

The Dispatch

The Newsletter of the Monocacy National Battlefield
Foundation

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MONOCACY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD
FOUNDATION
PRESERVE • PROTECT • ENHANCE

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Foundation Business Report

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Shiloh National Military Park, TN
Historic Plaque #F: Lew Wallace's (3rd) Division, Army of Tennessee
Monument Number: F
Grid Location: F04



(Photo courtesy of Lynn Bristol (April 25, 2025))

From the Superintendent's Desk

"A Season of Growth and Progress at Monocacy National Battlefield"

As the new Superintendent at Monocacy National Battlefield, I am honored to join such a dedicated team of employees, volunteers, and partners who work tirelessly to preserve and interpret this historic site. Over the past few months, the park has been a hub of activity, with each division making significant contributions to resource protection, visitor engagement, and operational success. With spring approaching, we are excited about upcoming events and opportunities to further connect with our community.

Resource Management: Preserving Our History and Landscape

Our Resource Management team has been hard at work on several important projects. The Archeological Overview & Assessment is now in its third year, with fieldwork continuing until the end of March. This research enhances our understanding of Monocacy's historical and cultural landscape. Additionally, our deer management program recently concluded, marking another successful year in maintaining a healthy forest ecosystem by ensuring balanced deer populations and protecting native vegetation.

Looking ahead, we will collaborate with the University of Virginia to conduct pollinator and spring ephemeral surveys, providing valuable insights into the park's biodiversity. At the same time, we are ramping up efforts to combat invasive plant species with the support of seasonal biological technicians. Fieldwork will soon begin, focusing on removing celandine (*Ficaria verna*) and other invasives to protect native plant communities and sustain the park's ecological balance.

Law Enforcement: Strengthening Our Team

We are excited to welcome Thomas Aaron as our newest law enforcement ranger. His addition strengthens our ability to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for visitors while enhancing the protection of the park's resources.

Interpretation: Expanding Volunteerism and Enhancing Visitor Engagement

Park Ranger Matt Borders has taken the lead on our volunteer program, bringing in new and potential volunteers who are assisting with transcription projects and research efforts. He is also developing a volunteer opportunity centered on our trail system, offering a great way for the public to get involved in roving, monitoring, and keeping our trails clean. Those interested in volunteering can reach out to Matt at Matthew_Borders@nps.gov.

Our popular "Monocacy Mondays" series continues, and can be viewed on Instagram and Facebook, offering engaging content about the park's history. This initiative allows us to connect with a broader audience and share fascinating insights into Monocacy's past.

Exciting developments are also underway for our museum renovation. A new map program is in the works, with animation, narration, and music enhancing the visitor experience. While project timelines have been adjusted to late spring/early summer, we remain committed to delivering a high-quality experience. Additionally, we are preparing to replace the Kids in Parks wayside at the Worthington House and introduce a new park-based brochure to enhance visitor engagement.

Furthermore, in collaboration with Frederick County Tourism and the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, we are developing joint programs and promotional efforts for the upcoming America 250th anniversary. These partnerships will strengthen our community ties and amplify the park's historical significance on a regional scale.

Maintenance: Keeping the Park Accessible and Historic Structures Preserved

Despite winter's challenges, our Maintenance team remained dedicated to ensuring park operations continued without disruption. Their snow removal efforts allowed visitors to safely explore the battlefield throughout the season. As we prepare for the busier months ahead, the team is also overseeing key projects, including the ongoing repair of the Worthington House porch, the Best House stucco replacement, and the Gambrill Mill sidewalk repair.

Looking Forward: Community Engagement and Collaboration

As we move into the spring season, our focus will be on continuing to strengthen our partnerships and engage with the community. Monocacy National Battlefield is a place where history, nature, and public engagement intersect. Whether through volunteer opportunities, historical programming, or preservation efforts, there are countless ways for visitors and partners to be part of our mission.

I look forward to working alongside our dedicated staff and partners to ensure that Monocacy remains a significant and meaningful place for generations to come. Thank you for your continued support, and I hope to see you at the park soon!

Very Respectfully,
Derek Carter
Superintendent, Monocacy
National Battlefield



"Faces of Monocacy"

by Cameron Mallow

Researching Civil War history has always been a passion of mine. During the summer of 2024, I had the privilege of working as a seasonal intern at Monocacy National Battlefield. One of my responsibilities was to curate a virtual library of images depicting individuals who participated in the pivotal events that transpired around Monocacy Junction during the Civil War. These images have a remarkable ability to bring the stories of the soldiers to life. Over the years of conducting research, I've noticed that visitors to Civil War Battlefields often pose two common questions: do you have any information about my ancestor who fought here; and is there an image of him?

Over the years when I come across images of soldiers from the Civil War, I document the sources and save them in my files. This past year at Monocacy I have found between 200 and 300 images of soldiers who fought here at the battle on July 9, 1864, or who were stationed there at some point during the war. The following information provides examples of my research thus far.



Captain Arison S. Wood,
Company M, 9th New
York Heavy Artillery.
Wood commanded
Company M during the
battle, a company that
was for a time deployed
as skirmishers on the
west side of the Monocacy
River. This postwar
image of Wood came
from the New York
State Library Cultural
Education Center.



Captain Richard Baxter,
of Company I, 42nd
Virginia Infantry. He
was killed during the
battle and is said to
have been buried on
the battlefield. The
image was discovered
on Ancestry.com in
the summer of 2024.
Not much is known
about him. However,
this is a great image
of Captain Baxter.



1st Lieutenant Abiel T. LaForge,
Company F, 106th New York
Infantry. This photo was
discovered using Find a Grave.
Finding the image led me to
many letters and a diary he
kept during his Civil War
service. Through the letters
I was able to discern which
New York Infantry company
was sent across the Monocacy
River as skirmishers on the
western side of the river. In
this case it was Company F
of the 106th New York
Infantry. The interesting part
about finding the image were
the letters and notes from
his diary.

In his letters and diary,
LaForge talks about how
his company had to ford
the Monocacy River to fall
back when his company
was being overrun by
Confederates and provides
a great account of the
skirmishing his company
was involved in during the
battle. Also during the
battle, LaForge took command
of Company F when Captain
Martin J. Chamberlain of
Company F was mortally
wounded that day. Chamberlain
died of his wounds on July
22, 1864.



Captain Martin J. Chamberlain
Company F, 106th New York Infantry



Major Randolph Jones Barton
General William Terry's Staff

Major Randolph Jones Barton of General William Terry's Brigade Staff. Born in Winchester, Virginia April 14, 1844, he was 17 years of age when he enlisted in the 33rd Virginia Infantry. Later during the war, he was transferred to the 2nd Virginia Infantry, and on May 15, 1863, he was transferred to the staff of William Terry of the Virginia Brigade of General John Gordon's Division.

During the afternoon of the Battle of Monocacy General Gordon's Brigade was ordered to cross Worthington Ford to support General McCausland's Brigade who had been engaged for most of the morning. When General Terry's brigade formed their battle line, Major Barton knew they would soon be under heavy fire. Major Barton was mounted upon his mare named Mary Stuart, and he was concerned for her safety. He saw three farm horses grazing in the nearby meadow and put his bridle and saddle on the largest horse. He then sent Mary Stuart to the rear and joined the brigade, which was advancing.

During the battle the horse he had stolen was shot out from under him and died in the field. Years later, when living in Baltimore, he met Miss Alice Thomas and learned that she was in the Thomas House at the time of the battle. He then learned that the horse he had stolen and that had subsequently died had been named 'Old Davy.' Miss Thomas repudiated any claim against Barton and expressed satisfaction that the family had been able to give something to the Southern cause.

It is with great hope that the many pictures I uncovered last year can help with future interpretive programing at the Park. I also hope that research will reveal more stories and faces of those who bravely fought at the Battle of Monocacy.

Cameron Mallow, a seasonal National Park Ranger and historian, specializes in the American Civil War. In the summer of 2024, he worked as an interpretive ranger at Monocacy National Battlefield in Frederick, Maryland. Between National Park Service jobs, he engages with children as a substitute teacher, volunteers at camps, and is a writer—with his first book currently undergoing editing.

"This Unimportant Engagement"

by David M. Hall

Isaac Gordon Bradwell from Bainbridge, Georgia, was a 21-year old private in Company I, 31st Georgia Volunteer Infantry on July 9, 1864. He participated in the intense and costly combat on the grounds of "Araby" – the Thomas farm – as part of Evans' Brigade, Gordon's Confederate Division.

After the war, Bradwell was a frequent correspondent to the Confederate Veteran magazine, a monthly publication originating from Nashville, Tennessee which ran from 1893 through 1932. [1] His first submission in the September 1908 edition was "The Battle of the Wilderness". Bradwell – a post-war school teacher and superintendent of schools in Brantley, Alabama [2] – undertook a series of articles chronicling the war in the eastern theater in great detail, including emotive anecdotes of his soldiering from enlistment in November 1862 through Appomattox Courthouse. [3] He was an articulate and unapologetic elegist for the Confederacy and its soldiers who despite his advancing age, retained vivid recollections of service during the Civil War.



I. G. Bradwell

At first, Bradwell did not write about Monocacy although in the May 1911 edition, he glibly wrote of Early's 1864 campaign: "he made a demonstration against Washington, D.C., which was a long way off; but there were no very serious obstacles on the way, and by so doing he hoped to relieve the pressure on General Lee at Richmond and Petersburg." [4]

It seems the aging veteran's glibness belied some very traumatic memories of at least one serious obstacle encountered on July 9, 1864.

This changed in 1914, when as Bradwell wrote "...just fifty years after the battle of Monocacy, in company with Judge Glenn H. Worthington, who was reared on the ground, I walked over the location to refresh my memory..." [5]

Writing a few months after his walk with the Judge, as memories flooded back, Bradwell, a veteran of many bitter fights, recalled the perverse irony of Monocacy: "In this unimportant engagement our brigade of veterans, that had displayed such courage in all the great battles of the war, was decimated by Gen. Lew Wallace's men." [6]

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Gordon's division, led by Evans' brigade launched their assault a little after 3:00 p.m. on the 9th, and Bradwell recalled how they advanced over Brooks Hill and into a maelstrom of fire:

"We advanced in fine style up [Brook's Hill], but when we came to the open field we found their lines adjusting to meet us, and our yell was answered by a well-aimed volley which seriously wounded Gen. Clement A. Evans and Captain Gordon, his aid, and killed our wounded every regimental commander in the brigade, besides many of our company officers. The private soldiers were all veterans and knew what to do. They rushed at the enemy in the field and drove them to a sunken road, which they held against our left so well that our men became discouraged at their heavy loss...we would never have driven Rickett's men as we did but for our faithful allies, the brave Louisianians under York, and the Virginians, under Terry, for our enemy were seasoned veterans in good position..."[7]



Entry lane to Thomas House-Bradwell's fighting position looking toward Union position.

Over the years Bradwell brooded over the ghastly toll inflicted upon his comrades; haunted that their lives were squandered in a lost opportunity:

"What General Early and the rest of his army were doing while we were having such a strenuous time we never knew. It has been said that this battle saved Washington to the Federals, but that is not true. Only a part of Early's force was engaged, and his loss fell mostly on our brigade. The enemy retreated and left the way open to Washington, and General Early could have marched in with little or no opposition, as General Gordon wanted to do; but it was Early's intention to make only a 'demonstration'! [instead] We bivouacked that night along the road which the enemy had held with such tenacity..." [8]

After touring the battlefield on the 1914 anniversary, Worthington "... took me to the city cemetery [Mt. Olivet], where the good people of the community had buried the bodies of my comrades who were killed on that occasion in a long straight row near the grave of Francis Scott Key, author of the 'Star Spangled Banner', to rest until the judgment day. At the head of each grave stands a small white marble slab with the name and regiment on each but on these I noticed some mistakes. Our pioneer corps had hastily buried our dead the next morning where they had fallen, but they later received a more decent burial, as I have said, at the hands of our good friends of the place...go to the city cemetery of Frederick, Md., where the good people of the place buried my comrades and count the headstones there erected to their memory, [and]...see how heavy was our loss in this affair." [9]



Undated photo of Confederate Row- Mount Olivet Cemetery

Like many combat veterans, Bradwell struggled to understand why he did not fall with comrades. In 1924 he wrote:

"And now sixty years after..those strenuous days of danger and hardship, my mind often carries me back over the scenes of battle and I am constrained to attribute my preservation to Divine protection. Surely Providence had other duties for me to perform for my country, my elbow men, and myself, or I should have met the fate which befell so many of my comrades. But I hope I have been as faithful in the discharge of my duties as a citizen and Christian as I was as a soldier in defense of my country." [10]

One of the "duties" Bradwell took upon himself for his fallen "elbow men" was to memorialize them.

Writing of a sharpshooter - the brave Charley Billet - cut down in the Battle of Spotsylvania earlier in '64, Bradwell could have also have been writing of the men laying beneath the tomb stones at Mt. Olivet.

"In this engagement many of our best men who had done conspicuous service went down and among them the brave Charley Billet, unknown in history, unwept by his country men, and forgotten. Somewhere.. perhaps in an unmarked grave, the bones of this comrade rest, while his soul has joined the multitude of brave spirits who made the extreme sacrifice...who fell in defense of his country. This article is written as a just tribute to the memory of a brave comrade..whose deeds otherwise would never be known." [11]

As for the characterization of "this unimportant engagement" expressed in his first article on Monocacy in 1914, by 1928, Bradwell apparently came to accept its importance in the larger context of Early's 1864 campaign:

"Our men on this long march from Richmond showed the greatest fortitude and demonstrated what a small body of Anglo-Saxons can accomplish under adverse circumstances and will endure for their country when they think their rights and liberty in danger. Our ranks were decimated by a series of battles, great and small, before we set out on this march of four hundred miles, poorly equipped and ragged, but we boldly met the enemy, superior in numbers, supplied with everything a well-organized government could furnish, defeated them in every in every instance, and returned to our friends with small loss, except to one division of the army, inflicting a loss in men on the enemy greater than our own and bringing back with us much stock and other supplies needed to feed and equip our own men". [12]

Cont'd. from -8-

As to whether the Battle of Monocacy deserved to be recognized for posterity, Bradwell made his feelings clear:

"Yes let Congress set aside this ground as a national memorial. It will commemorate the valor of our Southern heroes who willingly offered up their lives on the altar of their country, as well as remind future generations of Americans that the delay occasioned by the battle at this place saved the capital city from falling into the hands of the Confederates who might have taken the President as a prisoner back to Dixieland." [13]

Bradwell last appears in the Confederate Veteran in 1932: "I. G. Bradwell of Brantley, Ala., would like to communicate with any old Confederate who took part in the battle of Monocacy, Md., July 9, 1864" [14]

Homeric until the end in 1934, his obituary revealed that "Just a few days before his death he made a very interesting speech at the school house, telling the children and visitors of his Civil War experiences." "The sweet spirit of Mr. Bradwell took its flight so peacefully and gently to the city not made with hands." [15]

[1] Confederate Veteran archives (hereinafter "CV").

[2] Morgan, Joyce, Bio of I.G. Bradwell, posted September 9, 2012 on Ancestry.com.

[3] Service records of I. G. Bradwell, <https://www.fold3.com/file/51932615>.

[4] CV, Volume XIX, May 1911 edition, "First of Valley Campaign by General Early" p. 231.

[5] CV, Volume XXXVI, March 1928 edition, "On to Washington" p. 95.

[6] CV, Volume XXII, October 1914 edition, "Early's Demonstration Against Washington in 1864" pp. 438-39.

[7] CV, Volume XXVIII, May 1920 edition, "Early's March to Washington in 1864" pp. 176-177.

[8] Ibid. Volume XXII.

[9] CV, Volume XXXVII, October 1929 edition, "The Battle of Monocacy MD" pp. 382-383.

[10] CV, Volume XXXII, October 1924 edition, "Presentiments" p. 375.

[11] CV, Volume XXXI, August 1923 edition, "Tribute to a Brave Comrade" pp. 291-292.

[12] Ibid. Volume XXXVI.

[13] Ibid. Volume XXXVI.

[14] CV, Volume XL, May 1932 edition, p. 102.

[15] "Mr. I. G. Bradwell," obituary, The Laverne Journal and Crenshaw County News, December 26, 1934.

David M. Hall is an independent Civil War researcher and a frequent contributor to the newsletter.

Foundation Business Report

MNBF-Sponsored Collegiate Internship for Monocacy National Battlefield

In furtherance of our partnership with Monocacy National Battlefield (MNB), we are providing our first-ever scholarship to help fund a summer college intern selected from the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, PA. It is a twelve week internship at MNB and you can expect to learn more from us in the coming months on the details of the program. We are excited by the prospect of working with an intern and MNB to achieve educational goals as part of our mission statement. Visit us on Facebook for updates.



MNBF YouTube Channel

Visit our YouTube channel for more and different content on the history of the peoples, places and events associated with the Battle of Monocacy. Thanks to Board members, Brad Stone and Clinton Eppleman, for their contributions to our channel. <https://www.youtube.com/@MonocacyNBFoundation>

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

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