

CEDAR CREEK

A Battle Remembered and Re-enacted, A Battlefield Seeking Protection

Photography by Richard Nowitz

October 19, 1864. In the morning, the 17,000-man Confederate army of General Jubal A. Early attacks and routs the 30,000 men of Union Major General Philip H. Sheridan.

But in the afternoon, Sheridan himself arrives after a ride from Winchester and takes advantage of Early's fatal misperception that the North's regrouping is no more than a sign of an organized retreat. At about 4 p.m., Sheridan mounts a new attack and prevails.

Cedar Creek was the only Civil War battle in which the same two armies each won and lost a battle on the same day.

Total casualties: 8,824.

The Battle of Cedar Creek marked the end of several other things:

- The career of Jubal A. Early.
- Confederate domination of the Shenandoah Valley and its food supplies.

- Confederate hopes for a negotiated peace with the North.

The 1991 Living History weekend at Cedar Creek (in Middletown, Va.) takes place October 19 and 20, with re-enactments, parades, drills and demonstrations each day.

The Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation has been organized to preserve the land on which the battle took place. The 600 or so acres around the battle site have remained very much as they were 125 years ago, but industrial development now threatens the site.

For information on the re-enactment weekend or the CCBF, call 703/869-2064.



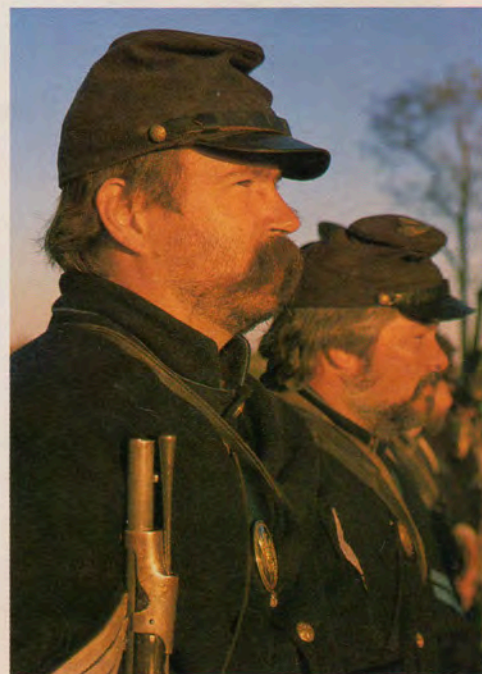
On the grounds at Belle Grove.

Construction on Belle Grove Plantation began in 1794. In 1864 it served as headquarters for Union General Sheridan until the morning of October 19, when Belle Grove was re-captured, albeit for a brief time, by the Confederacy.



Faces of a battle remembered.

There were some 47,000 troops involved in the Battle of Cedar Creek.





The dawn of success.

The Confederate forces began their advance well before dawn, and by sunrise were advancing successfully on all parts of the field.



Readying to re-enact.

This year's re-enactment takes place October 19-20, in Middletown, Va.



The advance of the Blue.

General Philip Sheridan's Union troops, routed early in the day by the Confederates, regrouped and came back to defeat the South in the afternoon.



Bayonets at the ready.

The turning point in the Battle of Cedar Creek may have occurred when General Jubal Early allowed six hours to pass without action after the morning rout.



Field of ended dreams.

Much of the acreage where the Cedar Creek battle took place remains as it was in 1864. The Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation is raising money to keep it that way.