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Gettysburg Monuments Vandalized: National Park Service Asks Public for Information

Gettysburg National Military Park is looking for information related to the vandalism of civil war monuments on the Gettysburg Battlefield damaged during the night of February 15, 2006 or the early morning hours of February 16, 2006. Vandals pulled the top stone and sculpture off of the 11th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Monument, dedicated on October 8, 1885. The 11th Massachusetts monument is located on Emmitsburg Road at the intersection of Sickles Avenue. Vandals pulled down the bronze sculpture of a Zouave infantryman from the pedestal of the 114th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Monument, dedicated on July 2, 1886, located at the Sherfy house on Emmitsburg Road. The figure landed on a decorative iron fence that was also damaged.

Vandals also pulled the bronze sculpture of a Civil War Artilleryman from the monument to Smith's battery, also known as the 4th New York battery, located on Devil's Den. The Smith's battery monument was dedicated July 2, 1888.

Anyone with any information is asked to call the National Park Service at 717/ 334-0909.



The 11th Mass. marker early 1900's



The 11th Mass. after vandals hit. The hand and sword were taken. (GNMP)



The 114th Pennsylvania monument in 1898



The 4th New York Independent Battery - early 20th century



The 114th Pennsylvania after vandals toppled it from its pedestal (GNMP)



The 4th NY Ind. Battery monument after being toppled & dragged 160 feet (GNMP)

MORE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE



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Four Virginia Civil War sites at risk

By Arlo Wagner, THE WASHINGTON TIMES March 2, 2006

Three Civil War battlefields in Virginia and the Circle Forts in the District were identified yesterday as among the 10 most-endangered sites relating to the four-year war.

The most endangered battlefields in Virginia are the Wilderness, west of Fredericksburg; Glendale, southeast of Richmond; and sites in the Shenandoah Valley. The Circle Forts is a ring of 68 fortifications scattered throughout the District.

"Today, our Civil War battlefields are being destroyed at an alarming rate," said O. James Lighthizer, president of the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT). "Hallowed ground, where more than 600,000 Americans gave their lives, is being paved over in favor of shopping malls, housing tracts and even gambling casinos."

The annual listing of endangered battlefields by CWPT emphasizes efforts to protect and preserve the historic battlegrounds. Since CWPT was founded more than 10 years ago, the group has protected 22,300 acres at 95 sites in 19 states. That includes 1,726 acres last year.

The other battlefields that were identified by CWPT as most endangered include Gettysburg, Pa.; New Orleans Forts in Louisiana; Raymond in Mississippi; Fort Morgan in Alabama; Chattahoochee River Line in Georgia; and Glorieta Pass in New Mexico.

"These endangered battlefields are irreplaceable treasures and now, more than ever, we must work to preserve and protect these sites because once they're gone, they're gone forever," Mr. Lighthizer said. The Circle Forts were built to protect

the Union capital from the threat of Confederate assault from 1861 to 1865. Today, only 22 remain marked, including Fort Stevens near Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Northwest. Over the years, the ring has been largely absorbed by growing neighborhoods in the area. The Wilderness was the site of the first clash between Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee and Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in May 1864. The battle left more than 25,000 troops dead or wounded. Today, the site is in Orange County, Va., which is changing from a largely rural area to a suburban community, with new-home construction and an increasing population.

Glendale, also known as Frayser's Farm, is the site of savage fighting that took place during the fifth day of the 1862 Seven Days campaign. Today, construction has begun on three housing projects in the area immediately surrounding the battlefield, with three more in the planning stages.

Shenandoah Valley was a vast battlefield where Confederate Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson won fame for a series of victories over three Union generals in the spring of 1862. Today, several battlefields in that area are threatened by the proposed widening of Interstate 81. CWPT reports that Gettysburg, the site of the largest and most costly battle in the United States, is threatened by plans to build a 3,000-slots gambling casino about a mile from East Calvary Field. CWPT said the casino also would damage the area's heritage-tourism businesses. A public opinion poll commissioned by CWPT found that most voters in Pennsylvania oppose the casino. Virginia has more Civil War battlefields than any other state, with

123, according to the National Park Service. Maryland has seven.

"The battlefields are sacred," said Ben Stein, an actor and commentator who is an active battlefield preservationist.

"The Civil War was our bloodiest conflict, but also the densest concentration of courage ever shown on this continent. America's Civil War battlefields are where that courage is best memorialized," he said. "Let's keep them, and keep them glorious and beautiful. Keep them above commerce."

Family home of J.W. Booth too pricey for preservationists

Lincoln assassin's early residence available for about \$1 million

By JUSTIN FENTON, BALTIMORE SUN, MARCH 2, 2006

When the family home of Abraham Lincoln's assassin was put up for auction in 1999, preservationists and prospective buyers found that the Gothic home had an appearance to match its ill-fated past: The porch was falling apart. The paint was peeling from the cracking walls. The property was in disarray.

The fate of the home, many feared, was also in danger. Historians, actors and local officials teamed up to make a play for Tudor Hall, an 8-acre property between Bel Air and Churchville, only to be trumped by a young couple who saw it as their dream house.

After spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in renovations, Robert and Beth Baker quietly put the childhood home of John Wilkes Booth and his acting kin on the market last week for \$925,000. Six years later, still beaten down from their losing battle and hopelessly out-priced,



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Tudor Hall was built in the 1800s in Harford County by actor Junius Brutus Booth as a country retreat from Baltimore. (Sun photo by Kenneth K. Lam)



preservationists said the revamped home continues to hold historic value and hope it can be reopened to the public.

"A lot of ill will has moved on and gone away," said Gary Sloan, an actor who led the push to help the public claim the property. "In the end, they might've been just the right family and right spark. It could be a great bridge to what's coming." The two-story, four-bedroom cottage was built in the mid-1800s by acclaimed English-born actor Junius Brutus Booth as a country retreat from Baltimore. After his death, it was where his widow raised their 10 children, several of whom would go on to successful stage careers. Among them was Edwin Thomas Booth, considered one of America's greatest Shakespearean actors. But when John Wilkes Booth, a handsome and popular performer in his own right, fired a .41-caliber bullet into Lincoln's head at Ford's Theatre in 1865, he not only changed the course of history but also sullied his famous family's name.

"In the county, there are a lot of ambivalent feelings about John Wilkes Booth and Harford County being known as the home of Lincoln's assassin," said Dinah Faber, a volunteer at the Historical Society of Harford County. "But it's important to emphasize that the house was built by one of the most prominent actors of his time. And Edwin was the superstar of his day as well, equivalent to, say, Johnny Depp or Tom Cruise."

In 1999, Tudor Hall's owners -- Howard and Dorothy Fox -- both died over a short span of time and without a will. Though the Foxes had hosted tourists and staged theatrical productions there for 30 years, the property was unkempt and deteriorating.

With an auction approaching, many were fearful that the home could be razed. Though listed on the national and state historic registries, there was no historic easement for the property to prevent its demolition. Those concerns were realized when developer Alvis Gords entered the bidding process.

When asked by CNN whether he intended to make a profit by selling the home piece by piece to collectors, Gords responded, "That's the only thing I work for."

More than 100 people, including an Abraham Lincoln lookalike and a throng of national media, flocked to the auction. A 31-year-old landscaping business owner named Robert Baker walked away with the house after placing the \$415,000 winning bid.

After much hoopla, interest in the home virtually dried up in the six years since the Bakers moved in. The family chose not to offer tours, and people stopped coming. The group that led much of the preservation effort for two decades -- the Preservation Association for Tudor Hall -- dismantled. The Harford historical society, which claimed many of the historic artifacts to display in a "Booth Room," instead has them spread among its collection. In the meantime, the Bakers went to work on making their new home livable. Though they claimed to be less interested in their new property's history than in its size, the couple were soon enchanted by the lore. "The nice thing about the property is that when the current owners purchased it for a home and restored it, they restored it with an appreciation for its architectural integrity," said Aimee C. O'Neill, an auctioneer who is handling the sale. The decrepit porch was torn down -- "One nail was holding the whole thing together," said Becky Baker, 34 -- and rebuilt in the same style. The floors were refinished and walls painted with a mix of warm and vibrant colors.

The diamond-shaped window where John Wilkes Booth scrawled his initials remains. After stepping over



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the toys in 5-year-old Robbie's bedroom, a visitor can stand on the small balcony where Booth is said to have recited Shakespeare.

"It's a really neat house," said Robert Baker, 35. "We love the place, but we just decided we wanted more land." The price tag this time around is well out of reach of most nonprofits and government entities. Yet Sloan, one of the leaders of that failed movement six years ago, said he hopes for a plot twist in the saga of Tudor Hall. His interest is not in Booth the assassin, but in the Booth family and its place in theater history. Supported by Hollywood stars -- such as actress Lynn Redgrave -- he sought financing from local government to turn the property into an actor's museum or cultural center. Harford Community College was willing to put up a considerable amount of cash, but not enough.

Sloan, who heads the drama program at Catholic University, said he doesn't have it in him to make a similar fundraising push. Instead, he said, he hopes to pique the interest of some successful acquaintances.

When he found out about the sale Monday, Sloan sent two e-mails: one to a friend he met through acting and who is now a successful doctor, and another to Sloan's brother, a top executive at Washington's Sibley Hospital, who he hopes might forward the message to Shakespeare buff Joseph Albritton, a banker and newspaper publisher.

An auction is scheduled for April 6, though a sale could take place sooner.

Cornwell to Help Solve Hunley Mystery

By BRUCE SMITH, AP, February 14, 2006

CHARLESTON, S.C. - Best-selling crime author Patricia Cornwell will donate at least \$500,000 to help researchers solve the mystery of the sinking of the Confederate submarine Hunley, the first sub in history to sink an enemy warship.

"This is a crime scene and you are doing an autopsy on that submarine," Cornwell told The Associated Press Tuesday. "It's much like Jack the

Ripper — you take the best modern science and apply it to a very old investigation and see if you can make the dead speak after all these years."

The eight-man, hand-cranked sub rammed a spar with black powder into the Union blockade ship Housatonic off Charleston on Feb. 17, 1864. The Hunley never made it back.

The sub was located off Charleston 11 years ago and raised in 2000.

Cornwell, whose 20 crime books include her series of thrillers featuring medical examiner Kay Scarpetta, often conducts research in working labs to give her novels added realism. She visited the Hunley in its conservation lab a month ago and worked with Dr. Jamie Downs, the coastal regional medical examiner for the state of Georgia who has worked on the Hunley project.

Cornwell said one of the purposes of her donation is to bring in equipment such as high-tech computers that might help solve the mystery of the sinking. That equipment includes an infrared device able to show structural weaknesses in metal.

She also said she may recruit other scientists she has met over the years — including experts in metal from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory — who may be able to help unravel the Hunley mystery.

"They may not find anything that answers the question," she said in an interview from New York. "I'm simply saying this should not be put to rest without us doing everything we can to try to figure out what happened to the Hunley and what killed these eight people on board."

There are generally two theories about the sinking. One is that the glass in the conning tower was shot out during the attack, allowing water to rush into the iron vessel. The other

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is that the crew ran out of air as they tried to crank the sub back to shore. In December, scientists said that in removing encrustation from the front conning tower, the view port glass was missing. If shattered glass is found at the bottom of the sub, it could indicate it was broken during battle. But if it is found largely intact, it might indicate it broke when the sub was sinking. The floor of the sub is still encrusted with hardened sediment.

Park Service can use private building to renovate Gettysburg home

Associated Press, February 16, 2006
HARRISBURG, Pa. - The National Park Service can have access to a building adjoining the home where Abraham Lincoln slept the night before he delivered the Gettysburg Address, a federal judge ruled.

The Park Service is renovating the now-vacant house in Gettysburg, but says it needs to get into an attached building to make structural repairs. The owners of the adjoining building denied access, saying they were concerned about possible damage to their property and about hurting the business of an ice cream shop that rents the space.

U.S. District Judge Christopher Conner ruled Tuesday that the Park Service property could be irreparably harmed if it doesn't get access to the adjoining property, which is owned by John and Atoinette Kosciński, of Cape Coral, Fla. Conner said the Koscińskis did not give a valid reason why the Park Service shouldn't have access to their building.

The historic house's chimney is collapsing, its roof is sagging, its beams and rafters are rotting, and

bricks are missing in the wall shared by the buildings, park Superintendent John Latschar has said.

The judge said the Park Service can get into the Koscińskis' building, but must provide notice and adequately protect their property, among other requirements.

The Park Service wants to turn the historic home, known as the Wills House, into a museum. The home is named for the man who owned it at the time, lawyer David Wills.

Lincoln slept the night of Nov. 18, 1863, the day before the address in which he resolved to avert the permanent destruction of the nation.

Cannon carriages being replaced on USS Cairo

VICKSBURG, Miss. - Associated Press, March 1, 2006

Historians are replacing the original wood cannon carriages on the USS Cairo with custom-built replicas.

"I've seen a definite change in them over the years," said Elizabeth Joyner, curator of the Vicksburg National Military Parks museum and display of the Civil War ironclad.

The project, paid for with \$500,000 in federal funds, will take two to three weeks and will result in the carriages moved from under the canopy which protects the site. The replicas were built by the NPS Historic Preservation Training Center in Frederick, Md.

Work began this past week with the installation of a temporary floor to accommodate moving the carriages.

The gunboat was sunk by a Confederate mine in the Yazoo River on Dec. 12, 1862. It was recovered from the river bottom about 100 years later and eventually restored as a museum.

The gunboat has been under canopies practically since it was recovered.

Joyner said 13 cannons and carriages were recovered with the Cairo. One was moved indoors, to the adjacent Cairo museum, and a replica of it was put in place. After the current project, the 12 remaining carriages will be in storage in a local, climate-controlled site, Joyner said.

Exhibit specialist Dean Wigfield said the same kind of wood, white oak, was used for the structures and a Pennsylvania blacksmith was selected to re-create the hardware.

Reconstructionists tried to go by 1851 Department of Ordnance drawings but they proved imprecise, he said.

Architects also found precise measurements impossible to make with the cannon tubes still in place. The first carriage that was put in place, for example, had to be tweaked slightly on the spot but ended up fitting fine, Wigfield said.

The heaviest of the cannon weighs 8,200 pounds, Wigfield said.

Julia Sells \$9.2 Million in Firearms and Civil War Antiques

by Robert Kyle, Maine Antique Digest, February 14, 2006
James Julia's annual fall firearms auction set new records for the company when the tally after four days of selling about 3000 lots totaled \$9.2 million. His Web site declared it "the largest grossing firearms auction ever held in the world." Julia auctions also held that title in 2004 when its fall sale earned just under \$9 million. Julia told *M.A.D.* he had about 1000 registered bidders, nearly two-thirds of whom were absentee, including bidders in ten foreign countries. There were 286 registered in-person bidders. He said the higher-priced guns stayed in the U.S. "Most of the



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foreign buyers tend to buy the under \$10,000 items," he said. The fall sale exceeded the \$9 million mark based on the bread and butter of American gun collecting: Winchester, Colt, Remington, Smith & Wesson, Marlin, Parker Brothers, and Civil War pieces. Five lots sold in the six figures: two Winchesters, two Colts, and one Confederate flag. Their sales alone totaled \$713,000. The top-seller was a cased, engraved Colt single-action Army revolver, which brought \$230,000 (includes buyer's premium). Considered more a work of art than a firearm, it is profusely decorated with foliate arabesque designs by the preeminent gun engraver of the era, L.D. Nimschke. Made in 1883, it appears like new.

Another engraved Colt single-action Army revolver, made in 1898, was the sale's second-best lot at \$178,250, well above its estimate. The strong price is attributed to its former owner, Captain Frank Hamer of the Texas Rangers. He is credited with tracking down Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, although this gun was not present at the ambush. The third-place lot at \$149,500 was an iron frame Henry rifle, the early form of what would become the Winchester. Its low serial number (2) and "very fine" condition were responsible for its desirability. Selling for \$143,750 was a brass frame Henry rifle, serial number 18, with a fully engraved receiver. Among random lots were a 13-star U.S. Navy ensign flag captured at Battery Wagner of Morris Island, 1863, with damage and wear, \$13,800 (est. \$15,000/20,000); a Harpers Ferry Model 1855 rifle, \$22,425 (est. \$22,500/27,500); a presentation sword and items from Col. Henry Wilson, 22nd

Massachusetts Regiment, 1861, \$19,550 (est. \$20,000/25,000); a presentation sword to Capt. Charles Angel, 35 New Jersey Volunteers, circa 1865, \$13,800 (est. \$8000/12,000); a cased percussion bench rifle, with accessories, maker unknown, 33" barrel, from a Maine collection, \$21,850 (est. \$10,000/15,000); and an engraved 15½" powder horn, dated 1755 and carried by Lt. John Bridge in the King George's and French and Indian Wars, \$19,550.

Actor Tom Selleck failed to sell the guns associated with his Last Stand at Saber River. One is a reproduction Colt Model 1860 Army conversion, estimated at \$15,000/25,000. The other is a reproduction engraved Henry rifle made by Uberti of Italy. It's not the one used in the film—that was leased from Stenbridge Gun Rentals. This rifle is a duplicate of that one, which Selleck wanted to use in a sequel to the film, which did not materialize. Its estimate was \$8000/12,000.

The Michael Adamson (born 1953) collection was so large and diverse it required its own hardbound catalog. It consisted of nearly 600 lots. The builder and businessman from Georgia collected just about anything connected to the Civil War. A Confederate iron cannon with period carriage, described as a "3-inch Noble Brothers & Company Ordnance Rifle," sold for \$63,250 (est. \$125,000/225,000). A Noble Brothers six-pound cannon on a reproduction carriage brought \$40,250 (est. \$150,000/250,000). A U.S. 12-pound Bormann fused cannonball with original wood sabot sold for \$3450 (est. \$1250/2100).

Preservation Magazine celebrates saving Morris Island, SC

By Margaret Foster, Preservation Magazine Online, Feb. 14, 2006

A South Carolina island that survived not only the first shots of the Civil War but seven developers will be preserved as open land.

The Charleston-area island, depicted in the 1989 film "Glory," was also the site of the 1863 attack by the African American 54th Massachusetts regiment.

Rather than build houses on the 125-acre northern tip of the island where Confederate soldiers first returned Union shots on April 12, 1861, a Florida developer bought the tract last month for \$6.5 million and has agreed to sell it to the Trust for Public Land for \$4.5 million.

Nature, in the form of island erosion, held off several of the seven attempts to build on the barrier island, and the 12-member Morris Island Coalition, which formed in February 2004, helped fend off the last two housing projects. (The National Trust is a member of the coalition.) The most recent owner, Bobby Ginn of the Florida-based Ginn Co., apparently heard the outcry against the island's development.

"Our job was relatively easy, for hardly anyone wanted to see the island developed, including the island's owners," said Blake Hallman, coalition spokesman, in the Charleston Post and Courier. "Charlestonians have the right to be ecstatic at the outcome of what should be the last battle for Morris Island."

Now the nonprofit trust must raise the \$4.5 million to complete the deal.