

# Being an Expert on Civil War Battlefields

Historic preservationists are experts on the following topics related to the Civil War:

## The History

- Understanding why Civil War battlefields are important in local, state, and American history by studying historic documents and visiting archives or museums that contain documents, maps, and photographs that provide information about a particular battle.
- Studying historic documents and visiting archives or museums to help them understand the history of how a battle unfolded. For example, they look at where troops were moved, where different battles took place, and if there were important buildings on a piece of land. An example of an important building is a house that served as a military headquarters.
- Speaking with other historians, members of local historic societies, and city planners to learn about what actions have been taken towards the protection of a battleground and discuss what needs to be done to protect a battlefield.

## The Landscape

- Participating in a survey of a battlefield to document to see if historic structures are still standing or have been changed. Historic preservationists may also work with archaeologists to understand what has been found under the ground that may be important to a battlefield site.
- Studying maps both historic and current to see how the landscape has changed over time. Preservationists also must be aware of current boundaries of a battlefield.
- Using old photographs, historic preservationists can pinpoint missing structures or other changes in the landscape. For example, have trees and vegetation taken over part of a site?

## The Community

- Working to acquire land that may have been part of a battlefield, but for some reason was not included in a protected site. Historic preservationists will work with lawyers, local governments, or historical societies to buy land that can be protected as part of a historic battlefield.
- Talking with urban planners to make sure that historic sites stay protected and out of the way of new development, such as housing developments, new roads or buildings.
- Explaining the importance of historic preservation with people who are interested in protecting historic battlefields. Speaking at meetings to describe preservation and its importance can help make people aware of American history.

# Steps to Evaluate Proposals

## Step 1: Understand How to Evaluate Proposals

Historic preservationists carefully consider proposals to look for possible problems in the information provided. While reading through your proposal, pay attention to the following things:

- Knowing WHO will be evaluating the current condition of the battlefield site. It is important that someone experienced evaluates the condition of the site. Has this person done other evaluations on historic battlefield sites? Is the person familiar with the history of the specific battlefield?
- Know HOW the battlefield site will be evaluated. Will the person be working with a team to document the condition of the battlefield site? Will measurements be needed? Will photographs be taken? It is important that evaluators pick a method that will ensure the most accurate data is collected on the site's current condition.
- What is the proposal's plan for reconstruction and renovation? What materials need to be used or replaced? Are the materials similar to ones originally used in the construction of the building?
- Will the completed proposal maintain the historic integrity of the site? Maintaining historical integrity means making sure the site looks like it did when the battle took place?

## Step 2: Research Battlefield History

- Before you can evaluate the proposals for restoring the battlefield, you need to know what the battlefield originally looked like.
- Research details about the original battlefield on [Handout: Sources](#)

## Step 3: Evaluating Proposals

- To evaluate your proposal, fill out the rubric on the next page. You will rank each topic on a scale of 1-5. 5 is the highest score you can give.
- When you finish filling out the rubric, calculate the total score.
- Then, write comments about whether you think this proposal should be used to restore your battlefield site.

# Rubric

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Choice of Materials</b>	Choice of materials will completely change the look of the site or necessary historic details.	Choice of materials is mostly, but not completely inaccurate.	Choice of materials is roughly half historically accurate and half not historically accurate.	Choice of materials is not 100% accurate, but changes were necessary for safety or other reasons.	Choice of materials is 100% historically accurate and appropriate.
<b>Plan to Evaluate Current Condition</b>	Plan will not allow evaluators to accurately assess the battlefield condition.	Plan will allow some details to be collected about the battlefield, but many questions will remain.	Plan will allow some details to be collected about the battlefield, but many questions will remain.	Plan will allow some details to be collected about the battlefield, but many questions will remain.	Plan will allow evaluators a detailed and accurate assessment of the battlefield that will leave no questions
<b>Plan to Restore in a Historically Accurate Way</b>	The preservation repairs or restoration will be made in a way that completely ignores historical accuracy.	The site will be preserved with very few accurate materials, but is mostly inaccurate.	The site will be preserved with an attempt to keep it historically accurate, but includes many differences from the original construction or appearance.	The site will be preserved mostly accurately with almost no difference from original construction or appearance.	The site will be restored and preserved completely accurately with no difference from original construction or appearance.
<b>Overall Safety Concerns Addressed</b>	Repairs or removals are very dangerous and could result in harm.	Very few safety concerns have been addressed. Most of the project will be risky.	About half of the repairs or removals are safe for the crew, while the other half of the repairs or removals are dangerous.	Repairs are mostly safe with one or two risky steps.	Repairs will be made while considering the safety of all crew and a plan has been made to address all risks.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_ / 20

Comments:

# Group Assignments

## Group Assignment #1: Restoring a Historic Building

### Preservation Focus:

- To restore the McLean House to its original appearance, as it would have looked in 1865.

### Why the Site is Important

- The McLean House is where Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered his army to Union General Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865.
- The house was a private residence. It was later taken apart to be moved to another location. However, the move never happened. Now, a local preservation group wants the house rebuilt because of its significance. The house will be included as part of the Appomattox Battlefield Park.

### Plan to Assess Site:

- We are going to send a historian to look at the site and will also look at historic pictures of the McLean House. The historian will spend about 2 hours or so doing this.
- The historian will then type up notes and send them to us with a recommendation as to what to do next.
- The historian is a graduate student at the university who is interested in historic buildings. This is the first project she has ever done.

### Plan for Restoration:

- Our plan is to first look over all the information that has been gathered.
- Once we have reviewed the materials, we will draw up a plan of what we think the McLean House can look like, but taking into account it should be modernized.
- Materials and supplies that we will use: historic photographs and we will be using modern materials to build the house. A local contractor that has built many homes in the area will take care of the construction. He will work with some other carpenters who will bring their own equipment.

# Group Assignments

## Group Assignment #2: Restoring a Historic Building

### Preservation Focus:

- To restore the McLean House to its original appearance, as it would have looked in 1865.

### Why the Site is Important

- The McLean House is where Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered his army to Union General Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865.
- The house was a private residence. It was later taken apart to be moved to another location. However, the move never happened. Now, a local preservation group wants the house rebuilt because of its significance. The house will be included as part of the Appomattox Battlefield Park.

### Plan to Assess Site:

- We are going to send a team of historic preservationists and a local architect to the site. They will also look at historic photographs and blueprints of houses that are similar to the McLean House.
- The team will type up their notes and email them to our team to provide their recommendations about what needs to be done to rebuild the house.
- The historic preservationist will come from the local preservation society. The preservationist is a recent graduate and this is only his second project. The architect has designed schools and businesses, but few houses.

### Plan for Restoration:

- Our plan is to first look over all the information that has been gathered.
- Once we have been able to find the drawings and floor plans for the McLean House we will draw up plans. The architect can also make suggestions as to what kinds of modern materials could be used to build the house.
- Materials and supplies that we will use: historic photographs and current maps of the property to be sure we are building in the right spot. Because companies that specialize in historic structures are very expensive, we may go with a local builder and use modern building materials and techniques. This will be cheaper and the house when finished will look very close to what it was originally.

# Group Assignments

## Group Assignment #3: Restoring a Historic Building

### Preservation Focus:

- To restore the McLean House to its original appearance, as it would have looked in 1865.

### Why the Site is Important

- The McLean House is where Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered his army to Union General Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865.
- The house was a private residence. It was later taken apart to be moved to another location. However, the move never happened. Now, a local preservation group wants the house rebuilt because of its significance. The house will be included as part of the Appomattox Battlefield Park.

### Plan to Assess Site:

- We are going to send a group of archaeologists and historic preservationists who have strong backgrounds in architectural history. An architect that helps reconstruct historic structures will also be there. They will walk the site and are planning to spend a few days at the site. They will walk around, photograph the area, consult maps, and make notes. The archaeologists will dig to see if they can find artifacts that are associated with the house.
- The preservationists will go to City Hall and see if there are land maps and architectural drawings of the house to study. They will also make a list of materials used to build the house.
- The preservationists, architect, and archaeologists will type up their notes and email them to our team to provide their recommendations about what needs to be done to restore the landscape. The architect will also note what building techniques would have been used to build this 19th century house.
- The preservationists and archaeologists will come from the local Center for Archaeological Research, which is known for their skill in evaluating historic sites. The archaeologists are specialists in battlefield archaeology. The preservationists are recent graduates of a preservation program and this is their first project. The architect has worked on other historic properties in the area.

### Plan for Restoration:

- Our plan is to first look over all the information that has been gathered.
- Once we have been able to find the drawings and floor plans for the McLean House, we will determine if any of the original materials from the house have been found (bricks, lumber, hardware) and if the materials are still usable. If not, the architect will make a list of businesses that specialize in materials for historic homes.
- Materials and supplies that we will use: historic photographs and maps, current maps of the property to be sure we are building in the right spot. We will also hire a building company that has experience in constructing historic houses. We will also consult with a landscape historian to make sure that any trees or bushes that are planted are similar to what was originally there on the site.



# Sources

## Source 1 :



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McLean\\_House\\_\(Appomattox,\\_Virginia\)#/media/File:McLean\\_house\\_1865\\_April.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McLean_House_(Appomattox,_Virginia)#/media/File:McLean_house_1865_April.jpg)

This is the McLean House in Appomattox, Virginia in 1865. This is what the house should look like when completed.

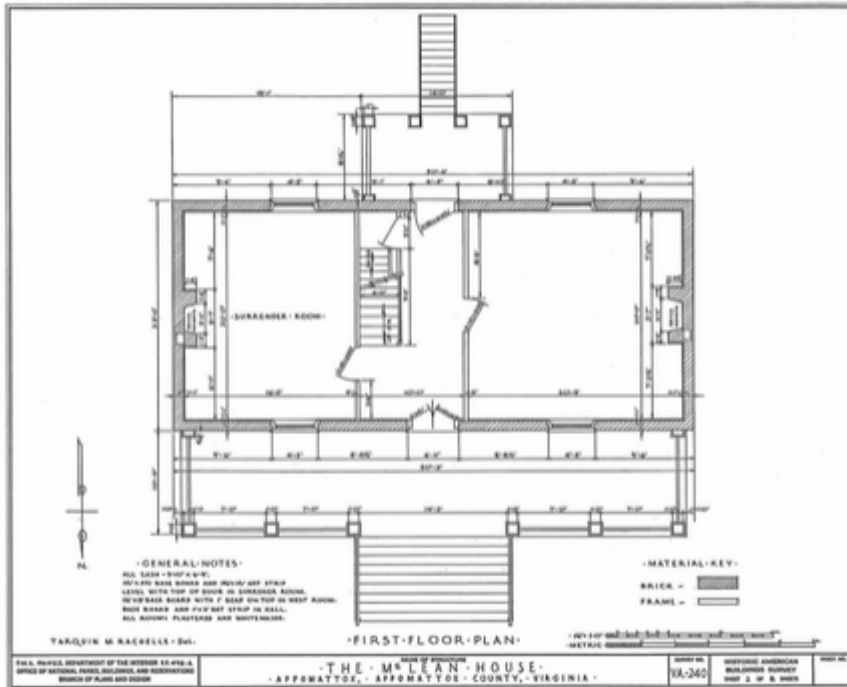
## Source 2 :



This postcard shows the ruins of the McLean House many years later.

[https://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/appomattox-th-village-restored-after-plan-to-erect-monument-was/article\\_9b8c0d60-d897-11e4-a2a0-6b692461370d.html](https://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/appomattox-th-village-restored-after-plan-to-erect-monument-was/article_9b8c0d60-d897-11e4-a2a0-6b692461370d.html)

### Source 3 :



These are the floor plans drawn up for the McLean House reconstruction. These are also called measured drawings. This is because the plans shows the length and width of the house and how big the rooms should be. These drawings show the first floor of the house. Notice how the drawings also included fireplace locations at the center ends on the left and right sides. The drawing also shows the porch and steps. There is also a key to help builders understand what materials should be used. In this case, the McLean House is built of solid brick.

<https://picclick.com/The-McLean-House-Drawings-Appomattox-Virginia-Architectural-191705828326.html#&gid=1&pid=2>

### Source 4 :



This is a photograph of the measured drawings showing the front of the McLean House. Notice how each part of the house is labeled with the materials that are to be used. For example, the roof is to be covered with wood shingles. The outside of the house is brick. It also tells the builder the type of pattern that the bricks will be laid in. Even the windows are to look a certain way. Most homes during the period of the Civil War were built of wood or brick.

<https://picclick.com/The-McLean-House-Drawings-Appomattox-Virginia-Architectural-191705828326.html#&gid=1&pid=3>



Source 5 :



<https://www.loc.gov/resource/hhh.va0248.photos/?sp=4>

Besides building the house correctly, historic preservationists will also note any buildings or fences that might have been standing. This historic photograph shows that the McLean House had a white picket fence around it. So, a similar fence will be built in the reconstruction.

# Teacher Key

## Group 1:

- The evaluation team only appears to be studying the site and some historic photographs, but very little else is being done. Also, a few hours is not enough time for this type of reconstruction project.
- Although there are suggestions for replacement materials that are historic, the fact that modern materials and building techniques will be used means that the building will not be entirely historically accurate.
- Although the plan is to rebuild the home, there are serious questions if the house will be a faithful and historic reconstruction using historic techniques and similar materials. There also does not seem to be a plan that addressed safety issues.
- Suggested Ratings: Materials: 2, Evaluation Plan: 2 Restoration Plan: 1 Safety:2

## Group 2:

- The evaluation team is thorough in looking at site plans, photographs and maps, but may not be spending enough time doing so.
- The suggestions that modern materials and building techniques will be used means that the building will not be historically accurate
- .Although the plan is to rebuild the home, there are serious questions if the house will be a faithful and historic reconstruction using historic techniques and similar materials. Also there does not appear to be experienced members on the team who know and understand how to reconstruct historic buildings. There also does not seem to be a plan that addressed safety issues.
- Suggested Ratings: Materials: 2, Evaluation Plan: 2 Restoration Plan: 1 Safety:2

## Group 3:

- The evaluation team covers everything above and below ground, but a few days may not be enough time for an accurate evaluation.
- The team is being very careful to follow descriptions and photographs showing what materials are being used and how the house was built.
- The plan to rebuild the home in its original spot, and to follow the blueprints faithfully suggests that the house will look much the same as it originally did. Also there is attention to restoring the yard around the house. The team also consists of experienced professionals who have done similar types of work. There is little information though about safety procedures.
- Suggested Ratings: Materials: 4, Evaluation Plan: 3 Restoration Plan:4 Safety:2

# Additional Proposals to Evaluate

## Proposal #1: Power's Hill

### Preservation Focus:

- To restore Power's Hill at the Gettysburg Battlefield

### Why the Site is Important

- Power's Hill was the location for Union artillery during the Battle of Gettysburg. Artillery are guns and cannons. The Union used artillery to fire towards Confederate forces who were attacking Culp's Hill and Spangler's Spring on July 3, 1863.
- Over time, the site has been hard to see because of large trees in Spangler's Spring.

### Plan to Assess Site:

- We are going to send two historians to look at the site. They will study the site for a total of 4 hours. They will walk around and make notes of what they see.
- The historians will type up their notes and email them to our team to provide their recommendations about what needs to be done to restore the view.
- The evaluators will come from the graduate history program at the local college. This will be their first preservation project!

### Plan for Restoration:

- Our plan is to first determine what trees might need to be cut and if any of the land needs to be excavated, or removed.
- After we determine what we think the landscape should look like, we will remove a few trees so people can see some of Power's Hill.
- Materials and supplies that we will use: equipment to cut down the trees. We will do all this work ourselves because we want to save money and one person says he knows how to use the equipment.

# Additional Proposals to Evaluate

## Proposal #2: Fleetwood Hill

### Preservation Focus:

- To restore the historic landscape at Fleetwood Hill. Fleetwood Hill is located in Brandy Station, Virginia. It is where the Battle of Brandy Station occurred.

### Why the Site is Important

- The Battle of Brandy Station was the largest cavalry battle of the Civil War. Cavalry are soldiers who fought on horseback. There was no clear victory for either side.
- A local preservation group has bought the land to preserve the battlefield. Part of that purchase includes non-historic houses that were built during the 1990s. A non-historic building is a building that is less than 50 years old.

### Plan to Assess Site:

- We are going to send architectural surveyors to look at the site. They will walk and video the site and are planning to spend the day there. They will also photograph the area, consult historic and modern maps they have brought with them, and make notes.
- The surveyors will type up their notes and email them to our team to provide their recommendations about what needs to be done to restore the landscape to how it looked at the time of the battle.
- The surveyors will come from a local company that studies important historic architectural and landscape sites. This is the seventh historic battlefield project they have worked on and they have won awards for their work.

### Plan for Restoration:

- Our plan is to first look over the historic and current maps to see what has changed.
- After we are clear about what the battlefield should look like, we will study how to best remove the non-historic buildings from the site. We will also note tree lines or plantings that were in place during the battle.
- Materials and supplies that we will use: historic photographs and maps, current maps of the property. We will also make arrangements with local demolition companies to safely remove the non-historic buildings from the property. We will make sure that on the day those houses come down that no one that is not supposed to be there is on the property. In addition, any trees, bushes or plants that would not have been present at the time of the battle will be removed or planted. This activity will be done by a professional landscaping crew. This will then help to restore the landscape to what it looked like in 1863.

# Sources for Power's Hill

## Source 1 :



This is the view of Power's Hill taken during the 1880s from Spangler's Meadow. The Union artillery was lined up on the hill and fired upon Confederate soldiers crossing the field.

<https://www.gettysburgdaily.com/spanglers-spring-area-tree-removal-progress/>

## Source 2 :



This is a modern-day view of Spangler's Meadow.

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/view-restored-powers-hill-gettysburg-battlefield>



# Sources for Fleetwood Hill

## Source 1:



<https://www.essentialcivilwarcurriculum.com/the-battle-of-brandy-station.html>

This historic photograph taken at the Battle of Brandy Station shows Union General Meade's Headquarters on Fleetwood Hill. Fleetwood Hill was the site of the largest largest cavalry battle during the Civil War and in American history. A cavalry are soldiers on horseback. The all-day battle took place on June 9, 1863. By the end of the day, neither side could declare victory. Union troops pulled back, and the Confederate army stayed.

## Source 2 :



<https://markerhunter.wordpress.com/2014/09/11/fleetwood-hill-restore-ipr/>



<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/galleries/threats-weve-faced>

This is the battlefield today. Fleetwood Hill is in the distance. There is a modern house located on the hill now.

# Teacher Key for Additional Proposals

## Proposal #1- Power's Hill

- Two historians looking at the site for four hours may not be enough time to do a detailed evaluation of the land. Also nothing has been said as to whether the historians are familiar with the battle and how it unfolded.
- Although the students may do a good job, this does not suggest that their evaluation will be thorough.
- Only removing part of the trees when photographs show that the field was clear is not historically accurate.
- No safety considerations have been made to make sure the removal of the trees and other brush are done properly.
- Suggested Ratings: Materials: 3, Evaluation Plan: 2 Restoration Plan:1 Safety:2

## Proposal #2- Fleetwood Hill

- Evaluation plan will allow for a detailed report that present both written and visual documentation. The video will allow any remaining questions to be addressed at a later date.
- The evaluators are experienced and highly recommended.
- Even though there may be modern materials used in planting new trees or bushes, they will be close to what would have been present on the land during the battle.
- Proper safety measures and trustworthy professionals are being used to remove the non-historic buildings in a safe manner.
- Suggested Ratings: Materials: 3, Evaluation Plan: 4 Restoration Plan:5 Safety:5