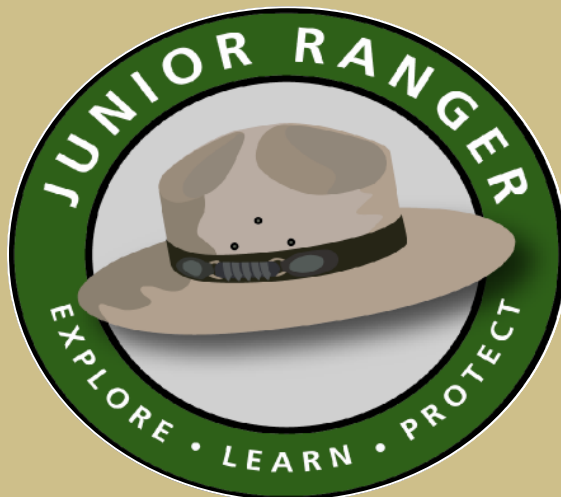


Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park



Junior Ranger Activity #4 Spotsylvania Court House



www.nps.gov/frsp



FREDERICKSBURG AND SPOTSYLVANIA NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

Check off the activities as you finish them:

- ☐ Just a Few Facts
- ☐ In the Trenches
- ☐ The Bloody Angle
- ☐ The Spotsylvania Stump
- ☐ War is Cruelty

Thanks for deciding to become a Junior Ranger!

Today you will learn many things about our park.
After completing the required activities, you can become a Junior Ranger and earn a Junior Ranger patch!

How to become a Junior Ranger:

Step 1: Complete all the activities in this folder.

Step 2: Have someone responsible check your work.

Step 3: Award yourself the Spotsylvania Junior Ranger rocker patch found in this folder! **Congratulations!**

Helpful Hints:



If you have questions, ask a Park Ranger.

Go on a guided tour ~ you can get lots of answers!

There are also Junior Ranger programs at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and the Wilderness!

Junior Rangers know it's important to preserve the battlefields for people today and in the future. You can help us take care of this important place by promising to:

Stay on trails and only cross earthworks by using bridges.

Be a good example and act in a safe and courteous manner.

Honor the memory of the men who fought here by treating the battlefields with respect by **not** playing ball, flying kites, or riding skateboards in the park.

Enjoy the park and leave it in a better condition than you found it.

Enjoy learning about Civil War history and share what you have learned with others.



Just a Few Facts ...

Go to the Exhibit Shelter at Stop #1.
Read the panels to answer the questions below.

The armies came to Spotsylvania right after fighting another battle not far from here.

Which battle was that? _____

The Battle of Spotsylvania lasted a *long* time.

What day did it begin? _____

What day did it end? _____

How long is that? _____



Which army did most of the attacking at this battle? _____

The Confederate army dug trenches (earthworks) in the shape of a giant letter U.

It became known as the _____ shoe salient.

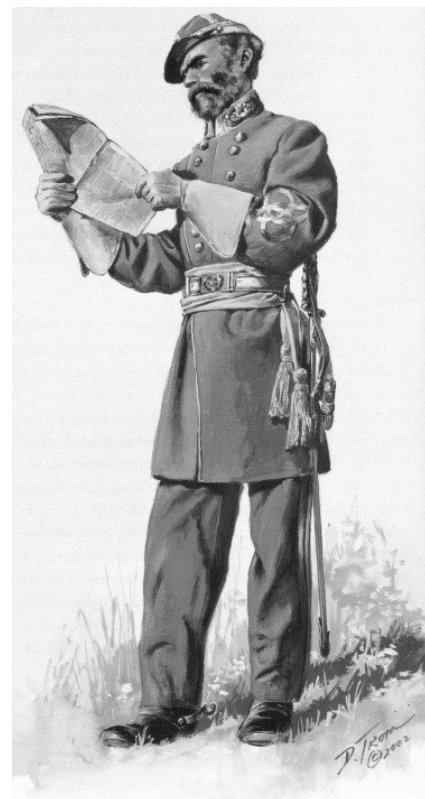
Which army do you think won this battle, or was it a tie? _____

Why?

X Marks the Spot

Look at the large battle painting and find the following:

- ☐ Where you are now
- ☐ Brock Road
- ☐ Harrison House
- ☐ McCoull House
- ☐ Landrum House
- ☐ Bloody Angle



Artwork courtesy Don Troiani

In the Trenches



Soldiers did lots of digging at the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House. Sometimes they dug into the ground and made **trenches** to hide *in*. Other times they piled up dirt and made **earthworks** to hide *behind*. They often added logs to make them sturdier and higher. Many of the original trenches and earthworks are still visible today! **Please stay off them, because we want them to last!**

Who used more trenches: Attackers or Defenders?

So which army dug more trenches at Spotsylvania?

Digging trenches and building earthworks was tough work. Do you think it was worth it? Why or why not?



The Bloody Angle

Go to Stop # 3. Walk the trail and read the signs.

On May 12, 1864, both armies wanted to capture a part of the earthworks that became known as the **Bloody Angle**.

They fought over it for **20 hours**!

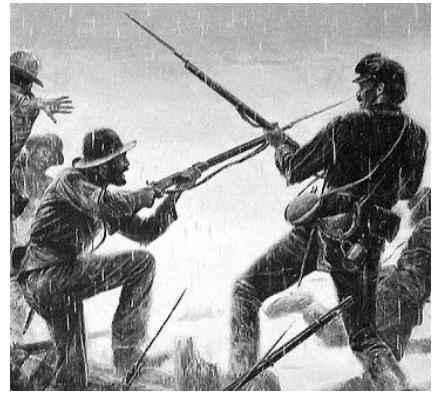
Sometimes the soldiers got so close to each other they used bayonets or even swung their guns like clubs (*it probably looked like the picture below*).

It also rained during the Bloody Angle fight, so the trenches filled with water and the earthworks turned into mud.

What words would you use to describe what happened here?

Some soldiers said the Bloody Angle was the worst thing they had ever seen. How was it worse than other battles? What made it different?

Stand here and think about what happened at this place. How does it make you feel?



The Spotsylvania Stump

During the fighting at the Bloody Angle, trees were cut down by bullets! Soldiers noticed one particularly large (22" diameter) oak tree fell over after it was shot apart in many hours of battle.

After the war was over, soldiers took what was left of the tree to Washington, D.C., where you can see it on display at the Smithsonian Museum today!



How many bullets do you think it took to cut down this big tree?

Do you think it was safe to be near this tree?
Why or why not?

Why do you think the soldiers felt this tree was special?

Why do *you* think this tree stump is special?



Relics

Some people collect items from battlefields.

Bullets, buttons, cannonballs, and this tree stump are all examples of *relics*.

Why do you think people collect these things?

Why do we put relics in museums?



Civil War bullet
(actual size)

War is Cruelty

Being a soldier can be difficult.

Wars have death, destruction and sadness.

Soldiers try to be tough, but sometimes it is hard.



David Holt was a Confederate soldier from Mississippi. He wrote about what happened after his unit had fought for almost 20 hours at the Bloody Angle:

*“We halted in a pasture and broke ranks. Then came the reaction.
All moved by the same impulse, we sat down on the wet ground and wept.
Not silently, but vociferously and long.”*

Why do you think the soldiers cried?

Why do you think David wrote about this story?

What would make you keep fighting for 20 hours?



David Holt

Remembering ...

Today you visited the place where a battle occurred.

If you were a soldier in the Civil War, how would you want people to remember what you did?



