

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>West Virginia</b>
COUNTY: <b>Nicholas</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE <b>JUL 24 1974</b>

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Carnifex Ferry State Park**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Carnifex Ferry Battlefield**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**S**  
**About 2 miles south of Kesslers Cross Lanes off ~~State Route 129~~ WV**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Kesslers Cross Lanes Vic.**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
**Third**

STATE: **West Virginia** CODE: **54** COUNTY: **Nicholas** CODE: **067**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**State of West Virginia**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1800 Washington Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Charleston**

STATE:  
**West Virginia**

CODE:  
**54**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Nicholas County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Summersville**

STATE:  
**West Virginia**

CODE:  
**54**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

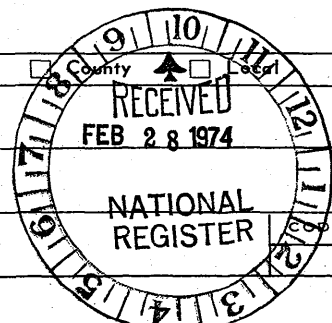
DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:



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**7 DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Carnifex Ferry Battlefield consists of more than 150 acres of farmland and wooded area north of the confluence of Meadow and Gauley rivers in Nicholas County, West Virginia. During the battle of September 1861, Confederate and Union forces were camped about the entirety of what is now the park, the former to the south and latter to the north of the grounds. Near the present entrance to the battlefield are evidences of trenches and the road leading to the ferry over which Confederate General John B. Floyd retreated. No less than 150 rifle pits are plainly visible to the left of the entrance in a wooded area.

One of the striking aspects of physical appearance is the abundance of native shrubbery, including rhododendron, little laurel, mountain laurel, service, wild plum, wild crabapple, holly, hemlock, white pine and various hardwoods. The view of the Gauley River from the site of General Floyd's commissary is of rugged cliffs creating a great gorge.

Since 1950 the open farmland has been developed for tourists. A house was erected for the park superintendent, and the old, battle-scarred Patterson house was restored for use as a museum of Civil War relics. This building stood between Union and Confederate lines and was struck by numerous stray shots; after the final engagement it was used as a Federal hospital. Little changed since the time of its Yankee occupation, the farm house is today a white, two-story building with thatched gabled roof, shiplap wooden siding, a porch with sloping thatched roof to the front and a lean-to addition to the rear.



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## SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) August-September 1861

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education           | <input type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering         | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry            | losophy                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention           | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape           | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | Architecture                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature          | itarian                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Music               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As a result of the Battle of Carnifex Ferry, the threat of Confederate General John B. Floyd to the Union positions in the Kanawha Valley was forever diminished. Of still greater importance was the fact that failure of his campaign at the Ferry freed a large part of the Valley to participate in West Virginia's statehood movement through a referendum, scheduled for October 24, 1861, on the question of the division of Virginia.

In August 1861, Confederate troops moved into the Valley; they were commanded by General John B. Floyd, the controversial Secretary of War in President Buchanan's Cabinet and former governor of Virginia. As soon as Union General George B. McClellan learned of Floyd's advance, he sent his subordinate, Brigadier General William S. Rosecrans, into the area to prevent Confederate domination. Rosecrans then established a defensive perimeter from Gauley Bridge to Cheat Mountain, placing the southernmost section under the command of Brigadier General J.D. Cox. Even though this and other precautions were taken, Southern forces succeeded in crossing the Gauley River barrier at Carnifex Ferry and defeating Union troops under Colonel E. B. Tyler at Cross Lanes (now Kessler's Cross Lanes) to the north. Then they fortified at Camp Gauley and awaited Northern retaliation.

Floyd did not have to wait long, for as soon as Rosecrans learned of the Confederate menace he departed from his headquarters at Clarksburg and headed for Carnifex Ferry, gathering about 7,000 troops on the way. When news came of this advancement, Floyd asked for reinforcements, but General Henry A. Wise, another ex-governor of Virginia, was jealous of Floyd's authority and used his own discretion in sending what proved to be too small a number to strengthen Floyd's troops sufficiently.

At Carnifex Ferry on September 10, 1861, Rosecrans ordered Brigadier General Henry W. Benham to reconnoiter the Confederate line. Floyd's troops engaged Benham's party in the afternoon and a battle ensued. By midnight Floyd realized his opponent's superior strength and withdrew his command from the Ferry. His escape was a remarkable feat considering the odds he faced at Camp Gauley and the narrow roads over which he was forced to retreat. This withdrawal, however, was a shattering blow to Confederates in the Valley and took pressure off residents participation in the coming referendum.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Lambert, Harold and Jo Lambert. "Old Rosy. . . the Fading General of West Virginia." West Virginia State Magazine, VIII (Mar. 1957) 7, 27, 29.  
 Lamp, Okey. "Battle of Carnifex Ferry." Outdoor West Virginia, XXXII (Dec. 1968), 22-36 and (Jan. 1969), 15-16.  
 Shaffer, Dallas B. "The Battle at Carnifex Ferry." Charleston, W.Va.: West Virginia Dept. of Natural Resources, Division of Parks & Recreation, n.d. (Pamphlet)  
 Vaughn, Gladys. "Carnifex Ferry Battlefield State Park." Charleston, W.Va.: West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation, n.d. (Typewritten paper)

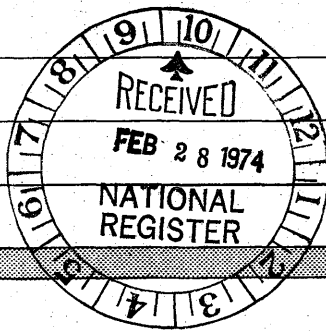
**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	38° 12' 50.7"	80° 56' 44.7"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	38° 12' 50.7"	80° 55' 42.9"		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	38° 11' 56.7"	80° 55' 42.9"		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	38° 11' 56.7"	80° 56' 44.7"		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **156.37 Acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Ted McGee, Field Agent**

ORGANIZATION: **West Virginia Antiquities Commission** DATE: **October 25, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Old Mountainlair, West Virginia University**

CITY OR TOWN: **Morgantown** STATE: **West Virginia** CODE: **54**

**12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Leonard M. Davis  
**Leonard M. Davis**

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date February 22, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

AK Martensen  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 7/27/74

ATTEST:

Wm. Stuebel  
Keeper of The National Register

Date 7.19.74

SEE INSTRUCTIONS  
 NW 17/504 740  
 NW 17/506 260/4229 376  
 SW 17/506 270/4227 700  
 SW 17/504 740/4227 700