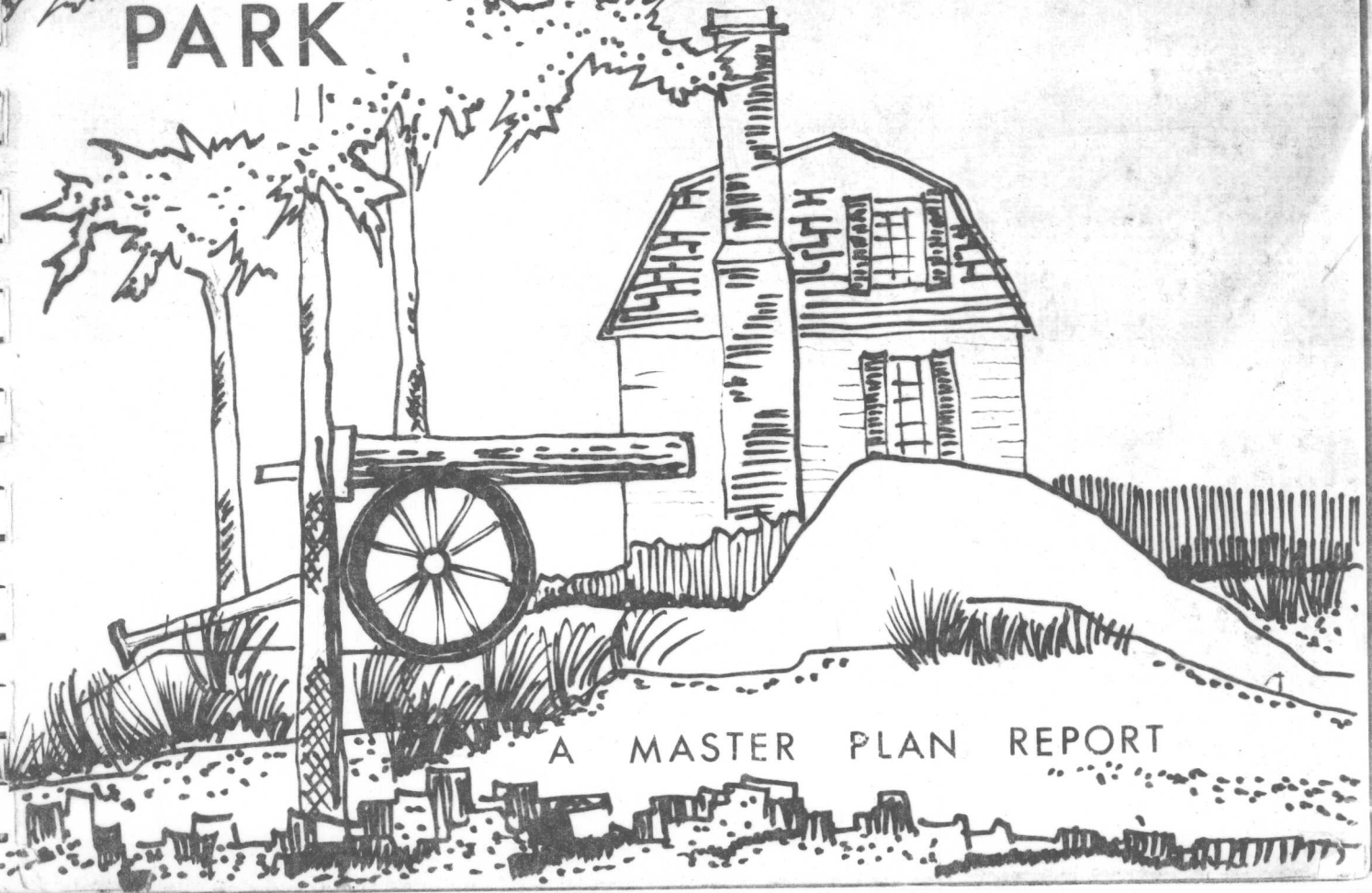


Richmond
RICHMOND

National
NATIONAL

Battlefield
BATTLEFIELD

Park
PARK



A MASTER PLAN REPORT

Land Description

Richmond National Battlefield Park is ten separate parcels of land relating to the defense of the capital of the Confederacy. Description of each of the 10 separate parcels of land included in Richmond NBP are as follows:

- (1) Chimborazo Park - Park Headquarters and the primary Visitor Center are located in an early 20th century building. The 5.6 acre tract is all in lawn and includes part of the site of the famous Confederate Chimborazo Hospital.
- (2) Chickahominy Bluff - The 39.2 acres are mostly forests, and include considerable earthwork fortifications. An interpretive shelter overlooks the Chickahominy Valley and it was from this vicinity that Lee watched his army launch the Seven Days' Battle.
- (3) Beaver Dam Creek - This is an 11.95-acre creek bottom, where Confederates unsuccessfully attacked a well-fortified Union command. An old millrace and a few faint traces of field fortifications is all that remains. Wayside exhibits tell the story.
- (4) Watt House and Site - The battle of Gaines' Mill, the bloodiest of the Seven Days' Battles, was fought here. The 60-acre tract is mostly forested. The Watt House itself is an exterior restoration. The interior is used as an employee residence. Interpre-

tive facilities included wayside exhibits and a trail to the "break-through point."

- (5) Cold Harbor Area - A 1.8 mile loop drive provides access to this 154.25 acre woodland. Numerous field fortifications mark the battle lines. A secondary visitor center is located near the entrance.
- (6) Garthright House - This house was used as a field hospital during the battle of Cold Harbor. The exterior has been restored and the interior will be used as a employee residence. This 2.10 acre parcel is across Va. 156 from the Cold Harbor National Cemetery.
- (7) Malvern Hill - A wayside interpretive shelter overlooks a scene that appears much as it did when a battlefield in 1862. Approximately a third of the 130,60 acres is devoted to this scene. The remainder is in woodland and is available for other compatible use.
- (8) Fort Harrison - The 7-mile-park drive begins at New Market Road (Va. Route 5) and follows a series of earthworks to Fort Brady on the James River. Parking areas and wayside exhibits exist at Forts Gilmer, Gregg, Johnson, and Hoke. There is a self-guiding trail through Fort Brady. In the immediate vicinity of Fort Har-

risson is a secondary visitor center, self-guiding trails, picnic area, maintenance area, and two residences. The total area of this tract is more than 310 acres.

- (9) Fort Darling - The 15.95 acre parcel contains a large earthen fort located atop a 90-foot bluff, overlooking James River. An eroding bluff and an adjacent county landfill create sizeable problems here.
- (10) Parker's Battery - This forested tract of 9.82 acres was located on a Richmond defense line and includes one earthwork remains. A wayside marker is at the site but since it is off the beaten path the area receives very little use.

Basic Data

Chickahominy Bluffs was acquired as an 84.9-acre gift from the E.I. DuPont de Nemours Co. in October 1958, by a transfer of title first to the Eastern National Park and Monument Association. The land contains a representative portion of the Richmond outer defense line -- rifle pits, gun emplacements, and their appurtenances. It is located 1.6 miles southwest from Mechanicsville, on the south side of the Chickahominy River, and fronting on the east side of U.S. Route 360 (Mechanicsville Turnpike). It includes a portion of the crest of the river valley bluffs from which Confederate cannon duelled with Union artillery occupying Mechanicsville prior to the Seven Days Battle. It was in this area that General Robert E. Lee had his command post on June 26, 1862, when he launched the attack that opened the series of conflicts and maneuvers known as the Seven Days Battle, thus successfully turning aside the first, and the most serious Federal threat to Richmond until late in the war.

Before title to Chickahominy Bluffs was transferred to the United States in October 1960, there was acquired by exchange a 4.1-acre parcel of land adjacent to both U.S. Route 360 and the south side of the original plot, to provide a suitable access. The land exchanged was a 40.6-acre portion comprising the southeastern half of the original gift plot, plus an additional 1.4-acre portion forming a 60-foot road right-of-way

to U.S. Route 360. This approximately bisects the remaining northwestern half of the original gift plot. This bisected northwestern portion and the 4.1 acres acquired for access comprise the 29.2 acres presently in this Park unit.

The land on the bluff affords a sweeping panoramic view of the Chickahominy River valley, Mechanicsville, and the area of the Battle of Beaver Dam Creek, providing an overview of the first day and the first two events of the Seven Days Battle. The Park fronts on 4-lane U.S. Route 360, which connects with the circumferential route, Laburnum Avenue, less than half a mile to the south. Two miles south of the Park, U.S. Route 360 connects with Interstate 64, which in turn forms a junction with Interstate 95 in downtown Richmond. By this fast, 4-lane route, Chickahominy Bluffs is a ten minute drive from anywhere in downtown Richmond. Via the supporting circumferentials, it is not more than 20 minutes from anywhere in the greater metropolitan Richmond area. Three miles northeast of the Park, U.S. Route 360 will soon connect with a new suburban circumferential, Va. "I" Route 295.

Beaver Dam Creek was fought on the afternoon of the first day of the Seven Days Battle, June 26, 1862, on one of those typical plateau-creek-plateau battlefields. (Some historians hold that the engagement at King's Schoolhouse, fought on June 28 was the first battle of the Seven Days.) Union forces under General Fitz-John Porter were dug in

and awaiting the Confederate advance across the Chickahominy River and through Mechanicsville, just abandoned by Union infantry. The battle, which generated about 1,700 casualties, mostly Confederate, achieved the Union objectives of attrition and delay. Under the threat of increased pressure, Union forces withdrew toward Gaines' Mill during the night. The conflict demonstrated raw courage and the crude state of the tactical arts while revealing much of the intended strategy of both sides.

The 11.95 acres in the Beaver Dam Creek unit were all acquired prior to establishment. It consists of a strip of stream and bottom land about 700 feet wide and 1000 feet long, enclosing the Ellerson Mill site and a section of the millrace. A 30-foot by 900-foot strip of land projecting upstream from the north end of this plot contains an additional stretch of millrace, which was used as a Union infantry parapet. Neither valley wall nor any plateau land is within the boundaries. The western boundary of the park is, for the most part, the right-of-way of Va. Route 156. Present Virginia State Highway Department projections call for a "re-aligned" Va. Route 156; this road would cut through the base of the 900-foot millrace projection of the property, and lie adjacent to the remaining north boundary, probably at a considerable elevation. The region around this park is on the verge of an explosive period of suburban development triggered by new

transportation routes and the avid metropolitan need for additional housing. A housing project is now within a few hundred yards of the northwest corner of the park.

Gaines' Mill was fought at distances more than half a mile southeast of the mill. General Fitz-John Porter, retreating from Beaver Dam Creek, took a defensive position behind the swamps along Boatswain Creek on June 27, 1862, and again awaited a Confederate thrust. It came, misdirected by General Robert E. Lee's conviction that the Federals would retreat northeast toward White House, on the Pamunkey River.

In reality, Porter's Corps and its supporting units were buying time for the remainder of the Army of the Potomac to execute a change of base southeastward, toward the James River. In this most bitter and costly battle of the Seven Days, Union casualties were 6,800, Confederate losses, 8,700. A Confederate charge at nightfall broke the Federal line, and Porter's men retreated across the Chickahominy River during the night.

The 60.2-acre Watt House unit of the park commemorating this battle, centers on the restored farm home of the Watt family, driven away by the battle, never to return. Around the house, agricultural permits help maintain a plantation aspect on unwooded portions of the battlefield.

A 30-foot wide access road bisects the park -- a condition of the original terms of acquisition, prior to park establishment. Because this road runs through the center of interpretive developments and the visitor circulation pattern, it has been the subject of litigation in the past and continues to exert a depressing influence upon interpretive developments and public relations. Park boundaries are all essentially within view of the Watt House, imposing other presently insurmountable restrictions on attempts to achieve a convincing authenticity for this exhibit. Lifting these restrictions would result in a significant resource for an 1830-62 period exhibit, with good potential for "working plantation," or "living farm" and architectural emphasis. This would not detract from a proper presentation and interpretation of the Battle of Gaines' Mill on the site.

The Watt House unit lies directly in the path of one of the most vigorous suburban development patterns affecting Richmond NBP. This is equally true of Cold Harbor and the Garthright House units of the park; the Cold Harbor National Cemetery lies between them, but is not NPS operated. The Cold Harbor-Gaines' Mill area has more than doubled in population in the last five years. The new circumferential, Va. Route 295, will pass within a few hundred yards of the present Watt House unit boundary. The park setting is in extremely rapid transition from rural to suburban, with tract-type housing developments predominating. For these reasons, and because foreseeable population densities project

formidable recreational resource demands in this area, it is recommended that optimum boundaries for the Watt House unit be determined with careful attention to the needs of the neighboring Cold Harbor and Garthright House units.

Old Cold Harbor was a seedy looking tavern squatting by a dusty crossroads 8 miles from Richmond on the flat plain north of the Chickahominy River. The name indicates a place to get a bed for the night and something cold to drink, but no hot meals. Those dusty crossroads were strategically important if Grant was to attack Richmond, and both Grant and Lee realized it. It was Grant's last chance to get between Lee and Richmond. In the race for initial possession, Lee's cavalry won by a few hours, but on May 31, 1864, Grant's cavalry, armed with Spencer repeating rifles, drove them and a supporting infantry brigade out. On June 1 and 2 attacks by soldiers of the Armies of the Potomac and James gained ground, but Confederate counterattack prevented a Union breakthrough.

Grant launched a massive assault along two and one-half miles of his six-mile front, on the morning of June 3. It was over in 30 minutes, and 7,000 Union casualties were left lying the hot sun between the trenches. By the time Grant pulled out ten days later to steal a march on General Lee and cross the James and begin the investment of Petersburg, his casualties had mounted to 12,700, as opposed to about 2,000 for the Confederates. Richmond was saved once more.

The Cold Harbor battlefield unit contains 154,25 acres centered on part of the field over which Grant assaulted on June 3. Besides being one of the most significant battles fought near Richmond, there are many intricate examples of Civil War military earthworks. An eye-witness reported, "They are intricate, ziz-zagged lines within lines, lines protecting flanks of lines, lines built to enfilade opposing lines * * * works within works and works outside works, each laid out with some definite design." Now, a 1.25-mile loop tour road leads from a small unattended secondary Visitor Center along half a mile of Confederate works, then crosses over and swings back along the Union front. The Park is essentially woodland, but one small field is under an agricultural use permit. A legal farm access road runs from the northeast turn of the tour road through the north boundary into private land, in accordance with a provision in the original deed of acquisition, prior to Park establishment. The right-of-way of Va. Route 156 forms the south boundary of Cold Harbor unit.

The Garthright House is located .2-miles east of the Cold Harbor tour road exist, just past the Cold Harbor National Cemetery (not NPS operated), on the south side of Va. Route 156.

Architects have tentatively dated some of the oldest part of this handsome house from the early 1700s. Just behind the Union lines during the Battle of Cold Harbor in 1864, it bears bullet scars and there are

stories of its use as a hospital, first for Union, then for Confederate casualties. It was donated prior to Park establishment, and was restored as an exterior exhibit by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937.

The 2.1 acres upon which this exhibit is located are not adequate for a proper yard for this building, without mention of interpretive facilities, parking installations, or other protection considerations. The property is afforded some care through a special use permit held by the Pamunkey Women's Club. Their attempts to exhibit the interior of the building on a fee basis failed, and the premises serve only as a meeting place for the Club. The property is repeatedly vandalized, and periodically burglarized with impunity by reason of its isolated situation and inadequate provision for its protection. The house has interpretive potential. Certainly the architecture is strong and authentic. The site has persistently been proposed as a location for a field hospital medical exhibit, with correlated interpretive services. In the summer of 1970 the house was seriously damaged by fire.

The future of the property seems dependent upon boundary changes to provide adequate space for interpretive facilities and provision for resource protection. In view of the proximity of Watt House, Cold Harbor, and Cold Harbor National Cemetery, and in view of the previously described growth-potential of the surrounding community, there may be

wisdom in considering a common exterior boundary for all in the area, and the inclusion of urban-park recreational lands for use other than historical preservation.

Malvern Hill was fought July 1, 1862, the day after the Confederate fiasco at Glendale, on ground of McClellan's choosing -- a gently rising eminence terminating southwardly in bluffs on the James River valley. The position was flanked on either side by deep ravine less than a mile apart. Across this narrow front were placed Union batteries, with the guns almost hub to hub. In front the ground was open, sloping down to woods, marshes, and swamps in which the Confederate had to form for attack within range of Federal artillery. Ignorance of the country, dense forests, poor communications, and the extreme difficulty of the ground prevented the Confederate battle lines from attacking until late in mid-afternoon. Then, the Confederate artillery was unable to deliver effective supporting fire. General John Magruder attacked first, and was beaten back with heavy losses. D. H. Hill then assaulted, to meet a similar fate. General Benjamin Huger then hurled his two brigades against the right angle in the Union line. Repulsed they fell back as Magruder committed five fresh brigades. The Confederate infantry charged up the slope to be cut to pieces by double charges of canister. Union infantry stood in line of battle and their crashing rolleys wreaked havoc on the unrushing Confederates, who were unable to coordinate their efforts. Just before dusk,

General Thomas J. Jackson came up with his corps, but delayed by the woods and swamps was able to commit only a few brigades before darkness put a stop to the slaughter.

During the night General George McClellan continued his withdrawal, and the next day found the Army of the Potomac safe at Harrison's Landing (Berkeley Plantation), under the protection of the Federal gunboats on the James. The Seven Days were over. Total casualties: Army of Northern Virginia, 20,614; Army of the Potomac, 15,849.

Acquisition of the 130.6-acre Malvern Hill tract was accomplished prior to Park establishment. It is located approximately two and one-half miles south of Glendale, and is sectioned by Va. Route 156. An off-set north in the southern Park boundary excludes the Crew House site. The original Crew House was an important landmark during the battle; there is now a modern residence on the old foundations. The west boundary of this tract follows the banks of the seasonal water-course that fronted the Federal left. Park property does not extend north far enough to include any except the most advanced Confederate positions. Along the first 915 feet of Union artillery positions west of Va. Route 156, only the first 865 feet in front of the guns is Park land.

About three-fourths of the tract of land west of the road is woodland; all 100 acres is currently under grazing and general farming special use permits.

East of Va. Route 156, the south boundary of this unit is off-set 253 feet farther north than the boundary line west of the road. The Union artillery positions along the entire 888-foot width of this tract are excluded. The land runs northwardly 1,894 feet to an acute-angle terminus on the Va. Route 156 right-of-way 750 feet north of its junction with Carter's Mill Road. The western boundary of the parcel is on Va. Route 156 right-of-way. This land was occupied during the battle by infantry and artillery defending the Union center. More than half, or about 17 acres of the tract is open field, under a general farming special use permit. The remainder is woodland. There are no interpretive installations.

Management and interpretation of the Malvern Hill area pivots on the restrictive, artificial boundaries, which include much of the ground defended by Morell's division and across which D. H. Hill's left flank brigades and Hugar's division assaulted. The area has no buffering, and is situated so as to be vulnerable to off-site encroachments on the historic scene. Lack of control over vistas make an on-site orientation to the battle situation very difficult, with little of the key terrain in view. No Confederate positions of consequence are included in the Park. The "Y" intersection of Carter's Mill Road and Va. Route 156 is an especially historically important exclusion. This intersection will become an early locus of settlement in the immediate area, which is as yet limited to farm-

steads, except for the growing concentration of homes at Glendale and the beginnings of a cross-roads community at the junction of Va. Route 156 and Va. Route 5.

The plateau land east of Va. Route 156 and south of the course of Turkey Island Creek is desirable for interpretive purposes, both delineation of the battle action and orientation to the James River escape route would be enhanced. The bluff (south) side of this area would lend itself to development of administrative and visitor use facilities. Some land in this area is suitable for non-historically oriented recreational activities.

Interpretively significant high ground immediately south of that portion of the Park west of Va. Route 156 also appears to be essential to an adequately buffered and protected historic scene.

Fort Harrison was one of the effects of McClellan's Peninsular Campaign of 1862. That campaign caused much anxiety for the safety of Richmond. After the Seven Days Battle, the war shifted to other sectors, and for nearly two years, while the armies fought in northern Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, the defensive perimeter of Richmond was extended and strengthened. By September 1864 Fort Harrison was a strong earthwork commanding the southeastern approaches to the city.

In the pred-dawn darkness of September 29, 1864, General Grant, intent upon tightening his investment of Petersburg, slipped a strong force across the James River in a surprise move against the outer defenses of Richmond. His goal was two-fold -- to keep the Confederate from concentrating against the Army of the Potomac as its thrust toward the Boydton Plank Road, and to prevent General Lee from sending reinforcements to General Jubel early in the Shenandoah Valley. During the morning, soldiers of the Army of the James stormed heavily armed but badly undermanned Fort Harrison. General Hiram Burnham, commanding the leading brigade, was killed in the assault, and the captured fort was renamed in his honor. A mile and a half to the north, another Federal force was repulsed in an attack on Fort Gilmer.

General Lee considered the loss of Fort Harrison serious enough to demand his personal attention. The next day, with reinforcements rushed up from Petersburg, he directed several virorous assaults against the fort. The Union defenders had closed in the rear and strengthened it, and they successfully beat back the attacks inflicting heavy losses on the Confederates. Total casualties in the two-day battle of Chaffin's Farm exceeded casualties at first Manassas.

The loss of Fort Harrison caused Lee to draw back his outer defense line and build new earthworks. He was also forced to extend his

lines north of the James--ultimately to White Oak Swamp, about seven miles northeast of Fort Harrison. To protect their new position and neutralize Confederate ironclads on the James, Federal troops constructed Fort Brady about four miles south of Fort Harrison, on a high bluff overlooking James River. Although a number of limited attacks were made on General Lee's new line between White Oak Swamps and the James, usually in conjunction with efforts to extend the Union lines fronting Petersburg farther west, no major effort was made to breakthrough in this sector. North of the James, the troops continued to confront one other until the break through at Petersburg on April 2, 1865, compelled the Confederates to evacuate the area and abandon Richmond.

The 315-acre Fort Harrison unit of the Park was acquired prior to park establishment. As commonly applied, the designation embraces all park land lying along Battlefield Drive from its junction with Va. Route 5 about 2 miles north of Varina, to Fort Brady on the South. Placenames used for portions of this property, listed sequentially from the north, are: Battery Alexander, Fort Gilmer, Fort Gregg, Fort Johnson, Fort Harrison, Battery White, Fort Hoke, Fort Maury, and Fort Brady. The Battlefield Drive which connects these points is six miles long, including access spurs from Battlefield Drive to Varina Road just north of the Fort Harrison Visitor Center, and from Battlefield Drive on Osborn Turnpike at Fort Hoke. There is no

developed access to Fort Maury. The Fort Harrison Park unit has the configuration of a parkway, with very narrow boundaries along most of the road. Intended to follow and display a segment of the perimeter defense line around Richmond, Battlefield Drive has nodes at intervals, embracing larger parcels of land where strongpoints on the Union and Confederate lines occurred. Fort Harrison, containing 195 acres, is by far the largest and is historically the most important of these; other features of the line, especially Fort Gilmer, have some significance as examples of the Richmond perimeter defenses (which are also displayed at Chickahominy Bluffs), and as artillery outposts in support of Fort Harrison and Chaffin's Bluff. The latter was a Confederate stronghold, in 1864, lying west of Fort Harrison on the east bank of the James.

Initial preservation efforts at Richmond National Battlefield Park were carried out by the Civilian Conservation Corps. A camp was quartered at Fort Harrison. The Park Maintenance Division is still housed in building erected at that time. Two employee quarters now exist on this site. Near the Fort is a three-room log cabin, another artifact of that period, that served as Park Headquarters from establishment until 1957. The cabin has recently been designed as a facility of the Environmental Awareness Study Area lying east of the Fort. A 25-table picnic area, situated on the access spur between

Varina Road and Battlefield Drive just north of the Fort Harrison Visitor Center, completes the facilities in this area.

By far the most significant management problems at Fort Harrison unit results from the multiplicity of legal private accesses onto Battlefield Drive. It can be said that these accesses, and the resultant property development, prevent attainment of most of the desirable characteristics of a parkway or scenic drive, and strongly negate historical preservation. The pattern has been to develop adjoining properties in the manner that would prevail on any suburban avenue. Short driveways lead from Battlefield Drive directly into the front or side yards of unscreened private dwellings representing a wide spectrum of economic levels. Many are less than a hundred feet off the park right-of-way. Mail boxes, paper racks, and reflectorized markers adorn Battlefield Drive at each such access, and there exists legal provision for these accesses at intervals of 400-500 feet along the major portion of Battlefield Drive.

One rural landowner has a total of seven legal access, six of them on a single half-mile stretch of park road. Another developer has just completed a transaction with the National Park Service that enables him to build 90 tract houses under the southern exposure of Fort Harrison, and empty the entire traffic load thus generated onto Battlefield Drive via several 80-foot accesses to his property. This type of off-site audio and visual intrusion and on-site non-recreational

traffic and non-conforming use is most acute between the north end of Battlefield Drive and Fort Johnson; on the east side of Battlefield Drive from Fort Harrison to Battery White; on both sides of Battlefield Drive from Battery White to half-a-mile south of Fort Hoke; and on the east side of Battlefield Drive from Kingsland Road to Fort Brady. It is interesting that the lattermost accesses were legalized by an alteration of deeds accomplished, on petition from the State of Virginia, twenty years after the park was established.

From the standpoint of historical preservation and interpretive development, boundary changes appear to be a necessary prerequisite for acquiring a Fort Harrison management unit that encompasses the minimum expanses of vista, allows visitor-use and administrative facilities on non-historically sensitive locations, provides controlled access to permit development of an effective protection posture in an increasingly urban environment, and diverts non-recreational traffic and other non-conforming uses.

From the broader viewpoint of regional development patterns, the entire expanse of rural land, most of it under cultivation, lying between Fort Harrison and the James River seems strategically located and possessed of high potential for a spacious urban park. There are resources present to provide a whole spectrum of recreational activities. There is room for a Park large enough to contribute significantly to the foreseeable needs of the urban explosion now under way in this area.

Such a Park would permit development of a historical interpretive theme involving both Fort Harrison and Drewry's Bluff, (west of the James), while providing ample space and resources for non-historically-oriented recreational activity.

Drewry's Bluff, a 70-foot high promontory on the west bank of James River, eight miles below Richmond, was fortified in anticipation of McClellan's Campaign of 1862. The fall of Norfolk and destruction of Virginia opened James River to the Union fleet, and on May 15 two ironclads, Monitor and Galena, and several other gunboats attempted to reduce and pass Drewry's Bluff to shell Richmond. Sunken obstacles in the river and punishing fire from the fort so decisively denied this goal that no further attempts were made. For the remainder of the war, Drewry's Bluff served as the Main Camp of Instruction for the Confederate States Navy and Marine Corps. The fortifications continued to be strengthened during the war. General P. G. T. Beauregard repulsed an attack on Drewry's Bluff by an army under General Benjamin F. Butler in May 1864 and drove the Union force behind their fixed positions on the Howlett Line, stretching from near Farrar's Island on the James River southward to an anchor-point on the Appomattox. Opposing forces confronted each other across the Howlett Line from this time until the evacuation of Richmond.

The 15.95-acre Drewry's Bluff (Fort Darling) park unit, perched on an eroding clay-gravel bluff 70 feet above the James River eight

mies from Capital Square in Richmond, contains an earthen fort designed in 1862 for the purpose of denying the James River route to Richmond to enemy forces. The works now threatened by erosion of the river bank are in remarkably good condition. A small stream in a deep ravine immediately under the south side of the fort approximates the park boundary on that side, and becomes the west boundary line. Presently, Chesterfield County is operating a land-fill dump on land bordering the south and southwest banks of this stream. The north boundary of the unit is an artificial property line between the Park and a Shell Oil Company refinery. On the west (creek) boundary, a 60-foot wide corridor extends from the creek to the right-of-way of Va. Route 1438, which terminates in a turning circle at that point. This corridor contains the footpath and bridge abutment which forms the only public access to Drewry's Bluff. In 1960 Chesterfield County agreed to improve and maintain the present Va. Route 1438 approach road to Drewry's Bluff in exchange for fee simple title to 7.58 acres of land lying adjacent to the Shell Oil Company property and west of the present park boundary. This strip of land was once intended for use as the primary access route to Drewry's Bluff. While no agreement exists about the future use of the present land-fill dump and the land adjacent to the terminus of present Va. Route 1438, indications are that Chesterfield County expects to develop a recreational resource there when the land-fill

operation is complete. At present the brow of the ravine west of the Drewry's Bluff west boundary and adjacent to the access corridor, is a very poorly maintained picnic area. This results in frequent adverse reactions from patrons who assume that land to be park property. An unsightly fence parallels the final one-eighth miles of Va. Route 1438, enclosing but not screening the active land-fill operation, only about 300 yards from the park access corridor leading into Drewry's Bluff.

The most serious protection (preservation) problem at Drewry's Bluff is the rapid eroding away of the bluff that forms the eastern park boundary--the west bank of the James River. Civil War photographs indicated losses of up to about 100 feet since that time, or an annual loss averaging about 9 to 12 inches. Portions of the fort's major works, i.e., gun emplacements, parapet, a ditch, and the base of the fort curtain, or outer wall, are rapidly washing away. A Project Construction Proposal in the amount of \$1,220,000 to repair and stabilize about 100 feet of this bluff was approved in August, 1970, but has not been programmed.

All external boundaries of Drewry's Bluff are vulnerable. Buffering is essential. This Park unit is a 30-minute drive from the present Park Headquarters--12.5 miles through parts of three densely populated communities: Richmond, Bensley and Bellwood. There are, however, no human habitations in the immediate vicinity of the Park. The degree

of isolation and vulnerability makes effective protection impossible with present staffing and facilities. Drewry's Bluff has the highest incidence of vandalism and non-conforming use of all Richmond NBP units. A practical solution appears to be acquisition of adequate buffering and boundary security, and provision for an employee resident on site.

Parker's Battery formed part of the defensive works designed to protect Confederate communication line between Richmond and Petersburg from the Federal Army of the James. Landed from transports on James River in May 1864, this army under General Benjamin F. Butler occupied City Point (Hopewell) and pushed forward, gaining a lodgment on the railroad connecting Petersburg and Richmond. On May 15-16 a Federal thrust at Drewry's Bluff was repulsed by troops under General P. G. T. Beauregard, who then drove the Federals back behind their prepared works. Thereafter this front was relatively quiet. Confederate artillery in Parker's Battery occasionally fired at the enemy, tended their cows and chickens, and waited until forced out by the evacuation of Richmond almost a year later.

Situated on the military trenchwork system known as the Howlett Line, Parker's Battery is about 5 miles south of Drewry's Bluff and about 0.6 miles east of the intersection of Interstate Highway 95 with Va. Route 10. At establishment, Parker's Battery contained only 3.25 acres. In 1956, after almost ten years of negotiation, an additional 6.57 acres

was acquired in a 3-cornered exchange by which the donor of record was reimbursed by Virginia Electric and Power Company, who received from the National Park Service a perpetual high-voltage power line right-of-way across (almost parallel to the west boundary of the Park). This exchange of interstate brought the site to its present size of 9.82 acres.

Va. Route 898, just off the north boundary of this unit, is the former Va. Route 10, which is now a 4-lane highway located farther north. Between Va. Route 898 and the Park boundary is a 30-foot right-of-way easement. This easement also exists between the Seaboard Railroad right-of-way and the Park boundary on the east, as well as along the westernmost 440 feet of the south boundary. The remainder of the south boundary and the west boundary about private holdings. The legal status of the easements just described has never been tested, but the weight of opinion is that the Park has no legal access by reason of their existence.

Wedged on three sides by a railroad, a power transmission line and a public roadway, respectively, and located in an area destined for industrial developments which are already moving in adjacent to the Park, the future of this small tract as parkland appears negligible. Its historic role is that of a segment of the line General Grant extended from Petersburg eastward to and along the Howlett Line,

thence to Fort Brady, Fort Harrison, and on to White Oak Swamp. A reevaluation of its potential may disclose other methods of interpreting this phase of the final siege of the Confederate heartland.