

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Monmouth Battlefield

AND/OR COMMON Monmouth Battlefield State Park

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Northwest of Freehold on New Jersey Route 522

CITY, TOWN northwest of Freehold VICINITY OF —NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3

STATE New Jersey CODE 34 COUNTY Monmouth CODE 25

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME State of New Jersey/Department of Environmental Protection, Mr. David J. Bardin, Commissioner

STREET & NUMBER State Capitol, State Street

CITY, TOWN Trenton VICINITY OF STATE New Jersey

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Monmouth County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Freehold STATE New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey--"The Craig House"

DATE 1939 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress--Annex, Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY, TOWN Washington STATE D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Battle of Monmouth, June 28, 1778, was waged over the fields and swamps to the north and west of the small village of Monmouth Courthouse. Due to the nature of the engagement, the battleground consists of two distinct scenes of conflict, separated by a three mile expanse over which the Continentals advanced and retreated, and the British followed in counter attack. (Refer to Ward's map for a detailed analysis of the battle and battlefield).

The site of the first major clash, between The Continental vanguard under General Lee and the British rearguard, under General Cornwallis is located north and slightly west of the present town of Freehold (which has overgrown the historic crossroads settlement of Monmouth Courthouse), and approximately one half mile east of Lake Topanemus. The Continental troops were positioned on the field between the so-called "east ravine" (through which McGellaird's Brook flows, just east of the lake), and the road to Middletown (the present State Route 79); the British line was drawn up on the eastern side of the Middletown road, just west of the road which passes through East Freehold. Following some hot encounters, a confused and disjointed retreat was called, and the Continentals dropped to the southwest and hastened back over the road west to Tennent. (The route of this road is closely approximated by the present road to Tennent and Englishtown.) The present road is slightly to the north of the original.)

The condition of this first battle site is not particularly good. The position of the Continentals to the west of the Middletown road has been heavily urbanized, at least to the southern ridge of the east ravine. The ravine itself has been crossed by a two-lane road. Similarly, the British position is still partially open land, however development at the juncture of Route 79 and the road to East Freehold, and the right-of-way of the Central Railroad of New Jersey, (which roughly parallels Route 79 at a distance of 900 yards) have impacted upon the site.

Following the Continental retreat to the west, the second engagement, and the most important, took place approximately three miles west of the initial attack, on the sloping eminence which rises between the fork of Wemrock Brook and Weamaconk Creek. The main army, slightly larger than the vanguard, was advancing from the direction of Englishtown, to the northwest, under General Washington. In the vicinity of the Freehold Meetinghouse (the Old Tennent Church) Washington first received notice of the retreat. He continued to advance southeasterly to the "west ravine," where a bridge crossed Weamaconk Creek. Here he finally encountered Lee (a brass plaque marks the approximate spot) and reorganized the army to repulse the British counterattack. The retreating troops were allowed to rest and regroup on the slope to the west of the west ravine, while Washington hurriedly ordered the last of the retreating troops into position on the north side of the road, just east of the west ravine. The American line was soon extended to the south, where Wayne's regiments took up their positions behind a hedgrow which bounded an

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES June 28, 1778

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Called by a biographer of Washington "the hottest day of battle,"* and not only because of the scorching weather, the battle of Monmouth of June 28, 1778, marked the combat debut of the American Army after the hard winter's training at Valley Forge. Although Washington failed in his design to break up the British movement across New Jersey after the evacuation of Philadelphia, this last major battle in the north between the two main armies demonstrated to both sides that von Steuben had succeeded in molding an American Army able to engage British regulars on even terms.

The Monmouth battlefield, located just west of the present day town of Freehold, New Jersey has survived relatively untouched in its historic setting of orchards and fields. The scene of the heaviest fighting is presently enclosed in a new 1400 acre state park, but the eastern portion of the battlefield over which Lee executed the initial attack and retreat has been engulfed by Freehold's recent expansion.

HISTORY

On June 18, 1778, Sir Henry Clinton, the recently-appointed British commander, evacuated Philadelphia and headed toward the New Jersey shore where he could embark his 10,000 troops and complete his return to New York by water. Washington, his army now numbering around 14,000 men, dispatched a force to reoccupy Philadelphia and departed from Valley Forge with the rest of his troops in pursuit of the enemy. The British army, with its long, slowmoving, and cumbersome supply train was in a particularly vulnerable position and subject to constant harassment from colonial partisans.

By the 27th of June, the supply train and rear guard had reached the little settlement around Monmouth Courthouse, and that night, Washington decided to attack in the morning, against the advice of most of his lieutenants. Command of the American striking force was offered to General Charles Lee, who refused it at first, but later accepted at the last moment.

Clinton, realising the danger he faced, dispatched his wagons at the first opportunity. Meanwhile, Lee began to engineer his attack, but without first initiating a reconnaissance of the terrain. His flanks engaged the enemy, and in a resulting confusion, Lee ordered a retreat,

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Douglas Freeman, George Washington, vol. V Victory with the Aid of France (New York, 1952).

Benjamin Lossing, The Pictorial Fieldbook of the Revolution, vol. II (New York, 1859).

Leonard Lundin, Cockpit of the Revolution: The War for Independence in New Jersey (Princeton, 1940).

W.S. Stryker, The Battle of Monmouth (Princeton, 1927).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1450 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A | 18 | 5611000 | 4458640
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | 18 | 5611000 | 4459430
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | 18 | 551671510 | 4458010

D | 18 | 557010 | 4459640

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at the northwest corner of the Old Tennent Churchyard, proceed south along the western boundary (the eastern curb of the road running north through Tennent) of the churchyard, and then east at the southwest corner of the churchyard, along the southern boundary of the churchyard, thence south, continuing to follow the churchyard boundary to its 90 degree turn to the east. The landmark boundary continues south at this point, following an extension of the churchyard boundary, to the north curb of State Route 33, thence east along said curb, past Wemrock Road to the junction of the north curb of route 33 with the

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

STATE CODE COUNTY

STATE CODE COUNTY

Landmark
 Designated: Jan. 20, 1966 date
 Boundary Certified: [Signature] Jan 15, 1977

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Richard Greenwood, Historian, Landmark Review Task Force

ORGANIZATION Historic Sites Survey

DATE 6/18/75

STREET & NUMBER 1100 L. Street, NW.

TELEPHONE 202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN Washington

STATE D.C.

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 7/26/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

1

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

2

orchard. Thus the first American line stretched over the eminence from Wemrock Brook almost all the way to Weamaconk Creek. On the right of this line, (to the south) across the swampy Wemrock Brook, a six-gun American battery was positioned on Comb's Hill, where it commanded a clear line of fire. Finally, on the sloping hill west of the west ravine, and behind the first line, the main American army dug in, its position roughly paralleling Weamaconk Creek.

The British attack followed the route of Lee's retreat, and after crossing the "middle ravine," through which a branch of Wemrock Brook flows, the British artillery emplacements were made and the British troops grouped for a series of attacks upon the American position behind the hedgerow, as well as upon the right and left flanks of the main American force. The British attacks were all repulsed, except for a final assault upon the hedgerow position, which succeeded by sheer weight of numbers.

The battle ended shortly after five o'clock. The British withdrew to a strong position to the east of the middle ravine and the Americans held their positions. When morning came, the British had already slipped away to the east.

The western battleground has survived in a well-preserved condition due to its uninterrupted use as farmland. The swampy bottomland along Wemrock Brook and Weamaconk Creek has been drained, and the west ravine no longer presents as formidable an obstacle as the British attackers reported. The land between the two streams is covered with cornfields on the west, and orchards on the north and east. No remains of the hedgerow are extant, although there is a cellarhole on the approximate site of an old parsonage which was in the thick of the fighting, on the northern end of the hedgerow. The ground west of the west ravine is open pasture land with occasional farmhouses. Combs Hill is lightly wooded and as yet, undeveloped. An earth bulwark exists near the crest of the hill, but further research is needed to determine if it dates from the artillery emplacement. The original sand road which served as the main avenue of movement has been supplanted by a two-lane macadam road which follows approximately the same route. A Penn Central Railroad right-of-way roughly parallels this road and crosses Weamaconk Creek slightly to the north of the original bridge, of which no evidence remains. A new road, Wemrock Road, runs in a northeasterly-southwesterly direction, from the road to Tennent south to State Route 33. It parallels the middle ravine, which is 900' to the east. East of the middle ravine, at a distance of 800 yards, U.S. 9 runs in a north-south direction through the battlefield.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

2

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

3

The Tennent Church, on the high ground northwest of the position of the main American army, has survived in a well-preserved state, and serves as a precise reference point in determining the battle. The Craig House, and barn 700 yards north of the middle ravine, have been completely restored. The house is a two-story, square, shingled frame house. On its east end there are two adjoining additions, a one-and-a-half story frame wing, and a single-story frame shed.

The major portion of the western battleground has been incorporated into a State Park. The state plans to remove all non-historic houses and buildings and to restore such features as the hedgerow and parsonage, and to lay new roads through the battlefield for interpretive purposes. These plans are presently being carried out, and the park is not yet open.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

1

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

2

but failed to inform the generals of his subordinate commands.

In a welter of confusion, the untried troops fell back over hills and swamps upon the main army under Washington. The ~~enraged~~ American commander peremptorily relieved the erratic Lee and took over the conduct of the battle in the face of a strong British counterattack. He ordered General Wayne to make a holding action while he reformed the army, and Wayne positioned his men behind a hedgerow near an old parsonage. Here raged the heart of the battle, with the 100 degree temperature taking almost as heavy a toll as the gunfire. An American artillery unit gained Combs Hill on Wayne's right and with deadly accuracy enfiladed the attacking British. The fighting raged back and forth over the fields and swamps, with neither side gaining or yielding significantly. Clinton withdrew as night fell, leaving the Americans holding the battleground. During the night Clinton slipped away to Sandy Hook where his army and supply train were safely transported to New York.

Although Washington had failed to prevent Clinton's escape, he had received unmistakable evidence that the training and discipline imparted to the army by von Steuben at Valley Forge had created a new Continental Army. His troops had grappled with the finest troops of the British army in the longest sustained engagement of the war, and they had held their own.

* Douglas S. Freeman, George Washington, Vol. 5, Victory with the Help of France (New York, 1952), New York.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

eastern bank of the northerly branch of Wemrock Brook, thence north along said bank to its termination, thence north to the western curb of U.S. Route 9, and north along said curb to its intersection with the northern bank of McGellairds' Brook, thence west along said bank to its intersection with the southern curb of the road running to the Old Tennent Church, thence west along said curb to the northwest corner of the churchyard, the point of origin.

These boundaries enclose that portion of Monmouth Battlefield which has been preserved largely in its historic appearance, while excluding that portion to the east which has been severely intruded upon. The landmark, which is state park land almost in its entirety, encompasses the crucial battlefield area with the various historic physical and manmade features. Aside from the Craig House and the Old Tennent Church, none of the enclosed buildings and structures contributes to the significance of the landmark.