

The Dispatch

The Newsletter of the Monocacy National Battlefield
Foundation

Volume 7, Issue 3
Fall 2024



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Foundation Business Report

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experience, your donation
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our meeting that mission.



Completed in 1831,
the wye of the B&O
Railroad at Monocacy
Junction was the first
example of its kind
in the United States
and is still in use.

The wye, now part of
CSX Transportation, is
visible from the Junction
Trail on the Monocacy
National Battlefield
(photo courtesy of Clinton
Eppleman (August 2024)).



Changes to The Dispatch

We thank outgoing board member Mary Turner for her participation on the Board, commitment to the Foundation, and excellence in producing and editing the newsletter from 2022- September 2024. The position of editor is open and we encourage you to apply.

The Foundation turns a page by retooling our resources as a necessity to meet the challenges of increasing our viewership and charitable fundraising. As we explore different social media platforms, the newsletter will remain a part of our programming, but in a different form and format. Each issue will include a photo feature relevant to Monocacy and that can be your own submission. Our objective is to provide you with the most current news and to continue as a forum for publication of your articles. We look forward to continuing our outreach through the Dispatch.

Lynn Bristol, PhD, JD

President, Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation

What's New in the Park?

Monitoring for Chronic Wasting Disease in the Park's Deer Population

In the United States, chronic wasting disease (CWD), a prion disease, was first identified in the 1960s in captive deer. In 1981, the first wild deer with CWD was reported. Since then, the disease has been found in wild deer in more than half of U.S. states. Once the disease is established in an area, the prion, the causative, infectious agent of CWD, can remain in the environment (soil) for years.

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The reports of CWD appearing in limited populations of deer at both Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields has raised concerns about deer population management in the region [1]. This is recognized by the NPS [2] and by the individual parks. To this end, former Acting Superintendent of the Monocacy National Battlefield (MONO), Jim King, informs us that “MONO has issued a no-cost Scientific Research and Collection Permit (partnership/ agreement) to University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine to assist with their study of CWD in deer.”

It is not known if CWD is infectious in humans whilst no infections have been reported. However, CWD is a theoretical risk to humans [3].

King states “In addition to partnering with USDA during planned deer reduction in early 2025, U Penn’s study intends to advance CWD detection by using samples to train dogs specifically to detect CWD in feces from affected deer and elk. Presently USDA and NPS take samples from deer and forward to an NPS lab in Colorado [4]. Results can take up to a week to return. During that time the deer are butchered and ready to travel to food banks if results are negative. If the CWD test is positive in any one deer, the entire daily catch (20-25 deer) needs to be discarded due to cross contamination at the butchershop. To be able to identify earlier in the process, infected deer can be culled and remaining sent to butcher shop with the meat on its way to food banks expeditiously and disease free.”

[1] [fredericknewspost.article_3e240d0a-1b9a-5430-97d5-a784410a5afa.html](https://fredericknewspost.com/article_3e240d0a-1b9a-5430-97d5-a784410a5afa.html)

[2] parkplanning.nps.gov/documentID28828

[3] www.cdc.gov/chronic-wasting/about/index.html

[4] The Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Directorate (NRSS) in Fort Collins, CO, is the laboratory approved to conduct CWD testing.

Foundation Gifts Artifact Collection of Capt. James S. Inskeep to the Park

On Monday, October 21, 2024, the Foundation met Park Rangers Tracy Evans, Matt Borders and Brian Robinson, at the Visitor Center for the gifting of the Capt. James S. Inskeep collection to the Monocacy National Battlefield. Borders identified the collection from a reputable dealer in historical artifacts that ensued with its purchase by the Foundation. The provenance of the collection is from Daniel Carroll Toomey, Civil War and B&O Railroad historian, who wrote of Capt. Inskeep of Company A, 3rd Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade, in his article for the Dispatch 4(3): 3 (Fall 2021).

The artifact collection enriches the interpretation of the Battle of Monocacy and of an individual who fought on that hallowed ground. Consider making a donation.

“Captain James Inskeep, the Man and the Collection”

by Matthew Borders [1]

Born in 1828, James Inskeep was in his early 30's, married with two children and a successful magistrate in Cumberland, Maryland, when the war broke out in 1861. That September, he chose to enlist in the 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade and shortly thereafter was elected 1st Lieutenant of Company A on September 29. The 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade spent much of 1862 guarding the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, and in July was assigned to the Railroad Brigade. That September the regiment fought in the Battle of Harpers Ferry and was forced to surrender with the rest of the Federal garrison on September 15, 1862. Lieutenant Inskeep and the rest of his comrades were sent to Camp Parole, Maryland to await exchange, which occurred in early 1863.

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James Inskeep was listed as present for duty throughout 1863, and with the 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade was assigned to the defenses of Baltimore until the end of June. They guarded the Washington Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad at Annapolis, Relay Station, Annapolis Junction and Monocacy Junction. That July they were attached to the VIII Corps, part of the Middle Department, and served with the 3rd Separate Brigade until October, when they were transferred to the 1st Separate Brigade. They remained with this command until August 1864 and fought as part of it during the Battle of Monocacy.

On February 20, 1864, James Inskeep was detached from his regiment to go on recruiting duty at Ellicott Mills, Maryland. He was only there a brief period until he was promoted to Captain of Company A on April 27, 1864. Captain James Inskeep's commission papers for both his 1st Lieutenancy and his Captain's commission were recently purchased by the Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation.



Included in the collection is a carte de visite of James Inskeep in uniform, as well as one of his shoulder boards with his captain's rank. It is very likely that this shoulder board was worn by Captain Inskeep when he and the rest of Company A fought west of Frederick on July 7 and here on the banks of the Monocacy River on July 9.



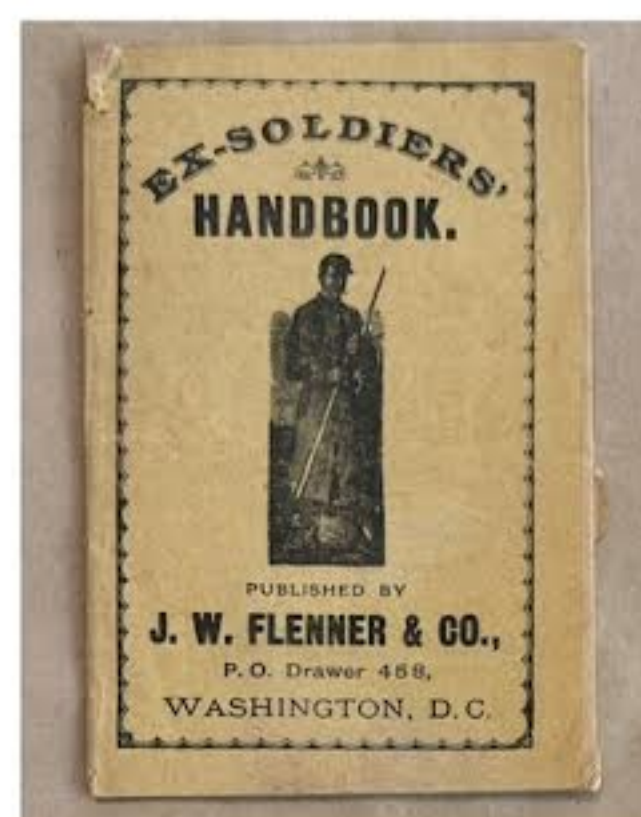
Captain James Inskeep arrived with his company at Monocacy Junction as part of the 1st Separate Brigade on July 6, 1864. On July 7 they proceeded down the Frederick spur line by train to Frederick City and advanced west out of town to support the 8th Illinois Cavalry during the "Battle of West Frederick." Arriving before 4pm, Colonel Charles Gilpin of the 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade was now the senior officer on scene and deployed his 600 or so men, including Inskeep's Company A, to resist the advance of Brigadier General Bradley Johnson and his Confederate cavalry. Though hard pressed throughout the engagement, Gilpin, leading the 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade, charged the encroaching Confederate cavalry around 8pm, driving them back to the Catoctin Mountains, ending the engagement for the time being. Major General Lew Wallace spoke of the fighting west of Frederick in glowing terms in a telegram to Washington that night, "Think I have had the best little battle of the war!"

Not seriously engaged on July 8, the 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade withdrew from Frederick with the rest of Wallace's command around 10pm. They fell back by way of the National Road over Jug Bridge and then down the east side of the Monocacy River to Monocacy Junction.

On July 9, 1864, the 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade was broken up by companies and deployed along the Monocacy River. While portions of the regiment covered Crum's Ford, north of the Junction, Companies A, B & K were deployed to the floodplain below the ridge on the east side of the Monocacy River and along the ridge itself. They remained there over the course of the battle skirmishing with North Carolina troops from Brigadier Robert D. Johnston's brigade across the river. Their presence helped prevent Confederate forces from crossing the Monocacy River until the final withdrawal of the 10th Vermont Infantry detachment at Monocacy Junction near 5pm. The 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade retreated with the 11th Maryland Infantry at that time, withdrawing northward to the Baltimore Pike and then moving east towards Monrovia and finally Ridgeville.

Following the retreat to Baltimore, the 3rd Maryland Potomac Home Brigade joined in the pursuit of Early's forces back to the Shenandoah Valley. With the reorganization of Federal forces in the Department of West Virginia that August, the regiment joined the Major General Philip Sheridan's Army of the Shenandoah at Harpers Ferry. They participated in the skirmishing at Bolivar Heights, Halltown, Charlestown and Berryville, in August 1864 before being reassigned to the District of Harpers Ferry and eventually the Reserve Division in October. The regiment remained with the Department of West Virginia for the rest of its service and mustered out on May 29, 1865.

James Inskeep mustered out of service a few months before the rest of his regiment on January 2, 1865, at Buckhannon, West Virginia. Having survived the war, he returned to his wife and three children, his youngest daughter having been born in 1862 after his enlistment. While it is not known specifically what James Inskeep did after the war, he eventually moved to Pennsylvania and put in for a pension on April 1, 1887. James Inskeep died on February 6, 1902, and is buried at Addison Cemetery in Addison, Pennsylvania, Row 7, Grave 5.



1st panel: GAR officer's medal; 2nd panel: GAR Dept. of Maryland Roster (1882); 3rd panel: Ex-soldiers handbook.

[1] Matthew Borders is a Park Ranger at Monocacy National Battlefield, President of the Frederick County Civil War Roundtable, author of several books, and a licensed battlefield guide for Antietam National Battlefield.

New Board Members of the Foundation

Join us in welcoming our newest Board members, Messrs. Jason Coleman and Clinton Eppleman. We look forward to their contributions in our mission to preserve, protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the Monocacy National Battlefield.



Jason Coleman is a history teacher and football and basketball coach at the St. Paul's School for Boys in Brooklandville, Maryland. Prior to transitioning to a career in education, he worked in television for NBC Sports, covering a wide variety of events and content from NFL (Football Night in America), Premiere League soccer, NASCAR, the 2018 Winter Olympics, Triple Crown horse racing, and the French Open. He is a United States Marine Corps combat veteran of the Iraq War, where he served two tours as a Marine infantryman. After his military service, Jason earned a bachelor's degree in US History and a master's degree in journalism, both from Columbia University. He is descended from generations of service members going back to the Civil War. As such, military history has been a lifelong passion. He is especially passionate about Civil War history and feels a deep reverence and connection to the NPS battlefields across the United States. He was born and raised in New England, and as such is a diehard New England sports fan. Most importantly, he is a father and husband deeply committed to his family and takes great joy in sharing his love of history and appreciation of service with his young son.



Clinton Eppleman has long admired the impactful work foundations provide to support the efforts of the National Park Service. He comes to the board of directors with a strong passion for Civil War history and the Battle of Monocacy. In particular, his specific interest in Monocacy stems from an ancestor who fought in the battle with the 138th PA regiment. Professionally, Clinton has over a decade of leadership experience in Information Technology and Cybersecurity. Currently, he is a Team Lead at Morefield, where he manages a team focused on delivery of technology professional services. In addition to his professional experience, he has been involved in volunteer work with the following organizations: Adams County Historical Society, York County History Center, National Civil War Museum, and the Sons of Union Veterans (Gettysburg Camp 112). He has served as the Chair of Board of Trustees at the Adams County Historical Society since 2020. These roles have equipped him with a solid understanding of governance, strategic planning, and fundraising, which will be beneficial to the Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation.

“The Colonel and the Cemetery”
by Charles W. Mitchell [1]

On November 18, 1863, Col. John A. Steiner of the Potomac Home Brigade in Frederick set off for Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Steiner wished to attend the dedication of a new cemetery that would be both a resting place for Union and Confederate soldiers who had died in July on the adjacent battlefields and a symbol of national reconciliation that President Abraham Lincoln hoped would symbolize a reunified, post-Civil War America.

Steiner's horseback trip to Gettysburg, which took most of that day, was a rare opportunity for a citizen far from the nation's capital to see the President. Steiner's journey was likely between 35 and 40 miles, so at the average 19th century speed of 8 mph on horseback, it would've taken him approximately 7 hours, including stoppage to eat and water his horse. “Morning cloudy & slight rain about 8 ½ o'clock left for Gettysburg arrived there about dusk,” he wrote in his small diary. “Found there an immense crowd very clear & pleasant.” That evening Steiner may have been in the crowd that heard Lincoln speak briefly on the town square outside the home of lawyer David Wills, where the President was staying.

Early the next day, November 19, wagons, buggies, riders on horseback and pedestrians clogged the roads leading into the small town. Trains disgorged more visitors. Steiner described the scene: “Morning cloudy but pleasant. After breakfast went over Battle ground with a number of friends.” He recorded his impressions of the ceremony: “Then at the stand from where the dedicatory ceremonies of the National Cemetery were had. Saw the President, Mr. Everett & many others of our distinguished Statesmen & was much gratified.” (Edward Everett, the former president of Harvard and featured orator, spoke from memory for two hours.)

That Steiner said nothing further about his day in that small Pennsylvania town, still recovering from the bloody three-day battle that summer, deprived historians of a detailed eyewitness account. But he clearly enjoyed Lincoln's brief remarks at the ceremony, as did many of the 15,000 people present. And thanks to the observations in his diary—sparse as they were—we know that this Marylander was glad to be part of this great civic occasion, his reward listening to a tall man with a high-pitched voice, wearing a top hat, deliver the Gettysburg Address, 161 years ago today.

[1] Mitchell is co-editor of “The Civil War in Maryland Reconsidered” (with Jean H. Baker) and author of “Maryland Voices of the Civil War,” and “Travels Through American History in the Mid-Atlantic: A Guide for All Ages.” He serves as a board member on the Foundation.

FOUNDATION BUSINESS REPORT: Activities and Events

Coming soon! MNBF YouTube Channel

Stay tuned for our launch of a Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation YouTube channel. Material content will be contributed by board members on all things related to Monocacy. This expands our social media presence that includes our existing FaceBook page and our website at monocacynbfoundation.org. A foundation-based channel ensures the archiving and curating of the contents for the next generation. Visit our FaceBook page for a premier of a video by Brad Stone (MNBF board member) interviewing MONO Park Ranger Tracy Evans.

Upcoming Events

Kris Kringle Procession sponsored by Celebrate Frederick: Friday, December 13th from 6:30-8:00 PM. The event begins at the corner of South Carroll and East Patrick streets and ends in Baker Park.

Foundation board members will partake in this procession to celebrate the festival of the holidays of today and from the 19th century. Happy winter solstice.

Submissions

We welcome your articles and photographs (pdf) about people, places, history and natural resources of Monocacy National Battlefield and Frederick County. Send them to monocacynbf@outlook.com.

Acknowledgements

This issue of The Dispatch is brought to you by Lynn Bristol, Charley Mitchell and Clinton Eppleman.

Make a donation. You can pay by credit card on our website at monocacynbfoundation.org or by sending a check by mail to the address:

Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation, Inc.
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Thank you for your generosity!