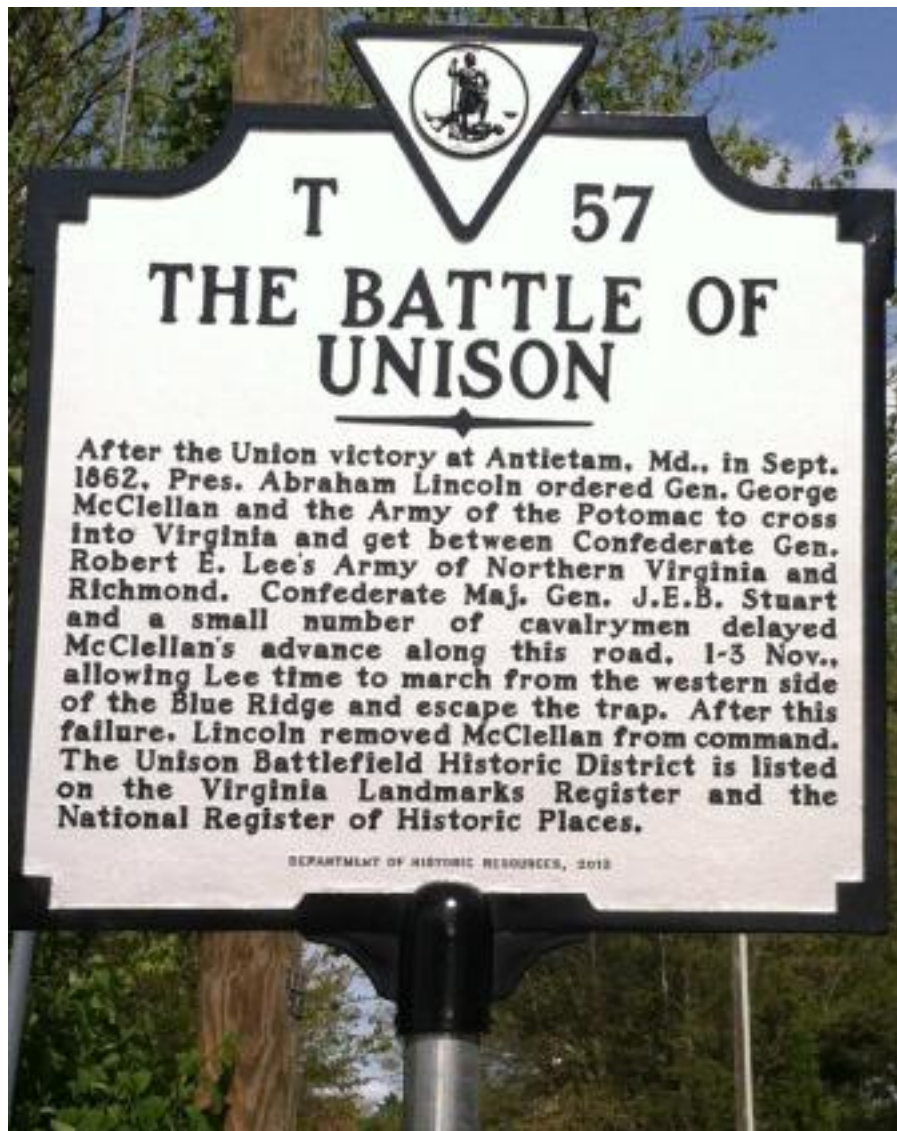


Battlefield Historic District



On Sept. 22, 2011, Virginia's State Review Board and Virginia's Historic Resources Board both voted unanimously to place the 8,000-acre Unison Battlefield Historic District in the Virginia Landmarks Register. They simultaneously recommended to the National Park Service that the battlefield be placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The United States National Park Service approved the recommendation from the State of Virginia, and the Unison Battlefield Historic District is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Department of Historic Resources Director Kathleen Kilpatrick praised both the battlefield and the Unison Preservation Society for what they are doing for historic preservation in this region. She cited the pristine nature of the battlefield, with its farms, villages, historic dirt roads and no development, as one of best preserved battlefields and noted that more than half the battlefield is already under conservation easement.

The Land Trust of Virginia, a major supporter of UPS and the battlefield project, calls the region one the best preserved most heavily easemented places in the nation. Being on the historic

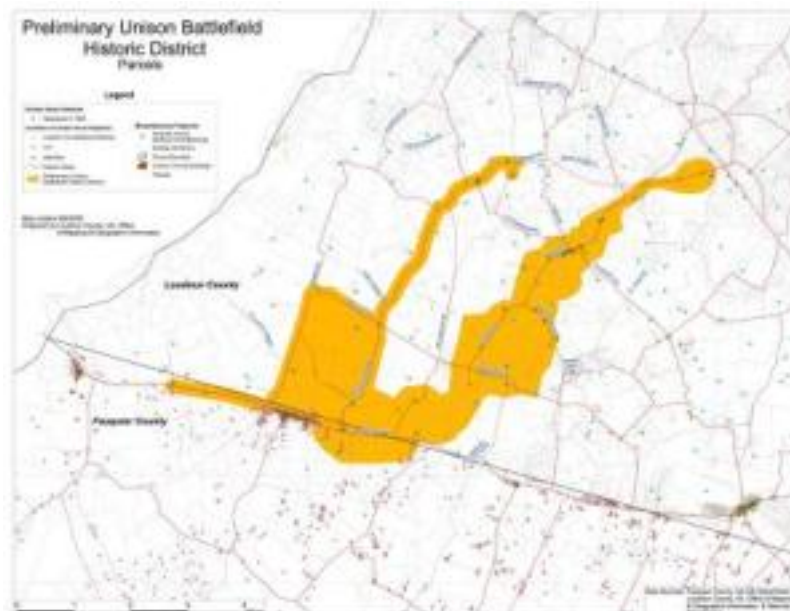
registers will make easements easier for landowners within the battlefield. Several additional battlefield easements are now pending.

There was no opposition to the proposed 8,000-acre battlefield historic district at the official state public hearing held on Aug. 22 in Upperville, and no registered written opposition, attesting to the extensive public information effort by UPS over the past years. There was one unofficial letter of opposition. The Unison Village Historic District had no opposition when UPS created it 10 years ago. The village is on both state and national historic registers.

The eight-mile-long battlefield historic district, which stretches from Philomont through Unison to Upperville, with spurs to Bloomfield and Trappe, has been almost six years in the making, since UPS first won a federal grant to study the 1862 Battle of Unison. That grant, from the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program, funded the mapping and history of the Battle of Unison by National Park Service historian David Lowe.

ABPP then gave UPS two additional grants to help create the battlefield historic district. The grants enabled UPS to hire architectural historian Maral Kalbian of Berryville, who has done more historic districts than anyone else in Northern Virginia (she also did the Unison Village Historic District). Kalbian hired historian John Salmon to do additional historic research on the Battle of Unison and the battlefield and archaeologists Steve Thompson and Ben Ford of Charlottesville, who did an archaeological study of the center of the battlefield near the Quaker cemetery west of Unison. The nomination to state/national registers, with more than 100 pages of maps, photos, and architectural, archaeological, and historical information, is available online at least through October on the DHR website: dhr.virginia.gov/registers/boardPage.html. It will be available afterward under Loudoun County listings at:

dhr.virginia.gov/registers/register_counties_cities.html.



The battlefield area is being called “pristine” by historians and state and federal officials because this rural countryside in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains has changed so little in the past 150 years. Settled by Quakers in the 1730s, Unison was one of the first five settlements in what is now Loudoun County and is one of the best-preserved. It has no housing

subdivisions or commercial development and most of its rural dirt roads, lined with stone walls and trees, are still intact, including a stream ford that Union and Confederate cavalry fought across on the first two days of the November 1862, Battle of Unison.

More than half of the Unison Battlefield area already is under conservation easement, with a large number of the easements held by the Land Trust of Virginia. UPS and the Land Trust held a joint celebration and fund-raiser for the battlefield historic district on April 30 at Llangollen, the historic Upperville estate owned by Donald and Patricia Brennan.

The nomination was funded in part by grants to the Unison Preservation Society from the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program, which earlier gave UPS a grant to map and study the 1862 Battle of Unison (click on the site for information on the battle and on Publications for the National Park Service's 52-page history of the Battle of Unison).

The battlefield historic district is an honorary state/federal designation that provides some benefits to landowners but places no restrictions whatsoever on their properties.

Please see Society News for further information or use our **Contact** webpage to contact UPS Battlefield Committee members Paul Hodge, Mitch Diamond, Owen Snyder, and Denis Gordon with questions about the battlefield.