Valentine's Day Civil War Style

Valentine's Day
Source: Harper's Weekly
"...this is the day on which those charming little missives, ycelped Valentines, cross and inter-cross at every street and turning. The weary and all forespent twopenny postman sinks below a load of delicate embarrassments, not his own." Valentine's Day in Essays of Elia by Charles Lamb 1860 (*called)*

Ester Howland Card
Source: Card Museum

Valentine's Day was a well-established holiday by the 1860's, dating back to, it is attributed, the ancient Roman fertility festival of Lupercalia, and to St. Valentine who, it is said, sent the first valentine to the girl who had visited him in prison, signed "From Your Valentine." However, it is clear that by the 1860s the religious aspect of the day had been put aside. George Tillotson (1863) writes in *The Boy's Yearly Book*: "…St. Valentine's Day now bears witness to the fact that a partial return to the pagan form has since been found agreeable. St. Valentine, personally, had nothing to do with the celebration of this day."

Ester A. Howland

The first written valentines were sent in the 1400s and continued to be popular as they are today. Poetry was composed. Cards and tokens were handmade with love and care for that special someone. But in 1848, inspired by an English valentine card she had received, the "Mother of Valentine", Ester A, Howland, daughter of a book and stationery manufacturer, began selling valentines produced using an all-female assembly line (long before Henry Ford's) in her home.

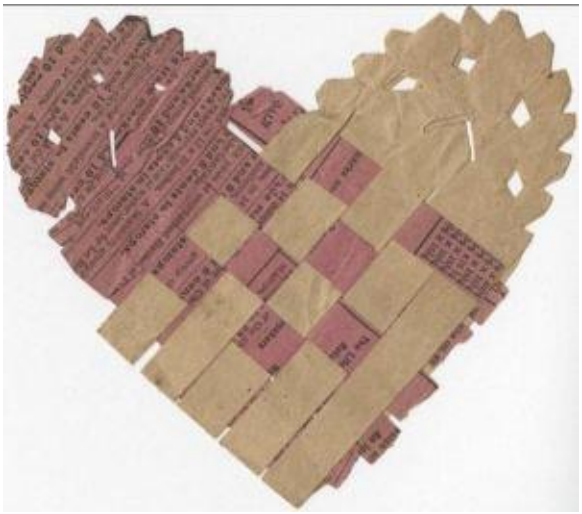
Made of glued bits of lace, ribbon, and cutouts of printed pictures, the cards were still essentially handmade. She introduced a number of innovations that remain popular to this day including pop ups, shadow boxes, and contrasting colors behind the lace, and one that is only now again available

An 1850 Howland card
with Internet cards – the ability to insert the verse of your choice in the card. Venders were provided with 131 verses for the purchaser to glue inside the cover of they had picked.

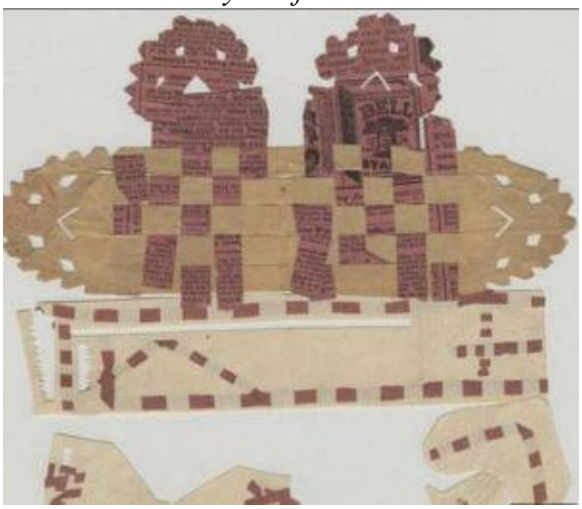
She named her company the New England Valentine Company [stamped NEVco], and it is estimated she earned an incredible $25,000 to $75,000 a year from the business which lasted to 1888 when she sold out to her competitor.

Valentine cards were especially important during the Civil War when husbands and wives, and young lovers were separated not only by miles but by the fear they would never see each other again.

Cards made by Howland and her competitors were sent by those who could afford them and had access to stores. However, out in the field many soldiers made their own cards using what materials that they had. In 1862 Confederate soldier Robert King made this basket weave folded card for his wife from scrounged paper. Opened up it showed two crying lovers. A particularly sad foretelling of his death.



Robert King 1862
Source: The Sun http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2078938/A-treasure-trove-American-history-Massive-collection-Civil-War-artifacts-unearthed-basements-attics-mark-150th-anniversary-conflict.html



Soldiers also made folded cards like a Puzzle Purse by folding in the corners to make a paper pouch in which they would insert a trinket or lock of hair for their loved ones.

 *Source: https://lancasterhistory.org/*

Virginia Governor Youngkin Calls for Creation of Culpeper Battlefields State Park

American Battlefield Trust applauds Governor's request to create a historic and recreational park in the heart of Virginia's Piedmont region

Jim Campi and Mary Koik, ABT, January 22, 2022

(Richmond, Va.) — The American Battlefield Trust applauds Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin's announcement on Friday, requesting $4.93 million for land acquisition to create a Culpeper Battlefields State Park. The announcement was part of a package of legislative initiatives and budget amendments submitted by the Governor to the General Assembly on January 21, 2022. "Friday's announcement marks an important step in the effort to create a Culpeper Battlefields State Park," noted Trust President David Duncan. "Culpeper's battlefields are among the most pristine and historic in the nation. Transforming this landscape into a state park will produce a heritage tourism destination in the heart of Virginia's Piedmont, with educational, recreational, and economic opportunities that will benefit visitors and local residents alike."

The Culpeper Battlefields State Park initiative is a proposal to create a state park from a critical mass of more than 1,700-acres of preserved lands on the Brandy Station and Cedar Mountain Battlefields. While this landscape's overarching national significance is associated with famous Civil War battles and events, the region is rich in history and culture. The pristine countryside visible today retains the imprint of its first native people and the generations that followed.

State Senator Bryce Reeves, long a champion of a state park in Culpeper County, urged the Governor to make a Culpeper Battlefields State Park a priority for the new administration. He worked tirelessly with the Governor's team to craft the budget amendment submitted to the General Assembly on Friday. According to Reeves, "Culpeper is the ideal location for Virginia's next state park. I look forward to the day when Virginians and visitors from throughout the country can learn about our nation's history by visiting these hallowed grounds."

Joining Senator Reeves in support of a Culpeper Battlefields State Park is a long-standing and bipartisan coalition of state legislators, national and local preservation organizations, and Culpeper government officials. In 2016, the Culpeper County Board of Supervisors and the Culpeper Town Council both passed resolutions endorsing a state battlefield park in Culpeper County.

As submitted, the Governor's budget amendment sets aside $4.93 million in FY2023 for the state park. The amendment indicates the funding "[p]rovides for the

purchase of land to create a new state park in Culpeper County that will have multiple recreational and educational opportunities."

Nestled in the Virginia Piedmont, Culpeper County is widely recognized for its scenic character, natural beauty, and abundant history. Its pristine rivers, rolling landscape, recreational opportunities and unparalleled historic resources make it a desirable location for a state park. Its location between the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers made it an area of strategic importance during the Civil War, and thousands of enslaved peoples crossed its rivers, heading northward to Freedom; some returned as free men to fight for their country on this very soil.

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 54,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War. Learn more at www.battlefields.org.

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Long-Sought Opportunity Emerges at Williamsburg, as American Battlefield Trust Pursues Purchase of James Custis Farm

Just-announced $4.6 million matching grant is the largest in the history of the federal American Battlefield Protection Program

Mary Koik, ABT, November 24, 2021

(Williamsburg, Va.) — The American Battlefield Trust has secured a contract to acquire a 250-acre property on the Williamsburg Battlefield in York County, Va. Known historically as the James Custis Farm, this property is hugely historic with relevance stretching back to 1690, long before the 1862 Civil War battle in which it figured prominently. With its large size, desirable location and development potential, the tract's massive $9.2 million value has posed a challenge to achieving its permanent protection. But buoyed by the prospect of federal and state matching grants — including a landmark $4.6 million sum from the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP), administered by the National Park Service — as well as other anticipated funding sources, the Trust is confident that its preservation is on the horizon.

"Announcing publicly that the Trust is on the cusp of protecting the James Custis Farm is a triumphant achievement," said organization president David Duncan. "Despite all that has been done over many long years to reach this point, the Trust must align further funding sources and private donations to complete the acquisition. Only once ownership is secured and the land is fully paid for will we declare victory."

A major step in the process came yesterday, as ABPP announced that it had awarded the largest battlefield land acquisition grant in its two decade history to the effort. The $4.6 million grant dwarfs the previous record holder, a $2 million sum put toward the Trust's 2006 acquisition of the Slaughter Pen Farm at Fredericksburg, Va. ABPP grants for land acquisition must be purchase property outside National Park boundaries at sites identified as historically significant to the outcome of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 of Civil War through formal studies.

"This grant represents the largest single grant in the American Battlefield Protection Program's history and underscores the value of historic properties and green spaces

outside federal lands. The preservation of this battlefield is the result of nearly a decade of organizing and planning at the local, state and national levels and exemplifies what we can achieve when we work across boundaries," said NPS Deputy Director Shawn Benge.

Such a costly and complex transaction has necessitated a long procedural process before any public announcement could be made. These preliminary steps, including securing speculative matching grants from the state's Virginia Battlefield Preservation Fund and Surry Skiffes mitigation funding, as well as negotiation of a substantial landowner donation toward the effort.

From the 1690s to the mid nineteenth-century, a series of owners operated the land as a slave plantation. It was originally known as "Fouace's Quarter" after Stephen Fouace, a French Huguenot and one of the original trustees of the College of William and Mary, but later associated with Carter's Grove Plantation. Enslaved people produced liquor, tobacco, wheat, wool, butter, cider, pork, veal, mutton, and livestock on the property. Before the outbreak of the Civil War, James W. Custis, who served in the Virginia State Senate and House of Delegates, operated the site. Understudied or undiscovered archaeological resources, including burial sites, on the property may help us acknowledge and interpret the lives of the enslaved men and women who lived and labored here for 150 years.

This property is also a battleground of national significance, where Union soldiers and enslaved Virginians turned the tide of the Battle of Williamsburg and helped build public support for emancipation. In 1861, Confederates built 14 major military earthworks as a second defensive line in the Peninsula, with No. 11 on the site. During the Peninsula Campaign in the spring of 1862, Union forces moved to threaten the Confederate capital of Richmond from the southeast, with the Battle of Williamsburg as the first pitched battle of this offensive. On the morning of May 5, 1862, members of the local enslaved population — who had likely been impressed into building the defensive works — notified the Union army that two redoubts, numbered 11 and 14, were unoccupied. Due to their guidance, Brig. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock directed two batteries of artillery to these positions, outflanking the Confederate forces. Despite being temporarily pushed back by an attack that swept across this property, Hancock's forces were able to and reestablish their line around Redoubt 11, repulsing the Confederates and earning the commander his sobriquet "Hancock the Superb." Following the battle, the Union army used the nearby Custis farm buildings as a field hospital.

According to the Civil War Fortifications Study Group, Redoubt 11 on the property is one of the best-preserved redoubts from the early war period in Virginia. Moreover, according to historian Glenn David Brasher, whose The Peninsula Campaign & The Necessity of Emancipation received awards from the Center for Civil War Research and praise from the Journal of American History: "There are few battlefields more appropriate than Williamsburg for telling the story of the military roles that enslaved African Americans played even before the Emancipation Proclamation in saving the Union and freeing their people from bondage."

Acquisition of the James Custis Farm will not be the American Battlefield Trust's first achievement at Williamsburg. Last December, the organization declared victory on protection

of a 29-acre tract at the Bloody Ravine, acquired from The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation with grants from ABPP and the Commonwealth of Virginia, plus donations from Trust members. Another major Trust acquisition occurred in 2015 with Anheuser Busch's donation of 65 acres, adjacent to the James Custis Farm.
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 nearly 54,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War. Learn more at www.battlefields.org.

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You can help with the Great Backyard Bird Count at Gettysburg National Military Park on February 19

A red tailed hawk sits on the top rail of a fence on the Gettysburg battlefield. NPS Photo

Jason Martz, NPS, February 14, 2022

Gettysburg National Military Park and the South Mountain Audubon Society invite the public to participate in a free guided bird walk on February 19 at the Emmanuel Harman farm, a battlefield site that is the former Gettysburg Country Club. Park and meet at 9 am by the tennis courts/outdoor pool complex at 730 Chambersburg Rd, just west of Gettysburg. Easiest access to this parking lot is from Country Club Ln. Hike will be about one and a half miles in length over flat terrain. Wildlife specialists will offer information and help with identification of birds wintering in the Gettysburg area.

Birders of all levels are welcome. Bring binoculars and guidebooks if you have them. Be prepared for winter conditions and dress appropriately. In case of rain or snow the walk will be postponed to the following day, February 20 at the same time and location.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is a nationwide free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at birdcount.org. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world.

Data from this event will help scientists gain a better understanding of the distribution and abundance of birds. Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share.

Gettysburg National Military Park preserves, protects and interprets for this and future generations the resources associated with the 1863 Battle of Gettysburg, during the American Civil War, the Soldiers' National

Cemetery, and their commemorations. Learn more at www.nps.gov/gett.

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The Tournament of Roses Parade and the Battle of Missionary Ridge

By Norman Dasinger, Jr., Blue and Gray Education Society February 4, 2022

Rose Bowl float

Located at Rossville, Georgia, just 3 miles north of the Chickamauga Battlefield, sits the Iowa Monument. The 72-foot-tall memorial stands where Union troops under Gen. Joseph Hooker attacked the southern flank of Confederate positions along Missionary Ridge on November 25, 1863. Although the units and soldiers honored on the monument did not necessarily fight in the area where the shrine is located, the Iowa veterans wanted to place their monument within Ross's Gap. The reason being: The fond memories of the grand review the Iowans held at Rossville following the victory and rout of Gen. Braxton Bragg's Confederate Army around Chattanooga in late November of 1863.

On November 20, 1906, a delegation from Iowa dedicated their unique monument. The designer was the Van Amringe Company from Boston, Massachusetts. Their creation included a pedestal with an outline of Iowa with three granite statues at the corners and a shaft in the form of a square column that supports a statue of a Union color bearer. Recognized on the monument are 10 separate Iowa regiments and the 1st Battery. One of the names listed on the base of the memorial is Col. Jabez Banbury, commander of the 5th Infantry.

Col. Jabez Banbury, a Civil War veteran and early Pasadena settler | public domain

Banbury was born in England and came to America as a young man, settling in Marshalltown, Iowa. Before the Civil War, he served as the County Auditor, U.S. Revenue Collector and School System Treasurer. In the summer of 1861, he joined Company D of the 5th Iowa, as a 1st lieutenant. His capture of the flag of the 40th Mississippi and 100 prisoners at the battle of Corinth, Mississippi in 1862, led to his promotion to colonel. Banbury was in command of the 5th Iowa during the Chattanooga Campaign. In 1874, he moved to California and built one of the first three homes in Pasadena. He became one of the town's leading citizens and was even elected

to the state legislature. His legacy, however, was being a founding member of the Pasadena Valley Hunt Club in 1890.

Many of the club's early members were like Jabez: migrants from the East and Midwest. In order to showcase the beauty and comfortable weather in Pasadena and California in general, the club organized a parade. They began with horse-drawn carriages covered in flowers. They added games and a polo match and the first year attracted over 2,000 to their exposition. Soon, marching bands were added and also floats. By 1895, the event had grown, and the founders decided it would be best to form a separate non-profit, called the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association. Coincidently, it was Union Col. Jabez Banbury's home where the founders met and brainstormed their initial parade idea.

To add even more to this interesting historical story, today, the former site of the Banbury home serves as the headquarters of the modern Tournament of Roses Association.

The Colonel J. Banbury home on South Orange Grove Avenue, which he built in 1876. This was the second home built in Pasadena. | public domain

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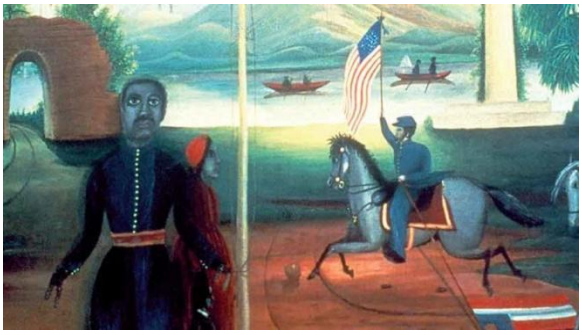
The Rise and Fall of Martin Delany, the U.S. Army's Visionary First Black Officer



Symbolic Tribute: Martin Delany is aptly the focus of this ca. 1863 lithograph, Allegory of Freedom, but the meaning of some of the symbols shown, such as the two boats and obelisk, is not completely evident. The banner being dragged behind a horse appears to be an inaccurate depiction of the Confederacy's first national flag. (Granger, NYC)

Ron Soodalter, HistoryNet
March 2019

Martin Robison Delany was an extraordinary man—author, educator, poet, abolitionist, newspaper editor, explorer, inventor, physician, judge, and champion of African American rights. And though he was also the first Black field officer in the history of the U.S. Army—appointed by President Abraham Lincoln himself—his legacy has in many ways been lost to history.

Pathbreaker A carte-de-visite of Martin Delany as major of the 104th USCT. (National Park Service Photo)

Born in 1812 to a free mother and a slave father in what was then Charles Town, Va., Delany began preaching equal rights for African Americans as early as the 1830s, and for decades advocated the establishment of an independent homeland for America's Black population. Prior to the Civil War, he traveled to Africa, explored regions of Nigeria, and made a treaty with the local chiefs for the settlement of African-American émigrés. He partnered in Frederick Douglass' newspaper, *The North Star*, and authored several books and treatises on the "Destiny of the Colored People of the United States."

When John Brown planned his ill-fated 1859 attack on Harpers Ferry, he reached out to Delany for counsel. For decades, Martin Delany was globally recognized as one of the nation's foremost African American spokesmen and activists. Yet with one pivotal political decision, he eventually wrecked his own career and doomed himself to historical oblivion.

Although Delany's upbringing was humble, he descended from African royalty, according to family oral history. When Martin was 10, his mother—in order to avoid official sanctions for teaching her children to read and write—moved him and his four siblings to Chambersburg, Pa., soon joined by his father, who had managed to purchase his own freedom. At 19, Delany relocated to Pittsburgh, where he attended school and took an interest in medicine. During the Pittsburgh cholera epidemic of 1833, he apprenticed himself to a physician as a "bleeder, cupper, and leecher." He would maintain a successful practice for years.

From early youth, Delany dedicated himself to the fight for racial freedom and full civil rights for America's Blacks. It became his life's driving purpose. In 1831, at the country's first National Negro Convention in Philadelphia, Delany was among 38 free Black delegates from seven states. Two months later, a more assertive group—the Colored Citizens of Pittsburgh—met under the leadership of Black businessman John B. Vashon. An uncompromising militant, Vashon was a courageous activist who proved a great inspiration for Delany.

Growing increasingly vocal, Delany founded and led various African-American youth organizations promoting education in Pittsburgh. In September 1843, he founded *The Mystery*—the first African-American newspaper west of the Allegheny Mountains—for which he served as reporter, editor, and publisher. He used the paper to advertise Black-owned businesses, warn his readers about the presence of slave catchers, and rage against racial inequity. He hammered home the fact that America's Blacks went unrepresented in Congress and the courts, leaving them no legal recourse, even though "our hoary headed father or mother may be maltreated, abused or

murdered, our wives and sisters ravished before our eyes!" He railed against white churches that tolerated slavery. "[T]he very man who hands you the bread of communion," he wrote, "has sold your daughter away from you."

For decades, Delany was globally recognized as one of the nation's foremost African American spokesmen and activists.

When the Mexican War began in 1846—President James K. Polk's thinly veiled strategy of extending the United States' domain to the Pacific—Delany editorialized against it, attacking the doctrine of Manifest Destiny as both imperialistic and racist. He was absolutely fearless. "I care but little what white men think of what I say, write or do," he declared. "My sole desire is to so benefit the colored people; this being done, I am satisfied—the opinion of every white person in the country or the world to the contrary notwithstanding."

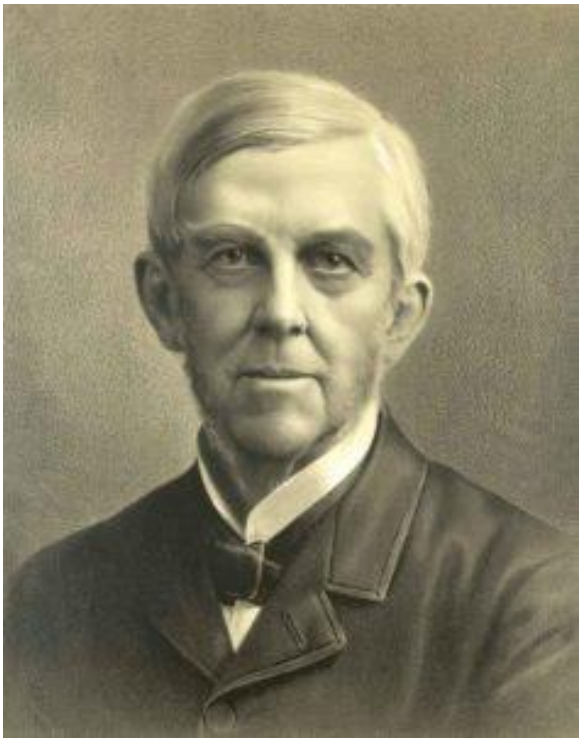
All aspects of Delany's life conveyed unflagging devotion to his cause. That included the names of his 11 children—seven of whom survived—such as Toussaint L'Ouverture, Ethiopia, Rameses, Alexander Dumas, and Faustin Soulouque, in tribute to the emperor of Haiti.

In his mid-30s, Delany developed a close relationship with the famed Frederick Douglass. A dynamic writer and speaker, Douglass established The North Star in 1847 and invited Delany to join him in its publication. For the next year and a half, Delany lectured, wrote, and traveled on behalf of the paper and in pursuit of civil rights for his people.

Delany had never abandoned his pursuit of medicine, and he soon left *The North Star* to further his medical career. Douglass used his influence to convince Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., dean, to admit his friend and two other African Americans to Harvard Medical School. Harvard's white students objected, however, and petitioned the medical faculty to have them removed. "[W]e deem the admission of blacks to the medical Lectures," they wrote, "highly detrimental to the interests, the welfare, of the Institution of which we are members, calculated alike to lower its reputation in this and other parts of the country." The teaching staff concurred; Holmes bowed to faculty pressure and expelled the three at the end of their first term. Undeterred, Delany continued to practice medicine all his life.

Douglass would remain Delany's friend, but Martin's radical approach to Black rights and unilateral equality outstripped even the renowned writer and activist, ultimately driving a wedge between the two. At no time was this more sorely felt than during Delany's vigorous pursuit of a homeland to resettle America's Black population.

Well into his 40s, Delany found himself abandoning the hope of emancipation and equality in his own country. "I…would as willingly live among white men as Black," he wrote, "if I had an equal possession and enjoyment of privileges….But I must admit I have no hopes in this country—no confidence in the American people." He began formulating a plan to establish a homeland outside the United States.



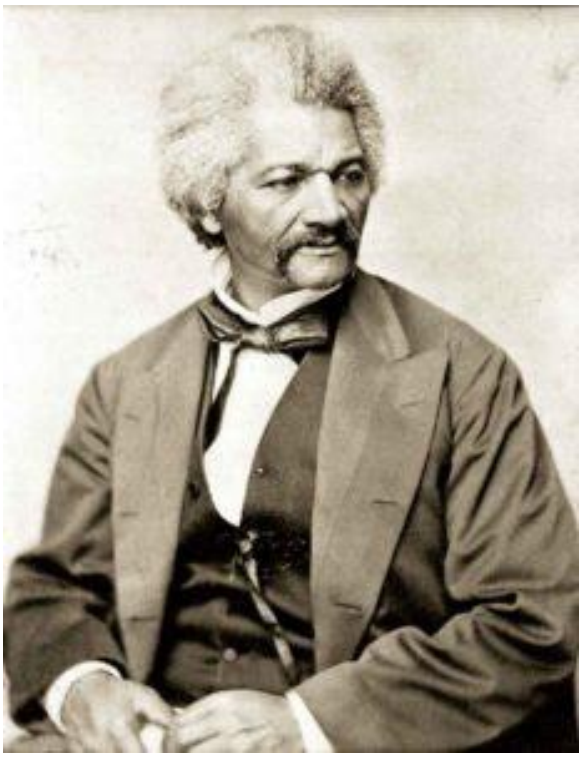
American Icons: Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. faced outrage from white students for his decision to admit Delany and two other African Americans to Harvard Medical School, at the behest of Frederick Douglass (below). The experiment lasted only one term, but it did not put an end to Delany's medical career. (Library of Congress)

He was not the first to entertain the prospect of racial separation. In 1816, political luminaries, including Senators Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, Chief Justice John Marshall, President James Monroe, future President Andrew Jackson, and former President James Madison, created the American Colonization Society—an organization whose espoused purpose was the "repatriation" in Africa of America's free-born and manumitted Blacks. They selected what they deemed a suitable location on Africa's west coast, named it "Liberia"—Land of Freedom—and called the capital "Monrovia," after the president. Over the next few decades, Black colonists sailed to Liberia, where they endured deprivation, starvation, deadly diseases, and attacks by indigenous tribes.

Most African Americans rejected the notion of leaving America under the banner of the ACS. Wrote Douglass: "[W]e claim no affinity with Africa. This is our home…the land of our forefathers….The best blood of Virginia courses through our veins."

Delany disagreed. Although he was also strongly opposed to any attempt to create a Black homeland sponsored by America's ruling whites, most of whom were slaveholders who believed free Blacks would incite slave uprisings, Delany supported the idea of establishing a Black nation elsewhere—preferably in Africa, but possibly in Canada or Latin America. When the first of Delany's books—*The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States, Politically Considered*—was published in 1852, it quickly became a rallying cry for those Blacks who had lost hope of achieving equality in America.

Delany's reputation grew in the decade before the Civil War. In 1854, he organized Cleveland's four-day National Emigration Convention. It was attended by 145 advocates, 29 of whom were women—including his wife, Catherine. At the conference, Delany read his paper, "Political Destiny of the Colored Race on the American Continent," espousing a position that went beyond that of other Black leaders. Among its points, the convention resolved "that, as men and equals, we demand every political right, privilege and position to which the whites are eligible in the United States, and we will either attain to these, or accept nothing."



Frederick Douglass (Library of Congress)

These incendiary comments challenged the thinking of even the most progressive African Americans. At this point, Douglass distanced himself even further from his former partner, writing, "I thank God for making me a man, but Delany always thanks Him for making him a Black man."

By mid-decade, Delany saw nothing on the national horizon to convince him that either Congress or the states were planning anything positive for Black Americans. Already bitter over such developments as the 1845 annexation of Texas as a slave state, the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law, and his ouster from Harvard, he grew increasingly disheartened over the lack of support from such noted friends and colleagues as Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison.

Delany moved to Canada, where he continued to promote his plans for a homeland for ex-slaves. In 1859, he traveled to Africa to serve as commissioner of the latest emigration convention, and to scout a suitable site for his colony. He explored various regions, focusing mainly on today's Nigeria, and signing treaties with local chiefs. As one biographer observed, "He…led the first party of scientific exploration to Africa from the American continent." From this experience came his 1861 book *Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party*.

To raise money for his plan—and in response to the runaway bestseller *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which he pilloried as offensive and unrealistic—Delany published *Blake, or the Huts of America, a serialized novel (1859-62)* in which he described his own travels through the slave South. "My soul is vexed within me so," he wrote. "To think that I'm a slave, I've now resolved to strike the blow, for Freedom or the grave."

By the time Delany returned home in December 1860, South Carolina had seceded. Although funding for Delany's colony was in place and a number of potential settlers stood ready to sail for Africa, he saw for the first time that emancipation at home was possible and decided to remain in the United States and help in the fight for liberation.

Throughout the war, Delany campaigned for enlistment of Black troops and was responsible for recruiting thousands from the Northeast and Midwest. In 1863, he traveled through Ohio, Connecticut, and Rhode Island on recruiting campaigns. His own son, Toussaint L'Ouverture, would fight with the immortal 54th Massachusetts Infantry.

In February 1865, Delany's reputation earned him a meeting with President Abraham Lincoln, to whom he proposed an entirely Black corps commanded by Black officers—a Corps d'Afrique—to be utilized to its fullest capability. As Delany later recalled the conversation, Lincoln began by

asking what he could do for his visitor. "'Nothing, Mr. President,' I replied, 'but I've come to propose something to you, which I think will be beneficial to this nation in this critical hour of her peril.'"

Lincoln was so impressed with Delany that he sent a note to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, urging, "Do not fail to have an interview with this most extraordinary and intelligent Black man." There is no record Stanton complied; however, about three weeks after their conversation, Lincoln commissioned Delany a major in the U.S. Colored Troops, and on February 27, Stanton assigned him to Maj. Gen. Rufus Saxton, superintendent of recruitment and organization of colored troops in the Department of the South. Delany approached the assignment with his customary dynamism, vigorously recruiting Black men into the ranks. When the war ended a few months later, up to 180,000 African Americans had volunteered for service, and Delany was the U.S. Army's highest-ranking Black field officer in uniform. (Francis E. Dumas, one-eighth African American, had been promoted to major in the 2nd Regiment, Louisiana Native Guards earlier in the war but had resigned his commission in July 1863. The 1st Louisiana Native Guard eventually became the USCT's 73rd Infantry.)

In April 1865, after the Union capture of Charleston, S.C., the War Department invited Delany—along with luminaries like Henry Ward Beecher and William Lloyd Garrison—to speak at the ceremony marking the re-raising of the Stars and Stripes over Fort Sumter. No longer needed to recruit, Delany began working with the Bureau of Refugees. On July 15, 1865, he was assigned to the 104th USCT, but remained on detached duty with the Freedmen's Bureau until he mustered out on August 5, 1868. Over the next few years, he served as a lieutenant colonel in the South Carolina Militia, and was a spokesman for the Republican Party. But his political fortunes soon changed.

'I…would as willingly live among white men as Black if i had an equal possession and enjoyment of privileges.' -Maj. Martin Delany

In 1869, Delany applied to newly elected President Ulysses S. Grant for the position of minister to Liberia. Neither Grant nor Secretary of State Hamilton Fish would respond. He then wrote to Reconstruction South Carolina Governor and former Union Brevet Maj. Gen. Robert K. Scott, requesting the relatively minor post of jury commissioner of Charleston County, but Scott gave the post to another applicant.

Delany ran unsuccessfully for lieutenant governor of South Carolina in 1874. He supported white office seekers who had made promises on behalf of the state's Black population—promises the officials invariably ignored once elected. He was appointed a trial justice, but in 1876, he was tried on trumped-up, politically motivated charges of "defrauding a church." Although the facts of the case should have absolved Delany of blame, he was convicted and imprisoned. Despite receiving a gubernatorial pardon, he lost his judgeship.

Having grown increasingly frustrated with the rampant political corruption that undermined Reconstruction, as well as the federal government's failure to honor its commitment to freed slaves, Delany in 1876 did the unthinkable: He switched parties, leaving the party of Lincoln to support the Democratic gubernatorial candidacy of former Confederate general—and onetime slaveowner—Wade Hampton III. His reasoning was simple: He saw Hampton as the best hope for his people. Hampton had repeatedly stated that if elected, "I shall

know no party, nor race, in the administration of the law." Delany signed on.

It did not help Delany's image or reputation that he found himself sharing support for Hampton with such men as "Pitchfork Ben" Tillman, who once wrote, "We of the South have never recognized the right of the negro to govern white men, and we never will. We have never believed him to be the equal of the white man…"

Delany convinced enough Black voters to help swing the election in Wade Hampton's favor, despite the ostracism they faced within their own communities.

Delany threw himself into the campaign energetically, using his powerful oratory on behalf of the candidate. The results were not always peaceful. Riots were started by men of both races and parties, leaving dead and injured in their wake. Perhaps the worst incident took place in July 1876 in the African American community of Hamburg, where hundreds of armed whites attacked Black members of the National Guard. Besides those who were killed in the one-sided fight, four of the captured Black men were cold-bloodedly executed. The invaders then looted the town.

Unfazed by threats to his safety, Delany spoke eloquently of the corruption, the broken promises, and the hopelessness of supporting the Republican Party. For the first time, however, a majority of the state's Black population stood against him. The editor of the Charleston News and Courier accurately predicted, "Maj. Delany will, doubtless, be soundly abused for talking plainly to his people…."

On October 14, 1876, just three weeks before the election, Delany was scheduled to speak at a Republican rally on Edisto Island, near Charleston. He and other Democrats of both races had been promised they would be allowed to address the crowd of predominantly Black Republicans without disruption or violence. A crowd of some 500–600 Black Republicans, later described by a News and Courier reporter on hand as "the most uncouth, savage and uncivilized that I have ever seen," had forced passage to the island for the express purpose of "cleaning out those Democrats." According to the reporter: "As soon as Col. Delany mounted the wagon, the Negroes started to beat their drums and left in a body. They would not listen to 'De damned N—— Democrat.'"

Contentious Pact: Civil unrest in South Carolina, like the 1876 Hamburg Massacre, was constant during Reconstruction. Delany's alliance with former Rebel Wade Hampton III (shown shaking the hand of an "influential colored voter") angered many fellow Blacks. (Granger, NYC)

When quiet was finally restored, Delany was invited to go on with his speech; he refused, stating that he had spoken before nobility in Europe and Africa and had never suffered such disrespect as that shown him today by members of his own race. He surrendered the platform to a Charleston teacher, but before the man could begin, someone in the

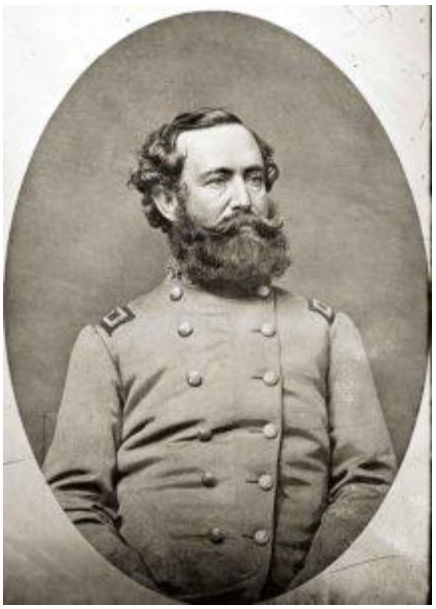
audience, mistaking him for Delany, fired a shot. Though the bullet missed, the rally was over.

Two days later, October 16, Democrats, Black and white, held a rally of their own near Cainhoy, a small community 10 miles upriver from Charleston. Scheduled to speak, Delany was confronted by an armed mob of Black Republicans, most militia members. After the speeches began, shots from the crowd rang out. When the smoke cleared, seven of the unarmed Democrats were dead (six of those white) and 16 wounded. Delany had barely escaped with his life.

Political and racial violence would erupt elsewhere in South Carolina during the remaining days of the campaign. The day after the Cainhoy Massacre, Governor Daniel H. Chamberlain declared martial law, with President Grant's support. When the votes of the November 7 election were counted, Hampton emerged victorious. Amazingly, Delany had managed to convince enough Black voters to help swing the election, despite the ostracism they faced within their own communities.

Hampton rewarded Delany with an important judgeship in Charleston and honored his campaign promises, including dispensing with the practice of peonage. When disgruntled constituents sent him a petition objecting to Delany's appointment, Hampton stood firm. Nevertheless, a number of African Americans felt betrayed by Delany's political about-face.

In 1878, Delany revisited his old scheme of establishing an African American expatriate colony. With the ACS now bankrupt and out of the picture, he personally co-sponsored the Liberian Exodus Joint Stock Steamship Company. The enterprise proved a dismal failure.



Wade Hampton III (Library of Congress)

The following year, Delany wrote *Principia of Ethnology: The Origin of Races and Color*, which forcefully advocated maintaining the purity of the races. By this time, however, Delany's political base, which had withered when he shifted allegiances, had further deteriorated with the advent of a new generation of Black leaders. The aging activist resumed his medical practice, while lobbying unsuccessfully for political appointment. Still dreaming of establishing a homeland in Africa, Delany died on January 24, 1885, at the age of 72.

Martin Robison Delany was a complex man. As one biographer put it, his "political trajectory through abolitionisms and emigrationisms, from Republicans to Democrats, dissolves any simple attempts to fix him as consistently either conservative or radical." Sadly, history forgot about Martin Delany for a century. Indeed, in 1936, African American scholar and historian W.E.B. DuBois observed, "His was a magnificent life, yet how many of us have heard of him?" It wasn't until the 1970s, during a period of increased African American awareness, that his legacy was

revived, and he was touted as the "Father of Black Nationalism."

At the end of his life, Martin Delany saw himself as a failure. Ultimately, however, although his efforts to establish a homeland for African Americans and to achieve parity at home came to naught, he was unflagging in his crusade to bring racial equality into the lives and minds of Americans. In the words of one biographer, "He gave black pride existence."

Ron Soodalter, a regular America's Civil War contributor, writes from Cold Spring, N.Y.

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No Man Left Behind: A Union Soldier Risked it All To Save Wounded Comrades

Lieutenant Lemuel Crocker persisted in rescuing his fallen comrades despite threats from his superiors and while under fire from enemy troops on the banks of the Potomac. Ronn Palm Museum

John Banks. HistoryNet December 2021

Looking like 400 miles of bad road, I sit at a table outside the Sweet Shop Bakery in Shepherdstown, exhausted and achy but eager to walk the West Virginia town's Civil War battlefield. On a Nashville-to-Philadelphia round trip, I have already visited a prison where Al Capone was incarcerated; a tavern on the site of a deadly Civil War munitions factory explosion; a rough neighborhood where the more adventuresome may examine the head of George Meade's favorite horse; and world-famous Pat's King of Steaks, where I ordered a sweet pepper-covered, heartburn-inducing steak sandwich.
Then a helmet-clad man on a whirring, humming Segway rolls up, looking like he means business.

"Are you John Banks?" he asks.

"Yes," I say, visions of Paul Blart in *Mall Cop* swirling in my head.

"I'm Steve Alemar."

He's just the man I want to see.

Steve Alemar safeguards Shepherdstown, W.Va., as a parking enforcement officer and president of the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association. (Photo by John Banks)

Alemar, the part-time parking enforcement officer in Shepherdstown (pop. about 1,800), is president of the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association. He has secured permission for me to visit privately owned battleground on the bluffs above the Potomac River. My aim: Walk in the footsteps of 118th Pennsylvania Lieutenant Lemuel Crocker, whose heroics on September 20, 1862, in the final Maryland Campaign battle should be legendary.

Alemar, a 67-year-old Vietnam veteran and former national park ranger, quickly earns a

spot on my "Compelling/Interesting Characters From Civil War Trips" list—a lengthy roll call that also includes an ex-CIA station chief whose ancestor fought at Antietam; a former Marine/FBI agent who helped save a battlefield; a man who left a job in law enforcement to mow hallowed ground; a woman who has a framed Oreo cookie with frosting shaped like the profile of Abraham Lincoln hanging in her Civil War-era home; and a descendant of Confederate soldiers who seems obsessed with "snake-handling churches."

In six years on his parking enforcement gig, Alemar has seen a little bit of everything in this quaint, college town along the Potomac River—flashers, drunks, bottle throwers, and other belligerents. A skin cancer survivor ("508 stitches in my face"), he uses the Segway on the job because he has a heart condition and a right knee replacement. I am tempted to ask for a spin on the thing, but there's a battlefield to see. We agree to meet in 90 minutes on River Road, at battlefield markers near the ruins of a cement mill building that predates the war.

But first I order another cup of Joe in the Sweet Shop Bakery, asking the woman behind the counter if she's creeped out because the building was used as a Confederate hospital in 1862 in the aftermath of the Battle of Antietam, the war's bloodiest single day. "My own house is haunted," she tells me, "so it doesn't really bother me."

And then I am off…

I have advanced on Shepherdstown from all directions over the decades—by car from my one-time home in Martinsburg, W.Va., to cover football games at Shepherd University as a newspaperman long ago; by bike from the nearby Antietam battlefield in Maryland; and by wading the Potomac, an exhilarating experience if one knows how to swim and can keep an iPhone from plunging into the river. In the early 1980s, a newspaper pal and I used a cheap metal detector to scour a Shepherdstown hillside for battle relics. Our haul of pull tabs from beer cans was stellar.

Like John Buford at Gettysburg, I scout the ground along River Road, roughly 15 yards from the Potomac. Oh my, what a treacherous place this was for the rookie 118th Pennsylvania, the "Corn Exchange" regiment from Philadelphia. Atop the bluffs, the Pennsylvanians fought with defective 1853 pattern Enfields, which proved useless. Then "beaten, dismayed, wild with fright," Crocker and others hastily retreated under fire across a mill dam to the Maryland side of the Potomac.

In the distance behind me, barely in view between a stand of trees, are remains of that dam, stretching across the river; to my front are steep, craggy bluffs from which some 118th Pennsylvania soldiers plunged to their deaths as they hastily retreated. Others huddled along the river by Boteler's Cement Mill kilns, where some were killed by friendly artillery fire from the Maryland side of the Potomac. You can see those ruins, too, if you're mentally prepared for the copperheads.

Imagine the fright of those soldiers as they lay near the riverside, their own cannon booming in the distance and enemy troops nearby. "A cry of horror went up from our men, heard across the river," 118th Pennsylvania Captain Frank Donaldson wrote about the awful effects of Union artillery fire on their own troops.

Some 118th Pennsylvania Infantry soldiers plunged to their deaths from the bluffs above the Potomac River. (Photo by John Banks)

In one of the gutsiest moves of the war, Lemuel Crocker rescued wounded comrades and retrieved bodies of some of the unit's dead, disobeying orders. In the army less than a month, the 118th Pennsylvania lieutenant, "absolutely covered with blood and dirt," was carrying a soldier to the riverbank when he was approached by an aide for 5th Corps commander Fitz John Porter. Stop, he told Crocker, or a battery will open fire to persuade you. "Shell and be damned," replied Crocker, who continued his noble work on the Virginia side of the river. (Remember: This didn't become West Virginia until June 1863.)

When confronted by a Confederate general and his staff, Crocker—a large, muscular man with a thick beard—told them "humanity and decency demanded" that Union dead and wounded be cared for properly. And so this Civil War bad ass proceeded with his rescue and recovery mission.

Two days after the battle, Crocker—whose only punishment for disobeying orders was a reprimand—described his harrowing battle experience in a letter to his parents. "As we got to the river- side we had to go near a half a mile to a dam over which our men were attempting to cross; and to make this dam many a man lost his life, as the rebels were stationed on the bluff taking deliberate aim during the whole fight," the 33-year-old soldier wrote.

"I was cool and collected during my travel by the riverside," he continued, "but when I reach this dam, I think my cheek blanched, for it seemed to me certain death to cross it, as the rebels had got into a large brick building below the dam, and the main body above on the bluff, picking off our poor fellows." Ravaged by time, nature, and graffiti, that brick building used by Rebel soldiers still stands.

The ruins of a cement mill where some of the 118th soldiers sought shelter from friendly fire during the Battle of Shepherdstown. (Photo by John Banks)

After Crocker's death in Buffalo in 1885, apparently from a stroke, no mention appeared in local newspapers of his long-ago heroism. A respected businessman, "he was noted for his liberality, public spirit and kindheartedness," an obituary noted. "He had many warm friends by whom his sudden taking off will be greatly deplored." Crocker, buried in Buffalo's Forest Lawn Cemetery, did not receive a Medal of Honor for his Shepherdstown valor—an egregious oversight someone must rectify.

"The daring of this man," Donaldson wrote about Crocker's Shepherdstown heroism, "is without precedent."

On this muggy afternoon, I'm eager to commune with the spirit of the man, to touch his soul, to conjure visions of this brave soldier. I'm also eager to avoid the bears, coyotes, and snakes that are said to lurk in the woods on my route to the top of the bluff. "Just use your common sense," Alemar told me in a pre-visit phone call, clearly not knowing whom he was speaking with.

Minutes after examining a sliver of ground along the river saved by the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association, Alemar arrives on River Road in his black truck. Only a few cars pass by us on this relatively remote stretch of road. In the distance, a deer bounds through the woods. "I used to love to come here," he says. "It's so peaceful."

Alemar tells me about remains of Confederate artillery emplacements in the woods. We discuss non-Civil War topics, too—his mom was a secretary for FBI director J. Edgar Hoover; his dad was employed by the Office of Strategic Services, the precursor to the CIA. Alemar, a former U.S. Postal Service employee, also served as a ranger for two years in the 1980s at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, an especially moving experience for a veteran.

Alemar also recounts his own life-altering war experience.

On October 1, 1972, he was an 18-year-old sailor aboard the USS *Newport News* off the coast of South Vietnam. About 1 a.m., the 21,000-ton heavy cruiser was firing on enemy targets when an eight-inch shell in the center gun of Turret 2 prematurely exploded, killing 20 and injuring 36 aboard. The battleship became a horror show of fire, thick, green smoke, and burning flesh. "I don't remember how long I was in there," a sailor recalled decades later about the scene at Turret 2, "but I'm guessing 15–20 minutes and then I was relieved. I [spent] 34 years in the fire department, and I don't recall ever being as scared."

"We were young that night," another remembered years later, "but we aged fast."

'for future generations' The Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission and Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association have helped save approximately 118 acres of the site of the Battle of Shepherdstown. (Photo by John Banks)

Alemar, who was above Turret 2 when the disaster occurred, suffered a crushed ankle and from smoke inhalation. The battered *Newport News*—"The Gray Ghost of the East Coast" —finally made it back to its Norfolk, Va., base on Christmas Eve. The memory of that awful day still day cuts deeply for Alemar: "Those things never go away," he says.

Armed with a Tennessee walking stick, a new iPhone, and curiosity, I eye my route through the woods to the bluffs above the Potomac. Alemar, who stays behind, offers instructions and insect repellent. There are ticks up there, too.

And so I begin my climb in search of a hero… while leaving another one behind. ✯

For the record, John Banks has never ridden a Segway. Shortly after writing this column, Alemar crashed while aboard his, suffering several injuries and ending his short law enforcement career. He is still recovering.

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What Happened at the First Battle Between Grant and Lee?

The 140th New York Zouaves charge across Saunder's Field into a hornet's nest of Confederates. The action on May 5, 1864, opened the Battle of the Wilderness. Keith Rocco/Bridgeman Images

Rick Beard, HistoryNet, February 2022

The Army of the Potomac's passage across the Rapidan River in early May 1864 promised the first battlefield confrontation between Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee. The stakes could scarcely have been higher: a Union defeat might well lead to an armistice and defeat for Abraham Lincoln in the fall presidential elections.

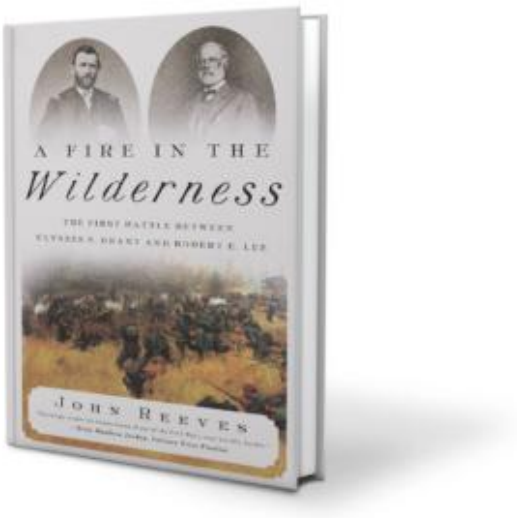
A Fire in the Wilderness offers a compelling narrative of the Overland Campaign's first clash of arms, characterized by one Union officer as "a useless battle, fought with great loss and no result." Federal casualties, more than one and half times greater than Confederate losses, offered numbing proof of Grant's plan "to hammer continuously at the Armed forces of the enemy…until by mere attrition…there should be nothing left to him but…submission."

Reeves skillfully deploys first-person accounts of the frightfully brutal battle. A year earlier, much of the fighting during the Chancellorsville Campaign had been at close quarters in the a dense second-growth forest of the Wilderness. Lee knew that confronting Grant here would neutralize the Union's advantages of men and matériel.

The fighting on May 5, Reeves argues, proved Lee's prescience. Union troops, many of them inexperienced replacements, were thrust into battle in piecemeal fashion, suffering heavy casualties and too often retreating chaotically. Reeves attributes this counterproductive strategy to a high command plagued by friction between Grant and Maj. Gen. George Gordon Meade, and the resulting poor communications with their subordinates.

Reeves clearly faults Grant but relies on the general's contemporaries to make his case. "It was the beginning," wrote a Union staff officer years later, "of a reckless…way of fighting battles by hurrying into action one division, one brigade, or even a single regiment at a time, which characterized every contest from the crossing of the Rapidan to the battle at Cold Harbor."

Despite the first day's lost opportunities for the Federals, Reeves suggests, "There was something remorseless even in Grant's mistakes." The overnight hours offered horrific fires in the heavy underbrush that killed wounded soldiers unable to flee.



A Fire in the Wilderness: The First Battle Between Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee
By John Reeves
Pegasus Books, 2021, $28.95

By May 6, Reeves believes Lee had begun to fear he had underestimated Grant's relentlessness, and momentarily betrayed his desperation by recklessly deciding to lead a charge by Texas troops. Only the intercession of his junior officers kept the general from risking his life. The wounding of James Longstreet somewhat fortuitously blunted a Confederate frontal attack that "ought never, never have been made," one of Lee's most loyal staff officers critically noted. "It was wasting good soldiers whom we could not spare."

On May 7, rather than continue to attack entrenched Confederate forces in the Wilderness, Grant sought to outmaneuver Lee with a night march to Spotsylvania Court House designed to position his forces between the Rebel army and Richmond, however. The attempt failed: Lee's army arrived there first, and on May 12 one of the war's costliest battles—the Bloody Angle—ensued.

Throughout his book, Reeves utilizes personal experiences to great effect; the fall from grace of Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren, the hero of Little Round Top, is especially engaging. Although the inclusion of maps in the text would clarify a confusing fight, their absence detracts very little from an exciting, well-written account of the first clash between Grant and Lee.

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