

American Battlefield Trust Marks 22 Years Saving at Least 1000 Acres, Sets Outreach Records

Despite 2020's inherent challenges, passionate members propelled the nonprofit to continued success

Mary Koik, ABT January 19, 2021

(Washington, D.C.) – Despite a year that will go down in history for its unprecedented challenges, the American Battlefield Trust further cemented its status as the nation's premier battlefield preservation and education organization in 2020, recording its 22nd consecutive year saving more than 1,000 acres of hallowed ground. Meanwhile, the organization set records for digital engagement, deepened strategic partnerships with likeminded organizations and extended support for battlefield preservation among elected officials and the general public.



Trust President David Duncan stands with friend, mentor, and Trust President Emeritus James Lighthizer. Buddy Secor

“Despite the extraordinary challenges faced in 2020, the American Battlefield Trust remained unwavering in our commitment to mission,” said Trust

President David Duncan. “We triumphed at renowned places like Antietam and Shiloh but also at overlooked gems of battlefields, such as Bennington, N.Y., and Williamsburg, Va. — all while connecting with students and history enthusiasts at record-breaking levels.” Beyond the near-universal difficulties experienced by all nonprofits operating during the pandemic, the Trust also underwent a change in leadership. Duncan, the longtime the chief development officer, was unanimously selected by the Board of Trustees to assume the top role in October, following the retirement of James Lighthizer, who led the organization more than 20 years.

Working closely with landowners and preservation partners, the Trust closed 28 transactions at 22 battlefields in 10 states, amounting to 1,126.8 acres. This included projects at: Antietam, Md.; Bennington, N.Y.; Bentonville, N.C.; Brice's Cross Roads, Miss.; Gettysburg, PA; Cedar Creek, Va.; Cedar Mountain, Va.; Chattanooga, Tenn.; Cold Harbor, Va.; Fredericksburg, Va.; Jackson, Tenn.; New Market Heights, Va.; Parker's Cross Roads, Tenn.; Perryville, Ky.; Port Royal Island, S.C.; Reams Station, Va.; Shepherdstown, W.V.; Shiloh, Tenn.; Stones River, Tenn.; Trevilian Station, Va.; White Oak Road, Va.; and Williamsburg, Va. Amidst this year's preservation victories, numerous other transactions edged closer toward completion, setting the stage for a productive 2021.



Brown's Tavern, dating to 1803, has connections to the Trail of Tears and to the 1863 Battle of Brown's Ferry. Kenneth May

Especially noteworthy was the acquisition of 48 acres at Stones River, Tenn., which included a 42-acre tract once lost to industrial use. The Trust approached the owner of the site, O'Reilly Auto Parts, and after presenting the site's incredible historic and preservation significance, landed on a purchase price of \$4 million — a hefty but fair sum for industrial land in a highly developed area. Elsewhere in the Volunteer State, the Trust secured the permanent protection of Brown's Tavern at Chattanooga, an important site with connections to Native American history and the Civil War. In both instances, matching grants provided by the American Battlefield Protection Program and Tennessee Civil War Sites Preservation Fund played a key role in the victory.

While the protection of battlefield landscapes is central to the Trust's mission, the organization also seeks to impart historical knowledge to both students and lifelong learners. Our quality educational tools reached more people than ever before during a year of digital and socially distanced learning, as the Trust

welcomed some eleven million visits to ww.w.battlefields.org, including more than eight million student visits. We actively sought new pathways to deliver history content digitally, resulting in the launch of more than 300 new or overhauled articles, creation of more than 300 videos, debut of two battlefield tour apps, introduction of an inquiry-based Civil War curriculum — plus shorter Crash Courses — and publication of *Battle Maps of the Civil War: The Western Theater*, the second book in a series collecting the Trust's acclaimed historical maps in bound form. And while our National Teacher Institute was forced to go virtual, the free continuing education program was a roaring success, seeing a record attendance of 784 educators from 47 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and three additional countries.

The organization looked to push the envelope on content produced but also invested in the power of perspective and connections. Two different video productions, "Civil War 1864: A Virtual Reality Experience" and "Brothers in Valor," won awards recognizing their immersive and personal storytelling. The success of these video productions is a testament to the collection of quality videos housed on the Trust's YouTube channel, which had amassed 127,200 subscribers and 22.9 million views by the end of the year. New productions included the Gettysburg AR Experience, an augmented reality app that allows users to interact with historic events, and the Southern Campaign Animated Map, a joint video venture with the National Park Service that details the often-overshadowed Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War. The Trust's first foray into audio storytelling came through the

innovative capstone project of a member of its inaugural Youth Leadership Team.



*Archaeology research near the Hornwork fortification in Charleston's Marion Square in front of the old Armory.
Sarah Nell Blackwell / Wingshot Design*

The Trust is committed to showcasing the relationships between the conflicts of America's first century and our contemporary lives. In 2020, this included the launch of a partnership Ancestry and Fold3 that helps place genealogical connections on the battlefields where those past soldiers fought, and debut of the Warrior Legacy initiative, which draws upon the rich pride in heritage of the American military. In South Carolina, The Liberty Trail — envisioned to ultimately link more than 70 sites and preserve 2,500 acres across the Palmetto State — blazed forward in terms of land protection and interpretation. An archeological study in Charleston's Marion Square to document the footprint of what was the Patriot-controlled defensive fortification known as the Horn Work and, anchor a physical and digital "Gateway Experience" that will introduce The Liberty Trail to potential visitors.

The ongoing success of the battlefield preservation movement stems

from bipartisan support for the issue among elected officials and decisionmakers. Enactment of the Great American Outdoors Act in August permanently funded the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which feeds the federal matching grant program most frequently used by the Trust and its partners to protect battlefield land, and allocated \$9 billion to address the deferred maintenance backlog for federal lands. During the 2020 legislative session, the Kentucky Battlefield Preservation Fund became the third statewide matching grant program to specifically pursue hallowed ground, and in the fall the Bluegrass State celebrated the Mill Springs Battlefield National Monument's official incorporation as the 421st unit of the National Park System.

The Trust's 2020 preservation accomplishments were made possible by the assistance of numerous partners, including: the American Battlefield Protection Program; National Park Service; Beaufort County, S.C.; Brice's Crossroads National Battlefield Commission; Commonwealth of Kentucky; Commonwealth of Virginia; Friends of Perryville Battlefield; Friends of Shiloh; Friends of Stones River National Battlefield; HTR Foundation; Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board; Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort; National Park Partners; Parker's Crossroads Battlefield Association; Save Historic Antietam Foundation; South Carolina Battleground Preservation Trust; South Carolina Conservation Bank; State of New York; State of North Carolina; Tennessee Civil War Sites Preservation Fund; Trevilian Station Battlefield Foundation; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Virginia Battlefield Preservation Fund; Virginia Land Conservation Foundation; Williamsburg Battlefield Association.

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 53,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Civil War. Learn more at www.battlefields.org.

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The Black Soldiers of the Civil War

A new book by scholar Deborah Willis features more than 70 photos, as well as letters journal entries and posters



Sergeant Major William L. Henderson and hospital steward Thomas H.S. Pennington of the 20th U.S. Colored Troops Infantry Regiment, as photographed by W.H. Leeson (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)

SMITHSONIANMAG.COM | Feb. 1, 2021, 7:30 a.m.

When Deborah Willis was growing up, her teachers seldom mentioned the black soldiers who’d fought in the American Civil War.

Years later, when the Philadelphia native became a curator—working first at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and then at the Smithsonian Institution—she found herself intrigued by photographs of these individuals, whose stories are still so often overlooked.

Speaking with *Vogue*’s Marley Marius, Willis explains, “I was fascinated because we rarely see images of soldiering, basically, with the backdrop of portraits.”

As Nadja Sayej reports for the *Guardian*, the scholar and artist’s latest book, *The Black Civil War Soldier: A Visual History of Conflict and Citizenship*, commemorates the conflict’s military men and women through more than 70 photographs, handwritten letters, personal belongings, army recruitment posters, journal entries and other artifacts.

Posing for portraits allowed black men who’d long been “told that they were second-class citizens, that they were subhuman,” to assert their newfound identity and freedom as soldiers, Willis tells *Vogue*.



Unidentified African American soldier in Union uniform (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)



Colonel Robert Shaw in Boston, ca. 1863 (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)

“Having a photograph taken was indeed a self-conscious act, one that shows the subjects were aware of the significance of the moment and sought to preserve it,” the author writes in the book’s introduction. “Photographs were a luxury; their prevalence shows their importance as records of family, position, identity, and humanity, as status symbols.”

Many of the images in *The Black Civil War Soldier* depict their subjects in uniform, donning military jackets and belt buckles while carrying rifles or swords. On the book’s [title page](#), for instance, Alexander Heritage Newton, a sergeant in the 29th Connecticut Infantry, poses alongside Daniel S. Lathrop, who held the same rank in the same regiment.

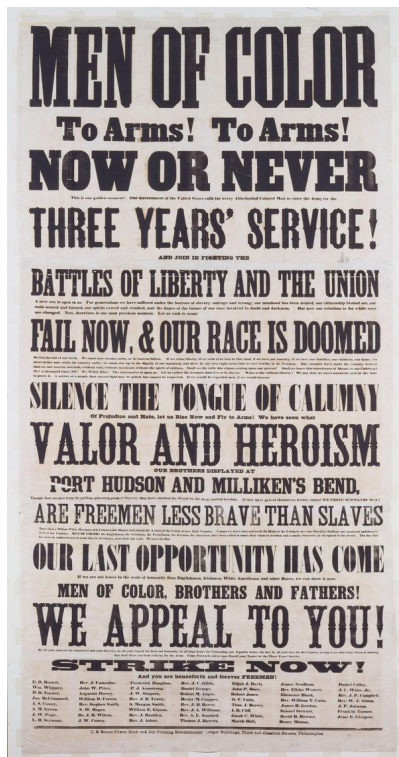
The two stand side by side, holding swords in their gloved hands. Hand-colored after the portrait sitting, the men’s gold jacket buttons and belt buckles, green sleeve chevrons, and purple belt tassels appear in sharp contrast to the rest of the black-and-white photograph. (Soldiers paid extra for these touches of color, which added a level of verisimilitude to the keepsakes.)

Per the *Guardian*, black and white soldiers alike often posed for tintypes—an early, relatively inexpensive form of photography that allowed artists to shoot outside of the studio—in order to send the likenesses to their loved ones.

Willis uses letters and journal entries to offer a sense of the photographed soldiers’ personalities. As she notes, these writings “convey the importance of family and family ties, the urgent need to belong.”



Portrait of Christian Fleetwood (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)



An 1863 flyer encouraging African American men to join the war effort (Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture)

Some missives discuss principles of equality, while others outline their authors' reasons for joining the war effort.

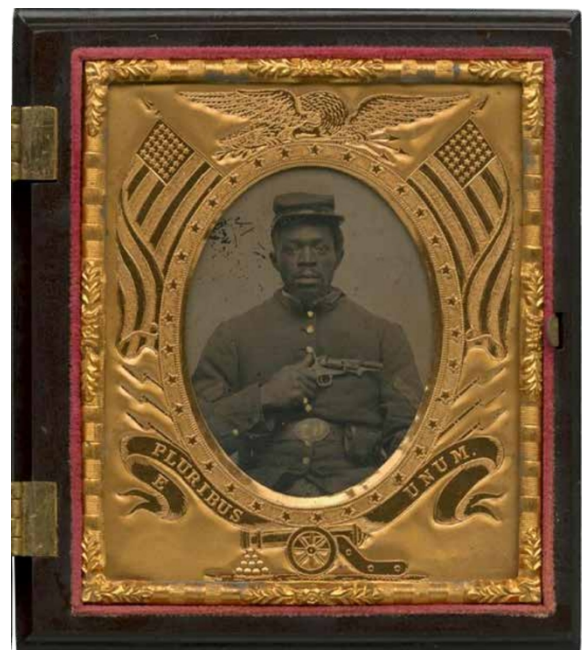
Newton, the sergeant pictured on the book's title page, penned a letter stating, "Although free born, I was born under the curse of slavery, surrounded by the thorns and briars of prejudice, hatred, persecution."

A number of black soldiers wrote to President Abraham Lincoln directly, pledging their allegiance to the war effort and offering their services. Others' mothers petitioned the president to ensure that their sons received equal pay and treatment.

"By examining diary pages, letters and news items, I want to build on the stories that each of their portraits tell," Willis says to

the *Guardian*, "to focus a lens on their hopefulness and the sense of what could be won from loss."

The Civil War was rife with such loss. An estimated 620,000 soldiers died during the war, making it the bloodiest conflict in American history. Though black Americans weren't initially allowed to fight, this changed with the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. In May of that year, per the Library of Congress, the U.S. government established the Bureau of Colored Troops to oversee rising numbers of black recruits.



The buckle on the soldier's outfit reads "SU," though the image is reversed, so it actually reads "US," which was typically embossed on Union soldier's outfits (Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture / Gift from the Liljenquist Family Collection)

According to the National Archives, roughly 179,000 black men, or ten percent of the Union Army, served as U.S. soldiers during the Civil War. (Another 19,000 enlisted in

the U.S. Navy.) Approximately 30,000 of the nearly 40,000 black soldiers who died in the line of duty succumbed to infection and disease—a fact that underscores the importance of oft-unrecognized non-combatants like cooks, nurses and surgeons, Willis argues.

“The role of sanitation and cleanliness and health is a quiet story,” the scholar tells *Vogue*. “Most of the men died because of unsanitary conditions, and the role of women was to clean the wounds, clean the clothes.”

In a January 27 livestream hosted by the National Archives, Willis said she hopes that her book can help people re-examine representations of the Civil War by telling stories about its forgotten figures.

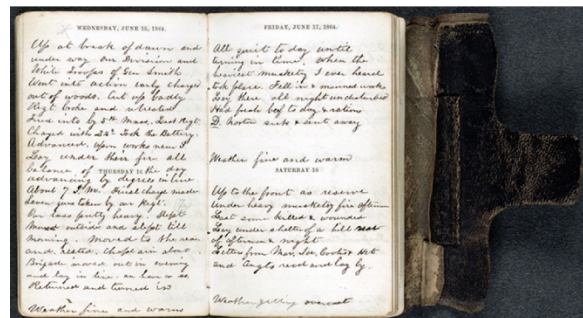
“These [are] fantastic works by the photographers, as these artists knew the importance of, the worthiness of these soldiers and fighters and cooks and nurses,” she explained, “the sense of what it meant to be free and what it meant to personalize their experience through the visual image.”



African American hospital workers, including nurses, at a hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, in July 1863 (Courtesy of the National Archives)



A drummer photographed by John Ritchie and included in a carte-de-visite album of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment (Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture / Gift of the Garrison Family in memory of George Thompson Garrison)



Christian Fleetwood’s diary entry, June 15–22, 1864 (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division)

About the Author: Isis Davis-Marks is a freelance writer and artist based in New York City. Her work has also appeared in *Artsy*, the *Columbia Journal*, and elsewhere. Website: isisdavismarks.com Read more articles from Isis Davis-Marks and Follow on Twitter @IsisDavisMarks

Read Thousands of Abraham Lincoln's Newly Transcribed Letters Online

The missives, preserved by the Library of Congress, include notes to and from the beloved president



Thousands of volunteers helped transcribe the Library of Congress' Lincoln letters. (Illustration by Meilan Solly / Photos via public domain and Library of Congress)

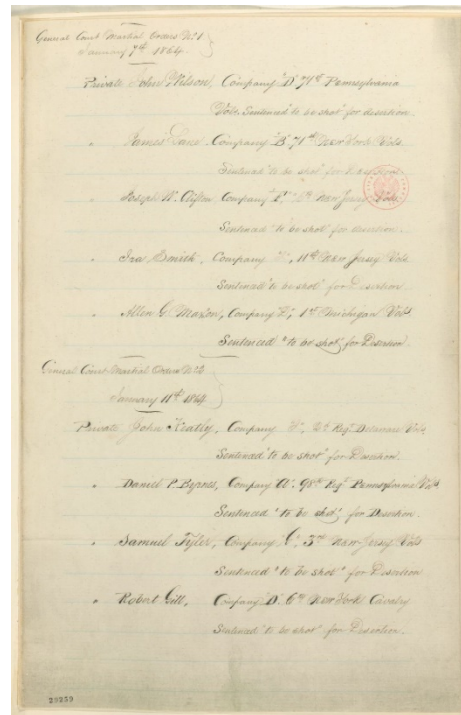
By Theresa Machemer,
SMITHSONIANMAG.COM
AUGUST 17, 2020

Between 1999 and 2002, the Library of Congress tasked the Lincoln Studies Center at Knox College in Illinois with transcribing thousands of letters sent to and from President Abraham Lincoln. Staff finished about half of the missives (mostly those penned by Lincoln himself), and in 2018, the Washington, D.C. library decided to recruit volunteers to transcribe the remaining 10,000.

Last month, the “Letters to Lincoln” project—conducted via the library’s “By the People” crowdsourcing platform—concluded after two years of work, reports Michael E. Ruane for the *Washington Post*. Now, transcriptions completed by thousands

of volunteers are set to join the 10,000 already available online. (In total, the library’s Lincoln papers constitute 40,000 documents, around half of which are digitized.)

“Crowdsourcing demonstrates the passion of volunteers for history, learning and the power of technology to make those things more accessible,” said Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden in a 2018 statement. The newly transcribed pages “represent some of the diversity of the Library’s treasure,” she added, “and the metadata that will result from these transcriptions mean these digitized documents will have even greater use to classrooms, researchers or anyone who is curious about these historical figures.”



Lincoln suspended the executions of the deserters listed here. (Library of Congress)

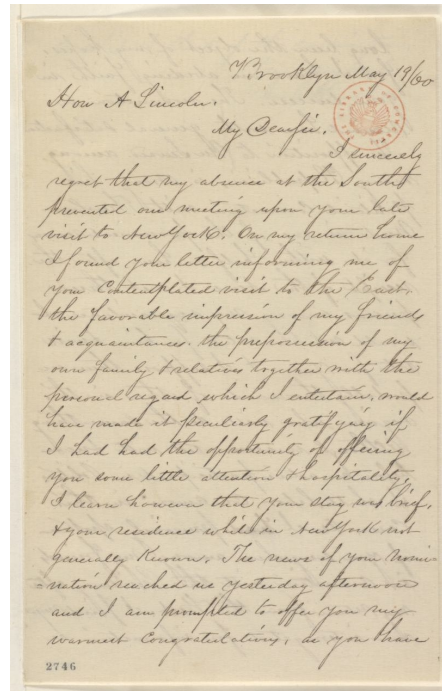
Covering everything from general correspondence to political advice, military news related to the Civil War, and personal and family matters, the documents showcase

the wide variety of information that came across the 16th president's desk—including advice shared prior to Lincoln's inauguration by a sender identified only as W. A.

W.A. recommended that the president “rid the house & grounds belonging to the capitol of every person male or female who has ever been employed as servants by Buchanan or Pierce,” per the transcript, which preserves the writer's original grammar. “Why sir -- under such circumstances I wouldnt trust the best of them to feed my dog.”

Presidents Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan immediately preceded Lincoln. Both allowed slavery to expand in the United States, and the latter did nothing to stop Southern states from seceding after his successor's election. But Lincoln didn't take the anonymous well-wisher's advice, instead keeping some of Buchanan's British-born domestic staff on payroll and bringing other workers from his home state of Illinois, according to the White House Historical Association.

In January 1864, Lincoln received a court-martial report that included the names of nine soldiers set to be “shot to death with musketry” on charges of desertion. Five were to be executed in front of their former divisions as a warning to others considering deserting. But less than three weeks after reading the letter, Lincoln suspended the men's sentences, reports the *Post*.



May 1860 letter from friend John C. Henshaw, who offers congratulations on Lincoln's nomination for president (Library of Congress)

Issues of personal concern to the president also appear in the transcribed letters. In 1864, for example, Lincoln learned that the men he'd entrusted with money for his stepmother, Sarah, who had moved to a 40-acre plot following the death of her husband, Thomas Lincoln, in 1851, were keeping the funds for themselves.

As John Hall, son of Lincoln's stepsister Matilda Johnston Hall, wrote in the letter (transcribed not by the volunteers, but the Lincoln Studies Center), “I write to Inform you that Grand Mother has not and does not receive one cent of the money you send her. ... I & my Mother are now taking care of her and have for the last four years— If you wish her to have any thing send it by check, here to the bank at Charleston or send none, for I tell you upon the honor of a man She does not get it.”

Another note dated to May 19, 1860, conveys friend John C.

Henshaw's congratulations on Lincoln's

nomination for president: “[Y]ou have long been the object of my hopes, for I have abiding faith in your success,” he explains. “ ... Within half an hour after the receipt of the news I met three persons among my acquaintance who would not have voted for [opponent William H. Seward] & will vote for you.”

Two teams of volunteers contributed to the Library of Congress project, with the first completing transcriptions and the second reviewing the first’s work. A few typos are scattered throughout the letters: Per the *Post*, one note describes the “N.Y.S.M.,” or New York State Militia, as “N.Y.Sill.” Still, the transcriptions are a critical starting point in making the archive searchable. “We’re providing people with a way to become engaged with the material and explore questions and interests that they might have,” Michelle Krowl, a Civil War specialist with the library, tells the *Post*. Adds Krowl, “Every generation has a different sort of questions they ask of these materials. ... These collections continue to be dynamic, and they continue to answer new questions.”

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The Battle of Olustee

battleofolustee.org

Early in the morning of February 20, 1864, General Seymour's army left Barbers' Plantation and moved westward towards Lake City. Because of the necessity of posting garrisons at Jacksonville and elsewhere, the Union force consisted of approximately 5,500 men. The small army was divided into three brigades of infantry, one brigade of mounted troops, and supporting artillery.

The Federals advanced in three columns along the Lake City and Jacksonville Road, which ran roughly parallel to the Florida

Atlantic and Gulf-Central Railroad. The Federal cavalry was in the vanguard, followed by the slower-moving infantry. By mid-day the Federals had reached Sanderson, where they briefly stopped for lunch. While at Sanderson, Seymour and his staff were warned by a defiant southern woman: "You will come back faster than you go." The Union officers were amused at her boldness.

In the early afternoon of February 20, a few miles west of Sanderson, the advance elements of the Union cavalry began skirmishing with a few southern horsemen that appeared to their front. This skirmishing was maintained for several miles, with the Federals driving the Confederates westward towards the railroad station at Olustee, about ten miles east of Lake City. Southern resistance intensified as the Federals neared Olustee.

In the days since the February 11th skirmish at Lake City, General Finegan had moved his force to Olustee Station, located about ten miles east of Lake City. There the Confederates found one of the few defensible locations in the area, where the railroad passed through a narrow corridor of dry ground bordered by impassable swamps and bays to the south and a large body of water known as Ocean Pond to the north. The Southerners built strong earthworks and awaited the Federal advance. When Finegan learned of the enemy's approach on February 20th, he ordered his cavalry forward to skirmish with the Federals and to lure them towards his main line. Unfortunately for Finegan, the fighting east of his main line intensified, forcing him to send out additional troops to help those already deployed. A major engagement soon developed about two miles in front of the Confederate line.

As the skirmishing intensified, both Finegan and Seymour fed additional troops into the battle. Finegan advanced first the 64th Georgia and part of the 32nd Georgia, followed by the 6th, 19th and 28th Georgia Regiments, and Gamble's Florida Artillery. General Colquitt commanded the detached units, while Finegan remained behind with the main body. General Seymour brought forward the 7th Connecticut, followed by the remainder of Hawley's Brigade, the 7th New Hampshire and the 8th United States Colored Troops. By midafternoon, the skirmishing has escalated into a major battle.



The battle threatened to turn rapidly into a rout for the Federals. While Colonel Hawley was positioning the 7th New Hampshire, a wrong command was given and the unit fell into confusion. The 7th soon collapsed, with some men running to the rear and others milling about in a disorganized mob.

The collapse of the 7th New Hampshire directed southern attention towards the 8th United States Colored Troops, which occupied the left of the Union line. The 8th was an untried unit, having been organized only several months before. Prior to Olustee, the regiment had seen no combat, and in fact

the men were not even completely trained. Colonel Charles Fribley tried to steady his men, but he soon fell mortally wounded. The raw troops of the 8th held their ground for a time, suffering more than 300 casualties. Finally, however, they retreated in some confusion, leaving the Confederates in virtual command of the battlefield.

With the dissolution of Hawley's Brigade, General Colquitt ordered the Confederate forces to advance. Since the beginning of the engagement, Finegan had sent additional units (the 6th Florida Battalion; the 1st, 23rd, 27th, and the remainder of the 32nd Georgia Regiments, and the Chatham Artillery) to Colquitt's support, so by now the Confederate lines stretched for about one mile, north to south. Colonel Harrison commanded the Confederate left, and Colquitt the right, although the units of their brigades were somewhat intermingled.



To stop the southern advance, General Seymour hastily ordered forward Colonel William Barton's Brigade of the 47th, 48th and 115th New York. The New Yorkers stopped the Confederate advance, and the battle lines stabilized for a time. The Union commander would later be criticized for reacting slowly to an increasingly dangerous situation, and for deploying his forces piecemeal into the battle. In fairness to Seymour, the battlefield's terrain somewhat limited his

options. The Federals lines were bordered by swamps on both flanks so there was little room to maneuver, and the field itself was an open pine barren with little cover.

The fighting during this middle period of the battle was particularly severe, with each side suffering heavy casualties. During this seesaw combat, the Confederates captured several Union artillery pieces and threatened to overwhelm the Federal infantry. Although the Yankees were under intense pressure, at a critical moment the surging Confederates began running low on ammunition. Men searched the pockets and cartridge boxes of their wounded and dead comrades to obtain additional rounds, but still the southern fire slackened. Several regiments held their place in line despite being completely out of ammunition. After what seemed to be an interminable delay, ammunition was brought forward from Olustee, along with the remaining reserves: the 1st Florida Battalion and Bonaud's Battalion. General Finegan also reached the battlefield at about this time.

With the arrival of these reinforcements, the Confederates again began advancing . By late afternoon, General Seymour had realized the battle was lost. To prevent a rout and to cover his retreat, he sent forward his last reserves, Colonel James Montgomery's Brigade, which consisted of the 35th United States Colored Troops and the famous 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. Montgomery's Brigade stopped the Confederates for a brief time, enabling Seymour to begin withdrawing his other forces. One white veteran of the battle states: " The colored troops went in grandly, and they fought like devils"

By dusk, the Union forces had begun their long retreat back to Jacksonville. The 54th Massachusetts, the Federal cavalry, and part

of the 7th Connecticut covered the withdrawal. Many wounded and a large amount of equipment had to be abandoned in the hasty retreat. Fortunately for the Federals, the Confederate pursuit was poorly conducted, enabling most of the Yankees to escape. The southern cavalry, led by Colonel Caraway Smith, was particularly criticized for its lackluster performance. That night, the Federals retreated all the way back to Barbers Plantation, where they had begun the day. By February 22nd, Seymour's battered army was back in Jacksonville.

The casualties at Olustee were staggering compared to the numbers that fought there. Union casualties were 203 killed, 1,152 wounded, and 506 missing, a total of 1,861, of approximately 5,500 troops involved. Confederate losses were 93 killed, 847 wounded, and 6 missing, a total of 946 of approximately 5,400 troops involved. This works out to about 34 percent for the Federals and a little less than 18 percent for the Confederates. The 47th New York had 313 casualties and the 8th U.S.C.T. had 310. Among the Confederate units, the 32nd Georgia lost 164 men and Bonaud's Battalion 107. For the North, the casualty percentage was among the highest of the war, and Olustee ranks as the second bloodiest for the Union when comparing the casualties to the number on men engaged. Letters and diaries from the men involved indicate that the battle was the equal of, if not worse than, the savage fighting a number of the veteran regiments had experienced in the campaigns in Virginia or the Western theater.

A regrettable episode in the aftermath of the battle was the apparent mistreatment of Union black soldiers by the Confederates. Contemporary sources, many from the Confederate side, indicate that a number of

black soldiers were killed on the battlefield by roaming bands of southern troops following the close of the fighting.

The Olustee defeat ended Union efforts to organize a loyal Florida government in time for the 1864 election. The Federals were somewhat more successful in meeting the expedition's military objectives. Jacksonville remained in Union hands until the end of the war, open for trade with the north; the operation had undoubtedly disrupted the supply of Florida cattle and other foodstuffs to the rest of the Confederacy; and the increased area of Federal control made it easier for Florida blacks to reach Union lines and for recruits to fill the ranks of northern military units. Of course, all of these objectives could have been met simply by the occupation of Jacksonville and without the nearly 1,900 casualties suffered at Olustee.

Military operations continued in Northeast Florida throughout the remainder of the war. Union troops frequently raided out from Jacksonville to harass Confederate supply operations. Confederate Captain J.J. Dickison, commanding a company of the 2nd Florida Cavalry, CSA, earned fame during this period. In a series of minor victories, Dickison was able to thwart a number of the Union drives into the interior of the state, although the Federals handed him a stinging defeat at the first Battle of Gainesville in February 1864.

Meanwhile, on Florida's Gulf Coast, Union penetrations were more successful, as they were in cooperation with Florida Unionists--often called "refugees," along with non-Unionists who were simply anti-Confederate. Many of these men formed the Second Florida Cavalry, USA, and were instrumental, in cooperation with the U.S. Navy's Gulf Coast Blockading Squadron, in

preventing large herds of cattle from West-central Florida reaching Confederate armies.

In fact, cooperation between the Union Army's Department of the South and the U.S. Navy's Gulf Coast Blockading Squadron, along with U.S. Army forces in the Gulf, under the command of General Banks, could have prevented the Union defeat at Olustee.

It was unfortunate for Gillmore that he did not tell Florida's west coast Union forces of his intentions. Admiral Farragut said that the army at Pensacola could have contributed fifteen hundred soldiers for a diversionary attack if the East Coast Blockading Squadron could have protected the landing. Admiral Baily [commanding that force] said he could have done so if he had known of the operation. He concluded: "The extraordinary expedition of General Gillmore to East Florida, without intimation or informing us or General Banks, has met the fate of other ill-contrived enterprises. The Troops have been whipped." [from *Blockaders, Refugees, & Contrabands : Civil War on Florida's Gulf Coast, 1861-1865* (pp 180-181, 2003, ISBN 0-8173-0682-X)]

In any case, by early 1865, it was obvious the defeat of the Confederacy was near. In early March 1865, the last military operation of any significance in Florida took place. At the Battle of Natural Bridge, a force of Confederate militia and home guard units, along with some regular troops, defeated a Union raid against St. Marks, on the coast south of Tallahassee. When Tallahassee was finally occupied by Northern troops in early May, it was the last Confederate capital east of the Mississippi to fall into Union hands. The Civil War was over. Thank God.

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The New Yorker Who Was a

Confederate Naval Commodore

Norman Dasinger, Jr., February 1, 2021
blueandgrayeducation.org



Commodore Ebenezer
Ferrand | Collections of the
Alabama Department of
Archives and History

Born in New York in 1803, Ebenezer “Eben” Ferrand entered the United States Navy in 1823 and was advanced to commander in 1834. While in command of the United States Navy Yard at Pensacola, Florida, he resigned his commission January 1861 to join the armed forces of the Confederate States of America. In an unusual twist of fate, he was immediately ordered to demand the surrender of all United States forces stationed at Forts Barrancas and McRae at the Navy Yard in Pensacola. He wrote, “We have decided it is our duty to hold our position until such a force is brought against us to render it impossible to defend...” In other words, he

resigned and then demanded the surrender of the installations he had just previously commanded!

Ordered to Drewry’s Bluff, Virginia, in the spring of 1862, Farrand was charged with building river defenses to prevent the United States Navy from advancing up the James River and possibly capturing the capital of the Confederacy. Fought May 15, 1862, the battle of Drewry’s Bluff was a resounding Confederate victory. Farrand saved the city of Richmond and was praised for his “gallantry and courage.”



Battle of Drewry's Bluff | public
domain

Transferred to Selma, Alabama, he was given command of the Naval Foundry recently established there and built it into a large military industrial complex. He commanded the Confederate Naval forces in Mobile following the battle of Mobile Bay, in late August 1864. He surrendered himself and his command at Mobile on May 8, 1865.

After the war, he became an insurance salesman in Montgomery, Alabama, and owned a home and a hotel along the railroad in Attalla (Etowah County), Alabama. He died in 1873 and was eventually buried in the Attalla City Cemetery.

At the Centennial of the Civil War in 1961, the adopted hometown of the Commodore, the city of Attalla, built a memorial park in his honor. Today, that park still proudly exists, forever memorializing this New Yorker who fought for the Confederate Navy.