



October 8, 2024

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Historic Preservation Commission

**VIA:** Thomas Gross, Supervisor, Historic Preservation Section ~~TWG~~  
Kacy Rohn, HPC Liaison, Historic Preservation Section, ~~KRR~~

**FROM:** Amelia Chisholm, Archeology Planner II, Historic Preservation Section ~~AGC~~

**SUBJECT:** **Staff Recommendation on Bladensburg Battlefield National Register Nomination**

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission forward a recommendation of approval to the County Executive for the nomination of the Bladensburg Battlefield to the National Register of Historic Places, based on National Register Criteria A and B.

## **PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND**

In 2011, the Maryland State Highway Administration (MD SHA) was awarded a National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program Grant to “Oversee and manage a National Register Nomination, preliminary Management Plan, and additional archeological survey for Bladensburg Battlefield.” This National Register nomination is a product of that process (Attachment 1).

The Prince George’s County Historic Preservation Commission, as a Certified Local Government (CLG), plays a role in the National Register of Historic Places nomination and amendment process by providing recommendations for or against National Register listing of properties within its jurisdiction. The HPC’s recommendation should be based on whether the nominated site meets the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (Attachment 2).

The Historic Preservation Commission’s recommendation will be forwarded to the County Executive for her concurrence or disagreement. The nomination was already reviewed and supported by the Governor’s Consulting Committee on the National Register (GCC) on October 1, 2024. Therefore, should either the HPC or County Executive recommend nomination, the nomination will be forwarded to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

## **SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

The Bladensburg Battlefield is in Prince George’s County and the District of Columbia, extending from the town of Bladensburg southwest into Washington D.C.

The nominated area encompasses 224.52 acres and includes four contributing buildings, seven contributing sites, and one contributing object. Within the boundaries of the nominated area there are seven Prince George’s County Historic Sites and one Historic Resource. Four of the County Historic Sites are also listed on the National Register: Bostwick (Historic Site 69-005-09) was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places on August 19, 1975; Hilleary-Magruder House (Historic Site 69-005-07) was individually listed on July 20, 1978; Market Master’s House (Historic Site 69-005-08) was

individually listed on March 29, 1990; and the George Washington House (Historic Site 69-005-02) was individually listed on August 7, 1974. The other Prince George's County Historic Sites and Resources within the boundary of the proposed Bladensburg Battlefield site are the Peace Cross (Historic Site 69-005-16), Rural Cottage at the Highlands (Historic Site 68-096-20), Dueling Grounds (Historic Site 68-014), and Fort Lincoln Cemetery (Historic Resource 68-015).

## **SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Bladensburg Battlefield is nationally significant under Criterion A for its association with a seminal battle of the War of 1812. The Battlefield is nationally significant under Criterion B for the role of Commodore Joshua Barney and for Charles Ball, an African American who escaped slavery to fight for his country. The significance of the battlefield under Criterion D remains undetermined. The period of significance is defined as August 24 through August 31, 1814, the date of the battle and the week following.

Under Criterion A, the Bladensburg Battlefield is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The battle had profound implications for the War of 1812 and development of the newly formed American nation. In the short term, the American defeat at Bladensburg galvanized the citizenry to successfully defend Baltimore and Fort McHenry. In the long term, the humiliating American defeat prompted changes to American defense policy that altered military preparation and development of the nation's infrastructure throughout the nineteenth century. The War of 1812 forged a new American identity, creating a unified nation for the first time. Improvements to the transportation and banking systems came directly from lessons learned during the war.

Under Criterion B, the battlefield is associated with the life of Commodore Joshua Barney and his defense of the Third American line. Barney was prominent in the foundation and early development of the U.S. Navy. The heroic defense by Barney and his troops were the only significant American resistance during the battle. The battlefield is also associated with the life of Charles Ball, a free African American who escaped slavery, fought for his country as a member of the Chesapeake Flotilla, was re-enslaved and escaped again to freedom. Charles Ball's story serves as an important lesson today about service to the country, slavery, and the indomitable spirit to gain freedom.

Under Criterion D, the eligibility of the battlefield is undetermined. Generally, the battlefield has been impacted by commercial and residential development. However, archeological investigations point out the possibility that the battlefield may be able to provide information important in history, even given the generally high degree of commercial and residential development in the region. Archeological investigations show that preserved ground surfaces are present scattered throughout the battlefield. Additional preserved surfaces, and possibly archaeological features including graves, may be present under places such as fill deposits and along the waterways. The overall landscape retains many important landscape elements associated with the battle.

## **DETAILED HISTORIC CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & SIGNIFICANCE**

For further details on the historic context, locational data and significance of the nominated areas, please refer to the sections below. This information is drawn from the nomination form prepared by MD SHA.

### **HISTORIC CONTEXT**

By the early nineteenth century, the American merchant fleet was the third largest in the world behind France and England. The British embargos enacted during the Napoleonic Wars negatively impacted

American trade. Additionally, between 1793 and 1812, over 6,000 American seamen were impressed into the British Navy. The illegal military conscription of Americans enraged American citizens and escalated tensions with Great Britain. The United States also desired a free hand in expanding its territories, including areas disputed with Great Britain. On June 18, 1812, President James Madison signed a declaration of war against Great Britain.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay were national centers of settlement, commerce, and government. The British Chesapeake Campaign reflected the region's strategic importance, and placed Maryland at the core of national events; Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay were a central theatre of the war. The Battle of Bladensburg and the burning of Washington marked a shift in the war.

The Battle of Bladensburg took place in Maryland and the District of Columbia on August 24, 1814. The opposing forces, composed of 4,020 British troops under Major General Robert Ross and 5,920 American troops under Brigadier General William Winder, engaged each other in the early afternoon at a crossing over the East Branch of the Potomac River, now called the Anacostia. American forces were positioned on a series of hills adjacent to Bladensburg Road, along which the British advanced. The battle lasted only a few hours, during which time the British troops drove Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia militia forces from the field. Official accounts report 64 British, and 26 Americans killed. Following the engagement, the British forces marched on Washington, where they burned the United States Treasury, the President's Mansion, and the Capitol building. Confusion, poor training, indecisive leadership, and an uncertain chain of command hindered American forces on the day of the battle. This was in sharp contrast to the experienced British troops who overcame serious battlefield challenges—most notably the crossing the Anacostia River under intense artillery fire.

The period of significance is defined as August 24 through August 31, 1814, the day of the battle and the following week when the wounded were attended, the battlefield was secured, abandoned weapons were collected, and casualties were buried. Contemporary descriptions of the battlefield landscape indicate the presence of mixed woodlots, open fields, and farmsteads. The battlefield continued to be used for agricultural purposes in the nineteenth century, but twentieth century suburban development, and later, commercial development, expanded into the battlefield.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The nomination includes three discontinuous areas totaling approximately 224.52 acres.

Area 1, the eastern part of the battlefield, is situated in the town of Bladensburg. Four surviving eighteenth century buildings in town were utilized during the battle and are considered contributing resources. British troops marched by the Hilleary-Magruder House (69-005-07) and the Market Master's House (69-005-08), and both were used as cover according to statements by George Gleig, a British officer who participated in the battle. Gleig mentioned several structures in Bladensburg that afforded a view of the Anacostia River were used for cover after American artillery fire commenced. In 1814, one of the properties was occupied by a British agent named Col. Thomas Barclay. Barclay was the British Commissary for the care and exchange of prisoners of war and was in residence at the time of the battle.

Area 2, the central portion of the battlefield, straddles the Anacostia River. It includes undeveloped woodland, river floodplain, recreation fields owned by the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and the town of Cottage City. Portions of Area 2 include intact floodplain topography and viewsheds of the Anacostia River and areas where British troops advanced. Contributing resources within Area 2 are associated with the no longer extant Ross's Tavern (Indian Queen Tavern),

where Joshua Barney was taken immediately after the battle. British artillery and Congreve rocket batteries were initially established in the central portion of the battlefield, which came under fire from American positions.

Area 3, the southwestern portion of the battlefield, straddles the District Line and was part of Civil War-era Fort Lincoln, which was developed as a cemetery in the early twentieth century. Within the cemetery, there is one contributing structure, a ca. 1765 springhouse, which was extant during the battle. The remaining headstone, markers, and statues are not contributing resources. Archeological testing within Area 3 suggests that portions of the historic battlefield may be able to provide information important in history, even given commercial and residential development. These investigations uncovered the remains of a mid-nineteenth century barn which has been identified as the previous location of Barney's battery of 18-pounder cannons. Excavations by the DC Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) have potentially identified archeological deposits on the 1814-era Bladensburg Turnpike approximately two feet under current road grade.

## DETAILED SIGNIFICANCE

The Bladensburg Battlefield meets National Register Criteria A and B. It is significant under the themes of *Military* and *Archeology Historic/Non-Aboriginal* and is associated with significant people including Commodore Joshua Barney and Charles Ball. Bladensburg Battlefield has a period of significance extending from August 24 to August 31, 1814, including the date of the battle and the subsequent week when casualties were buried, the battlefield was secured, abandoned weapons were collected, and the wounded were attended by both British and American troops. Several archeological resources were evaluated as part of this National Register nomination, however the eligibility of the site under Criteria D is undetermined.

Criterion A: Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

*Military*: The Battle of Bladensburg was one of several seminal battles in the War of 1812, and as part of the British Chesapeake Campaign can be viewed as an initial action leading to the Battle of Baltimore one month later. Bladensburg was the only time in American history that a sitting United States President was present on a battlefield, and the only time that the nation's capital was invaded by a foreign power.

The War of 1812 instilled a new sense of national identity in the public, who now saw themselves as "Americans" rather than Marylanders or Virginians, etc. The defeat at Bladensburg and the burning of Washington contributed to this new identity. Nationally, the battle demonstrated the limited capabilities provided by the state militia system. The Battle of Bladensburg made it clear that a strong regular army in combination with a sizable navy and coastal defense system was needed, shaping American defense strategies for years to come.

Improvements to transportation and banking systems also came directly from lessons learned during the War of 1812. Beforehand the country had been economically dependent on Great Britain. Wartime banking, trade, and defense legislation developed a measure of economic independence heretofore absent. Internal infrastructure improvements, such as the National Road and numerous canal projects, were initiated based on transportation shortcomings revealed by the war. Banking improvements were made to facilitate the funding of government initiatives.

*Archeology Historic/Non-Aboriginal*: Archeological investigations point out the possibility that the battlefield may be able to provide information important about the history of the Battle of Bladensburg,



even given the generally high degree of commercial and residential development in the region. Archeological investigations show that preserved ground surfaces are present scattered throughout the battlefield. Additional preserved surfaces, and possibly archaeological features including graves, may be present in places under fill. Intact, stratified soils containing robust assemblages of eighteenth and nineteenth century artifacts have been identified at several sites. Further archeological investigations have potentially identified the location of Barney's artillery battery and Miller's Marines. The overall landscape retains many important landscape elements associated with the battle. However, under Criterion D, the eligibility of the battlefield is undetermined.

Criterion B: Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

*Commodore Joshua Barney*: Under Criterion B, the battlefield is associated with the life of Commodore Joshua Barney and his defense of the Third American line. Barney and his troops repulsed a series of advances by veteran British troops, then drove them back with counter charges. Their heroic resistance saved the Battle of Bladensburg from being an unqualified American disgrace.

Joshua Barney was a Revolutionary War Naval veteran who was noted for his gallant service aboard the American naval vessels *Hornet*, *Wasp* and *Andrea Doria*. He was taken prisoner and exchanged several times. In 1779, he was imprisoned at Old Mill Prison in Plymouth, England, but escaped two years later and was put in command of the ship *Hyder Ally*. While in command of that vessel, Barney captured the *HMS General Monk*. After the Revolution, he served in the French Navy and was given command of a squadron with the rank of Commodore. He successfully captained the privateer *Rossie* in the early years of the War of 1812. During the War of 1812, to delay the British incursions of the Chesapeake Bay, he devised a plan to assemble a flotilla of heavily armed barges or row-galleys, which was accepted by the Navy. At the Battle of Bladensburg in 1814, he and his Flotillamen valiantly defended the American Third Line during several assaults before the British broke through, marched on Washington DC, and subsequently burned the capital.

*Charles Ball*: The battlefield is also associated with the life of Charles Ball, an African American freedman who escaped slavery, fought for his country as a member of the Chesapeake Flotilla, was re-enslaved, and escaped again to freedom. Charles Ball's 1858 narrative, *Fifty Years in Chains, or, The Life of an American Slave*, is the story of his enslavement, escape, his life as a freedman, and his military service to the country that enslaved him. African Americans who served in the U.S. military in the War of 1812 were not given freedom for their service. Many changed their names to avoid enslavement after the war, and it is likely that Charles Ball is a pseudonym, as Ball's narrative was published when federal fugitive slave laws were still in force, and he was a fugitive at the time.

U.S. policy forbade recruitment of African American sailors, but a chronic shortage of manpower relaxed this prohibition. In 1813, at least fifteen percent of American sailors were black. It is likely that the Chesapeake Flotilla contained an even higher number of freedmen and freedom seekers. The British command also appreciated their service, and British Vice-Admiral Cochrane ordered Admiral Cockburn to form the Colonial Marines, fighting units made up of refugee enslaved African Americans. In April 1814, Cochrane made the British position on recruitment of enslaved African Americans official, stating that African Americans who wished to leave the United States should be received on board British ships and have the choice of serving in the British military or being sent as free settlers to British colonies.

The War of 1812 resulted in over 4,000 people freed from slavery, the largest American emancipation until the Civil War. Three companies of British Colonial Marines were formed, and entire families made their way by canoe to the British fleet as they arrived in the Chesapeake in May of 1813. Once on board, they were on British soil and not subject to American law. Charles Ball had the choice to join the British

forces as so many other enslaved African Americans did to gain their freedom, but Ball already considered himself a free man, and he instead chose to serve in the Chesapeake Flotilla under Commodore Joshua Barney as a seaman and cook. After Barney ordered the flotilla sunk to keep the boats out of the hands of the invading British, Ball marched to Bladensburg with Barney and served in one of the artillery crews.

**Attachments:**

- (1) Bladensburg Battlefield National Register Nomination
- (2) NR-Criteria for Evaluation
- (3) Effects of Listing Maryland Properties

c: Bladensburg Battlefield National Register Nomination File (68-134)

*Municipalities:*

Mayor Monica Casañas  
Town of Colmar Manor  
3701 Lawrence Street  
Colmar Manor, MD 20722

Mayor Takisha James  
Town of Bladensburg  
4229 Edmonston Road  
Bladensburg, MD 20710

Commission Chair Wanda Wheatley  
Town of Cottage City  
3820 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Cottage City, MD 20722

*Others:*

Lakisha Hull, AICP, LEED AP BD+C., Planning Director  
Katina Shoulars, Chief, Countywide Planning Division  
Jolene Ivey, District 5, Prince George's County Council

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Bladensburg Battlefield

other names/site number MIHP # PG:68-134, (archaeological site 18PR1025--MD; 51NE044--DC; MD403--NPS)

## 2. Location

street & number Bladensburg, MD and Washington DC, NE (see Continuation)

☒

not for publication

city or town Bladensburg, Cottage City, Colmar Manor, & Washington DC, NE

☒

vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Prince George's code PR zip code 20710, 20722, 20018

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 2 Page 1

Bladensburg Battlefield: MIHP # PG:68-134,  
18PR1025-MD, 51NE044-DC, MD403-NPS

Name of Property

Prince George's County, MD  
and NE Washington, DC

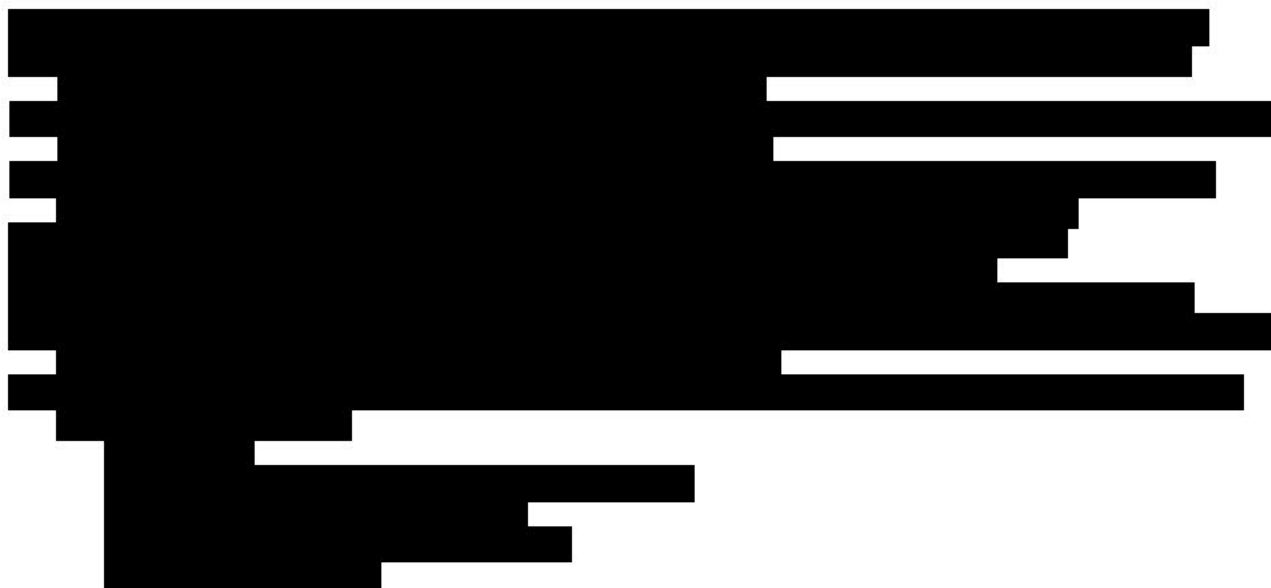
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

### 2. Location

Street & number:

In Bladensburg, MD



In Washington DC:



Bladensburg Battlefield: MIHP No. PG:68-134,  
18PR1025 (MD), 51NE044 (DC), MD403 (NPS)  
Name of Property

Prince George's County, MD  
and NE Washington, DC  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	5	buildings
7		sites
1	2	structures
	2	objects
12	9	<b>Total</b>

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Four (4)

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Defense (battle site)

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Funerary (cemetery, mortuary, graves/burials)

Recreation and Culture (outdoor recreation, sports facility, monument/marker)

Landscape (natural feature)

Transportation (road related – vehicular)

Domestic (single dwelling)

Commerce/Trade (warehouse, restaurant, specialty store, business)

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: N/A

walls:

roof:

other:



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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

### Summary Paragraph

The Bladensburg Battlefield is located in Prince George's County, Maryland and the District of Columbia, [REDACTED] the town of Bladensburg, across the Anacostia River, and southwest into Washington DC. The battlefield is significant under Criterion A as the location of an important War of 1812 battle that shaped the early development of the United States and its military in the following years. The battlefield is significant under Criterion B for its association with two significant figures in American history: Commodore Joshua Barney, who was prominent in the foundation and early development of the U.S. Navy, and Charles Ball, an African-American who escaped enslavement and authored a widely published autobiography. The battlefield's significance under Criterion D is not determined. Important terrain features relevant to the battle remain intact. The period of significance is defined as August 24 through 31, 1814, the day of the battle and the following week. The nomination includes three discontinuous areas totaling approximately 224.52 acres (Map 1). The east nominated area (Discontinuous Area 1) is within the town of Bladensburg (Map 2). The central nominated area (Discontinuous Area 2) straddles the Anacostia River, including the river crossing and terrain west of the river (Map 3). The southwest nominated area (Discontinuous Area 3) straddles the District Line (Map 4).

### General Description

The Bladensburg Battlefield is located in Prince George's County, Maryland and the District of Columbia, [REDACTED] extending from the town of Bladensburg, across the Anacostia River and southwest into Washington DC. The battlefield is significant under Criterion A as the location of an important War of 1812 battle that shaped the early development of the United States and its military in the following years. The battlefield is significant under Criterion B for its association with two significant figures in American history: Commodore Joshua Barney, who was prominent in the formation and early development of the U.S. Navy, and Charles Ball, an African-American who escaped enslavement and authored a widely published autobiography. The battlefield's significance under Criterion D is not determined.

The period of significance is defined as August 24 through August 31, 1814, the day of the battle and the following week when the wounded were attended, the battlefield was secured, abandoned weapons were collected, and casualties were buried. Contemporary descriptions of the battlefield landscape indicate the presence of mixed woodlots, open fields, and farmsteads. The battlefield continued to be used for agricultural purposes in the nineteenth century, but twentieth century suburban development, and later, commercial development, expanded into the battlefield.

Despite widespread development, important terrain features relevant to the battle remain intact: [REDACTED], Prospect Heights [REDACTED], portions of Dueling Creek, and the Anacostia River floodplain. Several modern roads follow the routes of the nineteenth-century roads. Troop positions and troop movements across the battlefield largely followed the historic roadways. Significant troop positions and avenues of attack are included within the proposed battlefield boundaries, and the locations of troop positions and movements are considered contributing elements of the battlefield. The nomination includes three discontinuous areas totaling approximately 224.52 acres (Map 1).

American political and military leaders believed that if the British attacked Washington, they would enter the city by one of three routes—the Lower Bridge, near the Washington Navy Yard; the Upper Bridge, also called Stoddert's Bridge, along present Benning Road; or the crossing at Bladensburg. Because the Lower and Upper Bridges were easily defended, and as the river at Bladensburg was fordable, the British chose to cross at the town of Bladensburg.<sup>1</sup>

Upon arriving in Bladensburg, the battle occurred predominantly west of the Anacostia River because the Americans selected a series of hills west of the river as the location of their defensive lines. The defining features of the Bladensburg Battlefield landscape are roadways that are located on or near the historic roadbeds extant at the time of the battle, the bridge crossing over the Anacostia River [REDACTED], the Anacostia River floodplain, and several topographic features important during the battle. Overlays of historic maps on USGS

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 112.



Bladensburg Battlefield: MIHP No. PG:68-134,  
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topographic quadrangles from the late nineteenth century onward have aided in correlating early nineteenth century and modern roadways (Map 4). Historical descriptions and maps indicate that the principal roads on which troops advanced and retreated are largely intact. The modern roadways themselves are not included in the nomination due to the loss of integrity caused by modern improvements. However, the road alignments are the locations of significant troop positions and avenues of attack. The locations of American defenses and British troop movements are included within the proposed battlefield boundaries, and are considered to be contributing elements to the battlefield:

- Bladensburg Road and the bridge crossing of the Anacostia River: Advance of the British troops; position of the First American Line [redacted] Wadsworth's two 6-pound guns [redacted] and the Second American Line [redacted] position of Barney's two 18-pound guns [redacted] and the position of Miller's three 12-pounders and the U.S. Marines [redacted]
- Road to Georgetown [redacted] Advance of British troops and retreat of the American First and Second Lines

Historical accounts and contemporary maps indicate that the landscape of the battlefield area in the first decade of the nineteenth century included the town of Bladensburg, farmsteads with dwellings and associated outbuildings, open fields, pastures, woodlots, and the floodplain of the Anacostia River (Map 5). Contemporary accounts also referenced a mill and a brick kiln. The layout of the landscape has changed dramatically since 1814. However, large areas of terrain remained unaltered [redacted]

As defined in this nomination, the Bladensburg Battlefield is located on parcels in both Prince George's County, Maryland and the District of Columbia. There are three discontinuous areas forming the nominated portions of the battlefield. The nominated areas are discontinuous due to the loss of integrity of the majority of the battlefield site. Only the areas retaining important topographic elements of the battle or providing viewsheds similar to those visible during the battle are included in this nomination. These three areas retain integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association with the battle.

The eastern part of the battlefield is situated in the town of Bladensburg. It includes three NRHP listed structures that were extant at the time of the battle, and were associated with the battle in some way. [redacted]

The central portion of the battlefield is situated [redacted] on either side of the Anacostia River. This land consists of various tracts, [redacted]. During the battle, historical accounts suggest that this area included the British Congreve rocket firing positions, and the location of the British crossing of the Anacostia River, and the area to the west of the Anacostia included part of the American First Line (Map 6). At the time of the battle, this area contained part of the river floodplain and the first rise above the river bed. There was a wooded thicket along the western edge of the river that provided cover for the American riflemen. Behind the thicket were open fields intersected by fences. The main part of the American First Line was in these open fields behind hastily constructed earthworks.<sup>2</sup> The southwestern most part of this area is now occupied by the town of Cottage City. The nominated area is situated on a gentle slope that rises from the river floodplain. It currently has a mixture of open land, wooded areas, and an early twentieth century development. A tennis court, ball field, recreation court, trail system, gazebo, playground, and a small monument are also present. These modern features are considered to be non-contributing elements. Although channelization of the Anacostia River shifted its course, the area northeast of the bridge retains the same overall appearance of 1814. A prominent sandbar within the bend of the river north of the bridge is suggestive of the shallow depths that provided the ability to ford the river at this point (Photograph 8). Additionally, [redacted] is roughly in the same location as the one present in 1814.<sup>3</sup> The low hills around 40th Avenue preserve the terrain on which the Second American Line was established. The Balloon Gardens, located east of the river, is near the location of the

<sup>2</sup> George Gleig, *A Narrative of the Campaigns of the British Army: at Washington, Baltimore, and New Orleans Under Generals Ross, Pakenham, & Lambert, in the Years 1814 and 1815; with some Account of the Countries Visited, by an Officer who Served in the Expedition*, (Philadelphia: M. Carey & Sons, 1821), 119-120.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 112. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.



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British Congreve rocket battery (Photograph 9).<sup>4</sup> With the exception of modern roadways, the viewshed of the Anacostia River from this location resembles that of the early nineteenth century (Photograph 10).

The southwest portion of the battlefield is [REDACTED] and a partially wooded area just west of the District Line. It is the location of the advance of the British forces on the American Third Line (Maps 7 and 8). [REDACTED] This part of the battlefield was the location of the most intense fighting, as British troops were repulsed successively by Barney's Flotillamen and Miller's Marines. The British were ultimately able to flank Miller's right and dislodge American militia under Lieutenant Colonel William Beall from their commanding position atop Veitch's Hill. At the time of the battle, this area contained agricultural fields on the property of John Veitch, interspersed with wooded parcels.

### East Nominated Area

The east nominated area (Discontiguous Area 1) is within the town of Bladensburg (Map 2), much of which was redeveloped in the early twentieth century. [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] All four structures were extant at the time of the battle, and each was associated with the battle according to project research<sup>5</sup> and local tradition. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is said to have been used as a field hospital by the British. British troops marched past both the Magruder House and the Market Masters House, and likely used the structures for cover, in accordance with statements by George Gleig, a British officer who participated in the battle,<sup>7</sup> that a number of structures in the town that afforded a view of the Anacostia River bridge and American positions were utilized in this way after American artillery fire commenced.

[REDACTED] NRHP), and in addition to the structure and expansive front yard, contains agricultural buildings and undeveloped land behind the structure. It thus provides a setting evocative of that present at the time of the battle. In 1814, a British Agent by the name of Col. Thomas Barclay resided [REDACTED]. Barclay was the British Commissary for the care and exchange of prisoners of war, and was in residence at the time of the battle. British Major General Robert Ross wrote that "The Agent

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Ormsby, *Sketch of the action fought near Bladensburg [sic], August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1814*. Thos. Ormsby, Weedon [barracks], July 19<sup>th</sup> 1816. Electronic version, Library of Congress American Memory Collection, retrieve November 2012 from: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?gmd:7:/temp/~ammem\\_66ac::@@@mdb=gmd.klpmap.ww2map](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?gmd:7:/temp/~ammem_66ac::@@@mdb=gmd.klpmap.ww2map).

<sup>5</sup> Hughes, Laura H., and others, "Historical Research Report for the Market Master's House, Magruder House, and the George Washington House (Report prepared for MD SHA, October 2009). On file, MD State Highway Administration, Baltimore.

<sup>6</sup> Cowl, Heather, and others, "Bladensburg Archeological Investigations: Magruder House (18PR982), Market Master House (18PR983), and Indian Queen Tavern Site (18PR96)." (Report prepared for MD SHA, 2011). On file, MD State Highway Administration, Baltimore.

<sup>7</sup> George Gleig, *A Narrative of the Campaigns of the British Army: at Washington, Baltimore, and New Orleans Under Generals Ross, Pakenham, & Lambert, in the Years 1814 and 1815; with some Account of the Countries Visited, by an Officer who Served in the Expedition*, (Philadelphia: M. Carey & Sons, 1821), 119-120.



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for British Prisoners of War very fortunately residing at Bladensburg I have recommended the wounded Officers and Men to his particular attention and trust to his being able to effect their exchange when sufficiently recovered."<sup>8</sup>).

#### Discontiguous Area 1

	Resource Type	Contributing	Non-contributing
[REDACTED]	Building	1	
[REDACTED]	Building	1	

#### **Central Nominated Area**

The central nominated area (Discontiguous Area 2) straddles the Anacostia River, [REDACTED] (Map 3) (Photograph 7). It encompasses part of [REDACTED] and includes undeveloped woodland, river floodplain, recreation fields owned by the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and the community of Cottage City. [REDACTED] on the east bank of the Anacostia served as a dwelling and store, and is associated with the no longer extant Ross's Tavern (Indian Queen Tavern), where Joshua Barney was taken immediately after the battle. British artillery and Congreve rocket batteries were initially established near [REDACTED], which came under fire from American positions.<sup>9</sup> [REDACTED] is considered to be contributing resources to the battlefield.

[REDACTED] e [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] considered contributing sites due to the intact topography of the floodplain and the viewsheds provided of the Anacostia River and the Bladensburg Road Bridge, where British troops crossed. Recreation fields, courts, play equipment, and trails of [REDACTED] are non-historic features within the boundary of the historic site. Because they do not impede the viewshed of the Anacostia River floodplain, they have not been included in the resource count. Two commemorative monuments exist within the [REDACTED] the Peace Cross is a prominent commemoration of Prince George's County soldiers who lost their lives during the First World War. [REDACTED] a new monument was dedicated August 24, 2014, to Joshua Barney, the Flotillamen, and US Marines who fought at Bladensburg during the War of 1812. This bronze relief sculpture was designed by prominent local artist Joanna Blake. These two monuments are considered to be non-contributing objects.

M-NCPPC archeologists report that around 1990, utility excavations near the Peace Cross uncovered the remains of what appear to be bulkheads associated with the town's public landing, now buried under made land. A summary of the contributing and non-contributing resources within Discontiguous Area 2 is as follows:

Twentieth century structures within the Central Nominated Area, including commercial structures along Baltimore Avenue, commemorative monuments, Bladensburg Road and Bridge No. 16008, recreational facilities in Anacostia River Park, and early twentieth century residences within the community of Cottage City (which are not individually enumerated in this nomination), are considered non-contributing resources.

#### Discontiguous Area 2

	Resource Type	Contributing	Non-contributing
[REDACTED]	Building	1	
[REDACTED]	Site	1	
[REDACTED]	Site	1	
Peace Cross	Object		1
"Undaunted" War of 1812 Monument	Object		1
SHA Bridge No. 16008	Structure		1
Residences in Cottage City	Buildings		1

(See Continuation Sheets for Section 7)

<sup>8</sup> Ralph Eshelman, *A Travel Guide to the War of 1812 in the Chesapeake*, 49-50

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 50



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## Southwest Nominated Area

The southwest nominated area (Discontiguous Area 3) straddling the District Line was part of Civil War-era Fort Lincoln and was developed as a cemetery in the early twentieth century (Map 4). It is now occupied predominantly by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is considered to be a contributing site. Within the cemetery, there is one contributing structure, the ca. 1765 springhouse, which was extant during the battle. Due to their scale, cemetery objects and structures, including headstones, markers, monuments and statues, were not counted for the purposes of this nomination. Cemetery buildings including the Mausoleum and Little Chapel, the Administrative Building, and the Mortuary are considered non-contributing resources. The remains of Battery Jameson, part of Fort Lincoln (1862), is a non-contributing structure for the purposes of this nomination.

East of the cemetery, [REDACTED] an important topographic feature during the battle, though the creek itself has been channelized. Preliminary archeological testing shows that both parks contain limited areas of intact nineteenth-century deposits.<sup>18</sup>

[REDACTED] was determined eligible for listing on the NRHP on August 24, 1998 under Criterion A based on the notoriety of the many duels fought there. British troops used the deep, wooded ravine as cover from Barney's artillery. [REDACTED] appear to have been impacted by grading and utility construction, but retain integrity of location and setting as a natural area in the midst of twentieth century development. Dueling Creek upstream of Bladensburg Road forms a deep, wooded ravine. A contemporary map by McKenney<sup>19</sup> indicates that this area was a broad meadow in 1814. Today's narrow valley reflects intentional fill placed within the stream valley.

[REDACTED] There are no historic standing structures within these areas, but archeological deposits relating to the battle were uncovered in 2010, indicating that these areas may have potential to yield information important in history.<sup>20</sup>

US Marines were stationed [REDACTED] A small bluff was present there [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] It includes several resources. The Springhouse, which was extant during the battlefield's period of significance as part of the Veitch farm, where

<sup>18</sup> Shawn Patch, "Archaeological Investigations of Seven Locations Associated with the Bladensburg Battlefield" (Report prepared for MD SHA, Nov 2012), 20-27,36. On file, State Highway Administration, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>19</sup> McKenney, Thomas Lorraine, Letter to Henry Banning, Esquire, by an Officer of Gen. Smith's Staff, September 10, 1814. Photocopy provided by the Enoch Pratt Library, courtesy of the Stapleton Library, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA. On file, State Highway Administration, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 77. On file, State Highway Administration, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>21</sup> "Fort Lincoln Cemetery, (Individual Property/District, Internal NR-Eligibility Review Form, prepared for Maryland Historical Trust by Traceries, 1998).



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Beall's militia and Miller's Marines fought, contributes to the historic significance of the battlefield. Civil War Battery Jameson (MIHP No. PG:68-15A), the Little Chapel (MIHP No. PG:68-15B), the Mausoleum (MIHP No. PG:68-15C), and the Administrative Building do not contribute to the significance of the battlefield, although the battery, chapel, and mausoleum were determined to contribute to Fort Lincoln Cemetery, which was determined eligible for the NRHP. Objects associated with the cemetery, including headstones, markers, and statues, are not individually enumerated in this nomination, but the cemetery site itself is considered a contributing resource, as it preserves much of the terrain significant to the British advance on the American Third Line (Photograph 11). The cemetery land was previously part of Fort Lincoln, a large fortification built in 1861 to defend the Capital during the Civil War (Map 9). A 190-foot section of Battery Jameson (a non-contributing resource) remains intact within the cemetery grounds.

In 2010 Broadbent conducted archeological investigations at [REDACTED]. Broadbent identified the foundations of a mid-nineteenth century barn constructed by Col. John C. Rives. Lossing states that Barney's battery of two 18-pounders was in the center of Bladensburg Road within a few yards of Rives' barn. Identification of the structure foundation makes it possible to precisely locate Barney's position to a spot 150 feet south of the District Line. [REDACTED] is considered to be a contributing site to the battlefield. Broadbent also identified the location of Barney's Spring [REDACTED]. The spring is on private land and could not be accessed. Its present condition and status as a contributing site is unknown. Within the median of Bladensburg Road, DC HPO archeologist Ruth Troccoli identified strata representing the 1814-era Bladensburg Turnpike about two feet below the present road grade. Buried remnants of the turnpike are considered to be contributing resources to the battlefield. Their presence indicates that deposits associated with the battle may be preserved at other locations under extant pavement.

A summary of the contributing and non-contributing resources within Discontiguous Area 3 is as follows:

## Discontiguous Area 3

	Resource Type	Contributing	Non-contributing
[REDACTED]	Site	1	
[REDACTED]	Site	1	
County Bridge over Dueling Creek	Structure		1
[REDACTED]	Site	1	
[REDACTED]	Structure	1	
Battery Jameson	Structure		1
Mausoleum	Building		1
Little Chapel	Building		1
Mortuary	Building		1
Administrative Building	Building		1
[REDACTED]	Site	1	
[REDACTED]	Site	1	

Archeology suggests that the battlefield may be able to provide information important in history, even given commercial and residential development. However, further archeological testing is required to determine the eligibility of the Battlefield under Criterion D. Broadbent's work at [REDACTED] identified the remains of Rives' barn, allowing the location of Barney's artillery battery to be accurately located on the battlefield. The discovery of artifacts related to the battle [REDACTED] reflect the positions of Miller's Marines and Flotillamen, along with their artillery battery. The identification of areas across the battlefield that contain intact, stratified, subsurface archeological deposits, shows that this urban setting

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 78.



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has preserved buried surfaces contemporary with the battle. Subsurface deposits were identified under Bladensburg Road; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] much of the natural topography from the time of the battle remains intact, especially the prominent Veitch's Hill which dominates the surrounding landscape. In 1814, this area was composed of an open field situated on the downward slope between the Veitch House, atop the hill, and [REDACTED], a creek within a wooded ravine at the bottom of the hill.<sup>24</sup> The current landscape of the cemetery features open grassy areas interspersed with cemetery-related objects and large oak trees. The openness of the terrain provides a prominent view over this portion of the battlefield toward Bladensburg Road and Dueling Creek that is similar to the viewshed at the time of the battle (Photograph 13). This area is also part of a larger topographic feature, known as Prospect Heights, which is the highest point within the study area, with an elevation of approximately 200 feet within the District of Columbia.

The creation of the cemetery in the early twentieth century inadvertently aided preservation of the site by maintaining open land and restricting relic collecting and metal detecting within the cemetery grounds. Archaeological investigations identified small areas of intact nineteenth-century deposits within the cemetery. This area was the site of some of the most intense actions of the battle, including Kramer's skirmish with the British just southwest of Dueling Creek; the repeated British attempts against Barney's artillery along Bladensburg Road, using the protection of Dueling Creek; subsequent British attempts to flank Miller's Marines and Miller's counter-attack towards Dueling Creek; and the British attack on Beall's militia atop Veitch's Hill.<sup>25</sup>

[REDACTED] comprises the northeastern boundary [REDACTED]. Portions of this creek have been channelized and therefore the creek has been altered from its nineteenth-century appearance (Photograph 14). However, the location of the creek remains the same, and the lower reaches [REDACTED] retain a natural wooded character (Photograph 15). Furthermore, an archeological survey conducted in November 2012 suggests that parts of [REDACTED] have the potential to yield intact deposits related to the battle. The survey utilized tube auger and bucket auger sampling at systematic intervals to and identify areas with intact stratigraphy. Two areas near Dueling Creek were identified as having "good soil profiles" and unaltered topography. Although both of these areas are very small, they have the potential to yield intact deposits related to the battle.<sup>26</sup>

Another section of land within the District of Columbia immediately adjacent to [REDACTED], part of Prospect Heights, was included in the nomination area as the British overran Beall's position, at the rear of Barney

<sup>23</sup> Wade Catts and Brooke Blades, "The Short Hills Battlefield," (National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, prepared for Metuchen-Edison Historical Society, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> John S. Williams, *History of the Invasion and Capture of Washington, the Events which Preceded and Followed* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1857), 363; and Michael J. Crawford, *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History*, Volume III (Naval Historical Center: 2002), 207.

<sup>25</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 112. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>26</sup> Shawn M. Patch, "Archaeological Investigations of Seven Locations Associated with the Bladensburg Battlefield" (Report prepared for MD SHA, Nov 2012), 36. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD.

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and Miller's artillery. The land northwest of [REDACTED] was also included as the position of Barney's left flank. [REDACTED], this area is a combination of wooded and open land with a gentle downward slope (Photographs 16 and 17) and was the location of Barney's battery of two 18-pounder cannon. A [REDACTED]. At the time of the battle, this area was part of a wooded slope, much as it is today.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Sir De Lacy Evans, *Sketch of the March of the British Army under Gen'l Ross from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> August 1814*, from a sketch by D. Evans, Lieutenant, 3<sup>rd</sup> Dragoons, Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General (London: Military Depot, Quarter Master General Office, Horse Guards, 1816); Electronic version, the Library of Congress American Memory Collection, retrieved November 2012: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?gmd:1:./temp/~ammem\\_66ac::@@@mdb=gmd.klpmap.ww2map](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?gmd:1:./temp/~ammem_66ac::@@@mdb=gmd.klpmap.ww2map); and James Wilkinson, "Map of Maj. Gen. Ross' route, with the British Column, from Benedict, on the Patuxent River, to the City of Washington, August 1814," in *Diagrams and Plans Illustrative of the Principal Battles and Military Affairs Treated on in Memoirs of My Own Times* (Philadelphia: Snell, 1816); available at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Military

Archeology Historic/Non-Aboriginal

### Period of Significance

August 24 to August 31, 1814

### Significant Dates

August 24, 1814: date of the battle

August 26, 1814: British troops return to battlefield

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Commodore Joshua Barney  
Charles Ball

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

### Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is defined as August 24 through August 31, 1814, the date of the battle and the following week when casualties were buried, the battlefield was secured, abandoned weapons were collected, and the wounded were attended. The battle started shortly after mid-day on August 24, and was over by the late afternoon. That evening British troops buried their officers in a single trench, probably located on what would later become the Rives property, and then marched into Washington DC. The next night, during the early hours of August 26, British troops returned to the battlefield

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on their march back to Benedict, briefly stopping to retrieve equipment and speak with wounded comrades who had been left behind. As was standard practice, the British left a small force at Bladensburg to maintain order and care for the wounded. Commodore Joshua Barney, who himself suffered a serious wound, was given charge of the wounded British and American soldiers, and organized the exchange of the British contingent left behind to secure the battlefield.<sup>10</sup> Over the days following the battle, American citizens buried the rank and file British dead in shallow graves along Bladensburg Road and collected abandoned weapons and ordinance for return to the U.S. Government and state militia units.

### Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

For the purposes of this nomination, [REDACTED] within the nominated area, which has been determined to be eligible for listing on the NRHP for its early twentieth century architecture, derives its primary significance from its association with the historic events post-dating the period of significance of the Bladensburg Battlefield.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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#### Significance Summary (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Bladensburg Battlefield is considered nationally significant under Criterion A for its association with a seminal battle of the War of 1812. The Battlefield is considered nationally significant under Criterion B for the role of Commodore Joshua Barney and for Charles Ball, an African American who escaped slavery to fight for his country. The significance of the battlefield under Criterion D remains undetermined. The period of significance is defined as August 24 through August 31, 1814, the date of the battle and the week following.

Under Criterion A, the Bladensburg Battlefield is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The battle had profound implications for the War of 1812 and development of the newly formed American nation. The impact of this calamity on the psyche of American citizens was significant, comparable to the attacks on Pearl Harbor and September 11, 2001. The defeat at Bladensburg was one of only two times that a sitting US President was present on a battlefield, and the only time that the nation's capital was invaded by a foreign power. In the short term, the defeat at Bladensburg galvanized the citizenry to successfully defend Baltimore and Fort McHenry. In the long term, the humiliating American defeat prompted changes to American defense policy that altered military preparation and development of the nation's infrastructure throughout the nineteenth century. The War of 1812 forged a new American identity, creating a unified nation for the first time. Improvements to the transportation and banking systems came directly from lessons learned during the War.<sup>11</sup>

Under Criterion B, the battlefield is associated with the productive life of Commodore Joshua Barney and his defense of the Third American line. Barney was prominent in the foundation and early development of the U.S. Navy. The heroic resistance by Barney, his Flotillamen, and U.S. Marines saved the Battle of Bladensburg from being an unqualified disgrace to American arms."<sup>12</sup> The battlefield is also associated with the productive life of Charles Ball, a free African American who escaped slavery, fought for his country as a member of the Chesapeake Flotilla, was re-enslaved and escaped again to freedom. Ball authored an autobiography first published in 1837 entitled *Slavery in the United States. A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Charles Ball, A Black Man, who lived forty years in Maryland, South Carolina and Georgia, as a slave*, which itself affected the debate over slavery. Charles Ball's story serves as an important lesson today on the subjects of service to the country, slavery, and the indomitable spirit to gain freedom.

Under Criterion D, the eligibility of the battlefield is undetermined. In general, the battlefield has been impacted by commercial and residential development. However, archeological investigations point out the possibility that the battlefield

<sup>10</sup> Crawford, Michael J. (editor), pp. 351-352. *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History, Volume III*. Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 2002

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 33. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD; and National Park Service, "Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement," (Report prepared by the Northeast Region, National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, March 2004), 15. Available online at <http://starspangled200.org/History/Pages/1814ChesapeakeCampaign.aspx>, accessed 13 November 2012.

<sup>12</sup> "Joshua Barney and the Battle of Bladensburg, War of 1812." [www.barneyfamily.org](http://www.barneyfamily.org). Accessed on May 32, 2012.



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may be able to provide information important in history, even given the generally high degree of commercial and residential development in the region. Archeological investigations show that preserved ground surfaces are present scattered throughout the battlefield. Additional preserved surfaces, and possibly archaeological features including graves, may be present under places such as fill [REDACTED] The overall landscape retains many important landscape elements associated with the battle.

### Resource History and Historic Context

The period of significance is defined as August 24 through August 31, 1814, the date of the battle and the week following. The Bladensburg Battlefield is considered nationally significant under Criteria A and B for its association with a seminal battle of the War of 1812, for Commodore Joshua Barney's role in that battle, and for the role of Charles Ball, an African American who escaped slavery. The significance of the battlefield under Criterion D remains undetermined.

Under Criterion A, the Bladensburg Battlefield is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The Battle of Bladensburg was one of several seminal battles in the War of 1812, and as part of the British Chesapeake Campaign, can be considered as the initial action leading up to the Battle of Baltimore one month later. The defeat at Bladensburg resulted in one of only two times in American history that a sitting United States President was present on a battlefield, and the only time that the nation's capital was invaded by a foreign power. The overall landscape retains many important landscape elements associated with the battle.

The battle had profound implications for the War of 1812 and development of the newly formed American nation. The impact of this calamity on the psyche of American citizens was significant, comparable to the attacks on Pearl Harbor and September 11, 2001. In the short term, the defeat at Bladensburg galvanized the citizenry to successfully defend Baltimore and Fort McHenry. Many of the same American and British troops faced one another less than one month after the defeat at Bladensburg, with vastly different results. In the long term, the humiliating American defeat pointed out the need for changes to American defense policy that altered military preparation throughout the nineteenth century. The War of 1812 also forged a new American identity that had heretofore not existed, creating a unified nation for the first time. Improvements to the transportation and banking systems also came directly from lessons learned during the War.<sup>13</sup>

Under Criterion B, the battlefield is associated with the productive life of Commodore Joshua Barney and his defense of the Third American line. Barney and his Flotillamen and U.S. Marines repulsed a series of advances by veteran British troops, then drove them back with counter charges. As one source commented "It would have been well for the honor of America if all who were present on that day had behaved with the same decision and effect as Commodore Barney and his command. Their heroic resistance saved the Battle of Bladensburg from being an unqualified disgrace to American arms."<sup>14</sup> Other properties associated with Barney's productive life include St. Leonard's Creek near the mouth of the Patuxent River where he fought a larger British fleet; Pig Point on the Patuxent River, where he scuttled the flotilla; and the Commodore Joshua Barney House (HO-41) in Elk Ridge. The nominated Bladensburg Battlefield has the strongest association with Commodore Barney's military activities, and portrays Barney's finest hour in his military service. The battlefield is also associated with the productive life of Charles Ball, a free African American who escaped slavery, fought for his country as a member of the Chesapeake Flotilla, was re-enslaved and escaped again to freedom. Ball authored a widely published 1858 autobiography *Fifty Years in Chains, or, The Life of an American Slave*, which itself had an impact on the debate over slavery. Charles Ball's story serves as an important lesson today on the subjects of service to the country, slavery, and the indomitable spirit to gain freedom. Because Ball was subject to federal fugitive slave laws, details of his story cannot be fully corroborated. Other sites associated with Ball in Maryland are not known to exist, and the Bladensburg Battlefield serves as the primary association with the productive years of Charles Ball's military career.

Under Criterion D, the eligibility of the battlefield is undetermined. In general, the battlefield has been impacted by commercial and residential development. However, archeological investigations point out the possibility that the battlefield

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 33. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD; and National Park Service, "Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement," (Report prepared by the Northeast Region, National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, March 2004), 15. Available online at <http://starspangled200.org/History/Pages/1814ChesapeakeCampaign.aspx>, accessed 13 November 2012.

<sup>14</sup> "Joshua Barney and the Battle of Bladensburg, War of 1812." [www.barneyfamily.org](http://www.barneyfamily.org). Accessed on May 32, 2012.



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may be able to provide information important in history, even given the generally high degree of commercial and residential development in the region. Broadbent's work at U.S. Reservation 520 identified the foundations of Rives barn under several feet of fill, allowing the location of Barney's artillery battery to be accurately located on the battlefield. The discovery of artifacts related to the battle [REDACTED], an undeveloped paper road, reflect the positions of Miller's Marines and Flotillamen, along with their artillery battery. The identification of several areas across the battlefield that, while developed, contain intact, stratified, subsurface archeological deposits, shows that the urban setting of the battlefield contains buried surfaces contemporary with the battle.<sup>15</sup> Subsurface archeological deposits were [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]<sup>16</sup> Intact, stratified soils containing robust assemblages of eighteenth and nineteenth century artifacts were also identified at each of the three historic standing structures [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]<sup>17</sup> Although spanning the correct time period, no artifacts relating to the battle were recovered from the town.

The archeological results show that preserved ground surfaces are present scattered throughout the battlefield. Additional preserved surfaces, and possibly archaeological features including graves, may be present under places such as fill placed [REDACTED] While a number of archaeological finds have been made to date, much of the battlefield has been impacted by commercial and residential development. Archeological discoveries recorded during the bicentennial investigations of the Bladensburg Battlefield provided better evidence of intact, subsurface archeological deposits than was anticipated. However, further archeological testing within specific locations is required to conclusively determine the eligibility of the battlefield under Criterion D.

The nominated property includes [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] However, the cemetery and associated buildings and structures have not been listed in the NRHP.

The nominated area also includes four standing historic structures previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places that are associated with the Battle of Bladensburg. [REDACTED]

(See Continuation Sheets for Section 8)

#### Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

<sup>15</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 124. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD. and NPS ABPP.

<sup>16</sup> Shawn M. Patch, "Archaeological Investigations of Seven Locations Associated with the Bladensburg Battlefield" (Report prepared for MD SHA, Nov 2012), 36. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD; Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 77. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>17</sup> Crowl, Heather, and others, "Bladensburg Archeological Investigations: Magruder House (18PR982), Market Master House (18PR983), and Indian Queen Tavern Site (18PR96)." (Report prepared for MD SHA, 2011). On file, MD State Highway Administration, Baltimore.

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The War of 1812 tested the young nation and its population.<sup>28</sup> In the words of the former Maryland Governor J. Millard Tawes, "Its historical significance lies in the fact that the young Republic, still struggling in the pain of growth, was able to repulse the first concerted attack upon its integrity. Its condition as a free and independent state thus was assured." American forces at Bladensburg were composed predominantly of militia. Due to poor training and equipment, and variable leadership, militia units were inferior to the regular US Infantry. Only a few regular troops were present at Bladensburg.<sup>29</sup> In contrast, the British troops were seasoned veterans of the battlefield, having recently defeated Napoleon Bonaparte after years of warfare in Europe. The goal of the British campaign was to destroy the capital, delivering "so great a blow to the government of a country, as well...as of the documents and records the invading army is almost sure to obtain..."<sup>30</sup> The solitary stand of the U.S. against the British Empire ultimately enhanced the country's international prestige and forced Great Britain to acknowledge the full economic and political sovereignty of its former colony. Politically, the war consolidated the emerging democracy and forged the nation into a unified whole with a new national outlook.<sup>31</sup>

**Period of Significance.**

The period of significance is defined as August 24 through August 31, 1814, the date of the battle and the week following. The Bladensburg Battlefield is considered nationally significant under Criteria A and B for its association with a seminal battle of the War of 1812, for Commodore Joshua Barney's role in that battle, and for the role of Charles Ball, an African American who escaped slavery to fight for his country. The significance of the battlefield under Criterion D remains undetermined.

**Criterion A.**

Under Criterion A, the Bladensburg Battlefield is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The Battle of Bladensburg was one of several seminal battles in the War of 1812, and as part of the British Chesapeake Campaign, can be viewed as an initial action leading to the Battle of Baltimore one month later. Bladensburg was the only time in American history that a sitting United States President was present on a battlefield, and the only time that the nation's capital was invaded by a foreign power.

The acreage encompassed in this nomination includes landscape elements that are surprisingly intact, given the extensive development of the Washington DC Metro area. The overall landscape [REDACTED] retains many important landmarks associated with the Third American Line. Portions of this area contain intact stratigraphy and artifacts related to the battle.

The battle had profound implications for the war and for the development of the newly formed American nation. The impact of this calamity on the psyche of American citizens was profound, comparable to the attacks on Pearl Harbor and September 11, 2001. In the short term, the defeat at Bladensburg galvanized the citizenry to successfully defend Baltimore and Fort McHenry. In the long term, the humiliating American defeat pointed out

<sup>28</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 33. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>29</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 33. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>30</sup> Roger Morris, *Cockburn and the British Navy in Transition: Admiral Sir George Cockburn, 1772-1853* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), 101.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 33. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

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needed changes in American defense policy that altered military preparation for the next century. The war forged a new American identity that had heretofore not existed, creating a unified nation for the first time. Improvements to the transportation and banking systems also came directly from lessons learned during the War of 1812.<sup>32</sup>

The American defeat at Bladensburg was considered shameful. The pillaging of the Nation's Capital shocked the American public and elected officials with an impact rarely matched in our history. Ingersoll states: "To this hour, that national disgrace is still the subject ... of angry and irreconcilable ... recrimination ... and the blasting catastrophe has left ... incurable wounds of vanity and shame."<sup>33</sup> Mary Barney went on to say "The very name of Bladensburg creates a sort of revulsion, which draws all the humors of the body into the region of the spleen ... We wish its name could be changed by Act of Congress!"

Less than a month after the British vacated Washington, many of the same American and British troops faced one another near Baltimore, with vastly different results. The troops defending Baltimore erected defenses that prevented British entry into the city. A small American force successfully skirmished with the British invasion force after their landing on North Point, mortally wounding Major General Robert Ross. The British were unable to breach the fortifications at Fort McHenry, and could not force a naval entrance to the inner harbor. When the unsupported British infantry arrived at the massive earthworks erected by the defenders of Baltimore, they ascertained that American cavalry prevented any flanking maneuvers, and quietly withdrew in the hours before dawn. The defense of Fort McHenry gave birth to a new spirit, and provided the country with its National Anthem.

The War of 1812 instilled a new sense of national identity in the public, who now saw themselves as "Americans" rather than Marylanders, Virginians, or New Yorkers. The defeat at Bladensburg and burning of Washington contributed to this new identity.<sup>34</sup> The test of successfully facing the most powerful military on earth changed how the public saw themselves, and how America was perceived by the world. The burning of Washington was a shock that unified American citizens; subsequent victories at Baltimore and New Orleans solidified this feeling.

Nationally, the battle demonstrated the limited capabilities provided by the state militia system. The Battle of Bladensburg made it clear that a strong regular army in combination with a sizable navy and coastal defense system was needed, shaping American defense strategies for years to come. Senior Naval historian Dr. Michael J. Crawford notes that "people of all political stripes witnessed the importance of having a strong, centrally controlled military... Many Republicans and Federalists were committed to a strong Navy, an adequate, professional Army, and the financial reforms necessary to support them." After the war, Congress approved a naval program and a regular Army of 10,000 men and raised taxes to fund these initiatives.<sup>35</sup>

Improvements to transportation and banking systems also came directly from lessons learned during the War of 1812.<sup>36</sup> Beforehand the country had been economically dependent on Great Britain. Wartime banking, trade, and

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 33. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD; and National Park Service, "Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement," (Report prepared by the Northeast Region, National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, March 2004), 15. Available online at <http://starspangled200.org/History/Pages/1814ChesapeakeCampaign.aspx>, accessed 13 November 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Charles Jared Ingersoll, *A Sketch of the Events Which Preceded the Capture of Washington by the British on the Twenty-fourth of August, 1814*. (Philadelphia: Carey, Hart, 1849), 169-171.

<sup>34</sup> Richard G. Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 122. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD. , and on file, NPS ABPP.

<sup>35</sup> Bradley Cantor, "Historian Explains War of 1812's Impact on National Defense." (American Forces Press Service, 9 February 2012). Available online at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=67118>. Accessed 14 November 2012.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 33. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD; and National Park Service, "Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement," (Report prepared by the Northeast



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defense legislation developed a measure of economic independence heretofore absent. Internal improvements, such as the National Road and numerous canal projects, were initiated based on transportation shortcomings revealed by the war. Banking improvements were made to facilitate funding of government initiatives.

**Historic Context for Criterion A.**

By the early nineteenth century, the American merchant fleet was the third largest in the world behind France and England. The British embargos enacted during the Napoleonic Wars negatively impacted American trade.<sup>37</sup>

Additionally, between 1793 and 1812, over 6,000 American seamen were impressed into the British Navy.<sup>38</sup> The illegal military conscription of Americans enraged American citizens and escalated tensions with Great Britain. The United States also desired a free hand in expanding its territories, including areas disputed with Great Britain. On June 18, 1812, President James Madison signed a declaration of war against Great Britain.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay were national centers of settlement, commerce, and government. The British Chesapeake Campaign was a reflection of the region's strategic importance, and placed Maryland at the core of national events; Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay were a central theatre of the war.<sup>39</sup> The Battle of Bladensburg and the burning of Washington marked a shift in the war. The nominated areas are the only areas associated with the Battle of Bladensburg that have escaped modern development and retain elements of integrity. There is no other comparable site associated with this battle.

The Battle of Bladensburg took place in Maryland and the District of Columbia on August 24, 1814. The opposing forces, composed of 4,020 British troops under Major General Robert Ross and 5,920 troops under Brigadier General William Winder, engaged each other in the early afternoon at the crossing of Bladensburg Road over the East Branch of the Potomac River, now called the Anacostia.<sup>40</sup> American forces were positioned on a series of hills adjacent to Bladensburg Road, along which the British advanced. The battle lasted only a few hours, during which time the British troops drove Virginia, Maryland, and District of Columbia militia forces from the field. Official accounts report 64 British and 26 Americans killed.<sup>41</sup> Following the engagement, the British forces marched on Washington, where they burned the United States Treasury, the President's Mansion, and the Capitol building. Confusion, poor training, indecisive leadership, and an uncertain chain of command hindered American forces on the day of the battle. This was in sharp contrast to the experienced British troops who overcame serious battlefield challenges—most notably the crossing the Anacostia River under intense artillery fire.<sup>42</sup>

In June of 1814, Rear Admiral George Cockburn, in charge of the Chesapeake squadron, wrote to Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, the commander-in-chief of the Royal Navy's North American Station, informing him that the defenses of the region were weak and that several large cities were vulnerable. Cockburn recommended an attack of Washington via Benedict, on the Patuxent River, as it was only 45 miles from Washington: "within 48 hours after the arrival in the Patuxent ... Washington might be possessed without difficulty or opposition of any kind." It was agreed that Washington was the ideal target "on account of the greater political effect likely to result."

Region, National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, March 2004), 15. Available online at <http://starspangled200.org/History/Pages/1814ChesapeakeCampaign.aspx>, accessed 13 November 2012.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. 32.

<sup>38</sup> Lincoln P. Paine, "War is Better than Tribute," in *Naval History*, 15.3 (2001): 20-25. US Naval Institute, Annapolis, MD 2001.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. 34.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. 58.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 71.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 51.

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Cockburn and Ross landed at Benedict on August 19, 1814, and began their march at 2 p.m. on August 23 because an earlier departure would have left their rear unprotected.<sup>43</sup> It was decided that the route through Bladensburg was preferred, as the Anacostia River was fordable in this location.<sup>44</sup> During the march, the British forces were divided into three brigades dispersed over several miles. They followed the Anacostia River for the last two miles, probably following present 52nd Avenue and turning into Bladensburg at Lowndes Hill.<sup>45</sup>

The British arrived in Bladensburg at noon on August 24, with Colonel William Thornton's 85th Light Infantry and light infantry companies of the 4th, 21st, and 44th regiments in the lead. The Second Brigade was composed of the 4th and 44th regiments commanded by Colonel Arthur Brooke. The Third Brigade was commanded by Colonel Patterson and comprised the 21st Regiment and a marine battalion.<sup>46</sup> The men marched north into Bladensburg along present 52nd Avenue. When the British entered town, American artillery fire commenced, but the British were out of range and were able to establish Congreve rocket batteries (a relatively new weapon firing rockets rather than shot or shell) along the east bank of the Anacostia just south of George Washington House.<sup>47</sup> Gleig commented that the American decision not to occupy Bladensburg was a "monstrous error," as the town, "...being composed of substantial brick houses, might have been maintained for hours against all our efforts."<sup>48</sup> This was the first of many poor decisions by American leadership.

American troops formed three defensive lines on hills west of the Anacostia. Gleig remarked that the position of the American forces was, "one of great strength, and commanding attitude...drawn up...upon the brow of a hill...their right resting upon a thick wood and a deep ravine." Gleig also reported, however, that the Americans squandered their advantages by scattering artillery positions "with no great judgment along the second line of infantry."<sup>49</sup> Winder was occupied with other matters that led to his late arrival on the battlefield, and left Brigadier General Tobias Stansbury in command. In Winder's absence, Secretary of State Monroe and civilian Francis Scott Key visited the battlefield and changed troop dispositions, without apprising either Winder or Stansbury. Monroe and Key re-deployed the Second Line from the cover of the orchard at the rear of the First Line to a new location

<sup>43</sup> Roger Morris, *Cockburn and the British Navy in Transition: Admiral Sir George Cockburn, 1772-1853* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), 100-104.

<sup>44</sup> Richard G. Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 47. On file MD State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>45</sup> George Gleig, *A Narrative of the Campaigns of the British Army: at Washington, Baltimore, and New Orleans Under Generals Ross, Pakenham, & Lambert, in the Years 1814 and 1815; with some Account of the Countries Visited, by an Officer who Served in the Expedition*, (Philadelphia: M. Carey & Sons, 1821), 118-121; as reported in Richard G. Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 59. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. 96-97; as reported in Richard G. Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 46-47. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD., and on file, NPS ABPP.

<sup>47</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 33. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>48</sup> George Gleig, *A Narrative of the Campaigns of the British Army: at Washington, Baltimore, and New Orleans Under Generals Ross, Pakenham, & Lambert, in the Years 1814 and 1815; with some Account of the Countries Visited, by an Officer who Served in the Expedition*, (Philadelphia: M. Carey & Sons, 1821), 119-120; as reported in Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 33. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

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one-quarter-mile behind the orchard. While the new position was on higher ground, it left the First Line of artillery unsupported.<sup>50</sup> According to Stansbury, the new position of the American Second Line was also completely visible to the enemy.<sup>51</sup>

The First Line contained Pinkney's 1st Rifle Battalion and the 1st Artillery Regiment (Baltimore City), located on the active floodplain of the Anacostia River, and the artillery was placed behind an earthen parapet with gun embrasures built by Colonel Decius Wadsworth in the days leading up to the battle. Captains John Meyers and Richard Magruder of the 1st Artillery Regiment positioned six 6-pound cannon behind the earthworks. Two 6-pound cannon commanded by Colonel Wadsworth were positioned on the right flank in the middle of Bladensburg Road, commanding the bridge over the Anacostia. Two additional 6-pounders under control of Captain Benjamin Burch were positioned at a nearby road to the north that led to Georgetown past Carleton's Mill (present Bunker Hill Road).<sup>52</sup>

As mentioned previously, the American Second Line was situated behind an orchard approximately one-quarter of a mile to the rear of the entrenchments occupied by the First Line.<sup>53</sup> It consisted of three militia regiments—the 5th under Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Sterett, the 2nd under Lieutenant Colonel John Henry Shutz, and the 24th under Lieutenant Colonel John Ragan.<sup>54</sup> The decision to position the Second Line behind the orchard, too far back to offer needed support to the artillery positions, was a factor in the early collapse of the First Line.<sup>55</sup>

The American Third Line straddled the District Line along Prospect Heights, a large prominence composed of Veitch's Hill and the site of Fort Lincoln (1862; Map 7). At this location, hills rise 200 feet above the Anacostia floodplain. The left flank was occupied by Major George Peter, who controlled the Columbian artillery and six 6-pound cannon; Brigadier General Walter Smith, in command of the Columbian Brigade (District militia); and Lieutenant Colonel William Scott, in command of elements of the 36th and 38th Regiments of US Infantry.<sup>56</sup> The left flank overlooked Bladensburg Road and the Anacostia floodplain, close to present 38th Avenue or 40th Avenue. Barney stationed his main battery of two 18-pound cannon in Bladensburg Road, about 150 feet south of the District Line, within the District of Columbia. To Barney's right was a battery of three 12-pound cannon, manned by the Flotillamen and a contingent of about 114 Marines under Captain Samuel Miller. The extreme right of the Third Line, occupied by the 17th Regiment of Prince George's County militia under Lt. Col. William Beall,

<sup>50</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 33. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>51</sup> John S. Williams, *History of the Invasion and Capture of Washington, the Events which Preceded and Followed* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1857); as reported in Richard G. Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 52. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD., and on file, NPS ABPP.

<sup>52</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 33. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>53</sup> John S. Williams, *History of the Invasion and Capture of Washington, the Events which Preceded and Followed* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1857); as reported in Richard G. Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 4, 52. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD., and on file, NPS ABPP.

<sup>54</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 33. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. 53.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. 54-56.

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was located on a commanding position atop Veitch's Hill.<sup>57</sup> Beall's men had arrived only 30 minutes before the battle (Barney's Flotillamen and Marines arrived later still, dragging their artillery pieces by hand from the Washington Navy Yard).<sup>58</sup> Colonel Jacob Kramer and a forward detachment of about 240 men from the 3rd Regiment were positioned on the western bank of Dueling Creek, about 400 to 500 yards forward of Barney.<sup>59</sup>

As the engagement commenced, British troops poured across the bridge and forded the Anacostia River, forcing Pinkney's 1st Rifle Battalion to flee after a brief skirmish.<sup>60</sup> The retreat of the riflemen left the artillery positions of the earthwork unsupported, as the Second Line was positioned too far to the rear to provide assistance. The British Light Brigade, therefore, formed along the river bank and assaulted the American First Line. Winder ordered Lieutenant Colonel Sterett's 5th Regiment to counter-attack. They briefly pushed the British back but quickly gave way. The British 44th Regiment then broke the Second Line.<sup>61</sup> At this juncture, a portion of the British forces under Colonel Brooke proceeded up the road to Georgetown to engage the left flank of the Third Line. Simultaneously, the British First Brigade under Thornton continued directly up Bladensburg Road, where they engaged Kramer's men at the crossing of Bladensburg Road over Dueling Creek. Here Kramer and his men forced the British off the road and into the ravine of Dueling Creek where the British sought cover. When faced with a second wave of British advance, Kramer and his militia fell back and reformed forward of Beall's position (incidentally, the only American militia forces that reformed after making a tactical withdrawal that day).<sup>62</sup>

After Kramer's withdrawal, the British continued their march directly up Bladensburg Road, where they were met with the intense fire of Barney's two 18-pound cannon and the oblique fire of Peter's six 6-pound cannon. The British mounted three assaults on Barney's artillery but were repeatedly forced back to the cover of the ravine, suffering heavy casualties.<sup>63</sup> The British 85th Regiment attempted to flank Barney's right. This maneuver brought them directly across from Captain Miller's battery of three 12-pounder guns. After driving the British infantry back, Miller and his contingent of Marines and Flotillamen executed two counter-attacks, driving British troops back to the ravine. During this encounter, which lasted approximately 30 minutes, many British officers were wounded and

<sup>57</sup> John S. Williams, *History of the Invasion and Capture of Washington, the Events which Preceded and Followed* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1857), 363; as reported in Richard G. Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 54. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD., and on file, NPS ABPP.

<sup>58</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 33. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>59</sup> John S. Williams, *History of the Invasion and Capture of Washington, the Events which Preceded and Followed* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1857), p. 351; and Charles Jared Ingersoll, *A Sketch of the Events Which Preceded the Capture of Washington by the British on the Twenty-fourth of August, 1814*. (Philadelphia: Carey, Hart, 1849), p. 193.

<sup>60</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 60. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD and NPS ABPP.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. 62.

<sup>62</sup> John S. Williams, *History of the Invasion and Capture of Washington, the Events which Preceded and Followed* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1857), 352; as reported in Richard G. Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 63-64. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD., and on file, NPS ABPP.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. 352 Charles Jared Ingersoll, *A Sketch of the Events Which Preceded the Capture of Washington by the British on the Twenty-fourth of August, 1814*. (Philadelphia: Carey, Hart, 1849), 178.

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killed.<sup>64</sup> Following the arrival of British reinforcements led by Ross and Cockburn, the regular US infantry and militia on Barney's left flank, then under attack by the British Second Brigade, was ordered by Winder to withdraw, leaving Barney's left exposed. Ross himself led the second attempt to outflank Barney's right, this time flanking around Miller and charging up Veitch's Hill. Beall's militia reportedly fired several volleys before quickly retreating. According to Beall's own account, he did not retreat until an order of a general retreat had been given by Winder. By then, many American militia units had already begun to flee. Winder's order of retreat was issued while Barney's position was still heavily engaged—yet another disastrous tactical decision.<sup>65</sup> Once Beall's position had been captured by the British, Barney's Flotillamen and Marines came under heavy fire. The British infantry was able to fire on both Barney's right and left flanks, although the most serious problem was the fire from Veitch's Hill—a position upon which Barney could not return fire. A number of Barney's officers were killed and wounded, Barney's horse was shot out from under him, and he was wounded by a musket ball to his right thigh. Without ammunition and flanked on both sides, Barney ordered his men to spike their guns and retreat.<sup>66</sup> With this, the battle ended and the British advanced on Washington.

Contemporary accounts and historic maps of the Bladensburg Battlefield provide a summary of the battle and its associated geographic features. However, most accounts, including official reports submitted by Commodore Barney, General Winder, General Stansbury, General Smith, and Major Peter, describe only a limited set of actions on a small part of the battlefield. British accounts, including those of Lieutenant De Lacy Evans and Gleig, include substantial discrepancies. Furthermore, immediately following the embarrassing defeat, an investigation was undertaken to identify parties responsible for the loss. This report was so full of contradictions between testimonies that it was shelved before completion.<sup>67</sup> What remains evident is that the battle was lost through a series of tactical errors, confusion, and an unclear chain of command. This embarrassing defeat and the subsequent burning of Washington led to the reevaluation of America's military and defense system. According to Dr. Michael J. Crawford, a senior Naval historian, "people of all political stripes witnessed the importance of having a strong, centrally controlled military...Many Republicans and Federalists were committed to a strong Navy, an adequate, professional Army, and the financial reforms necessary to support them." After the war, Congress approved a naval program and a regular Army of 10,000 men and raised taxes to fund these initiatives.<sup>68</sup>

**Criterion B.**

Under Criterion B, the battlefield is associated with the productive life of Commodore Joshua Barney and his defense of the Third American line. Barney and his Flotillamen and U.S. Marines repulsed a series of advances by veteran British troops, then drove them back with counter charges. As one source commented "It would have been well for the honor of America if all who were present on that day had behaved with the same decision and effect as Commodore Barney and his command. Their heroic resistance saved the Battle of Bladensburg from being an unqualified disgrace to American arms."<sup>69</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 60. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD and NPS ABPP.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 69.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. 67.

<sup>67</sup> Charles Jared Ingersoll, *A Sketch of the Events Which Preceded the Capture of Washington by the British on the Twenty-fourth of August, 1814*. (Philadelphia: Carey, Hart, 1849), 169-171.

<sup>68</sup> Bradley Cantor, "Historian Explains War of 1812's Impact on National Defense." (American Forces Press Service, 9 February 2012). Available online at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=67118>. Accessed 14 November 2012.

<sup>69</sup> "Joshua Barney and the Battle of Bladensburg, War of 1812." [www.barneyfamily.org](http://www.barneyfamily.org). Accessed on May 32, 2012.



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### Historic Context for Criterion B.

Joshua Barney was a Revolutionary War Naval veteran who was noted for his gallant service aboard the American naval vessels *Hornet*, *Wasp* and *Andrea Doria*. He was taken prisoner and exchanged several times. In 1779, he was imprisoned at Hill Prison, but escaped two years later and was put in command of the ship *Hyder Ally*. While in command of that vessel, Barney captured the *HMS General Monk*. After the Revolution, he served in the French Navy and was given command of a squadron with the rank of Commodore. He successfully captained the privateer *Rossie* in the early years of the War of 1812. To delay the British incursions of the Chesapeake Bay, he devised a plan to assemble a squadron of heavily armed barges or row-galleys, which was accepted by the Navy. At the Battle of Bladensburg in 1814, he and his Flotillamen valiantly defended the American Third Line during several assaults, before the British broke through, marched on Washington DC, and subsequently burned the capital. For his gallant defense of our nation's capital, he received a sword from the City of Philadelphia and thanks of the legislature of Georgia.<sup>70</sup>

Commodore Barney's bravery and contributions to the war effort at the Battle of Bladensburg are noteworthy. Barney's Flotillamen and Marines successfully repelled attacks by veteran British troops. Barney expected support from the American militia, which left the battlefield with Barney still engaged. Most of the American casualties that day were among Barney's Flotillamen and Marines. Barney's horse was shot out from under him, and Barney was wounded. Miller was also severely wounded. After Barney ordered his men to retreat, British Lt. James Scott, aide de camp of Rear Admiral Cockburn, arrived at the site, followed by Cockburn and General Ross. The British officers summoned a surgeon. General Ross noted that Barney's men had offered the only real resistance to the British. General Ross was so impressed by the bravery of Commodore Barney that he immediately paroled him. Barney was asked if he wished to be taken to Washington DC or Bladensburg. British sailors carried him by litter to the extant Ross's Tavern in Bladensburg, also known as the Indian Queen (Ross - no relation to British General Ross - had sold his tavern before 1814, but apparently it was still known by its former name). During the transport "an American sailor whose arm had almost been taken off by a ball, reportedly approached Barney, took one of his hands and burst into tears, an act which greatly affected his British attendants."<sup>71</sup> Barney was taken to Ross's Tavern in Bladensburg. He was charged with caring for both American casualties and the wounded British left behind after the battle.

Commodore Barney is directly associated with the Bladensburg Battlefield through his defense of the American Third Line. Other properties associated with his productive life include the Commodore Joshua Barney House (MIHP No. HO-41) in Savage, Howard County, Maryland. In 1978, the property was listed in the NRHP and the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (NRIS 78001470). The Maryland Historical Trust holds an easement on the property. The house was occupied by Barney before and after the War of 1812, and there he recuperated from the wound he received at the Battle of Bladensburg. During his recuperation, he wrote his account of the Battle of Bladensburg to the Secretary of the Navy. The house now functions as a Bed and Breakfast and the Maryland Historical Trust holds a preservation easement on the building.

Other properties associated with Barney's productive life include St. Leonard's Creek near the mouth of the Patuxent River where he fought a larger British fleet; and Pig Point on the Patuxent River, where he scuttled the American Flotilla immediately before the Battle of Bladensburg. At St. Leonard's Creek, Barney's Flotilla successfully beat back two larger and more heavily armed British ships, and then retreated up the Patuxent.<sup>72</sup> At

<sup>70</sup> *Biographies in Naval History: Commodore Joshua Barney USN (ret.)* [http://www.history.navy.mil/bios/barney\\_jos.htm](http://www.history.navy.mil/bios/barney_jos.htm). Accessed on April 16, 2013.

<sup>71</sup> Ervin, p. 70, citing Shomette, 2009.

<sup>72</sup> Babits, Lawrence E. and Jeffrey M. Enright (1998). Preliminary Report: Flotilla Project Site 18CV414. East Carolina University, program in Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology: Greenville, NC.

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Pig Point on the Patuxent River, Barney scuttled the flotilla on the orders of the Navy Department.<sup>73</sup> These sites have not been assessed for historic integrity as ~part of this project. One underwater archaeological site, 18PR226, has been investigated but not fully excavated. It is not clear if 18PR226 represents Barney's flagship, the *USS Scorpion*.<sup>74</sup> The nominated Bladensburg Battlefield has the strongest association with Commodore Barney's military activities, and portrays Barney's finest hour in his military service.

The battlefield is also associated with the productive life of Charles Ball, a an African American freedman who escaped slavery, fought for his country as a member of the Chesapeake Flotilla, was re-enslaved and escaped again to freedom. Charles Ball's 1858 narrative, *Fifty Years in Chains, or, The Life of an American Slave*, is the story of his enslavement, escape, his life as a freedman, and his military service to the country that enslaved him. African Americans who served in the US military in the War of 1812 were not given freedom for their service. Many changed their names to avoid enslavement after the war, and it is likely that Charles Ball is a pseudonym. Ball's narrative was published when federal fugitive slave laws were still in force, and he was a fugitive at the time. Due to these circumstances, his narrative cannot be fully corroborated, but many of the names of plantation owners referenced by Ball exist in the historical record.<sup>75</sup>

Ball's paternal grandfather was captured in Africa, transported on a slave ship, and sold in Calvert County, Maryland in 1730.<sup>76</sup> Ball' father was enslaved to an "avaricious", "penurious" member of the Hantz family living a few miles from his grandfather.<sup>77</sup> For the first four years of his life, Ball lived with his mother, brothers, and sisters within walking distance of his father and grandfather, who passed away about 1785. When the slave owner died, Ball's family was sold to different plantations. Ball, aged four years, was sold to John (Jack) Cox. Cox died 8 years later and his father, John Cox, Sr., took possession of his slaves. When Ball was about 20 years old, Cox senior hired him out to work at the Washington Navy Yard. In 1803, Ball became the subject of a lawsuit over Jack Cox's estate, and a Mr. Gibson took possession of him. Two years later Gibson sold Ball to a Georgia trader. In the interim, Ball had married and fostered two children.<sup>78</sup> He and 50 other slaves were marched in chains to South Carolina, and Ball was sold to a plantation on the Georgia frontier. After six years he escaped to Calvert County, Maryland. He rejoined his wife and children and hired himself out as a freedman. In 1813, he enlisted under Barney and served as a seaman and cook.<sup>79</sup>

U.S. Policy forbade recruitment of African American sailors, but a chronic shortage of manpower relaxed this prohibition.<sup>80</sup> In 1813, at least fifteen percent of American sailors were black.<sup>81</sup> It is likely that the Chesapeake Flotilla contained an even higher number of freedmen and escaped slaves. These sailors had a reputation for fierceness and courage. The British command also appreciated their service, and British Vice-Admiral Cochrane

<sup>73</sup> Crawford, Michael J. (editor), pp. 194-198. *The Naval War of 1812: A Documentary History, Volume III*. Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 2002.

<sup>74</sup> Krueger, Bradley, H. Brown, G. Schwarz, A. Catsambis, and B. Atcheson (2014). Archaeological Survey and Site Investigation of 18PR226, a War of 1812 Shipwreck in the Patuxent River, Prince George's County, Maryland.

<sup>75</sup> *Putting Charles Ball on the Map in Calvert County, Maryland*. [www.jefpat.org/Documents/Grulich](http://www.jefpat.org/Documents/Grulich), Accessed on April 17, 2013. This source notes "The narrator and editor in Ball's Narrative, Isaac Fisher [a.k.a. Thomas Fisher, Isaac Fischer], informs the reader at the outset that Ball's saga is ... made intentionally vague as Ball was still subject to the slave laws of the United States of America at the time he related his story. In an 1837 edition, Fisher certifies with witnesses that the slave who related this story is a real person. Ball's name may well have been a pseudonym." p.3.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. p. 1.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> *Black Sailors and Soldiers in the War of 1812*. <http://www.pbs.org/wned/war-of-1812/essays/black-soldiers-and-sailors-war-of-1812/> Accessed on April 18, 2013.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

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ordered Admiral Cockburn to form the Colonial Marines, fighting units made up of refugee slaves.<sup>82</sup> In April 1814, Cochrane made the British position on recruitment of African American slaves official with the following statement:

*All those who may be disposed to emigrate from the United States, will, with their Families, be received on board of His Majesty's Ships.... They will have their choice of either entering into His Majesty's Forces, or of being sent as FREE Settlers to British possessions, ... where they will meet with all due encouragement.*<sup>83</sup>

The War of 1812 resulted in over 4,000 people freed from slavery, the largest American emancipation until the Civil War.<sup>84</sup> Three companies of Colonial Marines were formed, and their presence inspired hatred and fear among the Americans. The British commander-in-chief said they were *more dreaded by the Americans than the British troops*.<sup>85</sup> Entire families of slaves made their way by canoe to the British fleet as they arrived in the Chesapeake in May of 1813. Once on board, they were on British soil and not subject to American law.

Ball tried to convince escaped slaves to come back to U.S. soil. He "*went amongst them*" he records in his memoir, "*And talked to them a long time, on the subject of returning home; but found that their heads were full of notions of liberty and happiness in some of the West India islands*".<sup>86</sup> After the war, in 1816, the British offered the former American slaves who served in the Colonial Marines farmland in Trinidad. The offer was made after the marines refused transfer out of the naval service into the West India Regimental Army. Their descendants live in Trinidad today and call themselves "the Merikans."<sup>87</sup>

Charles Ball had the choice to join the British forces as so many other African American slaves did to gain their freedom. But Ball already considered himself a free man, and as a seaman and cook, he instead chose to serve in the Chesapeake Flotilla under Commodore Joshua Barney. After Barney ordered the flotilla sunk to keep the boats out of the hands of the invading British, Ball marched to Bladensburg with Barney and served in one of the artillery crews. His memoir succinctly describes his involvement with the Third American line of defense:

*I stood at my gun, until the Commodore was shot down, when he ordered us to retreat, as I was told by the officer who commanded our gun. If the militia regiments, that lay upon our right and left, could have been brought to charge the British, in close fight, as they crossed the bridge, we should have killed or taken the whole of them in a short time; but the militia ran like sheep chased by dogs.*<sup>88</sup>

Ball, along with the other surviving Flotillamen, was discharged in the fall of 1814, and his wife died in 1816. He worked for six years in Baltimore, Annapolis, and Washington, DC. Around 1820 he purchased 12 acres in Baltimore for \$350. Ball remarried a woman named Lucy and they had four children. In June of 1830, the family that had enslaved him in Georgia came to Baltimore to claim and return him to Georgia. He was kidnapped from his home and jailed. A year later he escaped from Georgia in the cargo hold of a cotton boat. He returned to Baltimore and learned his farm had been confiscated and his wife and children sold into slavery. He fled to Pennsylvania and settled 50 miles outside Philadelphia.

The Battle of Bladensburg is significant under Criterion B for Charles Ball's association with the battle and his role in American history. As an African American escaped slave, he enlisted to serve under Barney as a free man. His subsequent capture showed that he was not free, but a fugitive who could be and was re-enslaved. The fate of African Americans in British hands turned out to be better than Ball's fate after the end of his military service. Work

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.



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by Ann Dowling Grulich, notably the publication *Putting Charles Ball on the Map in Calvert County, Maryland*, provides an assessment of the places mentioned in Ball's memoirs. Her analysis does not indicate that other sites associated with Ball in Maryland are extant, and in many cases the sites are not easily identified. The Bladensburg battlefield is associated with the productive years of Charles Ball's military career, and the role played by the United States military in the complicated federal policy on American slavery during that time.

### Discussion of Criterion D.

Under Criterion D, the eligibility of the battlefield is undetermined. In general, the battlefield has been impacted by commercial and residential development. However, archeological investigations show that the battlefield may be able to provide information important in history, even given the generally high degree of commercial and residential development in the region. Broadbent's work [REDACTED] identified the foundations of Rives barn under several feet of fill, allowing Barney's artillery battery to be accurately located. The discovery of artifacts related to the battle [REDACTED] reflect the positions of Miller's Marines and Flotillamen, along with their artillery battery. The identification of several areas of the battlefield that, while developed, contain intact, stratified, subsurface archeological deposits, shows that the urban setting of the battlefield contains buried surfaces contemporary with the battle.<sup>89</sup> Subsurface archeological deposits [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]<sup>90</sup> Intact, stratified soils containing robust assemblages of eighteenth and nineteenth century artifacts were also identified at each of the three historic standing structures in Bladensburg [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]<sup>91</sup> Although spanning the correct time period, no artifacts relating to the battle were recovered.

Broadbent's investigations demonstrate the ability of archeology to answer important questions about the battle, in certain cases. Broadbent identified Barney's Spring and the precise location of his artillery battery, conclusively locating the Third American Line on the modern landscape. Archeological results show the potential for preserved surfaces and features scattered across the battlefield, such as under the fill that was [REDACTED]. A portion of the Bladensburg Turnpike was identified by DC HPO Archeologist Ruth Troccoli within the median of existing Bladensburg Road just across the District of Columbia Line, near the position of Barney's artillery battery. Despite these finds, much of the battlefield has been impacted by commercial and residential development. Although archeological discoveries provided better evidence of intact, subsurface archeological deposits than may have been anticipated, further archeological testing within specific locations is required to conclusively determine the eligibility of the battlefield under Criterion D.

The badly conflicting historical accounts of the battle might be clarified by further archeological work. Artifact distributions have the potential to answer questions related to troop positions and movements during the battle, and are the only remaining physical evidence providing accurate interpretation of the battle. Contemporary reports

<sup>89</sup> Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, June 2012), 124. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD. and NPS ABPP.

<sup>90</sup> Shawn M. Patch, "Archaeological Investigations of Seven Locations Associated with the Bladensburg Battlefield" (Report prepared for MD SHA, Nov 2012), 36. On file at Maryland State Highway Administration in Baltimore, MD; Richard Ervin, "Assessment of the Bladensburg Battlefield: Archeological Potential, Interpretive Opportunities, and Management Recommendations for the War of 1812 Bicentennial" (Report prepared for NPS-ABPP, 2012), 77. On file Maryland State Highway Administration Baltimore, MD., and NPS ABPP.

<sup>91</sup> Crowl, Heather, and others, "Bladensburg Archeological Investigations: Magruder House (18PR982), Market Master House (18PR983), and Indian Queen Tavern Site (18PR96)." (Report prepared for MD SHA, 2011). On file, MD State Highway Administration, Baltimore.

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indicate that British enlisted men were buried by the Americans in shallow graves along Bladensburg Road where they fell.<sup>92</sup> Fallen British officers were reportedly buried in a mass grave somewhere [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Gleig stated that the officers were buried by their own troops only hours after the battle.<sup>93</sup> This grave site may yield important information in history. The battlefield has the potential to yield important information about military attire, weaponry, and equipment.

<sup>92</sup> Charles Jared Ingersoll, *A Sketch of the Events Which Preceded the Capture of Washington by the British on the Twenty-fourth of August, 1814*. (Philadelphia: Carey, Hart, 1849), 169-171.

<sup>93</sup> George Gleig, *Subaltern in America, Comprising his Narrative of the Campaigns of the British Army at Baltimore, Washington, Etc.*, (Philadelphia: E.L. Carey & Hart, 1833), 77.

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Bladensburg Battlefield: MIHP No. PG:68-134,  
18PR1025 (MD), 51NE044 (DC), MD403 (NPS)  
Name of Property

Prince George's County, MD  
and NE Washington, DC  
County and State

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<http://books.google.com/books?id=dZo6AAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=text>.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☐ State Historic Preservation Office  
☒ Other State agency  
☒ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other

**NPS American Battlefield Protection Program**

Name of repository: **Maryland State Highway Administration**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_



Bladensburg Battlefield: MIHP No. PG:68-134,  
18PR1025 (MD), 51NE044 (DC), MD403 (NPS)  
Name of Property

Prince George's County, MD  
and NE Washington, DC  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 224.52

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>332120</u> Easting	<u>4311813</u> Northing	3	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>332190</u> Easting	<u>4311770</u> Northing
2	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>332109</u> Easting	<u>4311769</u> Northing	4	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>332205</u> Easting	<u>4311771</u> Northing

(See Continuation Sheet for Section 10)

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the three discontinuous areas contained within this nomination are delineated by the polygons whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points: (See Continuation Sheets for Section 10)

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The east nominated area, Discontinuous Area 1, (UTM References #1-21), is located in the town of Bladensburg and contains three historic structures associated with the battle, encompassing a total of 11.60 acres (of which 3.59 acres was previously determined eligible for the NRHP; the additional area totals 8.01 acres).

Modern structures in Discontinuous Area 1, which are considered non-contributing elements, are privately owned.

The central nominated area, Discontinuous Area 2, (UTM References #22-34,

One historic structure associated with the battle,

British Congreve rocket batteries were established , and after the battle the wounded were treated at the no longer extant Ross's Tavern, adjacent to . A large part of the remaining area is owned by M-NCPPC and was the location where the British forded the Anacostia, and the position of the American First Line. The remainder of the area, centered on the foothills overlooking the west bank of the Anacostia River, was the location of the Second American Line and is privately held land within the community of Cottage City.

The southwest nominated area (UTM References #35-69) of the battlefield, Discontinuous Area 3, is the location of the American Third Line and the British advance on this position. As demonstrated by archeology conducted in 2010, intact nineteenth-century deposits dating to the battle are present. This area encompasses 91.43 acres. All of these areas experienced development during the early twentieth century. While the current landscape does not resemble the agricultural one of the early nineteenth century, the lack of development during the past century has preserved important topographic features related to the battlefield.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Bladensburg Battlefield: MIHP # PG:68-134,  
 18PR1025-MD, 51NE044-DC, MD403-NPS

Name of Property  
 Prince George's County, MD  
 and NE Washington, DC

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page 1

**UTM References – Continuation Sheet**

All coordinates are within UTM Zone 18.

The boundaries of the three discontinuous areas contained within this nomination are delineated by the polygons whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points:

Discontinuous Area 1 (East Nominated Area, town of Bladensburg)

Point	Easting	Northing
1	332120	4311813
2	332109	4311769
3	332190	4311770
4	332205	4311771
5	332205	4311746
6	332271	4311747
7	332272	4311721
8	332351	4311722
9	332455	4311726
10	332452	4311567
11	332334	4311556
12	332262	4311576
13	332208	4311606
14	332195	4311624
15	332190	4311755
16	332106	4311751
17	332079	4311761
18	332031	4311760
19	332030	4311796
20	332034	4311804
21	332040	4311809

Discontinuous Area 2 (Central Nominated Area)

Point	Easting	Northing
22	331134	4312209
23	331779	4312177
24	331788	4311802
25	331412	4311615
26	330902	4311338
27	330749	4311614
28	330704	4311632
29	330843	4311828
30	331188	4311775
31	331217	4311968
32	331091	4312009
33	331159	4312101
34	331107	4312174

Discontinuous Area 3 (Southwest Nominated Area)

Point	Easting	Northing
35	329943	4311193
36	329993	4311226
37	330289	4310922
38	330709	4311261
39	330610	4311290
40	330583	4311312
41	330527	4311325
42	330485	4311346
43	330563	4311442
44	330585	4311425
45	330567	4311398
46	330627	4311341
47	330669	4311330
48	330663	4311301
49	330714	4311280
50	330759	4311299
51	330848	4311203
52	330938	4311191
53	330998	4311221
54	331106	4311066
55	330989	4311042
56	330889	4311167
57	330820	4311140
58	330886	4310983
59	330935	4310590
60	330714	4310454
61	330580	4310594
62	330455	4310722
63	330437	4310752
64	330301	4310896
66	330239	4310844
65	330226	4310863
67	330238	4310873
68	330200	4310953
69	330186	4310941

Bladensburg Battlefield: MIHP No. PG:68-134,  
18PR1025 (MD), 51NE044 (DC), MD403 (NPS)  
Name of Property

Prince George's County, MD  
and NE Washington, DC  
County and State

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bryana Schwarz & Jeff Winstel, URS Architectural Historian & Principal Architectural Historian; revisions by Richard G. Ervin, Senior Archeologist, Maryland State Highway Administration

organization URS Corporation/ MD State Highway Administration date December 2012 / March 2016

street & number URS: 12420 Milestone Center Drive, Ste. 150 URS: (301) 820-3200  
SHA: 707 N. Calvert Street, telephone SHA: (410) 545-2878

city or town URS: Germantown MD 20876  
SHA: Baltimore state MD zip code 21202

e-mail RErvin@sha.state.md.us

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger.

Name of Property: Bladensburg Battlefield  
City or Vicinity: Bladensburg (vicinity)  
County: Prince George's County  
State: Maryland  
Photographer: Bryana Schwarz (#1-10), Melissa Blair (#11-15), HABS (#16-17)  
Date Photographed: 16 August 2012 (Schwarz), 23 January 2009 (Blair), and ca. 1936 (HABS)  
Location of Original Digital Files: 707 N. Calvert Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

**Photograph Log:** Description of Photograph(s) and number:

See Continuation Sheet

### Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

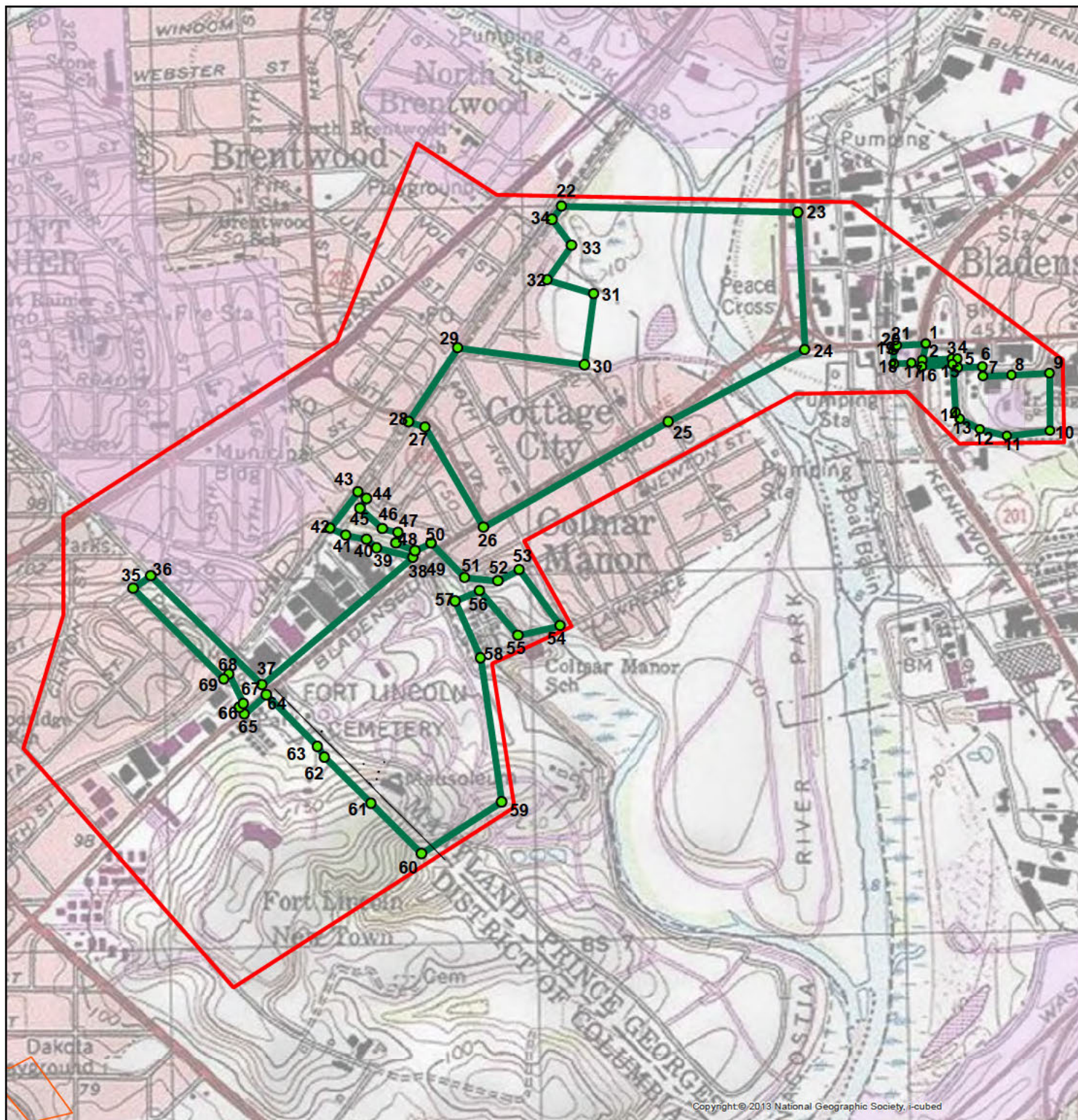
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.





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Maryland State Highway Administration,  
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American Battlefield Protection Program

**Study Area in red, Nominated Areas in green**  
SOURCE USGS 7.5' Series quads: Washington East,  
D.C.-MD, 1979, photorevised.

**Bladensburg Battlefield, PG:68-134**

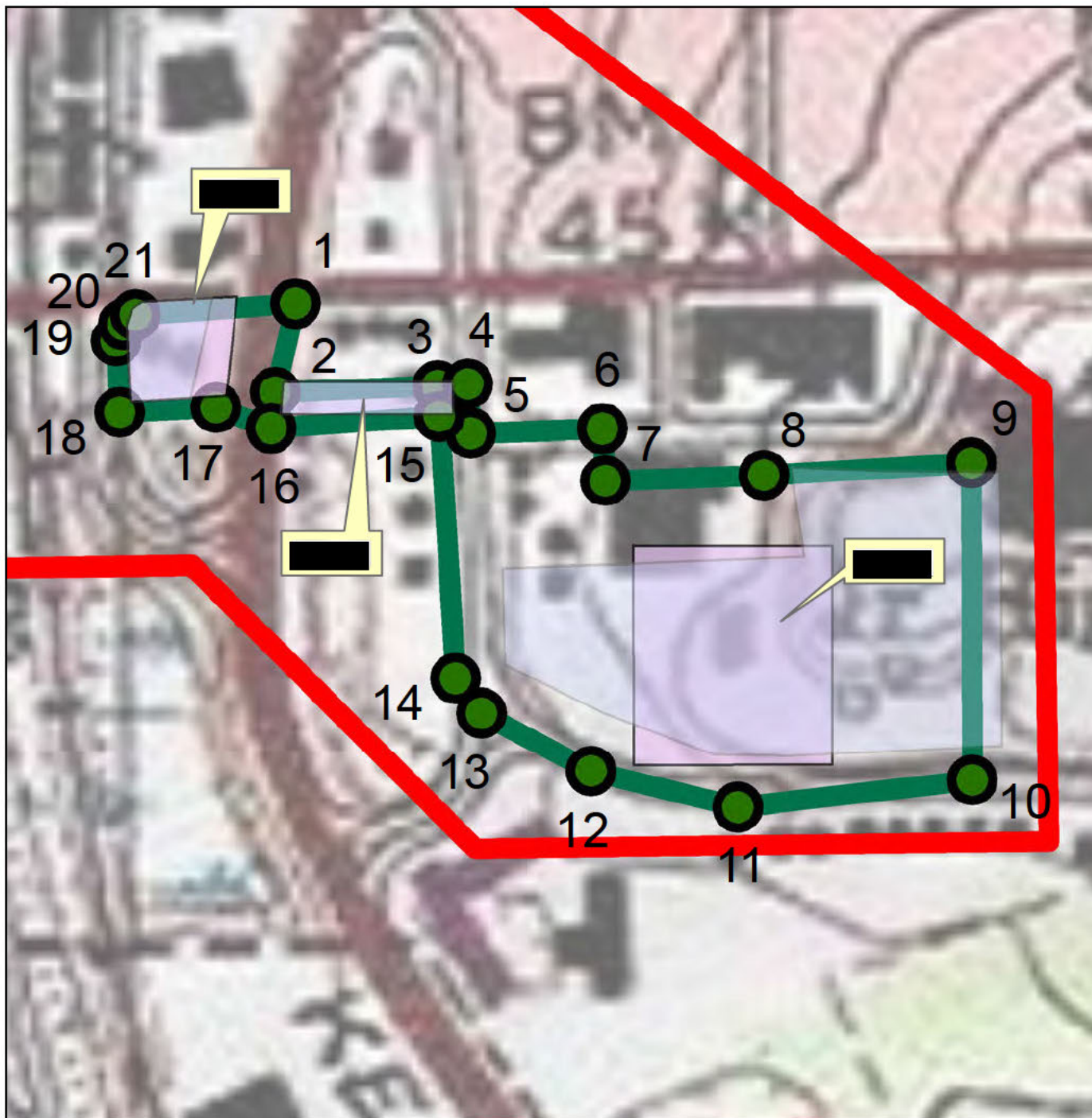


**Map 1**

Scale: 1:15,000







Maryland State Highway Administration,  
for the National Park Service  
American Battlefield Protection Program

**Bladensburg Battlefield, PG:68-134**

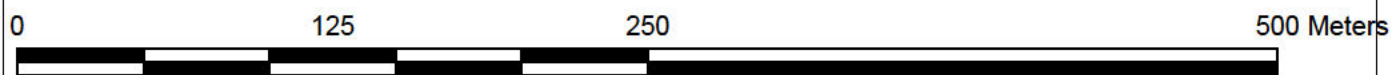


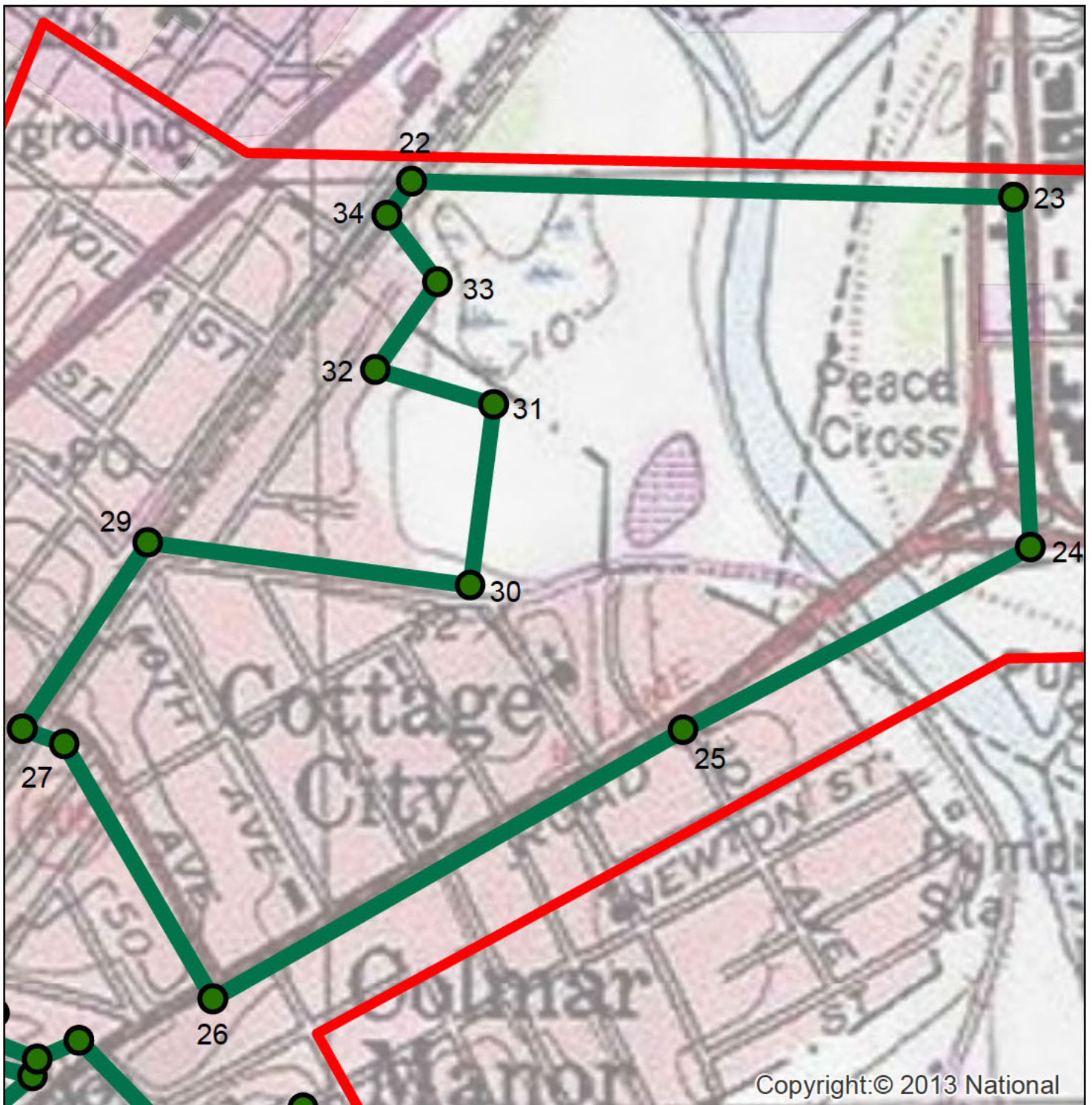
**East Nominated Area**

SOURCE USGS 7.5' Series quads: Washington East,  
D.C.-MD, 1979, photorevised.

**Map 2**

Scale: 1:3,000





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Maryland State Highway Administration,  
for the National Park Service  
American Battlefield Protection Program

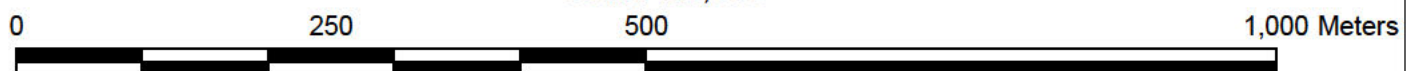


Central Nominated Area  
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D.C.-MD, 1979, photorevised.

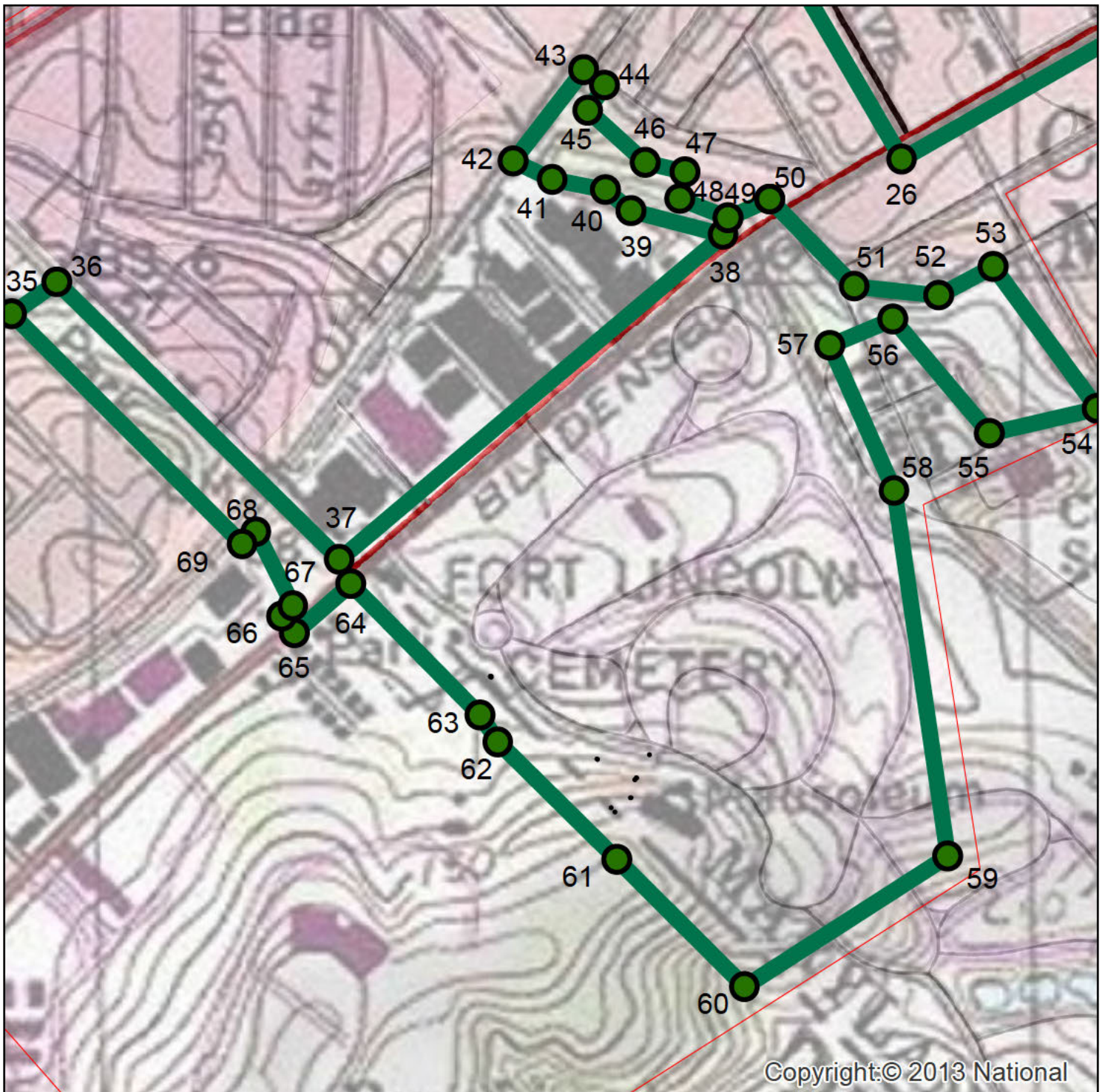
Bladensburg **Battlefield, PG:68-134**

Map 3

Scale: 1:6,000







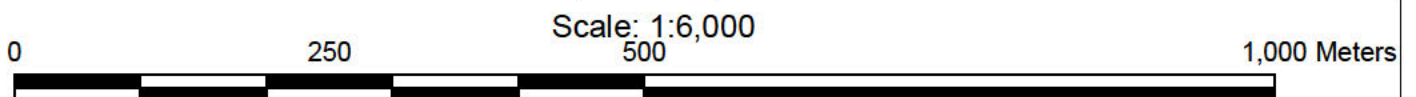
Maryland State Highway Administration,  
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American Battlefield Protection Program



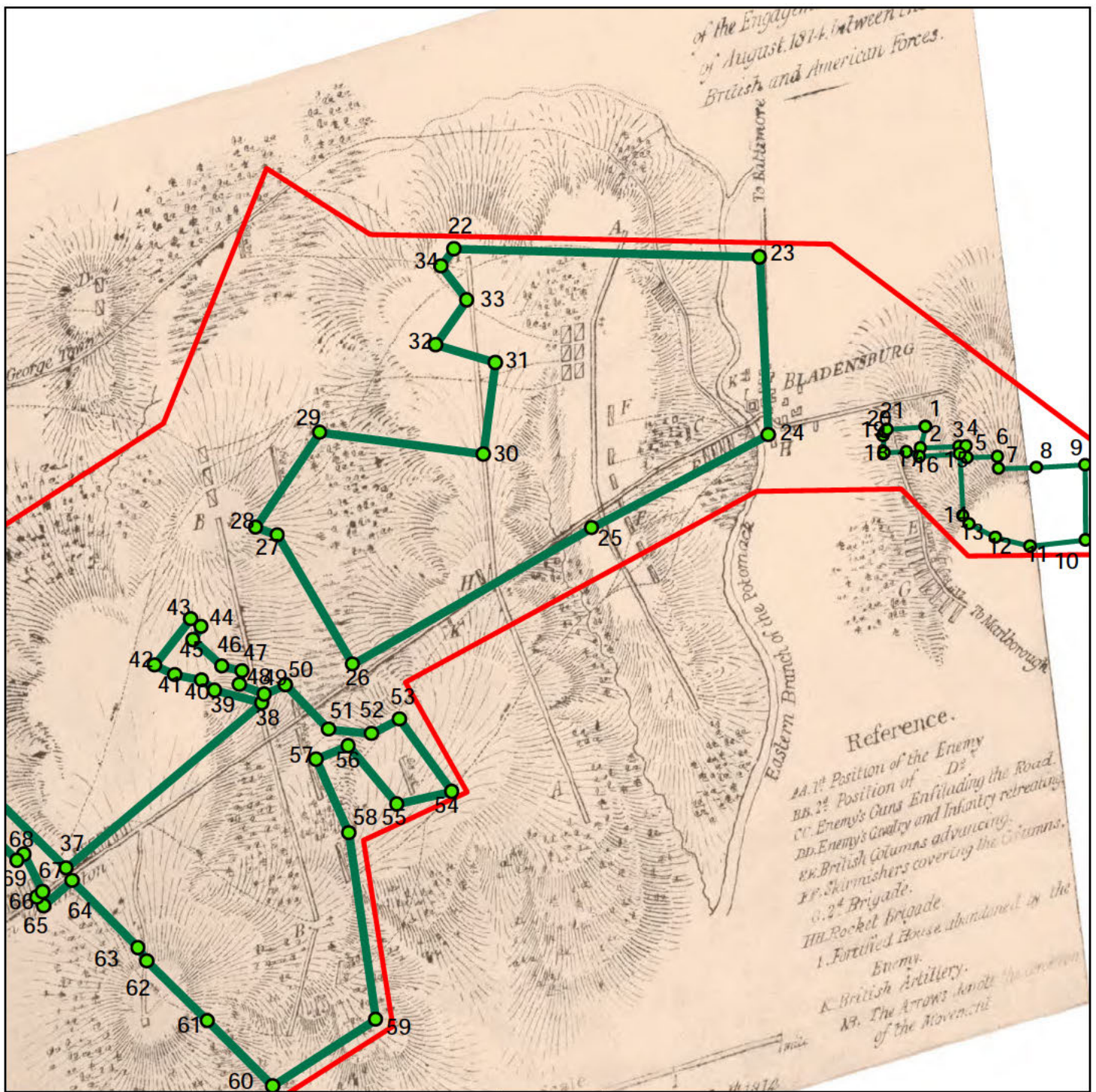
Southwest Nominated Area  
SOURCE USGS 7.5' Series quads: Washington East,  
D.C.-MD, 1979, photorevised.

Bladensburg Battlefield, PG:68-134

Map 4







Maryland State Highway Administration,  
for the National Park Service  
American Battlefield Protection Program

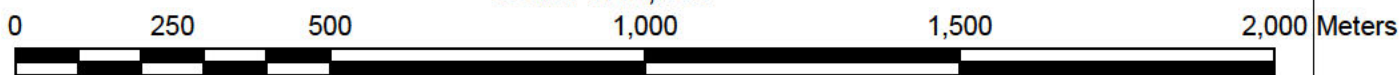
Bladensburg Battlefield, PG:68-134



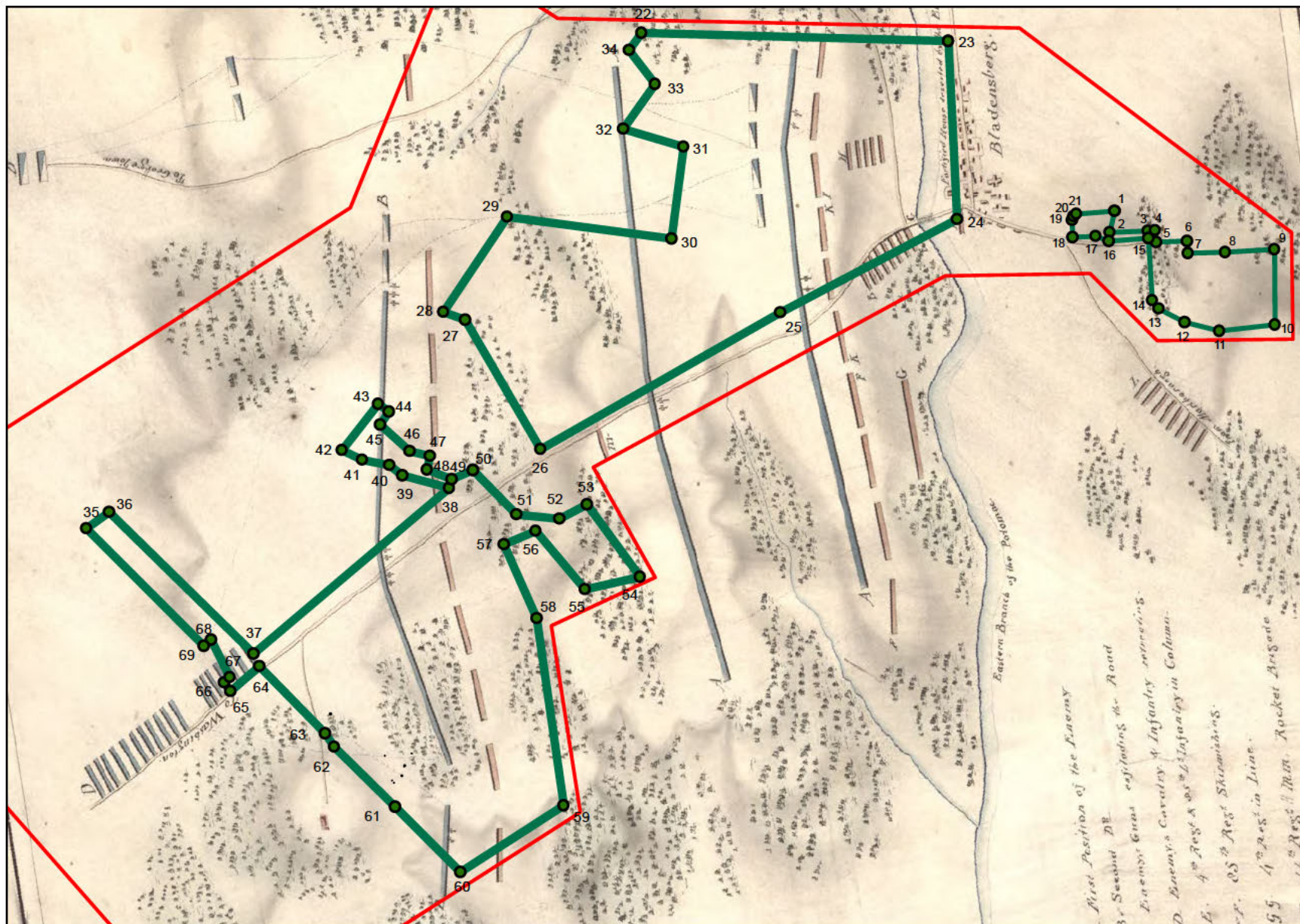
Sketch of the Engagement on the 24th  
of August 1814 between the British and  
American Forces  
by Sir George De Lacy Evans (1816)

Map 5

Scale: 1:12,000







Maryland State Highway Administration, for the  
National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program

**Bladensburg Battlefield, PG:68-134**

Scale: 1:12,000



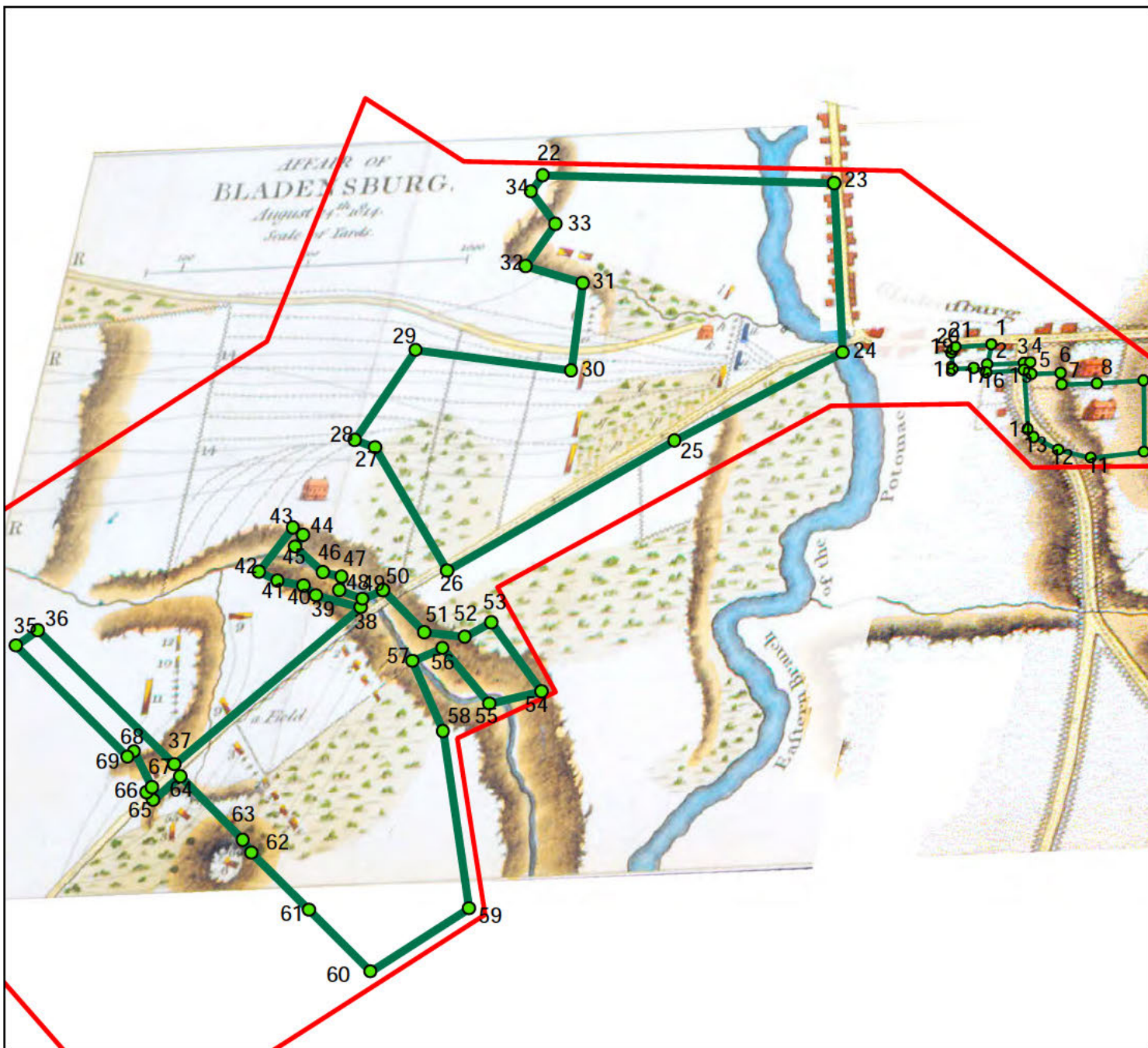
Sketch of the Action fought near  
Bladensburg (sic), August 24th, 1814  
by Sir Thomas Omsby (1816)

**Map 6**

0 250 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500







Maryland State Highway Administration,  
for the National Park Service  
American Battlefield Protection Program

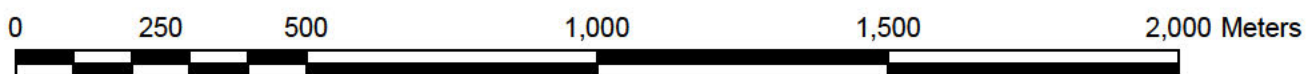


Affair of Bladensburg,  
August 24th, 1814  
by General James Wilkinson (1816)

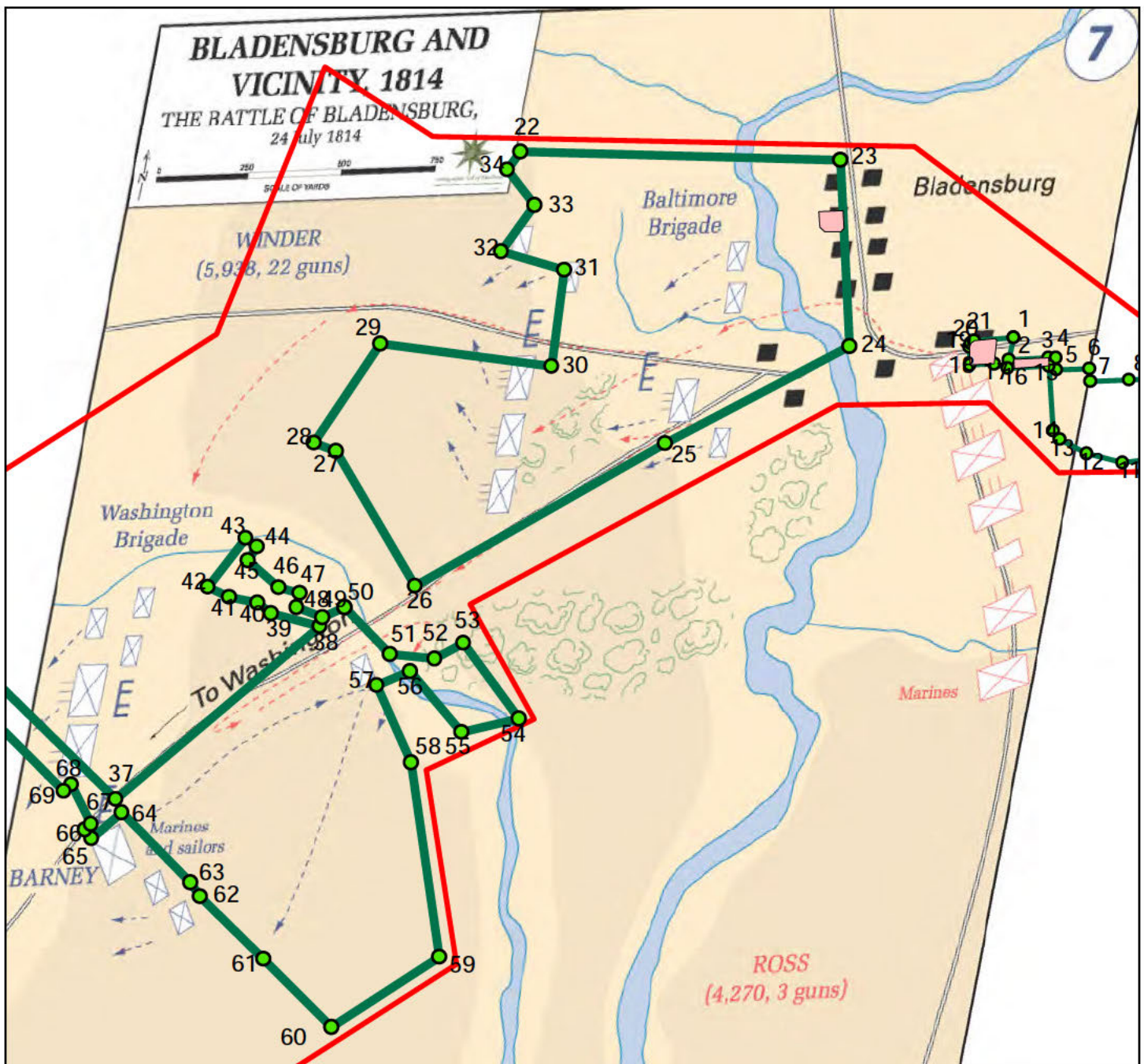
**Bladensburg Battlefield, PG:68-134**

**Map 7**

Scale: 1:13,000







Maryland State Highway Administration,  
 for the National Park Service  
 American Battlefield Protection Program

**Bladensburg Battlefield, PG:68-134**



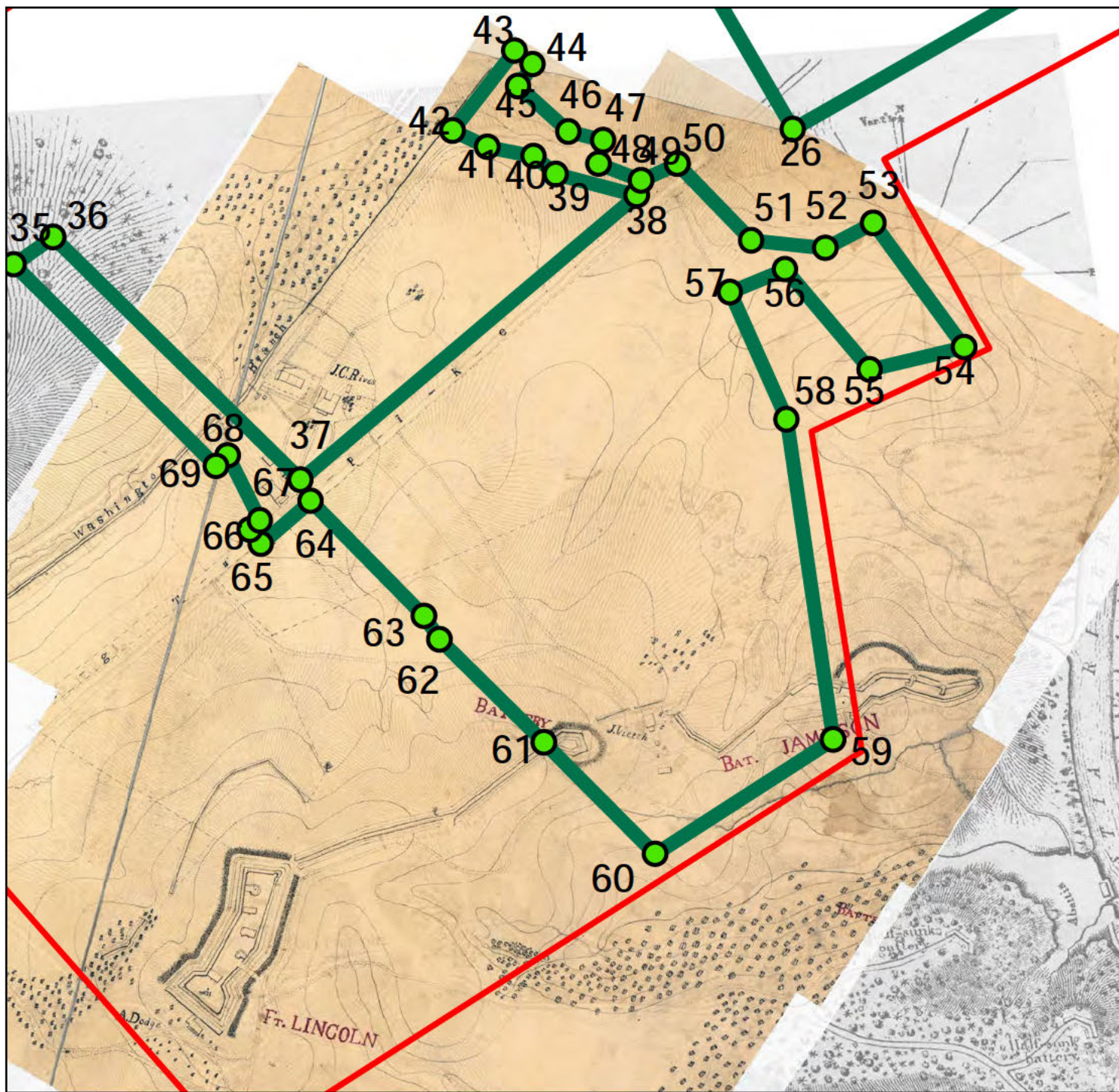
Bladensburg and Vicinity, 1814  
 The Battle of Bladensburg 24 Aug 1814,  
 from [http://www.westpoint.edu/history/  
 SiteAssets/SitePages/War%20of%201812/  
 BladensburgBattle.gif](http://www.westpoint.edu/history/SiteAssets/SitePages/War%20of%201812/BladensburgBattle.gif)

**Map 8**

Scale: 1:12,000







Maryland State Highway Administration,  
for the National Park Service  
American Battlefield Protection Program

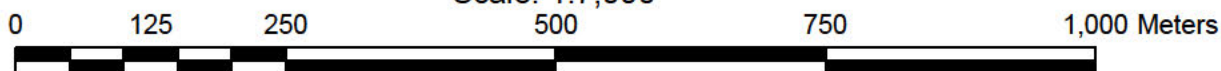
Bladensburg Battlefield, PG:68-134



Battery G Topographic Map 1st Brigade  
Defenses North of the Potomac, Wash.,  
D.C. (in color); and, Entrenchments For  
Defense of Washington (DR169SH156)  
(black & white background)  
by R. A. Hodasevich, Private, 2nd Artillery  
Pennsylvania Volunteers, Battery G (1863)

Map 9

Scale: 1:7,000



**NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN****HOW TO APPLY THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**[Previous](#)[Table of Contents](#)[Next](#)**U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service****II. NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION****Criteria for Evaluation**

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A.** That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B.** That are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or
- C.** That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D.** That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

**Criteria Considerations**

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties *will qualify* if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- a.** A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or



- b.** A building or structure removed from its original location but which is primarily significant for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- c.** A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building associated with his or her productive life; or
- d.** A cemetery that derives its primary importance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
- e.** A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- f.** A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
- g.** A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

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[Comments or Questions](#)

JPJ

## **NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

### **Effects of Listing Maryland Properties**

The National Register of Historic Places is a list of properties acknowledged by the Federal Government as worthy of recognition and preservation for their significance in American history and culture. National Register properties include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of significance to their local community, state, or the nation. The National Register program is part of a national policy to recognize and protect the country's historic and cultural heritage. The National Register is maintained by the Secretary of the Interior and administered by the National Park Service. In Maryland the National Register program is administered by the Maryland Historical Trust, the State Historic Preservation Office.

Benefits of listing in the National Register:

1. The prestige of formal recognition that a property is of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and/or culture. Nomination involves a multiple-step review process that includes professional evaluations of the significance of the property.
2. Consideration in the planning for federally or state assisted projects. Procedures require careful consideration of properties which will be affected by projects involving federal or state funds, licenses, permits, or tax benefits.
3. Eligibility for federal income tax benefits that include: 1) a 20% investment tax credit for a certified rehabilitation of historic commercial, industrial, and rental residential buildings and, 2) a charitable donation deduction for the conveyance of a perpetual easement to a qualified preservation organization.
4. Eligibility for a Maryland income tax benefit for approved rehabilitation.
5. Eligibility to apply for grants and low interest loans for historic preservation projects.

over

6. Consideration of historic values in the decision to issue a surface coal mining permit where coal is located, in accord with the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

Listing in the National Register . . .

does **NOT** mean that the Federal Government or the State of Maryland want to acquire the property, place restrictions on the property, or dictate the colors or materials used on individual buildings. Local ordinances or laws establishing restrictive zoning, special design review committees, or review of exterior alterations, are NOT a part of the National Register program.

does **NOT** require the owner to preserve or maintain the property or seek approval of the Federal Government or the State of Maryland to alter the property. Unless the owner applies for and accepts special federal or state tax, licensing, or funding benefits, the owner can do anything with his property he wishes so long as it is permitted by state and local law.

does **NOT** guarantee preservation of the property. The owner is not required to preserve the property nor is the property protected from the effects of development projects, unless federal or state funding, licensing or tax benefits are involved.

does **NOT** stop federally or state funded or licensed projects when these are desired by the owner and shown to be in the public interest. Procedures do require careful consideration of federally or state funded or licensed projects which call for alteration or demolition of National Register properties before the license is issued or funds released.

does **NOT** impose tax penalties on owners who demolish listed properties.

For further information about the National Register program in Maryland or the eligibility of a property for listing in the National Register, please contact the Office of Research, Survey and Registration of the Maryland Historical Trust at 410-514-7644.

For further information concerning tax benefits, grants, and loans, please contact the Office of Preservation Services at the Trust at 410-514-7628.