



War Cabin



The W. Manse George Cabin stands as a testament to the history of those who built and lived within its walls. The families associated with the cabin probably had no idea that their home would still be standing long after they all passed and would become a piece of American history.

Birth of the Cabin

In 1847, a young man named Lewis Wicker purchased 400 acres of land and built a cabin with his family on what is now Perry Field at the entrance to Shiloh National Military Park. Lewis, originally from North Carolina, married Flora Buchannan in 1824. They would have eleven children, ten of

which traveled to Shiloh. As the cabin was under construction, the family stayed either in a tent, their wagon, or a neighbor’s house. One of the first things the cabin would have witnessed was the travelers, cotton, and produce that came down the Hamburg-Savannah Road en route to the boats at Pittsburg Landing.

Life in the Cabin and War

Life in the new Wicker home saw the women of the house knitting, weaving, and sewing clothes for the family to wear, while the men hunted and fished so the family would have meat. There was nearly no end to the work to be done; jobs included weeding gardens, hoeing corn, gathering food, cooking, making soap, and churning butter. The children often worked with the adults on these chores, they also played games like tag and blind man’s bluff. However, a storm was brewing in the United States that would come literally to the doorstep of the Wicker cabin.

Following Lincoln’s election on November 7, 1860, the nation plunged headlong into secession and all out war. But, it wasn’t until March 1862, when steamboats began landing troops of General

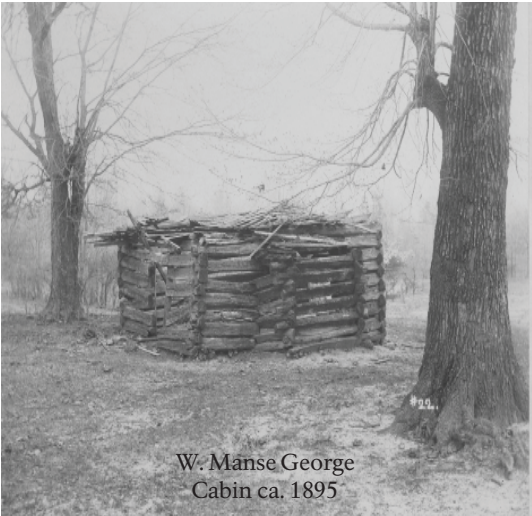
Grant’s Army of the Tennessee, that the war came to the Wicker cabin.

Sometime before the battle of Shiloh, the Wicker’s were found hiding in Owl Creek by Confederate soldiers. A man named Dennis Green helped the family find their way through the lines to safety before the fighting erupted. The cabin itself did not witness as much fighting as buildings on other parts of the battlefield. But, it definitely saw action the night of April 6th, as parts of the shattered Union army, mostly from William T. Sherman’s Fifth Division, formed their last line of defense and bivouacked in Perry Field.

William Manse George

Following the battle of Shiloh, the Wicker family did not return to their old cabin. Lewis had died before the war, and widow Wicker was living in another part of Shiloh at the time. One of the Wicker son’s, Alvis, more than likely sold the cabin to William Manse George, whose own house in the Peach Orchard area of the battlefield was destroyed in the fighting. George would take the cabin apart and rebuild it on his property, where the cabin still stands today.

The George family would reside in the old cabin until 1871. Over the next two decades, ownership of the cabin and the included land was held by four people, including John Wicker, a grandson of Lewis and Flora. However, by the time Shiloh National Military Park was established in 1894, the cabin was in a state of ruin and unfit to live in.



W. Manse George Cabin ca. 1895

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## Renovation and Preservation

The first major renovation finally took place in the 1930s to restore the old cabin back to its former glory. Many of the logs used were those that were originally used to build the cabin, though some logs had to be removed because of decay.

Over the next seven decades, the cabin would witness the erection of monuments and memorials by the various states whose regiments had fought on the battlefield. Living history demonstrations took place at the cabin to show how people in the area lived during the 19th century. And two more major renovations occurred in 1962 and 2003, respectively. Minor renovations are still performed on the cabin every one or two years, so the cabin stays preserved for future generations.



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## 2003 Preservation Efforts

