

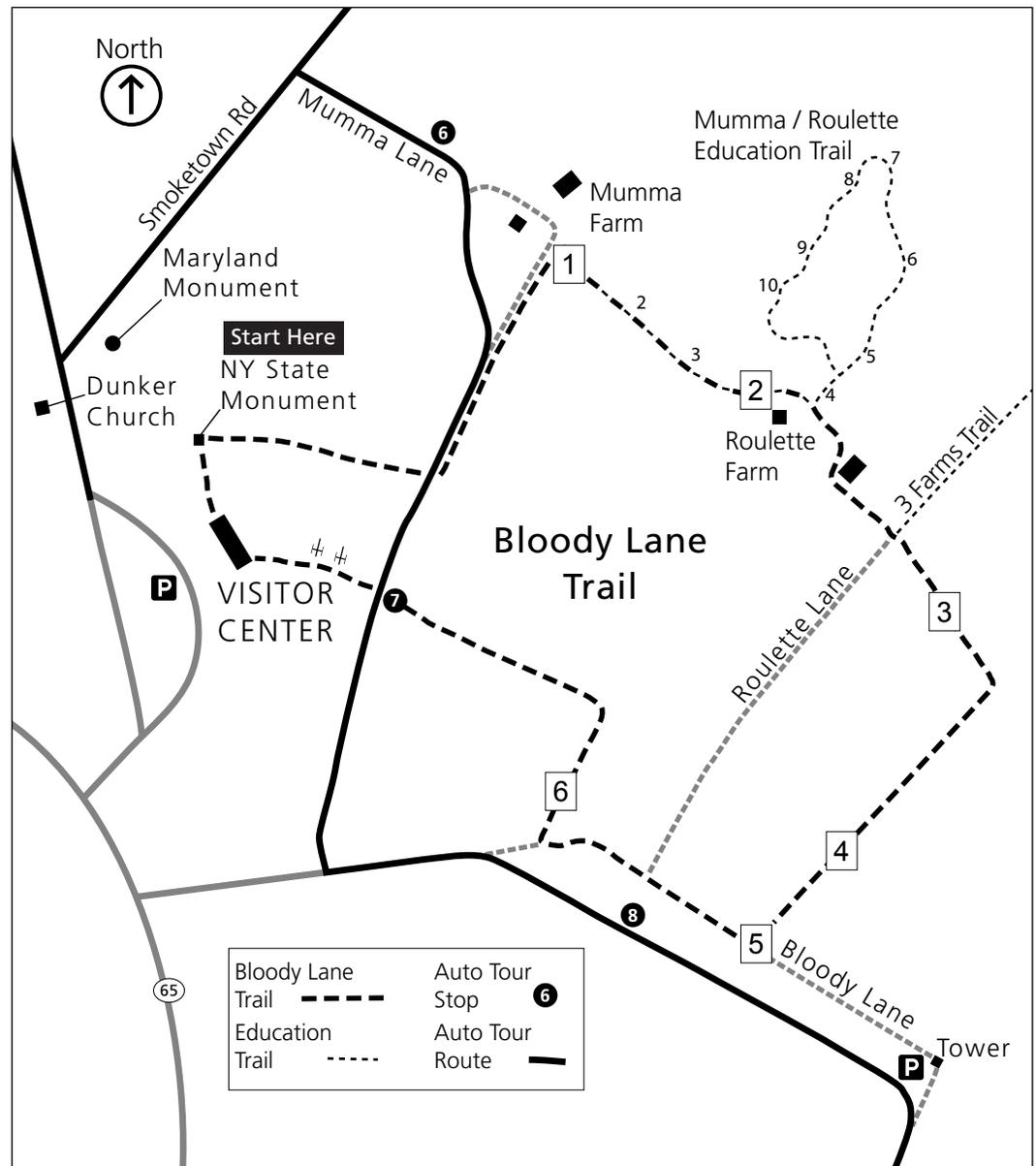
Bloody Lane Trail

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Antietam National Battlefield
P. O. Box 158
Sharpsburg, MD 21782



Trail Map



Introduction

The Bloody Lane Trail begins at the New York State Monument and ends near the cannon behind the visitor center. The length of the hike is 1.5 miles and should take about sixty to ninety minutes to complete. For a short section the trail overlaps the park's school education trail.

On the morning of September 17, 1862, three divisions of Gen. Edwin Sumner's Second Corps crossed Antietam Creek. The first division moved toward the West

Woods while the other two divisions advanced to the Sunken Road. Gen. William Henry French's division led the attack. Within an hour, Gen. Israel Richardson was in position to support him. Outnumbered, the Confederates in the road stood their ground for nearly three hours. Finally, the Federals were successful in driving them from this strong position. In three hours of combat 5,500 soldiers were killed or wounded and neither side gained a decisive advantage.

DIRECTIONS

Begin on the north side of the New York State Monument with the Dunker Church to your left (west).

Make your way down the hill (right/east) toward the Mumma Farm. Look for the map board just past the first building on the right.

Follow the fence line to the Roulette Farm and Stop 2.

Travel the gravel lane around the barn and when it bends to the right, continue straight along the tree line to Stop 3. Face south with the trees behind you.

Move south to the high ground in front of you.

Push on to the opening in the fence and into the Bloody Lane. Turn around and look in the direction from which you came.

Walk down the lane, away from the tower. About 100 yards past the Roulette Lane turn right just after the 130th PA Monument and continue to Stop 6.

Continue north to the hole in the fence, then left along the fence and back to the visitor center. Stop at the cannon just on the other side of the tour road.

New York State Monument

As the three divisions of the Union Second Corps arrived on the battlefield, one drove from the East Woods into the West Woods (The West Woods Trail). The divisions of Gen. William French and Gen. Israel Richardson marched south, past the Mumma Farm, toward a seemingly small group of Confederate

soldiers and a few battle flags. Unknown to the Federal forces, close to 2,300 Confederates were positioned in a old, worn-down sunken road awaiting their advance. French's men were in the lead and Richardson's followed about one hour later.

Stop 1 - Mumma Farm

During the early stage of the battle, Confederates positioned in this part of the field were ordered to set the Mumma house on fire. The house was burned to prevent Union soldiers from utilizing it as a sharpshooter

position. The Mumma family received no compensation from the Federal Government for their loss. They rebuilt their home shortly after the battle.

Stop 2 - Roulette Farm

Thousands of soldiers from Gen. W. H. French's division moved through the Roulette farm buildings on their way to the Sunken Road. The barn was used as a field hospital for many of the wounded from the Second Corps.

In his claim to the government, William Roulette stated that 700 soldiers were buried in his fields following the battle.

Stop 3 - Uphill to the Sunken Road

Parts of both French and Gen. Israel Richardson's divisions moved through this area and south toward the Sunken Road. From this point, the Union troops were out of range of Confederate small arms fire because the majority of the defenders in the lane were

equipped with weapons capable of accurate fire of about 100 yards. It was not long though, before the advancing troops came under a devastating rifle fire at the top of the hill.

Stop 4 - Fire!

As the Federals crested this ridge, the Confederates in the road unleashed a tremendous volley. One Union soldier remembered "our lines melted like wax before the fire." Near 11 a.m., the opposing battle

lines faced one another from the area near the post-war stone tower all the way to the Mumma Lane, a distance of almost 800 yards.

Stop 5 - Sunken Road to Bloody Lane

The Sunken Road was not a trench dug out by the soldiers; rather it was a well worn local farm lane. About 2,300 Confederates commanded by Gen. D.H. Hill held this position for nearly 2.5 hours before retreating after the numerous Federal attacks. After

Richardson was wounded, the Union drive stalled and they fell back to the north side of the ridge to your front. After nearly four hours of combat, the area around the road grew quiet, but the carnage in the lane and in front was terrible.

Stop 6 - Medal of Honor

During the first Union advance, the First Delaware moved over this ground. 286 of 650 soldiers from this regiment were wounded or killed and at one point it appeared as if their battle flag would be captured by the Confederates. However, Lt. Charles B. Tanner

rushed forward and as he remembered "reached the goal" and saved the flag. He was wounded in the arm during this action and later received the Medal of Honor for his gallantry in front of the Bloody Lane.

Conclusion - Artillery Behind Visitor Center

These cannon represent the position held by Capt. John Tompkins' battery. The six guns positioned here fired over 1,000 rounds in just three hours while supporting the Federal infantry. The fighting at the Sunken Road

began at 9:30 a.m. and was finished shortly before 1:00 p.m. 5,500 soldiers were killed or wounded during the struggle around the road, known forever, after the battle, as the Bloody Lane.