



THE OLD LINER



Trust Marks 161st Anniversary of the Battle of Antietam with Avey Farm Victory

Nearly 150 Acres of Maryland Campaign Battlefield Saved with the Help of Donors and Members Includes Historic Farmhouse

Mary Koik, ABT, September 15, 2023

(Washington, D.C.) — As the nation commemorates the 161st anniversary of the Battle of Antietam — America’s Bloodiest Day — the American Battlefield Trust is declaring victory in its efforts to save nearly 150 acres of battlefield land associated with the Maryland Campaign, including the Jacob Avey Farm, some of Antietam’s most hallowed ground.



Avey Farm, Antietam Battlefield, Sharpsburg, Md.

“Just a few months ago, we asked our members and preservation friends to help us save a key 20-acre portion of Antietam’s Jacob Avey Farm, where some of the fiercest fighting of the Battle of Antietam took place and where Confederate soldiers were buried after the battle, according to the recently discovered Elliot Burial Map,” said Trust

President David Duncan. “They answered our call and now this sacred ground is saved.”

The land also includes the historic Avey farmhouse, where the Avey family lived as the Battle of Antietam raged in Sharpsburg, Md., September 17, 1862. Like many civilians in Sharpsburg, Jacob Avey Sr. suffered great financial loss due to the battle. Heavy fighting took place on his land, and an errant Union shell penetrated his house. His claims for reimbursement from the Federal government, like many others in Sharpsburg, were rejected, despite his feeding Union soldiers and caring for them in his house.

The Trust is also claiming victory on six additional acres at Antietam, originally part of the historic Reel Farm. In the midmorning of September 17, 1862, the Union armies were gaining ground at Antietam as a large, Northern force entered the West Woods, near this parcel the Trust has preserved forever. Preserving these six acres helps the Trust unite a significant portion of the Antietam battlefield we’ve already saved.

After the Battle of Antietam, Confederate forces moved back across the Potomac and into Virginia at Shepherdstown, where fighting took place September 19-20, 1862. The Trust’s 150-acre Maryland Campaign victory also includes 122 acres of land associated with the Battle of Shepherdstown. These 122 acres of battlefield land, which include the historic Osbourn House, appear mostly as they did during the battle, offering the organization a valuable educational tool for generations to come.



THE OLD LINER



National Park Service awards \$3.3 million to protect 120 acres at five Civil War battlefields.



A section of landscape near Trevilian Station to be protected and interpreted as a site of a calvary battle during the Civil War in Louisa County, Virginia. NPS Photo

News Release Date: September 20, 2023

WASHINGTON – The National Park Service (NPS) awarded \$3,290,919.25 in Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants through the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) today to protect 119.98 acres, including five battlefields in Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Virginia.

State and local governments spearhead the projects funded by ABPP grants to protect significant battlefield landscapes that are vital to the shared history of their communities and the nation. The Land and Water Conservation Fund, which reinvests revenue from offshore oil and natural gas leasing to help strengthen conservation and recreation opportunities across the nation, makes these awards possible.

“These awards expand the local stewardship efforts of state and local governments with

their preservation partners to increase protection of the irreplaceable historic and cultural landscapes in their communities,” said NPS Director Chuck Sams.

An example of this expanded preservation is the acquisition at Trevilian Station Battlefield. The property was the site of significant action for much of the first day of the Battle of Trevilian Station on June 11, 1864. During the morning hours, Brigadier General George A. Custer’s Michigan Cavalry Brigade took a side road down to the Gordonsville Road and headed toward Trevilian Station. When his column turned, Custer spotted a large Confederate wagon train in the road ahead of him. He ordered two calvary units, the 5th and 6th Michigan Cavalry, to charge. However, a quick response by the Confederates encircled Custer’s command, which stood alone until additional Union cavalry could make its way through later in the afternoon. This new acquisition is near almost 100 acres of protected battlefield secured with previous grant awards. The location to the south of Trevilian Station and the Virginia Central Railroad is already an interpretive tour stop for the battlefield.

Today’s awards are distributed to:

City of Franklin (\$1,980,050.00) for the preservation of 0.87 acres at Franklin Battlefield in Williamson County, Tennessee.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (\$756,650.25) for preservation of 0.63 acres at Gettysburg Battlefield in Adams County, Pennsylvania.

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (\$44,448.00) for the preservation of 8 acres at Dinwiddie Courthouse Battlefield in Dinwiddie County, Virginia.



THE OLD LINER



Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (\$184,156.00) for the preservation of 11.78 acres at Seven Pines Battlefield in Henrico County, Virginia.

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (\$325,615.00) for the preservation of 98.7 acres at Trevilian Station Battlefield in Louisa County, Virginia.

The NPS ABPP's Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants empower preservation partners nationwide to acquire and preserve threatened battlefields on American soil. In addition, the program administers three other grant programs: Preservation Planning, Battlefield Interpretation and Battlefield Restoration Grants. Financial and technical assistance support sustainable, community-driven stewardship of natural and historic resources at the state, Tribal and local levels.

Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants are available on a rolling basis. To learn more about how to apply, head to NPS ABPP's website. For questions about NPS ABPP's grants, contact the program at e-mail us.

0-0

Jackson Trails Grade and Re-Gravel Project. Expect Delays and Partial Lane Closures



A gray gravel road winds through trees with bright green leaves. Larry Stuart

Release Date: September 19, 2023, John Storke, NPS

FREDERICKSBURG, VA — Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park will grade and re-gravel Jackson Trail East and Jackson Trail West beginning in early October 2023. The project should end by December 15, 2023, and drivers may expect traffic delays and partial lane closures during this time.

The grading and re-graveling project will begin with road preparation to loosen up the top 4" of gravel on each road, then clean out road ditches and culverts. All gravel road surfaces will be graded for a smooth, level driving surface and crowned at the center to facilitate rainwater drainage. A base layer of stone will then be placed over the road surface and compacted by a roller with a minimum of two inches of top gravel spread and rolled, based on VDOT guidelines.

While the project work is ongoing, drivers should plan for potential delays, follow all posted signage, and watch for flaggers directing traffic.



THE OLD LINER



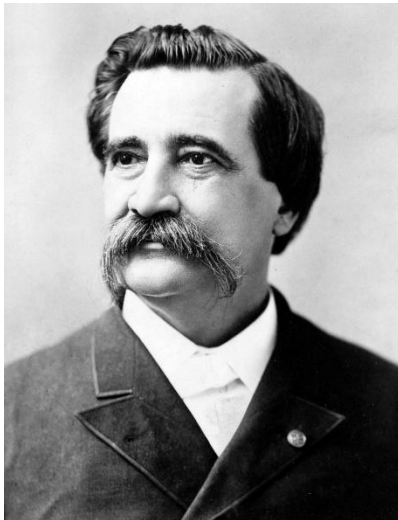
Jackson Trail East and West are gravel roads that follow the path of Gen. Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson’s famous 12-mile flank march on May 2, 1863, during the Battle of Chancellorsville.

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

o-o

"Black Jack" Logan

Len Reidel, September 18, 2023,
blueandgrayeducation.org



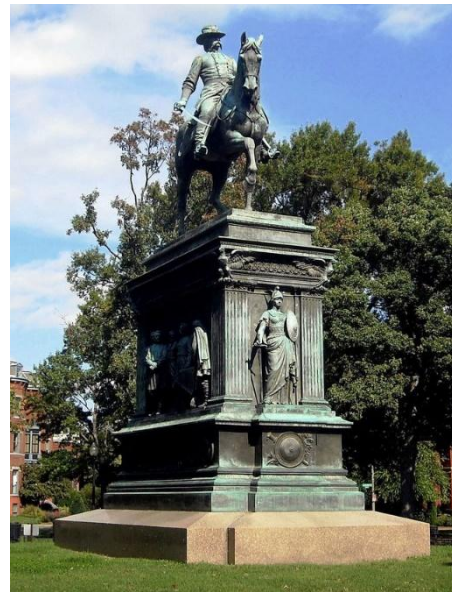
John Alexander Logan | public domain

In 1861, the 35-year-old John Alexander Logan was a representative of Illinois’ 9th District in the U.S. House of Representatives as a Democrat. Married to Mary S.

Cunningham (whose brother was both a Confederate and Union soldier) in 1855, he fathered three children, but only two survived into adulthood.

Logan entered the Union Army and eventually rose to the rank of major general, commanding the US XV Corps. He was on the field at first Bull Run, as an unattached volunteer to a Michigan regiment. He also fought in Belmont, Missouri; Fort Donelson, Tennessee; Second Corinth, Mississippi; the Vicksburg Campaign; the Battle of Atlanta (from which the Atlanta Cyclorama was done to promote his political fortunes); the Battle of Jonesboro, Georgia; and the Battle of Bentonville, North Carolina.

After the war, he was one of the impeachment managers in the trial of President Andrew Johnson. He was the commander in chief of the Grand Army of the Republic and helped promote the Union version of what would become Memorial Day. He was the running mate of Republican James G. Blaine in the 1884 presidential election.





THE OLD LINER



The monument honoring Gen. John A. Logan in Washington, D.C.'s Logan Circle | CC

After his death in 1886, he laid in state in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda. Logan Square in Washington, D.C., features a bust of him.

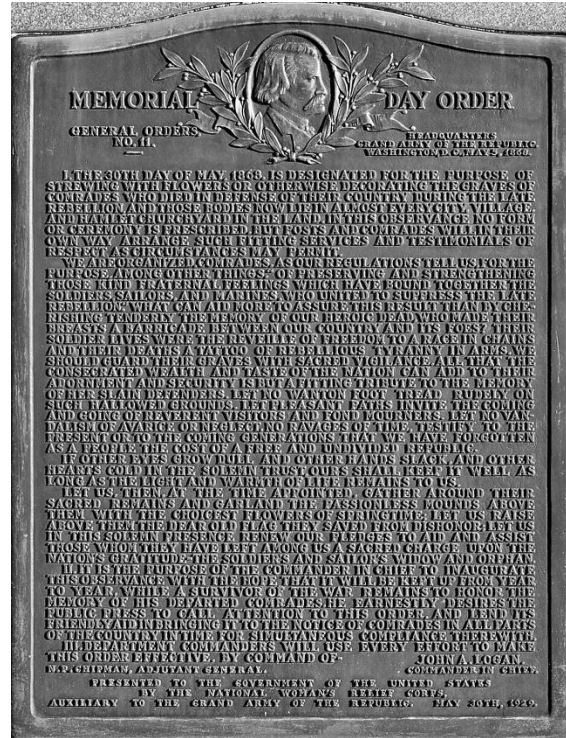
He is considered one of the great political generals in Lincoln's armies.

Concerning Logan at First Bull Run, here is an excerpt from *The Southern Bivouac*, Volume 3 #4, December 1884, quoted from the *Chicago Herald*:

"It is well known that John A. Logan, who was a Member of Congress at the time the war began, left Washington when he saw there was going to be a fight, and seizing a musket, walked all the way to Bull Run where he arrived just in time to take part in the battle. He had on a swallowtail coat, but he stood up to the rack as long as anybody did. He was back in Washington the next morning a good deal out of breath and was telling some of his fellow Congressmen all about it.

"Who gave you this account of the fight?" asked a member from the north woods of New York.

"Why I was there myself," said Logan. The New Yorker evidently had not heard the news, for he seemed a little mystified and asked, as if wishing to solve the mystery of Logan's speedy reappearance: "Are the cars running?" "No said Logan, "the cars ain't running, but, every other damned thing in the State of Virginia is, as near as I could make out."

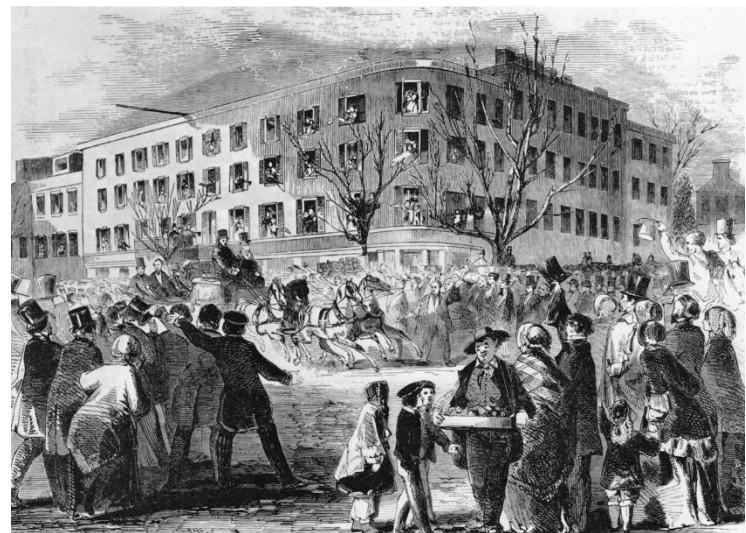


Logan's Memorial Day order at Andersonville National Historic Site | CC

0-0

Abraham Lincoln and the Oncoming War

John M. Taylor, September 4, 2023, blueandgrayeducation.org





THE OLD LINER

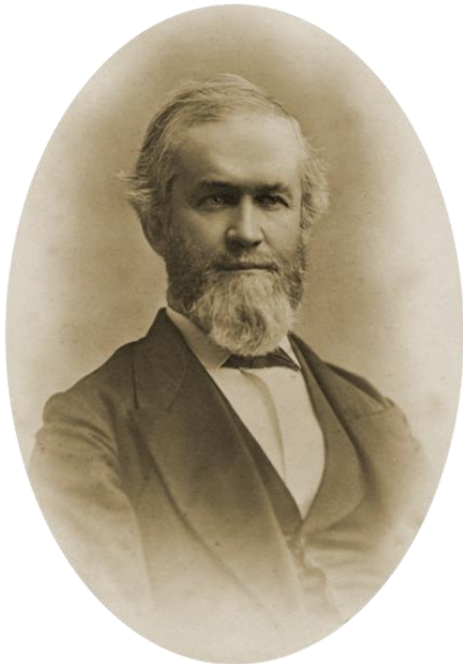


The Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., was the site of the unsuccessful 1861 Peace Conference. | LOC

In March 1861, Virginia, which had not yet seceded, became concerned after the Abraham Lincoln Administration rejected peace overtures.

In his First Inaugural Address on Monday, March 4, 1861, Lincoln spelled out his only reason for war: “The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere.”

Through Virginia’s persistence and its concern, Lincoln finally agreed to meet with Southern peace representatives.



James Brown Baldwin | Virginia Historical Society

First Meeting: On April 4, 1861, Virginia Unionist John Brown Baldwin met Lincoln in Washington, D.C., to offer a compromise. As their dialogue progressed, Lincoln asked, “Well ... what about the revenue? What would I do about the collection of duties?” Baldwin asked how much revenue would be lost per year. Lincoln responded “50 or 60 million.” Baldwin said \$250 (based on a four-year presidential term) would be “a drop in the bucket” compared to the cost of war, and Virginia’s compromise plan would ameliorate the situation. Lincoln added, “And open Charleston, etc., as ports of entry, with their 10 percent tariff. What, then, would become of my tariff?”

Second Meeting: A.H.H. Stuart, William B. Preston, and George W. Randolph, all prominent Virginians, spoke with Lincoln on April 12-13, 1861, and received a similar response. “I remember,” says Mr. Stuart, “that he used this homely expression: ‘If I do that, what will become of my revenue? I might as well shut up housekeeping at once.’”

Third Meeting: Another attempt at compromise was detailed in the April 23, 1861, edition of the Baltimore Exchange and reprinted in the May 8, 1861, edition of the Memphis Daily Avalanche. This meeting was led by Dr. Richard Fuller, a preacher from the Seventh Baptist Church in Baltimore. The article states:

“We learned that a delegation from five of the Young Men’s Christian Associations of Baltimore, consisting of six members each, yesterday [April 22, 1861] proceeded to Washington for an interview with the President, the purpose being to intercede with him in behalf a peaceful policy.”



THE OLD LINER



Fuller made a plea for peace and recognition of Southern rights. Lincoln responded, “But what am I to do? ... what shall become of the revenue? I shall have no government? No resources?”

Lyon Gardiner Tyler, a Virginian, and son of former President John Tyler, wrote:

“The deciding factor with him [Lincoln] was the tariff question. In three separate interviews, he asked what would become of his revenue if he allowed the government at Montgomery to go on with their ten percent tariff....”

All of the April 1861 peace efforts were rejected.

0-0

The Forgotten Counterattack That Probably Saved Lee's Army at the Battle of the Wilderness

Jerry McAbee, August 25, 2023,
blueandgrayeducation.org



A Kurz & Allison engraving depicting the desperate fight on the Orange C.H. Plank Road, near Todd's Tavern, on May 6, 1864, during the Battle of the Wilderness | LOC

During the Battle of the Wilderness, three events along or near the Plank Road on May 6, 1864, have fascinated historians for years. The “just in time arrival” of James Longstreet’s First Corps stopped the Federal rout of A. P. Hill’s Third Corps, preventing the piecemeal destruction of the Army of Northern Virginia. Longstreet’s subsequent flanking movement of four Confederate brigades from an unfinished railroad cut shattered the combat cohesion of five Federal divisions, forcing Winfield Hancock to flee to previously prepared positions. And, the grievous wounding of Longstreet stalled a well-planned Confederate attack intended to push more than half the Federal army back across the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers.

But one pivotal action that day was never properly recorded and has been essentially lost to history.

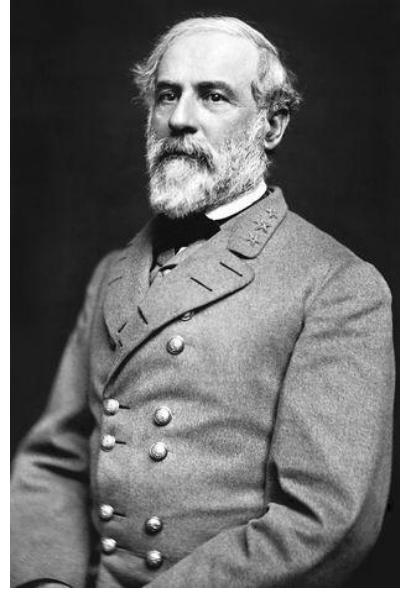
After Longstreet fell, Lee needed to realign the jumbled Confederate brigades before continuing the attack. The delay gave Hancock time to regroup. His seven divisions occupied a strong line of breastworks along the Brock Road. At 4:15 p.m., Field’s and Anderson’s rebels closed to within 100 yards of the breastworks and assaulted the center and left of the Federal line.



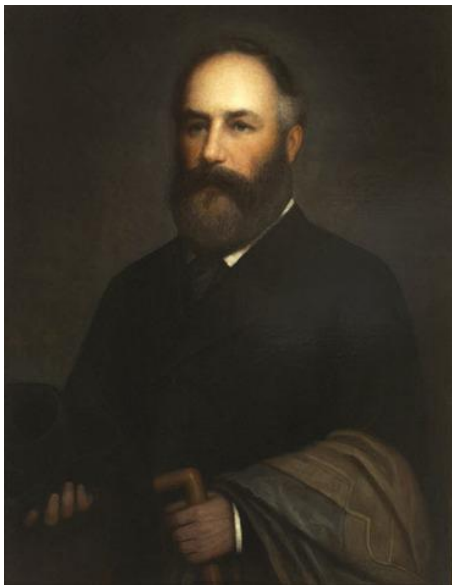
THE OLD LINER



James Longstreet | LOC



Robert E. Lee | LOC



Edward Perry | Florida Department of State

Beyond the rebel's left was a gap between Edward Perry's Florida brigade and the nearest Confederates. Henry Heth's and Cadmus Wilcox's divisions were posted several hundred yards northwest of the Floridians to guard the open area between Ewell's Corps at the Orange Turnpike and Longstreet. At 5:30 p.m., Orlando Willcox's Third Division, supported by Robert Potter's Second Division, both of Burnside's IX Corps, Army of the Potomac, moved into the gap and struck hard against the Confederate left, routing Edward Perry's Floridians and William Perry's Alabamians that had moved up in support. Two Federal divisions had surprised Lee! They were in perfect position to strike the flank and rear of Anderson and Field who already had their hands full at the breastworks. Another crisis was at hand.

Fortunately, William Perry had anticipated the attack and asked Lee earlier for reinforcements. William Wofford's brigade of Georgians was the closest uncommitted unit. Lee ordered it forward. Perry wrote: "The promised reinforcements came. It was



THE OLD LINER



not in time to save us from a great mortification; but it was in time to retrieve the disaster. It was Wofford's brigade of Kershaw's division. It swooped down upon the enemy in the midst of their exultation and confusion, and swept them away like chaff ... the enemy disappeared like an apparition."

In their official reports, Burnside and Kershaw were more succinct. Burnside stated: "This part of their line [Confederate left] was held for some time, but we were finally forced to give it up by the overpowering force of the enemy." Kershaw wrote that Wofford "moved against the enemy in the afternoon on the left of the Plank Road and met some success in that quarter and suffered some loss."

Wofford's brigade had prevented a disaster that threatened Lee's army as surely as Hancock's rout of Hill's Corps had threatened it earlier that morning.

Jerry McAbee is a retired brigadier general, United States Marine Corps. He is the author of Stubborn Men and Parched Corn. The Eighteenth Georgia Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

0-0

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION, ONE OF AMERICA'S MOST IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS, ON DISPLAY

**Now on permanent display at the
National Archives.**

By MELISSA A. WINN History.net
8/31/2023



Dr. Colleen Shogan behind display case

Dr. Colleen Shogan, Archivist of the United States, with the new display case that will house the Emancipation Proclamation. The document changed the Union's war goals from simply defeating the Confederate States to accomplishing that while also signaling the end of involuntary servitude. (National Archives)

Archivist of the United States Dr. Colleen Shogan announced in June that the National Archives will place the Emancipation Proclamation on permanent display in the Rotunda of the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C.

The intent is for the Emancipation Proclamation to be permanently displayed in the Rotunda along with the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the Bill of Rights.

"When President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, he wrote that 'all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free,'" Shogan quoted. "Although the full



THE OLD LINER



privileges of freedom were not immediately bestowed upon all Americans with Lincoln’s order, I am proud that the National Archives will enshrine this seminal document for public display adjacent to our nation’s founding documents. Together, they tell a more comprehensive story of the history of all Americans and document progress in our nation’s continuous growth toward a more perfect Union,” she said.

The National Archives will commence an assessment to determine the best display environment considering the condition and importance of the original document. The current plan for display calls for showing one side of the Emancipation Proclamation, a double-sided five-page document, alongside facsimiles of the reverse pages. The original pages on display will be rotated on a regular basis to limit light exposure.

Melissa A. Winn is a writer, editor, photographer, and collector of Civil War photographs. She’s a member of the Professional Photographers Association, Authors Guild, and the Center for Civil War Photography. She’s also an avid runner and triathlete.

0-0

THE REAL STORY BEHIND 58 CONFEDERATE BODIES TOSSED IN A WELL

What occurred on Daniel Wise’s farm in September 1862?

By STEVEN R. STOTELMYER, Historynet
9/14/2023



Fox’s Gap battlefield. This rare image of the Fox’s Gap battlefield was taken not long after the war. The camera is in Wise’s north field looking south, with the Wise cabin at right. Cornstalks can be seen in Wise’s south field, which today is mostly covered by trees. The Old Sharpsburg Road, lined by stone walls, cuts across the center of the image. (Marc and Beth Storch Collection)

On September 14, 1862, fighting broke out on South Mountain, Md., as portions of the Army of the Potomac clashed with Army of Northern Virginia troops holding passes over the mountain. On the 15th, the day after particularly heavy fighting at Fox’s Gap, Ohio troops were assigned to a burial detail on that contested cleft. As it was a task they did not particularly like, they sought a shortcut by dumping a number of Confederate bodies down a well in front of a cabin.

The cabin and well belonged to an old farmer named Daniel Wise. Realizing his well was ruined and being a shrewd codger, Wise made the most of a bad situation by contracting with 9th Corps commander Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside to continue the process for \$1 a body. After depositing several more bodies, Wise sealed the well, earning himself a tidy sum.

Or so goes the legend.



THE OLD LINER



Some versions of the tale claim that no damage was done because the well was dry or abandoned. Others claim farmer Wise was caught and made to put things right by removing the dead Confederates and giving them a decent burial. All accounts agree, at least, that Wise was paid for his troubles.

Most modern authors of books on the battle use the same source when relating the tale: *History of the Twenty-First Massachusetts Volunteers*. It was authored 20 years after the Battle of South Mountain by Charles F. Walcott, a member of the 21st. Since Captain Walcott was at Fox's Gap on September 14 and 15, some historians presume that he witnessed the event. It is from the following account that most authors have based their narratives concerning Wise:

“The burial of a portion of the rebel dead was peculiar enough to call for special mention. Some Ohio troops had been detailed to bury them, but not relishing the task, and finding the ground hard to dig, soon removed the covering of a deep well connected with Wise's house on the summit, and lightened their toil by throwing a few bodies into the well. Mr. Wise soon discovered what they were about, and had it stopped: and then the Ohioans went away, leaving their work unfinished. Poor Mr. Wise, anxious to get rid of the bodies, finally made an agreement with General Burnside to bury them for a dollar apiece. As long as his well had been already spoiled, he concluded to realize on the rest of its capacity, and put in fifty-eight more rebel bodies, which filled it to the surface of the ground.”

So now, let's establish some facts.

THE FIGHT AT FOX'S GAP

Daniel Wise was a real person. He was born in Brunswick, Md., in 1802. On June 24, 1824, he married Mary Milly and together the couple had at least three children, a son named John, and two daughters named Matilda and Christiana. The census records for 1860 lists Daniel, Matilda, and John as residents of a modest, 1½-story whitewashed log cabin that stood at the intersection of the Old Sharpsburg Road (modern Reno Monument Road) and two mountain roads that more or less followed the mountain crest in a north-south direction.

Daniel's wife seems to have perished (she was not listed in the 1850 census) and Christiana married and moved to start a family of her own. Among Christiana's children was one of Daniel's grandchildren, 5-year-old Anne Cecilia. Christiana often returned to visit and brought her children with her. At the time of the battle, Daniel Wise was 60 years old.

It seems that neither Wise nor his children were especially well off. In addition to farming, both Daniel and John eked out a living as day laborers and for a time as potters. Daniel Wise also earned a living as a “root doctor,” a local expert in folk medicine. According to the family's oral history, on the morning of the battle the Wise family fled their cabin to seek safety elsewhere.

The fight at Fox's Gap resulted in horrendous slaughter. The section of the Old Sharpsburg Road that passed over the ridge crest near Wise's cabin would come to be known to the veterans as the Sunken Road. Regarding Confederate casualties, square



THE OLD LINER



foot per square foot, the Sunken Road at Fox's Gap is proportionately every bit as bloody as its famous counterpart at Antietam.



A carriage heading north stops at the end of the Ridge Road, next to Wise's cabin. The Old Sharpsburg Road runs past the cabin. In the left foreground can be seen the terminus of the Wood Road. Today, a portion of the Appalachian Trail follows the Wood Road trace. (National Park Service)

One of the battle's Confederate combatants, 1st Lt. Peter McGlashen of the 50th Georgia Infantry, later wrote: "When ordered to retreat I could scarce extricate myself from the dead and wounded around me. A Man could have walked from the head of our line to the foot on their bodies."

This is borne out by a New York veteran of the battle. Remembered William Todd, the regimental historian of the 79th New York Infantry:

"Morning of the 15th dawned at last, and on such a sight as none of us ever wish to look upon again. Behind and in front of us, but especially in the angles of the stone walls, the dead bodies of the enemy lay thick; near the gaps in the fences they were piled on top of each other like cord-wood dumped from a cart. The living had retreated during the

night and none but the dead and severely wounded remained.... About noon we moved off the field, and on our way saw many more evidences of the battle. At one angle of the stone walls fourteen bodies of the enemy were counted lying in a heap, just as they had fallen, apparently. We referred to that spot as 'Dead Man's Corner.'"

The Wood Road, which ran southerly from Turner's Gap to Fox's Gap, was bordered on the east by a "stone and rider" fence near the intersection with the Old Sharpsburg Road. This type of fence consisted of a combination of stone wall with split rail fence over the top. William Todd may have referenced the intersection as "Dead Man's Corner" as he was one of many who noticed a dead Confederate soldier hung up on the fence. "A curious sight presented itself in the body of a rebel straddling a stone wall," wrote Todd, "he must have been killed while in the act of climbing over, for with a leg on either side, the body was thrown slightly forward stiff in death."

Captain James Wren of the 48th Pennsylvania Infantry had some time to view the battlefield on September 15 before his regiment headed for Sharpsburg. He not only noticed the dead Confederate on the fence, but another truly horrific sight. The following is from his personal diary:

"Just to the right of my skirmish line of yesterday were two Cross roads...and on our front there was a stone fence & behind that fence & in this cross road the enemy lay very thick. One rebel, in crossing the fence was Killed in the act & his Clothing Caught & he was hanging on the fence....At this place being the top of South Mountain, the Hospital was an awful sight, being a little



THE OLD LINER



house, by its self, & in the yard there was 3 or 4 Large tables in it & as the soldiers was put on it (that was wounded), the surgical Core Came along & the head of the Core had in his hand a piece of white Chalk & he marked the place where the Limb was to be Cut off & right behind him was the line of surgeons with their instruments & they proceeded to amputate & in Looking around in the yard, I saw a Beautiful, plump arm Laying, which drew my attention & in looking a Little at it, and seeing another of the same Kind, I picked them up & Laid them together & found that they are right & one a Left Arm, which Convinced me that they war off the one man & you Could see many legs Laying in the yard with the shoes & stocking on.”

Burial details began their gruesome work. Because Burnside’s 9th Corps occupied Fox’s Gap, the Union dead were buried first. By the end of the 15th, most of Burnside’s troops were off the mountain. Very few dead Confederates, if any at all, were buried on that day and, consequently, the bulk of the dead Southerners still lay above ground.

BURYING THE DEAD

Many of the survivors of the fight at Fox’s Gap took the opportunity to tour the field, and many of the local citizenry came by to watch and collect curios. The Wise family’s well was located between Wise’s cabin and the Old Sharpsburg Road in plain sight of everyone using the road.

It is not unreasonable, then, to presume that had a 60-year-old man been occupied dumping dead Confederates down his family’s well, there would have been someone around to take notice. The truth is, no bodies were thrown down the well on

September 15, 1862. That would instead happen on September 16, and farmer Daniel Wise had nothing to do with it.



Dead Confederates sketched on the Wise Farm. Overall, there were 2,685 Southern casualties at the September 14 battle. (Boston Public Library)

It seems there was a witness to the event, Private Samuel Compton of the 12th Ohio Infantry, who wrote:

“On the morning of the 16th I strolled out to see them bury the Confederate dead. I saw but I never want to another sight. The squad I saw were armed with a pick & a canteen full of whiskey. The whiskey the most necessary of the two. The bodies had become so offensive that men could only endure it by being staggering drunk. To see men stagger up to corpses and strike four or five times before they could get a hold, a right hold being one above the belt. Then staggering, as the very drunk will, they dragged the corpses to a 60 foot well and tumbling them in. What a sepulcher and what a burial! You don’t wonder I had no appetite for supper.”

Obviously, conditions at Fox’s Gap on September 16 were much different from what they had been the day before. The area was definitely less crowded. One of the soldiers on burial detail was Private Michael Deady of the 23rd Ohio Infantry, who recalled that there were 75 men on burial detail at Fox’s Gap, a mixture of soldiers



THE OLD LINER



from several different regiments. It certainly seems that the Ohio men had a hand in dumping the bodies down the well.

If Private Deady's veracity is trustworthy, the numbers of Confederates requiring burial was tremendous. After helping to bury 33 Union troops on September 15, Deady noted on the next day, "Buried 200 rebs, they lay pretty thick." On September 17, he was till at the grim work, "bury 250 today." Remarkably, the burial details at Fox's Gap were still at it as late as September 18. As Deady noted: "Same old work awful smell to work by. To day finish and glad of it." On the same day, Private John McNutty Clugston of the 23rd Ohio noted, "Finished the burying of the dead at 4 P.M. and proceeded to Boonsboro and camped in a barn."

The burial details at Fox's Gap spent three days, apparently on their own with little supervision, burying more than 450 dead Confederates. Many of the soldiers were using alcohol to numb their senses. These unfortunate Union soldiers rejoined their regiments at Antietam just as the burial details of that momentous battle began the grisly task of burying the dead in the fields around Sharpsburg.

58 BODIES

As far as the well is concerned, the intoxicated men may have simply viewed the well as a convenient receptacle. Or, it may have started by someone dumping amputated limbs into the well on September 15, and then naturally continuing with whole bodies the next day. For the burial details it would have seemed that the well was already ruined and therefore it was only natural to continue. This brings up another

aspect of the legend, that the well was not ruined because it was abandoned and dry. Once again there is evidence in the family history that indeed the well was dry, not because it was abandoned, but because as Anne Cecilia (Daniel's granddaughter) remembered, it was under construction at the time.

Whatever the spark of origin, or condition of the well at the time, at least 58 dead bodies ended up in Wise's Well on September 16. Samuel Compton's account was verified in both a remarkable and roundabout manner by someone else associated with the 12th Ohio Infantry. Eliza Otis, the wife of 2nd Lt. Harrison G. Otis. Eliza noted the incident in her journal. It was occasioned by the visit in June 1863 of some fellow officers that served with her husband. In the course of the evening's conversation, some incidents and "personal observations" of previous battles were discussed:

"In one place, near South Mountain, I think, they said it was, sixty dead bodies were thrown into a deep old well— that was their only sepulcher— they were those of the rebel soldiers, and were placed there by our men who were three days in burying the dead, and time and their various duties gave them no opportunity to afford the fallen foe a better mausoleum."

It is appropriate at this juncture to clarify that Captain Charles F. Walcott, whose account of the incident became the basis in popular Civil War history, was not there when the incident happened, because he marched off the mountain with his regiment on September 15. Walcott received his information second-hand, and footnoted his account by saying that the story as he



THE OLD LINER



described it was told originally to a member of the Sanitary Commission by Daniel Wise:

“This account of the burial of the rebels was given by Mr. Wise himself, a few weeks after the act. to a gentleman connected with the Sanitary Commission, who noticed that the well had been filled up, and asked him how a man’s hand came to be projecting through the sunken earth, with which it had been covered.”

The Sanitary Commission was a civilian organization whose basic object was to better the living conditions of the Union Army. Walcott did not name the source, only that it was a “gentleman” connected with the commission, but his anonymous second-hand account in his 1882 regimental history has been accepted over others written by those who observed first-hand what actually transpired at Wise’s farm.

It must have been a very frustrating couple of days for the Wise family. Not only were they unable to immediately get back into their home because it was being used as a field hospital, but they most likely had to wait several more days until the burial details had finished their work. According to the Wise family history, “there were bodies in the well when they came back.”

BOWIE’S LIST

Sometime around 1869, Moses Poffenberger and Aaron Good were employed by the state of Maryland to inventory Confederate burial places and visited Fox’s Gap. Although most of the Union soldiers who perished in Maryland had already been re-interred at the Antietam National Cemetery by then, the Confederates mostly remained buried on the battlefields. Both Poffenberger and Good

visited, identified, and cataloged every trench and grave they could find. Under the auspices of Governor Oden Bowie, their list was published with the title: A Descriptive List of the Burial Places of the Remains of Confederate Soldiers, Who Fell in the Battles of Antietam, South Mountain, Monocacy, and other Points in Washington and Frederick Counties in the State of Maryland. Today it is simply known as “Bowie’s List.”

Poffenberger and Good listed 47 unknown “In Wise’s lot on east side of house and lot on top of South Mountain.” They also listed 23 unknown “In Wise’s lot on west side of house and stable on top of South Mountain.” On page 51 of Bowie’s List is the succinct entry, “58 unknown, In Wise’s Well on South Mountain.”

In 1874, 12 years after the Battle of South Mountain, the Confederate dead were finally removed and re-interred at the Washington Confederate Cemetery in Hagerstown, Md. Incredibly, for 12 years the Wise family lived with the graves of 128 unknown Confederate soldiers in the immediate vicinity of their home. The work of removing the Confederate dead was contracted to Mr. Henry C. Mumma of Sharpsburg. He was paid \$1.65 “per head.” As noted in the local Hagerstown Mail, June 26, 1874:



THE OLD LINER



An 1868 sketch of Daniel Wise and his son at the simple marker that marked the spot where Union Maj. Gen. Jesse Reno was mortally wounded. Battle scars remain on the tree adjacent to the marker. (Boston Public Library)

“Mumma has been most successful in his work and is at this time continuing its prosecution with vigor...Some of these bodies we have heretofore noticed as having been taken from the historical well on South Mountain battle-field, where they were thrown by Gen. Reno’s command.”

General Burnside’s 9th Corps was commanded by Maj. Gen. Jesse Lee Reno, who was mortally wounded at the close of battle and perished within hours. What is germane to debunking the accepted narrative of the well is to note that the Hagerstown newspaper attributed the act to “Reno’s command,” not Daniel Wise.

In 1876, six years before the publication of Walcott’s regimental history, Daniel Wise died. He never knew of the legend that grew from Walcott’s storytelling, published in 1882. John Wise sold the property in 1878, two years after his father’s death, and moved to West Virginia. When Walcott’s book was

published, the Wise family had left Fox’s Gap.

EXCAVATION AND DISCOVERY

In the early 2000s, the National Park Service purchased the site of Wise’s well for incorporation into the Appalachian Trail. During the summer of 2002, a collaboration of archaeologists, historians, and trail volunteers explored the site and accomplished some meaningful archeology for the first time. They discovered a rectangular brick and mortar shaft feature in the vicinity of the suspected cabin site. A visual examination of the interior revealed a half dome-shaped concrete vault structure under the shaft. It was interpreted to be the top of a concrete cistern, that is, an underground tank for holding water. This was consistent with conversations of former residents who insisted there was no well, but a cistern instead, perhaps constructed by later residents as an alternate water source.



Author Steven Stotelmyer during the 2002 excavation of the site where Wise’s well was found. Stotelmyer discovered his great nephew is Daniel Wise’s sixth great-grandchild. That has



THE OLD LINER

*helped motivate him to set the record straight.
(Courtesy of Steven Stotelmyer)*

That theory, however, was debunked. Upon further excavation the bell-shaped concrete vault was found to be sitting on at least four courses of dry laid stone that undoubtedly surrounded an open shaft that was consistent with a hand-dug stone-lined 19th-century well or cistern. The feature was filled with debris, most of which looked to be from the mid- to late-20th century. No other stone-line underground structure that could have been used as a well or cistern was found near the cabin site that summer. Although not entirely conclusive, it does appear that the archaeologists found Wise's famous historical well. It also appears that it was later used for a time as a functioning cistern.

Setting the historical record straight is often condemned as "revisionism." The story of Daniel Wise's well has become cemented as fact in the history of the Maryland Campaign and, unfortunately, much of it is legend. The campaign has more than ample drama and human interest that is well documented and so its history should not include incidents that have no basis in the historical record.

To "revise," by definition, implies correction and improvement. I have attempted to correct the Wise's well story; not demolish it. The intent has always been to exonerate Daniel Wise from blame for an onerous act he never committed. Without doubt the well became a mass grave for at least 58 dead Confederate soldiers. What I have done is merely correct the narrative behind how they got there and, in the process, expose some of the true horror of warfare.



The 58 unfortunate Southerners were not put in the well on September 15, but rather the next day, September 16. Daniel Wise did not put them there, a drunken Union burial detail did; and there is no evidence that Wise, or any member of his family, got \$1 per body, or any compensation for damages done.

*Steven R. Stotelmyer writes from Hagerstown, Md., and is the author of *The Bivouacs of the Dead: The Story of Those Who Died at Antietam and South Mountain and Too Useful To Sacrifice*, *Reconsidering George B. McClellan's Generalship in the Maryland Campaign*. He is a National Park Service Volunteer as well as a Certified Antietam Battlefield and South Mountain Tour Guide.*

0-0

**AFTER THE CARNAGE OF
ANTIETAM, MAN'S BEST
FRIEND STOOD LOYALLY BY**
**The incredible bond between soldiers and
their dogs provided a moving addendum
to the Civil War battle's bloody fury.**

By SCOTT HARTWIG Historynet
4/7/2022



*Famed mascot Sallie never shied from action,
whether in Antietam's Cornfield or, as seen here,*



THE OLD LINER



the 11th Pennsylvania's clash at Gettysburg's Oak Ridge. (Painting by Greg Stump)

Grayfriars Bobby, a Scottish Skye Terrier known for once guarding his owner's grave in Edinburgh for 14 years, is an apt reminder of the deep and long connection and affection between dogs and humans throughout history. For as long as there have been soldiers in the earliest formed armies, they have had dogs as pets and mascots. In a personal, modern example, my son's Army scout platoon in Afghanistan adopted a female Afghan Kuchi puppy that it named "Scout." Scout was so special and important that Jason went through considerable effort to have her sent home when he left, and she lives happily with him in the United States today. At Antietam in September 1862, countless units in both armies were accompanied by faithful canine companions, and many of them went into battle alongside their human comrades.

The most famous of these army dogs was a Staffordshire terrier named Sallie, adopted as a puppy by the 11th Pennsylvania Infantry in the spring of 1861. Many today know Sallie from her sculpture on the front of the regiment's monument at Gettysburg. Sallie became a favorite with the regiment and a celebrity in the brigade. George Kimball, a soldier in the 12th Massachusetts, wrote how much he enjoyed visiting the 11th Pennsylvania's camp just to watch Sallie when the regiment performed dress parade. He wrote of observing the "drum corps slowly marching down the front, the colonel [Richard Coulter] with folded arms calmly looking into the faces of the men and Sallie lying at the feet of the color bearer, as if she loved to be in the shadow of the flag."

It was said that if the 11th experienced a particularly severe march, the unit could be counted upon to be represented at its conclusion "by a colonel, a flag and a dog," for Sallie never straggled. She also never shirked a battle and went in with the 11th when it marched through David Miller's Cornfield at Antietam the morning of September 17, 1862.

THE DOG THAT COULD SALUTE

Not far from Sallie, a black-and-white Newfoundland breed trotted along the Hagerstown Pike with its owner, Captain Werner von Bachelles of the 6th Wisconsin. The German-born von Bachelles was somewhat a soldier of fortune. He had trained at a Swiss military academy and saw service in the French army and with Garibaldi in the war for Italian unification.

A fellow officer described the German as a "tall and stalwart soldier" and rigid disciplinarian. Because his English was limited and his demeanor reserved and formal, he had few friends among the regiment's officers, but the soldiers of his Company F developed a fondness for their captain. Earlier in the summer, when the 6th Wisconsin was stationed near Fredericksburg, Va., the black-and-white canine wandered into Company F's camp. The men knew how much von Bachelles loved animals, so they gave him the dog as a pet. The two were soon inseparable, becoming the "most devoted friends on earth."

Von Bachelles trained the creature to give military salutes "and other remarkable things"—where he went, he was always accompanied by his dog. That morning of September 17, it was with him as they



THE OLD LINER



advanced astride the Hagerstown Pike at the spearpoint of the Union 1st Corps' attack. Company F stretched directly across the turnpike in the regimental line. They passed the David Miller Farm and the left of the regiment entered Miller's 30-acre cornfield. The ground sloped up to a slight east-west ridge just south of the corn. As the regiment neared this point, a Confederate limber and gun suddenly burst into view and disappeared behind the ridge driving south along the pike. Von Bachelles company was ordered to hustle to the ridge and shoot up the enemy gun team. When they reached the crest of the ridge, they were confronted by two small brigades of Confederate infantry lying at their right front. The Rebels quickly rose and blasted Company F. Hit at least 12 times, von Bachelles was killed instantly.



German-born Captain Werner von Bachelles of the 6th Wisconsin bonded immediately with a stray dog given him by his men. (Wisconsin Historical Society) (Wisconsin Historical Society)

A MASCOT FOR EVERY COMPANY

A soldier in the 1st Delaware, writing under the pseudonym "Billy," noted that every

company in the regiment had a dog as a mascot, but the boldest of the lot was "Scott," who belonged to Company G and followed it at Antietam during the regiment's assault on the Sunken Lane. According to Billy, when a solid shot struck near Scott, the dog commenced digging furiously at the spot. At one point, Scott mounted a charge on the enemy, running up barking to what was probably the rail fence at the southern edge of Samuel Mumma's cornfield, where he "put his paws on it, deliberately gazed at Secesh, then beat a masterly retreat back to the company." He then proceeded to run back and forth along the regiment's line, and although "the bullets rained thick and fast" he escaped unscathed. Scott was exceedingly lucky, as the 1st Delaware suffered 230 casualties that day—the heaviest loss of any regiment in Maj. Gen. William French's 3rd Division.

The 6th New Hampshire had what was probably a Chesapeake breed, an ocher-colored dog they had adopted as a puppy in Elizabeth City, N.C. It became known as the "Sixth Regiment Dog" and accompanied the regiment in camp, on the march, and in battle. On the morning of September 17, it joined the regiment when it and the 2nd Maryland made the second attempt to capture the Rohrback Bridge. "Dogs generally fear firearms when discharged in volleys," recalled the regimental historian, but "this one went fearlessly into battle." Like Scott and Sallie, the Sixth Regiment Dog survived the combat its regiment engaged in that day.

But just like the men they went into battle with, there was not a happy ending for some dogs. Captain von Bachelles's Newfoundland loyally remained by his side when he was



THE OLD LINER



killed and refused to leave his body even though urged to do so by some of the captain's men. This was one of the most hotly contested spots on the entire Antietam battlefield and units fought over the area throughout the morning. The next morning a burial detail from the 6th Wisconsin found von Bachel's beloved pet lying across the captain's body. They buried them together. And Sallie may have survived Antietam but she did not survive the war. She was wounded at Spotsylvania and killed at Hatcher's Run in February 1865. Like Grayfriars Bobby, Sallie and von Bachel's Newfoundland were loyal to their human companions unto death.

0-0