

FALL 2023 ★ Vol. 24 No. 3

AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST

HALLOWED GROUND

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*PHYSICAL
REMNANTS
of
THE PAST*

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HALLOWED GROUND
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THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST preserves our nation's hallowed battlegrounds and educates the public about what happened there and why it matters today. We permanently protect these battlefields as a lasting and tangible memorial to the brave soldiers who fought in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Civil War. Thanks to the contributions of more than 300,000 members and supporters nationwide, we have preserved more than 57,000 acres, more than 155 sites in 25 states. For more information, call 800-298-7878 or visit our website at www.battlefields.org. *Hallowed Ground* is the membership magazine of the American Battlefield Trust. It is produced solely for nonprofit educational purposes and every reasonable attempt is made to provide accurate and appropriate attribution for all elements, including those in the public domain. Contemporary images are reproduced only with permission and appropriate attribution; uncredited images are courtesy the American Battlefield Trust. Feature articles reflect the research and opinion of the bylined author. ©2023 American Battlefield Trust. CORRECTION: In the Summer issue, the Trust misidentified the city that is home to the USS *Yorktown*, home of our partners at the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. It is in Mt. Pleasant, S.C., just outside of Charleston.





Jacob Avey Farm
Sharpsburg, Md.
MATT BRANT

A

T THE American Battlefield Trust, we like to say that we're in the "forever business." By that I mean we recognize how we have been entrusted with these hallowed grounds by previous generations. And we believe it is our responsibility to preserve, protect and defend them, adding to them as we can and then passing them whole and intact to future generations. And if we do that, we have performed a solemn duty.

The protection of battlefields as tangible and inspiring links to our nation's defining events is the central core of our mission. These landscapes provide meaningful learning experiences — consider how today's and tomorrow's military leaders participate in staff rides on battlefields of past conflicts or how a school field trip may have inspired your own lifelong love of history. They are places of memory where we can honor all of America's citizen soldiers.

But, certainly, the battlefields themselves are not the only survivors from the tumultuous times of the Revolutionary War or Civil War. There are meaningful artifacts on display in museums. There are original documents filled with information priceless to researchers. Period structures remain on some battlefields as do a far smaller number of living "witnesses" — trees still standing a century and more later.

The care of all such items requires both passion and specialized skill. Curators, conservators, artisans trained in heritage crafts and even arborists play roles in extending the lifespans of these physical objects. A hard truth understood by such professionals is that they cannot completely stop the passage of time; organic compounds will break down, exposure to light and air will make colors deteriorate and corrode metals. Like us, they take what has been entrusted to them by their predecessors, safeguard and care for it, increase our understanding of it, then pass it on, so the next generation —

hopefully with even more advanced techniques and technologies — can do the same.

As a battlefield preservationist, I deeply appreciate the code that textile conservator Gwen Spicer articulates — ensure no harm is done. It strikes me as similar to our own creed, finding ways for history and development to coexist without obliterating the historic landscape. Because although pavement can be torn up and the battlefield restored, as has been done at Franklin and as we are doing at Gettysburg, it makes the job a whole lot harder! Just as she wishes that particularly noxious adhesives hadn't been used in the first place.

All of these survivors of the past — the landscapes, the artifacts and documents, the structures and sentinel trees — help us feel connected to those who came before, and who did so much to give the nation we are privileged to live in today. They offer us the chance to touch the same textures, experience the same view, enjoy the same shady respite. To me, they humanize those generations long past and make me feel closer to them.

I hope that my work with the Trust, which your generosity enables, will help extend that bridge so our grandchildren and great-grandchildren can enjoy the same experiences. You and I may not have training in the care of centuries-old manuscripts and textiles, or know how to repair vintage masonry using antique handtools, but you are a critical part of this process. The work we do matters greatly — whether it's purchasing key properties at Gettysburg and Fort Negley or advocating to stop rampant development at the Wilderness — and I thank you for joining me in it.



David N. Duncan

DAVID N. DUNCAN
President, American Battlefield Trust

President Portrait by BUDDY SECOR

battlefields.org

ON THE TRUST WEBSITE

THE TREES THAT WITNESSED HISTORY

Curious about the last living witnesses to the Battle of Gettysburg? Witness trees have been around for generations and help tell the stories of what happened on the battlefields and historic sites they inhabit. To learn about a few choice standing sentinels at Gettysburg, check out the Trust's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/americanbattlefieldtrust.

EXPLORE THIS ISSUE



COLORS ABOVE THE BATTLEFIELD

To distinguish Confederate from Union and one unit from another, regiments carried their colors into battle. The task of carrying these flags was a heavy one, literally and figuratively. The colors stood out as targets on the battlefield as their bearers kept them safe to ensure troop morale. Although often sustaining damage, many battle flags still exist today as a testament to their bearers' valor. To learn about remaining flags from the Battle of New Market Heights and their conservation, visit www.battlefields.org/NewMarketHeightsFlags.

PIECES OF HISTORY

Examining artifacts and letters is one of the best ways we can learn about events from the past. Civil War soldiers left behind millions of artifacts and letters to their families that can help us understand pivotal moments in American history today. The Trust is no stranger to priceless items, with more than 200 artifacts that came into its possession when it acquired Robert E. Lee's Headquarters at Gettysburg. However, these artifacts and letters like these can be found everywhere, even in your own home. To read more about how these Gettysburg artifacts were safeguarded, visit www.battlefields.org/LeesHQArtifacts. If you have primary documents and artifacts that you think will add to the larger understanding of history, read up on what you can do with them at www.battlefields.org/ArtifactsHowTo.

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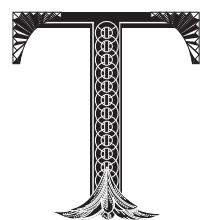


Sickles Witness Tree, Gettysburg NMP, Gettysburg, Pa., NOEL KLINE



THE FINAL ROUND

A dozen years later, campaign will complete protection of former Gettysburg Country Club



THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST has launched a \$3 million national fundraising campaign to acquire the remainder of the former Gettysburg Country Club and remove modern structures, continuing a preservation process begun nearly 15 years ago in partnership with The Conservation Fund and National Park Service. Thanks to a generous major donor and other considerations extending the window for payment, the Trust must raise \$375,000 in private gifts by November 20, to take ownership of the property.

Located along the Chambersburg Pike between McPherson Ridge and Herr's Ridge, and just past Willoughby's Run, this 15-acre property saw intense fighting in the opening phase of battle on July 1, 1863. Last summer, this vestige of the Emmanuel Harman Farm was proposed for intensive residential development, but won a reprieve following significant local advocacy to save the site. Denied permits for a sprawling apartment complex, the landowner appealed the decision but the door remained open for the Trust to negotiate preservation scenarios.

"Recognizing the community support for the addition of this acreage to the battlefield footprint, I am pleased that we were able to reach an agreement with the landowner, a regional development firm," said Trust President David Duncan. "This is a significant milestone, but much remains to be done before we can declare 'victory' and deem the entirety of the former Country Club property protected forever."

This preservation journey began in mid-2008, when the Gettysburg Country Club declared bankruptcy after decades of operations, and the site immediately became a top acquisition priority for the park and preservationists. Not only was it the scene of significant combat, but after the fighting moved east, a field hospital

was established on the banks of Willoughby's Run, and at least 23 combatants were buried on what became the Country Club.

An initial sheriff's sale failed to find a buyer, and the entire site was secured by a housing developer. However, preservationists continued to negotiate behind the scenes and, in March 2011, The Conservation Fund, assisted by the Trust and other allied organizations, successfully transferred 95 acres of former golf course to the National Park Service during an event headlined by then Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar.

However, the portion of the property fronting the road, including modern clubhouses, tennis courts and a swimming pool had been subdivided out and was not included in the acquisition. While they were used for various recreational purposes over the ensuing decade, these amenities had gone unused for several years, and the site remained vulnerable to development. The looming threat came to a head last summer, when Cumberland Township considered development plans for a large-scale apartment complex. Local residents and preservation advocates came out in force to oppose the plan, and the local Board of Supervisors denied approval.

Although the developer appealed that ruling and worked to address the specific issues raised in the process, the door was open for preservation discussions. After months of good-faith negotiations, the Trust was able to secure a purchase contract and launch a multiyear \$3 million campaign to secure the property. After taking ownership of the property in November, the Trust will also begin envisioning landscape restoration plan that balances removal of modern structures and stewardship of historical resources dating to periods after the battle.

Over the past two-plus decades, the Trust has helped protect, restore and interpret nearly 1,240 acres across the Gettysburg Battlefield. Learn more about these projects and initiatives at www.battlefields.org/enlivening-gettysburg.★

ADVOCACY UPDATES *Wilderness, Chancellorsville, Bristoe Station*



FROM HOUSING SUBDIVISIONS to industrial-scale solar facilities, and from strip malls to sprawling data centers, the Trust is monitoring acute threats to scores of battlefields at any given time. Our goal is always to advocate for win-win outcomes that balance preservation with progress, and we often reach amicable resolutions by working behind the scenes with local officials and developers directly. Other situations, however, require us to prepare for a more public battle.

As shared in the last issue of *Hallowed Ground*, this spring the American Battlefield Trust filed a lawsuit against Orange County, Va., in response to its approval of a 2,600-acre development project featuring millions of square feet of data centers at the gateway to the Wilderness Battlefield, near the intersection of state routes 3 and 20 – the same area where preservationists successfully dissuaded Walmart from building a decade ago.

Although the County's August responsive filing does not set any timeline for necessary court actions, we have not been idle, strategizing with our traditional partners and meeting organizations fighting other ill-considered data center developments across the state.

One of the county's troubling moves seeks to question the standing of both preservation organizations and private citizens who filed the suit – alleging that the board's authority is unlimited and no entity has the legal standing to question their decision. We disagree vehemently with both this and their

assertion that only the land inside the national park qualifies as "battlefield." As both a landowner in the immediate vicinity of the Wilderness Crossing project and as an organization dedicated to remembering and honoring America's past, we believe that the Trust has a moral responsibility to stand up for the fallen. Moreover, we are troubled by how an after-the-fact attempt to manufacture minutes from what had previously been called an unrelated gathering seemingly constitutes an admission that the Board met in violation of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

A short distance away, we are working with residents to oppose construction of a gas station and commercial strip on a forested stretch of road at the heart of the Chancellorsville Battlefield – just 1,500 feet from the site of the Chancellor Mansion that lent the engagement its name. At the first public discussion about the project, concerned citizens and preservationists overflowed the room, sending a strong signal to developers.

Meanwhile, the Trust is seeking to engage officials and developers to find a compromise plan at Bristoe Station, where a massive warehouse distribution center is slated to obliterate core battlefield and fundamentally change the experience at the neighboring county run battlefield park. Hundreds of truck bays would welcome tractor trailers at all hours of the day and night and local roads would be overwhelmed by fleets of delivery vehicles.

Please visit www.battlefields.org/SpeakOut to keep abreast of the latest happenings in these and other evolving situations. From petitions to donations that will be allocated to our advocacy fund, we need your help.★

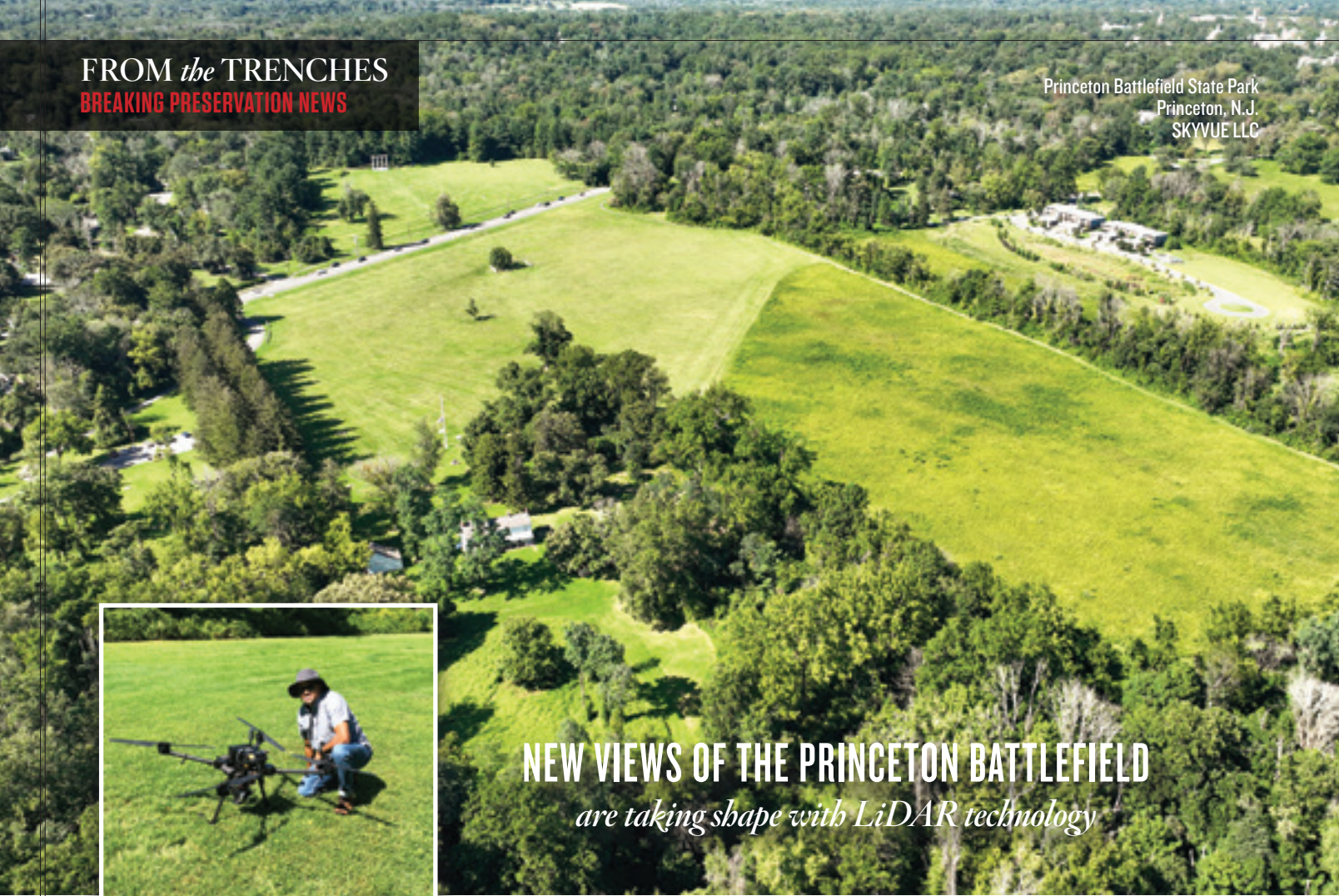


The Wilderness Battlefield
Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park
Fredericksburg, Va.
MATTHEW HARTWIG



DURING A SUMMERTIME LUNCHEON of the Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce, the Trust and the Mill Springs Battlefield Association presented plaques to Kentucky State Senators Damon Thayer (left) and Rick Girdler (right) lauding their role in creating statewide mechanisms for battlefield preservation and their steadfast support of initiatives to generate heritage tourism in the Bluegrass State.

Princeton Battlefield State Park
Princeton, N.J.
SKYVUE LLC



NEW VIEWS OF THE PRINCETON BATTLEFIELD *are taking shape with LiDAR technology*



WHEN WE EMBRACE technology to learn more about the places where history happened, there is no end to what new discoveries await.

For years preservationists have studied aerial photography to identify the character and conditions of battlefield lands throughout their evolution. Often, areas identified for more detailed study calls for the review of U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps or detailed site topographic surveys. Enter: Drone-Mounted LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) Mapping!

This cutting-edge technology is a game-changing application now employed in the American Battlefield Trust's battlefield rehabilitation efforts at the Princeton Battlefield, the New Jersey state park most notably attributed to George Washington's January 1777 victory over British forces. Together with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Princeton Battlefield Society, analysis and planning is under way to rehabilitate and restore the character-defining features of this National Historic Landmark.

The team of operators met in late August to launch the drone-mounted LiDAR modules, and, in the process, commence

a new era of battlefield landscape analysis. "The use of drones and low-altitude LiDAR analysis provides unprecedented detail at a scale previously unattainable," said preservation landscape architect Glenn Stach, the lead preservation planner overseeing the Trust's rehabilitation efforts at the Princeton Battlefield.

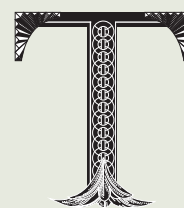
The drones took flight mid-morning, covering a pre-programmed flight path that spanned more than 85 acres of battlefield land, including the Trust's landmark acquisition at Maxwell's Field, where Washington once rode into the midst of battle to rally his troops and led a counterattack that drove the British from the field. Despite windy conditions that day, the flight — which took place at an altitude of 150-200 feet above the ground — was a success, and the data is now being translated to produce a detailed aerial and survey of existing topographic conditions.

LiDAR technology uses remote sensing techniques that depend on laser pulses to capture distance-to-ground measurements that, when combined, allow for the creation of detailed 3D surface-modeling maps, as well as topographic maps. In the same stroke, the survey also provides a detailed aerial photo of existing conditions.

This ground-breaking analysis is just one component of a comprehensive analysis of the cultural landscape at the Princeton Battlefield. Combined, its discoveries will influence the battlefield's rehabilitation in preparation for the nation's semiquincentennial commemoration. The 250th anniversary of the Battle of Princeton will take place on January 3, 2027.★

REVOLUTIONARY WAR TRAVELING TRUNKS

expand popular education program



THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST is expanding its popular Traveling Trunk series for educators to include, for the first time, Revolutionary War Traveling Trunks.

Applications for the 2023-2024 school year are now being accepted, and teachers can specify whether they would prefer to receive the Civil War

Traveling Trunk, filled with artifacts and documents related to that conflict, or one filled with materials related to the Revolutionary War.

"Every year, teachers tell us these trunks are an invaluable learning tool that brings history alive for their students," says Kristopher White, the Trust's deputy director of education. "We're especially pleased this year to be able to offer this hands-on experience as it relates to America's fight for independence, too."

The Traveling Trunk program is free of charge to educators and provides reproduction artifacts, clothing, documents and other materials for teachers to utilize during their early U.S. history instruction. The Revolutionary War Traveling Trunk includes more than 30 items for students to explore, including a Continental Army uniform jacket, colonial dress, powder horn, haversack, hats, flags, hardtack, fife and more. Similarly, the Civil War Traveling Trunk includes reproduction blue and gray uniforms, mess kit, canteen, playing cards, paper money and more.

In addition, the Trust is making available lesson plans that work in conjunction with the trunks and their contents. Lesson plans for the Revolutionary War Traveling Trunk include instruction about the everyday life of a Revolutionary War soldier, camp life, the home front, music and notable people from the war. Civil War Traveling Trunk lesson plans address the common soldier, home front, camp life, music and instruments during the war and Civil War photography.

"Traveling Trunks are among the Trust's most longstanding programs, one we have seen yield stellar reviews for decades," said organization President David Duncan. "Their ongoing popularity is a testament to the very human desire to touch the past and find tangible connections to the generations that came before us."

Applicants are selected based on specific criteria and receive a trunk to use with their students for five days, before it moves on to a new destination. During the 2022-2023 school year, the trunks visited 78 schools. Since the program's inception, the trunks have visited 49 of the 50 states!★



MELISSA A. WINN

Fort Negley
Nashville, Tenn.
MICHAEL BYERLEY



ADDING TO FORT NEGLEY *Nashville commits \$3 million to project*



ON AUGUST 1, Nashville Metro Council approved a \$3-million contribution toward the American Battlefield Trust's \$9.25-million campaign to acquire 2.36 acres adjacent to Fort Negley Park, a critical step toward reintegrating this land into the popular park and landmark and advancing the city's ambitious Master Plan for Fort Negley. In

addition to member donations, the Trust is also applying for significant federal and state matching grants to cover the remainder of the transaction cost.

"This is a community that has embraced the historic resources that set it apart, and we are exceptionally grateful for the vision of Mayor John Cooper and the commitment of Nashville's Metro Council as they have ushered in an exciting new era for Fort Negley," said Trust President David Duncan. "Their eager participation in this project from the outset — philosophically, logistically and financially — has been its driving force, and the Trust is thrilled to facilitate this game-changing acquisition."

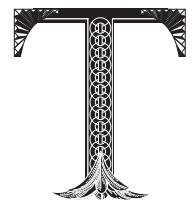
Tennessee is a leader among state governments when it comes to assisting in conservation of historic landscapes through the Tennessee Historical Commission's Civil War Sites Preservation Fund, administered by the Tennessee Wars Commission. Fort Negley is eligible for federal Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants, but the success of a project of this magnitude hinged on Metro Nashville's involvement from the outset, and the final vote was the result of months spent in constant communication and successful passage of the city's FY24 budget.

Built by Union forces during the Civil War, Fort Negley may not have played a decisive role in combat for control of the city, but it has become a major Nashville touchpoint in the decades since. It has faced 21st-century battles that pitted conflicting visions for a growing city against an iconic place integral to its past. In just the last five years, large-scale mixed-use development and an arboretum connected to the neighboring Adventure Science Center were proposed on portions of the historic park property.

Many regional and national organizations rallied to Fort Negley's defense, citing its unique story and status as the first American site nominated for the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Slave Route Project. During the 2019 mayoral election, Cooper pledged to champion Fort Negley, a campaign promise he has fulfilled and for which the Trust recognized him with its prestigious 2023 Preservation Legacy Award. All told, the Metro Council has approved a budget that includes \$18.5 million for repair, interpretation and expansion of Fort Negley Park under his leadership.★

MILITARY HISTORY, ANIMATED

New map-based video covers two centuries



HIS FALL, the American Battlefield Trust launched its most ambitious animated battle map to date: *America's Wars 1754-1945*. Produced by the award-winning Wide Awake Films, the stunning visuals and compelling storytelling bring to life the events and military engagements that shaped America over the course of two centuries, from the beginning of the French and Indian War in 1754 to the end of World War II in 1945.

The nearly hour-long production joins the Trust's broader series of about two dozen focused animated map videos, which have collectively been viewed more than 20 million times. It uses a combination of dramatic narration, historical and modern images, motion graphics, reenactment footage and music to share the mesmerizing stories of more than a dozen individual conflicts, including the Revolutionary War, Indian Wars, Mexican-American War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I and World War II.

"The *America's Wars 1754-1945* animated map is by far our most ambitious installment of the series," said the Trust's Chief Historian Garry Adelman. "In moving outside our usual period of coverage, we wanted to provide a learning opportunity to explore the earliest conflicts of America's citizen soldiers and what they did after. By taking a more wholistic view of American military history, we're able to place the 105-plus battlefields where the Trust has saved land into greater context."

Like all the Trust's award-winning educational content, the *America's Wars 1754-1945* Animated Map is available free of charge for anyone to watch, including the thousands of students in schools that already use Trust animated maps and other short videos in their classrooms. The full production is organized into chapters for individual conflicts to assist those who may prefer to utilize selected segments. ★

Watch the full animated battle map video here:



Jacob Avey Farm
Sharpsburg, Md.
MATT BRANT



ANTIETAM TRIUMPH

Jacob Avey Farm and Farmhouse saved



IN SEPTEMBER 17TH, the 161st anniversary of the Battle of Antietam, the Trust claimed victory on nearly 150 acres of battlefield land associated with the 1862 Maryland Campaign, including the Jacob Avey Farm, some of Antietam's most hallowed ground. In April, just a few short months earlier, the Trust appealed to members to help save the key 20-acre portion of the Avey Farm, where some of the fiercest fighting of the Battle of Antietam took place and where Confederate soldiers were buried after the battle, according to the recently discovered Elliot Burial Map. The land also includes the historic Avey farmhouse, where the Avey family lived.

Like many civilians in Sharpsburg, Jacob Avey Sr. suffered great financial loss due to the battle. Heavy fighting took place on his land, and an errant Union shell penetrated his house. His claims for reimbursement from the Federal government, like many others in Sharpsburg, were rejected, despite his feeding Union soldiers and caring for them in his house. Now the Trust can share his family's story through the power of place.

The Trust also claimed victory on six additional acres at Antietam, originally part of the historic Reel Farm. In the midmorning of September 17, 1862, the Union armies were gaining ground at Antietam as a large, Northern force entered the West Woods, near this parcel, now preserved forever. A powerful counterattack of some 7,000 Confederates fell upon the Union front flank, and rear, sending them reeling. Preserving these six acres helps the Trust unite a significant portion of the Antietam battlefield that's already saved.

After the Battle of Antietam, Confederate forces moved back across the Potomac and into Virginia at Shepherdstown. Part of the Union army pursued and attacked the Confederate rearguard, capturing four guns. The next day, Union forces crossed the Potomac and established a bridgehead, as well.

Gen. Robert E. Lee dispatched Gen. A.P. Hill's division to counterattack on land the Trust also claimed victory for – 122 acres of land associated with the Battle of Shepherdstown. Confederates were able to hold off the Federals and discourage them from further pursuit, and Lincoln was so frustrated with Gen. George B. McClellan's lack of initiative that in November he relieved him of duty and named Gen. Ambrose Burnside the commander of the Army of the Potomac.

These 122 acres of battlefield land at Shepherdstown, which include the historic Osbourn House, appear mostly as they did during the battle, offering a valuable educational tool for generations to come. ★

Take a video tour of the newly renovated Antietam National Battlefield Visitor Center:



NPS AND NARA CALL CITIZEN ARCHIVISTS TO ARMS

Citizen archivist project unveils and preserves untold stories of the American Revolution



AS AMERICA APPROACHES the 250th anniversary of its independence, the National Park Service and National Archives are collaborating on a special project to transcribe the pension files of more than 80,000 Revolutionary War veterans and their widows. If you've got a bug for history and untold stories, you can help!

The organizations are seeking the public's help to transcribe the records through the National Archives' Citizen Archivist program, a virtual volunteer project. Anyone can volunteer to transcribe the primary source material to make it more discoverable by the public. Citizen archivists transcribe, tag and can share comments about the documents. The project has already helped to transcribe millions of pages and numerous important collections, including the Pentagon Papers, the correspondence for several presidents, World War II posters, and the military service records of United States Colored Troops during the Civil War.

"Every word transcribed by volunteers becomes searchable in the National Archives Catalog. We like to say transcription unlocks history. But for this project we're asking volunteers to go one step further and complete a survey telling us what they find as they transcribe," says Suzanne Isaacs, community manager, National Archives Catalog. "Did they find a surprising or intriguing story? Unexpected artifact? These stories will then be brought to our attention so we can share them widely to tell an even more complete story of the Revolutionary War, from the veterans themselves."

The Revolutionary War pension files collection includes applications and other records pertaining to claims for pensions and bounty land warrants. During the early 19th Century, aging Revolutionary War veterans and their widows were increasingly living in poverty or substandard conditions. Their military pay and compensation for their service during the war were worth little by then and many veterans were in poor health and unable to support

their families. In 1818, the first of four Revolutionary War veteran pension acts was passed, at first for veterans, and later their widows, to collect a pension from the federal government paid out every six months.

The first two Acts, in 1818 and 1820, were for Continental Army veterans only – those who served under General George Washington. The 1832 Act opened pensions to soldiers who served in state formed militia units and the 1836 Act opened applications to widows.

To apply for a pension, the veteran or widow went to a Court of Record and testified before a judge or a lawyer and submitted that testimony to the War Department.

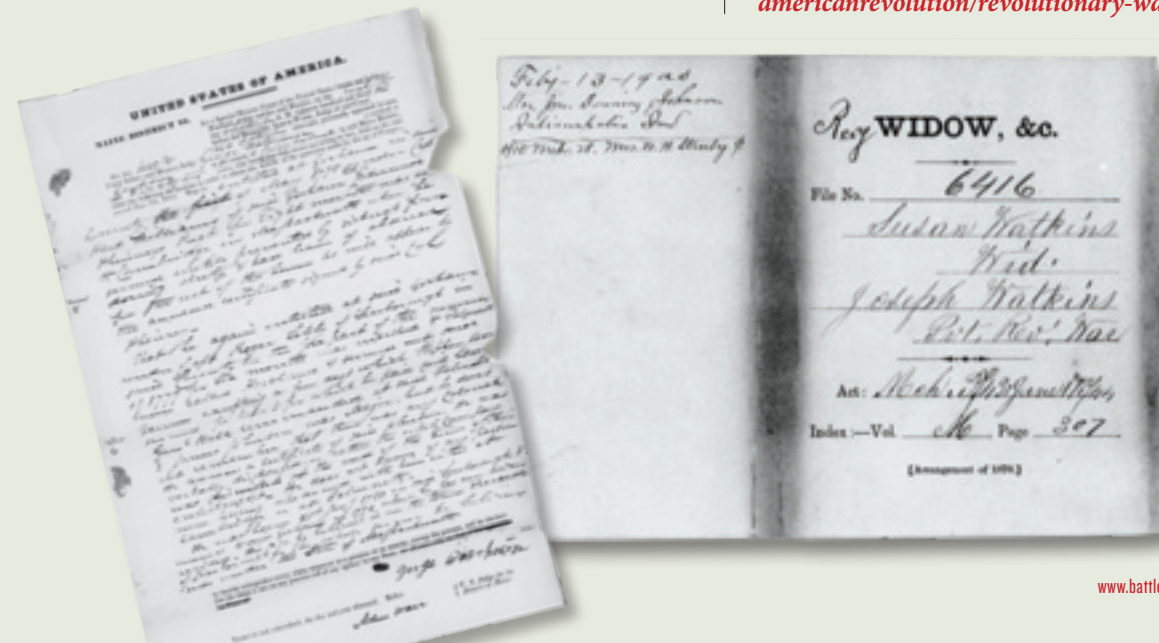
The files contain information about a soldier's rank, unit, and period of service, his age or date of birth, his residence, and sometimes his birthplace. Application files submitted by a soldier's widow might include her name, age, residence, date and place of marriage, and date and place of death of her husband. Some files contain copies of marriage or other family records. In support of the pension application, files can also include documents and veteran statements with information about the organization of military units, the movement of troops, details of battles and campaigns, and a soldier's personal involvement or experience during the war.

The series was maintained by the Office of the Secretary of War until ca. 1810, by the Military Bounty Lands and Pensions Branch from ca. 1810 - 1815, and thereafter by the Bureau of Pensions.

These testimonies hold the untold stories of the American Revolution; the soldiers, widows, African American veterans, and American Indians who fought for and against American forces.

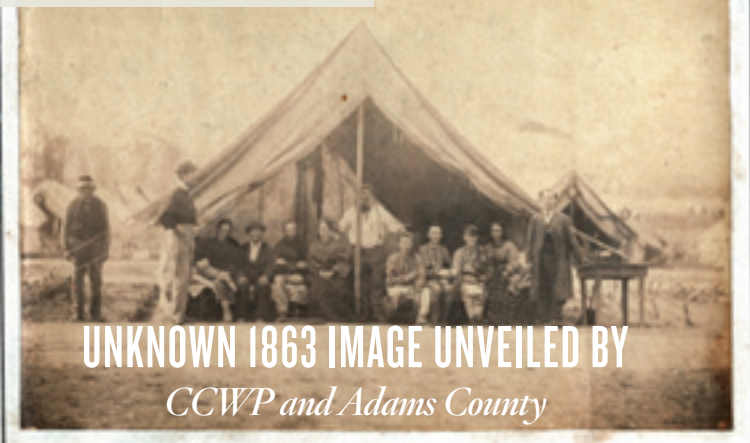
The transcription project will make a permanent contribution to the historical record, not only for the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution but also posterity.

Citizen Archivists need only register for an account to get started (if you want to be counted as an NPS transcriber, add NPS to your user name)! To learn more about the Revolutionary War pensions and to get involved with the project, visit <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/americanrevolution/revolutionary-war-pension-project.htm>. ★



The pension files of Revolutionary War veterans and their widows can contain, among other things, family records, service records, and interesting narratives. NARA

Collection of Fred Sherfy



UNKNOWN 1863 IMAGE UNVEILED BY
CCWP and Adams County

A few of the Wounded

PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN photographs taken after the Battle of Gettysburg continue to surface. On July 2, the 160th anniversary of the second day of the battle, the Center for Civil War Photography (CCWP) and the Adams County Historical Society unveiled the latest such discovery — a remarkable image showing young Union amputees recuperating from their wounds.

The image, taken by photographer Peter Weaver in October or November 1863, shows wounded Union soldiers and amputees sitting in front of a tent at Camp Letterman with several civilians.

“It is truly striking how young a couple of these wounded soldiers are,” said Center for Civil War Photography President Bob Zeller. “They were just boys. And now they faced a lifetime coping with a grievous disability.”

The Center for Civil War Photography (www.civilwarphotography.org) has published the image for the first time on the printed page in the new issue of the Center’s historical journal, *Battlefield Photographer*, which was released during the unveiling event at the historical society’s new headquarters and Beyond the Battle museum in Gettysburg.

The 19th-century albumen print is owned by CCWP member Fred Sherfy, whose ancestors managed the famous Gettysburg battlefield landmark the Peach Orchard.

“This is a photograph that allows you to step back into the moment and be able to see soldiers who are vulnerable in a way that no other photo from Camp Letterman seems to show,” said American Battlefield Trust Chief Historian Garry Adelman, a Gettysburg licensed battlefield guide and vice president of CCWP. “In that sense, it is one of the most striking and emotional of all of the photographs at Gettysburg.”

Adelman and other top experts on the Civil War photographs of Gettysburg, including photo historian William A. Frasanito, said they had never seen a print of the image until now and are unaware of it ever having been published.★

ABPP AWARDS 2023 PLANNING GRANTS

Selected projects span centuries

CONGRATULATIONS to the organizations and entities that have received federal Preservation Planning Grants through the American Battlefield Protection Program, administered through the National Park Service! In total 10 grants received \$1,212,066.50 in funding to help preserve sites of armed conflict stretching from the East Coast to Alaska’s Aleutian Islands. Grants will go toward conducting archeological site surveys, interpretive planning, and community outreach.

This year, the Trust received a grant that will help us conduct advance mapping of American Indian battlefields of the Great Sioux War of 1876-1877 across Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming. Recognizing that accurate maps are at the heart of preservation and interpretation work undertaken by countless organizations, we have previously supported similar projects for French and Indian War and Mexican War sites.

Other recipients include: Ships of Exploration and Discovery for their underwater archaeology project “Capturing the Carnage of War” in the Aleutian Islands, Alaska; Ridgefield Historical Society for a Phase II archaeology study of the Revolutionary War Battle of Ridgefield in Fairfield County, Conn.; the Gulf Archaeology Research Institute for their project researching the Seminole War Battle of Micanopy in Alachua County, Fla.; Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum for interpretation of America’s WWII aviation battlefield in Honolulu, Hawaii; the Maryland Historical Trust toward reconstructing the Revolution-Era cultural landscapes of the Washington-Rochambeau military encampments in Cecil and Harford Counties; the Trustees of Dartmouth College for archaeological investigations at coastal sites in Lincoln County, Maine, that witnessed 17th century clashes between English settlers and the native Abenaki population; North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources for a study to support work in pursuit of a National Heritage Corridor recognizing sites tied to the 1781 “Race to the Dan;” the Fort Ticonderoga Association for archaeological research shedding light on camp life during the Revolutionary War at Liberty Hill in Essex County, N.Y.; East Pikeland Township for study of Continental powder works at French Creek in Chester County, Pa.★



Guilford Courthouse
National Military Park
Greensboro, N.C.
MATT BRANT

Chickasaw Bayou Battlefield
Warren County, Miss.
MIKE TALPLACIDO

RECENTLY PROTECTED PROPERTIES

include land in six states

BENTONVILLE, N.C.

In March 1865, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman divided his force as he marched north into the Carolinas. Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston confronted an isolated wing on March 19, experiencing success until Union reinforcements arrived late in the day. On March 21, the Confederates attempted a final, desperate counterattack before retreating.

At Bentonville, the Trust acquired 139 acres that bore witness to a Federal rout of Southern cavalry. Thanks to funding by the American Battlefield Protection Program and the North Carolina State Capital Infrastructure Fund, the Trust has preserved this land in perpetuity and in June donated this property along with another 15 acres to the State of North Carolina for incorporation into the Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site. The Trust has now saved **2,063 acres** at Bentonville.

CHICKASAW BAYOU, Miss.

Between December 26 and 29, 1862, Union Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman failed in his bid to compromise Vicksburg’s Confederate defenses at Chickasaw Bayou. The outnumbered Confederates stood strong while Sherman’s Federals suffered eight times as many losses. While the defeat subverted the Union’s first attempt at capturing Vicksburg, the tide turned in July 1863.

The Trust successfully acquired nine properties at Chickasaw Bayou, marking a first-time preservation success at the Mississippi battlefield. The acquisitions were made possible thanks to funding from the American Battlefield Protection Program and the Mississippi Historic Site Preservation Fund. The Trust has now saved **10 acres** at Chickasaw Bayou.

FORT DERUSSY, La.

Some called Fort DeRussy impregnable, and when the Union expedition known as the Red River Campaign entered Louisiana, it was all that stood between Union troops and Shreveport. When Union forces arrived at its gates on March 14, 1864, they were hit by a barrage of fire. Determined to take the fort and open the Red River for the advance of the Union brown-water navy, Brig. Gen. A.J. Smith ordered the XVI Army Corps forward. After a 20-minute battle, Brig. Gen. Joseph Mower’s division stormed the parapet, and the Confederate defenders surrendered,

leaving the Union free to move up the river. Mower, a volunteer soldier, received a brevet in the regular army for his actions.

Aided by the American Battlefield Protection Program and the Red River Water Commission, the Trust successfully acquired 22 acres at Fort DeRussy in early February. The property, which includes the fort, earthworks, the fort’s cemetery and part of the battlefield, will be stewarded by the Trust until its incorporation into the Fort DeRussy State Historic Site. The Trust has now saved **80 acres** at Fort DeRussy.

MILL SPRINGS, Ky.

The Battle of Mill Springs, fought on January 19, 1862, was one of the first significant Union victories of the Civil War, as Brig. Gen. George H. Thomas defeated Confederate forces under the command of Maj. Gen. George B. Crittenden and Brig. Gen. Felix Zollicoffer. Zollicoffer, conducting reconnaissance in front of his forces, was shot and killed by Union soldiers during the battle. The Federal victory at Mill Springs not only helped bolster sagging Northern morale, it also helped keep Kentucky solidly within Union control.

With a grant from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Trust was able to acquire 63 acres at Mill Springs associated with Confederate earthworks and cannon emplacements during the battle. This property will be stewarded by the Trust until its transfer to the National Park Service for incorporation into the Mill Springs Battlefield National Monument. The Trust has now saved **832 acres** at Mill Springs.

MINE RUN, Va.

Payne’s Farm was the first and largest clash of the Mine Run Campaign. In late November 1863, Union Maj. Gen. George G. Meade attempted to march through the Wilderness and strike the right flank of the Confederate army south of the Rapidan River. Confederate Maj. Gen. Jubal A. Early met this advance near Payne’s Farm. The Union attacked twice, and an attempted Confederate counterattack was scattered by heavy fire and broken terrain. After dark, the Southerners withdrew to prepared field fortifications along Mine Run. The next day, skirmishing was heavy, but a major attack did not materialize. Meade concluded that the



Mine Run Battlefield
Orange County, Va.
MATTHEW HARTWIG

Confederate line was too strong to attack and retired for the night of December 1.

In a significant preservation victory in Virginia, the Trust helped preserve 703 acres of hallowed ground at Mine Run that was threatened by a utility-scale solar farm. This large conservation easement protects land that saw short cavalry skirmishes as both sides were hesitant to commit to a full battle. The Trust has now saved **1,392 acres** at Mine Run.

NEW MARKET, Va.

Ending the first phase of the Union presence in the Shenandoah Valley, the Battle of New Market on May 15, 1864, saw Confederate Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge defend against Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel and his attempts to sever Confederate supply lines. Rain and thunder caused confusion and created holes within the Confederate line, forcing Breckinridge to fill them with cadets from the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) under his command; these cadets later joined a desperate charge across a muddy field

toward Federal positions. The Confederates were successful in forcing the Union troops to retreat and in protecting the Shenandoah Valley for a time.

At New Market, the Trust provided funding for the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation's acquisition of 22 acres. The tract is associated with the famous charge by VMI cadets on the historic Bushong Farm and will be preserved under stewardship of the Foundation. The Trust has now saved **41 acres** at New Market.

REAMS STATION, Va.

On August 25, 1864, the Second Battle of Reams Station saw Lt. Gen. A.P. Hill sent to stop the destruction of the Weldon Railroad, a vital supply line for the Confederate army. Hill expelled the Union troops from the station, but lost key parts of the railroad, creating major logistical complications for the Richmond-Petersburg Campaign.

The Trust acquired a key 96-acre tract at Reams Station, adding to its long-time preservation success at the battlefield. This property, which saw Union troops occupy earthworks during attempts to

sever supply lines to Petersburg, will be stewarded by the Trust until its transfer to the National Park Service for incorporation into the Petersburg National Battlefield. The Trust has saved **389 acres** at Reams Station.

SHILOH, Tenn.

On the morning of April 6, 1862, Confederate soldiers poured out of the nearby woods and struck a line of Union soldiers near Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River. The overpowering Confederate offensive drove the Federal forces from their camp. Fighting continued until after dark, but the Federals held. A Union counteroffensive the next morning overpowered the weakened and outnumbered Confederate forces, resulting in a Union triumph.

The Trust successfully acquired two acres of land that saw both Federal and Confederate movements for two days at Shiloh, Tennessee. The Trust will steward the property until it is transferred to the National Park Service for incorporation into the Shiloh National Military Park. The Trust has now saved **1,401 acres** at Shiloh.

SPOTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE, Va.

Following the vicious Battle of the Wilderness, Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant continued his march "by the left flank" toward Richmond, setting his next target as Spotsylvania Court House. As both armies snaked south, parallel to each other, they finally met in battle on May 8. This was the opening of a two-week contest that would see some of the fiercest fighting of the war. Grant's assault on the Confederate salient was the scene of more than 20 hours of continuous fighting through torrential downpours of both rain and bullets. Union troops captured more than 3,000 prisoners during this fight, but the Federals were unable to break the Confederate lines and fighting continued until the 19th. The outcome was inconclusive, and each army continued its march south toward Richmond.

In March, the Trust acquired five acres at Spotsylvania Court House that saw slight Federal gains in this stalemate of a battle. The property will eventually be transferred to the National Park Service for incorporation into the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. The Trust has now saved **151 acres** at Spotsylvania Court House. ★

SO GALLANTLY STREAMING

How campaign streamers show the journey of a nation



ON CEREMONIAL OCCASIONS, the United States Army flag is accompanied by nearly two hundred campaign streamers, each marking a different moment of the nation's military history. To the initiated, the different colors and designs speak volumes, conveying information at a glance. Altogether, the streamers represent 17 conflicts extending

from the Revolutionary War to the 21st century. As wars waged and conflict ebbed and flowed, this form of recognition and honor became an extension of the country's story.

These battle honors came to prominence during one of the nation's most challenging moments — the Civil War. At the outbreak of the war, Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont was appointed by President Lincoln to command the Department of the West. Less than five months later, Fremont led troops from Iowa, Kansas and Missouri during the Battle of Wilson's Creek.

The 1861 battle, perhaps the most significant west of the Mississippi, was a resounding Confederate victory and gave them control of southwestern Missouri. Nonetheless, to recognize the extraordinary service of his Union soldiers during the arduous battle, Fremont ordered for the word "Springfield" to be embellished on the colors of all units that partook in the battle.

Acknowledging Fremont's action, the War Department announced General Order No. 19 on February 22, 1862. The General Order directed for the names of battles to be inscribed upon the colors or guidons of all regiments and batteries that performed admirably. Emphasizing its privilege, the Order explained: "it is expected that troops so distinguished will regard their colors as representing the honor of their corps."

Battle honors depicted on regimental colors or guidons continued from 1862 until 1890, when the convention was discontinued. In its place, silver bands engraved with the names of battles were placed around the staffs of their organizational colors. And while this new style continued the tradition of honoring soldiers' bravery, it did not last long. During World War I, because they were unable to obtain silver bands due to war rationing, the War Department authorized Cmdr. Gen. John J. Pershing to instead obtain ribbon as a substitute. The ribbons now would bear the names of all wartime operations by the American



Expeditionary Forces. Shortly after the end of the war, Army organizations were approved to use large campaign streamers. And now — for more than a century — these streamers have remained.

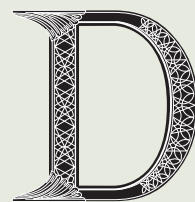
Today, each streamer — hanging four feet long and 2.75 inches wide — is embroidered with a campaign and the year it occurred. The colors adorning the streamers correspond to the campaign ribbons authorized for service during the respective conflict. For example, the 17 Revolutionary Campaigns are scarlet with a white stripe at the center, while the 25 from the Civil War are blue and gray. The 13 World War I streamers are double rainbows, and the 10 from the Korean War are light blue with a white stripe. Currently, 190 campaign streamers have been authorized for display on the Army flag, representing engagements from 1775 to 2015.

With a total of 47 streamers, the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War streamers mark some of the most poignant moments in our nation's story. From the shot heard 'round the world at Lexington and the British surrender at Yorktown to the attack on Fort Sumter and the surrender at Appomattox Court House, they chronicle the reality and sacrifice it took to shape the nation we know today. As such, the Army Flag is always presented with all campaign streamers attached, a constant reminder of where we came from and where we are. ★

TOP: Campaign streamers on display at Medal of Honor Day at Arlington Cemetery, Arlington, Va., US ARMY; **BOTTOM:** Pa. 210th Infantry, PENNSYLVANIA CAPITOL PRESERVATION COMMITTEE.

PAGE from the PAST

TANGIBLE LINKS TO HISTORY



DURING THE JUNE 9, 1863, Battle of Brandy Station, the grounds around the modest St. James Episcopal Church became a Confederate artillery position and bore witness to a horrific struggle when the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry and 6th U.S. Cavalry made an unsuccessful charge on the guns. The grounds became the final resting place for many who fell during the battle, and when the Army of the Potomac returned to Brandy Station for their winter encampment of 1863–1864, the structure itself became a casualty of war, as soldiers deconstructed it to use its red bricks for chimneys in their winter quarters.

The land on which the church stood has long been preserved, albeit bare of any physical church. But through the power of augmented reality (AR) technology, the American Battlefield Trust is now able to virtually place the structure back on the landscape, offering visitors a glimpse inside its hallowed walls for the first time since 1863.

Based on church records, first-hand accounts, images of similar period churches and a sketch of the church by Lt. Louis Henry Carpenter of the 6th U.S. Cavalry — the only surviving artistic rendition of the St. James Episcopal Church — the Trust and UK technology firm Zubr Curio were able to create graphics of the church's exterior and interior. The web-based AR model can be dropped on the very grounds where the church stood during the Civil War, and viewers can walk inside and view the upper and lower floors.

The Trust's first foray into augmented reality came in 2020 with an app placing multiple models on the Gettysburg Battlefield, such as President Abraham Lincoln delivering the Gettysburg Address. It's designed for use anywhere, letting the 16th president orate in schoolyards and backyards, although more advanced functionalities activate for those who bring the app to Gettysburg in person, as a mobile device scans the land and virtually places people and objects from the past in their precise geographic settings.

The Trust worked with partners Lumina Datamatics, an international firm with U.S. headquarters in Norwell, Mass., and Interactive Knowledge, a frequent Trust development partner based in Charlotte, N.C., to create the *Gettysburg AR Experience* app. Lumina Datamatics produced the app's visual renderings — 3D animations and interactive objects and characters, while Interactive Knowledge built the app, which works for both iOS and Android systems and is structured to expand with additional interactive scenes.

Kurt Jordan, director of Account Development at Lumina Datamatics, said the company was excited from the outset by the way the project "marries high-quality educational content and the engaging use of technology."

parts of the Gettysburg Battlefield, can now be taken out of the app and viewed separately from it using only a web browser. "More and more we'll be making our content available through a simple web browser, with no app download required," says the Trust's Chief Digital Officer Lawrence Swiader.

An AR model for Cold Harbor Tavern works the same, Swiader says. "Scan the QR code on the site's sign, and we drop the full-size tavern on the ground where it was. You can walk through the building's furnished rooms and see the rooms where travelers to the area would have gotten a cold drink, slept for the night or voted in a local election."

Although touring historic sites with a guide remains the gold standard, AR



AUGMENTED REALITY:

Preserving lost stories

Trust Chief Historian Garry Adelman, who has given hundreds of battlefield tours, agreed, "What you need to do as a battlefield guide is to drag the past forward. We know that technology provides all sorts of windows to allow enlivening of the senses so you can get a little closer to the past. And the *Gettysburg AR Experience* is one of the closest things to time travel I have yet encountered."

More recently, the Trust has worked to pull the models out of the app and offer them on a web-based platform, allowing for their use in wider applications and settings.

"What began in the app as multiple augmented models, bringing scenes to life and giving people a reason to visit various

can augment the experience, especially by demonstrating matters of scale.

At Fort Watson in South Carolina, the Trust will be offering a new AR experience, deviceless, through binoculars installed on the battlefield. Additional AR experiences and models are planned for Gettysburg, Franklin, Brandy Station and more, including for those battlefields and preservation opportunities that no longer exist.

"A lot of times, we'll talk about a battlefield that's been lost, no longer available for us to preserve," said Swiader says. "Augmented reality gives us the ability to go there and still represent that battle. It's a way of recovering history even when land preservation can't do that." ★



A Narrative Thread

GWEN SPICER: CONSERVATOR OF HISTORY

Symbolically, a flag is far more than a colorful banner and that meaning is not subject to physical deterioration. But the cloth itself can fray, stain, stretch and fade with time. Skilled artisans are necessary to extend the life of these objects that connect us to the past.

by BOB ZELLER

PHOTOGRAPHY by
DOUGLAS BACHMAN

If anyone can be said to be intimately familiar with historic military flags, it is textile conservator Gwen Spicer, who owns and operates Spicer Art Conservation, LLC from her farmstead in upstate New York. Over the course of her career, Spicer has known more than 300 such flags — dating from 1770 through the Vietnam War and even September 11 — down to their individual stitches.

During the Trust's recent trip to her studio, Spicer had a trio of flags on her workbenches from the collection of the West Point Museum, each representing vastly different eras and challenges. The oldest belonged to the 1832 Corps of Cadets and had significant damage to its unique base fabric. The flag of the 20th U.S. Colored Troops (USCT), carried in battle at Fort Blakely, Ala., the same day in April 1865 that the Army of Northern Virginia surrendered, was largely intact but with scattered vertical tears, especially among its field of painted stars. The heavily embroidered World War II flag that came from Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces experienced significant fading from light exposure during a past exhibition and required specialized mounting to ensure its future stability.

"Flags do tell stories, especially the older ones," she says. "Flags of the 20th century are mass produced, whereas flags from the 18th and 19th centuries are very individual. So, each one represents a story, and with each one there is an emotional connection to the people who owned them or have a connection to them."

For example, among the cherished, historical artifacts at the Maryland Historical Society is a regimental flag of the 4th USCT. The double-sided red, white, blue and gold flag was presented to the regiment by the African American women of Baltimore. On September 29, 1864, the banner was at the fore as the unit charged Confederate lines at the Battle of New Market Heights. When the colors went down, Sgt. Alfred B. Hilton of Co. H. didn't hesitate. He seized both the national and regimental flags and carried them forward to the inner line of the Confederate defenses until he, too, fell. His shattered lower right leg was amputated, but the wound proved mortal, and Hilton died at Fort Monroe about three weeks later.

The citation for Hilton's Medal of Honor — like four others awarded that day to Black soldiers — is explicit in its connection and devotion to the flag. But after more than a century and a half, the regimental flag was missing a large portion of the right side. And the rest of it was in extremely fragile condition, woven as it was of silk, with hand-painted lettering on the fabric. "It

THE FLAG is arguably the most significant of our national symbols. Even our national anthem is devoted to the flag in a military context, telling the story of how it still flew high above the ramparts of Fort McHenry after the battle there during the War of 1812. Such historic banners visibly bear the signs of conflict — bullet holes, vestiges of dirt and smoke accumulated in the field — as well as the ravages of time, and they resonate with us because we can conjure in our own hearts the devotion our forefathers had for them.



In her decades-long career, Gwen Spicer has pioneered innovative display techniques. Her book *Magnetic Mounting Systems for Museums & Cultural Institutions* is an essential reference in the field.

had many areas of tearing and shattering,” Spicer said of its condition upon arrival.

With each flag she handles, Spicer’s first step is to develop a conservation plan that takes into account the flag’s construction and condition — as well as the curatorial needs of the owning museum. The work is a blend of art and science; careful stitches combined with an understanding of how different fabrics react to cleaning agents or how forces like gravity and UV light will play out across years or decades of display. Often, mounts must be custom designed and fabricated to exacting specifications. And yet, as unique as each historic flag may be, the conservation of most of them starts out with careful but thorough removal of dust and particles.

She does repair work when appropriate, but the primary aim of conservation is not to replace what’s missing, but to preserve what is still left.

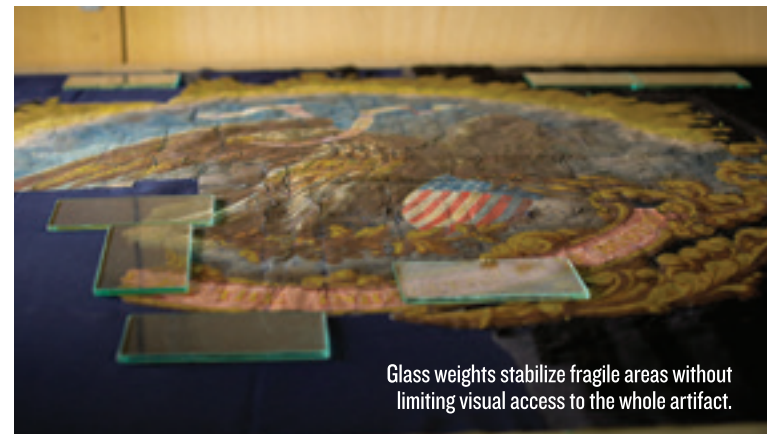
“Vacuuming is a pretty standard first step,” Spicer said. “It is a small, hand-held vacuum with a range of suctions, but most things need to be vacuumed with a low suction. And I use a vacuum with a HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter, so that the dust doesn’t get redeposited or circulated within the studio. And there’s a technique in the vacuuming. You want a motion that goes up and down versus side to side because you don’t want to add surface abrasion while you’re vacuuming.”

If necessary and if the flag won’t be harmed, it also receives a wet cleaning, often with nothing more than pure, distilled water. “Over the time that I’ve been treating things, I have tended to use less and less detergent and have learned to just use the power of water to clean things,” she said. “Because oftentimes, I’ve found that artifacts have already been cleaned in the past and sometimes have residue of detergent and soap already in them that hasn’t been fully washed out.”

Over her many years of experience, Spicer has helped develop tech-



Painted stars and verbiage show that the flag of the 68th USCT dates to late in the Civil War.



Glass weights stabilize fragile areas without limiting visual access to the whole artifact.



Vibrant colors and exceptional embroidery mark the WWII flag.

niques and strategies that have become standard in art conservation, if only because the field was in its early stages when she first became interested in it in the 1980s. As now understood and practiced, conservation contrasts with restoration, which might seamlessly re-create elements that have been lost. Instead, while Spicer may make small repairs when appropriate, she focuses on preserving what still remains, presenting it in the best possible light and maximizing its longevity.

But the number one rule is this: Do nothing that cannot be reversed.

Despite best intentions at the time, the damage done by past treatments can be dramatic. Another USCT flag Spicer conserved — a small, framed silk flag of the 26th USCT, owned by a small library in western upstate New York — had been adhered to a laminated board with an excessive amount of glue.

Spicer had to carefully remove several layers of the paperboard

to reach the base layer. That final layer, closest to the flag, presented extreme challenges because of the likelihood of removing pieces of silk from the flag while trying to separate it from the glue and paper.

“That was not easy,” she said. “It really was not easy. The adhesive that they used was super thick and it was not soluble.” She was able to remove a vast majority of the paper, but “small areas were determined to stay” and had to be left attached to the flag, she wrote on her blog, “Inside the Conservator’s Studio.”

The conservation of most flags also involves protecting them behind UV-filtered Plexiglas. “Depending on the material, whether it is wool, cotton or silk, and depending on the amount of loss or its level of deterioration, a common technique to stabilize flags is to encapsulate

evident the meaning they carry remains across generations. “When I was working at the (National Park Service) Harpers Ferry Center decades ago for a renovation of the Gettysburg Visitor Center, it was interesting when other Park Service staff visited how they related to the flags we were working on,” she said. Working on the 4th USCT flag further sparked a personal interest in the flags of those regiments, with extensive research to find out how many still survive. So far, she has found and reproduced 26 USCT flags on her blog, although several can be shown only as black-and-white images because that is all that survives.

No matter how many remarkable pieces she has conserved, the thrill of getting to touch the artifacts remains for Spicer each time



Spicer has cared for more than 300 historic flags in her decades-long career, with more entering her studio each year.

them between two shear layers. And the stitching to hold the layers together goes along the seams and in the areas of loss,” she said. The flag is then secured behind the Plexiglas in an aluminum frame. Custom frames showcase unique attributes of individual flags; the 4th USCT flag with the double-sided canton necessitated a mount with a Plexiglas window on the reverse so both sides can be seen.

Spicer’s love of textiles began in childhood with a beloved grandmother who taught her to sew and quilt. It was married to art and artifacts during a high school job in a gallery when, occasionally, a piece or object would arrive broken. “Somebody was hired to fix it, and I was like, ‘Wow! That’s the job I want. You can actually *handle* the art.’”

Although her technical expertise extends to all kinds of fabrics, from tapestries to uniforms to linens, flags have become an increasing specialty and passion because of how

she begins a new project or watches a visitor encounter her tangible type of history. Although she spends her days examining individual threads with a magnifying glass, she finds time to step back and wonder at how those fragile fibers can be bound into something that can last for generations — and carry such symbolic might.

“I may not be able to stop time,” she says, acknowledging that fabrics will and must deteriorate. “But I want to slow down what it does.”

Bob Zeller is one of the country’s leading authorities on Civil War photography and is co-founder and president of the non-profit Center for Civil War Photography. He has published 20 books, including Fighting the Second Civil War: A History of Battlefield Preservation and the Emergence of the Civil War Trust.

Go inside Gwen Spicer’s studio where she works to protect tangible links to the past





SILENT WITNESSES

NOT ALL WITNESSES to the past are made of flesh and blood. Some are rooted in the ground, with bulking trunks and crowns consisting not of gold and jewels but of branches and leaves.

by COLLEEN CHESLAK-POULTON

W

ITNESS TREES ARE THOSE FLORA that have withstood the test of time — persisting amidst moments that forever changed the trajectory of a nation and its people. Often, they are associated with tragedy and hardship, as silent sentinels that stood by soldiers in the whirl of conflict or provided them cover and shade when a fairly serene second could be sought.

Many of these time-honored trees remain scattered across historic landscapes, providing context for the life-altering events that flitted across the soil they are tied to. And while trees cannot be firmly dated until the rings of their core are counted, foresters can also estimate the age of a tree by considering the average growth factor of its particular species, which are defined and accessible figures. The formula, developed by the International Society of Arboriculture, is simple: multiply the tree's diameter* by its species' growth factor. For example, if you wanted to approximate the age of a white oak tree with a 20-inch diameter, you'd multiply 20 by the average growth factor of white oaks, which is five. You'd find that your white oak is roughly 100 years old.

Today's preserved battlefields, varying in the types and degrees of flora and fauna that cover their ground, create opportunities for the public to admire and learn from wartime witness trees. While the world around these towering guards moved fast and furious, they stood still, soaking it all in.

Witness Tree
Cedar Mountain
Battlefield
Culpeper
County, Va.
JENNIFER
MICHAEL

*Diameter = a straight line segment that passes through the center of the circle and whose endpoints lie on the circle's edge.

BRANDY STATION, Va.

THESE TWO TALL TREES stand upon Fleetwood Hill — the most contested, camped upon and trekked about hallowed ground in the nation. Now, at more than 150 years old, these wooden witnesses on the hill's northern terminus saw the strategic location covered with soldiers in blue and gray as early as the spring of 1862, when Confederate Gen. Joseph Johnston's men passed over and camped on its slopes. Several other soldiers followed suit — the grounds experienced a near constant flow of hard-fought actions and dense troop occupation as armies vied for control of the "Rappahannock River Line." Situated three miles southwest of the river and touching the Orange and Alexandria

Railroad on its southern base, Fleetwood Hill was a magnet for wartime activity.

Of the activities that unfurled across the land, mounted combat was frequent. In fact, Fleetwood's southern end saw more of it than anywhere else in the country. During the June 1863 Battle of Brandy Station, more than 7,000 troopers fought for control of this portion of land in the largest cavalry engagement fought on American soil and beginning of the Gettysburg Campaign. The history of Fleetwood Hill and beyond will be a primary focus as the American Battlefield Trust works alongside the Commonwealth of Virginia to establish Culpeper Battlefields State Park, set to open in June 2024.

Brandy Station Battlefield
Culpeper County, Va.
JENNIFER MICHAEL



Cedar Mountain Battlefield
Culpeper County, Va.
JENNIFER MICHAEL

CEDAR MOUNTAIN, Va.

AT CEDAR MOUNTAIN, you can find oak trees that are estimated to predate the birth of the nation. Two oaks are located

near the road heading northwest from General Winder Road near the Crittenden Gate. Another, a chestnut oak, is situated near the

old homesite of the Throckmorton family. With a diameter of 14 inches, it is estimated the tree could be around the likes of 300 years old. Meanwhile, a pin oak near the

Stonewall Brigade Monument is larger in diameter but younger in age than the chestnut oak... all thanks to the different species' growth factors!



Eutaw Springs Battlefield
Orangeburg County, S.C.
SARAH NELL BLACKWELL

EUTAW SPRINGS, S. C.

ON A ROUGHLY four-acre tract of land saved by the American Battlefield Trust — in collaboration with its partner on The Liberty Trail, the South Carolina Battleground Preservation Trust (SCBPT) — stands a rather spectacular, centuries-old oak tree. Surrounded by modern features, the imposing tree saw the nation and its people transform through circumstances ranging from shifting ideologies to economic rollercoasters to the unease of warfare. In fact, the oak witnessed soldiers toil over the fate of a new nation during the Battle of Eutaw Springs on September 8, 1781.

After defeat at Camden, S.C., in August 1780, General George Washington appointed Nathanael Greene his new southern commander that following October; and, as it turns out, Greene was just what the doctor ordered. He delivered hefty doses of strategy, tiring General Charles Lord Cornwallis' forces into North Carolina, leaving Greene to reconquer the South Carolina backcountry. While

driving the British from the backcountry and toward the Carolina coast in 1781, Greene's pursuit of British Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Stewart led to the September clash at Eutaw Springs.

While fighting initially erupted a little over three miles west of the Trust-saved tract during the morning of September 8 — when Greene's column surprised a British patrol and foraging party — significant maneuvers and combat unfurled upon this land later in the day. All the while, a young oak tree stood as witness to a well-fought battle, after which the Continental Congress recognized General Greene's exceptional service with one of only seven gold medals given during the war. From a quick glance at the towering flora, one would never know!

With the SCBPT as the owner and steward of the land, this witness tree is in the process of standing within a restored landscape — one free of modern structures and instead reminiscent of September 1781.★

Colleen Cheslak-Poulton serves as senior communications associate and an assistant editor of Hallowed Ground at the Trust. She holds a master's degree in public history from American University.

< This summertime demolition of a modern home and associated outbuildings from the newly preserved site now affords this unique living artifact the chance to shine.



OTHER WELL-KNOWN WITNESSES

“MAXWELL SYCAMORE” AT VALLEY FORGE, Pa.

As sycamore trees made very poor firewood, troops often left them standing in favor of other arboreal options. This sycamore tree is located off the beaten path near the home that was used for Henry Knox's headquarters.

“LAFAYETTE SYCAMORE” AT BRANDYWINE BATTLEFIELD, Pa.

Approximately 100 years old during the battle, legend grew that the Marquis de Lafayette's battle wounds were treated under this specimen. It is confirmed that the tree witnessed a Hessian advance and a colonial retreat. After the battle's conclusion, British forces camped here.

“MANASSAS WHITE OAK” AT MANASSAS BATTLEFIELD, Va.

This tree sits near Stone Bridge and witnessed both the First and Second Battles of Manassas. A photo taken by George N. Barnard in March 1862 shows the tree and the decimated landscape, including the ruins of the bridge.

“BURNSIDE SYCAMORE” AT ANTIETAM BATTLEFIELD, Md.

This is perhaps the most recognized witness tree at Antietam, and more than 150 years later, remains an important feature in the interpretation of the site. The tree has survived hurricanes and interference from the bridge itself, but it remains a prominent photographic landmark.

“SICKLES OAK” AT GETTYSBURG BATTLEFIELD, Pa.

Adjacent to the Trostle Farm at Gettysburg stands a swamp white oak that is said to have witnessed Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Sickles, commander of the Union 3rd Corps, being struck in the leg by a cannonball on July 2, 1863.



Death by Fire

THE REBIRTH OF THE REEL FARM

by MELISSA A. WINN
PHOTO by MATT BRANT

A

S ITS CORE MISSION, the American Battlefield Trust looks to the landscape as a primary source that can teach us about the past in a meaningful way. Occasionally, core battlefield properties contain historic structures that we must also steward and safeguard to ensure they remain in good condition. But a special property at Antietam saw us take on the stories that a set of ruins could tell.

BATTLE SCARS

Around noon on September 17, 1862, what had been a dismal but not uncommonly grisly scene of war became dreadful and incomprehensible...when a barn filled with wounded set ablaze. Located on the battlefield, less than a mile from the infamous sunken road, the barn belonged to David Reel.

In the early 1800s, when, his father, Jacob Reel settled in Sharpsburg, Md., and

bought up several hundred acres of farmland to tend and call home to his family, he could not have foreseen the horrors of war those lands would bear witness to on that dreadful day in September 1862.

After Jacob and his wife, Elizabeth, died in 1844 and 1845, respectively, their estate was left to their four children, Henry, Samuel, David and Nancy. Henry received a standalone parcel of 117 acres to the west of Sharpsburg, about a mile from the Reels' main property, which was divided among the remaining siblings.

Samuel Reel took over a 90-plus-acre parcel north of the family homestead, and David, the eldest brother, the remainder. Nancy and her husband farmed a corner of the land bordering Samuel and David's farms on what was known as Green Hill.

As Federal and Confederate troops converged on Sharpsburg, the families of Samuel and David Reel and their sister Nancy likely fled to safety at their brother Henry's home. By 7:30 a.m. on September 17, Rebels from Stonewall Jackson's division under

the command of Gen. John R. Jones had fallen back across the Reel Farm to regroup. David's barn was used as a first aid station and evacuation site to move Confederate wounded to before transport to hospitals.

Sharpsburg resident and historian John P. Smith was 17 at the time of the battle. He remembered a gruesome scene, "While staying at Mr. Reels I saw a number of wounded and dead Confederates brought into the yard; some were having their limbs amputated, others horribly mangled were dying. One man in particular I shall never forget. His entire abdomen had been torn and mangled with a piece of exploded shell. He uttered piercing and heart rending cries and besought those who stood by for God's sake to kill him and thus end his sufferings. Death came to his relief in a short time and he was hastily buried in a shallow grave dug in the orchard nearby."

John Bell Hood's division withdrew to the farm after fierce fighting in the now-infamous Cornfield and East Woods. At the same time, Confederate reinforce-

"The barn had been fired, and some of our wounded were burned to death."



The original barn after the Civil War. NPS

ments marched across the Reel farms toward the West Woods and the Sunken Road, while Col. Stephen D. Lee's artillery battalion redeployed in Reel's cornfield overlooking

the Hagerstown Pike, hoping to repel a Federal advance.

Writing to early battle historian Ezra Carman in 1898, Capt. Henry W. Addison of the 7th South Carolina Regiment said they were "charging right over the crest of the hill (a green cornfield on our right) where we found the Federals, who had fallen back under it, with innumerable Cannon and numbers of lines of Infantry ready and awaiting us. So rapid was the Federal fire of grape, Canister and Cannon balls of large size together with their Infantry fire, that we lost in Killed and wounded about three fourths of our number in fifteen minutes. I was shot down by a grape shot. In hobbling back to the rear, I crossed back over a brick or stone wall of the Public Road, near where we turned into line of Battle to the Right, to a Barn, I think of brick, where were numbers of our wounded [were]..."

"The fire of the Federal Batteries on this point was terrific after making several futile efforts, in the short intervals of their guns to cool, I finally got off some hundred of yards toward the Town, I looked back, and saw that the Barn or building had been fired, and suppose some of our wounded were burned to death," Addison wrote.

Sgt. George W. Beale of the 9th Virginia Cavalry later remembered, "A percussion shell from one of the [Federal] batteries, on the sloping hill beyond the Antietam, striking a ledge of rock close by, was exploded, much to our peril and that of the barn, which presently took fire over the wounded men, and to the grim horror of the battle, added those of its flame and smoke."

The hay-filled barn ignited instantly, burning to the stone foundation.

RESTORING THE REEL FARM

The American Battlefield Trust, with the help of its members and donors, has been able to purchase the Samuel Reel Farm and the bulk of the David Reel Farm, taking ownership of a historic house and barn

— built on the foundation of the one that burned in battle. Transforming the present-day barn to the wartime barn's appearance and utility was a primary goal when



The restoration of the interior of the Reel Barn in process in 2014. KATHY ROBERTSON

the American Battlefield Trust began restoration on the Reel Farm property in 2014.

"The barn was in bad, bad shape," says Matt George, who spent 11 years as the Trust's senior manager for land stewardship before retiring this autumn. "It was about 35 percent original and about to collapse."

The Trust hired a company to evaluate the buildings and create a plan for restoration, but the one-million-dollar price tag was prohibitive. Instead, we purchased the builder's plans and worked with a preservation-minded, family-owned company that specializes in this very sort of work. The family also opted to lease the land for use as a working farm for five years after restoration.

"We re-planked the entire barn and replaced portions of the roof that needed it," George says. "The corner of the northeastern wall had to be basically rebuilt because it had collapsed."

The Trust was able to source stone very similar to the original foundation from a local company, and "today you can hardly tell where they rebuilt the stone corner," George says. "That's the best part of this job."

The house on the Reel Farm property was about 80 percent original but had had very little work done to it since an addition was constructed in the 1920s. Major renovations were required to make it a livable structure. Most of that work was completed by 2020, but some is still ongoing.

Today, a different family rents the full property, using most of the land as pasture for some two dozen cattle and retaining about 80 acres to grow corn and sorghum.

The Reel Farm property is not currently open to the public. While a portion of it lies within the authorized boundary of Antietam National Battlefield, the majority is not, and it would require an act of Congress to adjust that line so the Trust could pursue a transfer to the National Park Service. ★

Melissa A. Winn is a writer, editor, photographer, and collector of Civil War photographs. She is the Trust's marketing manager and an assistant editor of Hallowed Ground.

FACING SARAH OSBORN BENJAMIN

Living to 114, this “Revolutionary” woman was captured on camera

IN THE FOURTH GRADE, Kyle Freiberger went “a little overboard” on his family tree project. Over the phone, his maternal grandmother supplied a long list of names, then on his next visit, the matriarch pulled him aside and showed him family heirlooms that had been stored away in an old cedar chest. Via a tintype image, Kyle came face to face with his sixth great-grandmother, Sarah Benjamin, his Revolutionary-era ancestor who survived long enough to have her stern visage recorded on camera.

“Some people could say I got a little bit of an addiction after that first discovery with my grandparents,” says Kyle, who has cultivated an extensive Ancestry profile for the ensuing 15 years. “At some point, I found an online copy of an 1850s or 1860s article about Sarah. It was one of the first times that I corroborated what my grandparents had told me — until then it had been ‘trust me that this is true.’”

But it wasn’t just this article, which detailed Sarah’s extraordinary exchange of gifts



Dive deeper into Sarah's story here!



with Queen Victoria, that demonstrates her “main character energy.” We also have the extraordinary pension application that Sarah submitted and, later, presented to the Wayne County Court (Pa.) in 1837.

In her testimony, Sarah recalled her wartime experiences at length, including two encounters with George Washington. The journey began shortly after she married Aaron Osborn in the winter of 1780 and followed him into service only after she was assured that he’d be placed on commissary guard. Her first season with the Continentals was spent at the fortress at West Point, New York, from which she witnessed battle but remained in camp washing and mending soldiers’ clothing.

Her first encounter with General Washington came about 40 miles south of West Point — at Kingsbridge, where Sarah had joined her husband on sentinel duty on a rather cold night, wearing his overcoat and carrying his gun. The general saw her and questioned who put her on the post, to which she responded, “Them who had a right to, Sir.”

Sarah later moved south with the army to the shores of Virginia, where she saw the Continental Army and their French allies bombard Yorktown. Witnessing soldiers suffering in the trenches there, she acted. Sarah led the women in camp to prepare beef, bread and coffee, and delivered it directly to the trenches ... even amid British artillery fire. It was during one of these deliveries that Washington inquired if she was not afraid of the enemy fire. She supposedly replied, “The bullets will never cheat the gallows.”

If her fiery spirit was not already obvious enough, Sarah’s 1858 obituary claimed that “her temperament was such that she could not be an idle spectator of events.” She was so insistent on witnessing the growth of a nation that she lived to be 114 years old!

Sarah eagerly recounted her experiences during the War for Independence throughout her long life. She was a ripe 87 years old when she testified on behalf of her pension application. And she did so convincingly, securing a pension reflecting the service of both her veteran husbands (she married again after Osborn left her and their children) — plus one for her own wartime service.

The accessible nature of these detailed sources has made Sarah an appealing subject for not only her family, but for historians as well.

The American Battlefield Trust and Daughters of the American Revolution were pulled toward Sarah’s story when creating the *American Revolution Experience* — a digital exhibit that examines the lives of men and women who witnessed the dawn of a new nation. ★

HIGH SCHOOLERS READY TO CHAMPION FOR HISTORY

Introducing the American Battlefield Trust’s 2023–2024 Youth Leadership Team



WITH FALL SETTLING IN and a new school year underway, students nationwide have reignited their educational journeys. But for 10 high school students powered with a passion for history and preservation, it will be a year like no other. The American Battlefield Trust is pleased to welcome its 2023–2024 Youth Leadership Team (YLT) cohort, 10 students who will serve as the youth face and voice of the organization while embarking on an advocacy journey in their communities and on a national level.

This year’s roster includes: Maurya Bonu, 17, from Illinois; Alex Chayriques, 16, from Massachusetts; Daniel Gleason, 17, from Connecticut; Isabella Hernandez, 15, from California; Nathan Mercer, 17, from Georgia; Wynton Nama, 17, from Texas; Tanisha Parikh, 16, from Texas; Lila Phipps, 15, from Arizona; Leo Tadikonda, 16, from New York; and Yujin Wu, 16, from New York.

As a YLT member, each participant will conduct research, map out plans and eventually execute a project that promotes historic preservation, history education and historic site visitation. From arranging guided tours at local battlefields to creating a Civil War–focused documentary, each project will aim to foster appreciation for our nation’s heritage in their corner of the nation.

The cohort, selected through a competitive national application process, began their year with a two-day orientation during which they underwent training on the Trust’s multifaceted mission. Led by Trust staff, students learned about land transaction processes, interacting with the media, petitioning support from public officials and more.

YLT participant Tanisha Parikh, from Katy, Texas, chose to apply to this program because she recognized the opportunity to make a difference in her community. To Parikh, historic preservation is “a way to ensure the future for generations to come. By preserving battlefields, we are securing a future where individuals will be able to understand their legacy, allowing them to cherish their backgrounds and heritage.”

Yujin Wu, from Flushing, New York, was drawn to the Trust because it “not only recognizes the importance of younger voices, but [also] provides opportunities for us to lay our hands on the mission.” For her project, Wu plans to create a documentary highlighting hallowed battlefields in New York State by interviewing historians and representatives of local historical organizations.

Other planned projects for the upcoming academic year include a clean-up at a local battlefield, a museum exhibit detailing local stories from soldiers who served in the War of 1812, a platform to expand stories from local Native Americans and Texas during the Civil War, adding interpretation signs to local battlefields, an exhibition profiling individuals who fought in the Revolutionary War and more.

The growing community of YLT alumni was also proud to welcome the 2022–2023 cohort into its ranks this summer as they completed their capstone projects. Congratulations to: Addison Anderson of Ohio, Jacob Bates of Connecticut, Ella Dieterlen of Indiana, Ana Kangsumrith of Alabama, David Mackowski of Texas, Grace Schroeder of Oregon, Colin Shen of Texas, Colter Sienkiewicz of Montana and Sriya Tallapragada of New Jersey!

The Youth Leadership Team is supported by the contributions of the Pipkin Charitable Foundation. To learn more about the Trust’s Youth Leadership Team, visit www.battlefields.org/ylt.



THE CAMPAIGN FOR HISTORIC TRADES

*A partnership program to preserve
the art of preservation*



WHAT WOULD Antietam Battlefield be without the Dunker Church? Manassas Battlefield without the Stone House? Gettysburg without Lee's Headquarters?

The preservation of a battlefield is a far greater task than merely staving off

its paving over or the development of modern structures on its land; it also requires the preservation of its historical structures, many of which have become iconic placeholders and important storytellers of the history that occurred where they stand.

But historical structures need specialized care, and the number of qualified craftworkers skilled in the trades to perform this work has been in decline for decades. To fill this shortfall, in 2019, Preservation Maryland and the National Park Service's Historic Preservation Training Center partnered to launch the Campaign for Historic Trades.

"One of the challenges with our restoration trades and work being done to save historic structures is that there are few apprenticeships aligned to those. If you want to become a carpenter, there's a pathway for that, but if you want to become a restoration carpenter or a preservation carpenter, there's no registered apprenticeship for that," says Nicholas Redding, executive director of Preservation Maryland. "We're now in the process in the Campaign of building out registered apprenticeships with the U.S. Department of Labor so that if somebody wants to become a window technician and restore historic windows, there's a clear pathway to doing that."

Established in 1977, the Historic Preservation Training Center uses historic preservation projects within the national parks or at partner facilities as vehicles for teaching preservation philosophy and building crafts, technology and project management skills. The Center also develops educational courses that fulfill the competency requirements of service employees in the career fields of historic preservation skills, risk management, maintenance, and planning, design and construction.

While the Campaign was launched to expand the Center's



apprenticeship program, it has since grown to include identifying ways to increase access to the trades. The Campaign's goals are to:

- Register apprenticeships with the U.S. Department of Labor and state labor offices.
- Create open education training resources available online in English and Spanish.
- Work with stakeholders to support preservation trades programs, associations and businesses.
- Develop statewide and national historic trades training opportunities that are accessible to all.
- Promote and recruit for the National Park Service's preservation and trades programs.
- Advocate for historic trades training.
- Lead the national movement to strengthen and expand historic trades careers.

In 2021, the Campaign commissioned a landmark analysis of the historic trades labor force in the United States. This first-of-its-kind labor analysis sought to identify how many people are working in the field and how many jobs and how many new entrants into the field are needed.

"That number is huge," Redding says. "We need over 10,000 people a year entering the field of historic trades to keep at par nationally with where we are at right now."

People think of historic trades when they go to a battlefield and see a historic structure, Redding says, "But it impacts places on main streets, too. It impacts the places where we go and eat while visiting Gettysburg or Antietam."

He adds, "The structures on the battlefields are not only evocative today, but they [also] were landmarks upon which commanders made decisions and certainly landmarks upon which people remember the battlefield. They certainly remember the white house or the red barn. They are critically important."

The National Park Service and the National Preservation Training Center work to train individuals at park units, like Gettysburg, Antietam and the C&O Canal, and through these training program they have worked on and touched numerous historic structures on these battlefields.

"A really good example of that and illustrative of how powerful it can be within the public's mind is Lee's Headquarters at Gettysburg," Redding says. "Lee's Headquarters would not be the story that it is were it not for the structure itself and the opportunity to feel or put your hands on a place."

"Preservation requires eternal vigilance," Redding says, adding that the buildings can be one of the more challenging aspects of battlefield preservation.

"The preservation of the structures requires a lot of engagement and long-term support and making sure the hands are there to do the work," he says. "Restoration without the hands to do it is just good intentions." ★

MEET THE COLOR BEARERS

The Key to Our Success



AMERICAN Battlefield Trust Color Bearers are the undisputed leaders in this nation's battlefield preservation movement. Just as the heroic Color Bearers of the Civil War distinguished themselves on the battlefield with their courage, valor and dedication, our Color Bearers distinguish themselves by their extraordinary commitment to the mission of saving our nation's most hallowed ground.

Color Bearer membership requires an additional, unrestricted gift of \$1,000 or more that goes above and beyond any battlefield-specific donations. Many choose to make this donation via monthly installments, rather than as a lump sum. These important membership dues act as a "ready reserve" fund the Board of Trustees can utilize to move quickly to save a piece of hallowed ground. Moreover, they pay for important functions like staff salaries, rent and utilities and the postage that brought this magazine to your door.

The vast majority of Color Bearers also give to many property acquisition appeals, and it is this level of "above-and-beyond generosity" that is worthy of special recognition. While representing less than 3 percent of our total membership, our 1,500 Color Bearers donate nearly 50 percent of all the gifts we receive, year after year.

Those listed on the following pages are the backbone of the American Battlefield Trust. If you are ready to join their ranks, visit www.battlefields.org/color-bearers

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Both images from the Annual Conference
Nashville, Tenn.
MIKE TALPLACIDO

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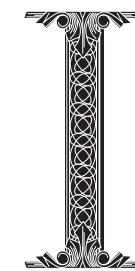
The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (NSSAR or SAR) was founded in 1889. SAR is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and promoting education for our future generations. SAR members volunteer untold hours of service each year in their local communities. SAR is very active in assisting veterans. We proudly assist teachers with living history interpreters, lesson planning materials, and reenactment events for school-aged youth to attend.

- ★Remembering Our Past...By honoring those who served or assisted the efforts for Independence during the Revolutionary War.
- ★Promoting Core Values...By inspiring communities and institutions with more profound reverence for the principles of the government founded by our forefathers.
- ★Shaping Future Generations...By educating our youth about the founding of our nation and American ideals and traditions.

Having an ancestral connection to our nation's revolutionary era, the SAR is a collegial organization whose mission is to further the founding ideals. As a hereditary society, our members are connected through a shared sense of honor, privilege, and responsibility to perpetuate the "cause" of the founders to create an independent nation of free people.



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IN THE DECADES after the Civil War, Congress expanded the Federal pension program to provide coverage for hundreds of thousands of veterans and their survivors and dependents, most notably widows and orphans. The venerable Montgomery Meigs was tasked with designing and creating the building to house the more than 1,500 staffers required to administer the new benefit system and the pension files to record it. Meigs sought to pay homage to the honorable lives the building served with a grand Italian Renaissance design. The red-brick exterior includes more than 15 million bricks laid between 1882 and its completion in 1887. The interior central atrium boasts eight of the largest Corinthian columns in the world, 75 feet tall with an eight-foot-diameter base and made from nearly 70,000 bricks painted to look like marble. Open arcaded galleries line the perimeter walls and lead to offices.

The building's deviation from the standard government design garnered many critics and even General Philip Sheridan is said to have quipped, "Too bad it's fireproof." Meigs was undeterred, saying, "Those who live in it appear to be content with it, and I believe that its continued use will justify the theory of its design and construction. No dark, ill ventilated corridors depreciate the health of those who work in it or depress their spirits. Every working room is lighted from windows on two sides. There is not a dark corner in the building."

Meigs' most notable gesture of reverence for his fellow Civil War veterans in the building's design is the 1,200-foot long

frieze that marches over 1,300 figures around the perimeter of the building. Sculpted by Caspar Buberl, it includes infantry, navy, artillery, cavalry, and medical components. Meigs insisted that a black teamster, who "must be a negro, a plantation slave, freed by war," be included on a quartermaster-themed panel. The figure stands in prominence over the building's west entrance.

In the 1920s the Pension Bureau merged into the Veterans Administration and the General Accounting Office took over the building in 1926, followed by a string of other federal agencies. In 1985 it became the permanent home of the National Building Museum, hosting exhibits about architecture and placemaking and home to an archive of architectural blueprints, models, and artifacts, including a tea set given to Meigs by some of his former staff, several old workers' shoes, and a portion of a wooden beam signed by Meigs.★

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