

**Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner
December 16, 2021**



Greetings BRCWRT Members and Friends - This edition of *Preservation Corner* provides information on the recent announcement of National Park Service grant awards to preserve 536 acres of American Revolutionary and Civil War battlefields.

On December 9, 2021 the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) awarded \$3,378,437 in Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants to the City of Chattanooga, Tennessee and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. These awards will protect more than 536 acres in Tennessee and Virginia associated with an American Revolutionary War and four Civil War battlefields.

ABPP's Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants empower preservation partners nationwide to acquire and preserve threatened battlefields on American soil. In addition, the program administers three other grants: Preservation Planning, Battlefield Interpretation and Battlefield Restoration Grants. This financial assistance generates community-driven stewardship of historic resources at state, tribal and local levels.

Recipient	Battlefield and Tract of Land	Acreage	Award
City of Chattanooga	Chattanooga Battlefield Reflection Riding	301.64	\$1,910,220.00
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation	Great Bridge Battlefield Mair	0.66	\$278,134.88
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation	Piedmont Battlefield Cline	3.25	\$65,123.10
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation	Port Republic Battlefield Edwards	107.35	\$816,318.23
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation	Tom's Brook Battlefield Morris	123.66	\$308,641.72
	Total:	536.56	\$3,378,437.93

"Hallowed Ground" at the Battle of Piedmont

Recipient: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Award Amount: \$65,123.10

Acreage: 3.25 acres

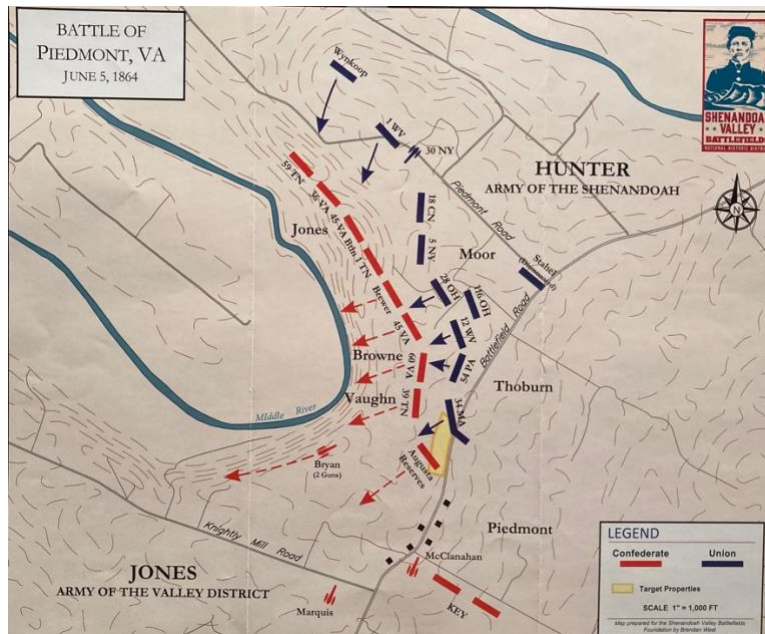
Following the May 15, 1864 Battle of New Market, Major General John C. Breckenridge and his division were recalled to rejoin General R. E. Lee and his operations to protect Richmond and Petersburg from Federal forces threatening Virginia's capital and railroad network (Grant's Overland Campaign). This left CSA Brigadier General John Imboden with 2 Brigades of Cavalry, to be reinforced with reserve forces from SW Virginia under the command of Brigadier General William E. "Grumble" Jones, to oppose Major

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General David (Black Dave) Hunter, who had replaced Major General Franz Sigel, and his Army of the Shenandoah for control of the Upper Shenandoah Valley.

The Battle of Piedmont, fought on June 5, 1864, resulted from Hunter's attempt to flank Confederate forces blocking the Federal route to Staunton, Virginia and its supply depot and key railroad assets. On June 4, General Hunter marched his army southeast from New Market to Port Republic. General Jones established a defensive line west of Port Republic near the Village of Piedmont and confidently proclaimed, "I can whip Hunter anywhere." General Hunter dispatched the Brigades of Colonel Moor and Colonel Thoburn to flank the Confederate position and after fierce hand-to-hand fighting, the Confederate line crumbled. General Jones was mortally wounded when he rushed to the front line, urging his men to hold their ground. Despite his last words, the Confederate defense collapsed, and the subsequent retreat became a rout. Hunter's forces entered Staunton the next day.



Battle of Piedmont Battle Map (courtesy of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation)

A 3-acre cornfield in the heart of the Piedmont Battlefield (see map, above) was the stage for the stand-up battle fought between the 60th Virginia and 34th Massachusetts Infantry Regiments, and is the land preserved through the awarded grant. The ABPP grant awarded to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VA DCR) will result in the preservation of the 3 acres of the Piedmont Battlefield through a conservation easement held by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. VA DCR, with its partner the Shenandoah Battlefields Foundation, plan to install interpretative signage and establish walking trails to enable public access.

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Port Republic Battlefield "Coaling" Property

Recipient: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Award Amount: \$816,318.23

Acreage: 107.35

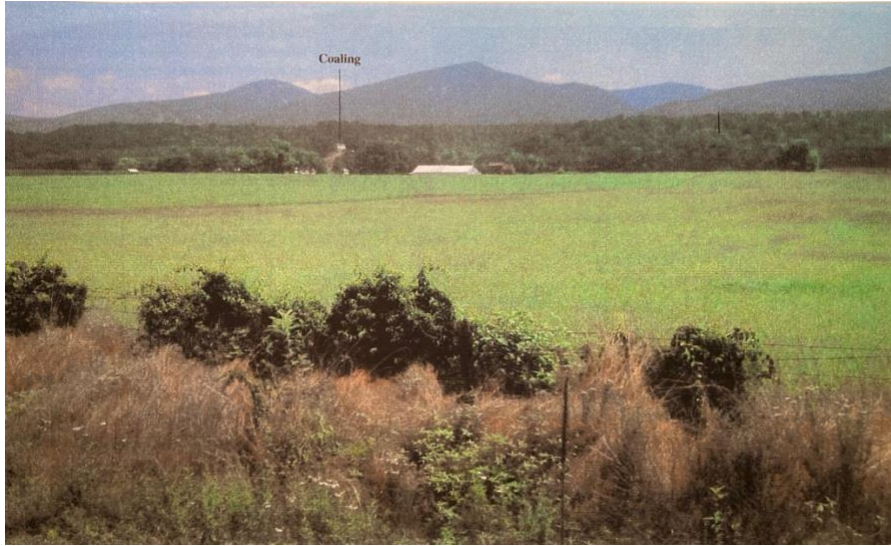
The "Coaling," a 70-foot-high prominence northeast of the town of Port Republic and near the South Fork of the Shenandoah River in Rockingham County, Virginia was once cleared for a charcoaling operation. It was the site of fierce fighting during the June 9, 1862 Battle of Port Republic. When Union General Erastus Tyler positioned artillery pieces atop the Coaling, allowing him to tear into Confederate General "Stonewall" Jackson's men. Shielded by dense woods, the 2nd VA and 4th VA INF regiments advanced upon the Union guns position at the Coaling and fought for the high ground in an intense hand-to-hand fight.



Late 1800's view of the Coaling (Blue and Gray Magazine Photo)

After being initially repulsed, Confederate reinforcements from Taylor's Louisiana Brigade charged the Coaling again, this time taking it. With the Federal artillery position firmly in Confederate hands, Tyler's line collapsed and withdrew. The Confederate victory at Port Republic capped Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign, enabling Jackson and his army to move east in support of Robert E. Lee's defense of Richmond.

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The Coaling viewed from near the South Fork of the Shenandoah River (photo courtesy of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation)

With the Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant from the ABPP, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, in partnership with the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF), will acquire the Coaling's 107 acres which had been planned for residential development. Subdivided into twelve residential parcels, the integrity of this historic landscape would have been destroyed had it not been saved from the proposed development. SVBF plans to construct walking trails with interpretive signage for public access. The property will be protected with a perpetual conservation easement held by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources.

Tom's Brook Battlefield Property

Recipient: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Award Amount: \$308,641.72

Acreage: 123.66

Following Federal victories at Winchester (September 19, 1864) and Fishers Hill (September 22, 1864), General Phil Sheridan initiated the phase of his 1864 Valley Campaign to destroy, burn and collect material resources (a.k.a. "The Burning") as he retrograded down the Shenandoah Valley toward Winchester. As this phase of Sheridan's campaign began, led primarily by the Cavalry Divisions of George Custer and Wesley Merritt, Confederate General Jubal Early ordered his cavalry "to pursue the enemy, to harass him, and to ascertain his purposes." Early's cavalry forces consisted of Major General Lunsford Lomax's Division (2 Brigades and a Horse Artillery Battery) and Fitzhugh Lee's Division

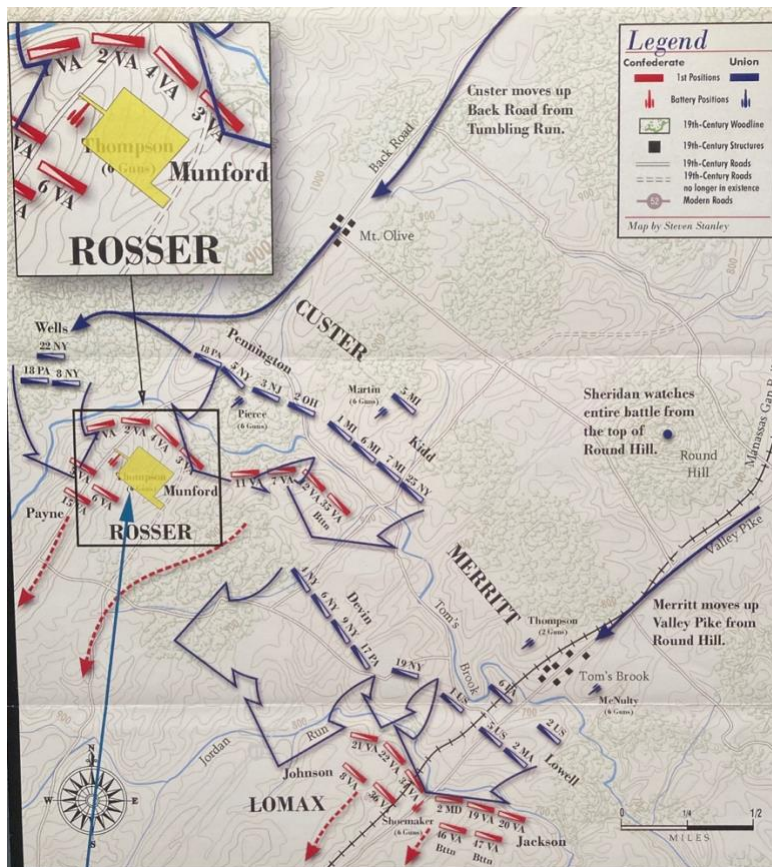
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commanded by Brigadier General Thomas Rosser (3 Brigades and 3 Horse Artillery Batteries), including Rosser's own Laurel Brigade composed of units and men from the Shenandoah Valley.

On October 9, 1864, the rolling and hilly terrain along Tom's Brook in Shenandoah County was the backdrop for a decisive cavalry battle between the Divisions of Lomax and Merritt along the Valley Turnpike and the Divisions of Rosser and Custer along the Back Road. The Battle of Tom's Brook resulted in the complete rout of the Confederate Cavalry. Both Rosser and Lomax were flanked by federal cavalry, and their resultant rapid retreat became known as the "Woodstock Races." Looking to deliver a knockout blow, Custer and Merritt pursued the Confederates south for almost 20 miles to Mount Jackson.

Now a cattle farm, this 123-acre tract (see map, below) was Rosser's main defensive line during the battle and provides the perfect vantage point to interpret the battle.



Battle of Tom's Brook Map (courtesy of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation)

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Thanks to the ABPP Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and its partner, the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, will protect this property with a perpetual conservation easement. Their plan is to work with the landowner to install a parking area, interpretive signage and walking trails to allow for public access.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of battlefield preservation and of BRCWRT's preservation actions and activities. Stay strong, stay safe and stay healthy in 2022!

Blake Myers, BRCWRT Preservation Chair