# HISTORY UNDER SIEGE



A GUIDE

TO AMERICA'S

**Most** 

Endangered

CIVIL WAR

BATTLEFIELDS

2006







What is the value of land that hundreds of men paid for with their lives?

We believe it to be priceless.



# History Under Siege

### America's Most Endangered Civil War Battlefields

n your hands you hold the 2006 edition of *History Under Siege*, the Civil War Preservation Trust's (CWPT) annual report on endangered Civil War battlefields. This report is more than a list of threatened historic sites — it is also a plan for saving the last remaining links to a moment in history that defined us as a nation.

Although many of these battlefields are in danger of being lost forever, CWPT is making significant progress. In 2005 CWPT rescued 1,726 acres of hallowed ground at legendary battlegrounds like Gettysburg, Pa., Franklin, Tenn., and Chancellorsville, Va. Since our creation more than a decade ago, CWPT has protected 22,300 acres at 95 sites in 19 states.

Despite such successes, our work is far from done. We hope this report energizes our long-time supporters and new allies to continue the fight to protect and preserve these historic battlefields.

History Under Siege has two distinct components: the first section identifies the 10 most endangered battlefields in the nation, and the second section lists 10 additional "at risk" sites, rounding out the 20 battlefields we believe need the most immediate attention. No attempt is made to rank the sites within these two tiers – instead, the battlefields are listed in alphabetical order.



The selection process is lengthy and difficult. Sites are nominated by our membership, and final decisions are made with help and input from historians, preservationists and CWPT's board of trustees. The sites included in the study are determined based on geographic location, military significance and preservation status.

In analyzing each site, CWPT consulted a 1993 study by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) that prioritized sites according to historical significance and state of preservation. Whenever possible, CWPT has used the CWSAC rating system throughout this report. Battlefields are ranked from Priority I (sites considered the most threatened) to Priority IV (sites considered lost). CWSAC also ranks battlefields from A (most historically significant) to D (sites of local importance).

# Chattahoochee River

**G**eorgia July 4 – 10, 1864

he Chattahoochee River Line was revolutionary in its design and formidable in its strength. It was called "one of the strongest pieces of field fortifications I ever saw" by Union general William Tecumseh Sherman. Stretching along the northern bank of the Chattahoochee River, General Joseph



Johnston's Confederates took up the line as a defensive position following the battle of Kennesaw Mountain. They occupied 36 distinctive, small forts called "Shoupades" (after their designer, Confederate general Francis Shoup) and a network of trenches connecting them.

The River Line was such a wellengineered defensive system that Union forces declined a direct assault; instead they dug themselves in to engage in daily artillery duels. Eventually, however, Johnston abandoned the River Line, drawing

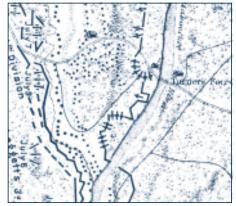
immense criticism and leading to his subsequent removal from command.

Threat: As late as the 1950s, a visitor could still walk the length of the River Line, but major suburban development has devastated the site. Of the original Shoupades, the earthen remains of only nine are identifiable. Sadly, most of these are damaged and many are threatened. Cobb County maintains a parcel containing one of the Shoupades, infantry trenches and an artillery position at the far left of the line; the rest are privately owned.

Many of the River Line's features were destroyed over the decades by landowners who feared that such historic details would impede their development plans. In the Fort Drive section of the Confederate Line, three Shoupades remain, one pressed against the fence for I-285. In the same area, recent rezonings have

led to approval of a development of 100 detached homes and townhouses. Although the developer will not harm the Shoupades themselves, their context will be erased by the construction, leaving only a view of houses rather than woods and fields.

There is no comprehensive CWSAC priority classification for the River Line.



# Circle Forts

1861-1865

Washington, D.C.

rected to protect Washington, D.C. from the threat of Confederate assault, this ring of 68 "Circle Forts" scattered around the capital city's perimeter faced only one direct threat from Southern forces, when troops under General Jubal Early moved to sweep Federal soldiers from the Shenandoah Valley and harass Washington in July 1864.

On July 11, the city was defended by a reduced garrison of 100-day troops, dismounted cavalry, clerks, and convalescents, but Federal reinforcements arrived overnight to bolster its defenses. The Confederate attack on July 12 was easily repulsed. Watching the action from Fort Stevens, President Lincoln became a target for Confederate sharpshooters, the only time a sitting American president has faced direct enemy fire. Eventually, the Confederates withdrew, having

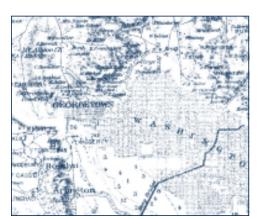


seriously threatened but not captured Washington.

**Threat:** Once intended to serve as the last line of defense for the Union capital, today this ring of fortifications has largely been absorbed by growing neighborhoods as the city swelled beyond its 1860s borders.

Although each fort has faced a different fate, they are not preserved as thoroughly as their rich heritage deserves. Approximately 22 defined earthworks have survived and are maintained by the National Park Service and local governments in an uncoordinated fashion. The Park Service has developed a Final Management Plan for the "Fort Circle Parks" that embraces those sites in its charge. At present, aside from the Fort Ward Museum and Park, there is no site-specific interpretive or museum center for the defenses of Washington.

Fort Stevens, partially reconstructed in the 1930s, sits roughly one-half mile from Walter Reed Army Medical Center. A counterattack across the hospital



grounds killed 49 Union soldiers, who were later interred at nearby Battleground National Cemetery. The Federal Base Realignment and Closure proposal to close the medical center brings threats of commercial development to the site.

There is no comprehensive CWSAC priority classification for the Circle Forts. Fort Stevens is a Priority IV, Class B site.

# Fort Morgan

**A**LABAMA

August 5 - 23, 1864

espite the Union blockade, Mobile Bay was a hot spot for smuggling supplies into the beleaguered Confederacy. Determined to end this trade, in the summer of 1864 a Federal fleet under Admiral David Farragut arrived intent on capturing and closing the port.



Confederate forces had spent three and a half years creating Mobile's defenses of fortified artillery positions, sunken pilings and other hazards, and rows of mines (called "torpedoes"). Fort Morgan, with its 500-man garrison and 46 guns would be the greatest obstacle for Farragut and his fleet. Faced with withering fire from the fort as well as mines, Farragut proclaimed, "Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!"

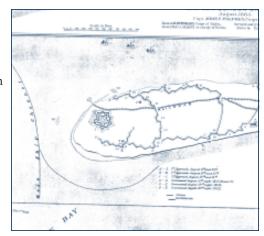
Threat: Today, the fort that

once withstood an 18-day Union bombardment has fallen into disrepair. Portions of the property are closed to the public due to safety concerns. Erosion and other damage by recent storms, particularly Hurricane Ivan, have taken a significant toll on Fort Morgan. But with staff reduced to half the recommended level, only the most minimal maintenance can be performed. Many heritage tourism programs have been cancelled completely.

Recently, the Alabama Historical Commission, which owns and operates the site, adopted a new plan to gradually increase staff and repair storm damage to the property, but the process will be far from easy. Implementation of the plan

will require substantial state funding. Another alternative supported by some concerned groups is to transfer the site to the National Park Service as a division of the Gulf Islands National Seashore system, which already includes Civil War sites in Pensacola, Fla., and Biloxi, Miss.

CWSAC classified Fort Morgan as a Priority I, Class A site, its highest designation.



# Gettysburg

July 1 - 3, 1863

PENNSYLVANIA

**G** ettysburg will always be synonymous with the Civil War. It was not only the site of the largest and most costly battle ever fought in the Americas, but also the inspiration for one of most famous speeches in this nation's history. Today the battlefield is dotted with thousands of markers,

monuments and historic tablets and is visited by nearly 2 million people each year.

On the morning of July 1, 1863, approximately 170,000 soldiers in blue and gray converged on Gettysburg. Three bloody days later, more than 50,000 of those men were casualties. The Confederacy's high tide, General Robert E. Lee's second invasion of the North, had been thwarted at a dreadful cost.

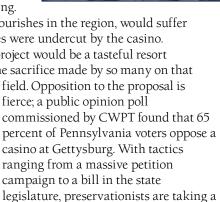
Threat: Although the park is the most visited Civil War battlefield in the U.S., the Gettysburg that millions of Americans have come to know and love is threatened by a plan to build a 3,000-slot gaming facility east of town at the intersection of Route 30 and Route 15.

Positioned merely one mile from East Cavalry Field, the effects of such a slots parlor would be immense and far reaching.

The heritage tourism industry, which flourishes in the region, would suffer immensely as countless small businesses were undercut by the casino.

Although investors claim that their project would be a tasteful resort destination, the casino would degrade the sacrifice made by so many on that





CWSAC classified Gettysburg as a Priority I, Class A battlefield, its highest designation.

stand to protect Gettysburg.



# Glendale

Virginia June 30, 1862

he savage fighting at **Glendale** (also known as **Frayser's Farm**) marked the fifth day of the 1862 Seven Days Campaign. As the Army of the Potomac withdrew toward the James River, Confederates under General Robert E. Lee attempted to cut off its escape route, split the retreating army in two and



defeat it in detail. Fighting was intense, with approximately 6,500 casualties, including five generals wounded and one captured.

Although the Confederates were briefly able to break the Northern line, a gallant counterattack by two Federal divisions enabled the Union army to hold the crossroads and later retreat to nearby Malvern Hill, where it set up a strong position for the next day's battle.

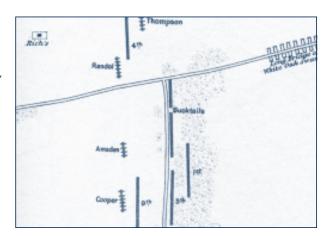
Threat: The area surrounding Richmond, Va., is a patchwork of battlefields from dozens of engagements, many of which are only

minimally preserved. The development pressures currently being felt at Glendale are typical of those in the city's rapidly growing suburbs and are steadily getting worse. Only 262 acres of the 7,800-acre Glendale battlefield are preserved, even after recent successes at the site.

The area around Glendale has numerous impending construction projects. Groundbreaking has begun on three developments in the area — Glendale Estates, Glendale Woods and the Estates at Willis Church — and three others are pending. The latest proposal is for a 56-acre, 29-home project on Darbytown

Road that will stand within musket range of preserved battlefield land.

CWSAC classified Glendale as a Priority I, Class B battlefield.



# Glorieta Pass

### March 26 - 28, 1862

New Mexico

G lorieta Pass is commonly referred to as the "Gettysburg of the West." It was here that Federal forces were finally able to turn back the Southern invasion of New Mexico. The two small armies commanded by

Confederate lieutenant colonel William Scurry and Union colonel John Slough totaled only about 2,500 troops, but the fighting was critical to the outcome of the war in the West.

The battle began with a preliminary encounter at Apache Canyon on March 26. March 28 was the decisive day of the conflict, as Scurry attacked Federals resting and filling canteens near Pigeon's Ranch. The fighting dragged on throughout the day, as the



Confederates gradually forced Slough to retreat eastward. When a detachment of Union infantry burned their supply train, the Rebels were forced to retreat back into Texas.

**Threat:** Pigeon's Ranch, the very heart of the Glorieta Pass battlefield, is suffering from neglect and public indifference. An adobe building that was a battle landmark and served as a field hospital sits only feet away from State Route 50. Vibrations from the traffic are slowly weakening the structure.

Although a state plan to widen the highway through the heart of the battle-field has largely been abandoned, the road's poor design and heavy traffic mean that the entire area is unsafe for visitors to explore on foot. Pecos National Historic Park, which oversees the location, conducts tours, but they must be

Consider Con

scheduled ahead of time and are largely conducted from vans driving along the roadway. Only a rerouting of the highway around Pigeon Ranch, which may be possible following a two-year federal traffic study, would allow visitors to explore this site safely.

CWSAC classified Glorieta Pass as a Priority I, Class A battlefield, its highest designation.

# **New Orleans**

### Louisiana

### April 16 - 28, 1862

n the spring of 1862, Forts Jackson and St. Philip, staggered on opposing banks of the Mississippi River 70 miles south of **New Orleans**, were the only obstacles standing between a powerful Union fleet and its goal. The capture of New Orleans by the U.S. Navy was the cornerstone of a plan to cut off



Southern ports to all trade, causing the Confederacy to suffer economically and forcing it into surrender.

The two garrisons were able to hold Admiral David Farragut's flotilla at bay for a week before the Union gunboats broke through. Although the major line of defense was broken, Confederate forces continued to harass the fleet as it progressed northward. But the capture of New Orleans was inevitable. The city surrendered on April 24, the two forts four days later.

Threat: Hurricane Katrina did

immense damage to many historical treasures along the Gulf Coast. Situated between two levees, the area surrounding Fort Jackson filled like a soup bowl when confronted with a 35-foot storm surge. Even though the levees saved the fort from total destruction by breaking the 200-mile per hour winds, they also made drainage more difficult. The fort stayed under water for weeks before it could be pumped out. Such prolonged submersion has made the structure's

fort's small museum was also heavily damaged.

Other forts in the New Orleans area also received heavy damage. Fort Pike, immediately outside the city, was so badly battered that it will remain closed

integrity uncertain, and many cracks have appeared in the fort's outer wall. The

indefinitely. Fort St. Philip remains completely isolated from the mainland and is only accessible via boat or helicopter.

CWSAC classified Forts Jackson and St. Philip as Priority IV, Class A sites.



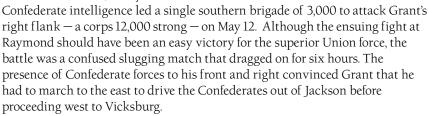
# Raymond

May 12, 1863 Mississipp

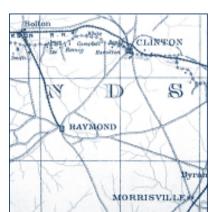
Raymond was a major turning point in Union general Ulysses S. Grant's Vicksburg Campaign. Deceiving his Confederate opponents as to his true intentions, Grant crossed the Mississippi River south of Vicksburg. After

establishing a supply base at Grand Gulf, Grant unexpectedly chose an indirect approach to Vicksburg, marching his army to the northeast to sever the railroad midway between Vicksburg and Jackson. His plan was to cut Confederate general John Pemberton's line of communication, and then destroy his army and capture Vicksburg.

While Grant moved toward the railroad, faulty



**Threat:** Thanks to a partnership between CWPT and the Friends of Raymond, 65 acres of the 1,000-acre battlefield are currently protected, and



ttlefield are currently protected, and three-quarters of a mile of interpretive trails have just been completed.

However, serious threats remain. State Highway 18, which runs through the battlefield, closely follows the Civil War road used by Grant's forces en route to Raymond. The battlefield's proximity to Jackson's growing suburbs has led to commercial and residential development along the highway.

CWSAC classified Raymond as a Priority I, Class B site.



# Shenandoah Valley

**Virginia** 1861 – 1865

onfederate general Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson once famously said that if the Confederacy lost the **Shenandoah Valley**, it lost Virginia, and if it lost Virginia, it lost the war. In the spring of 1862, Jackson defended his theory, taking his foot cavalry up and down the Valley, fighting six major battles and



defeating three Union commanders. From McDowell to Harper's Ferry and everywhere in between, Jackson and his men left their mark on the region and the war. Two years later, the Valley was back in the crosshairs, as Confederate general Jubal Early's southerners faced off with forces under the energetic Union general Philip Sheridan.

Threat: Running the entire length of the Valley, I-81 is a major transit artery through western Virginia that operates near peak capacity. A proposal to widen the highway could affect 11 major Civil War battlefields, and destroy hundreds of acres. Improvements to the interchange of I-81 and

I-66 will further infringe on the already beleaguered Cedar Creek battlefield. CWPT is part of a network of organizations and individuals exploring alternatives for highway improvement beyond simply adding more lanes, including a rail option. A rail solution could reduce truck traffic on the road, which

currently accounts for 30 to 40 percent of daily usage.

Another aspect of the road improvement plan is a bypass around Harrisonburg, which would affect the battlefields at Cross Keys and Port

Republic. Meanwhile, an expanding hospital complex in that city has all but consumed the Harrisonburg battlefield. In addition, mining operations at Port Republic, if expanded, could further damage that site's integrity.

There is no comprehensive CWSAC priority classification for the Shenandoah Valley battlegrounds. The Valley battlefields range from Priority I to Priority IV sites.



# **TheWilderness**

May 5 - 7, 1864

**Virginia** 

he first clash between Civil War legends Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant took place in a tangled mass of trees and scrub growth known as **The Wilderness**, west of Fredericksburg. The physical constraints of the

Wilderness concentrated the struggle along two roads, the Orange Turnpike and the Orange Plank Road. Visibility was limited and troop movement nearly impossible. Even worse, fires ignited by gunpowder swept through the forest, burning alive many of the wounded.

After two days of intense fighting, Lee had effectively stymied the Union advance and Grant abandoned the Wilderness. The two armies left more than 25,000 dead and wounded in their wake.



**Threat:** Much like Spotsylvania County, its neighbor to the east, Orange County is transforming from a largely rural area to a more suburban community. Population growth — predicted by the county to be 3.75 percent annually — and home construction threaten many areas of the battlefield.

Located at the bustling intersection of State Routes 3 and 20, the northern portion of the Wilderness Battlefield is particularly vulnerable to sprawl. Development plans abound, such as a proposal to rezone 2,600 and 2,400 acres of formerly rural land around the intersection as mixed use and residential,



respectfully. Such a change would pave the way for approximately 8,000 new homes — some within the park's authorized boundary. Simultaneously, road expansion to support the higher population, including a plan to double the width of Route 20 as it passes by Ellwood and through Saunder's Field, could also endanger federally protected lands.

CWSAC classified the Wilderness as a Priority I, Class A battlefield, its highest designation.

# At Risk Sites

hese 10 additional battlefields round out our ranking of the top 20 most endangered sites. To learn more about them, and how you can help watch over their preservation, be sure to visit our website at www.civilwar.org.

### Belmont, Kentucky and Missouri (Nov. 7, 1861)

Unlike many of the other sites profiled in this report, the primary threat to Belmont (and nearby Columbus) isn't development, but Mother Nature. If action is not taken soon, the battlefield will likely succumb to erosion by the nearby Mississippi River.

### Buckland, Virginia (Oct. 19, 1863)

Located along U.S. Route 29, Buckland suffers from many of the traffic and



sprawl pressures experienced at nearby Manassas Battlefield. Fortunately, there is still time to save this historic town and battlefield.

## Cedar Mountain, Virginia (Aug. 9, 1862)

Located near Culpeper, the fastest growing town in the Commonwealth, Cedar Mountain is rapidly becoming a hotbed of preservation activity. Continued growth will put many parcels of core battlefield under direct threat.

### Cynthiana, Kentucky (June 11-12, 1864)

Development is rapidly snaking northward along U.S. Route 27, including inside the National Historic Landmark boundary, while residential development east of town is encroaching on already preserved parts of the battlefield.

### Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia (June 27, 1864)

The National Park Service estimates that 160,000 cars travel through the park each day. Pressure is mounting for officials to widen roads, while sprawl continues to engulf the areas surrounding the park.

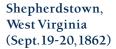
# At Risk Sites

### Manassas, Virginia (July 21, 1861 and Aug. 28-30, 1862)

Longstanding issues of traffic congestion continue to plague Manassas, which has already seen its share of preservation fights. A proposed bypass around the park may ease the traffic, but possibly at the expense of increasing development pressure on the park.

# Mansfield, Louisiana (April 8, 1864)

Rather than sprawl, preservationists at Mansfield are facing off against a mining company. Although an active grassroots network is in place, the company has thus far been unwilling to enter serious negotiations.



Recently, local headlines

have been dominated by a developer's attempts to put 100 houses on a 112-acre parcel known as the Far Away Farm. Numerous proposed developments in the region mean preservationists are facing an uphill battlefield to secure all 600 acres of core land.

### Spring Hill, Tennessee (Nov. 29, 1864)

Despite early preservation actions, in which CWPT and Maury County secured 110 acres in the mid-1990s, continued development is rapidly swallowing up what remains of the battlefield.

### Wyse Fork, North Carolina (March 7-10, 1865)

Only 58 of the roughly 6,000 acres have been preserved at the site of the second largest battle in North Carolina. Plans are on the table for a highway bypass that could bisect the battlefield, but preservationists and a growing number of locals are working hard to change the situation.



# **Progress Report**

n partnership with several national and local preservation groups, CWPT has been working tirelessly to save historic properties at sites identified in previous editions of *History Under Siege*. Listed below are a few of the successes achieved during the past twelve months.

### Bentonville, North Carolina

It wasn't that long ago that Bentonville Battlefield was considered one of the most endangered battlefields in the nation. At the end of the 1990s, only 244 acres of the battlefield was protected from development. However, a partnership between CWPT, the North Carolina Natural Heritage Trust, and the Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site has helped save 580 additional acres at the site - more than tripling the size of the battlefield since 2003. The park now consists of 900-plus acres, with additional saves on the horizon.

### Chancellorsville, Virginia

What began as a fight against a 2,300-house development on the heart of the Chancellorsville Battlefield has become a model for cooperation between the development community, local government and preservationists. In 2004 CWPT worked out an agreement with Tricord Homes to save 135 acres of the May 1, 1863, battlefield. CWPT is now working with Toll Brothers to save an additional 74 acres of the battlefield.



### Fort Donelson, Tennessee

Recent successes at the site where Ulysses S. Grant demanded "unconditional surrender" from a Confederate garrison have allowed CWPT to preserve exactly 300 acres at Fort Donelson. Our most recent acquisition, a 69.2-acre parcel in late 2005, marks the last large tract available at the site. While several smaller properties remain, this preservation puzzle is now tantalizingly close to completion.

# **Progress Report**

### Franklin, Tennessee

Thanks to the dedication of preservation groups and increased local government involvement, the preservation situation in Franklin has changed dramatically. The City of Franklin paid half of the \$5 million purchase price for a crucial 110-acre parcel on the eastern flank of the battlefield. And on November 30, the 141st anniversary of the battle, the city demolished a Pizza Hut location symbolic of the sprawl that has overtaken much of the battlefield.

### Morris Island, South Carolina

For more than six years, national and local groups have been engaged in efforts to protect Morris Island, the site of fighting portrayed in the 1990 movie Glory. On February 2, 2006, the mayor of Charleston announced a deal between the city, the Ginn Company (a resort developer), and the Trust for Public Land to save 126 acres



on the northern tip of the island. Now nearly the entire island is protected from development.

### Wilson's Creek, Missouri

Through negotiations with regional developer Missouri Partners, Inc., CWPT and the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation were able to forge a "winwin" deal at Missouri's most important Civil War battlefield. More than 150 acres of core battlefield land inside the park's new boundary were saved, creating a buffer between the battlefield and the Terrell Creek housing development.

# **About CWPT**

he Civil War was the most tragic conflict in American history. For four long years, North and South clashed in 10,000 battles and skirmishes that sounded the death knell for slavery and defined us as a nation. More than 625,000 soldiers and 50,000 civilians perished as a result of the war.

CWPT is committed to protecting the last tangible links to this tumultuous period in American history. With 75,000 members, CWPT is the largest nonprofit battlefield preservation organization in the United States. Its purpose is to preserve our nation's endangered Civil War battlefields and to promote appreciation of these hallowed grounds.

CWPT's principal goal is to preserve historic battlefield land through outright purchases, conservation easements, and partnerships with federal, state and local governments. Among the sites rescued by CWPT in recent months are key parcels at Gettysburg in Pennsylvania, Fort Donelson in Tennessee and Chancellorsville in Virginia. Over the years, CWPT has helped protect more than 22,300 acres in 19 states.

CWPT also maintains several outreach programs in support of battlefield preservation. These programs include: *Hallowed Ground*, our quarterly magazine; *History Under Siege*, an annual report on threatened Civil War battlefields; the Civil War Discovery Trail, a National Millennium Trail that links nearly 600

sites in 32 states; and Civil War Explorer, an online computer program that allows users to experience the war and its consequences.



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