

## Shiloh to Celebrate the 108th Birthday of the National Park Service



*Steve and Lisa Ball Performing. Steve Ball*

Chris Mekow, NPS, August 14, 2024

Shiloh is pleased to announce a full day of activities in celebration of the National Park Service's birthday, on August 24, 2024. The day will include a special ranger hike, a kids Junior Ranger camp, cannon firing demonstrations, tours of Shiloh National Cemetery, a Civil War era musicale and birthday cake!

"The National Park Service turns 108 years old on Sunday, August 25, so we will be celebrating its birthday at Shiloh on Saturday, August 24, with many activities for the public to enjoy," said Superintendent Catherine Bragaw. "We want to invite all of our visitors, park partners, friends, and neighbors, to join with us in the celebration," Bragaw continued.

The activities will start at 10:00 a.m. as Ranger Timothy Arnold leads a two-hour hike entitled, "Fraley Field: the Bloody Battle Begins." Follow in the steps of Colonel Everett Peabody's early morning patrol as they run into the Confederate

skirmishers of the 3rd Mississippi Battalion in Fraley Field.

Hikers will learn about the approach routes of both the Union patrol and the Confederate skirmishers as they met in Fraley Field for the opening shots of the battle. Then follow the path of Prentiss' Division as they engage in a fighting withdrawal back to Peabody's camps.

The hike will take place from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and hikers will meet at the park visitor center before driving out to the starting point of the hike. The distance of the hike is about 3.5 miles over moderate terrain. Participants should wear clothing and footwear appropriate for the weather. Insect repellent, sunscreen, and water is recommended.

Please call the park's visitor center at 731-689-5696 to register for the hike.

Calling all Junior Rangers! Volunteers are needed for the 1st Shiloh Volunteer Infantry Regiment and Mekows' Battery (Battery A 1st Shiloh Light Artillery)!

In celebration of the National Park Service's Birthday, Shiloh National Military Park is offering a Junior Ranger Artillery Kids Camp on Saturday, August 24. We have three programs that will immerse children into American History. The first program will take kids through the "School of the Solider" which will teach them how to train like a Civil War solider. The second program will introduce kids to what the artillery did during the Battle of Shiloh and participate in some cannon drills as part of a crew (no live firing). The third and final program will cover the importance of the color bearers in

the Civil War, and you will learn about flags and have a chance to design your own flag!

The program starts at the Shiloh Visitors Center at 10:00 a.m. and will end at 12:00 p.m. Participation in this camp is free to registered Junior Rangers and their guardians, so please register today by calling 731-689-5696.

The roar of cannon will echo across Shiloh Battlefield once again. Join the Shiloh Cannon Crew as they present Civil War cannon firing demonstrations in honor of the NPS birthday. Learn about the duties of the cannoneers and the tools and ordnance they used during the war.

Each demonstration will feature the firing of a 6-pounder field piece across the street from the park's visitor center. Demonstrations will take place on Saturday at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

As part of the NPS birthday, Shiloh rangers will provide guided tours of the Shiloh National Cemetery. These 30-minute-long tours will introduce visitors to some of the intriguing people and their stories contained within the cemetery walls. Learn about the first surgeon killed in combat during the war, the color bearers of the 16th Wisconsin Infantry, and the two Confederates interred here.

The cemetery tours will take place at 1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. Meet the park ranger at the gates of the national cemetery, no registration is required.

At 5:00 p.m., Shiloh is proud to present the acclaimed Civil War music of Steve and

Lisa Ball. They will perform some of the most popular songs of the mid-19th century and the stories behind these songs.

Playing period instruments and clad in Civil War clothing, the Ball's are modern troubadours of Civil War era music. Their historical research, story-telling, and musical abilities have entertained thousands of people all over the United States. The Ball's will perform two 45-minute sets, so everyone is invited to bring lawn chairs, blankets, and picnic baskets and enjoy music on the lawn of the park's visitor center.

Tags:



*A Cannon is Fired by the Shiloh Cannon Crew. NPS Photo/Mekow  
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## **Gettysburg National Military Park Seeks Public Assistance For Vandalism**



*The Josiah Benner farm. The barn is in the foreground and the house is in the background. NPS Photo*

Contact: Jason Martz, NPS  
August 14, 2024

GETTYSBURG, PA – Gettysburg National Military Park (NMP) staff are seeking public assistance regarding vandalism at Gettysburg NMP between February 13 and February 19, 2024. The vandalism occurred in the northern section of the battlefield at the Benner barn. Law enforcement rangers are conducting an active investigation and are seeking public assistance.

Information from visitors is often very helpful to investigators. If you were in the area of the Benner farm between February 13 and 19, 2024, or if you have information that could help, please contact us. You don't have to tell us who you are, but please tell us what you know.

Anyone who has any information regarding this incident is asked to contact the Adams County Crimestoppers hotline at 717-334-8057. Tips can also be submitted to [accrimestoppers.com](http://accrimestoppers.com) or via email to the park at [GETT\\_Superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:GETT_Superintendent@nps.gov). A reward is being offered.

Thank you for your assistance in protecting the resources of Gettysburg NMP.

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## **Reconstruction Era National Historical Park to Temporarily Close Downtown Visitor Center for Floor Installation Project**



*The Reconstruction Era National Historical Park Visitor Center will be closed August 22-30 for a floor installation project .NPS/DeMarco*

Chris Barr, NPS, August 19, 2024

BEAUFORT, SC- Reconstruction Era National Historical Park will temporarily close the Visitor Center/Old Beaufort Firehouse in downtown Beaufort from August 22-30, 2024 for a floor installation project in the building.

During the closure, park staff will provide visitor information and scheduled programming starting at the Beaufort Visitor Center Monday-Friday from 10:00 to 4:00 and Saturday from 10:00-3:00, with ranger programs at 11:00 and 2:00. The Beaufort Visitor Center is located at the Beaufort Arsenal at 713 Craven Street, across the street from the Park Visitor Center/Old Beaufort Firehouse.

During the closure, the park will expand access at Darrah Hall on the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District (open regularly Tuesday through Saturday 9:00-5:00) to include Sunday and Monday from 9:00-5:00, and at Pinckney Porters Chapel near Camp Saxton in Port Royal (open regularly Fridays and Saturdays 9:00-5:00) to Tuesday through Saturday 9:00-5:00.

For further information and updates, contact Superintendent Laura Waller ([laura\\_waller@nps.gov](mailto:laura_waller@nps.gov), 843-941-3674) or Public Information Officer Chris Barr ([christopher\\_barr@nps.gov](mailto:christopher_barr@nps.gov), 843-441-3156).

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## **Gettysburg Evergreen Cemetery Gatehouse**

Jul 28, 2024 Historic Publications



*Evergreen Cemetery Gatehouse taken just after the Battle of Gettysburg. Library of Congress*

### **The Gatehouse of Evergreen Cemetery is a Historic Landmark**

Constructed in 1855, the Evergreen Cemetery gatehouse is a noteworthy historic structure situated at 799 Baltimore Pike in Adams County, Pennsylvania. It was crucial to the outcome of the American Civil War, notably the Gettysburg Battle, which took place from July 1–3, 1863. Within the Gettysburg Battlefield Historic District, this gatehouse is acknowledged as a contributing structure.

### **Evergreen Cemetery's past**

Tucked up on a hillside south of Gettysburg Borough, Evergreen Cemetery is bordered by Tanneytown Road and Baltimore Pike. Founded in 1853, the Evergreen Cemetery Association of Gettysburg is still privately held today.

The gatehouse was created by Philadelphia architect Stephen Decatur Button in the middle of 1855. On September 1st of that year, Reverend Samuel Simon Schmucker placed the foundation stone. The brick

structure was built for \$1,025 by local masons George and Henry Chritzman in less than three months. Originally, the gatehouse was used as both the caretaker's home and the cemetery's office.

### **Gettysburg Battle**

Major-General Oliver Otis Howard realized the strategic value of the cemetery's high terrain during the Gettysburg conflict. He placed artillery facing north and west along what was later called Cemetery Hill, and placed other artillery facing east and north on the other side of Baltimore Pike. In the gatehouse, Howard set up XI Corps headquarters, which he remained in during the fight.

The telegraph key from the Gettysburg Railroad Station was moved close to the gatehouse on July 1 in order to preserve communications while Gettysburg Borough was evacuated. The caretaker's wife, Elizabeth Thorn, made dinner for General Howard, General Sickles, and General Slocum that evening.

The Battle of East Cemetery Hill began that evening on July 2. Colonel Isaac E. Avery commanded three battalions in North Carolina, while Brigadier-General Harry T. Hays led five regiments from Louisiana in an attack against the Union artillery batteries from the east. "Lying in reserve in the Evergreen Cemetery, they (73rd Pennsylvania Infantry) rushed out through the cemetery gateway to help drive the Confederates away from Rickett's and Weidrich's batteries," historian Frederick Hawthorne said of Howard's valiant resistance (Hawthorne, 1973).



*Evergreen Cemetery Gatehouse taken just after the Battle of Gettysburg with color overlay by Jack W. Melton Jr. in 2016. Library of Congress and Jack W. Melton Jr.*

### **Following-Battle Events**

The gatehouse of Evergreen Cemetery withstood the Gettysburg Battle. Following the battle, Elizabeth Thorn interred about a hundred dead troops nearby. In 1885, the structure received structural renovations that included the erection of a “lodge.”

One of 38 such buildings outside the borough, the “Evergreen Cemetery archway house” was named a contributing structure to the historic district by the Gettysburg Borough Council in 1972.

### **Sources**

“Stephen Decatur Button and the Gatehouse Design,” Pennsylvania Architectural Review, 1955; “Evergreen Cemetery Association,” Gettysburg Daily, 2021.” “Union Headquarters and Dinner Prepared by Elizabeth Thorn,” Gettysburg Historical Journal, 1993; “Cornerstone Laying by

Reverend Samuel Simon Schmucker,” Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1855.

The Frederick Hawthorne. Civil War History, “The Defense of East Cemetery Hill,” 1973.

Gettysburg National Cemetery Archives, “Burial of Fallen Soldiers by Elizabeth Thorn,” 1863; Adams County Historical Review, “Structural Repairs and Lodge Addition,” 1885.

Records of the Gettysburg Borough Council, “Designation as Historic District Contributing Structure,” 1972.

Historic Gettysburg Foundation, “Historic Structures Outside Gettysburg Borough,” 1972.

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### **Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield Commemorates 163rd Battle Anniversary**

Civil War News, Jul 22,

### **Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield Commemorates 163rd Battle Anniversary in “Save the Stories: Preserving Memories of the Battlefield”**

REPUBLIC, MO – The Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield will commemorate the 163rd Anniversary of the Battle of Wilson’s Creek between August 10 and 11, 2024. Explore first person accounts from soldiers and civilians from the battle and share your own stories of learning and connecting to the battlefield throughout the years.



*Anniversary Ceremony Color Guard.jpg*

Commemorative activities start at 10 am on Saturday, August 10, with an outdoor ceremony on the Visitor Center lawn. Speakers include Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Superintendent Sarah Cunningham, Wilson's Creek Foundation Executive Director Melissa Adler, Colonel Clay of the 16th Infantry Regiment Association, and keynote speaker, Todd Wilkinson, Project Manager for the James River Basin Partnership. Wilkinson holds a Master of Arts in History from Missouri State University and has worked and volunteered at National Park Sites in the area including Wilson's Creek National Battlefield, Fort Scott National Historic Site, and Ozark National Scenic Riverways. Additionally, recent donors will be recognized for their contributions to helping save stories through charitable donations to the battlefield's museum collections and the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation. The ceremony will conclude with the presentation of a memorial wreath and an infantry salute.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, visitors are invited to enjoy refreshments provided by the Wilson's Creek Foundation. The visitor center will host temporary exhibits to learn about the people who were here during the battle, and how the park is preserving stories through museum collection acquisitions. Throughout the afternoon, make your way to various stops throughout the tour road to learn from rangers, volunteers, and the Holmes Brigade living history group about the battle.  
Anniversary Ceremony Wreath.jpg

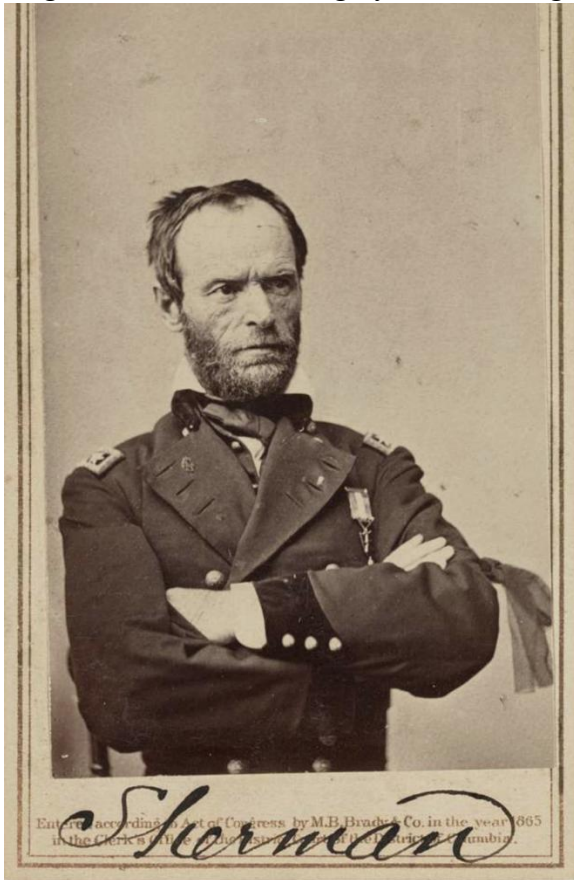
Entrance to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield is free. For additional information or to request program accommodations please call the visitor center at (417) 732-2662.



In the event of inclement weather, the programs may be altered or cancelled. Please call the park at 417-732-2662 or check the park Facebook page for program updates at [www.nps.gov/wicr](http://www.nps.gov/wicr) and <https://www.facebook.com/Wilsons-Creek-National-Battlefield-140802912626881/>.

## Sherman and the 2nd Wisconsin: Part I

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August 16, 2024, blueandgrayeducation.org



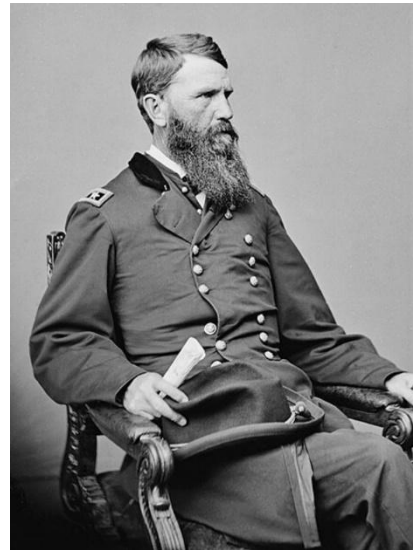
*William T. Sherman | National Archives*

At the onset of the Civil War, William Tecumseh Sherman was positioned to gain prominence within the Union war machine. An 1840 graduate of West Point, he served in the U.S. Army for 13 years before resigning his commission as a captain in 1853.

In addition to his military credentials, Sherman had strong political connections. He was closely tied to the influential Ewing family of Ohio in two significant ways: he was both the foster son and the son-in-law of

Thomas Ewing, a prominent Ohio Whig who had served as Secretary of the U.S. Treasury and as the first U.S. Secretary of the Interior. The Ewing family was so prominent that a “Who’s Who” of the country’s most eminent politicians attended Sherman’s wedding to Ellen Ewing in 1850, including President Zachary Taylor, Vice President Millard Fillmore, and Senators Henry Clay and Daniel Webster.

Sherman’s younger brother, John, was an even greater political asset. John was a prominent Republican who had nearly been elected Speaker of the House for the 36th Congress. When Lincoln appointed Senator Samuel Chase of Ohio to Secretary of the Treasury, the Ohio legislature selected John Sherman to replace Chase as the state’s second senator in March 1861.



*Congressman Frank Blair. | LOC*

Another important political connection was to the influential Blair family. Sherman was well-acquainted with Congressman Frank Blair, a Republican power broker in St. Louis and brother of Lincoln’s Postmaster General, Montgomery Blair. Both were sons

of Francis Preston Blair, another key figure in the Republican party.

In the spring of 1861, armed with these advantages, Sherman, who abhorred disunion but not slavery, traveled to Washington, D.C., where he and his brother John met with President Lincoln. Sherman hoped to be appointed to a prominent position in the U.S. Army, which he assumed Lincoln would reinvigorate. However, the meeting left Sherman dumbfounded. Lincoln informed William and John that he “did not think he wanted military men,” a stunning reflection of Lincoln’s mindset in the earliest days of his presidency.

Blocked from a military position, Sherman next sought a post in St. Louis within the Treasury Department, where he hoped to settle with his family. Once again, Sherman was rebuffed. Aggrieved, he decided to sit out the war and used his business connections to secure the presidency of a local horse-drawn street railroad in St. Louis.

Almost immediately after beginning his new job, Sherman’s political connections began generating federal job offers. On April 6, Montgomery Blair asked Sherman to accept the interim position of Chief Clerk of the War Department until Congress convened, at which point Sherman would be nominated to be the Assistant Secretary of War. With his nose now firmly out of joint, Sherman summarily refused. On April 17, just days after the fall of Fort Sumter, he received another request, delivered in person by Congressman Frank Blair. In response to Lincoln’s call for 75,000 volunteers, Blair asked Sherman to raise a regiment of volunteers in the precarious battleground

state of Missouri. Once again, Sherman refused to come to the aid of his country. Why? The truth was that Sherman despised volunteers, preferring to associate only with the regular army. In a letter to his foster brother Thomas Ewing, Jr., Sherman explained that “I will not volunteer among the irregular Militia, for I like not the class from which they are exclusively drawn.” In a letter to John, Sherman expressed relief that Ohio’s governor had appointed George McClellan as the major general in charge of Ohio’s volunteer militia because, had the position been offered to Sherman, his loyalty would have been called into question if he had declined.

Despite Sherman’s repeated refusals, another offer soon materialized. When the government decided to replace Brig. Gen. William Harney, who had strong Southern leanings, as commander of the Department of the West, Sherman was offered the position. True to his recent pattern, he declined this offer as well. The reason? Most of the troops on hand in St. Louis were “Dutch militia.”

In an April 8 letter to his brother John, Sherman named three stations “in which I can render most service”: Surveyor General (which he acknowledged had already been filled), Inspector General, or Brigadier General in the regular army. Instead, on May 14, William T. Sherman was commissioned as a colonel of the new 13th U.S. Infantry regiment. After two months of careful maneuvering, Sherman had finally achieved his goal—a promotion from captain to colonel in the regular army and command of regular soldiers.



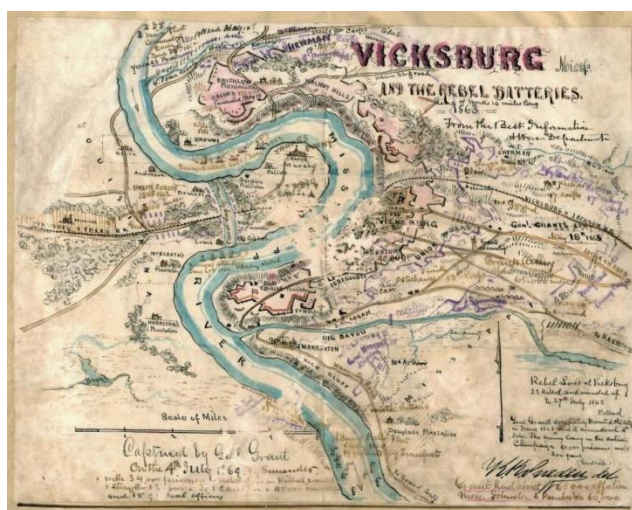
However, at this point, Sherman made a serious blunder, and all his machinations would soon come undone.

**To Be Continued ... in the August 19, 2024, BGES Dispatch.**

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## Edmund W. Pettus at Vicksburg

Norman Dasinger, Jr., August 5, 2024,  
blueandgrayeducation.org



Map of Vicksburg's rebel batteries in 1863 | LOC

Constructed along the major east-west railroad track leading into and out of Vicksburg, Mississippi, the Railroad Redoubt (aka Fort Beauregard) witnessed multiple attacks from both Confederate and Federal soldiers on May 22, 1863.

That day, the four-sided fort—part of a vast network of entrenchments enclosing the town—was manned by soldiers of the 30th and 46th Alabama Infantry Regiments, with Waul's Texas Legion in close support. Because all the officers of the 46th had been captured May 16th at the battle of Champion's Hill, Col. Edmund W. Pettus of

the 20th Alabama was ordered to take command within the redoubt.

At 10 a.m., “Big” Mike Lawler’s Union Brigade, composed mostly of Iowans, led the assaulting force. Their path had been cleared by hours of artillery fire that had bombarded the sleepless Alabamians trapped within the redoubt. That concentrated fire had punched a gap in the Confederate line, which Lawler’s men exploited. The Federals scaled the earthen fort’s walls, drove back the Confederates, and within a little over an hour, the flags of the 77th Illinois and 22nd Iowa were flapping in the summer breeze atop the ramparts. Success!

However, the assault stalled, giving the Confederates a chance to plan a bold response.



Studio portrait of Brig. Gen. Edmund Winston Pettus, C.S.A., 1863 | Collections of the Alabama Department of Archives and History

Andrew Miller, one of the rangers at Vicksburg National Military Park, wrote, “The hours ticked away as the Federals, stuck in the ditch outside the Railroad Redoubt, waited through the day’s sweltering heat for support or relief. Soon

the Confederates took to rolling artillery shells with lit fuses down the slope.” As the afternoon wore on, the Confederate command decided that Pettus would join forces with the fresh soldiers of Waul’s Texas Legion to retake the position. In 1907, Pettus wrote, “So, when ordered, I met Colonel Waul and told him what I wanted. He said, ‘I will not order but if any of my companies will volunteer, I will consent ... I told him that about thirty was as many as could be used in so small a place. ... In a moment, I had my band of thirty.”

Josh Edwards in the March 5, 2015, edition of the Vicksburg Post, wrote, “I [Pettus] was peremptorily ordered ... to take the redoubt. Waul’s Legion and three gallant Alabamians did volunteer, but I as their commander was acting in response to orders.”

The handpicked force was assembled, and before the sun could set, they moved into position. Pettus, “musket in hand,” led the assaulting party into the fort, fully securing it and capturing the colors of the 77th Illinois.

Waul reported, “The coolness, courage, and intrepidity manifested deserves the highest praise for ever officer and man engaged in the hazardous enterprise.”

Federal soldiers would never again assault Fort Beauregard. However, all the defenders of Vicksburg would surrender to Union General U.S. Grant on July 4, 1863.



*The surrender at Vicksburg on July 4, 1863 | LOC*

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## **Sherman and the 2nd Wisconsin: Part II**

Michael Kirschner  
(SecondWisconsinInfantry@gmail.com)  
August 19, 2024, blueandgrayeducation.org



*Oil portrait of Sherman by George Peter Alexander Healy, in 1866. | public domain*

Before William T. Sherman led a division at Shiloh, captured Atlanta, or marched through Georgia, he grudgingly commanded a brigade of volunteers at First Bull Run, Virginia. Had Sherman gotten his wish, he would have recruited and led a regiment of regular army infantry in and around St. Louis, as he strenuously objected to being associated with volunteer militia units. If that had happened, there is no telling how his career or the outcome of the war would have unfolded. But Sherman's desires were foiled. He led volunteer soldiers at First Bull Run, and for that single battle, his career intersected with the history of one of the Union's most storied units—the 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Regiment. His leadership produced bloody results that ultimately prepared the Badger regiment to serve as the inspirational senior member of the soon-to-be-formed Iron Brigade.

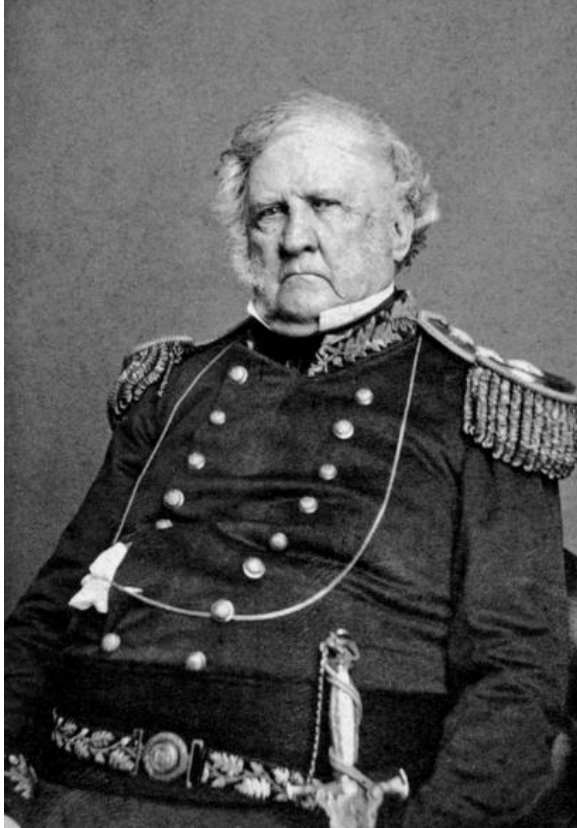
In May 1861, while in St. Louis, Sherman received regular assurances from his political correspondents in Washington that he had been named colonel of the new regular army's 13th Infantry Regiment.

Still, on June 6, Sherman jumped at an urgent summons to Washington upon rumors that he was to be made Quartermaster General of the United States Army, and he was not about to miss such an opportunity. Immediately upon arriving in Washington, Sherman and his brother went to Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Chase's home to inquire about the position but were disappointed to hear that another had already been given the post.

Being in Washington, however, Sherman renewed his acquaintance with Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott and Scott's military secretary,

Schuyler Hamilton, a grandson of Alexander Hamilton whom Sherman described as "a particular friend of mine." And here, Sherman began to undermine himself. First, Scott refused to let him return to St. Louis to organize his new 13th Infantry Regiment. Instead, Scott had Sherman appointed to inspect the arriving volunteer militia units and the forts that were being built to protect Washington from a feared Southern attack. Sherman disparaged volunteers. In a prior letter to his brother John, he stated that "volunteers and militia never were, and never will be fit for Invasion and whoever tries it will be defeated & dropt by Lincoln like a hot potato." Sherman's opinion did not approve after his rounds of inspection: "[I]t was manifest they were far from being soldiers."

The inspection work brought Sherman into contact with another object of scorn: Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell, who Sherman deemed woefully inexperienced, was charged with creating an army in Virginia to drive the rebels away from Manassas Junction.



*This picture of Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott was made at West Point, N.Y., June 10, 1862. The subscribers claim that, for correctness of portraiture, finish and detail, it is preeminently the best portrait of the Great American Military Chieftain. | public domain*

McDowell, given a difficult task, was not about to let a fellow West Pointer slip through his fingers, and so Scott ordered Sherman to cross the Potomac to Virginia on July 1 and report to McDowell, who, in turn, ordered Sherman to take command of a brigade of four volunteer infantry regiments, one of which was the 2nd Wisconsin.

Sherman was handicapped by having no battlefield experience of any kind, having been sent to California during the Mexican-American War. He revealed the depths of his combat ignorance in his Memoirs with a startling statement about his need to learn battlefield basics: “[After First Bull Run] I

organized a system of drills, embracing the evolutions of the line, all of which was new to me, and I had to learn the tactics from books.” [Emphasis added.]

In essence, Sherman knew nothing of combat and knew that he knew nothing.

Sherman’s lack of experience leading men into battle, combined with his aggressiveness, led to heavy casualties among his four regiments at the battle of First Bull Run. Toward the end of the battle, he ordered unsupported and fruitless charges up Henry Hill, one regiment at a time, all in a doomed effort to recapture Union artillery that had been overrun by elements of the Confederate army.

Of the eight Union brigades heavily engaged at First Bull Run, Sherman’s casualties in killed and wounded—313—dwarfed those of any other. Sherman thereby contributed to the bloody toll that one of his regiments—the 2nd Wisconsin—would amass during the war, ultimately earning it the dubious distinction of suffering the highest proportion of battlefield casualties of any Union unit in the Civil War. Even here, however, Sherman contributed to overall Union success because the experience of the 2nd Wisconsin at First Bull Run was critical in the later formation of what became the best fighting unit that the Union knew during the entirety of the war—the Iron Brigade.

While the 2nd Wisconsin would remain in the Eastern Theater of the Civil War, Sherman would head to the West.

## Sources

Bradley M. Gottfried, *The Maps of First Bull Run* (Savas Beattie, 2009)

William T. Sherman, *Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman* (Penguin Books, 2000)

Brooks D. Simpson & Jean V. Berlin, *Sherman's Civil War: Selected Correspondence of William T. Sherman, 1860-1865* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1999)

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