next came the Fifth Minnesota, the right of which rested on the 'Granny White' pike. Then came the Twelfth Iowa, which was on the right of the third brigade, commanded by Colonel Marshall. Next came the Seventh Minnesota, being on the left of the third brigade. Consequently, the Seventh did not join the Fifth, as claimed by General Hubbard. It is possible that the Tenth is represented in the painting, but if so the smoke hides it, mostly. In reality there is too much smoke. I could see the Tenth distinctly when they reached the enemy's works. The capitol guide says that the regiment on the left is the Seventh but the topography in front of the Seventh was entirely different from that in front of the Fifth.

Stone-Wall Defense.

"The enemy's works on the right or west of the pike was the ordinary stone fence of the country. On the left of the pike was a lane at a right angle with it, and they had used the rocks of the fence to build up the front, reinforcing it with rails laid close together and sloping from the top to the ground in front. The best map of the whole field is one made by the Confederate engineers, and it shows this reinforced fence. Back of this wall the ground rose abruptly at least twenty feet, and there, in the edge of a body of timber opposite the extreme left of the Tenth Minnesota, stood the Pointe Coupee battery, which at first raked the second brigade with grape and canister, but which turned it upon the Seventh and Twelfth Iowa as soon as they started, probably enabling the second brigade to complete its charge, which otherwise would have been difficult. As it was, the fifth suffered the most in killed and wounded.

"The charge was ordered directly by General McArthur, and I believe the first brigade was the only one that received the order. General Hubbard says he was ordered to charge, but I did not find a man in the Ninth that heard any such order from any officer. Certainly Colonel Marshall had no such order, but he ordered his brigade to charge when he saw the others starting. It was called an 'echelon' charge, but the echelon part of it was simply because no one knew there was to be any charge, and when the Tenth went in, the next one followed a little behind, then the next one, etc. It would have been better to have had it all take place at once and save the cross-fire upon any regiment.

Colonel Marshall's Place.

"Colonel Marshall does not appear in the painting, as is proper, for it does not represent his brigade. He rode in front of his brigade and was the first to enter the gap in the wall, there being only one place where the wall had been knocked down so as to admit of getting thru. If this is to represent the Seventh, why does not Colonel Marshall appear as well as General Hubbard?

"I am informed that General Hubbard instructed the artist as to the details of the charge. It is to be regretted that it was not generally known that such a painting was to be made. There is probably only one person now living who could give the proper representation of it as seen from the rear, and he made sketches of it at the time, intending to enter the lists for a large painting for the Minnesota Historical society. That person is Rev. E. E. Edwards of Greensaste, Ind., who is also an artist, and was chaplain of the Seventh Minnesota. After I learned that such a painting was contemplated, I tried to get the address of Mr. Pyle for the purpose of putting him in communication with the chaplain, but did not succeed in time.

"The guide should give the painting its proper name."

MIKADO IS REMEMBERED

Pyle

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