

**LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS**

**Vegetation**  
is managed to provide a sense of the battle environment and the memorial atmosphere

**Tour Roads**  
link the battle and memorial sites for visitor access

**Markers & Monuments**  
were erected to explain the battle's events and memorialize soldiers

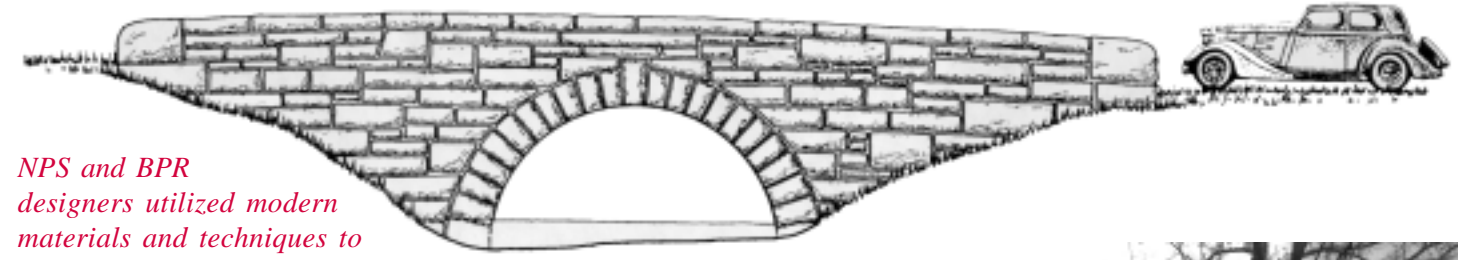
**Civil War Battlefield**  
The park began with the definition of the battlefield and related structures

The National Military Park is a system of layered features that work together to present the battle and its commemoration.  
(drawn by Nancy Hamburger, HAER)

*The Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Tour Roads were documented in 1998 by the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), a division of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The recording project was sponsored by the the Federal Highway Administration's Federal Lands Highway Office, through the NPS Park Roads and Parkways Program. The collection of drawings, photographs and historical reports is available through the Prints and Photographs Division at the Library of Congress.*

*This leaflet was produced by HAER in 1999.  
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HAER report by David Ezell  
HAER photographs taken by David Haas  
Historic photos from the park archives (CHCH)*

*Printed in cooperation with the National Park Foundation*



*NPS and BPR designers utilized modern materials and techniques to create bridges that harmonized with the stone spans constructed by the War Department forty years earlier. (Pete Brooks, HAER)*



*To support increased visitation during the post-war era, many roads were widened and paved with asphalt. In addition new visitor facilities and interpretative waysides were constructed. (HAER)*

**THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ERA**

National military parks were transferred to the National Park Service in 1933. The NPS and US Bureau of Public Roads jointly undertook a major reconstruction of tour roads throughout the system. Many primitive roads were widened and paved with concrete or asphalt to support the increased travel loads of automobiles and increasing visitation. Roadside landscaping and cleanup were also a priority for park service managers.

**CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC)**

The organization of the CCC as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal Administration had a tremendous impact on NPS sites nationwide beginning in 1933. The Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park had four camps at its disposal. Troops at these facilities performed a variety of duties, including construction of roads, trails and bridle paths, as well as landscaping, erosion control, and roadside cleanup.

After the closure of the last CCC camp at Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park in April 1942 due to World War II, little maintenance and improvement work was conducted. Two problems that continued to grow throughout the 1940s and 1950s were the increasing use of the LaFayette Road (US Highway 27) by local traffic and the growing numbers of park visitors. As the area grew and the economy improved, traffic on the roads was perceived by some as a threat to the integrity of the park.

**MISSION 66**

In response to growing concerns about poor conditions in national parks across the country, the National Park Service developed *Mission 66*, a ten-year program designed to address the needs of the parks by upgrading facilities, repairing roads, expanding interpretive programs, and improving staffing and management. The primary manifestation of *Mission 66* at Chickamauga and Chattanooga was the beginning of efforts to relocate US Highway 27 outside of the park. Large amounts of commercial traffic through the park had been a long-time concern. However, the relocation project did not become a top priority until park officials were faced with a local movement to widen the highway from two lanes to four to accommodate even higher volumes of traffic.

In 1964 a plan was developed that would reroute US 27 to a bypass looping around the west side of the park



*LaFayette Road (US Highway 27) carries increasing suburban commuter traffic. The relocation of US 27 outside the park will restore the road as a tourist route for leisurely driving. (FHWA)*

and reconnecting with its original route beyond the borders of the park. It was proposed that the section of the route that remained in the park would be restored to its 1863 appearance. The National Park Service planned to finance a majority of the project, if approval was granted by Georgia Highway officials. By 1967, it seemed that the US Highway 27 relocation would soon be a reality. The proposed project foundered, however. As late as 1980, the long-running proposal was still being tabled by park administrators due to insufficient funds. Finally in the mid-1990s, the proposed rerouting of the highway was budgeted by the Georgia Highway Department. The bypass would add six new miles of highway around the park and divert daily commuters and commercial traffic around the area. Ground was broken on the project in 1994, with an expected completion date in 1999.



*Horse-drawn gravel spreaders were used to lay the base for the macadam surface of park roads, ca. 1893 (CHCH)*

**National Park Service Era - 1930s**

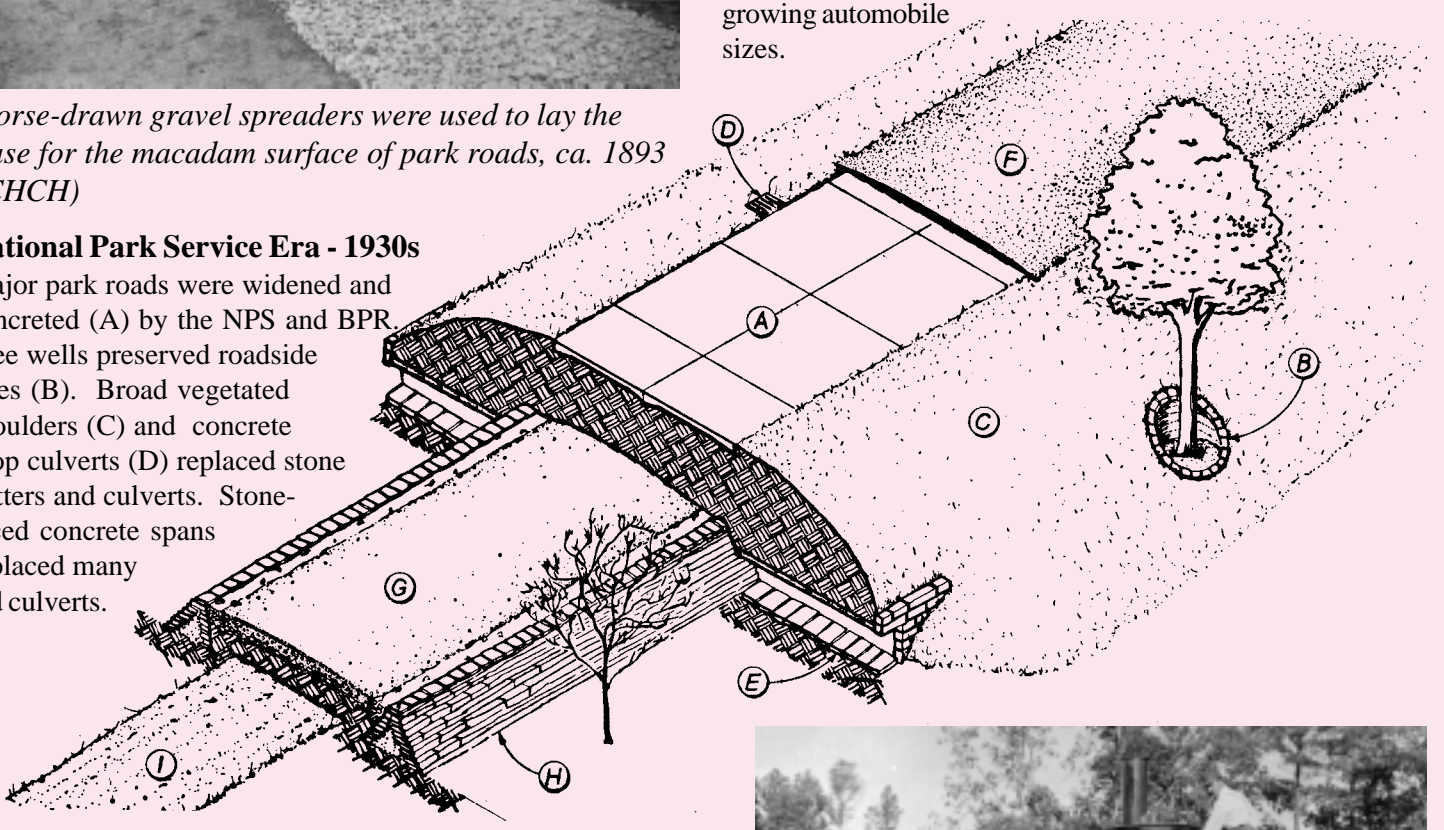
Major park roads were widened and concreted (A) by the NPS and BPR. Tree wells preserved roadside trees (B). Broad vegetated shoulders (C) and concrete drop culverts (D) replaced stone gutters and culverts. Stone-faced concrete spans replaced many old culverts.

**Park Commission Era - 1890s**

Roads were built on historic alignments. Improvements include oiling, graveling, or macadamizing surfaces (G), widening and constructing stone gutters and culverts, and bridging of stone, metal and concrete. Corbeled limestone revetment structures (H) raised roads above areas prone to flooding.

**Civil War Era - 1863**

During the Battle of Chickamauga roads were simple dirt routes with little drainage and no paving (I). These were used as the base for most of today's park road network.



**Roadway Construction and Evolution**

The road network of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park has evolved from dirt carriage roads to a groomed circuit of paved drives for safe and comfortable auto travel throughout the battlefield landscape.

**Mission 66 and Today - 1956 through 2000**

Most of the park roads were repaved with asphalt and often widened (F) to accommodate increased visitation and growing automobile sizes.



*Steam roller purchased for compacting the Macadam surface of park roads, ca. 1893 (CHCH)*

**The Motor Tour Experience**

The park tour roads allow visitors to experience the battlefield through a sequence of stops designed to interpret the events that occurred during the battle. The commemorative landscape is presented through a variety of view types.

*Open Views - Present open battlefield vistas*



*Focal Views - Focuses attention to a point of interest*



*Framed Views - Frame particular sites or monuments*



*Filtered Views - Pierce the forest to reveal markers*



*Closed Views - Are created by dense forest areas.*



*(Anna Sniegucka, HAER)*

**Highways in Harmony**

**Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Tour Roads**

Georgia and Tennessee



*Brotherton Road winds through Chickamauga Battlefield revealing the commemorative landscape. (HAER, 1997)*

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**





View along Battle Line Road with monuments and battle markers along the roadway. (HAER, 1997)

## CHICKAMAUGA AND CHATTANOOGA NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

Located along the Georgia/Tennessee border, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park was the first military park established by the US War Department in 1890. The park is a collection of reservations that includes battlefields, fortifications, national cemeteries, and significant locations attributed to the battle for control of Chattanooga. A well-designed system of tour roads carries visitors through the battlefields while regional roads provide access to the individual sites located around the area. These tour roads serve an integral role in commemorating the battle and memorializing those who fought.

## THE BATTLE FOR CHATTANOOGA

By the beginning of the Civil War, Chattanooga had become a major rail center for the South, making it a valuable asset for the war effort. Recognizing the importance of Chattanooga, Union forces began to move against the city in early 1863, under the leadership of Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans. In response, Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg established his troops in a defensive position south of the city.

The initial conflict occurred near Reeds Bridge, along Chickamauga Creek on 19 September 1863. On the second day of battle a strategic Union error resulted in a decisive victory for the South. Bragg was unable to keep the momentum of that victory, however, and his success was nullified at the Battle for Chattanooga less than two months later.

Union forces retreated to Chattanooga and the Confederates established themselves along the high ground encircling the city in preparation for their strategy of attrition. Bragg decided to starve Rosecrans and his men into submission. October brought relief for Northern troops as Union leadership changed hands, reinforcements arrived in the city, and a supply route was established for the troops in Chattanooga.

The balance of power began to shift. By late November, Union forces had gained enough strength to mount an offensive attack on the Confederate troops outside the city. The ensuing battle lasted from 23 November to 25 November as Union forces gained control of several strategic points in the areas of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. By the end of the month, the Confederate army was retreating into Georgia and Union troops secured the City of Chattanooga.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PARK

Like many other Southern battlefields, Chickamauga and Chattanooga was not preserved or protected in the years following the Civil War. The Southern states had neither the desire nor the resources to commemorate sites that represented their defeat. It was, in fact, two Union veterans who noticed the neglected battlefields at Chickamauga and Chattanooga, and began a campaign for preservation and commemoration of the sites. Beginning in June 1888, Henry Boynton and Ferdinand Van Derveer used their contacts in the media and the military to promote the creation of a “Western Gettysburg.” By May 1890, their goal was met-- House Resolution 6454 was passed by Congress to establish Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, the first in the country.



Crest Road was constructed along Missionary Ridge to link strategic points of interest, memorials and scenic vistas of the valley below. (CHCH)

## CREATING A COMMEMORATIVE ROADWAY

The park was initially run by a three-man commission appointed by the Secretary of War. This group’s duties were to purchase the park property, open and repair park roads, and define the lines of battle for study and interpretation. Military records, diaries, and personal memories of the veterans were used to configure the park and its features. Commemorative plaques and markers were then installed to interpret the landscape.

From its inception, the park’s efforts were geared towards development of an integrated unit of fields and roads commemorating the battles of Chickamauga and Chattanooga. From 1890 to 1892, the commissioners concentrated on establishing the approach roads and entrances to the park, and then clearing the fields of underbrush so that battle lines could be more easily established. The Civil War-era roads in the area were reestablished and opened for transit.



Roadwork included improvements on approach roads to the park, such as Ringold Road, ca. 1893. (CHCH)

The park commission’s primary concern was not construction of new roads, but maintenance of existing ones. The initial acts that created Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park called for government ownership of all “approach roads” into the park, to be ceded by the states of Georgia and Tennessee. Once this occurred, planners could develop and improve these roads to accommodate heavy visitor traffic.

There were several points of focus for road development. One of the most important was the LaFayette Road, which had been the center of the 1863 battle. Park developers also sought to highlight Crest Road, which ran along the top of Missionary Ridge, as it contained both strategic points and scenic vistas. The approach roads between Lookout Mountain and Rossville, as well as the Dry Valley and Crawfish Springs roads were targeted. Plans also called for the construction of a great military road to run from the Sherman Reservation in northern Chattanooga south through the Chickamauga battlefield and conclude at the site of Lee and Gordon’s Mill below the park boundary. Construction of this road began in 1892.



Horse-drawn equipment and hand tools were used to construct park roads, ca. 1893. (CHCH)

The task of restoring and reopening the battle-era roads in and approaching the park was a primary objective. A work crew of three hundred men lived in the park and toiled daily on the massive restoration project. The completed project was expected to require construction of nearly 50 miles of roadway.

Construction projects continued in 1893 with work on the road connecting Lookout Mountain with Rossville, a carriage drive at Point Park, surveys for construction of Crest Road, completion of LaFayette Road to Rossville and to a junction with the main route to Chattanooga.

After the park was officially dedicated and opened in 1895, the need to widen existing roads became a pressing issue. The overwhelming use of the main approach roads necessitated the widening of these routes, which required additional land acquisition from owners of properties along these roadways. Most of the roads leading to and through the park were completed by the turn of the century. In 1902, the LaFayette Road was continued south of the park to the corporate limits of LaFayette, Georgia. Additional improvements to the roads from Rossville to McFarland’s Gap and from Crawfish Springs (present-day Chickamauga) to Glass’ Mill were also completed. Feeling rather optimistic, Henry Boynton reported to the Secretary of War that this work should be the end of road construction in the park.

## BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

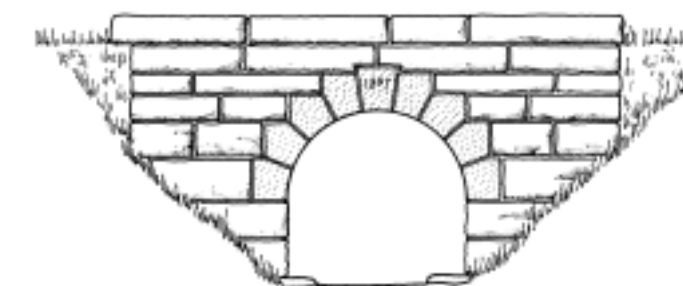
Most of the battle-era bridges were simple wood trusses, in aging condition. Several changes and replacements were made in 1905. The original wood bridge over Pea Vine Creek was replaced with a concrete structure, the old Alexander’s bridge was replaced with a prefabricated metal truss bridge, and a steel bridge was installed on the LaFayette Road near the location of Lee and Gordon’s Mill. In 1911, the park commission approved another metal truss span to replace Reed’s Bridge.



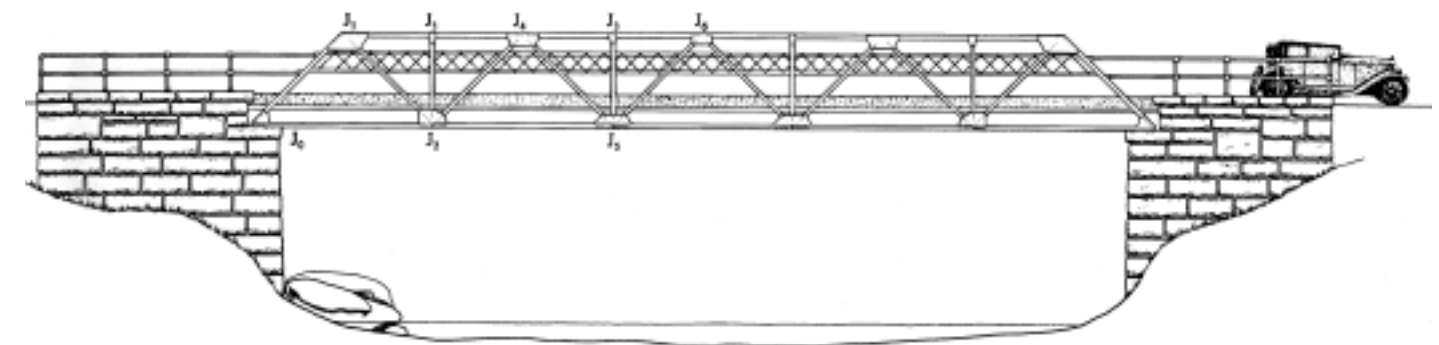
Reed’s Bridge, located near the site of the first battle of Chickamauga, was originally a three-span timber truss. This bridge has been replaced twice. (CHCH)



Hand labor was used for much of the construction work. Derricks placed large stones for culverts and bridges. (CHCH)



Stone arch and slab culverts were constructed throughout the park to manage the heavy rainfall in the region, thus protecting road bases and surfaces. (Tetyana Sprysa, HAER)



The old Alexander’s Bridge was replaced with this riveted steel Warren truss in 1910. (Pete Brooks, HAER)

<b>1863</b> Battle of Chickamauga (Sept.). Confederates defeat Union forces.	<b>1863</b> Battle for Chattanooga (Sept.-Nov.) Union Troops defeat Confederates and secure Chattanooga.	<b>1890</b> Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, the first Civil War battlefield park, established.	<b>1894</b> Shiloh National Military Park established.	<b>1895</b> Gettysburg National Military Park established.	<b>1890-92</b> Park Commissioners focus on development of approach roads and park entrances	<b>1899</b> Vicksburg National Military Park established.	<b>1905</b> Alexander’s Bridge replaced with prefabricated truss; steel bridge constructed on LaFayette Road near Lee and Gordon’s Mill.	<b>1906</b> Wood bridge at Pea Vine Creek replaced with reinforced concrete arch.	<b>1907</b> Construction of steel bridge spanning East Chickamauga Creek on Ringgold Road.	<b>1916</b> National Park Service established.	<b>1920s</b> Park roads and approaches paved.	<b>1933</b> Battlefield parks transferred from the War Department to the National Park Service.	<b>1930s</b> CCC workers employed in the park, improve road grades and surfaces, and construct small bridges and culverts	<b>1948</b> The last of the federally constructed approach roads transferred to counties in Tennessee or Georgia.	<b>1956</b> Mission 66 program initiated to upgrade and widen roads and increase roadside interpretation.	<b>1998</b> Historic American Engineering Record documented Chickamauga and Chattanooga NMP historic tour road system.	<b>1994-99</b> US Hwy 27 rerouted outside the park boundary to relieve congestion.
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## Timeline of Developments