



THE OLD LINER



Historic Chatham Reopens June 6 After Major Rehabilitation Project Rehabilitation improves safety, protects collections and enhances visitor access to one of Fredericksburg's most significant historic sites



A summer evening at Chatham.
NPS Photo

Beth Parnicza. NPS, June 3, 2026

FREDERICKSBURG, Va. — Visitors will once again be able to tour historic Chatham beginning June 6, 2026, following a major rehabilitation project that improves safety, preserves the historic house and protects its collections for future generations.

The National Park Service closed Chatham in August 2024 to install a modern fire-suppression system and complete extensive interior repairs. The project included repairs to historic plaster, upgraded building infrastructure, interior restoration work and improvements that better safeguard the building and its collections.

“Chatham offers visitors a unique opportunity to connect with the people, places and events that shaped our nation,” said **acting Superintendent Melissa Cobern**. “These improvements will help

preserve this historic landmark, protect its collections and ensure visitors can continue to experience and learn from its rich history for years to come.”

Built in 1771 by enslaved and free laborers, Chatham has been home to many people who experienced major chapters of U.S. history. These include: the American Revolution, a slave revolt, the Civil War and the self-emancipation of thousands of enslaved people, Reconstruction and the Colonial Revival movement. During the Civil War, United States forces used the site as both a headquarters and field hospital. In later years, Chatham became a private estate, known for its formal gardens designed by landscape architect Ellen Biddle Shipman. This summer, Chatham will welcome visitors Thursday through Monday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The parking area and grounds gate will be open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The grounds will remain open from sunrise to sunset.

www.nps.gov

About the park. *Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park includes the sites of four major battles spanning eighteen crucial months of the Civil War. The battles caused more than 100,000 casualties. The constant presence of armies left Fredericksburg and the surrounding landscape devastated and ended bondage for thousands of enslaved people in the region. Learn more at www.nps.gov/frsp, and on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.*



THE OLD LINER



Booker T. Washington National Monument to Commemorate 161st Anniversary of Emancipation and Juneteenth

Abbi Smithmyer, NPS, May 26, 2026

Hardy, Va.—Booker T. Washington National Monument will commemorate the 161st anniversary of the emancipation of Booker T. Washington with special anniversary programming, musical performances and activities on June 19-21, 2026.

This commemorative event begins on Friday, June 19, with a series of guided programs and activities that highlight Washington’s enslaved childhood on the Burroughs plantation and the importance of emancipation to Washington and to the nation.

On Saturday, June 20, bring lawn chairs and blankets to enjoy the day-long Celebration of Freedom Gospel Concert, which will begin at 11 a.m. Performers include Michael Boone, Sonny Brown Xperience, The Napper Singers, Perkins & EnVision, Larnell Starkey & The Spiritual Seven Gospel Singers, Pastor Milton Hardy Jr., and the Joy Bells. Food vendors and family-friendly activities will also be available.

The event concludes on Sunday, June 21 with a series of guided programs and presentations that discuss the importance of freedom and honor the life and legacy of Booker T. Washington.

All programs are free and open to the public but may be subject to change. For a detailed schedule of events and additional information, please visit www.nps.gov/bowa or contact Booker T. Washington National Monument at (540) 682-0173.

—NPS—

Booker T. Washington National Monument preserves the plantation where Washington was born into slavery in 1856 and where he and his family lived until their emancipation at the end of the Civil War in 1865. He is known as an educator who guided the Tuskegee Institute, now known as Tuskegee University, as well as an orator, author and leader in the African American community. Learn more at www.nps.gov/bowa.

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National Battlefield Moves Forward with Visitor Center Fort Donelson



A 3D rendering of the Fort Donelson Visitor Center

NPS, May 26, 2026

DOVER, Tenn. — The National Park Service will resume rehabilitation of the Fort Donelson Visitor Center this



THE OLD LINER

summer, advancing efforts to improve accessibility, safety and visitor services at Fort Donelson National Battlefield while preserving one of the park's most historically significant buildings. The NPS has awarded a contract to National Contracting Services to carry out the work.

The visitor center is a significant Mission 66-era structure whose unique architectural character reflects an important period in National Park Service design. The NPS has invested considerable funding, time, and expertise into rehabilitating this facility and remains fully committed to its completion.

Approximately half of the project work is already completed. Previous contracting efforts, begun in 2015, represent a separate chapter in the visitor center's rehabilitation history. The current work focuses on completing the rehabilitation using an updated, carefully assessed scope that reflects the building's needs after years of partial construction. This approach allows the NPS to move forward with clarity and purpose, ensuring the project advances efficiently and with renewed consistency while honoring the structure's significance and the community's expectations.

The NPS will continue to share updates on the rehabilitation of the visitor center at Fort Donelson through the park website, news releases and public briefings.

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National Park Service Announces Availability of Timed-Entry Tickets



for New Lincoln Memorial Undercroft Experience Beginning May 26

NCR Communications, May 22, 2026

Washington – The National Park Service announced today that timed-entry tickets for the new Lincoln Memorial undercroft experience will become available online beginning at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, May 26, in advance of the facility's public opening on June 25.

Advance tickets are available 30 days prior to visit on [recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov), or by calling 877-444-6777. Individuals may reserve up to six tickets per transaction. Tickets are free of charge, though there is a \$1.00 service fee per reservation. Starting June 25, free, same-day tickets will be distributed daily beginning at 8:45 a.m. at the Korean War Veterans Memorial kiosk on Daniel Chester French Drive, just south of the Lincoln Memorial. Supplies are limited and demand is expected to be high, especially on weekends and during peak visitation periods.

The Lincoln Memorial undercroft is a new, 15,000 square foot exhibit area which will introduce visitors to a dramatic, previously unseen space beneath the memorial. This cavernous structural chamber contains a soaring grid of concrete columns that support the memorial above and offers a striking view of the engineering that made the iconic monument possible. The experience will feature interactive displays



and a multimedia presentation that explores how the memorial's meaning has evolved over the last century.

For more information,
visit nps.gov/linc or Recreation.gov.

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Civil War Veterans and Their Monuments

By Dr. Brian Matthew Jordan, ABT



Veterans of the 4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment at their monument in the Wheatfield at Gettysburg, at which the monument was unveiled June 12, 1889. Jeff Kowalis Collection

On September 14, 1887, 40 survivors of the 107th Ohio Volunteer Infantry gathered atop Blocher's Knoll, the deadly perch they attempted to defend on the first afternoon of the Battle of Gettysburg. Bedecked with tasseled ribbons and bronze medals, the aging veterans returned to dedicate the slab of Westerly blue granite that Boston stoneworkers shaped into a regimental monument. A quarter-century before, packed into the tip of a sharp salient on this forlorn rise, the Buckeyes had suffered horrific losses. Defiant knots of men continued to fight as they fell back — first through the campus of the old Adams County Alms House, and then through the borough's confused streets. Fewer than 200 formed up

THE OLD LINER



that evening behind a low, stone fence atop East Cemetery Hill. There, the next evening, the veterans realized a redemption of sorts when they captured the colors of the 8th Louisiana, turned back one of the most feared rebel brigades, and, in a hand-to-hand fight, defended the anchor of the federal line. Gettysburg was a tale of two extremes for the 107th Ohio.

The Buckeyes made a most revealing choice when they opted to plant their regimental monument not at the scene of their greatest triumph, but instead at the scene of their greatest tragedy. Their decision betrays much about what battlefield monuments meant to veterans, and how Civil War survivors preferred to remember their service. Hardly exercises in vainglory or self-promotion, stone plinths and granite slabs paid tribute to the dead and testified to the participation of citizen-soldiers in an unprecedented war. Monuments recalled key episodes in the life of a regiment; they invested ordinary ridge lines, wheat fields, and wood lots with a transcendent significance. Monuments narrated the history of battles and campaigns; their imagery and inscriptions, together with the speeches veterans delivered at their dedication ceremonies, reflected on the Civil War's cause and consequences.

In their design, concept, and construction material, monuments expressed meaningful connections between the home front and the battle front. The 20th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, for instance, marked the position where it repulsed Pickett's Charge



THE OLD LINER



by prying a Puddingstone boulder from the earth near Roxbury; the stone was shipped to Gettysburg and mounted on a wide pedestal.

Keynoted by Maj. Augustus Vignos, the poignant dedication ceremony on Blocher's Knoll was the culmination of a multi-year, veteran-driven effort to embellish the war's bloodiest field with tributes to Buckeye soldiers. In 1885, Ohio's legislature appropriated funds to "purchase land upon which to erect a monument" to its Gettysburg dead. On July 4, at the invitation of the state's adjutant general, representatives of the Ohio units that participated in the battle — 13 infantry regiments, four artillery batteries, and two companies of cavalry — met in the chambers of the state legislature in Columbus to discuss the bill. The veteran assembly adopted a resolution expressing their "desire" to see a "proper designation of all the localities where Ohio soldiers fought" during the battle. "Very many beautiful tablets have been erected upon the field, designating the positions occupied by the various regiments from different states," the old soldiers observed. "We cannot believe that the state of Ohio will fail to properly care for her sons fallen in defense of the Union...when her sister states are doing so much."

Yielding to the veteran lobby, the Ohio state legislature appropriated an additional \$35,000 in April 1886. Each Buckeye outfit that participated in the battle would have its own monument on the battlefield. Veterans

took the lead in monument placement and design. Over the course of several days, agents from each regimental organization reviewed more than 600 concepts from some two dozen bidders. The 107th Ohio's delegation — Maj. Vignos, Capt. John M. Lutz, and regimental postmaster Alfred Rider — selected "Design No. 54" from Smith Granite Works in Boston.

Ornamented with a crescent moon — the emblem of the Army of the Potomac's Eleventh Corps. — the handsome tribute would record the principal engagements and tally its Gettysburg casualties. On the monument's face, the men proposed to etch a simple dedication: from "the surviving members of the Regiment to their Fallen Comrades."



Monument to the 107th Ohio Infantry Regiment at Gettysburg. Wikimedia Commons

By the last decade of the 19th century, veterans had turned the Gettysburg battlefield into an evocative commemorative landscape — a place, in the words of one Pennsylvanian, to "impress upon all, especially the young, the great principles for which we fought and suffered." They even drank from that well of inspiration themselves. In the autumn of 1894, one Yankee ex-soldier returned to Gettysburg and leaned



THE OLD LINER



against the “granite tablet” that marked his unit’s position along the brow of Oak Ridge. “Again, I saw the mighty armed hosts,” he wrote, “dealing pain and death and scattering sorrow ... The forms in blue were again behind the stone wall, and I noted familiar faces; and yonder the gray line vainly striving to advance; then the blue line springing forward, and the gathering in of the gray fragments.”

Drawing sabers, squeezing triggers, and clubbing muskets, a gathering army of granite soldiers not only marked the places where men fought, but reanimated the history of the battle. Tour roads soon laced through the battlefield, permitting hack drivers and tour guides to tell the story of the battle. Not surprisingly, the site of the war’s costliest clash became a locus of commemorative activity. But veterans lobbied and labored to sacralize other fields, too. In fact, in an index of their deeply personal significance, these efforts began during the war itself. In 1863, soon after the Battle of Stone’s River, Tenn., the Midwestern veterans of Col. William Babcock Hazen’s brigade piled hewn limestone into a “quadrangular pyramidal shaft” on the ground where they fought — perhaps the first Union monument on any Civil War battlefield. Very likely, the men of the 8th Georgia were responsible for placing the first Confederate monument, a simple column marking the spot where Col. Francis Bartow was killed atop Henry Hill during the first battle of Bull Run. Other makeshift mortuary monuments soon followed.



Bartow Monument on Henry Hill in Manassas, Virginia. National Park Service

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THE OLD LINER

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Dr. Brian Matthew Jordan

Dr. Brian Matthew Jordan is Assistant Professor of History and Director of Graduate Studies in History at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas, where he teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on the American Civil War, Reconstruction, and the philosophy of history.



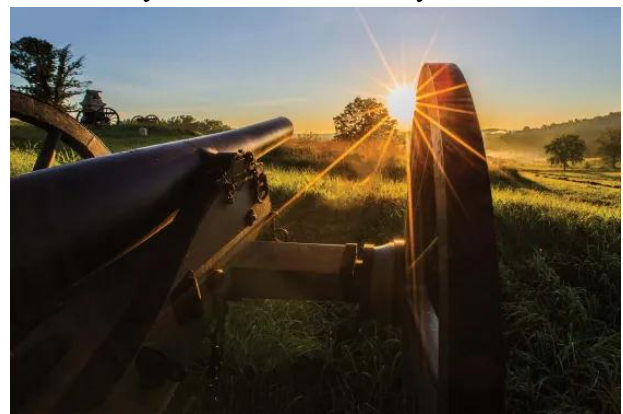
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Historic Preservation Win! House Votes Overwhelmingly to Extend Federal Battlefield Protection Program

In time for America's 250th birthday, U.S. House of Representatives votes 404-13 in support of bipartisan legislation reauthorizing the nation's most effective historic battlefield preservation grant program

Jared Herr, ABT, June 3, 2026

(Washington, D.C.) — In a major win for the protection of America's hallowed ground, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Battlefields Protection Program Amendments Act (HR 7618) this afternoon in a lopsided vote of 404-13. The bipartisan legislation, which garnered overwhelming support from both parties, reauthorizes the nation's most effective historic battlefield preservation grant program in time for America's semiquincentennial and the 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War.



East Cemetery Hill, Gettysburg National Military Park, Pa. Noel Kline



THE OLD LINER



The bill reauthorizes three American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) grant programs through 2036, designating \$20 million annually to battlefield preservation efforts, including historic property acquisition, landscape restoration and site interpretation. Additionally, the legislation directs the National Park Service (NPS) and the Department of the Interior to prepare more detailed strategic studies of sites related to the French and Indian War and the Mexican-American War, a major step toward expanding program eligibility.

HR 7618 was introduced earlier this year by U.S. Representatives Jen Kiggans (R-VA) and Seth Magaziner (D-RI), co-chairs of the Congressional Battlefields Caucus. The Senate companion bill, S.3524, was introduced in December 2025 by U.S. Senators Dave McCormick (R-PA) and Tim Kaine (D-VA).

“The passage of this bill sets in motion our preservation legacy for the next decade,” said American Battlefield Trust President David Duncan. “We are deeply grateful these lawmakers understand the power of America’s battlefields and are helping to safeguard our nation’s hallowed ground for generations to come.”

Congresswoman Kiggans said, “In just a few weeks, our nation will celebrate America’s 250th birthday. As we reflect on the sacrifices made to secure and defend our freedoms, it is more important than ever that we preserve the battlefields where so much of our nation’s history unfolded. These historic sites help tell the story of America’s founding, honor those who came before us, and ensure future generations can learn from their legacy.”



*Slaughter Pen Farm, Fredericksburg, Va.
(Buddy Secor) Buddy Secor*

For a quarter-century, the ABPP’s Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant Program (BLAG) has been the principal mechanism for protecting America’s irreplaceable historic landscapes — with nearly 40,000 acres saved and counting. These matching grants are more important than ever as land prices skyrocket throughout the nation, driven by an explosion of data centers and related commercial development that is driving per-acre acquisition costs to record highs.

“We must preserve these sacred sites and honor the brave Americans who fought on our soil to secure our nation’s freedom,” said Congressman Magaziner. “I am proud to help pass this important legislation so future generations can learn from, honor, and experience the places where history was made and so many sacrificed for our country.”

Nearly \$200 million in federal grants has been competitively awarded through the program, matched many times over by private donations and grants from states and



THE OLD LINER



localities. This process has allowed nonprofit groups to save battlefield land associated with some of the most iconic clashes in our country's history, including Appomattox, Brandywine, Chattanooga, Gettysburg, Petersburg, Princeton, Saratoga and Vicksburg. Overall, nearly 40,000 acres of historic land at 100-plus battlefields have been preserved in 20 states.

Currently, BLAG funding can be used to preserve land outside NPS boundaries at high priority battlefields from the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and the Civil War. The bill directs NPS to investigate the feasibility of expanding eligibility for BLAG grants to sites related to the French and Indian War and the Mexican-American War, building on 2020 studies funded by ABPP and conducted by Michigan State University and the American Battlefield Trust.



Gaines' Mill Battlefield, Hanover County, Va. Robert James

As it proceeded through the legislative process, the bill enjoyed the bipartisan support of the leadership of the House Natural Resources Committee, Chairman

Bruce Westerman (R- AR) and Ranking Member Jared Huffman (D-CA), along with Chairman Tom Tiffany (R-WI) and Ranking Member Joe Neguse (D-CO) of the committee's Federal Lands Subcommittee. The full Natural Resources Committee reported the bill out favorably to the House of Representatives in April.

The American Battlefield Trust is dedicated to preserving America's hallowed battlegrounds and educating the public about what happened there and why it matters today. The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization has protected more than 60,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War across 160 sites in 25 states. Learn more at www.battlefields.org.

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New Waysides Installed at Brandy Station Battlefield Ahead of Anniversary

Trust and Civil War Trails add new interpretive markers highlighting sites along battlefield

news@battlefields.org

June 1, 2026

(Culpeper, Va.) — Just in time for the battle's 163rd anniversary on June 9, two new historical waysides have been installed at Culpeper County's Brandy Station Battlefield in Culpeper County, adding fresh interpretation for visitors looking to explore the movements, terrain and stories that defined the first engagement of the Gettysburg Campaign.



THE OLD LINER



“Our waysides are just another way we aim to bring the battlefield and the stories that are stored in its soil to life, giving visitors a clearer sense of what happened here all those years ago,” said Chuck Laudner of Friends of Culpeper Battlefields. “Our long-standing partnership with Civil War Trails makes our work of enhancing the visitor experience a constant priority.”



New waysides being installed in Brandy Station Battlefield in Culpeper County, Va. Chuck Laudner

Installed in late May, the markers were made possible through a partnership between the American Battlefield Trust and Civil War Trails. One of the signs is placed along Beverly’s Ford Road, providing geographic context within the broader battlefield landscape and providing visitor orientation. A second sign focuses on Col. Benjamin Franklin Davis, a colorful Alabama-born Union officer killed in dramatic fashion during an early phase of the fighting.

The Trust has a long-standing history in Brandy Station, spanning nearly 30 years. Since 1997, the Trust has helped secure more than 2,300 acres of hallowed ground in Brandy Station and more throughout Culpeper County. In 2024, after a long campaign and work with partners on local and state levels, Governor Glenn Youngkin formally dedicated the Culpeper Battlefields State Park, the 43rd State Park unit in the Old Dominion. The park currently encompasses more than 260 acres of the Brandy Station Battlefield, land that was donated by the Trust and its partners to the state.

Fought on June 9, 1863, the Battle of Brandy Station was the largest cavalry engagement ever fought in North America and marked the opening phase of the Gettysburg Campaign. Following the Confederate victory at Chancellorsville, Gen. Robert E. Lee moved the Army of Northern Virginia toward Culpeper County. Union forces, under Brig. Gen. Alfred Pleasonton, launched a surprise attack across the Rappahannock River at Beverly Ford and Kelly’s Ford.

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Georgia's Barton-Stovall Brigade Carries On

Cliff Roberts | June 1, 2026 | Blue and Gray Education Society



THE OLD LINER



A Rick Reeves painting of Stovall's Brigade defending the cemetery at New Hope Church, Georgia. | courtesy of Rick Reeves

On March 17, 1865, in what would be the final battle fought by the Confederate Army of Tennessee, 376 men—all that was left of Stovall's Georgia Brigade—lay concealed among blackjack oaks and pine trees 3 miles south of the village of Bentonville in eastern North Carolina.

In three years of war, these Georgia veterans had fought in 21 battles across six Southern states. They marched roughly 2,200 miles and traveled another 2,000 miles in crowded boxcars, all in a desperate and ultimately unsuccessful effort to stop the advance of Union armies.

Now, directly before them across Willis Cole's fallow farm field, six Federal regiments under George P. Buell advanced steadily forward. These Union soldiers were veterans of Sherman's March to the Sea and, in an audacious winter campaign, they had marched across the Carolinas while facing but few pockets of Confederate resistance.

Colonel Lovick P. Thomas of the 42nd Georgia later recalled, "It was a grand sight to see them moving on us, 'Old Glory' floating in the breeze so proudly." Soon Thomas heard "the sharp click-clack of muskets being cocked" along his camouflaged line.



Wade Sokolosky leading the Barton-Stovall Association members on a tour of Bentonville in 2023.

The unsuspecting Federal front line—four Midwestern regiments—closed to within 40 paces of the tree line before Stovall's men suddenly rose and unleashed a devastating volley at point-blank range. Two Ohio regiments immediately fell back, but the 88th Indiana and 13th Michigan stood firm, returning fire even as officers fell wounded or dying around them.

After several furious exchanges, Buell ordered a retreat across the Cole farm. In response, Stovall's Georgians waved their hats and erupted with a loud Rebel Yell.

The Battle of Bentonville had begun in earnest.



THE OLD LINER



This all-Georgia brigade consisted of the 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, and 52nd Georgia Infantry regiments. Most of the men came from the Piedmont and mountain regions north, east, and west of Atlanta. Unlike many early-war volunteers, they were older, often married, and fathers of young children. They did not enlist until the spring of 1862 and were among the first Georgians sent west to fight in the Confederate Army's Western Theater.

Their first commander was Seth Barton of Virginia. At Champion Hill, Mississippi, Barton famously drew his sword and led four regiments in a desperate charge into Grant's Union army. The attack ended in disaster for both the Georgians and the Confederates.

During the brutal 42-day siege of Vicksburg, the brigade endured starvation and disease, losing scores of men. After the prisoners were exchanged, General Marcellus Stovall of Augusta, Georgia, assumed command.



Wayside marker from the Confederate tree line at Bentonville. Its erection was paid for by the Barton and Stovall History/Heritage Association.

Under Stovall, the brigade fought with distinction during the Atlanta Campaign and earned the trust of General Joseph Johnston, who frequently relied upon the Georgians to shield Confederate withdrawals. At Nashville, Stovall's men defended Overton Hill even as the Confederate line collapsed to their left. Through snow, mud, and bitter cold, Stovall's Georgians helped cover the retreat of Hood's shattered army for two days and two nights.

Finally, the remnants of the brigade arrived at Bentonville for one last stand.

For the past 24 years, descendants of the brigade have gathered each spring for a three-day "Congress" near the places where their ancestors fought. Organized by the General Barton and Stovall History/Heritage Association, these gatherings have been held at Cumberland Gap, Vicksburg, Franklin, Dalton, Cartersville, Atlanta, and Bentonville.

The annual Congress includes battlefield tours, lectures, a banquet, and, above all, fellowship among those dedicated to preserving the brigade's history and legacy.

Information about this unique organization can be found at the General Barton and Stovall History/Heritage Association.



THE OLD LINER



Barton-Stovall Association members



Graves of the 11th Ohio Battery-men (from Harper's Encyclopaedia of the United States History from 458 AD to 1905) | public domain

Cliff Roberts is the co-author of Atlanta's Fighting 42nd: Joseph Johnston's "Old Guard" (Mercer University Press). He is a past president of the Barton-Stovall Association and currently serves as president of the Fort Sumter Civil War Round Table in Charleston.

**all photos courtesy of the author unless otherwise noted*

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The 11th Ohio Battery at the Battle of Iuka, Mississippi

Daniel A. Masters, May 25, 2026,
blueandgrayeducation.org

The 11th Ohio Battery at Iuka suffered the highest number of losses of any Federal battery during the entire Civil War!

The six guns of the 11th Ohio Battery, manned by 102 officers and enlisted men under the command of Lieutenant Cyrus Sears, rolled onto the battlefield near Iuka, Mississippi, on the afternoon of September 19, 1862, determined to bring the fight to the enemy. The Ohioans had seen action earlier that spring, but Iuka represented their first real—and harshest—taste of combat.

Once under fire, the Ohioans deployed along a ridge, with the 5th Iowa Infantry on their right, the 48th Indiana Infantry on their left, and the 26th Missouri Infantry in support. At five o'clock, Confederate artillery opened fire on the Federals, softening their position in preparation for an assault.

Lieutenant Sears ordered his men to open fire as the long gray line advanced. The

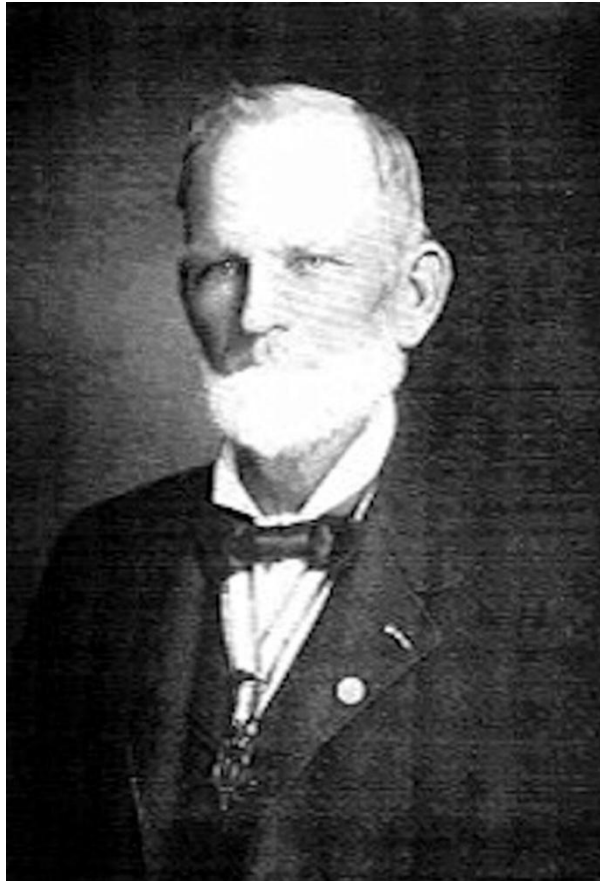


THE OLD LINER



Federal brigade commander then ordered Sears to load canister, and, at a distance of 100 yards, the battery fired a devastating volley.

“As we were pushing on to the enemy’s line, the smoke was so thick that we could scarcely tell the enemy from our own men,” one Arkansas Confederate remembered. Approaching within 50 yards, the Rebels let loose a volley against the Federal line. The hot fire proved too much for the 48th Indiana, which buckled under the assault, exposing the left flank of the battery. The 5th Iowa on the right also recoiled, as did the 26th Missouri, which wavered under the heavy fire of the Rebel advance.



Although severely wounded at Iuka, First Lieutenant Sears fought his battery until the

cannoneers and horses were nearly all killed or wounded. He was later awarded a Medal of Honor. | public domain

“As our line melted away, the battery found itself facing three directions with masses on three fronts,” Lieutenant Henry Neil recalled. “The guns were being worked with greater speed and smaller crews. Cannoneers were falling. Other cannoneers coolly took their places and performed double duty. On the fifth charge, the survivors finally choked from the guns.”

One cannoneer grasped the lanyard in his hand to discharge a load of canister when a Confederate soldier swung the butt of his rifle at his head. The gunner ducked, then decked the Confederate over his eye with a round of canister in his hand.

The Confederates swarmed over the guns and were appalled by the wreckage surrounding the captured cannons. The ground was strewn with 46 dead horses, and the battery lay in ruins, with 46 out of the 54 cannoneers either dead or wounded. Only two men were taken prisoner.

“Those battery boys had so much spunk that we took pity on the few who were left,” one Confederate later wrote.

After nightfall, the Confederates decided to retreat and spiked the captured guns of the 11th Ohio Battery. The next day, September 20, the Confederate Army evacuated Iuka, and the battlefield passed into Federal hands. “After the guns’ spikes were removed, the pieces were found to be in serviceable order



THE OLD LINER



and work on the splintered gun carriages was begun,” Lieutenant Neil wrote. The formerly captured cannons were eventually returned to the surviving men of the 11th Ohio.

Lieutenant Sears, wounded during the engagement, would later receive the Medal of Honor for his heroism at Iuka.

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Transformative Changes Take Shape at Gettysburg

The Trust's multiyear restoration campaign is bringing history back to life on the iconic battlefield

Jared Herr, jherr@battlefields.org, May 29, 2026

Heading to the Gettysburg Battlefield this summer? You'll be met with exciting changes underway as part of the Trust's Gettysburg restoration campaign.

More than 160 years after fighting there concluded, the Gettysburg Battlefield stands as a breathtaking witness to one of our nation's defining moments. The American Battlefield Trust is in the midst of several transformational projects, including removing non-historic structures, restoring those that bore witness to the battle, installing needed interpretive markers and signage, and revitalizing the landscape so that the battle's remarkable history emerges.



The McKnight House restored to its 1863 appearance. Cameron Bishop

What We've Done

December marked a major milestone in the Trust's ongoing restoration efforts with the demolition of two non-historic structures along Baltimore Pike, including the building that once housed the Battlefield Military Museum. The removal of these modern buildings allows a much-improved view of Stevens' Knoll, an area of the battlefield set aside for preservation in the 1860s. Additionally, the historic James McKnight House located nearby, fronting the Baltimore Pike, is undergoing a dramatic restoration to return its 1863 appearance. Ultimately, the Trust plans to have walking trails with interpretive signage and markers on the land to help visitors connect more deeply with events taking place on this portion of the battlefield.

What's to Come

For decades, General Pickett's Buffet was an iconic site in the Gettysburg community. But when the restaurant's operation relocated to a new, larger and more suitable venue, its longtime owners sold the original property



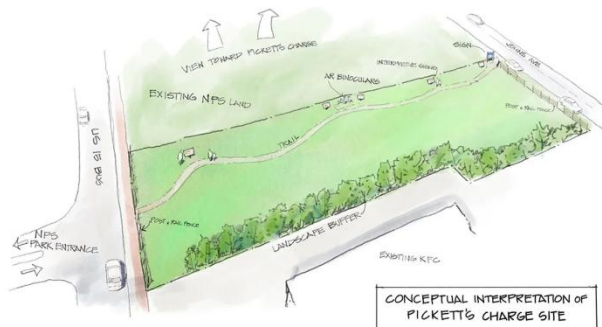
THE OLD LINER



to the Trust. Following a successful fundraising campaign, the Trust is engaged in a planning and permitting process to remove the building that has marred the landscape of Pickett's Charge for decades and integrate the site into the adjacent parkland. This will make way for state-of-the-art interpretation, including place-based augmented reality tools. But prior to any demolition, the building will be made available to the Gettysburg Fire Department for training exercises.



A satellite view of the property at Pickett's Charge BEFORE RESTORATION



*An illustration of the conceptual interpretive plan at Pickett's Charge INTERPRETIVE PLAN
Credits: Google Earth, Dale Watson*

Across town, the area between McPherson Ridge and Herr's Ridge, and just past Willoughby's Run, saw intense fighting in the opening phase of battle on July 1, 1863. In the 1940s, some 110 acres of this hallowed ground became the Gettysburg Country Club, a use that lasted into the 21st century. After the club closed, the golf course was added to the national park, but the remainder was proposed for intensive residential development. However, after significant local opposition and a permitting setback, the Trust was able to acquire the site via a series of good-faith negotiations. In fact, it was this purchase that pushed the Trust over the 60,000-acre milestone



Willoughby's Run, Gettysburg, Pa. Michael Rosst

Long-term plans envision removal of intrusive 21st-century elements but retention of the original clubhouse, which was frequented by President Dwight Eisenhower during his retirement years in Gettysburg. However, for the time being, that modern space is occupied by Cumberland Township, because the Trust offered it rent-free as a temporary home for local police and administrators during a major of their permanent office space.



THE OLD LINER

To learn more and support the Trust's efforts
to restore critical parts of the Gettysburg
Battlefield, visit
www.battlefields.org/restore-gettysburg.

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