

Siege of Port Hudson

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Siege of Port Hudson** occurred from May 21 to July 9, 1863, when Union Army troops assaulted and then surrounded the Mississippi River town of Port Hudson, Louisiana, during the American Civil War.

In cooperation with Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's offensive against Vicksburg, Mississippi, Union Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks's army moved against the Confederate stronghold at Port Hudson on the Mississippi River. On May 27, 1863, after their frontal assaults were repulsed, the Federals settled into a siege that lasted for 48 days. Banks renewed his assaults on June 14 but the defenders successfully repelled them. On July 9, 1863, after hearing of the fall of Vicksburg, the Confederate garrison of Port Hudson surrendered, opening the Mississippi River to Union navigation from its source to New Orleans.^[4]

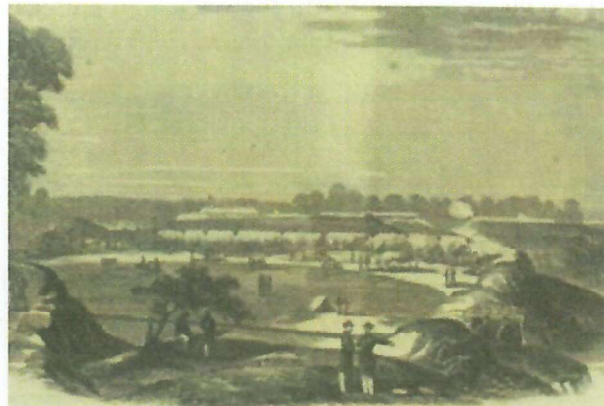
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Background

From the time the American Civil War started in April 1861, both the North and South made controlling the Mississippi River a major part of their strategy. The Confederacy wanted to keep using the river to transport needed supplies; the Union wanted to stop this supply route and drive a wedge that would divide Confederate states and territories. Particularly important to the South was the stretch of the Mississippi that included the mouth of the Red River. The Red was the Confederacy's primary route for moving vital

Siege of Port Hudson Part of the American Civil War



Bird's-eye view of the Great River battery, three hundred yards from the Rebel citadel.
Hamilton, J. R., artist.

Date May 21 – July 9, 1863
Location East Baton Rouge Parish and East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana
Result Union victory

Belligerents

 United States (Union)  CSA (Confederacy)

Commanders and leaders

Nathaniel P. Banks Franklin Gardner (P.O.W.)

Strength

~30–40,000: XIX Corps, Army of the Gulf^[1] ~7,500: Confederate forces, 3rd District, Department of Mississippi and East Louisiana, Port Hudson^[1]

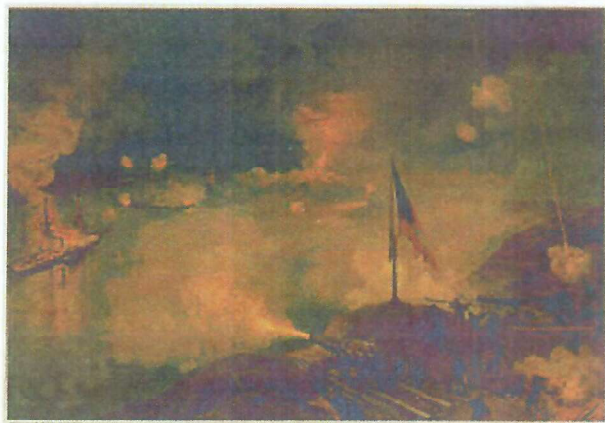
Casualties and losses

~5,000 killed and wounded, ~5,000 dead of disease^[1] ~750 killed and wounded, 250 dead of disease, 6,500 surrendered^[1]



supplies between east and west: salt, cattle, and horses traveled downstream from the Trans-Mississippi West; in the opposite direction flowed men and munitions from the east.

According to the historian John D. Winters in his *The Civil War in Louisiana* (1963), "Port Hudson, unlike Baton Rouge, was one of the strongest points on the river, and batteries placed upon the bluffs could command the entire river front." [Similar to Quebec



Confederate batteries fire down onto Union gunboats on the Mississippi.

City in the French and Indian War].^[5]

In the spring of 1862, the Union took control of New Orleans and Memphis, Tennessee. To make sure it could continue to use the

middle section of the river, the South fortified positions at both Vicksburg, and Port Hudson. A few days after the fall of Baton Rouge to the Union, Confederate General John C. Breckinridge carried out the wishes of General Earl Van Dorn by occupying Port Hudson, situated between Baton Rouge and Bayou Sara, with troops under the command of General Daniel Ruggles.

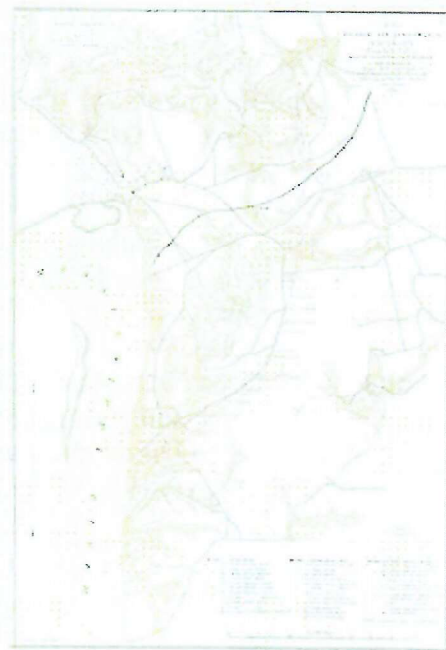
In May 1863, Union land and naval forces began a campaign they hoped would give them control of the full length of the Mississippi River. One army under Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant commenced operations against the Confederacy's fortified position at Vicksburg at the northern end of the stretch of the river still in Southern hands. At about the same time, another army under Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks moved against Port Hudson, which stood at the southern end. Banks's lead division encountered Confederates on May 21 at the Battle of Plains Store. By May 23, Banks's forces, which increased in strength from 30,000 to 40,000 men as the operation progressed, had surrounded the Port Hudson defenses. Banks hoped to overrun the entrenchments quickly, then take his army northward to assist Grant at Vicksburg.

Within the Confederate fortifications at Port Hudson were approximately 7,500 men. Their commander was Maj. Gen. Franklin Gardner, a New Yorker by birth. His goals were to have his men defend their positions as long as possible in order to prevent Banks's troops from joining Grant, and to keep Confederate control of this part of the Mississippi River.

The fighting and siege

Further information: Union order of battle & Confederate order of battle

Map showing Louisiana and lower Mississippi as it was during the Civil War. This map was printed by the Government printing office in 1904 as part of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies.^[2]



Fortifications and Battery Positions, Port Hudson, Louisiana, Department of the Gulf, 1864^[3]

On the morning of May 27, 1863, under Maj. Gen. Banks, the Union army launched ferocious assaults against the lengthy Confederate fortifications. Among the attackers were two regiments of African-American soldiers, the 1st and 3rd Louisiana Native Guard. The attacks were uncoordinated, and the defenders easily turned them back, causing heavy Northern casualties. Andre Cailloux, a free man of color from New Orleans and the Captain of the 1st Louisiana Native Guard, Company E, died heroically in this first assault. His death became a rallying cry for the recruitment of African-American soldiers. Union generals Thomas W. Sherman and Neal Dow were both seriously wounded and Col. Edward P. Chapin was killed in this attack.

Banks's troops made a second, similarly haphazard assault on June 14. Again they were repulsed, suffering even more dead and wounded soldiers, including division commander Brig. Gen. Halbert E. Paine, who fell wounded, losing a leg.

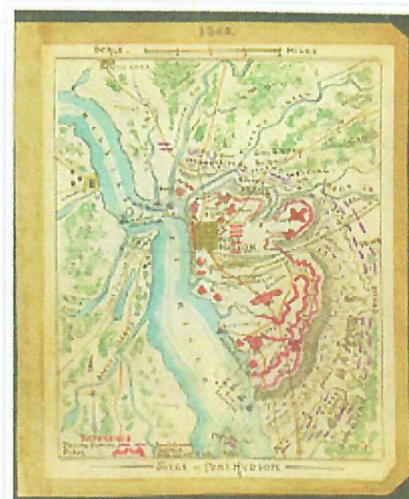
These actions constituted some of the bloodiest fighting of the Civil War. The Confederates began building their defenses in 1862, and by now had an elaborate series of earthworks. One of their officers provided the following description of the line of these barriers, which, as their name suggested, were made mainly from hard-packed dirt:

“ For about three-quarters of a mile from the river the line crossed a broken series of ridges, plateaus and ravines, taking advantage of high ground in some places and in others extending down a steep declivity; for the next mile and a quarter it traversed Gibbon's and Slaughter's fields where a wide level plain seemed formed on purpose for a battlefield; another quarter of a mile carried it through deep and irregular gullies, and for three-quarters of a mile more it led through fields and over hills to a deep gorge, in the bosom of which lay Sandy creek.

”

The elaborate defenses they built and difficult terrain in the area assisted the Confederates in keeping this part of the Mississippi under their control. The Federals had no choice but to besiege Port Hudson to obtain access to the full length of the Mississippi.

The fighting at Port Hudson illustrated how artillery affected the conduct of a siege. The Union Army combined artillery fire with sharpshooting riflemen as it attempted to keep the defenders from getting supplies of food or other necessities; the Union Navy added their big guns to the bombardment. The Confederates responded to the Union forces with rifle and artillery fire. Recognizing how dangerous this type of fighting could be, each side also built elaborate earthworks to protect themselves.



Map of Port Hudson during the siege showing the Confederate and Union positions.



“Quaker guns” made of pine logs were mounted in a ruse to fool the Union into believing that the Confederates were much better armed at Port Hudson in 1863. Black rings were painted on the end of the logs to make the muzzles look convincing. It worked. After Farragut's two vessels passed by Port Hudson, the Union chose to never attack from the river again.



Sailors aboard the USS *Richmond* shell Confederate forces at Port Hudson.

The siege created hardships and deprivations for both the North and South, but by early July the Confederates were in much worse shape. They had exhausted practically all of their food supplies and ammunition, and fighting and disease had



Capt. Edmund C. Bainbridge's Battery A, 1st U.S. Artillery, at the siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana, 1863.

greatly reduced the number of men able to defend the trenches. When Maj. Gen. Gardner learned that Vicksburg had surrendered, he realized that his situation was hopeless and that nothing could be gained by continuing. The terms of surrender were negotiated, and on July 9, 1863, the Confederates laid down their weapons, ending 48 days of continuous fighting. Captain Thornton A. Jenkins accepted the Confederate surrender, as Admiral David Farragut was in New Orleans.

Aftermath

The surrender gave the Union control of the Mississippi River, severing communications between the eastern and western states of the Confederacy. Both sides suffered heavy casualties: about 5,000 Union men were killed or wounded, and an additional 5,000 fell prey to disease or sunstroke; Gardner's forces suffered around 750 casualties, several hundred of whom died of disease. Six thousand five hundred Confederates surrendered and were sent North into custody.^[1]

After the war, a small number of former soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor for their actions at Port Hudson, including George Mason Lovering of the 4th Massachusetts.

See also

- Port Hudson State Historic Site

References

- This text is based upon *The Siege of Port Hudson: "Forty Days and Nights in the Wilderness of Death"* (<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/71HUDSON/71setting.htm>), a lesson plan written by Gregg Potts and Arthur W. Bergeron, Jr., for the National Parks Service. This is a work of the U.S. Government and is in the public domain.
- Kennedy, Frances H., ed., *The Civil War Battlefield Guide*, 2nd ed., Houghton Mifflin Co., 1998, ISBN 0-395-74012-6.



The American Civil War, Part I

War Along The Mississippi

BILOXI, MS

CAJUN RV PARK

DATE: Tuesday, April 5
MILES: 150
TIME: 3 ½ Hours

ARRIVAL TIME: 3:00 – 5:00 PM
UTILITIES: W-E-S

DRIVING INSTRUCTIONS

MILES

0.0	Turn Right onto River Road
3.9	Continue straight following signs to I-10 East
4.3	Turn Left on East Blvd towards I-10 East
4.6	Turn Right on Government Street towards I-10 East
4.7	Turn Right at I-10 East sign
4.9	Turn right on ramp to I-10 East
8.9	Take Exit 159 (Left Exit) on I-12 East towards Hammond
89.3	WalMart /SAM's stop
90.1	Return to I-12 East
95.3	Exit 85 C onto I-10 East toward Bay St Louis
101.2	Mississippi border
103.8	Stop at Mississippi Welcome Center
105.4	Return to I-10 East
133.8	Exit 31 to Flying J
134.5	Return to I-10 East
140.7	Take Exit 38 (Lorraine-Cowan Road). Highway 605
140.8	Go Right on Lorraine Road
143.7	Road name changes to Cowan Road. Move to Left lane as you approach Gulf.
145.1	Turn Left on Highway 90
148.6	Beauvoir House (Jefferson Davis Home) entrance on left. Continue straight.
149.8	Cajun RV Park entrance on the left

BILOXI, MS ACTIVITIES

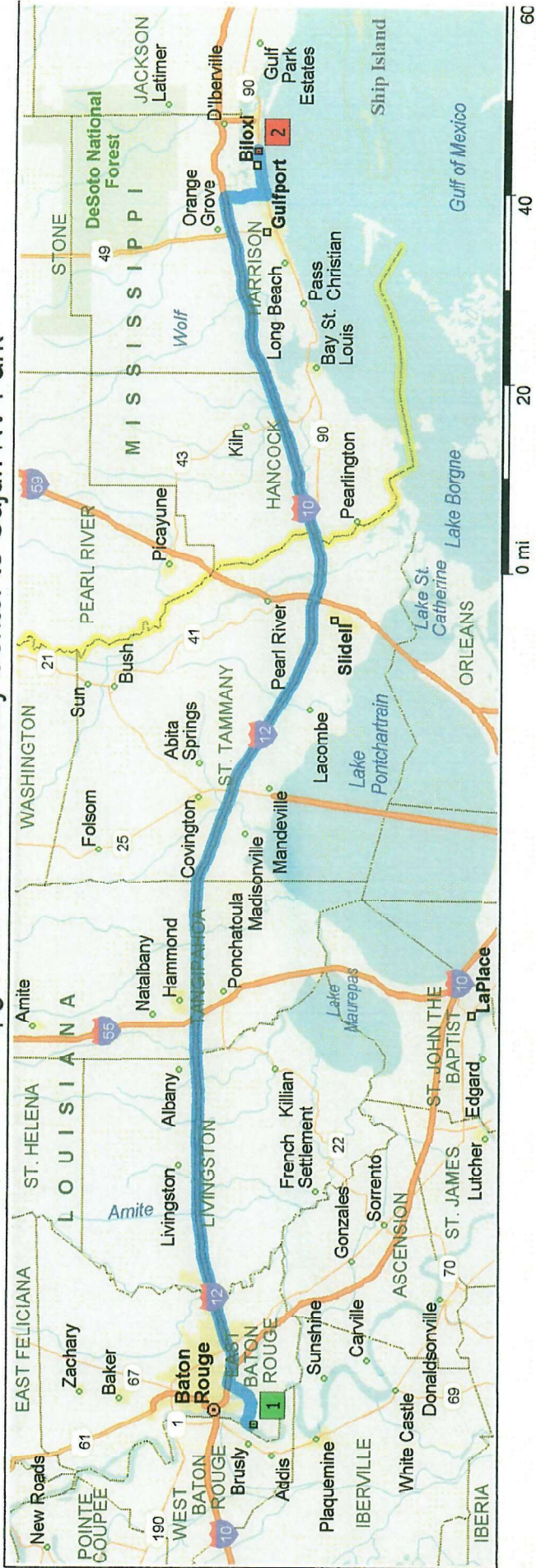
April 5	9:00 AM	Work crew leaves Baton Rouge, LA
April 6	10:00 AM	Depart for Beauvoir
	10:15 AM	Tour Beauvoir
	6:15 PM	Depart for Final Banquet
April 7		Disband

SUGGESTED SIGHTSEEING IN THE AREA

Maritime & Seafood Industry Museum, Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art, NASA – Stennis Space Center

TRIP NOTES

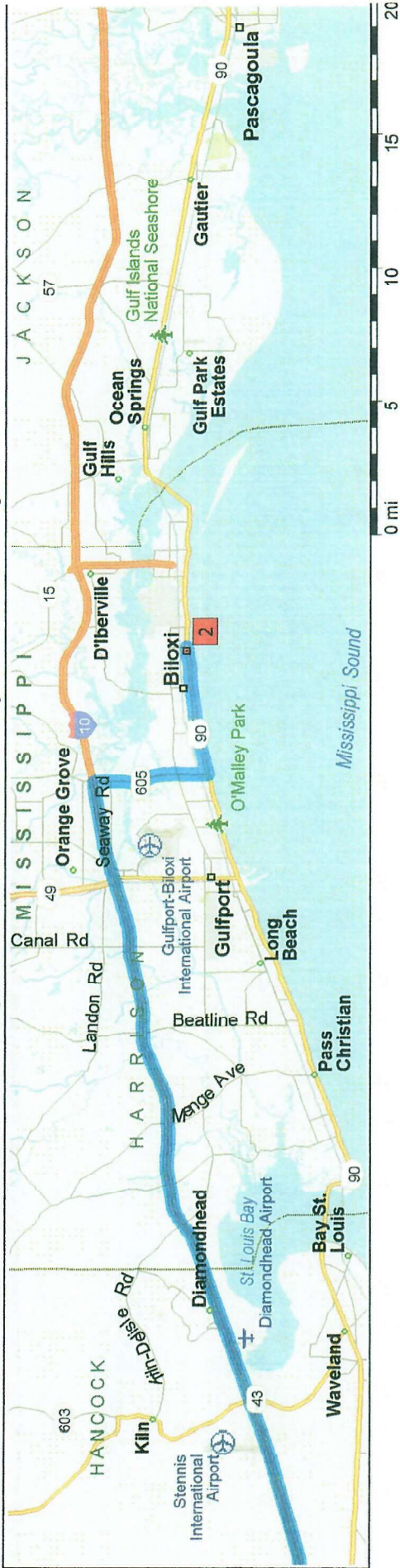
Farr Park Campground & Horse Activity Center to Cajun RV Park



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Farr Park Campground & Horse Activity Center to Cajun RV Park



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 All rights reserved.

DIRECTIONS TO BEAUVOIR

(Jefferson Davis Home)

- 0.0 Turn Right as you exit campground onto Highway 90
- 1.2 Turn Right at the entrance to Beauvoir

Beauvoir (Biloxi, Mississippi)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Beauvoir is the historic post-war home and Presidential library of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, begun in 1848 at Biloxi, Mississippi. The main house and library were badly damaged, and other outbuildings were destroyed during Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005. Beauvoir survived a similar onslaught from Hurricane Camille in 1969.

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Beauvoir

U.S. National Register of Historic Places
U.S. National Historic Landmark



Beauvoir in February 2010

Location: 200 W. Beach Boulevard, Biloxi, Mississippi

Built/Founded: 1848

Governing body: Private

Added to NRHP: September 3, 1971^[1]

Designated NHL: November 7, 1993^[2]

NRHP Reference#: 71000448

Description

Beauvoir was the location of the retirement home of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. The compound consisted of approximately 608 acres (2.46 km²) when Davis lived there (today, the site is approximately 52 acres (210,000 m²) in size). Beauvoir is located in Biloxi, Mississippi across US Highway 90 from Biloxi Beach. The name "Beauvoir" means "beautiful to view".

The compound consists of a Louisiana raised cottage-style plantation residence, a botanical garden, a former Confederate veterans home, a modern gift shop, a Confederate Soldier Museum, the Jefferson Davis Presidential Library and Museum, various outbuildings, and a historic Confederate cemetery which includes the Tomb of the Unknown Confederate Soldier. Five out of seven of these buildings were destroyed in Hurricane Katrina and replicas are being planned (see below).

The house was surrounded with cedars, oaks and magnolia trees and at one time had an orange grove behind it. The home faces the Gulf of Mexico and Spanish moss hangs from many of the large old trees on the property.

Oyster Bayou, a freshwater impoundment and bayhead swamp, once connected directly to the Mississippi Sound and runs across the property behind the main house from West to East. This body of water is fed by natural artesian springs that lie on the grounds. The northeast portion of the estate is the

site of a primitive, pre-urban hardwood forest with an environment similar to what existed in the area during the 1800s. Proposals currently call for restoration of Oyster Bayou to its original environmental state, though this area also suffered extensive damage from Hurricane Katrina.

History

Beauvoir was built by James Brown, a planter and entrepreneur, in 1848 and was completed in 1852. In 1873 the home was sold to Frank Johnston and soon thereafter to Sarah Anne Ellis Dorsey. Dorsey was a novelist and intellectual from Natchez, Mississippi, who was a staunch southern partisan. Dorsey lived in the home with her half-brother Mortimer Dahlgren. Dorsey invited Jefferson Davis to stay at Beauvoir and to write his memoir *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*.

Davis accepted Dorsey's invitation and moved into the *Library Pavilion* on the estate grounds in 1877. Later, his wife, Varina, joined him. Davis arranged to purchase the property in 1879 for \$5500 to be paid in three installments. Six months later, Dorsey died before the other two payments were made and left the estate to Davis in her will. Davis and his wife moved into the house proper along with their youngest daughter, Winnie. Davis lived in the home until his death in December 1889. Varina Davis remained on the property for a short time while she wrote her book *Jefferson Davis: A Memoir*. She and her daughter Winnie moved to New York City in 1891.

Jefferson Davis left the estate to his daughter Winnie. But on her death in 1898, the ownership of the property reverted to Varina who sold much of the property to the Mississippi Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans in 1902 for use as a memorial to her husband and as the location of home for Confederate veterans and widows. A dozen barracks buildings, a hospital, and a chapel were built behind the home and approximately 2,500 veterans and their families lived at the home at one time or another during its existence from 1903 to 1957.

In 1941 the main house opened for public tours. Eventually a Confederate Museum was opened on the site. Over the next few decades a Jefferson Davis Gallery, gift shop, the Tomb of the Unknown Confederate Soldier, and the Jefferson Davis Presidential Library and Museum were established on the grounds.

In 1969 the home survived the onslaught of Hurricane Camille. Due to its construction and materials it survived. The home did experience some flooding and a major fundraising and restoration effort was required.

In 1998 the Mississippi Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans opened the Jefferson Davis Presidential Library which contains the personal library and papers of Jefferson Davis, a biographical exhibit, and a theater and lecture hall.

Hurricane Katrina



View from rear parlor into front parlor in February 2010.

On August 29, 2005, the main building was severely damaged, losing its newly refurbished galleries (porches) and a section of its roof, but was not destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, which hit the Biloxi-Gulfport area head-on. The *Clarion-Ledger* reported on August 31 that Beauvoir was “virtually demolished,” though the report apparently overstated the damage. The storm destroyed the Hayes Cottage, the Library Pavilion, a barracks replica, the Confederate Museum and the director's home. The first floor of the Davis Presidential Library was gutted by the storm. Approximately 35% of the collections were lost.

Although the extensive damage from Hurricane Katrina has created a massive restoration project for *Beauvoir*, the publicity caused detailed U.S. Government photos of the building to become widely available, revealing some architectural details and part of the internal structure of the original construction.

At the *Beauvoir* entranceway, above the door and left-side window, dental molding appears along the lintel of the door and window. The internal construction of the building is also revealed, seen in exposed areas of the structure, such as the basement red-brick pillars, or the wooden wall frames with wooden latticework backing the external plaster covering.

The external shell of *Beauvoir* was protected by six fireplaces that surround the core of the house. Of those 6 brick fireplaces reinforcing the outside walls, only one of six rooftop chimneys collapsed during the hurricane, and five of the six fireplaces retained structural integrity to keep the walls of the building from falling away while under water.

On the back, west wing of *Beauvoir*, behind a front-yard tree, the green storm shutters survived the floating debris that battered the entrance, and the shutters protected the glass panes despite the 24-foot (8-m) storm surge that submerged the area. Whole sections of the *Beauvoir* home have remained intact to preserve many of the original construction details and windows (as seen in the photograph excerpts, at right).

Since thousands of homes in Mississippi were damaged or destroyed during Hurricane Katrina, construction work was diverted to all disaster areas of the state, and restoration of *Beauvoir* proceeded slowly. However, as a U.S. National Historic Landmark, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials approved Federal support to the repair and rebuilding of the *Beauvoir* complex.

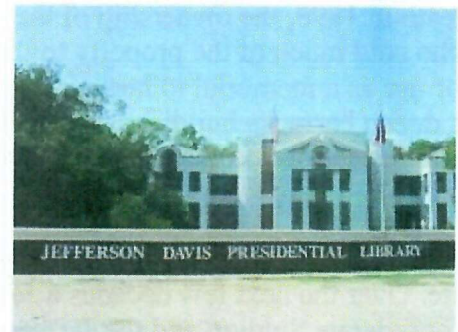
With the financial assistance of various federal, state, private organizations and individual contributions, restoring Beauvoir Mansion started in early 2006. On June 3, 2008, also Jefferson Davis' 200th Birthday, Beauvoir Mansion had been fully restored and reopened for public tours. The mansion was restored to the original condition of when President and Varina Davis lived there.



Beauvoir (April 2006), 7 months after Hurricane Katrina (before roof was repaired, without porches rebuilt).



Beauvoir (April 2006), detail of front door and windows.



Jefferson Davis Presidential Library, largely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina and later demolished.

In the winter of 2009, President Davis's personal library and the Hayes's cottage had been rebuilt (both structures were completely destroyed during Hurricane Katrina) and open for public tours.

As of the Spring of 2009, work has already started on rebuilding the Jefferson Davis Presidential Library. Many artifacts have been recovered and are restored/repared from the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina. In addition to the Presidential Library, the kitchen that existed behind Beauvoir mansion during the time that President Davis, his family, and the hundreds of Confederate veterans & their families resided on the property will be rebuilt along with a barrack similar to the numerous barracks that housed the Confederate veterans and their families.

Visiting the museum

Today Beauvoir is open for tours Monday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Beauvoir is one of, if not the last National Historical Landmark, on the beach in Biloxi that has been restored.

Beauvoir is owned and operated by the Mississippi Division of Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Collections

The salvageability of the collections stands at about 60%. The two remaining buildings of the seven on the site will be repaired and rebuilt. Replicas and additional outbuildings will be built. Prior to Katrina, the Jefferson Davis Presidential Library maintained a collection of 12,000 books on United States history, southern history, and history of the American Civil War. The library also maintained collections of photographs, personal letters, manuscripts, envelopes, postcards, newspaper clippings, records of Confederate heritage organizations such as the United Confederate Veterans and the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and records from the Veterans home that once was present on the grounds. Most of these records survived, except for those on display in the two museums.

Civilian volunteers and the Mississippi Army National Guard assisted with salvage. Unfortunately, the room storing much of the authentic china and artifacts was adjacent to the gift shop, with knockoffs and imitations of the originals. Both rooms were destroyed, so sifting through the debris and identifying the genuine relics was very difficult.

Activities

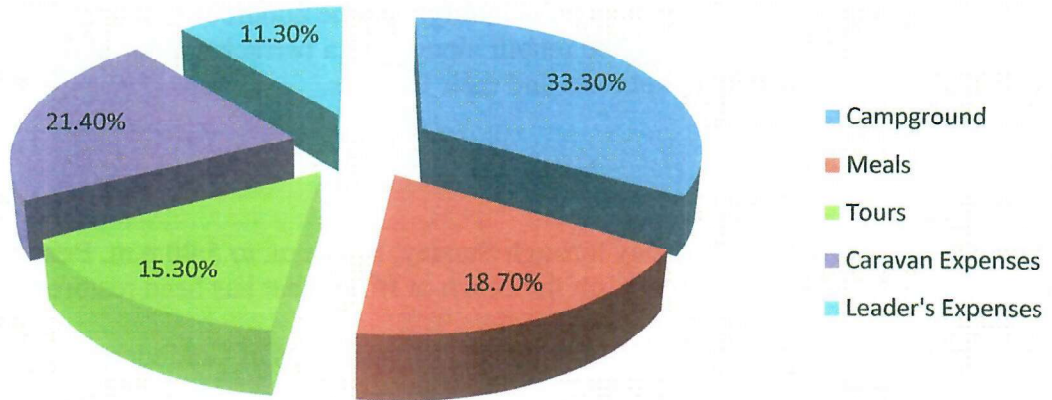
Before the destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina in the Summer of 2005, annual events included the Spring Pilgrimage in March, Confederate Memorial Day in April, the Fall Muster in October, and Candlelight Christmas in December.

Visitors to the site were presented with a biographical film on the life of Jefferson Davis narrated by an actor portraying Davis's long-time friend, Iowa Senator George Wallace Jones.

Designations

The home and grounds are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Beauvoir was also designated as a National Historic Landmark and a Mississippi Historical Landmark.

Caravan Estimated Expenses



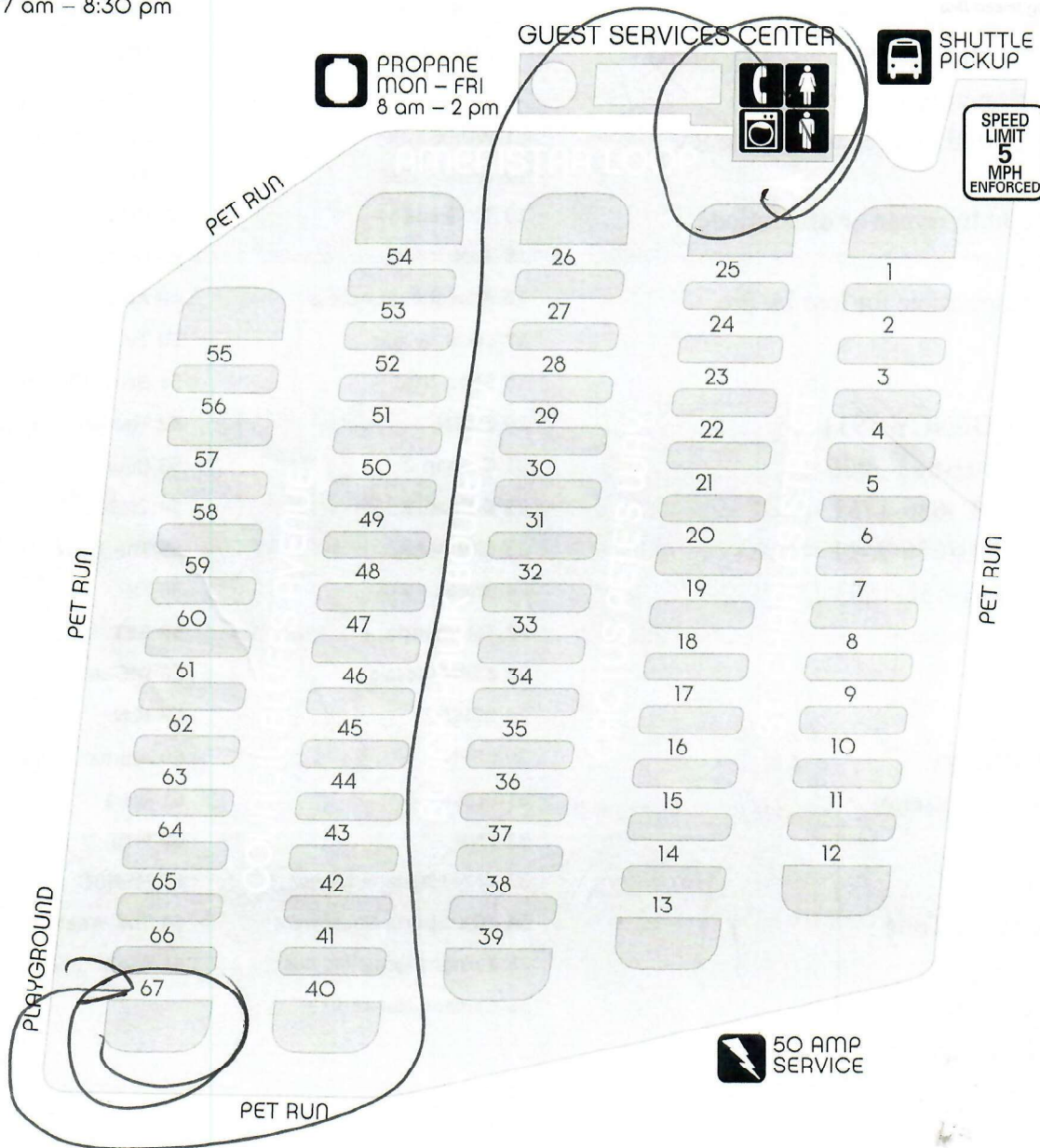
Ameristar Casino RV Park

VICKSBURG

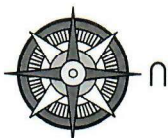
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Hours 7 am – 8:30 pm

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- * Tenants are responsible for the conduct and observance of park rules by all members of their party.
- * Pets are welcome, but must be on a leash when outside the RV unit. It is the responsibility of the pet owner to clean up after his/her pet.
- * No laundry is permitted to be hung outside RV units.
- * We reserve the right to refuse or discontinue service to anyone.
- * Ameristar is not responsible for loss by fire, accident or theft.

EMERGENCY - 911

Hospital	601-883-5000
Sheriff	601-636-1761
City	601-636-2511
Fire	601-636-1603

Points of Interest

- Civil War Battlefield
- National Military Cemetery
- Biedenharn Coca-Cola Museum
- ERDC
- Antebellum Homes
- Battlefield/Vicksburg Air Tour
- USS Cairo Museum
- Historical Downtown
- Gray & Blue Naval Museum
- The Vanishing Glory

CH	Station	CH	Station
2	PPV Previews	37	Fox News Channel
3	WLBT - NBC	38	The History Channel
5	WDBD - FOX	39	HGTV
6	Home Shopping Network	40	TNT
7	WMPN-MPB	41	A & E
8	WRBJ-UPN	42	TBS
9	WAPT-ABC	43	USA
10	WGN	44	Discovery Channel
11	WUFX-FOX	45	ABC Family
12	WJTV - CBS	46	Spike TV
13	TV Guide	47	CMT
15	TBN	48	Nickelodeon
16	Educational Access	49	AMC
17	Local Access	50	TV Land
18	Shop NBC	51	Sci-Fi Channel
20	EWTN	52	The Learning Channel
21	C-Span 2	53	Court TV
22	C-Span 1	54	CNBC
23	City Access	55	The Travel Channel
24	Sneak Peek	56	FX
27	Telemundo	57	BET
28	ESPN Classic	58	DISNEY
29	ESPN-2	59	ION
30	ESPN	60	Animal Planet
31	Bravo	61	VH-1
32	CNN	62	MTV
33	CNN Headline News	63	MSNBC
34	FOX Sports Southwest	64	The Weather Channel
35	Turner Classic Movies	65	Food Network
36	Cartoon Network		

The American Civil War An Overview

In the spring of 1861, young men marched off to war promising their mothers and sweethearts that they'd be home for Christmas. Few could imagine the terrible truths of four years of war. Over three and a half million men (one and a half million Confederates, two million Federals) led a soldier's life during the Civil War.

None of these men would answer if you asked for "an American". They were Pennsylvanians, or Texans, or Georgians, or Virginians. They'd throw fists at you if you said something negative about their home state, but (at least at the start of the war) there was no overriding patriotism to a national entity.

There was no typical soldier of either side. The majority were white boys in their early twenties, but the armies included dozens of nationalities, scores of occupations, and an age span of half a century. One in four Federal soldiers was a foreigner, mostly German and Irish. Women could not legally serve as soldiers, but hundreds disguised themselves as men and joined anyway. "We discovered last week a soldier who turn out to be a girl," wrote a shocked private in his diary. "She had already been in service for 21 months and was twice wounded." One Union general learned to his dismay that one of his "men", a sergeant no less, had been delivered of a baby.

Uniforms varied in comfort, quality, and appearance. Recruits complained of poor fit and poor quality ---some things never change. The variety of uniforms caused no end of confusion. Some regiments designed and issued their own uniforms. Militia units, particularly those which had been organized before the war began, already had their own uniforms and refused to change. Consequently, Union soldiers sometimes wore gray uniforms and Confederate soldiers sometimes wore blue. The "Zouave" regiments wore gaudy bright-colored uniforms of a French pattern, with tasseled fez-style caps and braided jackets, sashes, bright-colored baggy pantaloons, and white leggings. All of this produced a brilliant spectacle, but it left friend and foe alike thoroughly confused.

The bayonet was carried as a weapon, but saw use mostly as a digging tool, can opener, or roasting spit. The infantryman's weapon was a musket. Most of these were rifled, but early in the war, some (especially Confederate forces) still used smoothbore muskets. Muskets were muzzle-loaders, requiring a complex loading procedure, so that the rate of fire was very slow. Later in the war the breech loading rifle began to show up in substantial numbers, especially in Union regiments, and the increased rate of fire had predictable consequences on advancing attackers using tactics designed for muskets. Commanders on both sides initially resisted using the breech-loading rifles because they "would generate a significant waste of ammunition".

The average soldier spent fifty days in camp for each one day in actual battle. Camp life was a monotonous round of drills and target practice along with meals of varying quality and quantity. Any time left over was devoted to blacking boots, sewing clothing, chopping wood,

washing dishes, and other "chores". It isn't surprising that desertion was a major problem to the commanders on both sides.

These soldiers came from rural places, for the most part. There were only ten cities in the whole country with a population over 50,000. There were over two and a half million family farms. The soldier's regiment was his strongest tie to home, and preserved his identity as a Virginian or a Tar Heel, a Hoosier, or a Buckeye. Most men felt the same as the sergeant who was quoted as saying, "I would rather be a private in this regiment than a captain in any other that I know of." Within the regiment, the company was the military equivalent of his family. He marched with his company, slept in his company's bivouac, ate in a company mess, and went into battle in his company's line.

Early in the war, most companies on both sides elected their company-level officers (lieutenants and captains). Once elected, however, they often found that things changed. Officers often heard themselves described by their erstwhile friends as "dogs", "skunks", "whore-house pimps", and worse as they took on new responsibility. General Robert E. Lee did away with the election process in the Army of Northern Virginia when some of the elected officers proved unreliable in carrying out orders.

"An army marches on its stomach" is a quote often ascribed to Napoleon. It is certain fact, however, that one of the favorite occupations of soldiers was (and still is) complaining about the food---"grub" in Civil War parlance. An Illinois soldier wrote home that "The boys say our grub is enough to make a mule desert and a hog wish he had never been born...Hard bread, bacon, and coffee is all we draw." A loyal Confederate soldier wrote that he would rather face Yankee bullets than army food. "If I ever lose my patriotism, then you may know that the commissary is at fault," he warned.

Luckily, the soldiers of the Civil War were not completely dependent on their governments for provisions. Individuals and official organized groups went on fishing and hunting expeditions, and foraging parties produced much of the food consumed by both armies. Foraging was supposed to be persuading farmers to supply livestock, fruits, and vegetables in return for paper "receipts" that were ostensibly redeemable for money. However, foraging soon became little more than a kind of theft. Confederate cavalymen foraged not only for food but for horses to replace worn out or wounded animals (the Union government supplied horses to cavalry units, the Confederate government did not). Because most of the war was fought on southern soil, southern farmers suffered most from the depredations of foraging "parties".

Union and Confederate soldiers devised countless means of amusing themselves in the hours when they were not fighting, foraging, drilling, or doing camp chores. Music proved to be the single most important means of warding off homesickness, combating boredom, boosting spirits and relieving general weariness. Soldiers whistled and sang while at work around camp,

while marching from place to place, and around the inevitable evening campfires. No less an authority than General Robert E. Lee concluded, "I don't believe we can have an army without music."

Whether he was prepared to meet his maker or not, the single most important brute fact of the soldier's life was the possibility of being killed. The opposing army's bullets and cannon shells were but one possibility. For every soldier that died on the battlefield of an enemy projectile, three others died of sickness and disease and yet another died later from wound infections. Modern sanitation and personal hygiene were woefully lacking in both armies. Germs and bacteria had not been heard of. Regimental camps became breeding grounds for disease. Camp streets were littered with refuse, food, and wastes. Drinking water was drawn from streams that ran through the camp "regardless of the color of the water." Typhoid fever and diarrhea became the biggest killers, and the medical practice of the day had no knowledge of the cause or treatment of these problems.

Meanwhile, on the home front, non-soldiers worked, played and otherwise attended to daily life in and around their own homes. These homes included single-family houses, the American ideal, but also included large numbers of boardinghouses, tenements, rough cabins, sod-covered dugout, shacks...dwellings of every description. Most soldiers lived in cleaner, more respectable dwellings than did their families back home. These homes were located in urban settings, on isolated prairies, squeezed into company towns, luxuriating in quiet suburbs, or standing on the cultivated acres of thriving farms.

Most people maintained their personal appearance and attended to their hygienic needs in their bedrooms. Indoor plumbing was a novelty, found mostly in the higher-class areas of cities. A marble-topped washstand equipped with a basin, pitcher and towel rack served for the daily face-washing; a slop jar (chamber pot) could be found in a cabinet beneath the washstand or under the bed. During the day one went outside to the privy, and used the slop jar at night. We get our term "potty" from the small chamber pot a child used. Bathtubs would be found in the kitchen when in use, and most people bathed weekly, and this was considered a new fashion. In their grandparents' and great-grandparents' day, people did not bathe the whole body at all, and generally considered bathing as unhealthy.

The U.S. Postal Service as we know it today had its beginnings in the Civil War, as thousands of soldiers and their families tried to stay in touch with each other. First-, second-, and third-class mail classifications were instituted, and postal addresses began to be standardized. The telegraph was in existence earlier, and its technology developed rapidly during the war. Photography, invented earlier in the century, saw huge advances, and the Civil War was the most photographed war until WWII.

The practice of medicine during the Civil War, both in the military and back at home, was little different from what had existed a half-century earlier. Training for surgeons typically consisted of three, thirteen-week terms of almost entirely classroom training and observation, with little or no practical experience. No medical licensing boards existed, and so there was no regulation of who could practice medicine. In the two armies, there was at least a little oversight, because surgeons were commissioned by act of government (the Union Surgeon General's office, for example), but even army surgeons had no knowledge of germs or the process by which people became infected. Medical treatment in the military consisted almost exclusively of the amputation of wounded limbs. Anesthesia was either by chloroform or by whisky, if any was provided at all. Field hospital assistants ("orderlies") were usually soldiers assigned to that duty because they had shown themselves to be useless to their regiments. They frequently looted the pockets and possessions of the injured.

During the war, life did in fact go on. Young people grew up, and married. Old folks died (usually at home). The seasons changed, crops were planted and harvested, and in general the processes of life weren't very different from the way things were before the war.

The average young couple celebrated the birth of its first child about eighteen months after the honeymoon. Under normal circumstances the great event took place in the bedroom at the home. Some babies drew their first breaths in the back of a Prairie Schooner, or at sea, or in some other inconvenient and unexpected spot, but very few mothers gave birth in hospitals. Public hospitals did not exist (except charity wards for the indigent) and even those who could afford the services of a private hospital preferred the comfort and security of their own homes. Also, people regarded childbirth as a natural event rather than a process requiring medical apparatus and professional assistance. Doctors, midwives, female relatives, or neighboring women came to the expectant mother in her own home when summoned.

Death in childbirth was not uncommon, if not during the actual delivery, then in the week that followed. Few girls reached adulthood without having witnessed at least one childbirth and not infrequently a concomitant death. The result of this was that many women built up a psychological fear that caused them to shy away from sex altogether. Patent contraceptive devices were invented nearly every month, and marketed extensively, although few actually were very reliable. Abortion was more popular than contraception before the Civil War, but became less acceptable by the 1870's. The most effective solution remained the woman's headache.

Retirement did not rank as the significant milestone it does in modern America. People tended to work longer – far beyond "retirement age" – because there wasn't an incentive to stop working. There was no Social Security, no workers' pensions for most workers, no worker's disability programs – nineteenth-century Americans simply had to work productively as long as

possible. Significant drops in male employment in the 1860's and 1870's did not occur until after age seventy-five.

More than half of the laboring population of the country in 1870 worked in agriculture. Most of us were born on farms, and there we stayed, whether as landowning farmers or as hired hands. Which category we were in at the moment was subject to change, as family fortunes waxed and waned. The size of the average farm in 1870 was 153 acres, but that included farms in Wisconsin (average 25 acres) and in California (average 480 acres). The farmer (and his hired hands) worked fourteen- to fifteen-hour days. Every farm had some livestock, and it needed feeding, cleaning stables, milking, turning out to pasture and bringing back in – livestock consumed much of the farm work time. Most farm boys over the age of eight or nine learned to hate working with farm animals. Then there was wood cutting. Cook stoves and heating stoves had huge appetites.

Even during winter, caring for horses and mules, threshing oats, slaughtering animals, cutting and hauling timber, splitting rails and boards, replacing fences, hauling straw, shelling corn, cleaning seed, repairing or constructing outbuildings, watering troughs, and animal shelters had to be done. One farmer's diary says, "Done nothing but the chores today." The farmer's wife (and her hired girl, if she was lucky enough to have one) cooked, baked, washed, ironed, repaired or made clothes, cleaned the house, fed the chickens, milked the cows, planted and weeded the vegetable garden, and cared for the children on top of hours in the kitchen. Her work day began at four o'clock, and she could not retire until the supper dishes and been washed and put away.

Southern farmers operated a little differently from those in the north. Everybody planted corn, for it was the basis of the diet for man and beast alike. But the southern farmer's cash crops were cotton, tobacco, rice and sugar. These crops are extremely labor-intensive, and the southern culture resisted mechanical assistance. Many farmers owned two or three slaves (only a few had hundreds), and they and their children did most of the labor.

Their dependence on the soil left people of the Civil War era at the mercy of the weather, and there was no weather-forecasting science to predict that. Floods, droughts, blizzards, hurricanes – natural disasters struck without a warning. The effects of such disasters sometimes lasted for generations in people's memories. On top of the weather, there were grasshoppers. Incredibly huge swarms of grasshoppers (called locusts) darkened the skies some summers, without warning. They fell like snow, piled up against fences, and ate everything: crops, weeds, tree leaves, clothing, harness, wooden handles on tools, even weatherboarding on houses. During a "grasshopper summer" the well water was polluted by dead insects, and rivers and ponds turned brown with the dead and the excrement of the living and became unfit to drink. Hogs and poultry bloated to bursting after feasting on the invaders, and the meat tasted so strongly of grasshoppers as to be inedible.

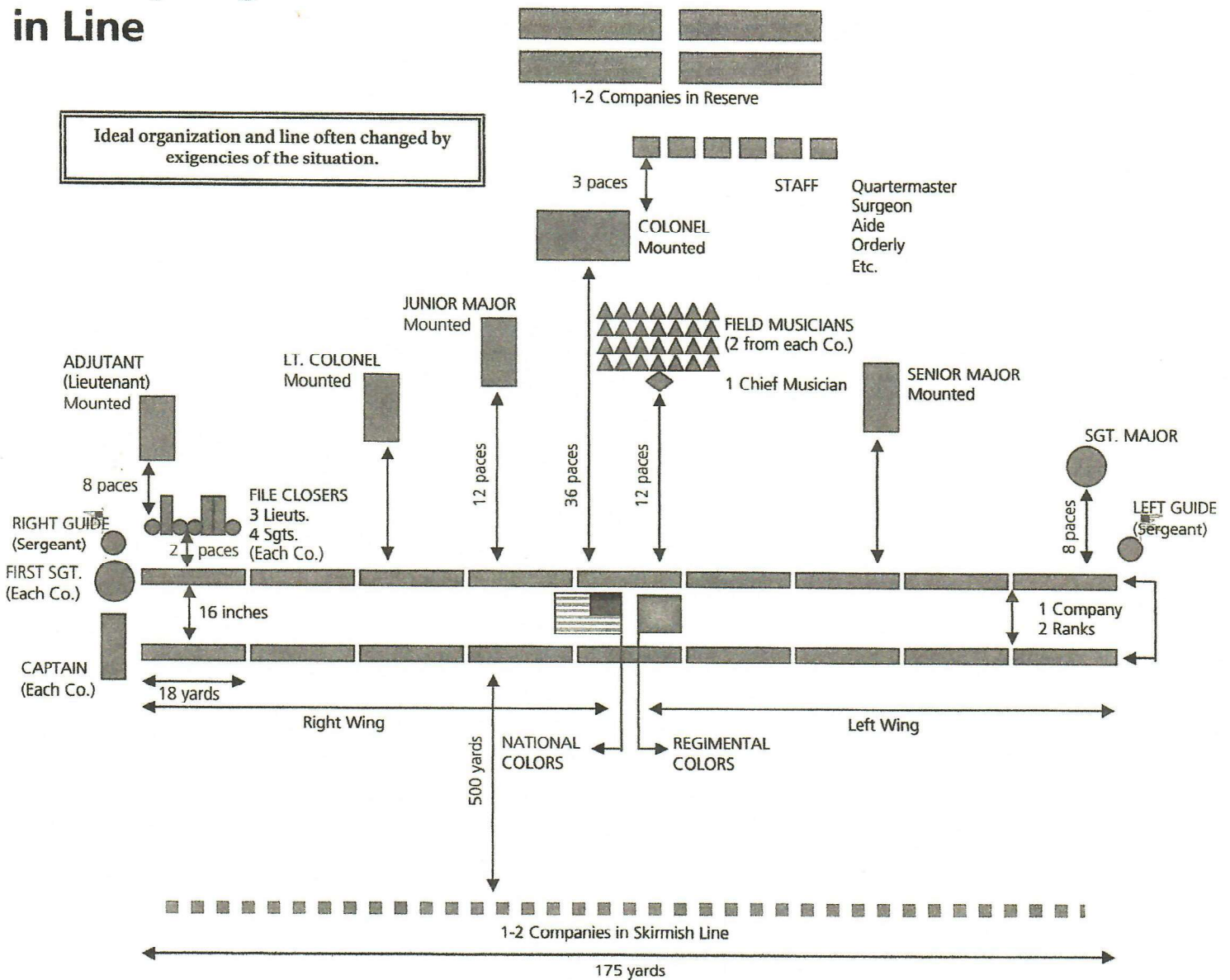
Those that lived in towns and cities did not suffer so much from the fickleness of nature as did farm families, but they were much more exposed than the country folk to the dangers of illness and epidemic. Living in close contact invited the spread of contagious diseases. Likewise, the sanitation standards of the day provided ample sources for the germs of diseases such as typhoid and cholera. Smallpox, scarlet fever, typhus – the medical science of the day had no antibiotics and didn't understand the process of contagion, and the diseases sometimes wiped out whole sections of a city. In Philadelphia in 1865, nearly 800 people died of typhoid fever and nearly 350 of typhus; in the same city 900 died of cholera in 1866, a whopping 1755 of scarlet fever in 1869, and two thousand of smallpox in 1870.

Despite all their woes, people in America during the Civil War era and after knew how to enjoy themselves. Family-orientated activities predominated in rural areas – parlor games, croquet, church socials, visiting neighbors, and family picnics provided congenial remedies for hard days working. In less rural areas, baseball became big right after the war. The National Association of Baseball Players formed in the late 1850's, and soldiers returning from the war formed teams all over the country. Families would go out to watch the games whether they had sons playing or not, and these games became one of the premier social activities of the village or town.

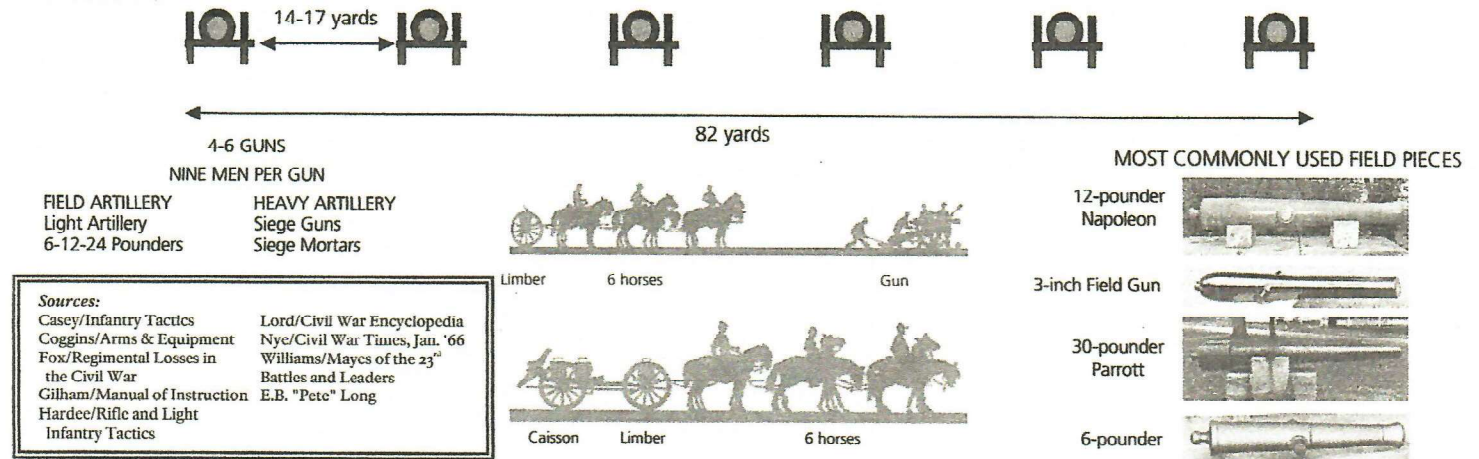
By 1876, a decade after the cessation of hostilities, most Americans, North and South, sensed that the time had come to put the years of Civil War and Reconstruction behind and look to the future. Americans were coming to realize that they lived in a very different world from the one of fifteen years earlier. The centennial celebration of American independence that year provided an appropriate vehicle. A great Centennial exposition was mounted in Philadelphia, with 167 buildings and over 30,000 exhibits. The whole world came to see what America was up to. And what it was really up to, was becoming one people.

The Civil War marked a real turning of American culture. Before the war we were one nation, but really two peoples, two cultures. After the war and reconstruction, the westward expansion and the industrialization of the 1870's and 1880's reinstated and refocused patriotism on the country as a whole. Now we were still Pennsylvanians, or Texans, or Georgians, or Virginians, but over and above that, we were Americans.

Infantry Regiment in Line



Artillery Battery in Line



Sources:

Casey/Infantry Tactics	Lord/Civil War Encyclopedia
Coggins/Arms & Equipment	Nye/Civil War Times, Jan. '66
Fox/Regimental Losses in the Civil War	Williams/Mays of the 23 rd Battles and Leaders
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Vicksburg

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Vicksburg National Military Park



Organization of the Civil War Armies

DISCLAIMER: This chart is a consensus of innumerable sources and opinions. It is intended to show only probable strength and makeup of units at time of battle. Chain of command was always subject to change. Numbers and organization were violated more often than followed -- but were the general goal.

