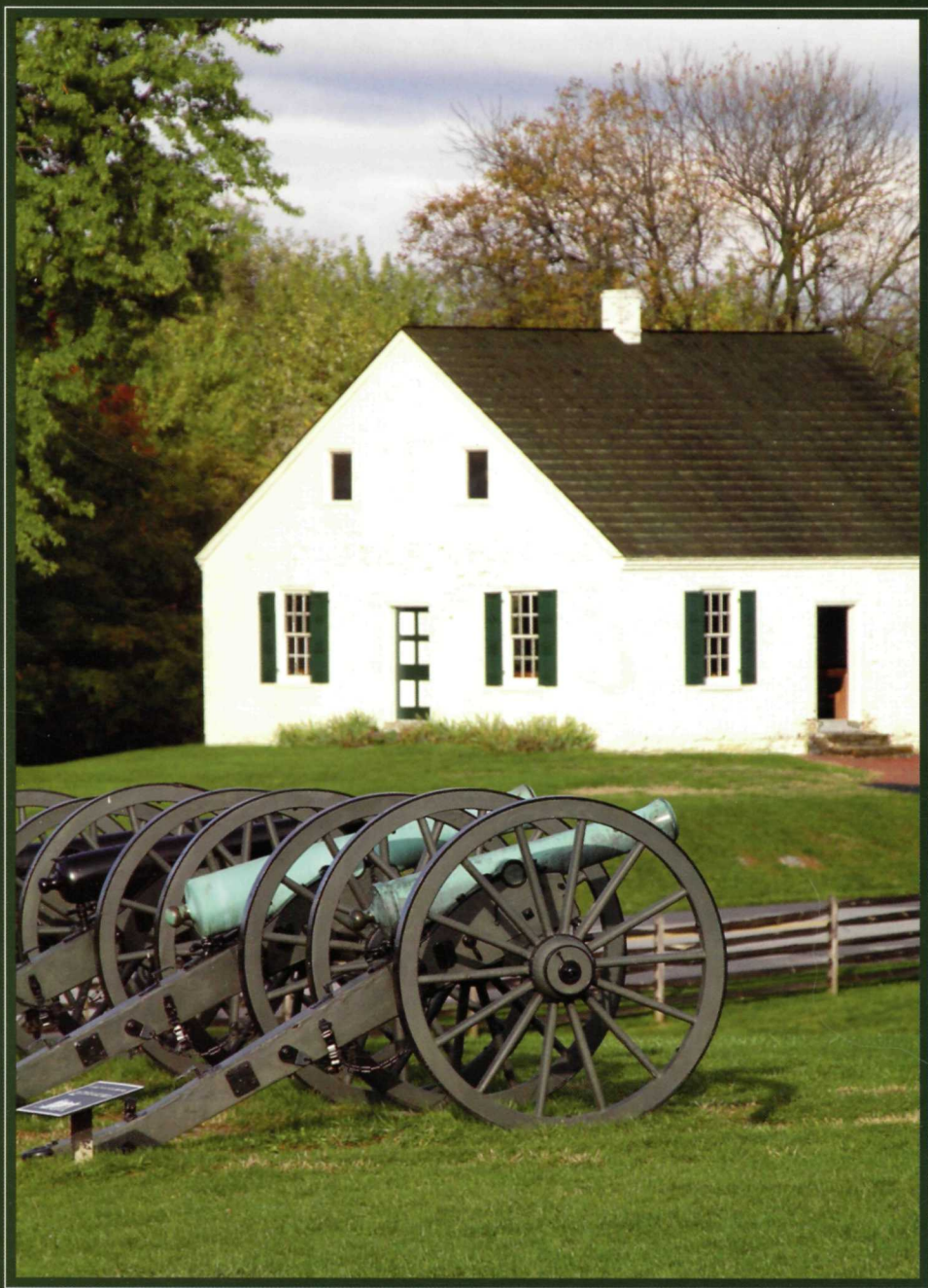


# Antietam Remembered

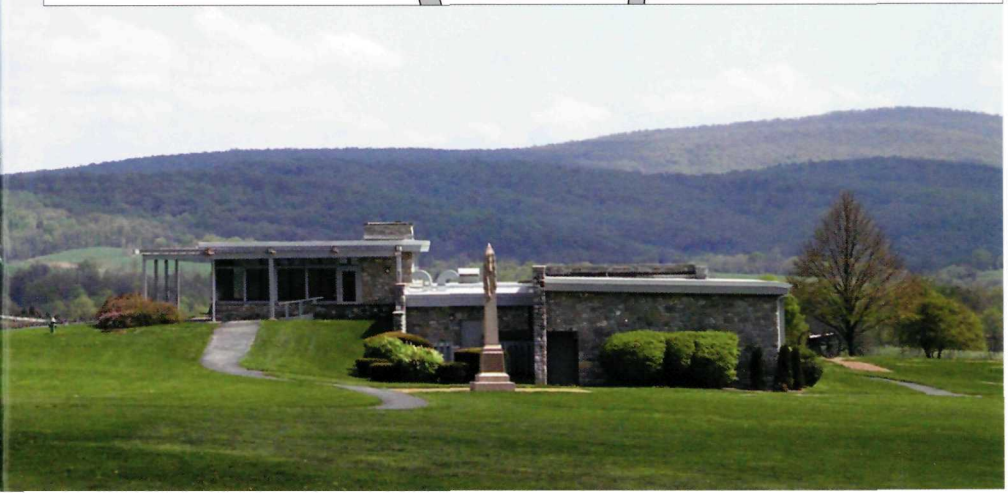
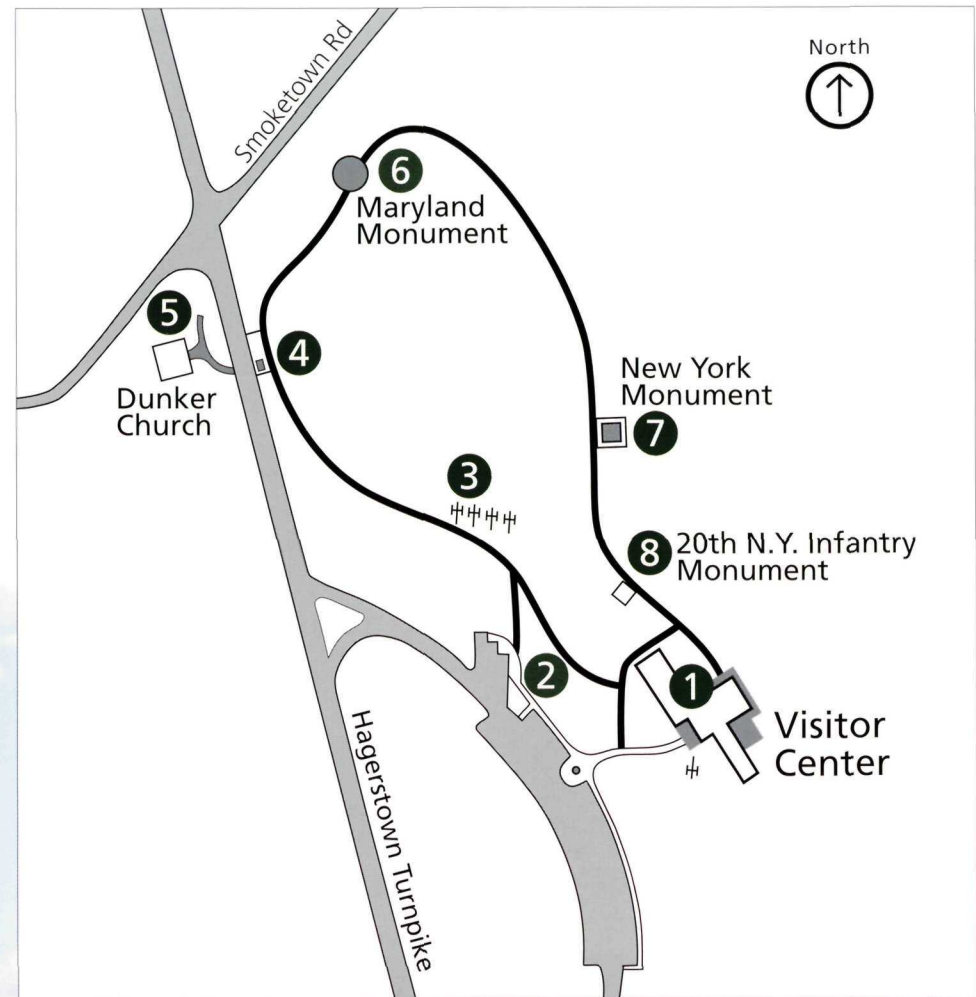
## A Walking Tour



## Introduction

What is a Battlefield Park? How does a nation commemorate and remember the sacrifices and events that created it? During this walk you will discover how veterans, the military, citizens, and the National Park Service created and preserved the tangible reminders of the Battle of Antietam for over 140 years.

The paved, quarter-mile trail starts and ends at the visitor center. It will take you past some significant landmarks and monuments that help tell the story of the battle and the evolution of this national park. Use the walking tour map to the right for your route and stops.



## Stop 1 - The Visitor Center

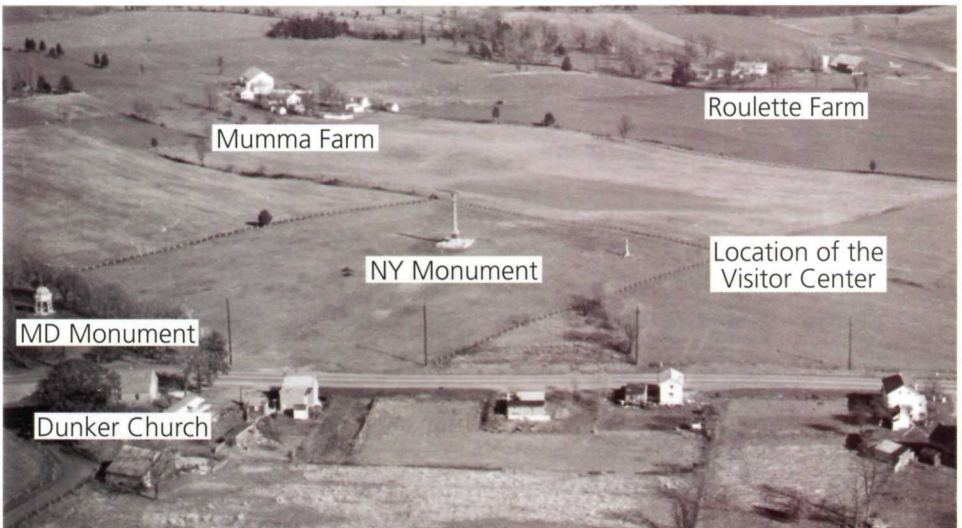
One common structure found in most national parks is a visitor center. It is a place for orientation, education, and comfort. The original visitor center at Antietam was located in the stone lodge building just inside the National Cemetery. The current visitor center was built in 1962 for a cost of \$202,930. At the time of the construction, America was in the

midst of the “Cold War.” Over \$40,000 of the construction costs went to build a solid concrete fallout shelter in the basement of the building in case of nuclear attack. The 142 acres of land where the center was built was acquired in 1961 for \$50,000. The visitor center was expanded in 1980 with the addition of the theater.



Visitor Center construction in 1961

Aerial view of the area before construction



## Stop 2 - Battlefield Namesake



One of the most unique ways that Antietam has been commemorated is the naming of U.S. Navy ships after the battle. Ships have been named for Gettysburg, Shiloh, Vicksburg, and there have been at least three ships named Antietam.

This ship's bell is from the U.S.S. Antietam, CV-36, a Navy Aircraft Carrier. Commissioned in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in January, 1945, the carrier weighed over 27,000 tons and was over 880 feet long. If you were standing here on one end of the ship, the other end would be 150 feet past the Maryland Monument with the green dome.

The ship had a crew of about 2,800 sailors, and was America's first angled-deck aircraft carrier.

This U.S.S. Antietam served until retirement in 1963, seeing its most active service during the Korean Conflict.

A new U.S.S. Antietam, CG-54 was commissioned in 1984. It is a guided missile cruiser and is still on duty today.



U.S.S. Antietam, CG-54

## Stop 3 - Colonel S.D. Lee's Artillery Battalion

Confederate Col. Stephen D. Lee held this position with about nineteen guns, including units from Virginia, Louisiana, and South Carolina. After three desperate hours, Lee's guns were finally driven from this position by long-range artillery fire from across Antietam Creek (one mile to the east) and by a series of Union attacks during the morning hours of the battle.

Lee wrote, *"A converging storm of iron slammed into the batteries from front and flank. Wheels smashed, men knocked down, horses sent screaming; to stay on that field was to sacrifice units needlessly."*

Of the 300 men Lee commanded, 25% were killed or wounded and 60 horses were lost.

Four types of Civil War cannons that represent Colonel Lee's position are on display. Continue on the paved walkway, towards the Hagerstown Turnpike and the Dunker Church.



Col. Stephen D. Lee

West  
Woods

Hagerstown  
Turnpike



Alexander Gardner's photograph of his position looking north along the Hagerstown Turnpike.

## Stop 4 - Crossing the Hagerstown Turnpike

Please be careful as you cross the road. In 1862 it was not paved nor as wide as it is today. However, at the time of the battle, the Hagerstown Turnpike was an important transportation route and the road played a key role during the battle. Before you cross, take a moment to look around you. In addition to placing cannons on the field, there are many objects, some obvious, some not, that have been added to the battlefield landscape in an effort to educate, preserve, restore, or commemorate the battle. Here is a key to these items that you can see here and throughout the park.

### Monuments

Primarily built by veterans of the battle and states to commemorate their sacrifices here, the monuments are typically located where the troops fought during the battle. There are ninety-six monuments at Antietam, the majority of which are Union. After the war, the former Confederacy was so devastated it was difficult for the veterans to raise the needed money to build monuments.



### National Park Waysides

These information signs are located at each of the numbered auto tour stops and provide maps, photographs, and quotes. They tell the basic story of the battle and are designed for use by the general public.



### War Department Tablets

Over 300 tablets provide more detailed information than the waysides and are scattered throughout the battlefield. They were created by the War Department in the 1890s to mark the location of different parts of each army during the battle. The tablets are best used to find individual regiments and follow the detailed actions of the battle. It is often difficult to use the tablets without a good working knowledge of the battle.



### Historic Fencing

The park is currently restoring miles of historic fences that existed at the time of the battle. Using historic maps and photographs, park staff and volunteers have built two main types of fences—five rail vertical and snake or zig-zag. If you see one of these two types of fences in the park, they represent where a fence was located during the battle.



### Replanted Woodlots

Another excellent example of the park's preservation efforts can be seen across the street and north of the Dunker Church—the reforestation of the historic West Woods. The park staff and more than 10,000 volunteers have planted over 20,000 trees to restore this woodlot and other woodlots on the battlefield.

## Stop 5 - The Dunker Church

The Battle of Antietam was one of the bloodiest battles in the history of this nation. Yet, one of the most noted landmarks on this great field of combat is a house of worship associated with peace and love. Indeed, the Dunker Church ranks as perhaps one of the most famous churches in American military history.

This historic structure began as a humble country house of worship constructed by local farmers in 1852. Mr. Samuel Mumma, owner of the nearby farm that bears his name, donated the land in 1851 for the Dunkers to build their church. During its early history the congregation consisted of about half a dozen farm families from the local area.

During the battle the church was the focal point of a number of Union attacks against the Confederates on this northern end of the battlefield. The old church was heavily battle scarred with hundreds of marks from bullets in its white washed walls. Likewise, artillery had rendered serious damage to the roof and walls. By 1864, the church was repaired, rededicated, and regular services were held there until the turn of the century when the congregation built a new church in the town of Sharpsburg.

Souvenir hunters took bricks from the walls of the old church and a lack of adequate maintenance weakened the structure. In 1921, a violent storm swept through the area flattening the church.



Sketch titled *Truce at the Dunker Church* by Alfred Waud

The land and church ruins were put up for sale and purchased by Sharpsburg resident Elmer Boyer. He salvaged most of the undamaged material from the building and in turn sold the property. In 1951, the property was purchased by the Washington County Historical Society. They in turn donated the site, then just a foundation, to the National Park Service. The church was reconstructed with as much original material as possible and rededicated on September 2, 1962.

Today, visitors can once again sit inside the church and contemplate the sacrifices of not only the soldiers, but also the citizens and community of Sharpsburg. Please carefully cross back over the road and walk up the sidewalk to the large monument with the green dome.

## The Dunker Church Through the Years



Postcard from about 1900



Destroyed by a storm in 1921



Reconstruction in 1962



1971—Restoring the church itself was not enough, the land around the church also had to be purchased and restored.



## Stop 6 - The Maryland Monument

This monument is the only one on the battlefield dedicated to the soldiers who fought for both sides. During the Civil War, Maryland remained in the Union, but was a politically divided, slave-holding border state. Marylanders fought for both the Union and the Confederacy.

Approximately 20,000 people attended the dedication on Memorial Day, May 30, 1900. General James Longstreet, Henry Kyd Douglas and many veterans of both the Union and Confederate armies were all present for the ceremony. President William McKinley, also a veteran of the Battle of Antietam, was the keynote speaker: *"I am glad to meet on this field the followers of Lee, Jackson,*

*Longstreet, and Johnson, with the followers of McClellan, Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan, greeting each other, not with arms at their hands but with affection in every heart... This meeting after these many years has but one sentiment, love for Nation and flag."* Sadly, fourteen months later President McKinley was assassinated.

The tall monument with the eagle on top is the New York State Monument. It is the next stop on your tour.





Maryland Monument and Dunkard Church, Antietam Battlefield, Md.



Clockwise from left: The Maryland Monument under construction, Monument Medal presented to Maryland veterans at the dedication, fall and winter at the Monument, postcard soon after the dedication.

## Stop 7 - New York State Monument

Almost one-fourth of the Union army at Antietam was from New York. Costing \$30,000, the monument was dedicated September 17, 1920, on the 58th Anniversary of the Battle of Antietam. The land you are standing on, 7.91 acres, was purchased by the State of New York for the monument in 1907 for \$1,402 or about \$200 an acre. The monument cost more than 20 times the price of the land upon which it was built.

The bronze tablets list the generals from New York who were in command, the New York regiments and batteries at Antietam and the New York State coat of arms. It is one of the tallest monuments on the field, approximately 58 feet high.

Over 250 Civil War veterans attended the dedication. The keynote speaker was Lt. Gen. Nelson Miles. At Antietam, Gen. Miles took command of the 61st and 64th New York when their commander was wounded. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions at the Battle of Chancellorsville, rose to the highest rank in the U.S. Army, and commanded the Army during the Spanish-American War.



Medals presented to veterans and guests at the dedication.

At the dedication, Gen. Miles looked out at the veterans and guests standing on this hill and declared:

*“Since the creation, there has never existed in this world a people who enjoyed more freedom, liberty of thought and action, security of life and property, or who were as well provided with all the requirements and comforts of life as citizens of these United States. These bountiful blessings are derived from the government.*

*Many nations have gone into decay and oblivion by the indifference and apathy of their citizens; ours will be no exception unless our people maintain and preserve it with devoted loyalty. If the same sublime patriotism manifested by you on this battlefield and in your lives since is maintained and perpetuated by the citizens of this country, then our Republic will be forever safe and will ascend to even higher and more exalted civilization and a purer destiny.”*



Monument dedication September 17, 1907. General Miles is on the left in the foreground.

## Stop 8 - 20th New York Monument

The 20th New York Infantry was organized in New York City. Most of the recruits were recent immigrants living in New York City or Newark, New Jersey, and spoke only German. During the battle, just after 1 p.m., they charged the Confederates lined along the Hagerstown Turnpike. They drove the Southerners into the West Woods until they were abreast of the Dunker Church, the possession of which had been so fiercely contested throughout the day. They were unable to hold the ground gained and had to fall back. The regiment suffered 145 casualties, some of whom are buried in the National Cemetery. Their veteran's association erected this monument in 1911.



A second 20th New York monument, dedicated in 1887 to the regiment's dead, stands in the National Cemetery.

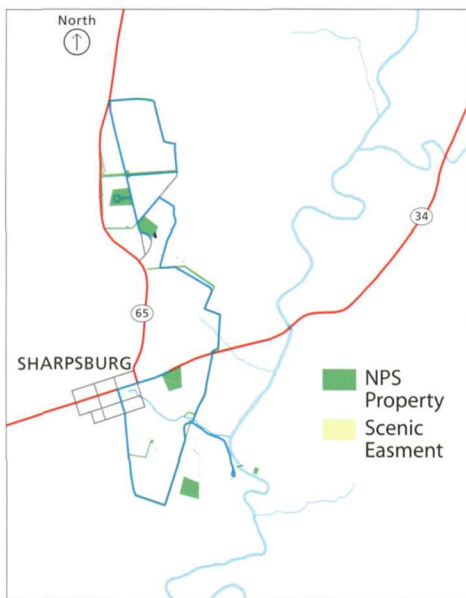
Veterans of the regiment and their families return to the battlefield on the 50th Anniversary in 1912.



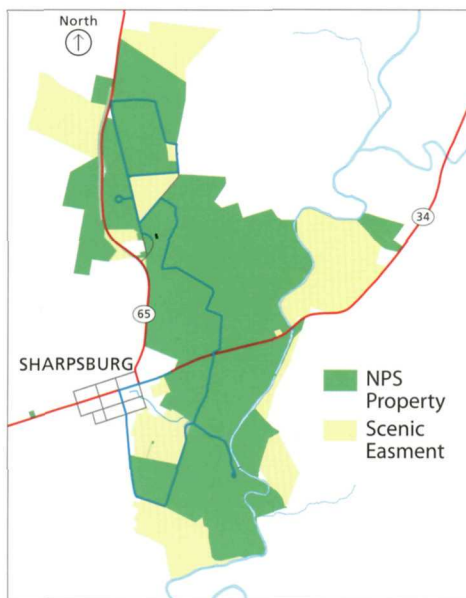
## Conclusion

The greatest success story in the preservation of the battlefield is the acquisition of the land where the battle took place. When the War Department transferred the battlefield to the National Park Service in 1933 it was only about 65 acres. Even as late as 1980, the battlefield was less than 600 acres. Over 60% of the battlefield has been purchased since 1990! Owning the land makes all of the other restoration efforts possible. Today over 3,000 acres are preserved for this and future generations.

As you have seen from your walk, there are many ways to honor and remember the tragic and momentous events that occurred here. Placing cannons, restoring buildings, building monuments, even creating this battlefield, are all designed so that we never forget the tremendous sacrifice of those that walked this field before. You have also helped keep the memory of blue and gray alive by taking the time to walk this field — remembering Antietam.



Antietam Battlefield in 1933.



Antietam Battlefield in 2006.



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