



## THE OLD LINER



### THE CONFEDERATE BEE BROTHERS: UNFORGETTABLE LEGACIES FOR VERY CONVERSE REASONS

**One gave Stonewall Jackson his nickname.  
One was dubbed "the poorest excuse for a  
Gen that I ever saw."**

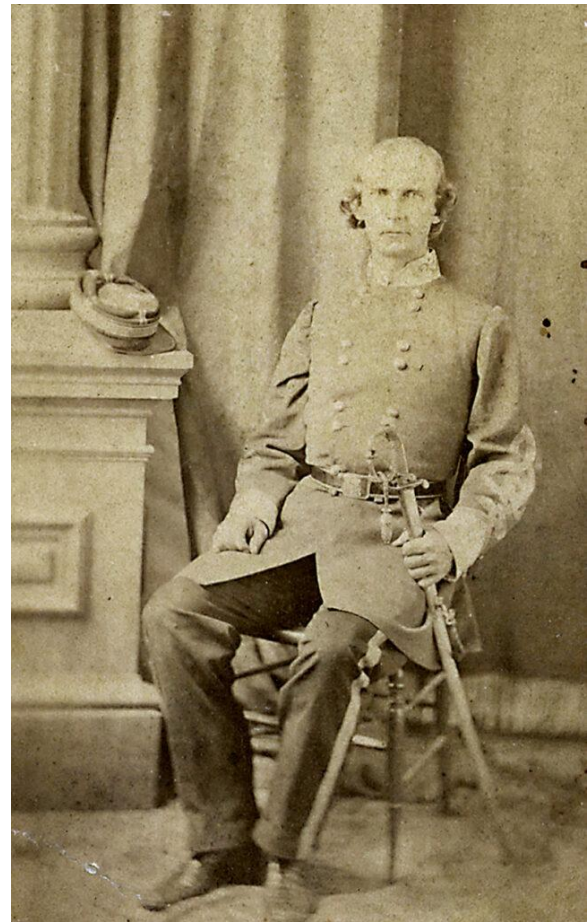
By Richard H. Holloway, HistoryNet, 2/14 2



*Brig. Gen. Barnard E. Bee, the 3rd Brigade's commander in the Army of the Shenandoah, rallies the 4th Alabama at First Manassas. (© Don Troiani, All Rights Reserved 2023 (Bridgeman Images))*

When one hears the name of a Civil War general named Bee, the first reaction for most is the Confederate commander from South Carolina who shouted to his men at the First Battle of Manassas on July 21, 1861: "Look men, there stands Jackson like a stone wall. Rally behind the Virginians!" That Bee was Barnard Elliott Bee Jr., who would be mortally wounded on Henry Hill shortly after uttering that immortal cheer.

But Barnard Bee had a younger brother who also served in the Confederate Army during the war, Brig. Gen. Hamilton P. Bee.



*Hamilton Bee (Southern Methodist University Libraries)*

"Ham" had moved with his parents as a teenager to Texas. He later leveraged his father's political standing in the Texas government to get a spot as a brigadier general of Texas Militia in a 10-county area along the coast. In March 1862, he was elevated to the same rank in the Confederate Army.

In the early stages of the 1864 Red River Campaign, Bee and a large cavalry force were sent to fight in Louisiana. Generals Richard Taylor and Edmund Kirby Smith met at Bee's campfire the night after the Confederate victory at Mansfield, La., on April 8. The next day, Bee was injured leading a charge at Pleasant Hill.



## THE OLD LINER



Although Bee was generally complimented for his personal bravery, he apparently lacked a capacity for military leadership. His ultimate failure came on April 23, 1864, when he pulled his men out of position at Monett's Ferry, allowing the Federals to escape unchallenged to Alexandria, La.

Taylor soon dismissed him from service. According to one subordinate, Bee was "the poorest excuse for a Gen that I ever saw."

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### **DAN SICKLES INSISTED THAT HIS GETTYSBURG ANTICS SAVED THE UNION. WAS HE RIGHT?**

**Sickles nearly cost the Union Army at Gettysburg by breaking George Meade's orders.**

By D. Scott Hartwig, History.net, 2/26/2024



*In this highly stylized artwork, Meade informs Sickles that he is out of position. That did occur, but before Longstreet had launched his attack on Sickles' 3rd Corps. (CBW (Alamy Stock Photo))*

"It was either a good line, or a bad one, and, whichever it was, I took it on my own responsibility....I took up that line because it enabled me to hold commanding ground,

which, if the enemy had been allowed to take—as they would have taken it if I had not occupied it in force—would have rendered our position on the left untenable; and, in my judgment, would have turned the fortunes of the day hopelessly against us." So testified Union Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Sickles on February 26, 1864, to the Joint Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War about the controversial decision he made, against orders, to reposition his 3rd Corps at Gettysburg on July 2, 1863. As a politician, Sickles understood the importance of getting out in front of a story and shaping how it was perceived. In his view, had he not moved his corps to its advanced position, the battle likely would have been lost—a narrative he pushed on more than one front. Sickles, whose left leg was shattered by a cannonball and amputated during that day's fighting, eagerly shared his version of the battle with President Abraham Lincoln while recovering from his wound, as well as anyone else in Congress he thought might be of help, particularly those who served on the Conduct of the War committee.

It was no accident Sickles was the first officer to testify before the committee about Gettysburg. In March 1864, he was likely the author, or at least the source, of an article about the battle in *The New York Herald*, under the pen name "Historicus," which essentially repeated Sickles' points from his testimony before the committee.

At the time, Sickles was unsuccessful in his effort to have Maj. Gen. George Meade removed as commander of the Army of the Potomac and for his personal return to the army, which Meade had blocked. But he was



## THE OLD LINER



successful in muddying the waters of truth and in casting doubt upon Meade's generalship at Gettysburg. This has echoed through the decades to today, where people still fiercely debate the wisdom or folly of Sickles' advance, and view Meade's generalship through the lens Dan Sickles shaped.



In considering the position Sickles occupied and the one Meade ordered him to be in, it is worth pausing a moment to consider the two men's military pedigree, for in this area they were not equals. Sickles had no antebellum military experience. He was commissioned a colonel on June 26, 1861, principally because he was a well-known Democrat who supported the war and could assist in the raising of troops.

Sickles' nomination to brigadier general in September 1861 was held up for months, and although he had command of a brigade, when it shipped out for the 1862 Peninsula Campaign, he remained in Washington to fight the political battles needed to secure that promotion. He succeeded but missed the key Battle of Williamsburg, although he was with the brigade at Fair Oaks (Seven Pines) on May 31–June 1, 1862.

Sickles saw further action during the Seven Days' Battles starting in late June, but then

returned home on a recruiting mission, which resulted in him missing both the Second Bull Run and Antietam campaigns. When Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside assumed command of the Army of the Potomac in November 1862, Sickles was bizarrely placed in command of the 3rd Corps' 2nd Division despite his lack of military training and combat experience. His division was lightly engaged at Fredericksburg, however, suffering only about 100 casualties.

Then, in yet another questionable military decision, Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker handed Sickles command of the 3rd Corps upon replacing Burnside atop the Army of the Potomac in January 1863.

In describing the general's performance at the Battle of Chancellorsville in May, Sickles' biographer, James Hessler, wrote: "[H]e fought aggressively, but demonstrated questionable military judgment." Shortly after that battle, Sickles left the army again, claiming a shell burst had damaged his health. He did not return until June 28, the day Meade replaced Hooker as the army's commander.

There is no question Sickles was a brave soldier, but he was a corps commander with relatively little experience who had demonstrated no aptitude to read terrain well. Meade, on the other hand, was a West Pointer with 28 years' service in the Army, including as a topographical engineer during the Mexican War, where his job was to read terrain. Meade had commanded, with great skill, units from brigade to corps in the Army of the Potomac in every major battle in the Eastern Theater.



## THE OLD LINER



When Meade decided where to place each of his corps on July 2, he relied on an early morning reconnaissance he had conducted. Meade sent verbal orders to Sickles early, probably about 5–5:30 a.m., to relieve a 12th Corps division on the northern slope of Little Round Top and to extend his right to connect with the 2nd Corps. Sickles never visited Little Round Top that we know of, and he would later claim the 12th Corps division had no defined position, which was untrue, for some of his troops did in fact spell relief for part of the 12th Corps command.

At 11 a.m., after riding to Meade's headquarters, Sickles told his commander he was unsure of the position he had been ordered to occupy. Meade reiterated "that his right was to rest upon General [Winfield S.] Hancock's left; and his left was to extend to the Round Top mountain, plainly visible, if it was practicable to occupy it."

What then of the advanced position to which Sickles subsequently moved without orders? The reasons why Meade had not deployed the 3rd Corps here soon became abundantly clear for several reasons: 1) the advanced position upset the defensive arrangement of the army commander; 2) it was beyond support distance of the 2nd Corps, or any of the army's other corps; 3) Sickles did not have enough men to assume the front he chose; 4) he left Little Round Top, the key terrain on the southern end of the field, undefended; 5) the salient at the Peach Orchard was easily hit by a crossfire of Confederate artillery; 6) if the 3rd Corps was driven from its position, it would have to retreat over open ground, likely leading to

heavy casualties; and 7) contrary to Sickles' claim, Meade's assigned position for the 3rd Corps was a superior one.

To answer Sickles' rhetorical question of whether his line was a good or bad one: no, it was bad—and it nearly led to the army's defeat. Colonel E. Porter Alexander was one Confederate certain the battle was won when he placed his guns in the Peach Orchard, with the 3rd Corps driven back. But "when I got to take in all the topography, I was very much disappointed," he recalled. "It was not the enemy's main line we had broken. That loomed up near 1,000 yards beyond us, a ridge giving good cover behind it & endless fine positions for batteries."

It was the original position Meade had assigned Sickles to defend.

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## **Remember the Fallen at Fourteen Engaging Battlefields and Historic Destinations This Memorial Day**

**The American Battlefield Trust recommends the following programs, events and activities at America's battlefields and historic sites in honor of Memorial Day 2024**

Mary Koik, ABT, May 22, 2024  
**(Washington, D.C.)** — In the years following the Civil War, Americans began dedicating a day each spring to remember friends and family members who lost their lives during the tragic conflict. What was initially known as Decoration Day has evolved into a tradition that encompasses all American wars; Memorial Day became a



## THE OLD LINER



national holiday in 1971. To honor the sacrifices made by our nation's military, the American Battlefield Trust — a national nonprofit organization that preserves battlefields of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War — recommends the following events, volunteer opportunities and activities for Memorial Day weekend 2024. For more activities and destinations, visit the Trust's online events page or check out calendars maintained by the National Park Service and state parks or museums near you.

### **May 24-27: Memorial Day Weekend at the National Museum of the U.S.**

*Army, Fort Belvoir, Va.*

With activities scheduled all weekend, the National Museum of the United States Army is ready to welcome museum visitors and help them create new memories and traditions that will honor the service and sacrifice of America's soldiers. Activities — including a flag display, documentary screening, a remembrance service, crafts, a hands-on exploration of the equipment and uniforms American soldiers have donned throughout time, and more — are free with a general admission museum ticket. Learn more.

### **May 25: Grand Opening of the Medal of Honor Museum at Patriots Point, Mount Pleasant, S.C.**

Head to the public unveiling of The Medal of Honor Museum at Patriots Point, which signals the launch of the revived museum aboard the *USS Yorktown*. The renovation, sponsored by the National Medal of Honor Center for Leadership, will showcase the stories of our nation's Medal of Honor recipients. See living history reenactors

showcasing military life from the Civil War to the Vietnam War, learn from Medal of Honor recipients James C. McCloughan and Leroy A. Petry, enter a raffle, and look forward to special food offerings. Museum admission includes access to all of Patriots Point and the Medal of Honor Museum. Learn more.

### **May 25: Flag Placement at Andersonville National Historic Site, Andersonville, Ga.**

Join this Peach State site for its annual Memorial Day observance at the national cemetery with the placement of the flags. Following, lunch will be provided by the Dixie Crows. Registration is required. Learn more.

### **May 25: WWII Memorial 20th Anniversary**

*Commemoration, Washington, D.C. and virtual*

Head to the National Mall to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the unveiling of the World War II Memorial, and witness World War II veterans place wreaths at the Freedom Wall of the Memorial in remembrance of the more than 400,000 Americans who lost their lives during the conflict. In-person attendees must register, but the ceremony can also be viewed online. Learn more.

### **May 25-27: "The Last Full Measure of Devotion" — The Civil War Origins of Memorial Day, Baltimore, Md.**

Visit Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine to learn about the Civil War origins of Memorial Day with programs led by park rangers. Discover how communities coped with the loss of their loved ones during the war, witness living history demonstrations, hear the roar of the drums



## THE OLD LINER



as the Civil War quicksteps of the Fort McHenry Guard Fife and Drum Corps echo across the parade ground, walk with a ranger to learn about Fort McHenry's role in the Civil War, and help rangers raise the stars and stripes over the ramparts. Learn more.

### **May 26: Service Stories in Slatersville, North Smithfield, R.I.**

Join Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park on Memorial Day weekend to explore the Slatersville Cemetery. With a park ranger as your guide, hear stories about the men of Rhode Island who served in the Civil War. Learn more.

### **May 27: Memorial Day Commemoration Program at Antietam, Sharpsburg, Md.**

Commemorate Memorial Day at Antietam National Cemetery with a program including keynote speaker Brigadier General Ty Seidule, U.S. Army (Ret.), music from the Hagerstown Choral Arts and a cannon salute from Antietam National Battlefield's volunteer group, Battery B, 4th U.S. Artillery. Learn more.

### **May 27: Memorial Day Service at Perry's Victory & International Peace Memorial, Put-in-Bay, Ohio**

Remember those that gave the last full measure of devotion to their country at a site that was established to honor those who fought in the Battle of Lake Erie, during the War of 1812, and to celebrate the long-lasting peace among Great Britain, Canada and the U.S. The annual event begins with a procession at 10:55 a.m., with the service on the Plaza immediately following at 11:00 a.m. Learn more.

### **May 27: Memorial Day Commemoration at Saint Paul's Church National Historic**

### **Site, Mount Vernon, N.Y.**

Join this national historic site for their annual Memorial Day commemoration. Visitors can sit in for a brief ceremony in the church, take a guided tour, help in placing flowers and flags, hear stories of the veterans buried on the premises, tune in for a talk about the ethnic dimension and diversity of the American Revolution, and end the day with a presentation on the "Songs of the Civil War" with historian Robert Cohen. Learn more.



*David Duncan*

### **May 27: Memorial Day Service in the Shiloh National Cemetery, Shiloh, Tenn.**

Head to the Shiloh National Cemetery with chairs and blankets for their annual Memorial Day service. With patriotic tunes, a special guest speaker, a wreath laying, firing salute and the playing of Taps, this program will ensure a heartfelt remembrance of those who gave their lives in service to the nation. Learn more.

### **May 27: Memorial Day Ceremony, Fort Pierce, Fla.**

Join the Navy SEAL Museum at its Memorial Wall to commemorate those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. Hear from veteran and active-duty SEALs and honor the fallen through various traditions. Learn more.



## THE OLD LINER



### **May 27: Memorial Day 2024 at Monocacy National Battlefield, Frederick, Md.**

Join Park Rangers at the battlefield visitor center for programming on the origin and lasting significance of Memorial Day. Learn more.

### **May 27: National Memorial Day Parade, Washington, D.C. and on TV**

The U.S. capital's Constitution Avenue will be abuzz this Memorial Day, as the story of American sacrifice is commemorated with special performances and appearances. The event is free to the public and will air on ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox and CW stations across the country. Learn more.

### **June 6-9: 80th Anniversary of D-Day at Eisenhower National Historic Site, Gettysburg, Pa.**

Head to Dwight D. Eisenhower's Gettysburg farm to remember and honor the men and women who 80 years ago risked everything to make the world safe for democracy. Over a four-day period, the national historic site will host special programming on-site and in Gettysburg National Cemetery to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day liberation of Normandy. This year's commemoration will feature a special naturalization ceremony at Eisenhower National Site at 10 a.m. on June 6. Learn more.

The American Battlefield Trust is dedicated to preserving America's hallowed battlegrounds and educating the public about what happened there and why it matters today. The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization has protected more than 58,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War across 155 sites

in 25 states. Learn more at [www.battlefields.org](http://www.battlefields.org).

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### **The American Battlefield Trust Debuts Documentary Series 'Battlefield America: The Civil War' with MagellanTV**

**Six-part series, a partnership with the streaming service and Wide Awake Films, features the non-profit's popular animated battle maps and leading historians**

Mary Koik and Melissa Winn, ABT, May 22, 2024

**(Washington, D.C.)** — The American Battlefield Trust has partnered with streaming service MagellanTV and Wide Awake Films to present the dynamic new six-part documentary series *Battlefield America: The Civil War*. The series, which debuted this Spring, features the Trust's popular animated battle maps, video and interviews with top historians to explore and explain the tactics and strategy of the armies during the conflict.

“Wars, campaigns and battles are hard to understand, and people crave clear explanations. Using the Trust's animated battle maps, *Battlefield America* lends a graspable visual element to the narrative that makes it easier to understand,” says Trust Chief Historian Garry Adelman. “Novices will find it helpful to simply know the order in which battles occurred. Well-seasoned battlefield enthusiasts will benefit from



## THE OLD LINER



historians' latest scholarship layered over the maps."

Each of the series' six episodes features a different engagement, including the Battles of Shiloh, Antietam, Vicksburg, Gettysburg, Chickamauga and the multi-battle Overland Campaign. The series takes a closer look at the troop placement, tactical decisions and strategies employed by the generals and commanders. The Trust's Animated Maps collection helps bring alive these individual battles with troop movement animations, narratives, video and more.

The series also utilizes Civil War-era photography and modern-day aerial and ground-level views of the battlefields, exploring the crucial role these landscapes played in the outcome of the battles. Interviews with historians include on-site analysis and insight into the personalities of the armies' commanders and common soldiers and the challenges they faced.

"To the American Battlefield Trust, history goes far beyond the recording of dates and places. It's a vital act of preserving the deep emotional well springs that have shaped our collective selves. Accordingly, it has been an incredible honor to collaborate with the women and men of the Trust on our series "Battlefield America: The Civil War,"" says Thomas Lucas, co-founder of MagellanTV.

"From everyone at MagellanTV, we are deeply honored to present 'Battlefield America: The Civil War' in association with the American Battlefield Trust. We share the organization's belief that preserving historic battlefields is vital to preserving who we are and how our nation came to be."

In conjunction with the series, Trust members at the Color Bearer level receive complementary access for one year to MagellanTV in recognition of their leadership in the battlefield preservation cause. Additional offers for Trust members will allow access to view the series and can be found on the Trust website at: <https://www.battlefields.org/welcome-magellantv-subscribers>.

### **About MagellanTV**

MagellanTV is an ad-free streaming service that hosts volumes of premium documentary programs. The platform's catalog encompasses true crime, history, science, biography, nature, and arts, and a growing its selection of 4K content.

### **About the American Battlefield Trust**

The American Battlefield Trust is dedicated to preserving America's hallowed battlegrounds and educating the public about what happened there and why it matters today. The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization has protected more than 57,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War. Learn more at [www.battlefields.org](http://www.battlefields.org).

### **About Wide Awake Films**

Wide Awake Films is a creative media group focused on innovative, efficient execution of historical, commercial and corporate video and film production. The production company excels in producing compelling and powerful corporate messages, as well as Emmy award-winning historical content for museums, documentaries and television programming.





## THE OLD LINER



### **Threatened by Development, Wilderness Battlefield Named One of Nation's Most Endangered Historic Places**

**Site is one of several in Virginia facing  
irreparable harm to historic, natural and  
cultural resources due to unchecked  
proliferation of massive data centers**

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May 1, 2024

**(Orange County, Virginia)** — Wilderness  
Battlefield, site of a pivotal clash that  
marked a turning point in the Civil War, was  
named one of the nation's 11 Most  
Endangered Historic Places due to the threat  
of a massive data center development that  
would irrevocably destroy the historic  
landscapes fundamental to maintaining the  
area as a vital educational resource and  
treasured hallowed ground.

Wilderness Battlefield anchors  
Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania  
Battlefields National Military Park in  
Orange County, Va., welcoming 500,000  
heritage tourists and outdoor recreation  
enthusiasts a year to its forested trails. In  
making the designation, the National Trust  
for Historic Preservation (NTHP) noted only  
a fraction of the historically significant  
battlefield landscape is federally protected,  
leaving it vulnerable to the impact of  
rampant development. Of particular concern  
is the recent rezoning of adjacent rural land  
for the Wilderness Crossing project, an

unprecedented local expansion of residential,  
commercial and industrial development, as  
well as millions of square feet of data  
centers and their associated noise pollution  
and transmission lines.

A broad coalition has formed to build legal  
and public pressure on Orange County  
officials to reconsider and educate the public  
on what is at stake. Partners in the  
Wilderness Battlefield Coalition include  
the American Battlefield Trust, Central  
Virginia Battlefields Trust, Cedar Mountain  
Battlefield Foundation, Coalition to Protect  
America's National Parks, Friends of  
Wilderness Battlefield, Historic  
Germanna, Journey Through Hallowed  
Ground, National Parks Conservation  
Association, National Trust for Historic  
Preservation, Piedmont Environmental  
Council and Preservation Virginia.

“We simply cannot allow this potentially  
catastrophic impact to occur when better  
planning and thoughtful consideration could  
preserve such a vital and irreplaceable  
historic site,” said David Duncan, president  
of the American Battlefield Trust, which  
along with Central Virginia Battlefields  
Trust, Friends of Wilderness Battlefield and  
neighboring landowners, have filed a lawsuit  
challenging the rezoning. “We are not  
against development and know progress and  
preservation need not be mutually exclusive.  
We are grateful to the National Trust for  
drawing attention to the danger.”

“The threat of Wilderness Crossing ripples  
region-wide and statewide, as it is likely to  
draw yet more electrical generation and  
transmission infrastructure to the Piedmont  
area, particularly the historic-site-rich Route



## THE OLD LINER



3 corridor,” said Piedmont Environmental Council President Chris Miller. “This designation for the Wilderness Battlefield Area epitomizes the threats to historic, scenic and cultural resources that result from the proliferation of data centers and associated energy infrastructure.”

The Battle of the Wilderness was fought May 5-7, 1864, and marked the first stage of a major Union offensive toward the Confederate capital of Richmond ordered by the newly named Union General-in-Chief Ulysses S. Grant. Despite his army suffering horrific casualties — nearly 18,000 soldiers killed, wounded or captured in 48 hours — Grant wrote to President Lincoln, “I intend to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer.”

“In response, Lincoln told Grant, ‘Hold on with a bulldog’s grip,’ and that is precisely the spirit we carry today. The preservation and conservation community remains resolute in our fight to protect the historic landscapes of the Wilderness,” said Bill Sellers, president of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, which spearheaded the competitive application process.

The Wilderness Battlefield is one of several historic sites imperiled by the unchecked explosion of data center development in Virginia, where the concentration of data centers is three times denser than anywhere else in the world. Another proposal adjacent to Manassas National Battlefield Park would convert more than 2,100 acres of farmland into a corridor of 40 data centers, the largest such complex on the planet. Further projects poised to mar historic landscapes are

advancing in Caroline, Culpeper, Henrico, Prince William and Surry Counties. The fate of such projects is committed to local officials, as there currently exists no federal or state oversight on the siting and building of these mega warehouses, even when such a facility would jeopardize cultural, natural or historic resources of national significance.

“The explosion of data center development across the Commonwealth is a grave concern for the preservation and public history community,” said Elizabeth Kostelny, chief executive officer of Preservation Virginia. “We have spent years sounding the alarm on this broadly impactful issue and are grateful for the 11 Most designation that will highlight it on the national stage.”

At the Wilderness, some protected lands, including many areas witnessing the most intense combat, are administered by the National Park Service, while the American Battlefield Trust, Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, the Friends of Wilderness Battlefield and the Commonwealth of Virginia also own or steward additional portions of the battlefield. Even these holdings do not cover the full extent of the historic landscape and large areas once used for encampments, entrenchments, hospitals, burial sites, military headquarters and troop movements remain privately owned and vulnerable to development.

In a single vote last April, the Orange County Board of Supervisors rezoned more than 2,600 acres for the massive Wilderness Crossing development at the gateway to the battlefield and partly inside its footprint. This includes by-right entitlement to blanket



## THE OLD LINER



732 acres in data centers without any cap on density, a 5-million-square-foot ceiling having been removed at the last minute. The project will also include 500,000 square feet of commercial development and industrial zones, plus 5,000 new dwelling units, which would have an overwhelming impact in a rural county of only 16,000 households. Moreover, proceeding with this massive, unchecked development will almost certainly necessitate the implementation of the Virginia Department of Transportation's long-stagnant proposal of a major realignment of Route 20 through the historic landscape.

Three of the partners in the Wilderness Battlefield Coalition (American Battlefield Trust, Central Virginia Battlefields Trust and Friends of Wilderness Battlefield) have filed a lawsuit over the April 2023 rezoning, citing multiple failures to comply with county ordinances and Virginia law and lack of consideration of the impact on historic, natural or cultural resources. A second successful lawsuit filed by the Piedmont Environmental Council showed county officials violated the state's Freedom of Information Act with non-disclosure agreements, redacted communications and other documents related to dealings with Amazon on the project.

“We recognize the need for development and the role data centers play in our everyday lives. But this does not need to come at the expense of historic resources,” said Central Virginia Battlefields Trust President Tom Van Winkle.

There is precedent for reconsideration of data centers. Recently, facing strong public opposition, an approved Amazon data center

development in King George County was renegotiated by the Board of Supervisors.

This is the second time the Wilderness Battlefield has been named to the 11 Most Endangered List. In 2010, it faced a different threat: construction of a Walmart Superstore. Ultimately, a win-win solution was found, with Walmart building at a different site several miles away and donating the original site to the Commonwealth of Virginia. In the aftermath, stakeholders — including the owners of the land now proposed for development — created the Wilderness Battlefield Gateway Plan outlining a compatible development vision for the area. It was a model for community engagement and collaborative planning, with elements of the plan officially adopted by the County. However, both the process and recommendations were largely ignored by the County this time around.

The inclusion on the current list was announced immediately before the 160th anniversary commemoration of the battle.

Since 1988, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has produced its list of 11 places in grave danger of destruction or irreparable harm. During that time, the Trust has identified more than 350 sites, and its efforts have helped galvanize support to protect nearly all of them.

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## The Last Civil War Volunteers

By Russell K. Brown, Ph.D., May 19, 2024  
(originally published October 10, 2022)  
[blueandgrayeducation.org](http://blueandgrayeducation.org)



## THE OLD LINER

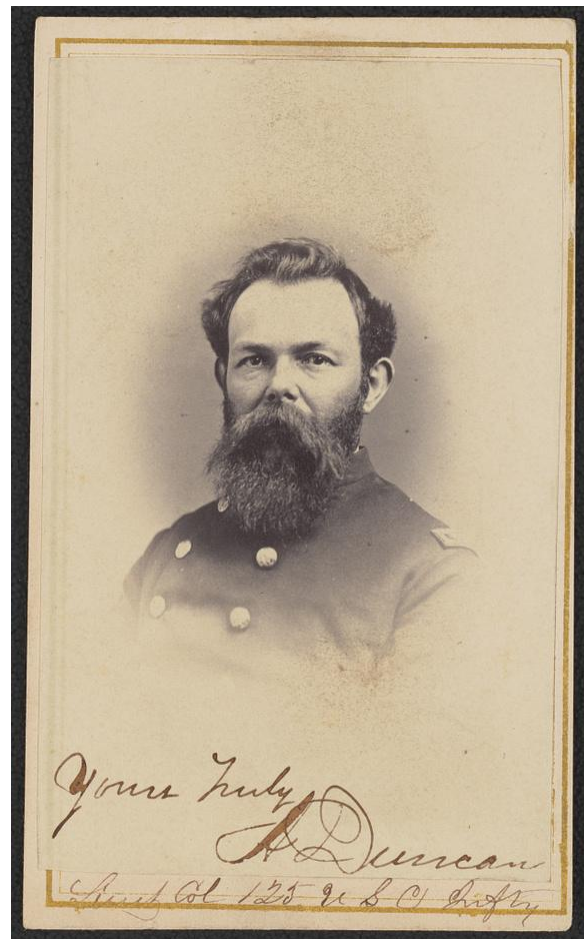


*"Come and Join Us, Brothers" recruiting poster*  
| public domain

The 125th United States Colored Infantry Regiment (USCI) was an African American unit of the Union Army during the American Civil War era. A part of the United States Colored Troops (USCT), the regiment was not formed until after the end of hostilities and saw no combat during the Civil War. The 125th was organized at Louisville, Kentucky, between February 12 and June 2, 1865. Successive regimental commanders were Col. Charles D. Armstrong (1865-1866) and Col. William R. Gerhart (1866-1867).

The regiment's personnel performed garrison and guard duty at Louisville and several points in the north-central states until they were transferred to New Mexico Territory in 1866. Approximately 26 officers and 610 men were present, with two officers and 102 men absent, early in April 1866. After traveling by steamboat from Cairo, Illinois, to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, they marched overland to New Mexico along the Santa Fe Trail, arriving at their destination in August 1866. Some of the men mutinied at St. Louis when they heard of their destination and a few deserted. The purpose

of sending black soldiers to New Mexico was to replace white volunteer troops who were leaving the service after the Civil War. Military units were needed to protect settlers and travelers in the Rio Grande River region from bandits and possible Indian attacks and USCT units were assigned this duty until regular army troops became available. At least three companies of the 57th Infantry Regiment, USCT, were also stationed in New Mexico and southern Colorado.



*Col. Alexander Duncan in 1861 | LOC*

Once in New Mexico, the companies of the 125th USCI were assigned to various forts across the territory. One detachment of the regiment founded a new post, Fort Bayard, New Mexico, on August 21, 1866. Two companies were assigned as far south as



## THE OLD LINER



Fort Bliss, Texas. The troops remained on duty in the desert territory until October 1867, when they were sent to Fort Riley, Kansas, for mustering out. The regiment was disbanded and paid off at Louisville on December 20, 1867. The 125th was the last Civil War volunteer unit, white or black, mustered out of service. A few of the men and one officer continued service in the Regular Army after 1867. Lt. Frank U. Robinson was a cavalry officer until he retired as a brigadier general in 1905.

The 125th USCI suffered only one known fatality in Indian fighting, but other men died while in service. In November 1866, Lt. Col. Alexander Duncan reported from Fort Selden, New Mexico, that seven or eight soldiers of his post, presumably including members of his regiment, already had been killed in the nearby town of Leasburg, where they probably went for entertainment. In letters to his girlfriend in the East, Lt. James H. "Harry" Storey of the 125th USCI at Fort Selden noted on one occasion that the soldiers went "on a spree day before yesterday and had not recovered from the effects today," and again "some of the fellows ... are bound to have a time tonight."

Previously, in October 1866, Lt. John Warner and Lt. Fred Hazlehurst of the 125th had shot and killed each other at Fort Selden in a fight over Hazlehurst's attentions to Warner's wife. "A few yards march with muffled drums, three volleys over the graves, and that was the end of two men who might have lived for years to come, but for the perfidy of one woman," wrote Lieutenant Storey. Capt. William L. Seran thought that one was "the victim of illicit love"; the other died "defending his honor."



*Private Richard Sanders of Co. H, 125th Regiment (USCT) | LOC*

Another fatality of the 125th USCI, Private Thomas Smith of Company A, received media attention in 2009 when his remains were reburied at the Santa Fe National Cemetery at Santa Fe, New Mexico, along with the remains of two other African American soldiers of the post-Civil War era. Smith had died in 1866 at age 23 of complications of either typhoid fever or cholera at Fort Craig, New Mexico, and was buried there. When Fort Craig was abandoned as a military installation in the 1800s, many burials from the post cemetery were exhumed and reburied elsewhere. In 2008, it came to light that some 20 bodies had been looted from the old Fort Craig cemetery and one mummified set of remains was on display in a private home. An investigation led to the recovery of Smith's skull in a brown paper bag and some other remains; in addition, approximately 60 more bodies were exhumed from Fort Craig to prevent further looting. Research by forensic scientists resulted in the identification of three of the remains, Private Smith among them. The research also led to the discovery of the rest of Smith's body.



## THE OLD LINER



In June 2009, some 60 sets of unidentified remains were reinterred at Santa Fe National Cemetery. On July 28, 2009, the three identified remains were reburied with the others at the Santa Fe cemetery. The elaborate ceremony with full military honors was conducted by the Arizona Buffalo Soldiers Association, officials of the Departments of the Interior and Veterans Affairs, and prominent retired African American military personnel. July 28 is the annual National Buffalo Soldiers Day.

The last known survivor of the 125th USCI was Capt. William L. Seran, who died in Los Angeles in 1936 at the age of 98 years and 11 months. The last known African American survivor was Private Robert Ball Anderson, who enlisted as a 21-year-old runaway enslaved person in 1865. Following his military service, Anderson settled in Nebraska where, by 1910, he was the richest black man in the state. He died in an auto accident in 1930. In 1997, Anderson's much younger widow Daisy, then 96, was honored at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, as one of three Civil War widows then living. She died a year later.