

Major General Sterling Price led a Confederate cavalry raid of 12,000 troopers into Missouri which culminated in the Battle of Westport on October 23, 1864. On October 22, Union troops defended Byram's Ford to keep Confederates under Brigadier General Joseph O. Shelby from crossing and on October 23, Confederates, under Major General John S. Marmaduke, defended Byram's Ford to prevent a crossing by a cavalry division of 7,000 men, commanded by Union Major General Alfred E. Pleasonton. Begin tour at Byram's Ford and follow in sequence the numbered sites as indicated on the map for a self-guided walking tour of the Big Blue Battlefield. Byram's Ford and adjacent area has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Site

1. Byram's Ford. Felled trees obstructed the ford on October 22, but the Union line was flanked when Confederates crossed above and below the ford. Federals under Colonel Charles R. Jennison retreated to Westport. Union field hospital established on the river bank October 23, by Brigade Surgeon John W. Trader, 1st Cavalry Regiment, Missouri State Militia, after First Brigade troops under Colonel John F. Philips had taken the ford.
2. Union skirmish lines defended the ford on October 22 and Confederate skirmish lines defended the ford on October 23 before retreating west to higher ground.
3. A section of Lt. H. L. Barker's Union Battery of 12 lb. mountain howitzers were in this area on October 22, to command the east bank of the Big Blue River. Site of National Register of Historic Places marker.
4. Route of Byram's Ford Road. Area to the west was open meadow to the rock ledge. Union Lt. Colonel B. F. Lazear led two unsuccessful mounted charges of the 1st Missouri State Cavalry up the road on October 23.
5. Marker No. 17. Refer to battle map and read narratives. The meadow and rock ledge are to the west. The railroad was not there.
6. On October 23, dismounted troopers of the Union First and Fourth Brigades attacked Confederates on the rock ledge. Confederates retreated to their final line on top of "Bloody Hill." Colonel Winslow was wounded and command of the Fourth Brigade went to Lt. Colonel Frederick W. Benteen.
7. Marker No. 16. Read narrative. The wooded ravine on the slope of Bloody Hill to the west was the Union attack route of the dismounted 4th Iowa Cavalry.
8. Marker 17A. Read narrative. This high ground was known as Potato Hill, but after the battle, it was called Bloody Hill.
9. Byram's Ford Road. A log house was here from which Confederate sharpshooters fired on advancing Union troops. The Union attack cost 200 casualties.
10. Follow tour path and cross foot bridge. The final Confederate defensive line was here and extended across 59th Street to the north.
11. Marker 17B. Read narrative. The Confederate 14th Missouri Cavalry Battalion was in line here.
12. Possible entrenchments remain. Captain Dee's dismounted Union Third Battalion of the 4th Iowa Cavalry and armed with Spencer repeating carbines attacked the Confederate line here on October 23.
13. Rock ledge. The second Confederate line was here on October 23. View of the meadow and the high ground east of the Big Blue River where Union Battery H, 2nd Missouri Light Artillery, of 3-inch ordnance rifled cannons were posted before the attack on the ford by Colonel Philip's First Brigade.
14. Flag pole and Big Blue Battlefield map. Brigadier General John B. Sanborn and the Union Third Brigade moved up here in support of the First and Fourth Brigades driving the Confederates west to the Harrisonville Road now Prospect Avenue. End of self-guided walking tour.



Big Blue Battlefield

63rd St. & Manchester Trafficway
Self-Guided Walking Tour

Battle of Westport



Kansas City, Missouri
Parks and Recreation
4600 E. 63rd St., Kansas City, MO 64130

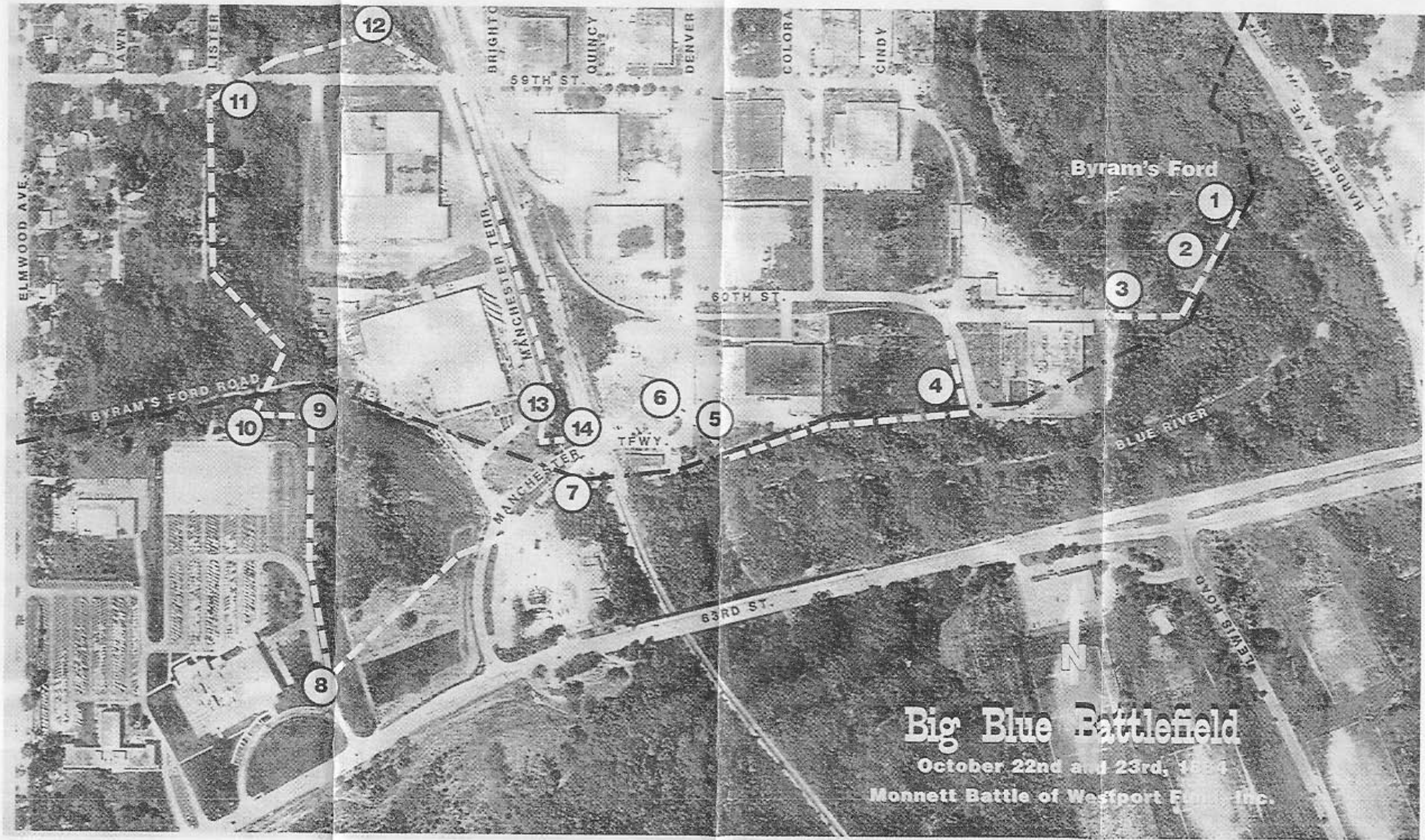


In cooperation with the
Monnett Battle of Westport Fund, Inc.

of the
Civil War Round Table of Kansas City

P.O. Box 6202, Shawnee Mission, KS 66206
913 345-2000
battleofwestport1864@yahoo.com

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Byram's Ford

BLUE RIVER

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Big Blue Battlefield

October 22nd and 23rd, 1854

Monnett Battle of Westport Falls, Inc.