

Telling the Story of **Shenandoah At War**



Developing and Implementing the
Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National
Historic District Interpretive Plan



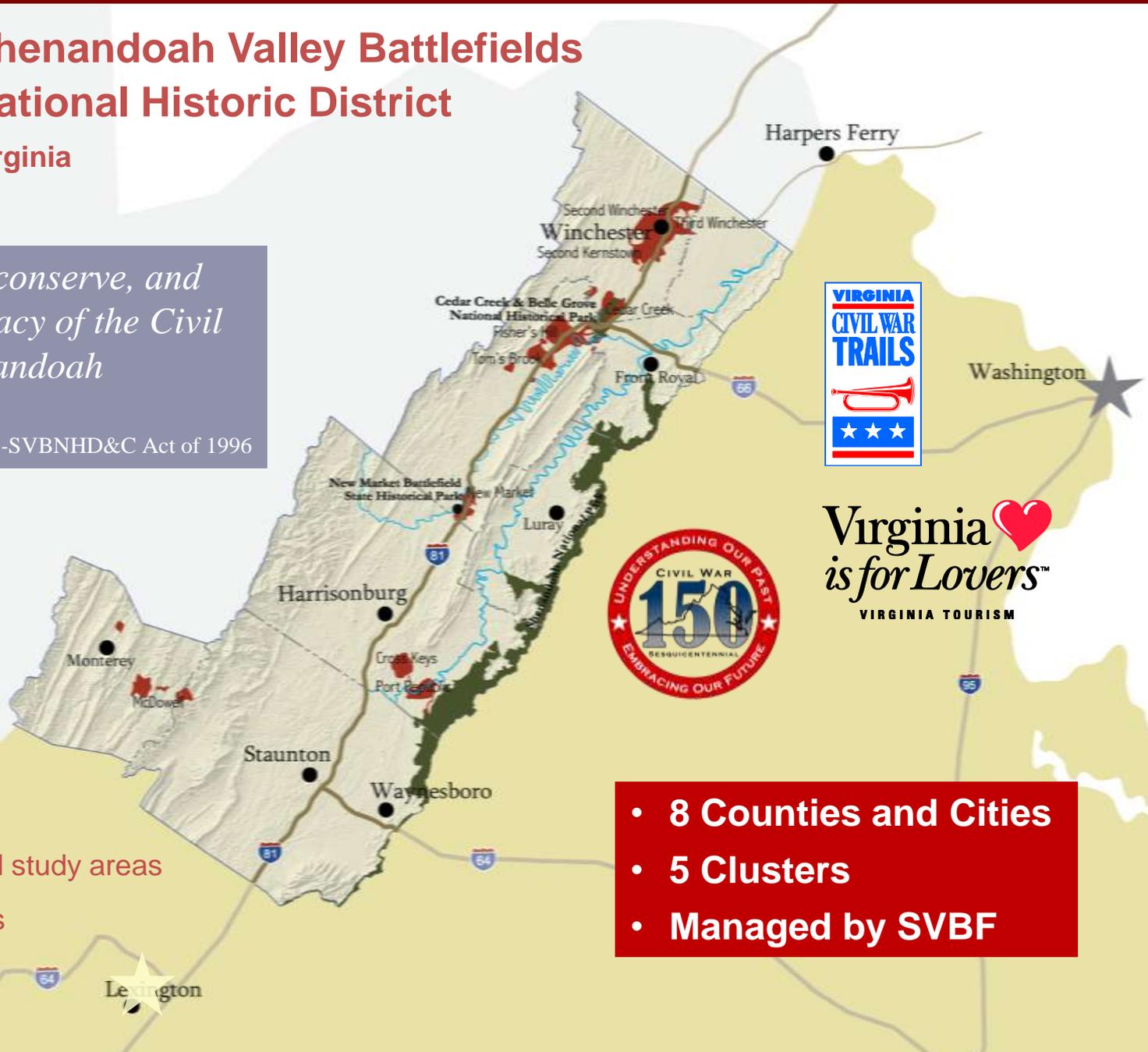
Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District

Virginia

“...to preserve, conserve, and interpret the legacy of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley...”

--SVBNHD&C Act of 1996

- battlefield core and study areas
- national park areas



Virginia *is for Lovers*[™]
VIRGINIA TOURISM

Combat in the Valley

- 6 campaigns
- 326 armed conflicts
- 20 classified as battles



Battles/Battlefields in the Valley

CWSSV - 1992

Legislated - 1996

Interp Plan - 2008

CWSAC/ABPP - Current

First Kernstown

McDowell

First Kernstown

First Kernstown – March 23, 1862

McDowell

McDowell

McDowell – May 8, 1862

Front Royal

Front Royal

Front Royal – May 23, 1862

First Winchester

First Winchester

First Winchester – May 25, 1862

Cross Keys

Cross Keys

Cross Keys

Cross Keys – June 8, 1862

Port Republic

Port Republic

Port Republic

Port Republic – June 9, 1862

Second Winchester

Second Winchester

Second Winchester

Second Winchester – June 13-15, 1863

Manassas Gap

Manassas Gap

Manassas Gap – July 23, 1863

New Market

New Market

New Market

New Market – May 15, 1864

Piedmont

~~Piedmont~~

Piedmont – June 5, 1864

Cool Spring

Cool Spring

Cool Spring – July 17-18, 1864

Rutherford's Farm

Rutherford's Farm

Rutherford's Farm – July 20, 1864

Second Kernstown

Second Kernstown

Second Kernstown

Second Kernstown – July 24, 1864

Guard Hill

Guard Hill

Guard Hill – August 16, 1864

Berryville

Berryville

Berryville – Sept. 3-4, 1864

Third Winchester

Third Winchester

Third Winchester

Third Winchester – Sept. 19, 1864

Fisher's Hill

Fisher's Hill

Fisher's Hill

Fisher's Hill – Sept. 22, 1864

Tom's Brook

Tom's Brook

Tom's Brook

Tom's Brook – Oct. 9, 1864

Cedar Creek

Cedar Creek

Cedar Creek

Cedar Creek – Oct. 19, 1864

Waynesboro

Waynesboro

Waynesboro – March 2, 1865

Importance of the Valley

- “Breadbasket of the Confederacy”
- Valley Turnpike
- Avenue of Invasion
- Geography – the mountains
- Importance as diversionary theatre
- Supply lines (north and south)

Valley was a microcosm of the War

- Battles and campaigns
- Personalities
- Politics
- Civilian story and divided loyalties
- Partisan warfare
- The Burning (1864)
- Rebuilding after the war – and the rocky road to peace



Telling the Story: The Challenges

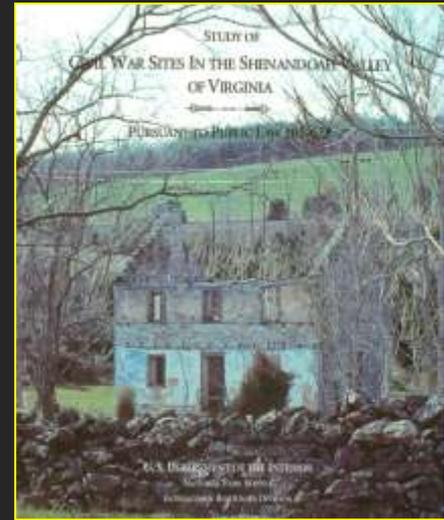
- Limited funds and limited staff
- Huge area with widely scattered sites
- Numerous partners & stakeholders with differing interests
- Serving many audiences
- Bringing together all of the elements as a cohesive story
- Whole battlefield vs. accessible battlefield
- Private land
- Preservation vs. protection
- The “ticking clock” of the Sesquicentennial

“[It] doesn’t look like a battlefield.”



- **Study of Civil War Sites in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia (1990-1992)**

- Identify Civil War Sites
- Establish Importance
- Determine Condition
- Assess Threats
- Provide Alternatives for Preservation and Interpretation



- **Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District and Commission Act (1996)**

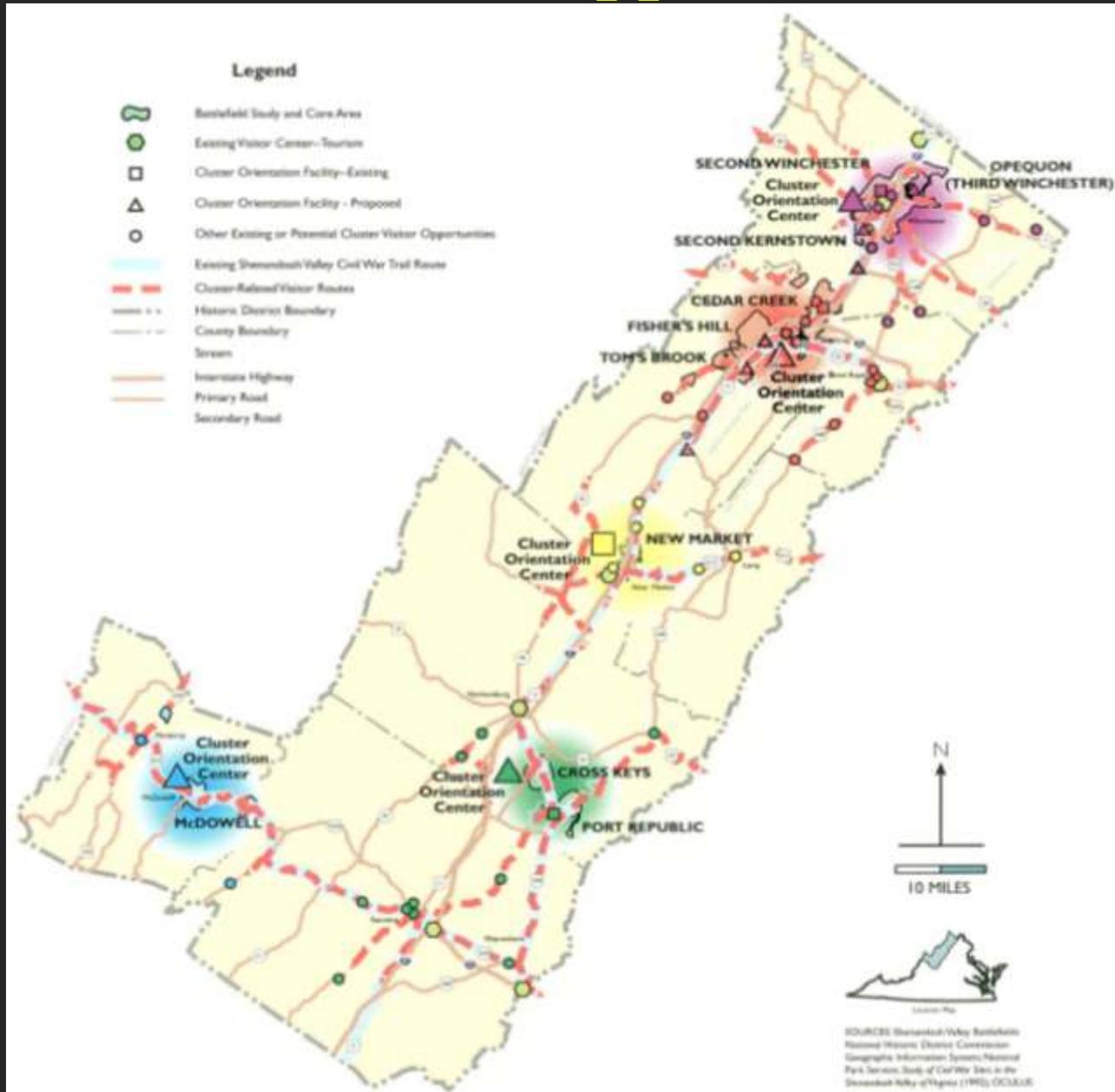
- Established NHD and Commission
- 8 counties, 4 cities, 10 battlefields, and historic roadways
- Purpose to “Preserve, Conserve, and Interpret the Valley’s Civil War Legacy”
- Emphasized Partnerships

- **Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Commission (1996-2000)**

- Published Management Plan
- Structured National Historic District by Clusters
- Created Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation to manage NHD



Cluster Approach



SVBF's Mission

- Battlefield and Resource Protection
- Visitor Experiences
- Partnerships
- Interpretation and Education...including the development of a District-wide interpretive plan



Developing the Interpretive Plan (2004-2008)

Funded by:

- NPS – American Battlefield Protection Program
- Commonwealth of Virginia – Department of Historic Resources
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- SVBF

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

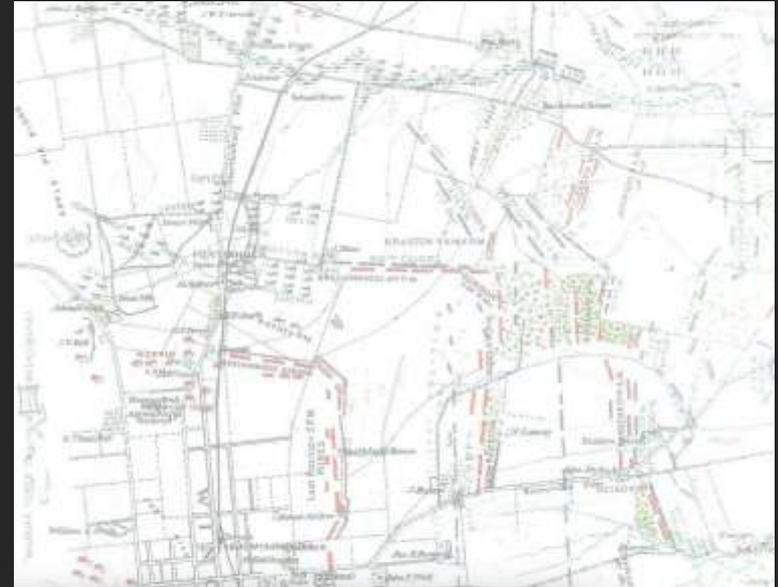
- Interpretive Plan Committee
- SVBF Staff

Project Consultants

- John Milner Associates
- Riggs Ward Design

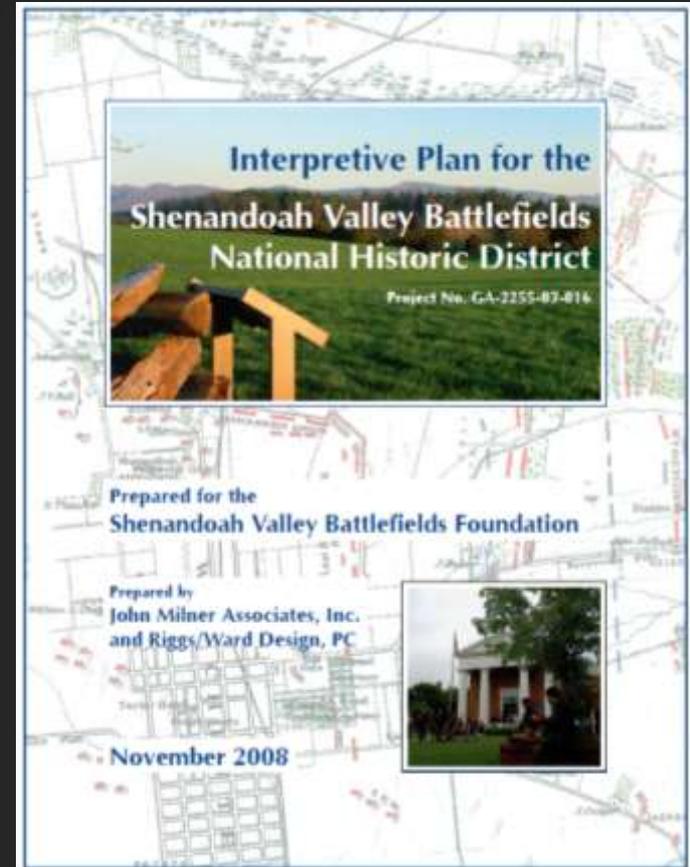
Stakeholders and Partners

- 30 Partner Representatives



Developed and Structured in Two Parts

- Context for Interpretation
 - Vision, Purpose, and Background
 - Existing Interpretation
 - Interpretive Themes
 - Interpretive Media
- Plan for Interpretation
 - District-Wide Interpretive Program
 - Implementation



Context: Existing Interpretation

- 
- Regional Attractions
 - Interpretive Attractions
 - Battlefields
 - Battlefield Sites
 - Marketing Plan Survey and **Audiences**

Context:

Audiences

- General Heritage Travelers
- Enthusiasts
- Families
- Friends and Families: Out-of-town guests
- Group tours
- School-age students
- Planned vs. Unplanned Visits



The Context: Interpretive Themes

The Valley

- The Context for War
- The Strategic Valley
- Civilian Experience
- The War's Resonance

The Campaigns

The Battles



The Plan

- Historic Roadways and Valley Towns
- Battlefield Clusters and Orientation Centers
- Battlefields
- Civil War-related Interpretive Sites
- Additional Interpretive Publications and Tools

The Plan: Historic Roadways and Valley Towns



The Plan: Battlefield Clusters and Orientation Centers

Shenandoah AT WAR

One story...
a thousand voices

Early 1862

Confederate General Robert E. Lee's "Fighting" Army
The Shenandoah Valley was a strategic corridor for the Confederacy, providing a direct route to Washington, D.C. Lee's army of 45,000 men moved north from the Shenandoah Valley in June 1862, capturing Front Royal and then moving on to Winchester and Fredericktown.

Spring 1862

Battle of Front Royal
On May 5, 1862, General Robert E. Lee's Confederate army of 45,000 men defeated General John C. Fisher's Union army of 11,000 men at Front Royal, Virginia. This victory allowed Lee to move his army north into the Shenandoah Valley and eventually to Winchester and Fredericktown.

Summer 1862

Lee's "Fighting" Army
In June 1862, Lee's Confederate army of 45,000 men moved north from the Shenandoah Valley, capturing Front Royal and then moving on to Winchester and Fredericktown. Lee's army was a "fighting" army, meaning it was composed of experienced soldiers who had fought in previous battles.

"This Valley is lost, Virginia is lost!"

Early Summer 1864

General Robert E. Lee
General Robert E. Lee was the Confederate general who led the Army of Northern Virginia during the American Civil War. He was a brilliant strategist and a skilled tactician, and he was responsible for many of the Confederacy's major victories, including the Battle of Gettysburg.

Late Summer 1864

General Robert E. Lee
General Robert E. Lee was the Confederate general who led the Army of Northern Virginia during the American Civil War. He was a brilliant strategist and a skilled tactician, and he was responsible for many of the Confederacy's major victories, including the Battle of Gettysburg.

Fall 1864

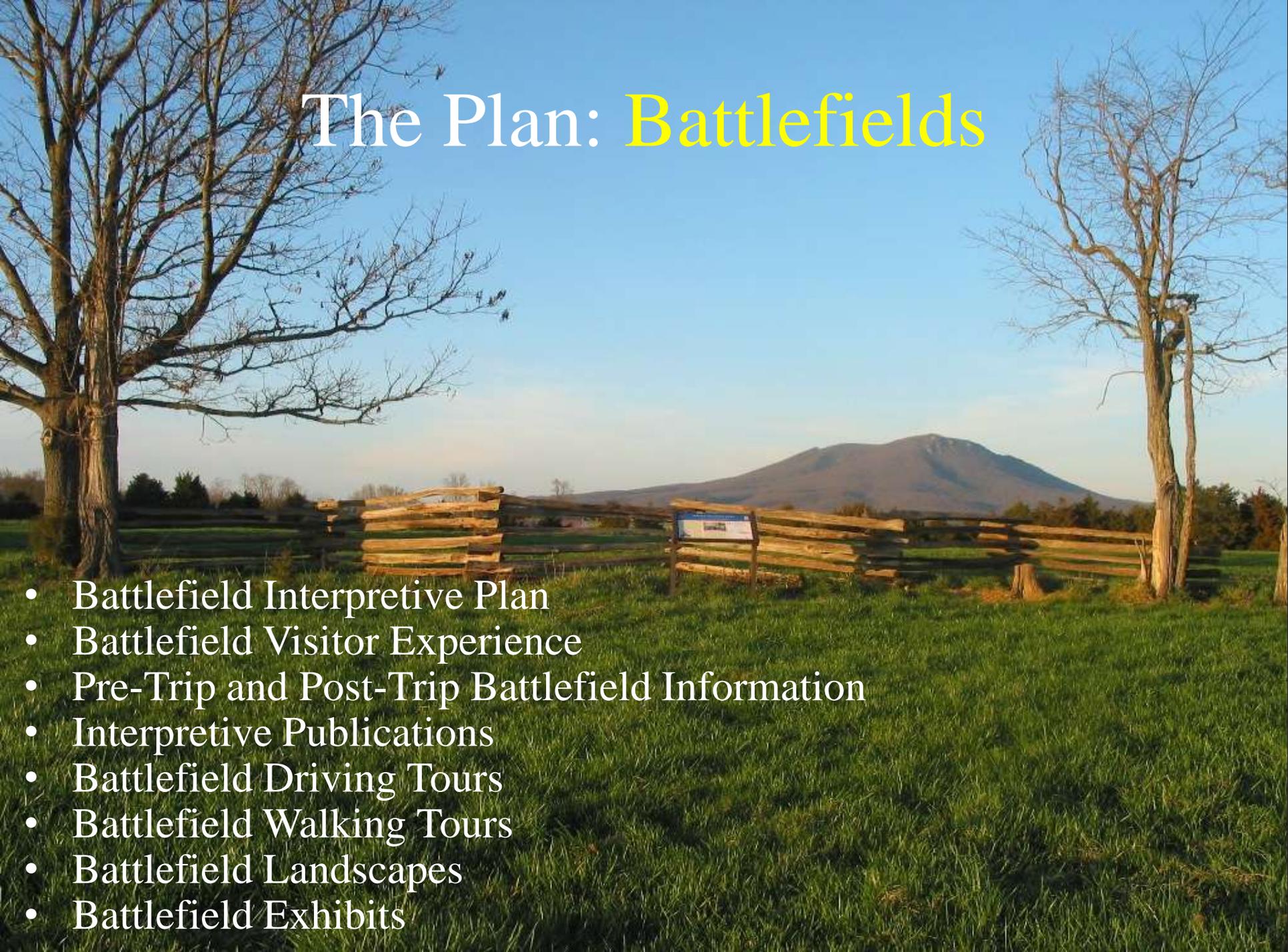
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WINCHESTER - FREDERICK COUNTY Civil War Orientation Center

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District

www.shenandoahva.org

The Plan: Battlefields



- Battlefield Interpretive Plan
- Battlefield Visitor Experience
- Pre-Trip and Post-Trip Battlefield Information
- Interpretive Publications
- Battlefield Driving Tours
- Battlefield Walking Tours
- Battlefield Landscapes
- Battlefield Exhibits

The Plan:

Types of Battlefield Visitor Experiences

- Full-Service Interpretation
- Self-guided Interpretation
- Battlefields with Dispersed or Limited Accessibility (“satellite” sites)
- Battlefields with Low Historic Integrity

The Plan:

Civil War-Related Interpretive Sites



- Regional Attractions
- Local Interpretive Attractions

The Plan: **Additional Interpretive Publications and Tools**

- Websites
- Podcasts
- Published Materials
- Audio Tours
- Static Exhibits
- Interactive Exhibits
- Guide-Assisted Interpretation



IMPLEMENTATION

- **Priorities and Phasing**

- Website and Publications
- Historic Roadways
- Clusters
- Battlefield Plans
- Civil War Related Attractions

- **Role of Partners**

- **Role of the SVBF**

- Battlefields Foundation Board of Trustees
- Interpretation and Education Committee
- Historical Advisors
- Battlefields Foundation Staff
- Protection of Battlefield Resources for Interpretation

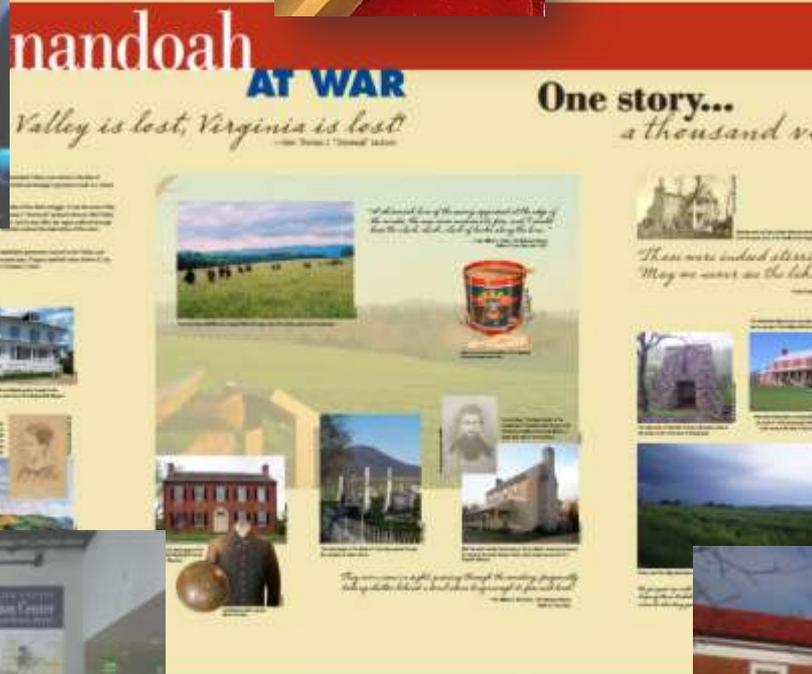
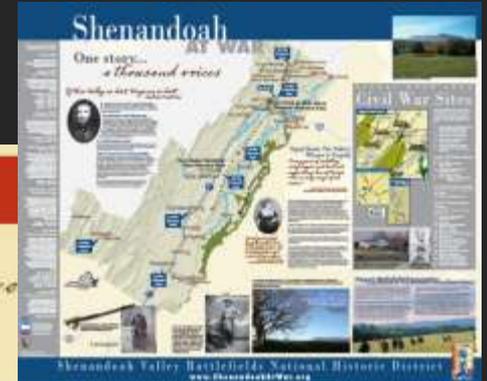


Results: Partnership and Regional Efforts

- Grants to Partners
- Partner Training
- Partner Coordination
- Cluster Groups
- Sesquicentennial Planning



Results: Orientation Centers/Displays



Results: Publications

Shenandoah AT WAR

One story... a thousand voices.

removed this morning passing into eternity.

freedom

Visitors Guide to the Shenandoah Valley's Civil War Story

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District

Visitor's Guide

"Give the enemy no rest!"
Sheridan's 1864 Shenandoah Campaign



Interpretive Booklets

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Signal Knob AREA AT WAR

Signal Knob AT WAR

Legend:

- Signal Knob
- Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District
- Civil War Battlefields
- National Parks and Forests
- Virginia Innovative State Parkways

888-869-4545 www.ShenandoahAtWar.org info@svbf.net

Map Pad

Battlefield Driving Tour

Battle of Fisher's Hill

22 September 1864

Northern Shenandoah Valley

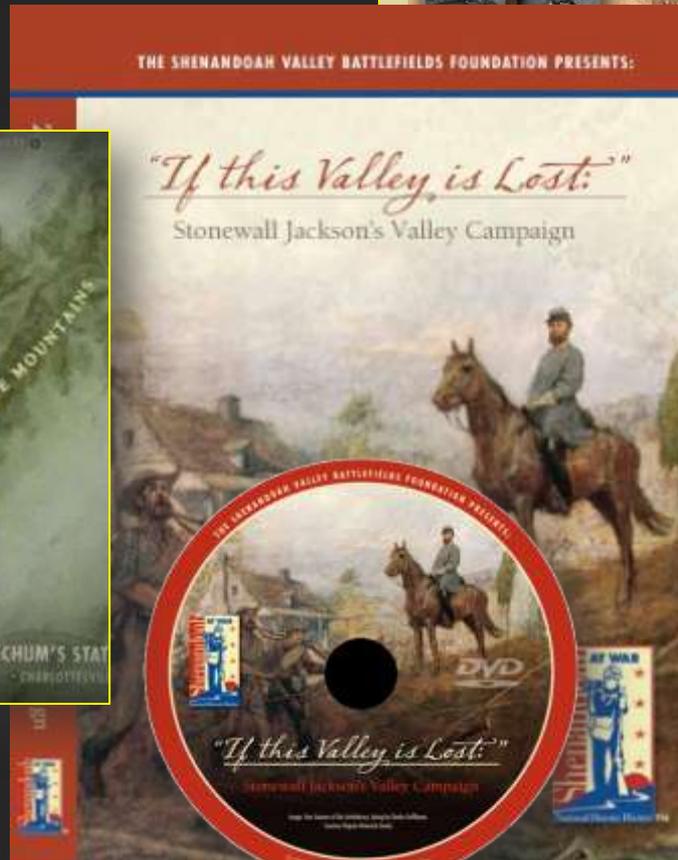
National Historic District

Driving Tours

Results: Other Media and Digital Initiatives



Orientation Films
and Animated
Battle Maps



Valley Campaign Film

ago...The Second Battle of Winchester
5, 1863)

Second Battle of Winchester
The Confederates launched his second attack on the north, he ordered Gen. Ewell to attack the Union force at Winchester to clear the Valley of Union forces. On June 12, Ewell's Second Division, consisting of Gen. A.A. Early and Gen. Edward Johnson's divisions, moved on Winchester. Early's forces were superior to those of the Union. Early's forces were approaching Winchester. Robert Milroy was ordered to defend the city. The Confederates would enable them to capture the city. The Confederates would enable them to capture the city. The Confederates would enable them to capture the city.

Second Battle of Winchester
After fighting on the afternoon of June 13, Milroy concentrated his forces in a triangle defined by the three forts, still confident he could hold the city. On June 14, Ewell sent Early's division on a flanking march to attack the smallest of those forts, West Fort, and after a 10-mile march Early's Louisiana Brigade swept over and captured the fort. That night (June 14-15), with his other positions now vulnerable, Milroy abandoned Star Fort and his other positions in an attempt to reach Winchester.

E-Blasts and
E-Newsletter

Results: Events and Programming

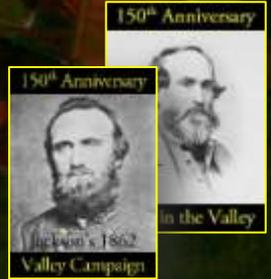


Results: Education



Results: Sesquicentennial

- Regional coordination and promotion that began in 2008
- Major regional events – 4 SVBF Regional Conferences, major commemorative events at Cross Keys, New Market, Second Kernstown, Third Winchester, and Cedar Creek
- “150 Years Ago...On This Day” tours on all 20 battle anniversaries
- New or updated interpretation added at each battlefield before anniversary
- 125+ Sesquicentennial Events in the Valley from 1861-1864

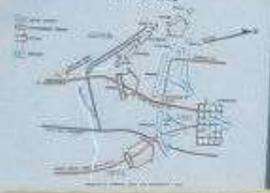


Battlefield Evaluation



- Proposed Visitor Experience
- Priority
- Current Interpretation
- Immediate Improvements
- Improvements in Next Three Years
- Interpretive Vision for 2015

1st BATTLE OF WINCHESTER
MAY 21, 1862



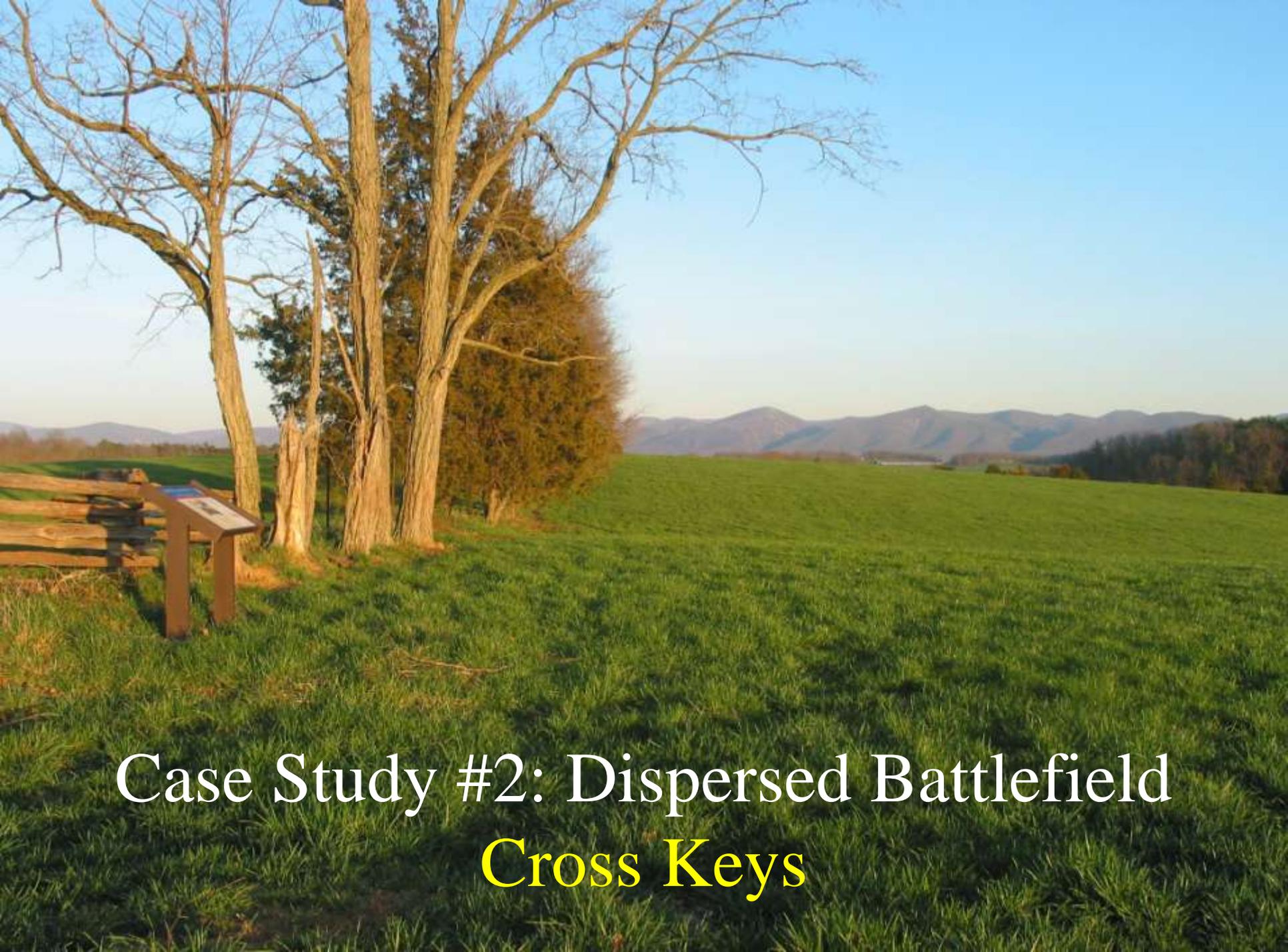
1st BATTLE OF WINCHESTER
MAY 21, 1862



General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia defeated Union General Nathaniel P. Banks and 9,000 Federal troops on May 21 in Winchester. It was the only Union tactical defeat since the beginning of the American Civil War. The loss forced the Confederacy to evacuate a large number of men and supplies from the Shenandoah Valley. The battle was the last major battle in the Shenandoah Valley during the American Civil War. The battle was the only tactical defeat of the Union Army in the Shenandoah Valley during the American Civil War. The battle was the only tactical defeat of the Union Army in the Shenandoah Valley during the American Civil War.



Case Study #1: “Lost” Battlefield First Winchester



Case Study #2: Dispersed Battlefield
Cross Keys



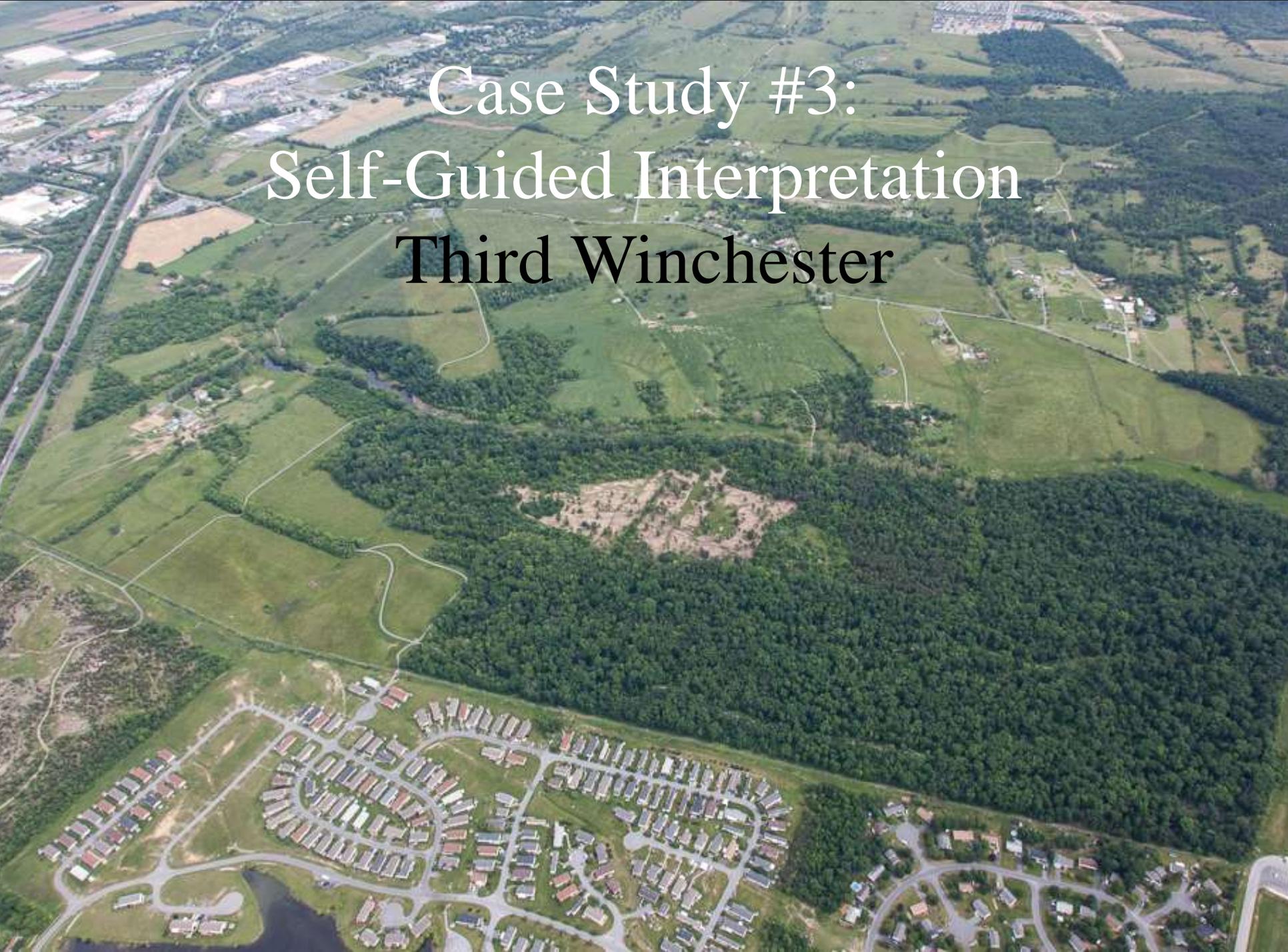
Cross Keys – Artillery Ridge



McDowell – Cemetery Hill

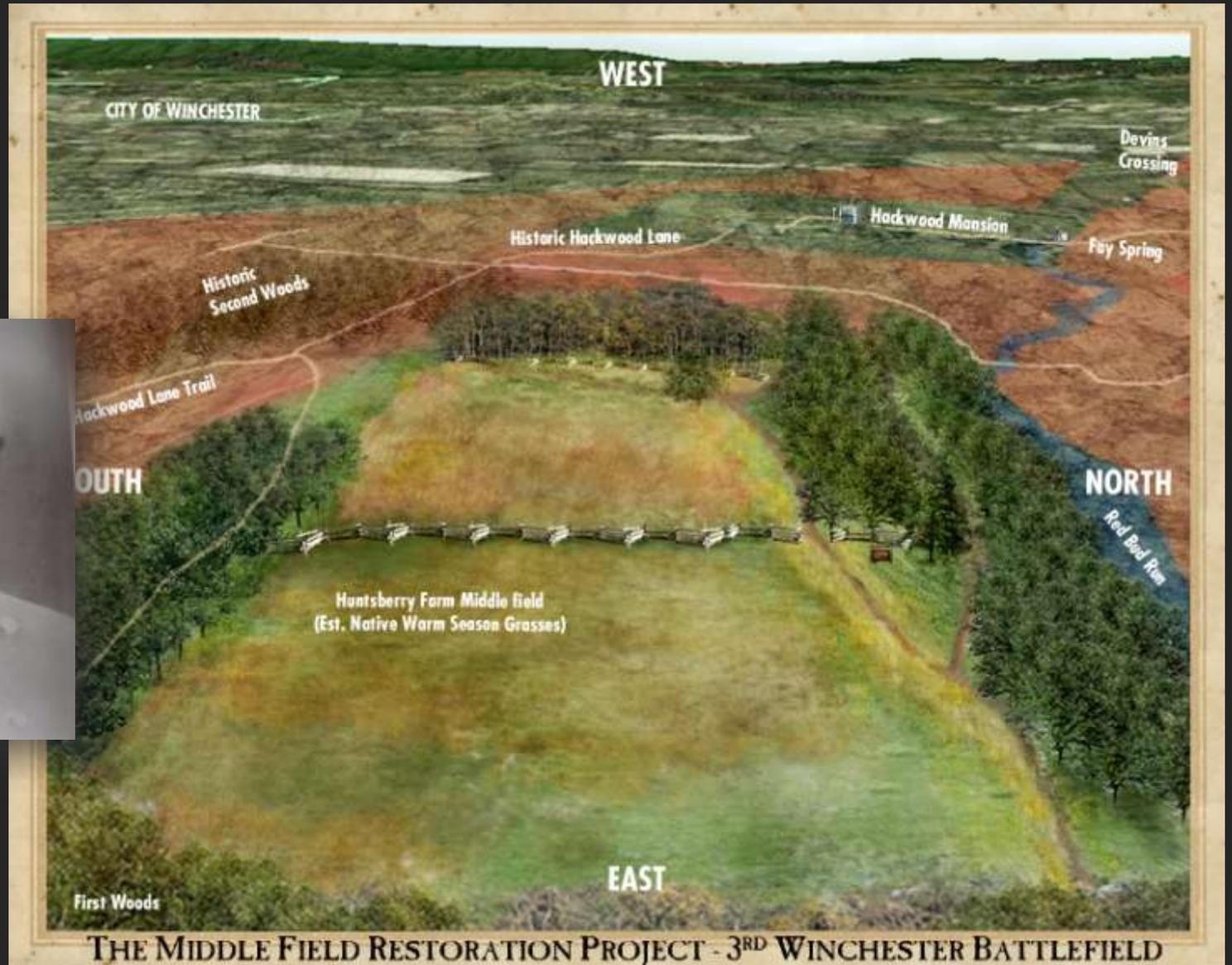


Thoburn's Redoubt – Cedar Creek

An aerial photograph showing a landscape with a residential development in the foreground, a large forested area in the middle ground, and a highway on the left side. The text is overlaid on the image.

Case Study #3:
Self-Guided Interpretation
Third Winchester

Third Winchester





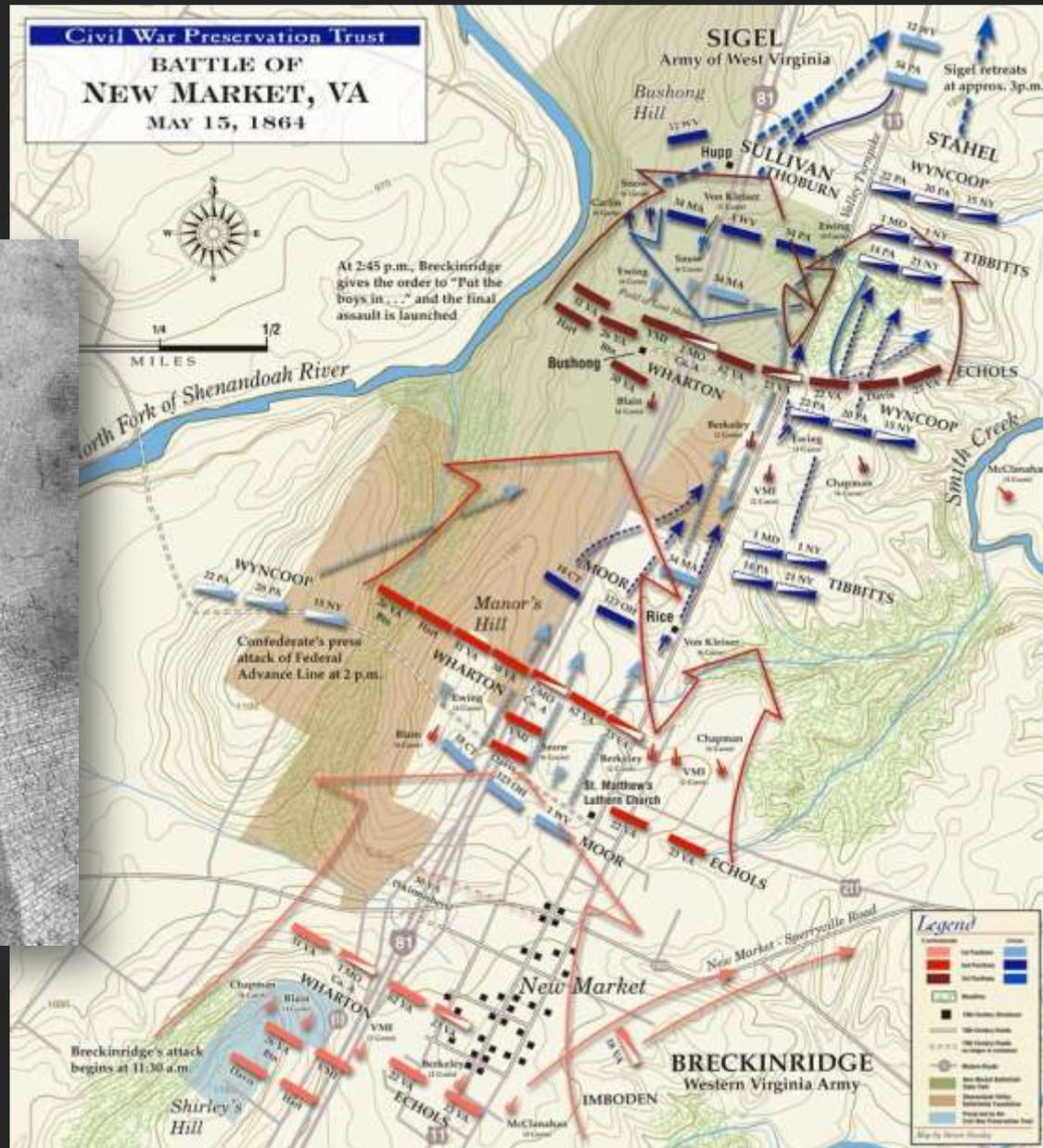
Star Fort – Second and Third Winchester

Case Study #4: Full Service Interpretation

New Market/Cedar Creek



New Market



Cedar Creek

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
Virginia

Welcome to Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. For information on the park start at one of these locations:

National Park Service Visitor Contact Station (7712 Main Street, Middletown, VA 22645) (540) 869-3051; website: www.nps.gov/cobe

Belle Grove Plantation, a National Trust for Historic Preservation property, is located within the park and offers house tours (338 Belle Grove Road, Middletown, VA 22645) opened seasonally; (540) 869-2028; website: www.bellegrove.org

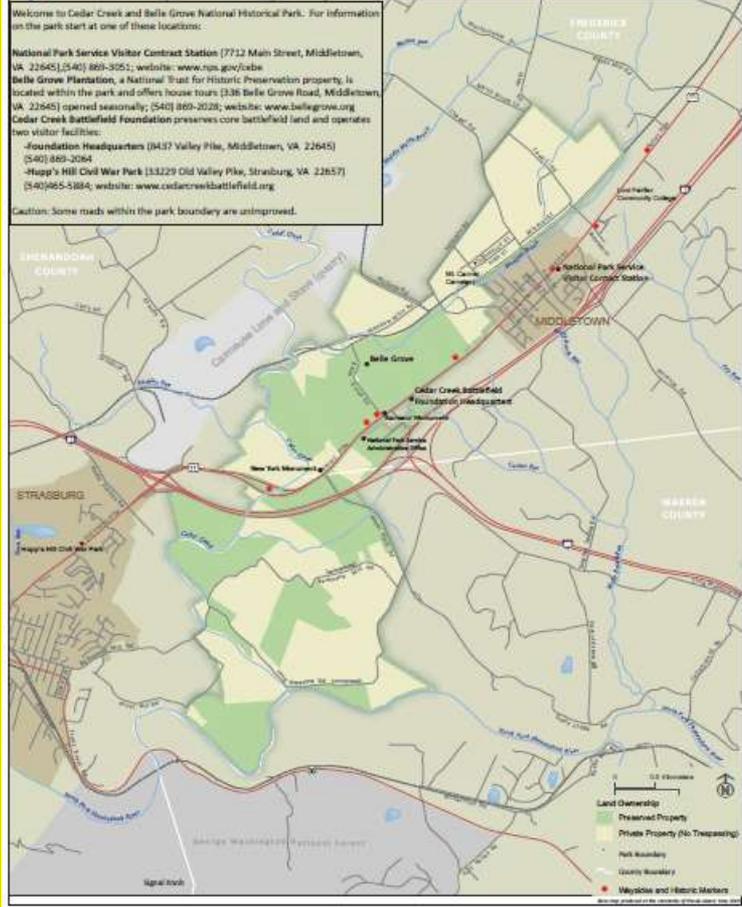
Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation preserves core battlefield land and operates two visitor facilities:

- Foundation Headquarters (8437 Valley Pike, Middletown, VA 22645) (540) 869-2064
- Happ's Hill Civil War Park (13329 Old Valley Pike, Strasburg, VA 22657) (540) 965-5184; website: www.cedarcreekbattlefield.org

Caution: Some roads within the park boundary are unimproved.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior





The map displays the park's location in Shenandoah, Frederick, and Warren counties, Virginia. Key features include the Cedar Creek Battlefield, Belle Grove Plantation, and the National Park Service Visitor Contact Station. Land ownership is color-coded: green for preserved property, yellow for private property (no trespassing), and grey for park boundaries. Major roads like US-11 and US-211 are shown, along with geographical features like the Shenandoah River and various creeks.



Results: Battlefield Interpretation



Results – Interpretive & Orientation Connections



A landscape photograph showing a lush green field in the foreground, filled with various plants and white flowers. The field is bordered by dense green trees and bushes on both sides. In the background, a line of trees stretches across the horizon under a sky filled with large, grey, overcast clouds. The overall scene is a natural, somewhat somber landscape.

The Future

Beyond 2015

Interpretive Lessons

- Just because something is important to you doesn't make it important to your audience. **Why should they care?**
- Just because something happened doesn't make it interesting.
- Evaluate your programs and approach constantly. If something isn't working, change it or drop it.
- It doesn't matter if you have the best idea or program in the world if your audience doesn't respond. Kill your darlings.
- Be true to your mission, but flexible in your approach.
- Avoid proprietary technology. Develop content that can be repurposed.
- Follow the evidence.
- Storytelling. Every thing is in service to the story.

Interpretation with Partners



Questions and Considerations

“How do you want your story told?”

SVBF Approaches



History/Storytelling Approach: “Then and Now”
Marketing Message: “One story...a thousand voices”
Storytelling: capturing and holding visitors’ attention
Telescoping: big story to small
“A trail of breadcrumbs”
Telling the history where it happened.

Serving the Mission

- Preserve the Shenandoah Valley's Civil War battlefields
- Coordinate the interpretation of the Valley's Civil War story
- Promote the Valley as a visitor destination





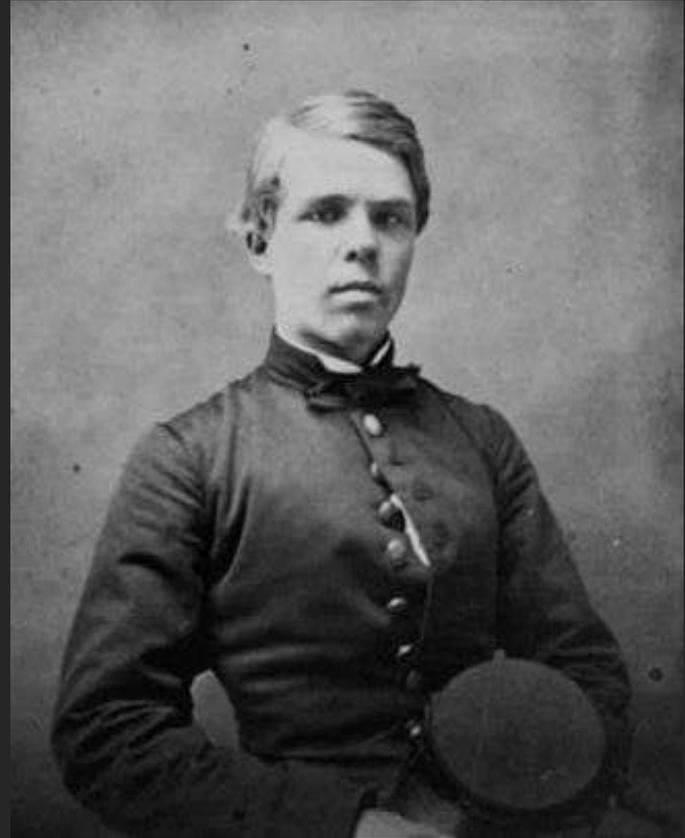
To Whom Are We Responsible?

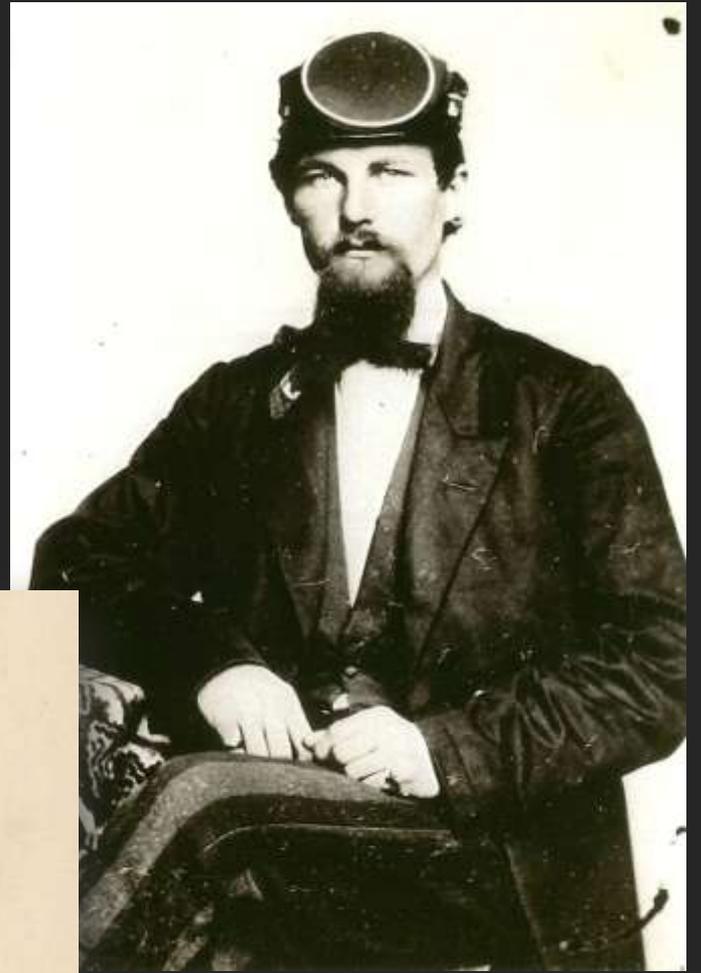
The People Who Lived Through It

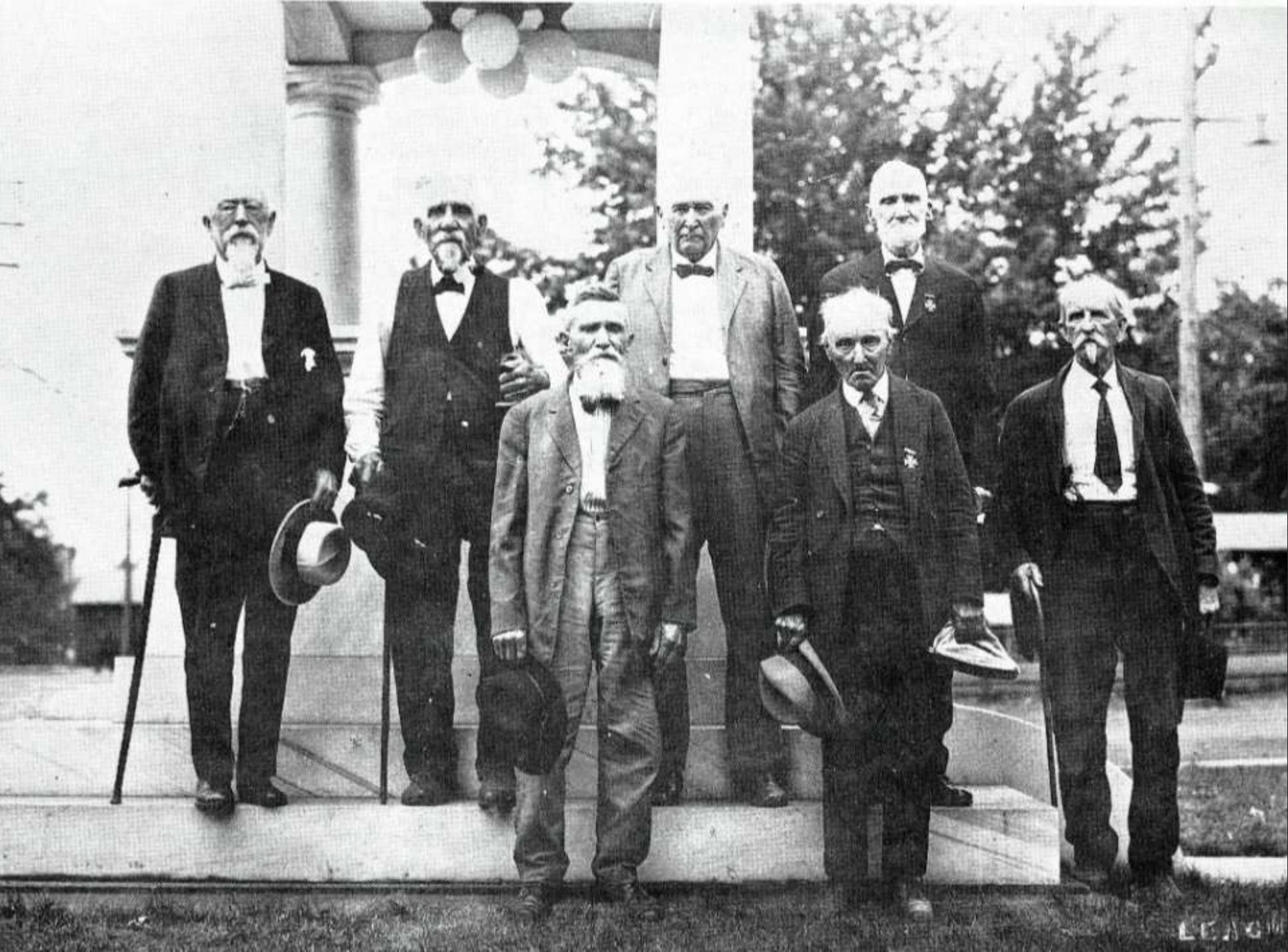
“We shall never any of us be
the same as we have been”

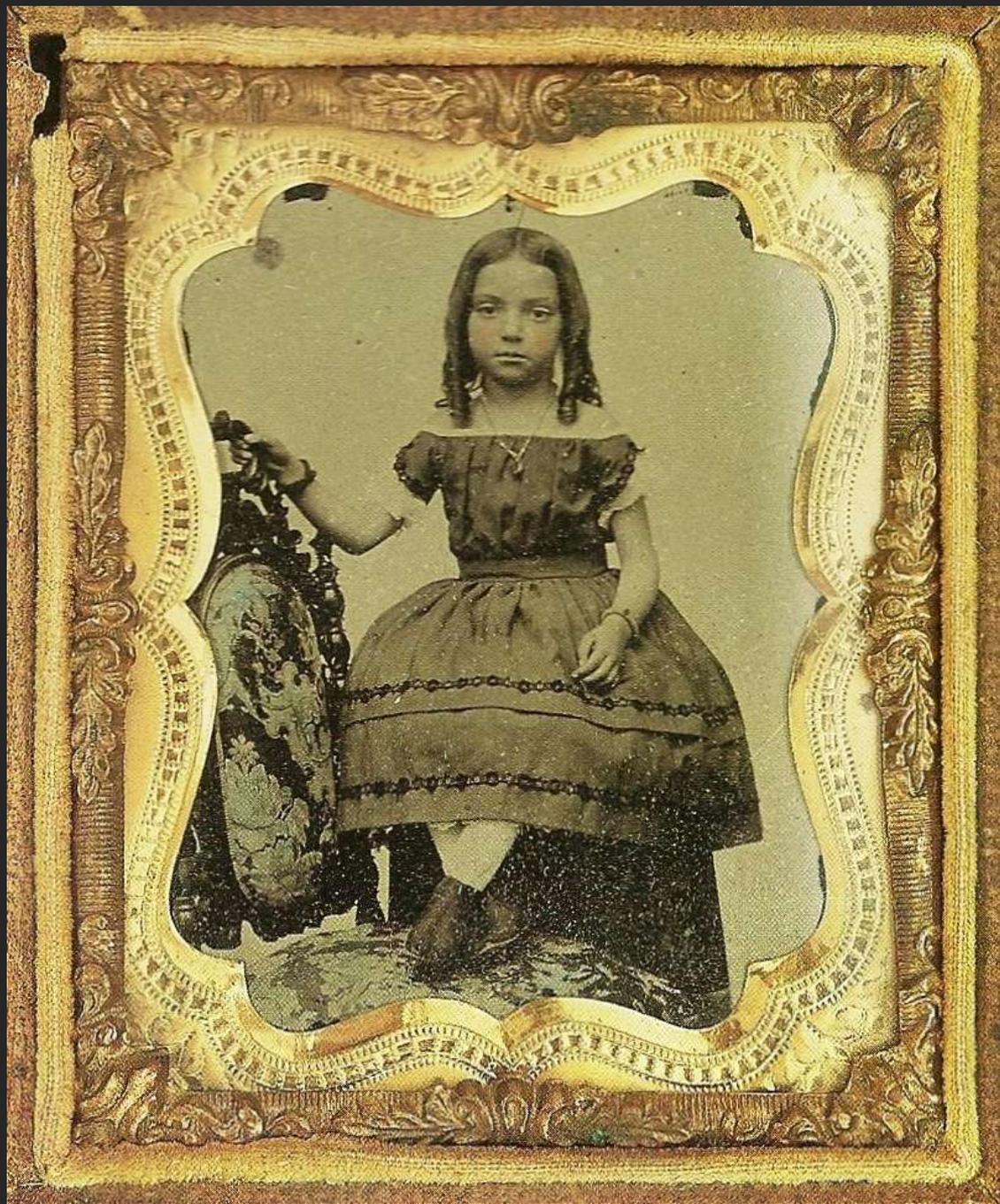
*Lucy Buck, Front Royal,
Diary Entry, 1862*

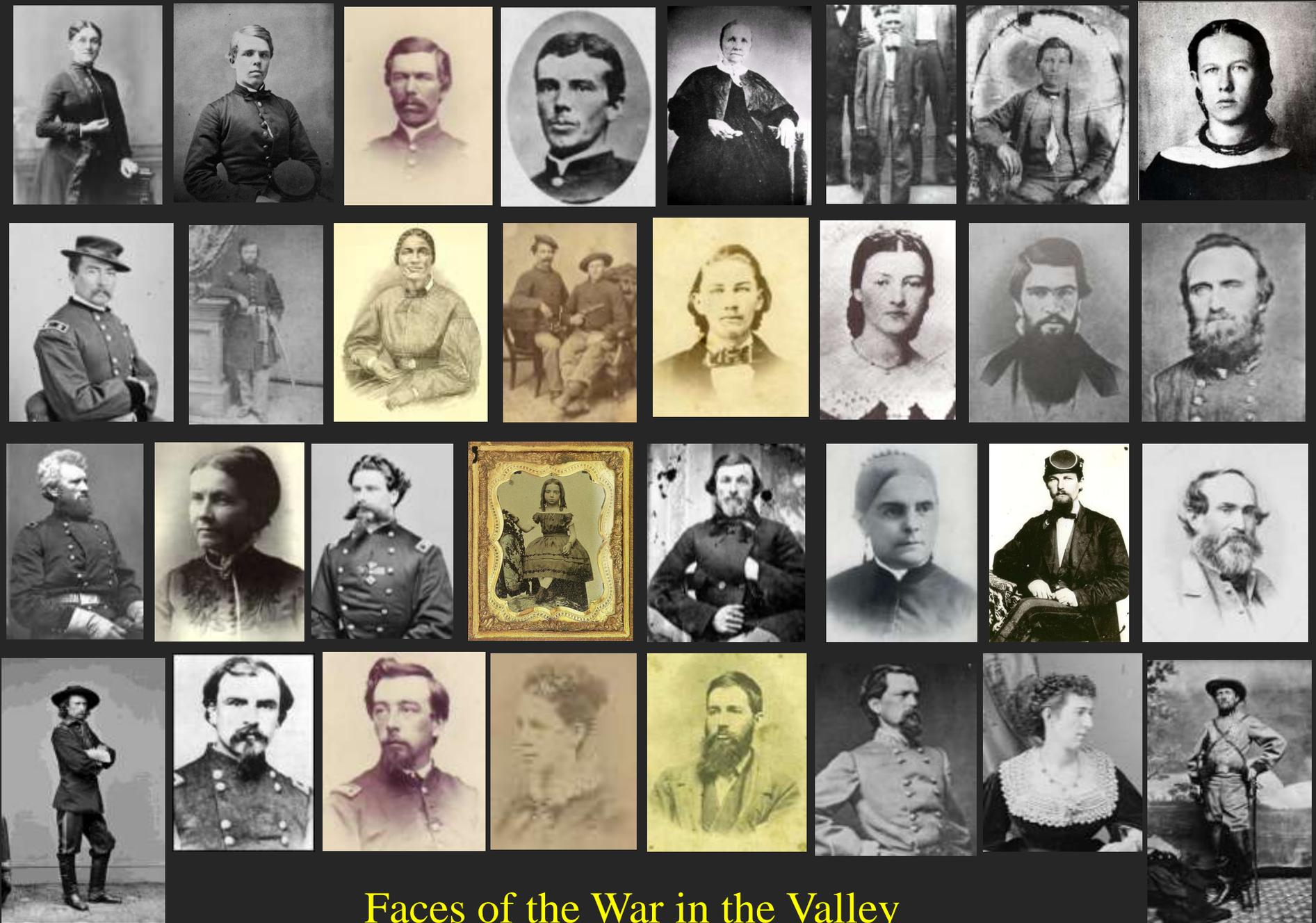












Faces of the War in the Valley



Shenandoah Valley

Battlefields Foundation



www.ShenandoahAtWar.org