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Commemoration of the 155th Anniversary of the Battle of Monocacy

Join the park on July 6 and 7, 2019 to commemorate the 155th anniversary of the Battle of Monocacy that took place on July 9, 1864.

From 9:30 am to 4:30 pm both days, visitors can participate in special ranger programs and visit military and civilian living history encampments on the battlefield. Learn about the battle and its importance through orientation talks at 9:30 am, 11:30 am, and 2:30 pm. Park staff also direct hands-on activities for kids of all ages. Through the live firing demonstrations, visitors can learn about historic small arms and light field artillery.

The park Visitor Center also opens a NEW EXHIBIT anniversary weekend, "They Became Heroes." This features personal artifacts from soldiers of the 10th Vermont Volunteer Infantry such as hand drawn maps, diaries, scrapbooks, and an engagement ring.

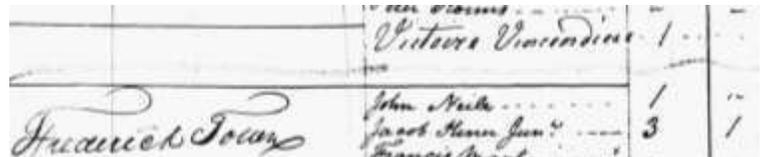
Tell Our Stories

Tell Our Stories features the women and minorities that are a part of Monocacy National Battlefield's story.

Victoire Vincendiere – Refugee, Slave Owner, Philanthropist

By Ken Plantz

While the stories and history of the Battle of Monocacy are traditionally the focus for visitors to the battlefield, much more is waiting for visitors to discover. One story to explore is that of the farms on which this historic battle took place and the people who lived on them-- before, during, and after the battle. Victoire Vincendiere and the Best or Trail Farm is perhaps the most researched and unique example of these "other histories."



A French woman, Victoire Vincendiere, came to Frederick in 1793 with other family members and their relative, Jean Payen de Boisneuf. They initially fled France to the French colony, Saint Domingue, because of the French Revolution. The slave uprising in Saint Domingue was the impetus for their move to Frederick County Maryland. These refugees purchased hundreds of acres along the Monocacy and established L'Hermitage in the late 1790s. The plantation grew to 748 acres and its heart is what today is called the Best Farm. The house standing today on the Best Farm was built by the Vincendieres. The plantation was fashioned after those in Saint Domingue and L' Hermitage grew into the second largest slave holding interest in Western Maryland.

The 1800 census lists Victoire Vincendiere as the head of this household. Victoire's story is extremely unusual during a time when few women owned large acreages. Land records indicate that this young woman also possessed additional land holding in states beyond Maryland. She was also young, unmarried, and a French Catholic in a land dominated by German Protestants. By 1827, she had sold off L'Hermitage, as well as most of her slaves, for a sizable sum. She donated much of her fortune to support Catholic charities and the local Catholic church and for the development of Mount Saint Mary's College. However, her daughter-in-law observed that she was "stern as a rock" when it came to charities promoting the progress of Protestantism."

Ongoing research paints a rather complex portrait of Victoire Vincendiere. Residents and neighbors viewed her as a cruel slave owner, as evidenced by several lawsuits brought against her. Her actions might be a reflection of what she observed on her

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father's plantation, as the enslaved were very poorly treated in Saint Domingue. Letters from family members present a contrasting view in their writings about her benevolence in opening her home to fellow refugees from Saint Domingue and Irish railroad workers during a cholera outbreak. Was Victoire a hardhearted plantation owner? Was she a savvy business woman, managing her plantation and perhaps speculating with her various land holdings? And how were she and her family received by the Frederick community at large? There is little doubt that she was a devout Catholic and displayed the spirit of generosity to those in the Church.

People are complex. They can be many things, even things that seem at odds with each other. Victoire Vincendiere and the questions that surround her continue to be at the forefront for researchers at Monocacy.

Ken Plantz is a volunteer at Monocacy National Battlefield Park.

Volunteers Travel to Research 10th Vermont Regiment

By Anita Murphy



Mary Turner and I are research volunteers at Monocacy National Battlefield Park. In early November last year, we drove to the Burlington and Montpelier Vermont area to research the Tenth Vermont Volunteers. We hoped to find new information and artifacts on the regiment and its men, particularly George Davis and Alexander Scott. These two members of the 10th Vermont both received the Congressional Medal of Honor for the valor they displayed at the Battle of Monocacy.

We spent one day at the Vermont Historical Society Research Library in Barre. There we found an original scrapbook full of photographs taken by Davis's son when they returned to Monocacy for the 25th anniversary of the battle. We also located the diary and letters of Albert Stoddard, the diary of Walter Graham, and information on the court martial of Col. Charles G. Chandler. One of the more interesting items we came upon was a compassionate letter that George Davis wrote to Eliza Hicks in 1864 about the wounding of her husband in battle. Unknown to Davis, by the time she received his letter, she had already been notified that her husband had died of his wounds.

The Special Collections Library of the University of Vermont also yielded some treasure: another piece to James Marsh Reed's diary, this portion covering the Battle of Monocacy. A box of his papers produced a piece of the Tenth's battle flag, a hand drawn map of the battle, and several poems.

Between research sites, we visited the family of a Davis descendent in Richmond Vermont. We learned several new pieces of information from our conversation, received photos of Davis' wife, and the diamond from the engagement ring he gave to her. We visited their graves in Burlington's Lakeview Cemetery and Anita did tomb rubbings of them both.

Last, we spent an afternoon at the Vermont State Archives in Middlesex. We found two diaries and a body of correspondence by two men from the regiment. The archive also holds regimental records for several companies within the 10th Vermont. We were disappointed to discover, once we returned to Frederick, that the time spent copying all those pages from microfilm to a flash drive was wasted because the pages did not transfer.

Anita Murphy is a research volunteer at Monocacy National Battlefield.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Upcoming Exhibit Will Feature 10th Vermont Personal Artifacts

The artifacts mentioned in this article will be on display in a new exhibit titled "They Became Heroes." The exhibit opens in the Monocacy Visitor Center on the 155th Battle of Monocacy Anniversary Weekend, July 6-7. Don't miss it!

What's New With the MNBF

By Susan Claffey

Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation (MNBF) finished its first three-year strategic plan at the end of 2018. The goals of that plan, our very first, laid the groundwork to construct the organization. We are proud to say that MNBF has completed an official friends agreement with Monocacy National Battlefield Park, created Articles of Incorporation and bylaws, received IRS approval as a 501(c)3, established a board, and drafted necessary internal policies and procedures. We have also created a website, launched the newsletter, and established a social media presence. We have a mailing address and office space thanks to the National Park Service (NPS) graciously allocating space for MNBF at park headquarters in the Thomas House. On top of all that, we have applied for and received a grant from the Maryland Heritage Area Association, sponsored two "Meet the Author" events for the Park, and hosted a reception to thank the donors, organizations, and individuals that made the Ransom special exhibit a reality. WHEW! And yay!

But, we are NOT resting on our laurels. Much work remains to be done to turn MNBF into a full-fledged advocacy and fundraising partner for Monocacy National Battlefield. A session was held on June 8 to establish a new strategic plan for the rest of 2019 through 2022. We very much appreciate the input we received from those of you who had the time to complete the survey we sent to our subscriber list and it was invaluable to our process. The new plan will move MNBF from an internally focused organization into an externally focused one. Our new plan requires that as we establish a financially sustainable organization, develop and implement a fundraising plan, create and launch awareness and outreach campaigns, and inaugurate a formal base of supporters for MNBF and the Park.

Our success won't be possible without you and we will share more information on our progress, plans, and how you can help as we go.

Susan Claffey is an MNBF board member.

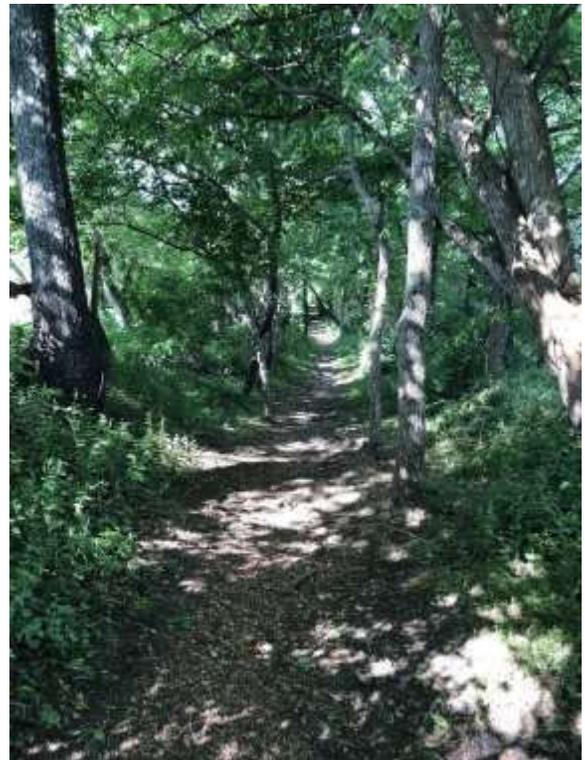
The Woodlands History and Legacy of Monocacy Battlefield

By Phil Bennett

When you view the Monocacy Battlefield from Google Earth, it appears that no more than 25-30 % of the Park is wooded today. And it is understood that this percentage has increased significantly from when the battle was fought, 155 years ago. It is easy to postulate that at one time before European settlement, the Park's roughly 1650 acres was virtually covered with mature native hardwood forest with small stands of evergreens where the conditions were favorable. So what has been the evolution of the Park's woodland resources?

When settlement started in this part of Frederick County in the 1720s, early settlers found a magnificent mature forest that harbored abundant game, was the source of pristine streams and rivers, and provided ready building materials for scattered homesteads and eventually small villages such as Urbana and, in 1745, the founding of Frederick City. With the clearing of much of the forest over the next 50-60 years, farms such as those that make up the Park were put into production. Virgin timber, extremely high-quality wood, was harvested with axe and hand saws. At first hewn by hand, as water power was harnessed, lumber was processed by mills. Lumber was used in the building of farm houses, barns, and outbuildings in the Park.

Other extensive uses of forest resources were for fence building, heating fuel and the making of charcoal. In colonial times, the largest use of wood was for fencing. Fence posts were usually made from chestnut and black locust, which were common in this area. This wood, that is very resistant to rot and insects, was strong and tough, and generally worked by hand to create the posts. Other wood, such as oak, was commonly used for rails. These fences could last a long time, indeed we occasionally find pieces of chestnut fence posts in the park today, laying under leaf litter, that were probably hewn nearly 200 years ago. However, as the best wood was harvested in earlier times, second and third growth timber was of lessor quality and not as long lasting.



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Since making and maintaining wooden fences was time consuming and labor intensive, alternatives were sought. A wood native to east Texas and Oklahoma, Osage orange, came into favor for creating living fences. In early stages of its life cycle, it forms a dense hedge that could contain cattle and horses, especially when branches were interwoven. However, over time as it matures, it becomes less dense, and unless the gaps between trees are filled with new plants, it loses its barrier qualities. A good example of Osage orange fencing that has overgrown is on the Brooks Hill Trail just to the east of the Worthington House, in the stream valley. Another example is along Araby Church Road between the Thomas Farm Lane and Baker Valley Road. Some of these hedges may predate the Civil War.

Osage orange quickly fell out of favor with the creation of barbed wire, about a decade after the end of the War. Barbed wire fencing could be installed and maintained relatively easily and was much more flexible in how it could be routed. By the early 1880's, barbed wire had transformed American farm fencing. Some early examples of barbed wire in the Park are along the ridgeline of the Brooks Hill trail where the wire protrudes from trees that it was either tacked to or next to and the tree growth subsumed it into the bark and wood over time.

In less than a century in eastern and central Maryland, the virgin forest yielded to agriculture, construction and industrial uses. Land was cleared for crops and by the time of the Civil War, little woods remained, and much of that was second and even third growth. Over the last 30 to 40 years, federal stewardship of the parkland has given the woodlands some respite, but it will take hundreds of years of thoughtful management for the forested areas to approach native woodlands. Nonetheless, the woodlands of today have much natural benefit to the local environment, and Park trails that wind through these woods are beautiful and peaceful retreats from urban and suburban life.

Grey smooth barked beech trees at the top of the ridge on the Brooks Hill Trail are at least 100 years old. Some of the oak trees along the Monocacy River are more than 150 years old. One oak cross section, that volunteers counted rings on, dated back to the laying of the B&O line in 1830-1831. And, there are a number of sycamores that are identified as witness trees, meaning they were already growing when the battle took place. They still guard the Battlefield today. Black cherry, mulberry, many varieties of maple, tulip poplar, black walnut and linden are still common.

Unfortunately, the mighty chestnut fell during the early 20th century blight. Probably the most versatile of any native tree for Native American and early European settlers and certainly one of the most beautiful trees, wiped out by a tiny introduced organism. A strong lesson in why the Park Service is vigilant in managing its tree resources. When you are hiking the trails of the Park, enjoy the trees, silent sentinels to the passage of time and hallowed ground.

Phil Bennett is an MNBFB board member and Monocacy National Battlefield Park volunteer.

Your Submissions

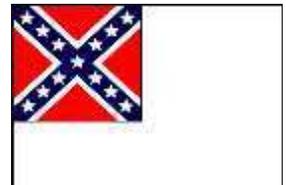
HAVE A PHOTO OR AN ARTICLE ABOUT THE PEOPLE, PLACES, HISTORY, AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF FREDERICK COUNTY?

Send them to: MonocacyNBF@outlook.com for publication in a future issue of the Dispatch.



Commanders Corner

Commanders Corner is a continuing feature for the newsletter featuring information on the two commanders at the battle of Monocacy--Union Major General Lew Wallace and Confederate Lieutenant General Jubal Anderson Early.



Lew Wallace
By Gail Stephens

On May 13, 1846, Congress declared war on Mexico after two battles between American and Mexican armies near the Rio Grande. Congress called for 50,000



Jubal Anderson Early
By Joseph McGraw

Jubal Early's life would be shaped in powerful ways by his place of birth and his family. Slightly less than 2 years after the ratified end of the War of 1812, Early was born

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Wallace (continued)

one-year volunteers and 19-year old Lew Wallace signed up with the 1st Indiana Regiment. At last, Wallace wrote, he would experience battle, “the climax of the sublime and terrible,” illustrating a vision of war that would never leave him, even after his Civil War service.

The 1st Indiana shipped to the Texas coast, arriving in July 1846. Major General Zachary Taylor’s army crossed the Rio Grande and moved on the Mexican city of Monterrey. Wallace’s regiment expected to join this movement but was ordered to guard the mouth of the Rio Grande. In the four months camped there, amid swamps and sand, the 1st lost 63 men from disease. So many were sick it was hard to muster even a battalion for drill on some days. Wallace was disillusioned and angry, writing, “Had we known in advance ... what all the misery and humiliation there was awaiting us in the camp ... I think it not unlikely that despair would have unloosed every bond of discipline and sunk our eight hundred good men into an ungovernable mob.”

In December they were ordered upriver to garrison the border town of Matamoros and in March 1847, they finally marched to Monterrey, arriving about a month after Taylor’s great victory at Buena Vista where his army of 4600 defeated a Mexican army of more than 15,000. It was a circumstance at Buena Vista that generated Wallace’s lifelong dislike of professional soldiers, as personified, at this point, by Zachary Taylor. Taylor arrived on the battlefield to see the men of the 2nd Indiana retreating. Their colonel, misunderstanding his orders, ordered the retreat. Taylor quickly sent Colonel Jefferson Davis to take his Mississippians and close the gap. This movement probably saved Taylor’s army that held the ground and won the battle. Taylor praised Davis and his regiment and severely criticized the 2nd Indiana, though an official court of inquiry found no fault. The slight created an uproar in Indiana and was never forgotten by Lew Wallace. His regiment left Mexico in May 1847 and disbanded in Indiana after their years’ service, having fought no battles.

Taylor’s treatment of the 1st Indiana, leaving them in the disease-infested swamps along the Rio Grande and very public accusations about the cowardice of the 2nd Indiana, even though they were cleared by the court of inquiry, instilled in Wallace a lifelong dislike of army regulars. His anger about the Buena Vista incident and Taylor’s praise of Davis, stayed with him. In 1861 when he swore his 11th Indiana Regiment into Civil War service, he ordered them to kneel and swear to “Remember Buena Vista.” For Indiana soldiers going to fight Confederate President Jefferson Davis’s armies, that pledge had great significance. Details of the ceremony were carried in newspapers throughout the North and it made the young Colonel Wallace famous.

Gail Stephens is a historian and author of Shadow of Shiloh; Major General Lew Wallace in the Civil War and numerous other articles and monographs.

Early (continued)

on November 3, 1816 in Franklin County, Virginia, located in the eastern foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the western edge of the Piedmont region of the Old Dominion. Situated about 80 miles southwest of Appomattox Courthouse, Franklin County was established in the mid-1780s only a few short years after the signing of the Treaty of Paris that concluded the American Revolutionary War.

Agriculture was the heart of Franklin County’s economy during Early’s lifetime and down to recent times. The primary cash crop was tobacco and tobacco farming played a central role in Early’s family life. Early’s father Joab came into tobacco farming as the result of marriage into one of the region’s prominent slave-owning planter families, the Hairstons. While still a child, Joab lost his father and became a ward of Samuel Hairston, a family friend and major landowner in southwestern Virginia who in 1851 would reputedly own \$5 million in land and enslaved laborers. Joab married Hairston’s daughter Ruth and went on to manage an extensive tobacco plantation of at least 1,000 acres using enslaved labor.

But agriculture was not the entire economic history of Early’s home county. Industrialization in the form of iron and copper mining and processing, also played a role in the local economy and eventually both metals were transported as far south as Georgia. In fact, the Washington Ironworks, the county’s oldest historic landmark and first industry, was founded in 1773 by the future father-in-law of Andrew Jackson, who sold it in 1779 to Early’s great grandfather Jeremiah (shortly before his death) and a partner, who used the ironworks in manufacturing for the American Revolutionary War effort. Under Jeremiah’s co-ownership, the ironworks quickly evolved from a rather primitive smelting operation to a more modern furnace and forge that produced a wide range of castings that were advertised as far away as South Carolina. Over time, the Washington operation expanded to cover 18,000 acres and became one of the last great iron plantations in Virginia.

Joseph McGraw is professor of public history at Stevenson University and Vice President of MNBF.