



Old Baltimore Pike (Dr. Baxter Road), east side of Monocacy River, view west.



Hughes Ford road trace, view east toward Monocacy River.

Name of Property: Monocacy Battlefield (Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation)

City, State: Frederick County, Maryland

Period of Significance: July 5-10, 1864; 1907; 1908; 1914; 1915; 1964

NHL Criteria: 1, 6; Exception 7

NHL Theme: IV. Shaping the Political Landscape
3. Military Institutions and Activities

Previous Recognition: 1973 National Historic Landmark

National Historic Context: VI. The Civil War
D. War in the East

NHL Significance:

- At the Battle of Monocacy, approximately 6,600 Union troops led by Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace were outnumbered by some 15,000 Confederate troops under Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early. The Confederate troops were part of the third and final Confederate invasion of the North, launched by Gen. Robert E. Lee in 1864 to relieve Virginia from the ravages of continued fighting by moving the war into northern lands and threatening or, if possible, capturing Washington D.C. Maj. Gen. Wallace later wrote of the casualties of the day-long battle, “These men died to save the National Capitol and they did save it.”
- The Battle of Monocacy was fought south and east of Frederick, Maryland, on July 9, 1864, near a web of transportation routes that led toward minimally defended Washington, DC. The battle delayed the Confederate troops sufficiently to allow Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant time to send reinforcements to defend the capital. The spent but victorious Confederate troops left the battlefield and headed toward the Washington defensive fortification known as Fort Stevens. Two days after the Battle of Monocacy, they skirmished with Union forces at Fort Stevens, but withdrew to Virginia that night.
- The Union defense of Washington in July 1864 is considered to have contributed to Abraham Lincoln’s re-election later that year. Had the Union capital endured more serious threat or damage, Democratic candidate Gen. George McClellan could have taken considerably more of the popular vote, defeated Lincoln, and ended the unpopular war



before its eventual conclusion. As historian Gary Gallagher wrote, “. . . it can be said with confidence that Wallace’s troops spared the Lincoln government a potential disaster, and for that reason the battle of the Monocacy must be considered one of the more significant actions of the Civil War.”¹

- The proposed National Historic Landmark boundary expansion would accomplish two important goals. It would change the NHL designation from two discontinuous parts to a single boundary that better reflects the range and intensity of the battle. It would also encompass Hughes Ford and the historic alignment of the Old National Pike, which persisted until 1942 when the old stone bridge was destroyed by flood waters. Protection of these two crossings from Confederate advance was a pivotal goal of the Union troops stationed along the river.
- Five monuments to the Monocacy battle were built between 1907 and 1964. The earlier monuments were built as tributes to the veterans who were still alive and to the fallen soldiers whose loved ones carried them in their memories. The last monument was built by the State of Maryland in 1964 to mark the 100th anniversary of the battle.

Integrity:

- The area within the original NHL boundary and the areas proposed for incorporation into the NHL retain a high degree of overall integrity. Integrity is particularly strong in terms of location, feeling, setting, and association.
- The Frederick County rural landscape consists of rolling terrain divided into small farms consisting of woodlands, pastures, and cultivated fields. The land is crisscrossed by a number of historic two-lane roads. Two major interstates cross the county, I-70 and I-270. The latter actually bisects the battlefield, although when it was planned consideration was given to the adjacent battlefield, so much of the highway is hidden from view. The historic B & O rail route also crosses the battlefield; today it is used by the CSX Corporation.
- The Monocacy River is an enduring feature in the landscape and was at the heart of major battle fighting. With Union troops on the east side of the river and Confederate troops on the west, it was the big divide that Confederates needed to cross to achieve their goal of eastward movement through Maryland.
- Frederick is a rapidly developing community, and the eastern side of town where the battlefield is located is no exception. Due to the rolling terrain and wooded landscape, the suburban development near the battlefield has a surprisingly small impact on the integrity of the battlefield or its viewshed.

Owner of Property: The ownership is represented as follows:

Monocacy National Battlefield: 1,647 acres (56% of the NHL)

City of Frederick, Frederick County, and private ownership: 1,278 acres (44% of the NHL)

Acres of Property: 2, 925 acres (556 acres added by this amendment)

Origins of Nomination: The National Park Service used an American Battlefield Protection

¹ Marc Leepson, *Desperate Engagement* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2007), 222.

Program grant to hire consulting firm Paula Reed and Associates to expand, update, and amend the 1973 NHL nomination. The intent of the project was to amend the boundaries to more fully incorporate the battlefield as defined by recent scholarship and to incorporate recent research into the nomination.

Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

- Involvement of the Frederick County Landmarks Foundation in the nomination process, through an American Battlefield Protection Program grant, provided excellent public exposure for the National Historic Landmark program. Four public meetings were held during the course of nomination preparation: three were for property owners who would be directly affected and the most recent was a community-wide public meeting.
- The NHL and Monocacy National Battlefield staff responded positively to city and county concerns about extending the boundary to areas that contain public facilities or that are proposed for development via existing zoning or subdivision. Both municipal governments seem to have been satisfied that a compromise was reached, and the National Park Service believes that essential components of the battle have been encompassed by the new boundary.
- Designation of the expanded National Historic Landmark property has the potential to increase public awareness of the Monocacy Battlefield, particularly parts that were previously not encompassed by the NHL boundary or the national battlefield. Visitation to and appreciation of Monocacy National Battlefield is anticipated to increase, and an emerging friends group, the Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation, is already engaged in care and preservation of the battlefield.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: None is known.

Landmarks Committee Comments:

Landmarks Committee Recommendation:

Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of 4/22/16):

Public Comments Opposing Designation (received as of 4/22/16):

Shawn and Rebecca Winpigler, Frederick, Maryland (owners)

Advisory Board Recommendation: