



# Foundation Document Overview

## Shiloh National Military Park

Tennessee/Mississippi



### Contact Information

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## Purpose



*The purpose of SHILOH NATIONAL MILITARY PARK is to preserve and interpret the battlefields, sites, resources, and oral histories associated with Shiloh, Tennessee, and Corinth, Mississippi, during the Western Campaign of the Civil War.*



## Significance

Significance statements express why Shiloh National Military Park resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- The Battle of Shiloh was the most critical and violent event in the early Civil War campaign to control western Confederate railroads and the Mississippi River Valley. As a result of the carnage at Shiloh, southerners and northerners alike realized that the divided nation faced a long, desperate, and costly war.
- As the second oldest national military park, the existing commemorative landscape on the Shiloh battlefield reflects the contributions of both Union and Confederate Civil War veterans to mark the field of battle in a manner that honors the shared sacrifice and courage of all those present.
- The intersection of two major railroad crossings at Corinth allowed Confederate armies to mass their forces in northern Mississippi, while Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River served as both a vital supply line and base of operation for Union forces deep in Confederate territory. Control of these transportation routes allowed the Union to remain on the offensive in the western theater, and illustrates the importance of logistics during the Civil War.
- The Corinth Unit of Shiloh National Military Park preserves and protects the few surviving examples of early earthen fortifications that foreshadowed the complex trench warfare that would come to define the final desperate year of the Civil War.
- Following the September 1862 announcement of Lincoln's intent to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, the Union Army established the Corinth Contraband Camp, considered a model of its kind, where formerly enslaved people took their first steps from slavery to citizenship through cooperative farm programs, education, and military service.
- In October 1862, the attempt to drive Union forces from their fortified defenses at Corinth resulted in a Confederate defeat at the Battle of Corinth, the last major Confederate offensive in the state of Mississippi.

## Fundamental Resources and Values



Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Shiloh Battlefield Landscape**
- **Corinth Landscape (Siege, Battle, and Occupation)**
- **Davis Bridge Site**
- **Place of Reflection and Serenity**
- **Shiloh National Cemetery**
- **Museum Collections**
- **Commemorative Resources/Features**
- **Archeological Resources**

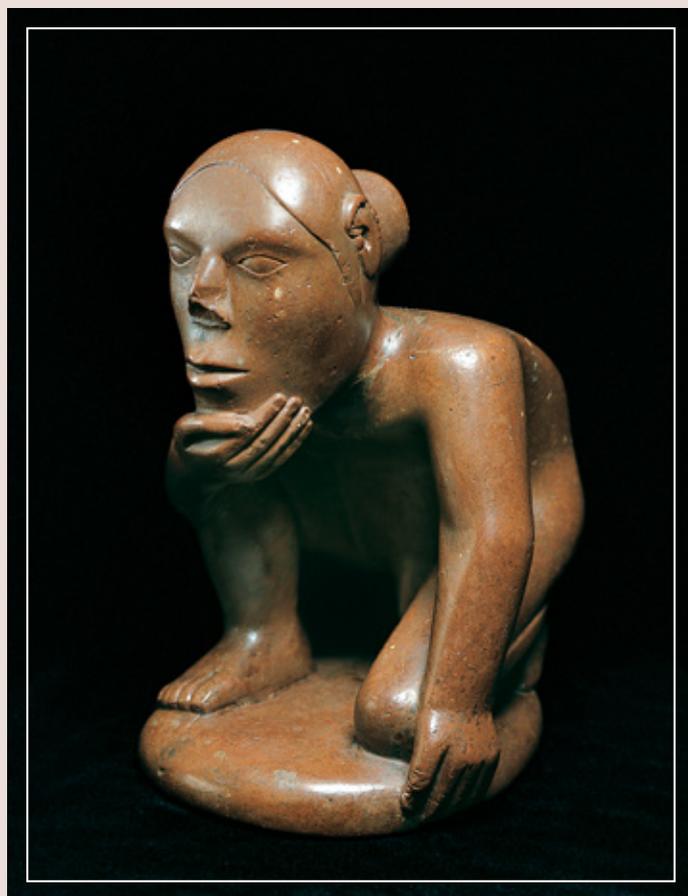
Shiloh National Military Park contains other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values.

- **Community Partnerships**
- **Shiloh Indian Mounds**
- **Civilian Conservation Corps / Works Progress Administration Infrastructure and Buildings**

## Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- **Slavery**
- **Shiloh an Epic Contest**
- **The Impact of War on Civilians**
- **Unresolved Issues**
- **Prehistoric Human History**
- **Shared Stewardship**



## Description

Shiloh National Military Park was established in 1894 to preserve the scene of the first major battle in the Western theater of the Civil War. The two-day battle of Shiloh, named for a log church in Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, called Shiloh Meeting House, took place on April 6 and 7, 1862, and involved about 65,000 Union and 44,000 Confederate troops. This battle resulted in 23,746 killed, wounded, and missing. This decisive victory enabled United States forces to advance and seize control of the strategic Confederate railway junction at Corinth, Mississippi, on May 30, 1862.

In the late summer and early autumn of 1862, Union soldiers erected a line of redoubts on commanding ground within one-half to three-quarters of a mile of the Corinth railroad crossover. These defensive works enabled Union forces to repulse attacking Confederate forces determined to recapture the town. The victories at Shiloh and Corinth set the stage for the Union capture of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863.

Shiloh National Military Park contains about 5,000 acres of the Shiloh battlefield and an interpretive center at Corinth, Mississippi. The park boundaries also include the Shiloh National Cemetery, established by the War Department in 1866 on the battlefield of Shiloh, in order to bury the dead from the battle and all the operations along the Tennessee River. The cemetery holds 3,584 Civil War dead, 2,359 of them unknown.

Shiloh is also the site of the Shiloh Indian Mounds National Historic Landmark, one of the finest examples of a complete Mississippian-era archeological village site in the nation. About 1,100 years ago, a town including seven earthen mounds and dozens of houses enclosed by a wooden palisade occupied the high Tennessee River bluff at the eastern edge of the Shiloh plateau. This town was the center of a society that occupied a 20-mile-long stretch of the Tennessee River Valley. The inhabitants of this village moved out of this part of the Tennessee Valley sometime in the 13th century.

The Shiloh battlefield is located in Hardin County, Tennessee, on the west bank of the Tennessee River, 9 river miles southwest, or upstream, of Savannah, Tennessee. The Corinth Unit, authorized to encompass more than 950 acres by Congress in 2007, preserves and interprets the Siege and Battle of Corinth, and is located in the city of Corinth, Mississippi.

