United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

914

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name   Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield

other name/site number   HR 182

2. Location

street & number   1 mile north of Cynthiana, east of SR 36   NA ☐ not for publication
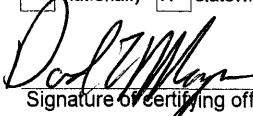   NA

city or town   Cynthiana   ☒ vicinity

state   Kentucky   code   KY   county   Harrison   code   097   zip code   41031

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic places and meets procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____   David L. Morgan, SHPO and Executive   6-18-02
Signature of certifying official/Title   Director, KHC   Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____
Signature of commenting official/Title   Date

_____
State or Federal Agency and bureau   Date

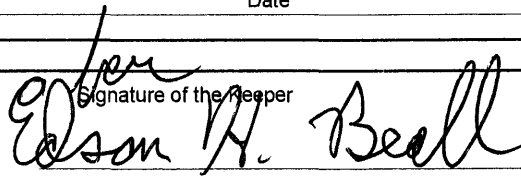## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☒ entered in the National Register.
  ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the
  National Register.
  ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
  National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register
  Register.
☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper   Edson H. Beall

Date of Action   9/6/02

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [ ] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [x] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	1	buildings
1	0	sites
4	0	structures
0	1	objects
5	2	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Defense - battle site

Transportation - rail related

Transportation - road related

Agriculture/Subsistence - agricultural field

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Subsistence - agricultural field

Transportation - rail related

Transportation - road related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation   N/A

walls   wood

roof   metal

other   stone

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

see continuation sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property
for National Register listing.)

[X] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[ ] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack · individual distinction.

[ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

[ ] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] B removed from its original location.

[ ] C a birthplace or a grave.

[ ] D a cemetery.

[ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure

[ ] F a commemorative property.

[ ] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Military - American Civil War

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Period of Significance

June 11, 1864

_____

Significant Dates

June 11, 1864

_____

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

_____

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography   see continuation sheets
(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

[ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
[ ] previously listed in the National Register
[ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
[ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
[ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
[ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #_____

Primary location of additional data

[ ] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State Agency
[ ] Federal Agency
[ ] Local government
[x] University
[x] Other

Name of repository:

Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property   160 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 1 6 | | 7 3 5 2 0 0 | | 4 2 5 5 1 8 0 | 3 | 1 6 | | 7 3 5 3 4 0 | | 4 2 5 4 4 8 0 |
  Zone   Easting   Northing   Zone   Easting   Northing

2 | 1 6 | | 7 3 5 6 5 0 | | 4 2 5 4 4 7 0 | 4 | 1 6 | | 7 3 4 7 8 0 | | 4 2 5 4 2 6 0 |

[X] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)   see continuation sheets

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)   see continuation sheets

11. Form Prepared By

name/title   Joseph E. Brent

organization   Mudpuppy & Waterdog, Inc.   date   April 1, 2002

street & number   129 Walnut Street   telephone   859-879-8509

city or town   Versailles   state   KY   zip code   40383

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

    A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

    A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

    Representative **black and white photographs** of the property

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name   see continuation sheets

street & number   telephone

city or town   state   zip code

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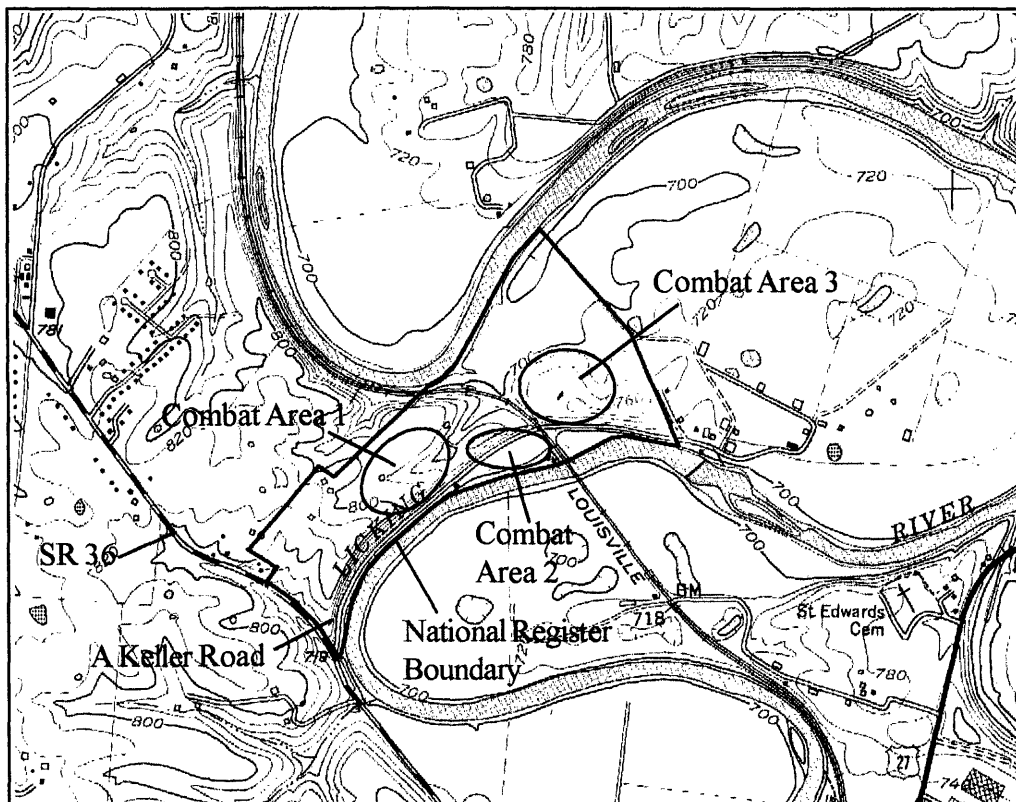Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield   Harrison County, Kentucky

Narrative Description
The Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield (HR 182), consists of approximately 160 acres which are located within two parcels of property and the right-of-way of the CSX Railroad (map1). The battle consisted of three areas of combat beginning with an initial engagement west of the railroad cut. From there, the Union forces were pushed down the steep slopes formed by the Licking River into a bottom south of the original line. The battle ended on the heights east of the railroad tracks within a narrow neck of land formed by the Licking River to the north and south and the railroad tracks to the east.

The battlefield is located within a large bend of the Licking River about one mile north of the City of Cynthiana. The Kentucky Central, now CSX Railroad, follows a curve in the Licking River north of the battlefield and crosses the battlefield in the neck formed by the river, bridging the river just south of the battlefield. In 1864 this bridge was called Keller's Bridge. Confederate troops destroyed the bridge the day before the battle. The destruction of the bridge forced the Union soldiers to detrain at this point and ultimately led to the military action in this area.

Map 1: Showing National Register boundary and three areas of combat.
Note unless otherwise noted, all maps used in the nomination are derived from the Cynthiana USGS quadrangle, 1961 photorevised 1978.

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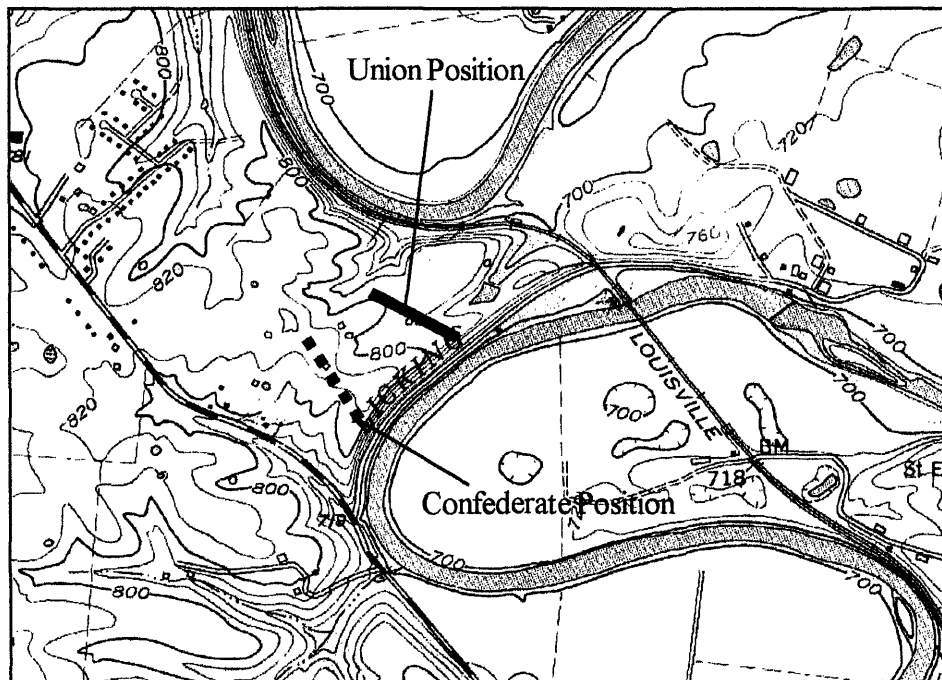
Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield   Harrison County, Kentucky

Combat Area 1 – This area of the battlefield is located on a series of high ridges above a meander of the Licking River. The river has cut steep slopes along part of the southernmost and northeast area of the first engagement. The ridges are bisected by seasonal drainages that flow toward the river. The ridges are broad-topped areas that allowed the combatants to form in line of battle.[1] A road, Raven Creek Pike, present-day SR 36, forms the western boundary of the battlefield. Confederate cavalry traversed this route to the battlefield, dismounted and formed in line of battle probably to the west of the barn on the property.

Union soldiers, after detraining, marched up a farm lane to the top of the ridge in the southern portion of this area. They had planned to cook breakfast and were probably in doing so when the Confederate soldiers arrived. They were quickly formed in line of battle facing the southern soldiers, probably in an arc extending from the old farm lane to the top of the ridge (map 2).

Present Condition – Today, this area is pasture. The only modern intrusion is a barn constructed ca. 1900. The old farm lane is still visible and is bound on the south side near the railroad by a limestone fence remnant. A second road follows the Licking River from SR 36 to a farm beyond the battlefield. This road, A Keller Road, was extant at the time of the Civil War and remains in use today. The road has been paved, but it has not been altered otherwise and it contributes to the nomination.

Map 2: Showing approximate troop positions in Combat Area 1.

[1] Line of Battle: In the 19th century, troops marched in columns, generally four abreast. To fight a battle they would take the column and stretch it out into a line. This resulted in two lines of troops paralleling one another, each forming a line of battle.

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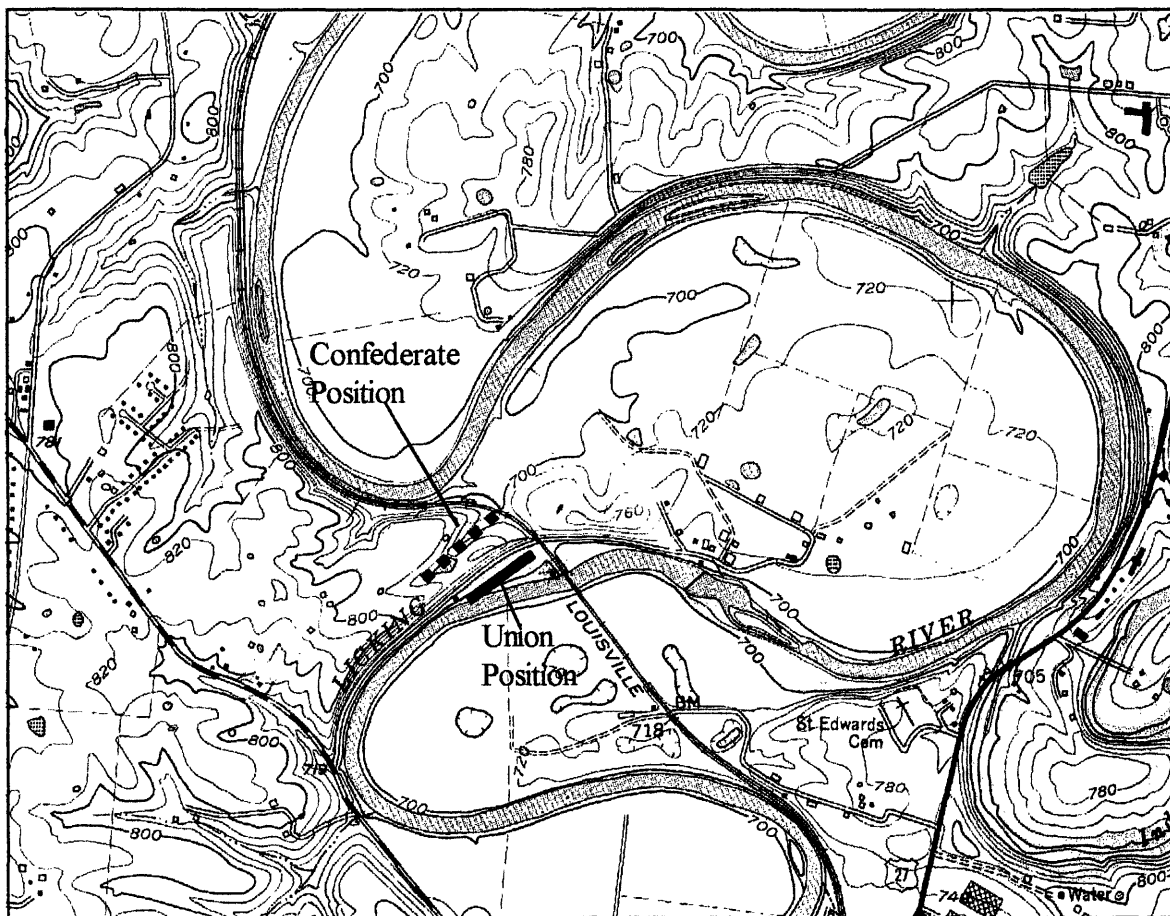# Continuation Sheet

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Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield   Harrison County, Kentucky

Combat Area 2 – This area is located in a broad bottom south of A Keller Road, north of the Licking River and west of the railroad. It was to this position that the Union troops were driven from their original line. The Union troops held this position only briefly, trading fire with the Confederates who were on the ridgetops above. The Union soldiers probably retreated down the farm lane across A Keller Road and into the bottom where they again formed into line of battle. This regrouping would have kept the Confederates at bay (map 3).

Present Condition – Today, this area appears to be a fallow field. It is approximately 600 feet across at its widest point and some 1000 feet long. There are no structures or intrusions within this area.

Map 3: Showing the approximate position of the troops in Combat Area 2.

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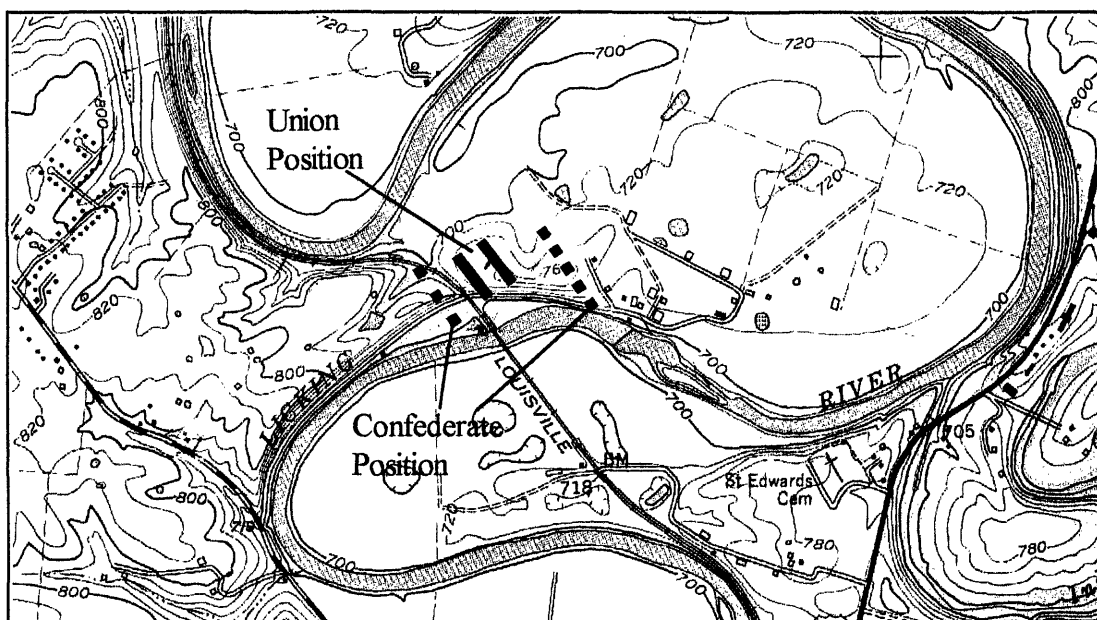
Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield   Harrison County, Kentucky

Combat Area 3 – This is the final phase of this engagement. From the bottom the Union soldiers retreated northeast up the slopes created by the railroad track and the bend in the river. They positioned themselves east of the railroad and reformed their line of battle to await an attack by the Confederate soldiers. The river to the north and south and the railroad to the west protected the Union line. The only access to this area was via two fords, the first to the north and the second near Keller's Mill and Dam, the terminus of A Keller Road, to the south of the Union position. Combat Area 3 is a knoll that commands the broad river bottom to the north and the land to the east, the Union army's first position. The land beyond the knoll falls off to the west and south very quickly and slopes more gradually to the north and east.

It was at this position that the Union army held until compelled to surrender by the Confederate troops. The Rebel soldiers had been reinforced by a second detachment under Morgan who crossed at the Keller's Dam Ford. From their vantage point the Union soldiers could not have seen the ford. Union Gen. Hobson divided his men into two lines to face both threats. The knoll offered plenty of room to maneuver troops. The Union lines remained in two parallel lines of battle on top of the knoll until they surrendered late that afternoon (map 4).

Present Condition – Today the field is in hay. The only modern intrusion is a utility line strung on wood poles that runs along the southern edge of the area. The railroad cut has been raised ten to twenty feet, but the approach to the knoll from the tracks is still steep and easily demonstrates why the Union line was moved to this position. The railroad follows the same course that it did in 1864 and a concrete bridge spans the Licking River in roughly the same spot as the 1864 wooden trestle.

Map 4: Showing the final positions of the troops in Combat Area 3.

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Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield   Harrison County, Kentucky

Integrity

The Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield has integrity of location, setting, feeling and association. The battle was fought on either side of a railroad cut between a narrow neck of land bounded on both sides by the Licking River. The engagement was rather small scale, perhaps between 1000 and 1,200 men fought here. These troops fought a moving battle in an area squeezed in between river and the ridges, bottoms and slopes created by the river.

The landscape described by the soldiers in their accounts of the battle is intact. The 160-acre battlefield is devoid of modern intrusions, with the exceptions of a barn and a wooden utility line. The railroad track, though higher than it was in 1864, remains in the same location and the Licking River is bridged at the same place by CSX as it was by the Kentucky Central Railroad. In fact, it was the destruction of this bridge that caused this battle to occur at this location.

Standing on the ridges either east or west of the railroad only a handful of houses can be seen and all of these buildings are outside of the National Register boundary. On the west side of the track are buildings associated with A Keller Farm. A Keller Farm is outside of the National Register boundary. Several of these buildings, including the main house, were present at the time of the battle. These buildings are for the most part screened by large, mature trees, thus preserving the viewshed of the battlefield. East of the railroad two farmsteads can be seen, both 20th century farms. However, the area where the battle occurred was farmland at the time of the battle and still is today.

It is rare that a Civil War battlefield retains this much integrity with so few noncontributing features. The natural setting, i.e. the topography features of the battlefield, along with the cultural resources, A Keller Road, Raven Creek Pike (now SR 36) and the Kentucky Central Railroad (now CSX) define the historic landscape of 1864. These features remain and have not been compromised by modern intrusions.

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The Second Battle of Cynthiana (HR 182) is eligible under criterion A within the context of the Civil War in Kentucky. The area being nominated is the engagement at Keller's Bridge, the second of three engagements that have come to be called the Second Battle of Cynthiana. These engagements took place in and around Cynthiana, Harrison County, Kentucky on June 11 and 12, 1864. The Engagement at Keller's Bridge is the only one of the three that retains integrity. This battle is significant statewide as the only extant feature of the final battle fought by Confederate Gen. John Hunt Morgan and it is illustrative of the changing tactics employed by Morgan in 1863 and 1864 that led to his fall from favor within the Confederate high command. This raid ultimately caused the Confederate high command to call a court of inquiry to look into the actions of Morgan and his troops. [The First Battle of Cynthiana was fought on July 17, 1862 in roughly the same location of the first engagement of the Second Battle of Cynthiana.]

The engagement at Keller's Bridge was a victory for Morgan; however, the following day his forces were soundly defeated by Union cavalry that scattered his command and recaptured most of the horses and military supplies that the Confederates had captured in Mt. Sterling and Lexington a few days earlier. Morgan was ultimately defeated at Cynthiana because he chose to stay and fight a pitched battle rather than taking the horses and other supplies he had seized and retreating back to Virginia. The tactics at Cynthiana were a marked departure from the hit-and-run tactics that had proved so successful for Morgan in 1862.

During the course of the June 1864 raid into Kentucky Morgan's cavalry fought ten pitched battles. Of these ten, only the Battle at Fort Hill in Frankfort and Keller's Bridge are extant. The Battle in Frankfort is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Second Battle of Cynthiana, is one of the eleven Civil War battlefields in Kentucky surveyed by the congressionally mandated Civil War Sites Advisory Commission and the only battle in the Kentucky survey involving Confederate Gen. John Hunt Morgan.1

Background – Morgan's 1864 Raid
As June 1864 began Union forces were pursuing the main Confederate armies in Virginia and Georgia. The end was not quite in sight but the situation was becoming critical for the Confederacy. In Virginia, the new Union commander Gen. Ulysses S. Grant proved to be a different kind of foe. Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia defeated Grant at the Battle of the Wilderness in May, but unlike his predecessors, Grant did not retreat. He regrouped and continued to press Lee. In the west, Union forces under Gen. William T. Sherman continued to push the Confederates back slowly toward Atlanta. The Union vice was tightening on the Confederacy, but there was still fight in the Rebel armies and Confederate citizens and their leaders still believed they could achieve victory.2

Vital supplies of salt and lead came to the Confederate army from Saltville and Wytheville, Virginia via the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad. Morgan's headquarters was in Abington, Virginia very near these important

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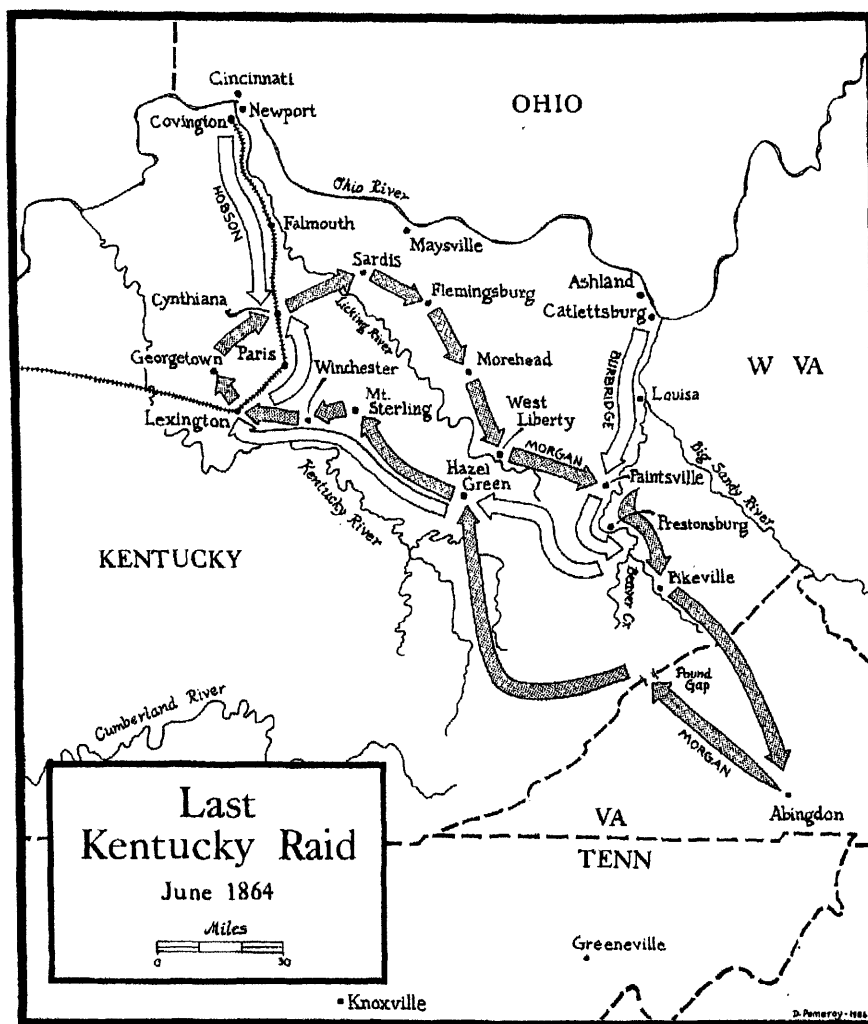
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Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield   Harrison County, Kentucky

towns. In early May 1864
Morgan joined forces with Gen.
William E. Jones and stopped a
Union raid on the East Tennessee
and Virginia Railroad. This action
at Crockett's Gap, Virginia
helped strengthen his new com-
mand and gave Morgan an idea
for a raid into Kentucky.3

Morgan had only recently re-
joined the Confederate service.
He had been imprisoned in the
Ohio State Prison following an
unsuccessful raid into Indiana and
Ohio in July 1863. He managed
to break out of the prison in
November and made his way
back to the Confederacy. The
fight at Crockett's Gap was
Morgan's first action since his
incarceration. In the summer of
1864 Morgan's command, a
cavalry unit, consisted of 2,700
men, about 800 of whom were on
foot. The situation was actually
worse. Many of the Confederate
soldiers had no weapons and
some had little in the way of

Map from Ramage, 1986, p. 214.

clothing. In contrast the Union soldiers they faced were well armed and supplied. Morgan's plan was to go into
Kentucky to obtain supplies for his command and to attack and defeat the Union army in Kentucky before it
could take any action against the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad or the lead mines and salt works.4

Morgan received approval for the raid from his immediate superior Gen. William E. Jones and left Virginia for
the raid into Kentucky before the authorities in Richmond could recall him. Union troops in Kentucky, under the
command of Gen. Stephen Gano Burbridge, were aware of Morgan's movements and planned to intercept him
but were delayed just south of Louisa, Kentucky, allowing the Confederates to escape. For a week Morgan's

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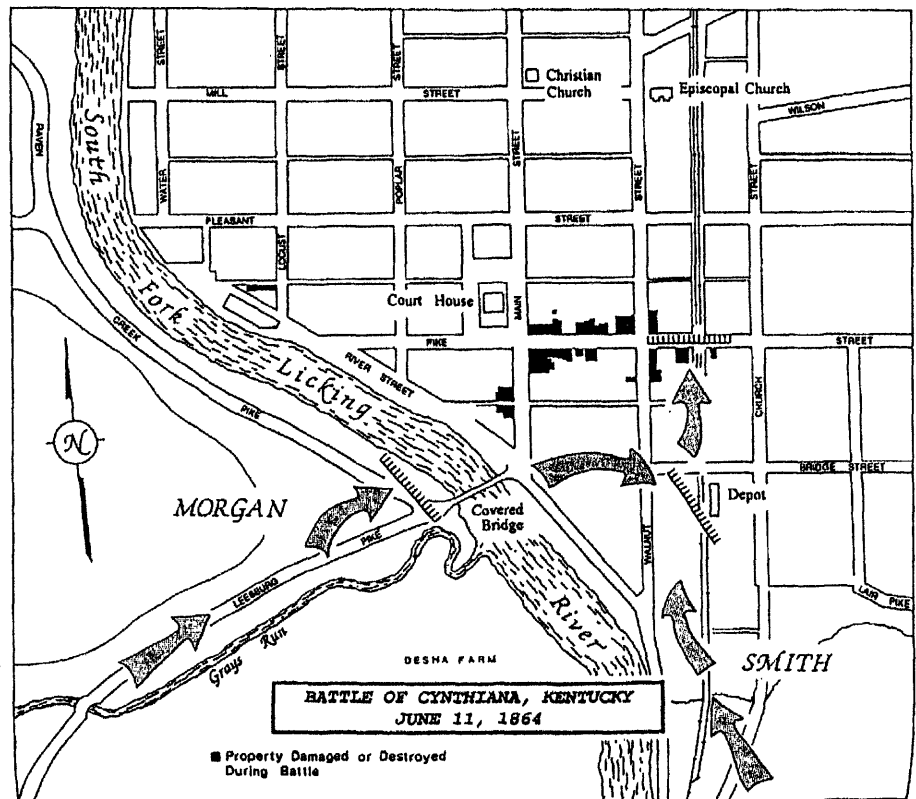
command, with many riding double, trudged through the rough hill country between Pound Gap and Mt. Sterling. On June 8, 1864 the 2,700 Confederates arrived in Mt. Sterling, where the Union garrison of 300 quickly surrendered.5

Feeling that he was not threatened, Morgan divided his force. He left his unmounted soldiers in Mt. Sterling and with the mounted portion of his command pushed on for Lexington where he hoped to gather enough horses for his entire command. He had received false information that his pursuers had moved into Virginia to attack the salt works. This misinformation led to a false sense of security and thus the division of his command. On June 9 Burbridge attacked Mt. Sterling. A brisk fight ensued. The Confederates suffered over 300 casualties but delayed Burbridge for several days, allowing the Confederates to get further into the Bluegrass.6

Morgan was reunited with the battered remnants of his command in Winchester. The Confederates then pushed on to Lexington where they found plenty of horses and the needed equipment. As Morgan's main column marched into Lexington, he sent a small detachment to burn the bridges near Cynthiana. Now well supplied, raiders pushed north toward Georgetown. On June 11, 1864 Morgan's command reached Cynthiana.7

Cynthiana
Three bridges on the Kentucky Central Railroad were burned between Paris and Cynthiana. Keller's Bridge, which is about two miles north of Cynthiana where the Kentucky Central crosses the Licking River, may have been the first. The Confederate soldiers or others also burned Townsend Bridge six miles north of Paris and Kimbrough Bridge one mile south of Cynthiana. Each bridge was guarded by a stockade designed to prevent the very

Map from Penn, 1995, p. 106.

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action that occurred. Morgan's men either overpowered the Union garrison or simply convinced them to surrender. By destroying the bridges Morgan hoped to cut Cynthiana off from any support that could come by train.8

In the time between the burning of the bridges and the arrival of Morgan's column in Cynthiana Union soldiers arrived from Cincinnati. Gen. Edward H. Hobson and a handful of men had been sent to Cincinnati by Gen. Burbridge to gather reinforcements and bring them south into Kentucky. Col. Conrad Garris arrived first. His regiment, the 168th Ohio National Guard, consisted of some 300 "100 day men" who had been mustered into service in May. These troops were not regular soldiers. In other words these men did not have the same level of training or equipment provided to soldiers in the wartime army. The 168th Ohio arrived just north of Cynthiana, at Keller's Bridge, on June 10, 1864. The soldiers left the train and marched the two miles into Cynthiana where they prepared to defend the town against the Confederate cavalry.9

When John Hunt Morgan's Confederate command arrived in Cynthiana on June 11, 1864 he had about 1,200 effective troops, the bridges were out and he felt secure. His plan was to gather supplies from the Union garrison in Cynthiana, feign an attack on Cincinnati and then escape either via Maysville or another northern route or back through eastern Kentucky into Virginia. Morgan's confidence was based on his misunderstanding of the numbers. He knew there would be soldiers at Cynthiana but he knew he outnumbered them and he suspected they were not front line troops. Morgan would spend two days in Cynthiana, one day too long.10

At dawn on June 11 Morgan sent his Second Brigade under Col. D. Howard Smith to cross the Licking River above Cynthiana " . . . to gain the enemy's rear." The First Brigade under Col. Henry L. Giltner was ordered to move directly on the town. Morgan's divided force attacked the Union garrison in Cynthiana from two directions. Giltner's First Brigade attacked the soldiers defending the covered bridge on the Leesburg Pike leading into the city from the west and Smith led the Second Brigade into town from the southwest, probably from the direction of Lair. In the attack on the Leesburg Pike, 75 Union soldiers were captured before they could cross the bridge into Cynthiana. Those that made it across retreated to the railroad depot east of the covered bridge. In the fighting at the depot Col. George W. Berry, who was in command at that place, was killed. Soon after, the Union garrison at the depot soon surrendered.11

The 171st Ohio National Guard Regiment, some 800 strong, had arrived at Keller's Bridge from Cincinnati around 4 a.m. and took up a defensive position west of the Kentucky Central Railroad. At some point during the fighting in town, Col. Garris of the 168th Ohio sent a courier to Keller's Bridge apprizing Col. Joel F. Asper of the 171st Ohio of the situation and urging him to send help immediately. In town, the remaining Federal soldiers retreated to the courthouse and to the unfinished Rankin Hotel. The men at the courthouse were surrounded and quickly surrendered. Those who took refuge in the hotel, a three-story brick structure, held out longer. To hasten their surrender Morgan ordered the hotel's stable set on fire. This fire forced the remaining soldiers to surrender; it also consumed 37 additional structures, about half of the buildings in the downtown

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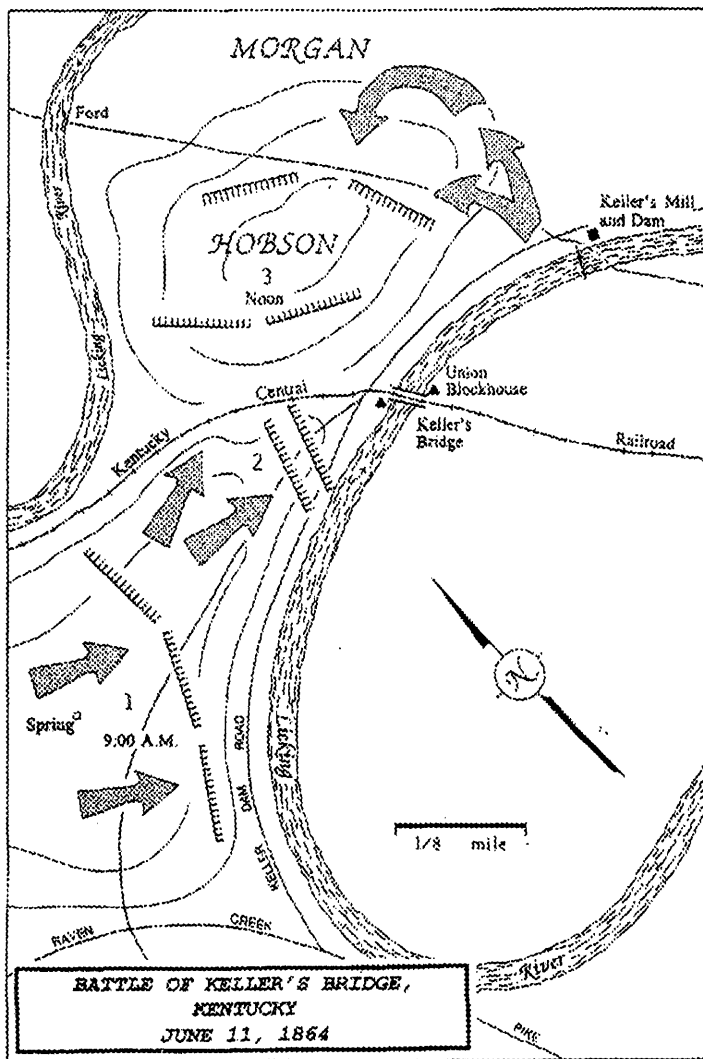business district. By 8 a.m. Morgan held the town but the battle was not over.12

Keller's Bridge
As the fighting in town raged and the outcome swung to the side of the Confederates, Col. Giltner sent Col. Ed Trimble's 10th Kentucky Cavalry north of town toward Keller's Bridge to cut off the retreat of any soldiers who may have escaped the Confederate trap in town. At the bridge Trimble found more than a few stragglers. The 171st Ohio National Guard Regiment, which had arrived just as Morgan struck Cynthiana, were in a defensive position west of the Kentucky Central Railroad. Trimble quickly dispatched a courier back to Col. Giltner in Cynthiana explaining that he had met a strong force of Union infantry and could not hold long without aid.14

[The fighting that would initially take place on the west side of the railroad track is the area designated Combat Area 1 on map 1 in Section 7.]

Map from Penn, 1995, p. 118.

As the Confederate troops awaited help, their Union counterparts prepared to defend them-selves. It is unclear if Trimble attacked the Union soldiers before help arrived. Col. Asper wasted little time getting his troops in line of battle along the heights west of the railroad. As he was aligning his men, Gen. Hobson arrived on the field and took command. In addition to the 171st Ohio, Hobson had about 100 men from various regiments, who had either accompanied him to Cincinnati from Louisa or he had gathered in Ohio. He took those men and a company from the 171st Ohio, another 100 men, and deployed them as skirmishers in front of his main force. According to Asper's report the Union skirmishers attacked Trimble around 5 a.m., forcing him back.15

An hour or an hour-and-a-half after the assault by the Union skirmish line upon Trimble's detachment, Col.

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Giltner brought the rest of the Confederate First Brigade onto the field from Cynthiana. Giltner dismounted his troopers and deployed them in line of battle opposite the Federal line, placing the 10th KY Cavalry and the 10th KY Mounted Rifles on his right. The 1st and 2nd KY Mounted Rifles were in the center and the 4th KY Cavalry was on the left. To the rear of the Confederate line, one of every four soldiers was detailed to hold the horses, cutting the Confederate effective fighting strength by one-fourth. Giltner probably had around 550 men engaged.16

The two lines faced off across the open space. The 171st struck first, hitting the Confederate line. The Rebel troops held. The Union soldiers fell back, regrouped and waited. The Confederate soldiers charged at the Union line. A volley from the Ohio troops staggered them but they did not retreat. The Confederates fired and drove the Ohioans from the hill into a valley between the Licking River and the railroad.17

[The flood plain in the valley between the Licking River and the railroad is the area designated as Combat Area 2. The Union soldiers only occupied this place briefly before moving east of the railroad.]

> "Our men [Confederates] pressed closely upon them & the battle raged fiercely. I have never seen such obstinate fighting. They were evidently two or three to our one in numbers, & handled by a gallant officer. We discovered by their volleying fire, which at times was terrible, & their steadiness under fire, & evolutions in face of an Enemy, that we were fighting trained troops. We might have been mistaken, but the evidence was overwhelming for the belief. No '100-day' men."18

The Confederate observer was incorrect. These were 100-day men but they fought like veterans. Giltner's Confederate line continued to press the Ohioans, who retreated across the railroad cut to the east and situated themselves in a very strong position. The Union soldiers had now been pushed from their original line along the ridges approximately 300 yards west of the railroad tracks, to a position on a high ridge east of the tracks. They were now located just east of " . . . a deep railroad cut, in a bend in the river – an exceptionally strong position, the river encircling them like a crescent, the railroad cut in their front."19

[Combat Area 3 is the Union position on the high ground east of the railroad cut. This was the best defensive position that the soldiers had occupied since the fight began. Unfortunately, by the time they arrived their fighting strength had been greatly deminished.]

The new Union position placed Giltner's men in a difficult position. To attack the Union line the Confederates had to cross the railroad cut and climb the hill in front of them. Flanking the Federals, getting around the ends of their line, was impossible because the bends of the Licking River protected their flanks. Gen. Hobson had placed his Ohio troops in a position that only offered one option for the Confederates – a frontal assault.

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The final Confederate assault that pushed the Union line east of the railroad exhausted the ammunition of the 4th KY, the largest regiment in the Confederate line. They were forced to withdraw. The weakened Confederate line charged the Federals at least twice, each time being repulsed by the stubborn Union soldiers.20

The 4th KY was remounted and the unarmed soldiers paraded around behind the Confederate line in a show of strength intended to intimidate the Union soldiers. It was a ruse to make Gen. Hobson believe that the Confederates were about to make one last grand charge at their position from the west. In fact, the rest of the soldiers in the Confederate line were also short of ammunition. Giltner sent for the horseholders' ammunition and the Confederate soldiers were ordered not to call to their comrades for cartridges. Giltner also sent a courier to Morgan urgently requesting that he bring support.21

Gen. Hobson had been working to strengthen his position but his manpower was greatly reduced. By mid-morning his effective force had been reduced to about 300 effective men. Ascertaining that there were two fords across the river on either side of his position he sent men to the fords to prevent any crossing by the Confederates.22

About 11 a.m. Giltner, with all the ammunition he could gather, was preparing for a last desperate charge across the railroad cut at the Union lines. As Giltner made his preparations Morgan finally arrived. Morgan, with Maj. Cassell's 3rd Battalion, brushed aside the Union soldiers guarding the ford at Keller's Dam and effectively got his command behind the Union line. The Third Brigade, under the command of Col. Robert Martin, soon reinforced Morgan's command. With the Confederates suddenly on both sides of them, Hobson ordered Col. Asper to reposition a portion of the ever-shrinking command to meet this new threat: "I placed all I could spare from my front line against a high fence to our rear where they would be partially protected by two fences of a lane."23

A superior force now surrounded Gen. Hobson as Morgan probably had about 800 men on the field. As Giltner's troops charged across the railroad cut they were met at the top of the hill by a flag of truce. The battle had ended. Morgan had sent a flag of truce to Hobson earlier. The General conferred with his staff, who believed that they could hold out a while longer but they could not win. Hobson decided to surrender.24

The surrender took place about noon. The Union soldiers marched out and stacked their arms. The Confederates spent a great deal of time taking their names for their official parole. In all, it took about four hours for Hobson's men to surrender to Morgan. [Valuable time for the Union column pursuing Morgan from the east.] The Confederates captured about 700 men of the 171st Ohio and from various other regiments. The 171st lost 13 killed and 54 wounded in the fighting at Keller's Bridge. Morgan now had about 1,300 prisoners; the 168th and 171st Ohio that had been captured in Cynthiana and 200 or so more that had been captured in Mt. Sterling.25

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Conclusion

At Cynthiana, Morgan's change in tactics once again caught up with him. For years Morgan had survived on his cunning and daring, doing the unexpected, employing hit-and-run tactics and generally breaking all of the rules taught officers in the regular army. Following his victory the afternoon of June 11, 1864, the prudent move would have been to abandon Cynthiana, or at least move his command into a position that offered the best possible defensive position. The Confederate general chose to remain in Cynthiana to fight the Union troops who he knew were pursuing him. When Morgan deployed his troops on the night of June 11 he knew that Gen. Burbridge's command was fifteen miles away in Paris.26

The third and final engagement of the Second Battle of Cynthiana began at dawn on June 12, 1864. Gen. Stephen Gano Burbridge brought 2,400 well-equipped Union soldiers and two artillery pieces to Cynthiana. Giltner's First Brigade was down to two rounds of ammunition per man. The battle was brief. The overwhelming numbers of the Union soldiers and artillery quickly turned the battle into a route. The Union soldiers cut off the main avenues of escape and the retreat became every man for himself. In the end Morgan's scattered command limped back to Virginia. In the end, Morgan's June 1864 Raid, also know as his Last Kentucky Raid is more significant for the damage it did to Morgan's reputation than for its military achievements.27

There are a number of questions that remain unanswered about the Second Battle of Cynthiana. Morgan's command, short of ammunition, was suddenly presented with a bountiful harvest of arms and ammunition captured when the Ohio troops surrendered, yet the Confederates did not use these weapons, they chose to destroy them. Various sources have stated that the Rebel cavalry, who were armed with a shorter Enfield rifle, did not want the longer infantry muskets that had been used by the Ohio troops.28

The lack of discipline on the part of the Confederate troops throughout the course of the raid is also puzzling. For on previous raids Morgan's command had been known for its skill, stealth and discipline. On this raid, Morgan's command degenerated into an undisciplined mob. The Confederates robbed banks in Mt. Sterling, Winchester, and Lexington; not to mention pillaging stores in all of the places mentioned above as well as Cynthiana. What had happened to the command that had swept through Kentucky and Tennessee terrorizing Union troops and destroying supplies, railroads and bridges? Part of the answer could be that many of Morgan's best officers were still in prison in Ohio. Most of Morgan's command had been captured in the summer of 1863 and lodged in the Ohio State Prison, but, ultimately, the blame falls on Morgan. 29

John Hunt Morgan carried out numerous raids on Union garrisons and supply lines during the Civil War until his death in the summer of 1864. Morgan had some military training but he was not a West Point graduate. His operations against the Union were most successful when he employed hit-and-run tactics and did not try to follow the rules prescribed for military actions in manuals. He would march his men at night and attack weakly defended places and retreat with his command before reinforcements could arrive.

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The most daring and successful of his raids, the Christmas Raid of 1862, utilized these tactics. In the course of this raid Morgan ". . . captured and paroled over 1,800 prisoners, inflicted over 150 causalities, burned a total of 2,290 feet of bridgework, wrecked thirty-five miles of track, and telegraph line, and destroyed three depots, three water stations, several culverts, and cattle guards and large quantities of Federal stores."30 Along the way he sent telegrams to the Union command in Louisville offering false information and he kept moving. Morgan sent out feints to confuse the Federals regarding his strength and his whereabouts. He destroyed the two rail-road trestles on Muldraugh's Hill, his primary objective, avoided a pitched battle with infantry at Lebanon Junction and made his escape back into Tennessee.30

John Hunt Morgan was least successful when his objective was fuzzy, failed to adhere to hit-and-run tactics and/ or tried to fight a conventional fight. This was not because his troops were inferior to those he faced. It was more a lack of insight into conventional warfare on Morgan's part and sometimes he just did not seem to know when to cut his losses. Morgan was often overconfident and trusted in fate and luck.

Morgan's Great Raid of 1863 and the Last Kentucky Raid are good examples of the above. The Great Raid had no clearly defined military objective and the Last Raid could have been successful if Morgan had left Kentucky earlier. He did not and the raid failed. As a result he would face a court of inquiry for leaving Virginia and the conduct of his command while in Kentucky.31

Four battles fought by John Hunt Morgan's command illustrate both Morgan at his best and at his worst: the Battle of Hartsville, Trousdale County, Tennessee; the Battle of Vaught's Hill, Rutherford County, Tennessee; the Battle of Tebbs Bend, Campbellsville, Kentucky; and the Battle of Buffington Island, Meigs County, Ohio. These battle clearly demonstrate Morgan's tactics moving away from the hit-and-run strategy that served him well early on to a more conventional type of warfare, which would be his downfall.

The Battle of Hartsville was fought December 7, 1862 after the Perryville Campaign of the summer and fall of 1862. This battle was a decisive Confederate victory and following the battle Morgan was promoted to the rank of brigadier general. Morgan took a small number of cavalry and infantry, crossed the Cumberland River at night and brought his men into Hartsville, where he fought and defeated a larger number of Union soldiers. Again, deception and luck played an important role in the battle. Morgan faced a Federal force of untested men. Once the fight began the Confederates quickly attacked and pushed hard. The surprised and confused Union soldiers soon surrendered. Morgan took his prisoners and booty and quickly recrossed the Cumberland before the Union reinforcements could catch him. The Battle of Hartsville is listed in the National Register of Historic Places with national significance.32

The Battle of Vaught's Hill was fought on March 20, 1863 near Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Following the Christmas Raid and the Battle of Stones River an uneasy quiet settled in middle Tennessee. The Confederate army had moved into camp in and around Tullahoma. Morgan's cavalry was employed in screening the Confed-

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erate army. Morgan was restless and sought a chance to win a battle and bring accolades upon himself and his command. On March 19 a Federal force was sighted headed back to Murfreesboro. Morgan's plan was to surprise the Union force while they were on the move and vulnerable to attack. Morgan sprung his plan the next day. The surprise was missed and the Union soldiers took cover atop a steep hill. Morgan attacked up the hill losing 150 men in the process, the Federals lost only 38. He called off the attack and withdrew to Tullahoma. This was the first fight in which Morgan shunned hit-and-run tactics in favor of a more conventional approach and the results did not bode well for the future.[34]

The Battle of Tebbs Bend was fought on July 4, 1863; it was the beginning of the Great Raid and an ominous one. The official plan of the Great Raid was for Morgan to take Louisville and destroy as much Federal property and L&N rolling stock as possible. Morgan probably never intended to go to Louisville and, in fact, he did not. His plan was to cross the Ohio River, raid into Indiana and Ohio, escape into Virginia and be back in Tennessee in five weeks. In early July, 1863, Morgan crossed the Cumberland River into Kentucky. Just north of Columbia, Kentucky, at a crossing of the Green River near Campbellsville, a Michigan colonel with 250 men prepared a stout defense and awaited Morgan's advance. Col. Orlando Moore situated his defensive position between the river bluffs leaving Morgan no alternative but a frontal assault. Morgan could have easily bypassed Moore's men but he did not. He attacked. In a one-half-hour fight he lost 75 men, including six officers. Morgan called off the attack and moved on. At Tebbs Bend, like Vaught's Hill, Morgan failed to appreciate the advantage of a well-fortified position against a frontal assault. The Battle of Tebbs Bend is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.[35]

The Battle of Buffington Island was fought July 19, 1863. After a chase through Ohio Union infantry, cavalry and the navy in the form of the gunboat *Moose*, caught up with Morgan at Buffington Island in the Ohio River. The two columns of Union soldiers were under the command of Gen. Edward H. Hobson and Gen. Henry M. Judah. The Union columns and the gunboat on the river caught Morgan in a crossfire. The result of this action was that 600-700 of Morgan's force of 1,900 was captured. The next day Morgan had a chance to escape into West Virginia with his command but chose to stay. Here again, Morgan fought a pitched battle and lost. In his defense, he had very little choice and his avenues for escape had been cut off or at the very least restricted. The debacle at Buffington Island was due more to the position Morgan put his men in by crossing the Ohio and seeking greater glory for himself and his command. He achieved the glory, but lost the faith of the Confederate high command. The Battle of Buffington Island is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.[36]

Of the numerous battles and skirmishes in which Gen. John Hunt Morgan's cavalry participated seven were chosen for inclusion in the 1990-92 Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Survey: Cynthiana in Kentucky, Buffington Island and Salineville in Ohio, Corydon in Indiana and the Battles of Hartsville and Vaught's Hill in Tennessee. The battles in Ohio and Indiana are the only Civil War sites surveyed in those states. All of the sites listed above except Vaught's Hill, Salineville and Cynthiana have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places.[37]

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Since the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission survey two John Hunt Morgan-related battles in Kentucky have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places: the battle at Fort Hill in Frankfort in Franklin County and the Battle of Tebbs Bend in Taylor County, Kentucky. Tebbs Bend was described above. The battle at Fort Hill was fought by a detachment of John Hunt Morgan's cavalry, as a part of the June 1864 Raid. The Confederates were unable to take the fort and Frankfort was saved.38

When viewed in context with other Morgan battles the Second Battle of Cynthiana clearly shows the pattern that Morgan followed after his successes of 1862. The Second Battle of Cynthiana has statewide significance because it was the last victory by Morgan and one of the few bright spots in the Last Kentucky Raid. It is difficult to say where Morgan's career would have gone if the court of inquiry had not been interrupted by his death, but his star had fallen with those in the Confederate high command and the Last Kentucky Raid, epitomized by his ultimate defeat at Cynthiana, was the last straw.

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[1] Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields, Technical Volume II: Battle Summaries, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1993, pp. 35 and 119. Here after cited as CWSAC.

[2] John S. Bowman, The Civil War Almanac, World Almanac Press, New York, 1983, pp. 198-206.

[3] James A. Ramage, Rebel Raider: The Life of General John Hunt Morgan, The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 1986, pp. 211-212.

[4] Ramage, Morgan, pp. 214-215.

[5] Lowell Harrison, The Civil War in Kentucky, The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 1975, p. 73 and Ramage, Morgan, pp. 220-221.

[6] Ramage, Morgan, p. 219.

[7] Harrison, Civil War, p. 73 and Ramage, Morgan, 220-221.

[8] Col. J. H. Simpson to Capt. J. Bates, July 19, 1864, RG 393, Entry 2173, Box 4, National Archives, Washington, DC and William A. Penn, Rattling Spurs and Broad-Brimmed Hats: The Civil War in Cynthiana and Harrison County, Kentucky, Battle Grove Press, Midway, Kentucky, 1995, pp. 100-101.

[9] Penn, Cynthiana, 102 & 105 and Faunt Le Roy Senour, Morgan and His Captors, C. F. Vent and Company, Cincinnati, 1865, pp. 348-349.

[10] Penn, Cynthiana, 104 and William C. Davis and Meredith L. Swentor, Bluegrass Confederate: The Headquarters Diary of James O. Guerrant, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1999, p. 468.

[11] George Dallas Mosgrove, Kentucky Cavaliers in Dixie: Reminisces of a Confederate Cavalryman, reprint edition, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1999, p. 152.

[12] Davis & Swentor, Guerrant, p. 475 and Mosgrove, Cavaliers, pp. 152-153.

[13] War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I Volume 39, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1880-1909, p. 56, hereafter cited as OR and Penn, Cynthiana, pp. 105-113.

[14] Davis & Swentor, Guerrant, p. 475; Mosgrove, Cavaliers, p. 154; and OR, p. 56. It should be noted that this force includes musicians, hospital attendants and supernumeraries and the entire force was never available for combat.

[15] OR, pp. 56-57.

[16] Mosgrove, Cavaliers, p. 154 and Penn, Cynthiana, p. 117.

[17] Mosgrove, Cavaliers, p. 155 and Davis & Swentor, Guerrant, p. 476.

[18] Davis & Swentor, Guerrant, p. 476.

[19] Mosgrove, Cavaliers, p. 155.

[20] OR, pp. 56, 63 and Mosgrove, Cavaliers, p. 155.

[21] Mosgrove, Cavaliers, p. 156 and Davis & Swentor, Guerrant, p. 477.

[22] Penn, Cynthiana, p. 119 and OR, p. 32.

[23] OR, p. 57 and Penn, Cynthiana, p. 120.

[24] Penn, Cynthiana, p. 120 and Davis & Swentor, Guerrant, p. 478.

[25] Penn, Cynthiana, pp. 121-122.

[26] Penn, Cynthiana, pp. 125-126 and Ramage, Morgan, p. 222.

[27] Mosgrove, Cavaliers, pp. 160-163; Penn, Cynthiana, pp. 125-146; and Ramage, Morgan, pp. 223-233.

[28] Penn, Cynthiana, p. 121; Mosgrove, Cavaliers, p. 157; Ramage, Morgan, p. 221; and Davis & Swentor, Guerrant, p. 478.

[29] Ramage, Morgan, pp. 218-221.

[30] Ramage, Morgan, p. 137.

[31] Ramage, Morgan, pp. 134-147.

[32] Ramage, Morgan, pp. 180-182, 222-225 and 242.

[33] CWSAC, Battle Summaries, p. 119 and Ramage, Morgan, pp. 128-131.

[34] CWSAC, Battle Summaries, p. 127 and Ramage, Morgan, pp. 151-153.

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[35] Ramage, <u>Morgan</u>, pp. 163-164.

[36] CWSAC, <u>Battle Summaries</u>, p. 97 and Duke, <u>Morgan</u>, 331-336

[37] Phil Thomason and Doug Cubbison, *Hartsville Battlefield*, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Tennessee Historical Commission, Nashville, Tennessee, 1998.

[38] Ramage, pp. 129-133 and Nicky Hughes, "Fort Boone and the Civil War Defense of Frankfort," <u>Register of the Kentucky Historical Society</u>, Vol. 88 No. 2, pp. 152-160

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UTMs continued

5. 16	734510 4253780	6. 16	734300 4254000
7. 16	734320 4254060	8. 16	734220 4254100
9. 16	734420 4254450	10. 16	734530 4254320
11. 16	734760 4254620		

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of The Engagement at Keller's Bridge, Second Battle of Cynthiana Battlefield is a triangular shaped area that encompasses some 250 acres. Beginning in the northeast corner on the Licking River the boundary follows the property boundary of parcel 13 Harrison County Property Valuation map 88 south to the Licking River. From this point the boundary follows the course of the Licking River to spot where A Keller Road intersects SR 36. From the point the boundary becomes the right-of-way of SR 36 approximately 1,200 feet north. At this point approximately 200 feet south of a 20th century farmstead the boundary turns east for approximately 250 feet to UTM point 6 and then north 500 feet to UTM point 7. From UTM point 7 the boundary follows the line of parcel 11 Harrison County Property Valuation map 88 to the Licking River. From this point the boundary follows the Licking River back to the point of origin.

Boundary Justification

The land that has been nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places encompasses the core area of this battlefield. That is all of the areas of actual combat have been included. The northeast corner of parcel 11 Harrison County Property Valuation map 88 was excluded as it contains a 20th century house and several outbuildings that do not contribute to this nomination.

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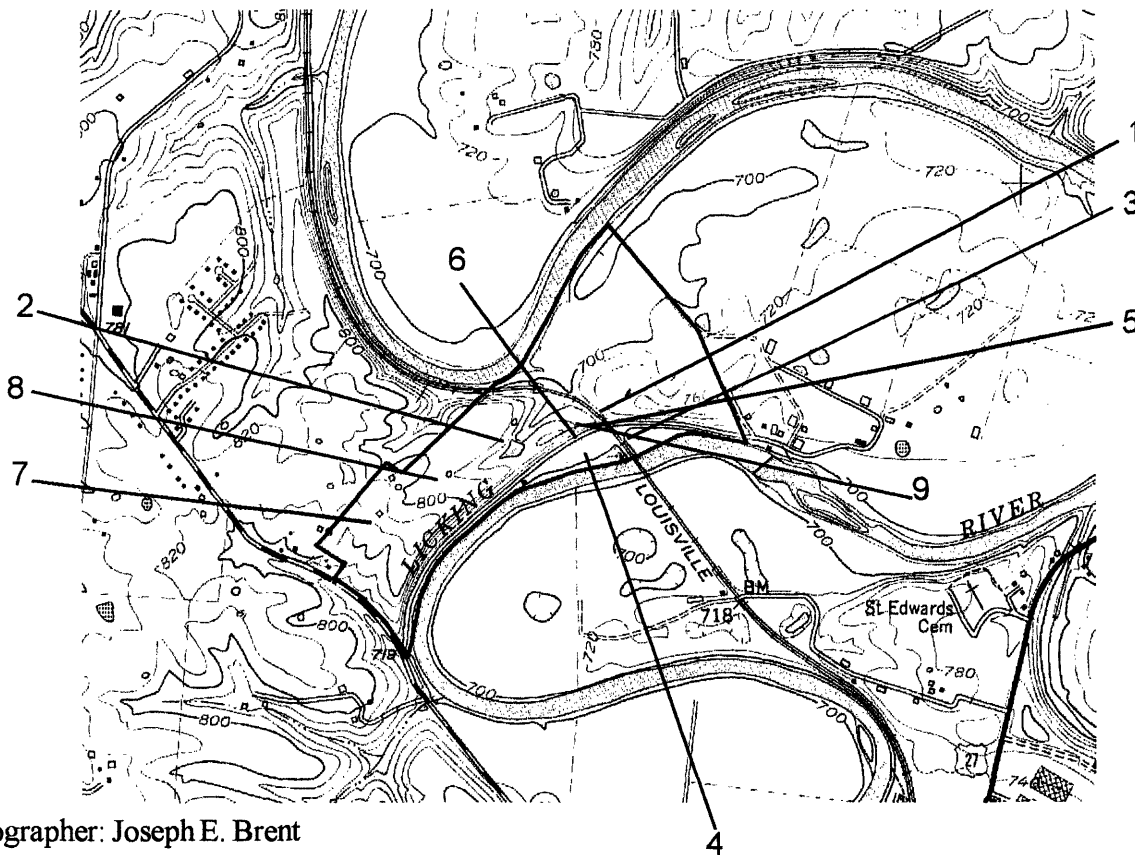# Continuation Sheet

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Photographs

1. Railroad cut with Union line on ridge above (combat area 3)– looking east
2. View of original Union line (combat area 1) looking west
3. View of railroad track looking southwest
4. Second Union line (combat area 2) looking southwest.
5. Old stonewall just west of railroad tracks looking southwest
6. A Keller Dam Road looking west
7. Barn, noncontributing looking northwest
8. General area of first Confederate line looking southeast (combat area 1)
9. Old farm lane, probable Union route to first position from railroad tracks looking west

Photographer: Joseph E. Brent
All photographs taken February 28, 2002.
Negatives stored at the Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Kentucky

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Parcel 13 Map 88

J. W. Switzer
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Cynthiana, KY 41031
Parcel 11 Map 88

CSX Transportation, Inc.
301 West Bay Street J 220
Jacksonville, FL 32202