

# SHILOH

National Military Park  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

## America's National Cemeteries: The Bivouac of the Dead

The National Cemetery System is the final resting place for some three million Americans in 113 cemeteries which encompass over 10,000 acres of American soil.

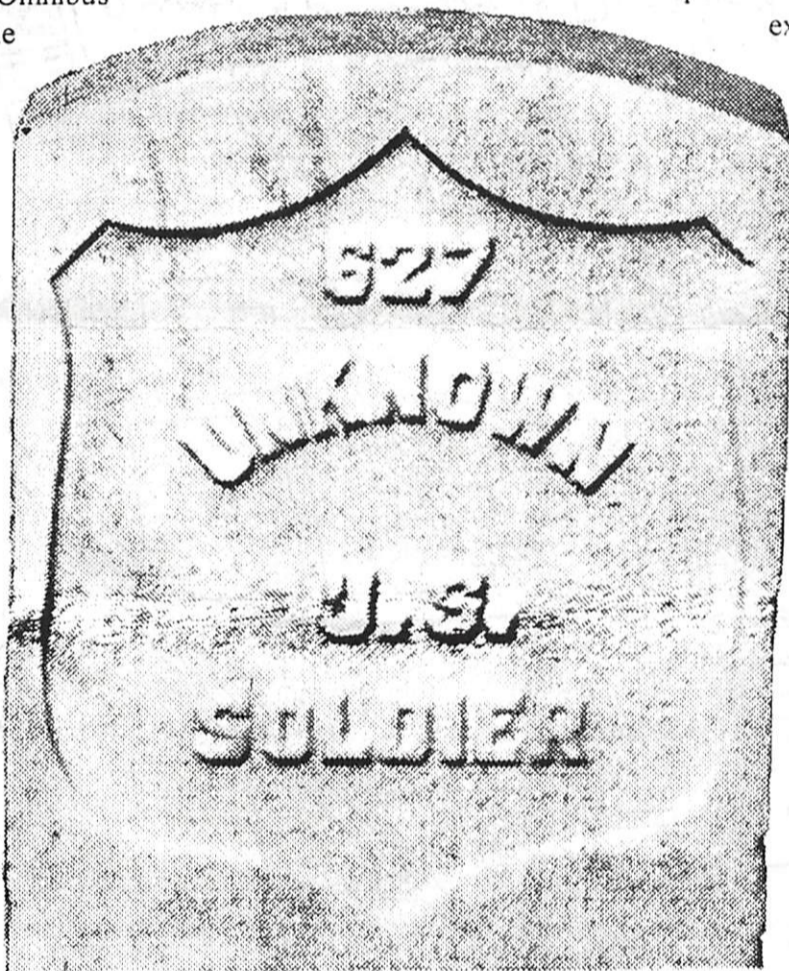
In the midst of the American Civil War, on July 17, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed an Omnibus Bill which provided "That the President of the United States shall have [the] power ... to purchase ... grounds ... to be used as a National Cemetery for the soldiers who shall die in the service of the country." This act of Congress legitimized what Lincoln's military commanders had been doing all along: burying the dead where they fell, with no compensation to the land owners.

In 1862, 12 of the original 14 National Cemeteries were located around heavy troop concentrations, as disease was the primary cause of death during the Civil War. Dysentery, Malaria, Typhus, Pneumonia, measles, and Consumption reaped havoc in the ranks, both North and South. Alexandria (VA), Soldier's Home (Washington D.C.), Ft. Leavenworth (KS), Ft. Scott (KS), Annapolis (MD), Camp Butler (MO), Danville (KY), Keokuk (IA), Loudon Park (MD), New Albany (IN), Philadelphia (PA), and Cypress Hills (NY), were among the first sites designated as National Cemeteries.

Congress officially created the National Cemetery System in 1866. By 1870, the system had expanded to seventy-three sites, including units on

battlefields and prisoner-of-war camps both North and South. Antietam, Maryland (1862), Mill Springs, Kentucky (1862), and Andersonville, Georgia (1867) were a few of the first.

In 1873, Congress extended the right of burial into a National Cemetery to



all honorably discharged Union veterans of the Civil War.

The conclusion of the Spanish-American War (1898) marked a new era in U.S. burial policy. It is considered to be the first time in world history that a country at war with a foreign power disinterred its soldiers and took them home with them, at the discretion of the next of kin.

In 1933, eleven National Cemeteries on Civil War sites, including Shiloh National Cemetery, were transferred

from the War Department to the National Park Service. In 1962, president John F. Kennedy announced a non-expansion policy with respect to the National Cemetery System; in which no new cemeteries are to be established, and no additional lands are to be purchased for the expansion of existing cemeteries, with the exception of Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

The National Cemeteries Act of 1973 transferred the National Cemetery System from the Department of the Army to the Veterans Administration, with the exceptions of Old Soldiers Home, and Arlington National Cemeteries, which are still under the auspices of the U.S. Army.

The National Cemetery here at Shiloh National Military Park is the final bivouac for some 3,672 Americans; 1,476 of whom died of their battle wounds. Veterans of then Revolutionary War to the

Persian Gulf War rest in Shiloh National Cemetery. The cemetery closed in 1991.

Only two Confederate soldiers are interred here, in section "M". They were both prisoners-of-war who died of their battle wounds in Savannah, Tennessee, shortly after the Battle of Shiloh. These men were reinterred into the cemetery in 1866 when Shiloh National Cemetery was established. Most of the Union dead, originally buried in mass burial

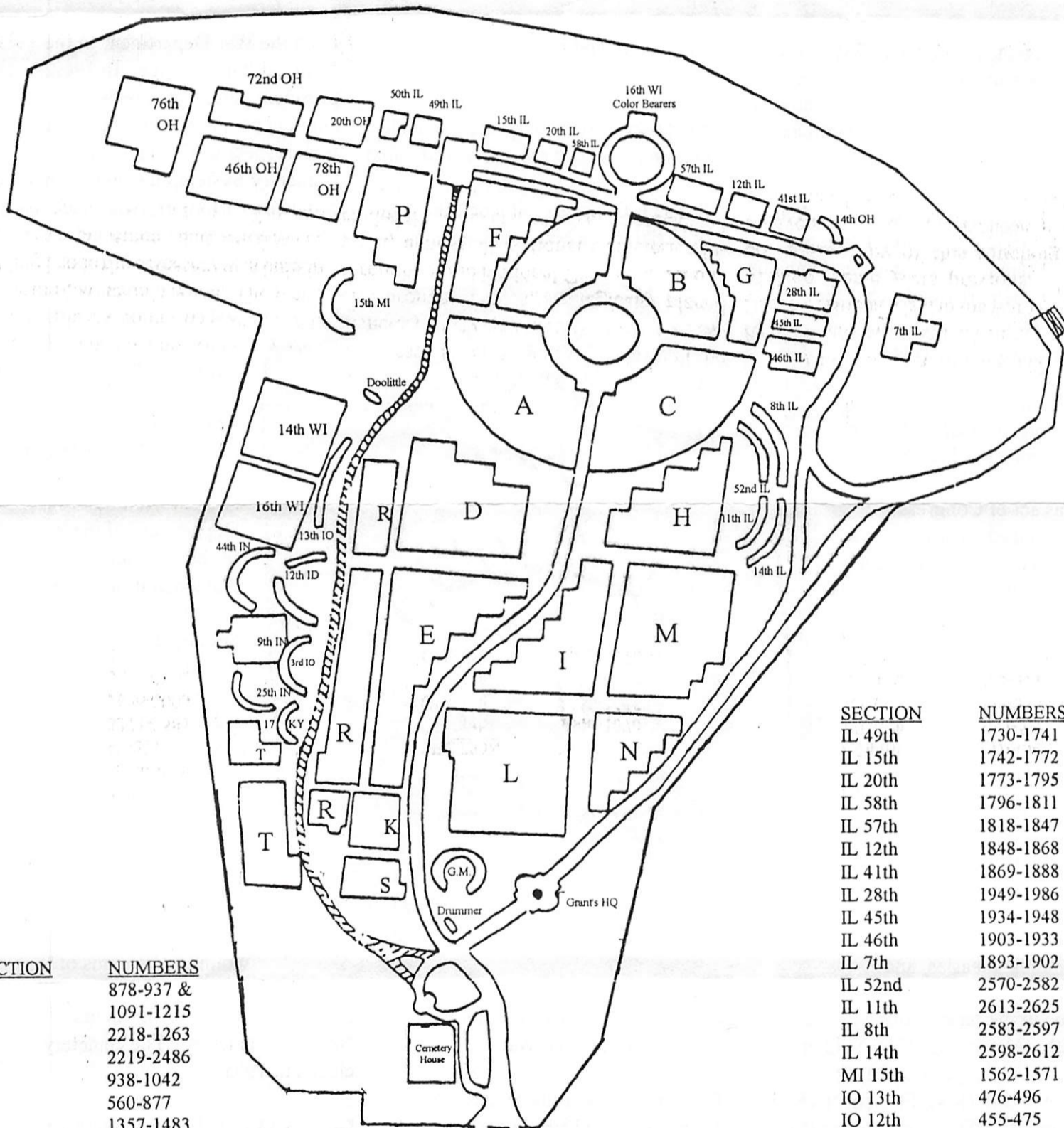
*Continued on reverse side*

In 1909 a cyclone hit the park and inflicted great damage onto the National Cemetery. The western cemetery wall (facing Visitor Center) was wiped out, as was the Caretaker's home. The white building inside the cemetery was built in 1912 as a replacement, and functions as the Park Headquarters today. The site of the flagpole marks the spot of an

octagonal stone and iron bandstand, where for decades, visitors sat and watched the Tennessee River. As you walk through the cemetery today, pay special note to the several bronze plaques, strategically placed throughout the National Cemetery. At one point, almost all National Cemeteries included these tablets, which display selected two-line verses from the poem,

"Bivouac of the Dead". Theodore O'Hara (1820-1867) wrote this piece in 1847 to commemorate his fellow Kentuckians who had fallen at the Battle of Buena Vista in the war with Mexico, some years previous. A complete copy of this touching twelve stanza poem, is available for a nominal fee at the Visitor Center desk.

## SHILOH NATIONAL CEMETERY



SECTION	NUMBERS
A	878-937 & 1091-1215
B	2218-1263
C	2219-2486
D	938-1042
E	560-877
F	1357-1483
G	1998-2113
H	2487-2569
I	3004-3268
K	97-271
L	3371-3581
M	2626-3003
N	3269-3342
P	1484-1561
R	272-3771
S	1-96
T	3810-3846

SECTION	NUMBERS
OH 76th	1646-1670
OH 46th	1611-1645
OH 72nd	1671-1688
OH 78th	1572-1610
OH 20th	1689-1718
OH 14th	1889-1892
IL 50th	1719-1729

SECTION	NUMBERS
IL 49th	1730-1741
IL 15th	1742-1772
IL 20th	1773-1795
IL 58th	1796-1811
IL 57th	1818-1847
IL 12th	1848-1868
IL 41st	1869-1888
IL 28th	1949-1986
IL 45th	1934-1948
IL 46th	1903-1933
IL 7th	1893-1902
IL 52nd	2570-2582
IL 11th	2613-2625
IL 8th	2583-2597
IL 14th	2598-2612
MI 15th	1562-1571
IO 13th	476-496
IO 12th	455-475
IO 3rd	390-410
IN 25th	374-389
IN 9th	411-430
IN 44th	431-454
WI 16th	497-526
WI 14th	527-559
KY 17th	355-373
WI C.B.	1812-1817
G.M.	3582-3588
Doolittle	3590
Drummer	3589