

ANTIETAM NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD, OBSERVATION TOWER  
Antietam National Battlefield  
Richardson Avenue  
Sharpsburg vicinity  
Washington County  
Maryland

HABS MD-934-A  
*MD-934-A*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### ANTIETAM NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD, OBSERVATION TOWER

HABS No. MD-934-A

Location: Richardson Avenue, Sharpsburg vicinity, Washington County, Maryland

Date of Construction: 1896

Builder: James Snyder – contractor

Original Owner: U.S. War Department, Office of the Quartermaster General (1896-1933)

Present Owner: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (1933-present)

Present Use: Observation tower

Significance: Antietam’s stone Observation Tower was built during the War Department’s era of battlefield preservation and interpretation. In 1890, congressional legislation gave the War Department oversight of the Antietam Battlefield Commission—created to preserve and maintain the battle lines from the September 17, 1862 Battle of Antietam. Until 1933, when administration of the battlefield transferred to the National Park Service, the War Department was the steward of Antietam and many other Civil War battlefield sites for commemorative and educational purposes. The preserved landscapes were meant to honor the dead and provide visual lessons on strategic military tactics.

Built to provide a commanding view of the Antietam Battlefield, this structure was constructed by local workers using primarily local resources and materials such as native limestone. Rising nearly sixty feet, the tower enabled visitors to have a better view of the Antietam battlefield. The surrounding topography lacked elevated natural land features, making it difficult at times to envision the battlefield landscape as a whole. As part of a new preservation plan developed between 1890 and 1895, the tower also allowed visitors to view battlefield land still held in private ownership by local Sharpsburg residents. The “Antietam Plan” preserved narrow strips of land, maintaining the rural agricultural

landscape while simultaneously providing access to key battle locations. With limited access to most of the battlefield, the Tower provided a commanding 360 degree view. While a fair portion of returning war veterans made use of the Observation Tower, its construction also reflected an increase in tourism at the turn of the century. Whether utilized by veterans or the larger tourist population, the Tower demonstrates the War Department's physical impact on the landscape of the Antietam Battlefield.

Historian: Susan C. Hall

Project Information: Documentation of the Observation Tower was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), within the Heritage Documentation Programs (HDP) of the National Park Service (Catherine C. Lavoie, Chief, HABS; Richard O'Connor, Chief, HDP) during the summer of 2009. This effort was made possible through the Sally Kress Tompkins Fellowship, an award established by HABS and the Society of Architectural Historians to recognize and encourage the historical research of emerging scholars. Susan C. Hall (University of California, Riverside), 2009 Sally Kress Tompkins Fellow, produced historical reports focusing on several War Department-era structures at Antietam National Battlefield and Antietam National Cemetery. Assistance was provided by many staff members at Antietam National Battlefield, particularly Jane Custer (Chief, Cultural Resources) and Keven Walker (Cultural Resource Specialist). Lisa P. Davidson, HABS historian and Chair of the Sally Kress Tompkins Fellowship committee, served as project leader. Large-format photography was undertaken by HABS photographer Renee Bieretz.

## I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: August-December 1896
2. Architect: Office of the Quartermaster General
3. Original Owner: U.S. War Department, 1896 – 1933
4. Subsequent Owner: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1933 – present
5. Builder: Jacob Snyder, Washington County, Maryland

6. **Original Plans and Construction:** The original blueprint plans of the Observation Tower are dated July 1896 and represent the structure generally as it exists today. However, letters between contractor Jacob Snyder and Ezra A. Carman of the Antietam Board reveal that it was decided to omit the pyramidal roof in the initial 1896 building campaign.<sup>1</sup> The structure consists of a mixture of native limestone and Indiana blue limestone. Apparently the locally available stone, generally tan in color, was used in lieu of difficult to acquire blue limestone.<sup>2</sup> As completed in December 1896 the tower cost \$2,740.<sup>3</sup>

7. **Alterations and Additions:** Other than the addition of a roof as originally planned, the observation tower has seen few major changes since its construction in 1896. Directional markers made of melted cannon were placed on top of the tower's parapet in 1897.<sup>4</sup> In August 1908, an advertisement was sent out from the General Depot of the Quartermaster's Department for bid on the tile roof construction.<sup>5</sup> By April 1909, the pyramidal tile roof had been added to the structure.<sup>6</sup> Originally blue glazed tile was planned but later red clay tile was substituted.<sup>7</sup> Various safety measures have been added

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<sup>1</sup> Letter, E.A. Carman to Jacob Snyder (5 August 1896; 14 October 1896), File No. 595, Entry 707—Records of Cemeterial Commissions, 1893-1916, Antietam Battlefield Commission, Letters and Reports to Secretary of War, 1894 – 98, Record Group 92 – Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives I, Washington, D.C. (hereafter, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I).

Note: It should be noted that the files from Record Group 92 are retrievable from the National Archives in Washington, D.C. and College Park, MD. In the Downtown branch (NARA I), they prefer that researchers request files using the Record Group, Entry number, and (at times) file number. For Entries 89 and 707, specific box numbers are not generally requested by the researcher but rather filled in by the staff members on duty based on the file number entered. Instead, file numbers are pulled based on indexes from Entries 84 and 706. In the College Park branch (NARA II), they prefer that researchers request files using the Record Group, Box number, and (at times) Entry number. Those files in Entry 1891, RG 92 do require box numbers. Record Group 79, on the other hand, requires box numbers and entry numbers.

<sup>2</sup> Extensive correspondence between E.A. Carman, Geo. W. Davis, and Jacob Snyder. File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>3</sup> Memorandum, Maj. Geo. W. Davis, (4 January 1897), File No. 595, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>4</sup> Descriptions of the melted cannon can be found in newspaper articles from 1897. For example see: "Antietam Gun to be Melted," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 7 November 1897, 28.

<sup>5</sup> Circular, (27 August 1908), File No. 220405, Entry 89 - General Correspondence, 1890-1914, Antietam (hereafter Entry 89), RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>6</sup> Letter, E.G. Mitchell to Depot Quartermaster (22 April 1909), File No. 220405, Entry 89, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>7</sup> Letter, A.B. Shattuck to Office in Charge, Quartermaster's Depot (10 July 1908), File No. 220405, Entry 89, RG 92, NARA I.

to the rooftop entrance of the viewing platform and the stairways.<sup>8</sup> The original blueprint plans display a brick floor at the base of the tower, but today cement covers this floor.<sup>9</sup>

#### B. Historical Context:

When the observation tower was completed on the Antietam Battlefield in 1896, it served as a structural reminder of the importance placed upon preserving and presenting physical remnants of the Civil War to a national audience. In addition, its construction and use on the battlefield reiterated the supportive *and* conflicting relationships that developed between the local community and the Federal Government. Both groups fought to control historical memory through access to the physical landscape.

From 1861 to 1865, the Union and Confederacy fought over the very issue of whether or not the nation would remain united or divided, preserved or dissolved. The Battle of Antietam is recognized as a key strategic conflict in the War's outcome. It occurred on September 17, 1862, marking the culminating engagement in Robert E. Lee's Maryland Campaign and his first invasion of Union territory. Fighting between Lee's Army of Northern Virginia and Major General George B. McClellan's Army of the Potomac began at dawn as Union General Joseph Hooker's men attempted to flank Lee's troops along the north end of the battle lines. This attack near Joseph Poffenberger's farm, the North Woods, and D.R. Miller's cornfield began a series of disconnected actions that took place throughout the day. Along with the cornfield, the morning phase of the battle was marked by particularly heavy fighting along the Dunker Church Road and the West Woods, where Union and Confederate troops attacked and counterattacked until Union General John Sedgwick's soldiers finally broke through. The second phase of fighting occurred mid-morning along the center of the Confederate line at a sunken road used by local farmers. Although the road began as a strategic natural barrier that kept Brigadier General William French's Union troops at bay, D.H. Hill and Richard Anderson's Confederate soldiers soon discovered that it also served as a death trap. As Union troops flanked the sunken avenue, dead and wounded Confederate soldiers piled up in the road. As a result, this area of the battlefield became known as Bloody Lane. By the afternoon, fighting was also concentrated further south at Sharpsburg's Lower Bridge. After three unsuccessful and deadly attempts to take the bridge, Union General Ambrose Burnside's men managed to cross the bridge and rout the Georgian troops on the heights above. Pushed back to the town of Sharpsburg, the timely arrival of Confederate General A.P. Hill prevented the destruction of Lee's army and a Confederate defeat.

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<sup>8</sup> Photo documentation indicated that a portion of the security railing on the rooftop access was constructed or restored in 1988. However, it is most likely that the safety measures found throughout the Tower were added over several generations. Photograph, "Observation Tower Security Stairway Project 1988," Observation Tower photograph collection, Cultural Resources Department, Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, MD

<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that the tower did undergo renovation work in 1993. This work, however, was primarily structural in nature. National Park Service, Antietam National Battlefield, "Renovation of Stone Tower" Project, June 1991. Accessible from the NPS's Electronic Technical Information Center online at <http://etic.nps.gov/>. Accessed August 2009. Photo documentation from the Cultural Resources office of Antietam Battlefield supports this renovation work. Photograph, "Observation Tower Reroofing Project 1993-94?" Observation Tower photograph collection, Cultural Resources Department, Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, MD

Lee remained in the Sharpsburg vicinity on the 18<sup>th</sup> and prepared to face Union troops once again, but McClellan failed to attack. Instead, he allowed the Confederate troops to retreat across the Potomac River at night. As Lee returned to Virginia, he left behind enormous numbers of dead, wounded, and missing. Both Union and Confederate armies experienced unspeakable suffering at the Battle of Antietam. It was and is the single bloodiest day in American history, leading to more than 23,000 Union and Confederate casualties. This number represents more casualties than all of those from the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican War, and Spanish American War combined.<sup>10</sup>

McClellan's failure to halt Lee's retreat into Virginia led to a military draw at Antietam and President Lincoln's decision to remove McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac. However, the battle did serve as an important strategic victory for the North. Lincoln used it as a catalyst to issue his Emancipation Proclamation, stating that all slaves held in rebelling states were to be freed on January 1, 1863. He hoped that such an issuance would provide the Union with more foreign support and lead to a tactical blow against the Confederacy, its workforce, and food supply. As a result, the bloody fields of Sharpsburg became a strategic landscape, utilized for a larger, national cause set on preserving the Union *and* ending slavery.

While the battle was used in Washington D.C. to introduce a new strategic vision, the soldiers who lay dead on the fields of Antietam were the physical reminders of the horrors of war. Working for Mathew Brady, D.C.-based photographer Alexander Gardner traveled to Sharpsburg to visually document the shocking scene of Antietam dead. Only two days after the battle, Gardner took approximately 70 photos of the death and destruction. When Gardner took the photographs back to Washington, D.C. and displayed them in Brady's studio, it was the first time that the gruesome carnage of war was brought to the general public.<sup>11</sup>

As the public experienced the destruction of war through photography, Sharpsburg's civilians— along with the Union details who remained behind —were forced to deal with its grisly reality. Together, soldiers and civilians gathered and dug graves for the bodies of both the Union and Confederate dead. The 137<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania buried hundreds of Confederates and only managed to carry out their orders with the help of liquor. While their drunkenness made the task at hand possible, it also led to a disrespect of the dead. Not all of the dead were properly buried—or even hastily buried for that matter. One local farmer found fifty-eight Confederates thrown down his well.<sup>12</sup> Other farmers unearthed the remains of soldiers as they went about tilling their fields, making it challenging and gruesome to return to the routines of everyday

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<sup>10</sup> James McPherson, *Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3.

<sup>11</sup> National Park Service, Antietam National Battlefield, "Historic Photographs by Alexander Gardner;" available from <http://www.nps.gov/anti/photosmultimedia/gardnerphotos.htm>; Internet; accessed 22 August 2009. National Park Service, Antietam National Battlefield, "Photography at Antietam, Part 2;" available from <http://www.nps.gov/anti/historyculture/photography2.htm>; Internet; accessed 22 August 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 69.

life.<sup>13</sup> Men who were killed in or near the sunken road - nearly 700 - were buried on William and Margaret Roulette's neighboring property.<sup>14</sup>

The means by which the Union army dealt with the Antietam dead—and the property of local landowners—left much to be desired. Along with bloodied farm fields, Union and Confederate troops had cleaned out the barns, haylofts, corncribs, and henhouses of food and forage; “fields of ripe grain and corn [were] trampled, livestock driven off or butchered, prim orchards stripped bare, beehives destroyed, and root cellars emptied.”<sup>15</sup> Even items such as “women's bonnets, silver spoons, and other knick-knacks” had been plundered from vacant homes.<sup>16</sup> When not picked over for food, firewood, and other goods, both the town and farm structures of Sharpsburg residents were damaged or destroyed by artillery. Samuel Mumma's farm house and barn were burnt to the ground—deliberately.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, the local residents of Sharpsburg helped out in the aftermath of the battle. They opened their homes as hospitals and helped bury the dead. However, it was not long before they pushed for the removal of the dead from their farm lands for some return to normalcy.<sup>18</sup>

#### The Antietam Board and War Department Era: Preserving the Battlefield

Despite the removal of the dead, the Antietam landscape did not return to what it once had been. At the end of the nineteenth century, Sharpsburg residents again faced an “invasion” of the Federal Government and Civil War soldiers—this time as veterans—as they sought to preserve a portion of the Antietam Battlefield for posterity. Antietam was not alone. The 1890s represented a period that historian Timothy Smith describes as the “Golden Age” of battlefield preservation.<sup>19</sup> In addition to Antietam, the battlefields of Gettysburg, Shiloh, Chickamauga/Chattanooga, and Vicksburg were targeted by Congress and Civil War veterans for preservation. Acts of Congress established Battlefield Commissions for these sites. Through

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<sup>13</sup> Stephen W. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983), 355.

<sup>14</sup> Kathleen Ernst, *Too Afraid to Cry: Maryland Civilians in the Antietam Campaign* (Mechanicsville, Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 2007), 163.

<sup>15</sup> Sears, 335; Ernst, 160.

<sup>16</sup> Ernst, 160.

<sup>17</sup> Ernst, 158.

<sup>18</sup> Robinson & Associates, Inc., *Antietam National Cemetery Lodge: Physical History and Condition Assessment, Final Submission*, (Washington, D.C.: architrave p.c. architects, 5 March 2003), 20. Ernst's *Too Afraid to Cry* explains that “it was hard for civilians to piece their lives back together when the devastation and horror seemed to linger. The shallow graves weren't sufficient, and residents frequently came across gruesome reminders of September 17. ‘It was a common thing to see human bones lying loose in gutters and fence corners for several years,’ Mr. C.M. Keedy recalled, ‘and frequently hogs would be seen with limbs in their mouths.’” Ernst, 185.

<sup>19</sup> Timothy Smith, *The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation: the Decade of the 1890s and the Establishment of America's First Five Military Parks* (Knoxville, Tennessee: University of Tennessee Press, 2008).

preservation and interpretation, the battlefield commissions' primary goals were two-fold. First, they promoted battlefields as sacred sites. The hallowed grounds were to be used as physical reminders of the Civil War and the soldiers who fought and died on them. In addition, the preserved landscapes provided tactical military education for the benefit of future generations. Memorialization of the Civil War soldiers and their military achievements, therefore, was the focus of these preserved battlefields.<sup>20</sup> On August 30, 1895, an Act of Congress approved the establishment of Antietam as the second nationally preserved battlefield.<sup>21</sup> One year later, the Secretary of War appointed Colonel John C. Stearns and Major General Henry Heth as members of the Antietam Board—ordered to survey, locate, and preserve the lines of battle at Antietam.<sup>22</sup>

Even with its relationship to the other founding national battlefields, Antietam marked a distinct departure from the other commissions and their sacred spaces. In relationship to Chickamauga and Chattanooga, it was less significant in national support and physical acreage. Although both the Chickamauga-Chattanooga and Antietam administrative bodies had three appointed members, for instance, the Antietam group was officially established as a Board rather than Commission. Smith argues that the title “Board,” in comparison to “Commission,” suggested a second-rate status to the pomp and circumstance surrounding the formation of Chickamauga.<sup>23</sup> Both Union and Confederate veterans had actively pursued the preservation of the other War Department battlefields, but veteran enthusiasm was more muted at Antietam. The first president of the Board, Major George B. Davis, had enlisted during the last year of the Civil War and felt little connection to the battle of Antietam and those who had died there.<sup>24</sup> Most likely, Davis was chosen to lead the Board as a result of his visionary preservation concept. Before his promotion to President of the Board, Davis proposed a new form of battlefield conservation to the Secretary of War. His idea resulted in the Antietam Plan—a preservation strategy meant to be more cost-effective but achieve the same goals of memorialization and education.<sup>25</sup>

The Antietam Plan focused on diverging from the major land acquisition strategies that took place at the Chickamauga and Gettysburg battlefields.<sup>26</sup> Instead, the Board purchased small tracts of land from local landowners. When the land had been purchased, Secretary of War Lamont explained that “about 17 acres of land was purchased in strips, conforming closely to the

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<sup>20</sup> Smith, 114.

<sup>21</sup> Charles W. Snell and Sharon A. Brown, *Antietam National Battlefield and National Cemetery: an Administrative History* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior/National Park Service, 1986), 68. The first national battlefield established was the “Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Park or Military Park” on August 19, 1890.

<sup>22</sup> Snell, 73. The Antietam Board ultimately consisted of three members. See Snell, 86.

<sup>23</sup> Smith, 90.

<sup>24</sup> Susan W. Trail, “Remembering Antietam: Commemoration and Preservation of a Civil War Battlefield” (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 2005), 179.

<sup>25</sup> Smith, 114; Snell, 87.

<sup>26</sup> The United States had acquired nearly 6,000 acres at Chickamauga and 1,000 at Gettysburg. Snell, 89.

actual battle lines and embracing the principal features [of the battlefield]. Along these, five miles of substantial metaled roads were constructed” and iron tablets installed, “recording the movements of the various commands.”<sup>27</sup> As a result, the War Department calculated that the new preservation plan cost nearly \$700,000 less to develop than Chickamauga.<sup>28</sup> Secretary of War Daniel Lamont believed that the Antietam Plan was the best strategy to pursue the preservation of other battlefield sites, as well. He argued that “such an approach would not only lower costs but could also be accomplished rather quickly. It is earnestly recommended that Congress authorize the marking of the remaining important battlefields in the same manner adopted at Antietam.”<sup>29</sup>

Davis explained that purchasing less land saved money and enabled Sharpsburg’s farms to remain intact. The Board, therefore, justified the purchase of small strips land to keep visitors off the farmers’ fields while simultaneously guiding them along the historic lines of battle.<sup>30</sup> However, the Antietam Board reported that local landowners were not thrilled with the idea of selling directly to the government nor did they desire to sell only small parcels of their land.

Because a fair portion of the Antietam landscape was still owned privately by the local farmers, Antietam’s Observation Tower was a central component of implementing and completing the Board’s mission under the Antietam Plan. Along with the roads and iron tablets, the Tower was part of what Timothy Smith defines as the “sprint to build the park” that began in October 1894 and ended officially in March 1898.<sup>31</sup> An advertisement circulated in local newspapers included requests for proposals not only for the Tower but “2,800 feet macadamized road 12 feet wide and 8 inches thick” and the “construction of about 290 rods Jones Locked Wire Fencing.”<sup>32</sup> These separate components worked together to achieve the Board’s primary goals of remembrance and military education through preservation and interpretation. While the War Department avenues provided access to key locations along the battle lines—and the fencing helped separate federal and local land—the area’s topography—according to the Board—was fairly nondescript and varied from the ground. The Tower, therefore, was necessary to establish a commanding view of the battlefield for visitors.

As a result of the Antietam Plan, the Tower was situated on a War Department road in between two private properties which had been owned by Henry Piper and William Roulette at

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<sup>27</sup> Snell, 91.

<sup>28</sup> Snell, 91.

<sup>29</sup> Smith, 40.

<sup>30</sup> Smith, 92.

<sup>31</sup> Smith, 104. Major George W. Davis was President of the Board until March 18, 1898, at which time the Antietam Board was dissolved. Snell, 559.

<sup>32</sup> Typescript (20 July 1896), File No. 578, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I. This advertisement was to appear in the *Frederick News* on July 22, 23, 25, & 27.

the time of battle.<sup>33</sup> It was placed at the highest end of the historic Bloody Lane, preserving a key sacred site on the battlefield. The site marked not only a key strategic location in the battle but also an extremely deadly one. According to local lore, an old Sharpsburg resident had stopped by the “Sunken Hog Trough Road” after the battle which was then piled deep with dead bodies. Overwhelmed by the site, “she descended from her carriage, knelt in prayer, and asked God’s blessing on the men who had fallen in that ‘bloody lane.’”<sup>34</sup> The gruesome memories of the sunken road did not dissipate once all of the bodies were buried. Months after the battle, rain storms still turned the water red as it ran down Bloody Lane. The sunken road, therefore, remained a particularly salient and sacred landscape feature after the battle. Kathleen Ernst argues that it was “an ever-present reminder of the physical and emotional stains of the battle.”<sup>35</sup>

While located next to a particularly sacred piece of battle land, the Tower’s aerial view enabled visitors to connect with other significant sites on the battlefield. More specifically, the commanding view of the battlefield helped support military education by providing visual access to key points of the battle. To the North were the fields from which Union troops approached the Confederates strategically placed in the “shelter” of the Sunken Road. Beyond was the rooftop of the Pry House, General McClellan’s Headquarters during the battle. To the East, viewers could see and imagine the terrain of South Mountain, Crampton’s Gap, Antietam Creek, and Sharpsburg’s Middle Bridge. To the South, viewers saw the Lower Bridge (now known as Burnside’s Bridge), Lee’s Headquarters, the National Cemetery, and the nearby Piper Farm. Directly to the west was an aerial view of the Sunken Road while the West and East Woods, the Miller Cornfield, and the Roulette and Mumma Farms were not far off.

Though few details are available, there are indications that an early version of the tower was begun in 1895 at this site.<sup>36</sup> Records indicate that construction on the first tower “was commenced in the year 1895 and the walls were carried to about the height of 16 feet, when the appropriation was exhausted and the work was stopped.”<sup>37</sup> This truncated tower had a flight of wood stairs leading to a wood deck. Early specifications for the current tower reflect an initial plan to add to the 1895 structure. Instead, for unspecified reasons, the old tower was demolished and the debris used as road fill before construction on the current tower commenced.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Trail, 29-30.

<sup>34</sup> Ernst, 163.

<sup>35</sup> Ernst, 185.

<sup>36</sup> Letter, E.A. Carman to Maj. Geo. W. Davis (15 August 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>37</sup> “Description of Observation Tower at Antietam Battlefield, MD and Specifications for its Completion,” (16 May 1896), File No. 552, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I. These specifications reflect an earlier, discarded plan to add to the partially built tower begun in 1895.

<sup>38</sup> Letter, Maj. Geo. W. Davis to E.A. Carman (14 August 1896), Filed No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

Although the Observation Tower was designed by a federal entity, it was intended to be constructed by local help, made with local materials, and compliment the local landscape. After receiving a number of different proposals in response to their advertisements in local newspapers, the Board decided to hire Jacob Snyder, a Sharpsburg resident who had already worked on a number of projects for the Battlefield Board. In addition, Snyder's brother, James, was in charge of a number of battlefield projects. The Snyders had been residents of Sharpsburg in 1862 and as a result, were directly impacted by the battle and its aftermath. The family had taken refuge with friends during the fighting, sealing up the house and hiding their American flag. After the battle, Jacob's brother James returned to find that the house had been looted anyway. He found the house filled with "little heaps of dusty rags"—"discarded filthy Confederate uniforms shucked by the soldiers who had exchanged them for the Snyder boys' clothes."<sup>39</sup>

The Antietam Board wanted Snyder to focus on using local materials to construct the Tower. This approach was in keeping with the stated philosophy for the first generation of War Department battlefield parks to preserve the landscapes as they were at the time of the battles. Modern construction meant to provide access to visitors "should be kept to a minimum and should not alter the terrain or historical remnants of the battles."<sup>40</sup> Therefore stone cut from local quarries would help the Observation Tower compliment its historic surroundings. Ironically, the Board failed to recognize that a tall tower, whether made from local stone or not, could not help but stand out. The Tower's imposing height was merely enhanced by the fact that it was located directly next to the sunken road.

Regardless, the use of local stone by Snyder in the construction of the Tower became a topic of discussion and concern among the Board members. Not only would local stone blend in with the surrounding landscape, it would also be more cost effective. In a May 14, 1896 letter to Ezra Carman, George W. Davis explained in detail his vision for the Tower, at this point still considering adding to the partially built tower. If possible, he wanted to obtain native limestone from a quarry near Keedysville that had been used to construct the coping stone of the wall around the National Cemetery. Davis explained:

The thought occurs to me that if that stone can be obtained from the quarry in fairly regular slabs a hammer dressing would then be all we required. If the dimensioned stone were tool dressed, the work would, of course, be quite expensive, but if the dressing be confined to a rough pointing by the hammer, the cost would not be very considerable... I wish you would talk with some stone mason who is familiar with the resources of the quarry, and ascertain of him in what shape the rough slabs can be gotten out. If thicknesses of seven or eight inches, I would like to make rather free use of this material

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<sup>39</sup> Ernst, 160.

<sup>40</sup> Smith, 8.

in completing the tower. This, of course, so as to accomplish some architectural effect which I will explain to you when I see you again.<sup>41</sup>

A sketch of the tower in this file also dated 14 May 1896 shows a square roofless shaft on top of a base 16 feet high and 16 feet wide. The doorway was a narrow segmental arch opening with a four panel door. Davis's design for the Tower included using horizontal belt courses at the key points in the tower wall – three setback courses at the top of the base, three projecting courses at the platform level, and another just below the coping.<sup>42</sup> Eventually only a single flush and dressed belt course approximately one-third of the way up was included, perhaps because of the decision to build the tower new from the ground up. The July 1896 blueprints prepared by the Office of the Quartermaster General clearly represent the present tower, with a straight square shaft rising from a low water table base, a large round arch opening, and hipped roof.<sup>43</sup> War Department correspondence indicates that in August 1896 Jacob Snyder completed excavation for the new foundation, which would rest at least partially on solid rock.<sup>44</sup>

In August 1896, Jacob Snyder began quarry work in Hagerstown to find stone for the Tower. Ezra Carman reported to George W. Davis that “they are getting out good blocks of nice blue stone.”<sup>45</sup> In mid October, Carman reported that “some stone” for the belt courses and copings had been quarried and was ready for setting. However, the new quarry used by Snyder could not provide enough, prompting Snyder to order Blue Indiana Limestone for the coping.<sup>46</sup> Carman complained that Snyder had said nothing about ordering the coping stone from sawed blue Indiana limestone; “the one trouble with Mr. Snyder is that he is so nervous about his work that he flies off in the face of a little trouble and does just what he should not, without advising with anyone.”<sup>47</sup> Major George W. Davis replied to Carman's message with the following note:

I wish you would take a look at the “Blue Indiana Limestone” that Mr. Snyder has contracted for, for coping. If it will match nearly as to color, and its texture is good, we will have to take it I suppose, but the outer face, where showing, would I suppose be sawed and smooth. I shall insist on his “pitching” the face so as to make it look like the

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<sup>41</sup> Letter, Geo. W. Davis to General E.A. Carman (14 May 1896), File No. 552, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I. See also: Letter, Geo. W. Davis to General Carman (16 May 1896), File No. 552, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I. Here Davis did not stress financial reasons but instead, claimed the “rough” coursework would “harmonize” better with other rough-cut work.

<sup>42</sup> Letter, Geo. W. Davis to General E.A. Carman (14 May 1896), File No. 552, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I. Davis asks for several measurements to “enable [him] to work out a design for completing the structure,” including the total height of the present masonry work and placement and height of door and window openings.

<sup>43</sup> “Stone Tower at Antietam Battlefield, MD,” (July 1896), RG 92 – Office of the Quartermaster General Blueprint file, Cartographic and Architectural Branch, NARA II.

<sup>44</sup> Letter, E.A. Carman to Maj. Geo. W. Davis (18 August 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>45</sup> Letter, E.A. Carman to Geo. W. Davis (15 August 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>46</sup> Letter, E.A. Carman to Geo. W. Davis (15 October 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

work below as to finish. I would much prefer to have the Maryland stone, and I feel sure he could get it if he had any head on him for work.<sup>48</sup>

Davis' clear annoyance with Snyder continued in another letter to Carman dated October 19:

Respecting the tower, it seems to me for you to remind Snyder that his quarrying operations ought to be looking ahead for the belt courses and the coping course that tops off the masonry. There will be about 190 running feet of it... If he is not getting it from his quarries now from day to day he will be short when the time comes, and I shouldn't want to consent to using that light colored Indiana stone. If he can get what you told me was called the grey limestone in suitable lengths, and can't get the blue, I would prefer that to the Indiana stone.<sup>49</sup>

Carman again went to Hagerstown on October 19 and, after having looked at the available limestone from the quarries, he was satisfied Snyder could not get all of the stone of necessary width for the coping from them.<sup>50</sup>

Construction continued to progress, with the iron work arriving on site in early November. Work was briefly delayed by muddy road conditions and Snyder requested a extension of his contract.<sup>51</sup> In late November, the masonry work was complete and the stairs were being installed.<sup>52</sup> By December, correspondence discusses the tower as "now completed," with a final payment of \$1,350 released to the contractor.<sup>53</sup>

Despite challenges and the Board's decision to make use of some out-of-state materials, one particularly important feature on the Observation Tower solidified the structure's connection to its surrounding landscape. The eight directional tablets placed on top of the tower's coping were melted down cannon from the Battle of Antietam itself. In November of 1897, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* described the process in a piece entitled "Antietam Gun to be Melted:"

On the top of the coping, extending around the top of the column, will be found a bronze plate, with full explanation of the location of all the more memorable events of that battle.... It is to lose its present identity, only to reappear in another condition of far more peaceful utility. The gun weighs 1955 pounds. It is seven feet long, measuring fourteen

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<sup>48</sup> Letter, Geo. W. Davis to E.A. Carman (16 October 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>49</sup> Letter, Geo. W. Davis to E.A. Carman (19 October 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>50</sup> Letter, E.A. Carman to Geo. W. Davis (19 October 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>51</sup> Letter, E.A. Carman to Geo. W. Davis (6 November 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>52</sup> Letter, E.A. Carman to Geo. W. Davis (19 November 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>53</sup> Letter, E.A. Carman to Geo. W. Davis (11 December 1896), and Letter Geo. W. Davis to Gen. E. A. Carman (14 December 1896), File No. 605, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

inches at its larger diameter, and eleven inches near its mouth... This old engine of destruction is to become that tablet on which will be engraved the several designed arrowed indices, such as will mark the localities of all the more thrilling adventures which made famous the history of that day... This gun will first be broken into small pieces. It will then be consigned to the crucible, there to be reduced to a proper state, preparatory to its recasting in the form of a plate. When the casting process is begun the metal of this gun will be made into eight sections. These sections will be mitered together on the coping of the Antietam tower, and will be the register on which will be engraved the explanatory record of that memorable battle.<sup>54</sup>

The bronze plates, along with “six gun plates with inscriptions and the tower plate” were done for a sum of \$418.00 by McShane Foundry in Baltimore.<sup>55</sup>

The cannon’s direct connection to the battlefield—past and present—created a romanticized aura about it that was reflected in the dramatized descriptions of the Tower. According to the *Washington Post*, the “hallow column” was 100 feet in height. At the platform of the tower, tourists could “read the story of this great battle told on the tablet” while simultaneously examine the whole battlefield. Ironically, by making the tower 100 feet tall, the article suggested—and approved of—altering the battlefield landscape even further than it actually did. In reality, the tower stood 54 feet high and the stories of the battle provided on the coping tablets were merely directional arrows with simple text.<sup>56</sup>

### Contextualizing the Antietam Battlefield

Placing the directional tablets on the top of the Tower was one of the last acts completed by the Antietam Board. As early as 1896, most of the Board’s work on the Antietam Battlefield was winding down. The following December, in 1897, Davis reported to the Secretary of War that the park was complete, having spent a total of \$78,031 since 1890. 408 tablets marked troop movements and battle lines along the War Department’s avenues. In addition the Board had erected six mortuary monuments for those generals who had died in battle and placed eight cannon on the field to mark artillery placements.<sup>57</sup> Although the Board’s work was complete, the Tower’s work as a tool for memorialization and education was just beginning. Under the War Department’s stewardship, the Tower was both witness to and reflective of a number of larger trends and changes taking place in the nation.

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<sup>54</sup> “Antietam Gun to be Melted,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 7 November 1897, 28.

<sup>55</sup> These six gun plates were placed on top of six cannon used as mortuary markers for the Union and Confederate generals who died or were mortally wounded during the Battle of Antietam. Letter, Julian J.G. McShane to George W. Davis (23 September 1897), File No. 559, Entry 707, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>56</sup> “Old Cannon Cut Into a Tablet,” *Washington Post*, 28 October 1897, 3.

<sup>57</sup> Smith, 108.

Creation of Antietam National Battlefield as a preserved landscape reflected historic preservation trends by the end of the nineteenth century. As early as the 1850s white, upper class Americans used historic preservation as a means of promoting national symbols and iconic heroes in order to define the nation's collective memory. At the turn of the century, these sites related to important people, places, and events were preserved and promoted by both women and men who sought to reinvigorate a connection to America's patriotic past. James Lindgren argues that modernization, immigration, and economic destabilization led to a renewed sense of nativism and an effort to preserve the social standing, prized lineage, and property of white families whose status and heritage were now in doubt.<sup>58</sup> By literally preserving the past, people could escape the uncertainty of the present and unite with others who had once been the enemy.

In 1898, the *Butte Weekly Miner* published an article reflecting on the battlefield's preservation in "Antietam Unchanged." The article dramatically proclaimed that "Fate has decreed that Antietam shall remain as on the day which made the name memorable in all the world." It exclaimed, "The increase of population and the march of material progress have not disturbed Antietam... It is in the rugged and picturesque mountain country of western Maryland, which today looks about as it did in 1862." By preserving the landscape of the single bloodiest day in American history, visitors did not have to imagine the Antietam battlefield to recognize its significance in American history. They were not "obliged to interpret all objects as 'standing where something else stood,' or occupying the space where so-and-so could once have been observed."<sup>59</sup> According to the author, they could experience the real thing. However, the "march of progress" and the fear of modernization had impacted and inspired the very decision to preserve the Antietam battlefield. It had also influenced the landscape itself which, in reality, did not remain untouched by time. The construction of the Tower itself—which the author lauded as an important part of the "quiet afternoon's ride by carriage or bicycle"—was indicative of change.

The Tower itself was altered in 1908-09 when a pyramidal clay tile roof supported on corner piers was placed over the observation platform as originally planned.<sup>60</sup> Assistant Engineer E.G. Mitchell exclaimed that it added "much to the appearance of the Tower."<sup>61</sup> In

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<sup>58</sup> James M. Lindgren, "'A Spirit That Fires the Imagination:' Historic Preservation and Cultural Regeneration in Virginia and New England, 1850-1950," in *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 107-130; Michael Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 110. Mary Abroe's dissertation, "'All the Profound Scenes:' Federal Preservation of Civil War Battlefields, 1861-1990," argues that the preservation of battlefields was one means by which people were not just faceless masses crowded into factories. Preservationists argued that the nation's heritage was guided by important individuals who had turned the course of history. Mary Abroe, "'All the Profound Scenes:' Federal Preservation of Civil War Battlefields, 1861-1990," (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University of Chicago, May 1996), 162.

<sup>59</sup> "Antietam Unchanged," *Butte Weekly Miner*, 7 April 1898, 13.

<sup>60</sup> Letter, to E.G. Mitchell (22 April 1909), File No. 220405, Entry 89, RG 92, NARA I; Letter, A.B. Shattuck to Office in Charge, Quartermaster's Depot (10 July 1908), File No. 220405, Entry 89, RG 92, NARA I.

addition to physical changes to the Tower, visitors could view the changing landscape that surrounded the Tower platform. Observers lamented the fact that a number of wood lots imperative to the 1862 battlefield scene had been cleared by local farms to sell for profit.<sup>62</sup> Yet the gruesome scene that made those wood lots important had long since been removed. Only time and progress allowed visitors to look over the fields of Antietam with nostalgia and see a charming, picturesque landscape rather than view the “terrible scene of slaughter” that it once had been.

In addition to changes in Antietam’s “natural” landscape, the battlefield’s commemorative meaning was shifting as well. What had once represented a killing field between North and South now promoted sectional reconciliation. Just west of the tower, visitors on the platform could see two of Antietam’s six mortuary monuments to the battle’s fallen generals. Located along Bloody Lane, these two monuments honored the ultimate sacrifice of Union Major General Israel B. Richardson and Confederate Brigadier General George B. Anderson. In addition to the Board’s efforts to honor both Union and Confederate soldiers, veterans of the Blue and Gray utilized the battlefield of Antietam for their own monument dedications. Bloody Lane was a particularly important location to gather and the west elevation view from the Tower offered a panoramic view of the regimental and state monuments dedicated around the turn of the century.

In fact, veterans had begun to convene on and near Bloody Lane even before the Board’s construction of the tower. In October 1894, approximately 400 veterans from Connecticut gathered on the Roulette property adjacent to Bloody Lane to dedicate the 14<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Monument.<sup>63</sup> In 1900 between 15,000 and 25,000 people gathered to dedicate the Maryland State Monument. Though located near Dunker Church, the large monument’s copper-coated dome “crowned with a bronze statue of “Peace” was visible from the top of the Observation Tower. As the only monument on the battlefield dedicated to both sides of the conflict, the monument intended to honor Maryland’s “Sons, in both Union and Confederate Armies, who, on her own soil, at the battle of Antietam, offered their lives in maintainance [sic] of their principles, but also in recognition of the precepts of peace and fraternity, which now find their embodiment in the hearts of a united people.”<sup>64</sup> In doing so, veterans from both the North and South helped establish the landscape as a site of commemoration and reconciliation. Rather than focusing on the differences that had brought soldiers of the Blue and Gray together on the battlefield, Antietam sought to place sectionalism in the past.

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<sup>61</sup> Letter, E.G. Mitchell to Depot Quartermaster (22 April 1909), File No. 220405, Entry 89, RG 92, NARA I. Mitchell also complained in this letter that “wages asked by stone cutters and masons from Hagerstown were high, (55 ¢ per hour) and the carpenter demanded \$2.50 per day for all his men, some of whom were merely helpers. The carpentry work also progressed very slowly as the men were not accustomed to working so far above the ground and were in constant fear of falling off the roof.”

<sup>62</sup> “Antietam Unchanged.”

<sup>63</sup> Trail, 244.

<sup>64</sup> Quote taken from the “Maryland Monument of Antietam” design solicitation, January 16, 1899. Trail, 261.

From the Tower platform, visitors not only saw changes to the battlefield's commemorative landscape but also how people arrived at Antietam. Initially, visitors arrived in Sharpsburg by railroad and toured the battlefield in carriages. In 1904, the National Geographic Society brought about 275 members and guests to the battlefield for its fourteenth annual field meeting. A *Washington Post* article noted:

The party arrived in eight Pullman coaches over the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Keedysville at 11 a.m. At this point they were driven in about fifty carriages to the battle-field, where the monuments and important sights were viewed. At the observation tower Gen. Ezra A. Carman, a former member of the Antietam Battle-field Commission, gave an address on the movements and Confederate troops as they were engaged in battle. Former Secretary of the Navy Hilary Herbert, of Alabama, who served as a Confederate officer during the battle, spoke from the viewpoint of a Southerner. He paid a glowing tribute to Gen. George B. McClelland, and declared that if he had not been removed from command of the Army of the Potomac, Gen. Lee would not have won as many battles as he did. Gen. Fairfax of the Confederate Army, was also present. From the tower the party went to Sharpsburg, where they took dinner at two hotels.”<sup>65</sup>

In 1912, on the fiftieth anniversary of the battle, 118 hundred Union veterans from the 20<sup>th</sup> New York regiment arrived in Sharpsburg by means of a “special train from Hagerstown” to dedicate two monuments on the battlefield.<sup>66</sup> The *Butte Weekly Miner* indicated that “Antietam is sufficiently near Washington to make it a convenient place for leisurely tourists to visit.”<sup>67</sup> While the Norfolk & Western came into the Sharpsburg station—renamed as the Antietam station to profit from the nearby battlefield—most tourists traveled to Keedysville on the Hagerstown branch of the Baltimore & Ohio railroad. From Keedysville, tourists traveled to Antietam where “close scrutiny of the battlefield reveals the fatal errors of Gen. McClellan in failing to take advantage of position and time.”<sup>68</sup> A *New York Times* article suggested that this close scrutiny was aided by the stone tower built sixty feet high that overlooked the whole field.<sup>69</sup>

By the 1910s, automobiles began to make regular appearances on the battlefield. In 1906, *Town and Country* Magazine included an article on the Hagerstown factory of the Pope Manufacturing Company. In it, the Company used the roads of Antietam as a testing ground for the durability of its automobiles. By including photographs of the automobiles on the battlefield, *Town and Country* made a distinct connection between the possibility of automobile tourism and

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<sup>65</sup> “On Antietam Battlefield,” *Washington Post*, 22 May 1904, 8.

<sup>66</sup> “Fortune Rewards Kind Act,” *Washington Post*, 18 September 1912, 4.

<sup>67</sup> “Antietam Unchanged.”

<sup>68</sup> “Scenes About Antietam,” *New York Times*, 12 September 1897, 14.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

historic sites.<sup>70</sup> This popularization of automobile tourism in the 1910s and 1920s was reflected in an increase in advertising for Antietam as a tourist destination, due to the fine condition of the War Department's tour roads. In 1911, *In the Auto World* wrote that

The new line of officers and the board of governors of the Automobile Club of Washington are going to make things "hum" in local motoring circles this coming season....A day of hill climbing before the end of April is promised by Capt. Johnston, to be followed on Decoration Day by a sociability run to Gettysburg, Hagerstown, and the Antietam battlefield.<sup>71</sup>

The increased use of photography that accompanied the rise in automobile tourism helps to document the number of automobile tourists that made their way through Sharpsburg and the Antietam Battlefield. The convenience of the car and improvements in road construction in the region made trips from Washington, DC and the Mid-Atlantic states extremely popular.<sup>72</sup> A *New York Times* article entitled "South Attracts Winter Tourists" included Antietam in one of its tour routes that highlighted improved road conditions below the Mason Dixon Line.<sup>73</sup>

Automobiles made the battlefield accessible to a larger audience who, for the most part, had not experienced the Civil War or the Battle of Antietam themselves. Instead, they were responding to the nation's call to "See America First." With the mass production and affordability of Henry Ford's Model-T, more and more Americans had the opportunity to take to the roads and experience America. The nation's preserved spaces—natural and historical—were used to help express an ideal of nationhood, the fruits of democracy, and the strength of the modern nation state.<sup>74</sup> In August 1916, auto owners all over the nation were urged to take to the road and "See America First." The *Washington Post* included Antietam as an important stopover for Washington, DC tourists who were encouraged to participate in the first annual national touring week.<sup>75</sup> The use of Antietam to promote automobile tourism and products continued in the 1920s. For example in 1926, the Penn Oil Co. in Rosslyn, Virginia advertised its Lightning Motor Fuel with Memorial Day Trip suggestions, including one to Antietam Battlefield.<sup>76</sup> In 1928, the *Washington Post* highlighted Antietam Battlefield and Harpers Ferry in its "post tour

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<sup>70</sup> "Automobiles on Historic Grounds," *Town and Country*, no. 3135 (16 June 1906), 30.

<sup>71</sup> "In the Auto World," *Washington Post*, 6 March 1911, 4.

<sup>72</sup> "Attractive One-Day Trips Out of Washington," *Washington Post*, 25 October 1908, AU3.

<sup>73</sup> "South Attracts Winter Tourists," *New York Times* (20 November 1910), C8. Marguerite Shaffer's *See America First* expands upon the importance of good roads in the development of early twentieth century tourism. Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 137-168.

<sup>74</sup> Shaffer, 106-107, 160-161, 181.

<sup>75</sup> "Usher in Touring Week," *Washington Post*, 6 August 1916, A14.

<sup>76</sup> Display Ad 19 – No Title, *Washington Post*, 29 May 1926, 19.

for Sunday” that marked the points of interest along a 161-mile route on all paved roads. Along with Burnside’s Bridge and the military cemetery, motorists were encouraged to visit Bloody Lane and the “observatory.”<sup>77</sup>

The Observation Tower played a key role in how tourists saw the Antietam Battlefield. Like other aids to tourism implemented around the turn of the century, the Tower’s particular panoramic view was used to guide the tourist gaze. As early as the eighteenth century, American travelers actively sought the panorama as a means of “viewing” landscapes. Guidebooks, such as William Cullen Bryant’s *Picturesque America*, and larger works of art, such as Chicago’s collection of panoramas at the 1893 Columbian Exposition, served as forms of entertainment that commodified natural and historical landscapes.<sup>78</sup> These panoramic scenes presented their viewers with the preferred vantage point from which to experience the landscape. According to historian Marguerite Shaffer, these panoramas taught tourists “how to look at, understand, and appreciate the sites and scenes of America.”<sup>79</sup> While guidebooks and painted panoramas sought to control the tourist gaze from the pages of a book or the paneled walls of a cyclorama, tourists were also encouraged to go out and see these iconic, picturesque landscapes for themselves. By physically consuming these views, they could better understand and appreciate the course of the nation.<sup>80</sup>

Antietam’s Observation Tower was part of this tradition that helped encourage particular destinations and vantage points. From the platform of the Tower, tourists experienced a 360 degree panorama *and* four separate framed views of the Antietam battlefield. From the ground, other tools guided the tourists’ experience, as well. In 1907, the *Washington Post* informed readers:

Visitors to the field...will find there fifty fine monuments, not including markers, may read the story of the struggle upon 243 cast-iron tablets, and while traveling along the excellent pikes for which the vicinity is famous or the avenues constructed by the national government, keep in the right direction by the aid of 130 cast-iron guide signs....At the east end of the land is a stone observation tower, seventy-five feet high, on which is a bronze coping informing the observer by arrows and inscriptions the distance and direction of the many points of interest within view.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> “Post Tour for Sunday in War-Torn Territory: Antietam Battlefield and Scene of John Brown’s Raid among Many Interesting Points on 161-Mile Route All on Paved Roads,” *Washington Post*, 27 May 1928, A2.

<sup>78</sup> For an examination of Bryant’s *Picturesque America* see Shaffer, 176-180. For an examination of the importance of panoramas as a form of urban entertainment see Lauren Rabinovitz, *For the Love of Pleasure: Women, Movies, and Culture in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998), 62.

<sup>79</sup> Shaffer, 178.

<sup>80</sup> Shaffer, 180.

<sup>81</sup> “State and Nation Have Helped Veterans Adorn Picturesque Antietam Battlefield,” *Washington Post*, 15 September 1907, M8.

Along with the guide signs and constructed avenues, the Tower helped influence the battle narrative and national narrative that visitors consumed. Together, the War Department encouraged messages of memorialization of the dead, reconciliation, and nationalism.

In spite of the rising importance of tourism, Antietam National Battlefield still played an important role within military training initiatives. In the 1890s, Civil War veterans traveled by train to Antietam Battlefield, generally to relive their own war experiences or remember the dead who had fallen on the sacred ground. By the turn of the century, however, a new generation of military men used the battlefield and Observation Tower as an important educational tool. In the era of expansionism, imperialism, and the First World War, the United States military used Antietam to train the next generation of America's soldiers. As late as 1912, students from the Army War College in Washington, DC traveled to Antietam via horseback to study the battle's logistics.<sup>82</sup> In September 1924, the Marine Corps Expeditionary Forces visited Antietam and used the battlefield as an outdoor classroom and training ground.<sup>83</sup> Battle exercises included a reenactment of the actions at Bloody Lane.<sup>84</sup> Nine years later, National Guard officers from the Twenty-ninth Division, met at Antietam to "discuss the general military plan of the battle of Antietam during the Civil War in relation to modern military methods, both from the tactical and strategic points of view."<sup>85</sup>

The Observation Tower reflects Antietam's distinct situation as a battlefield park during the growth of heritage tourism. The War Department was not prepared for the large number of visitors that automobile tourism encouraged. In fact, while automobiles promoted direct access to historic landscapes for more individuals, the Antietam Battlefield was designed specifically to discourage direct access to the historic and sacred. Throughout the War Department era, a fair portion of the historic landscape remained in private hands. The Tower, therefore, provided a panoramic view of sites that visitors could not otherwise access from the ground. While national historical parks under the War Department touted themselves as belonging to the people as a part of their national heritage, the Antietam Plan created a distinct landscape with only avenues and an observation tower from which to experience that heritage.

Even as a structure developed specifically for visitation, the Observation Tower did not always encourage an inviting environment for tourists. Superintendent George Graham once, in a drunken stupor, aimed a shotgun at a visitor in the Observation Tower.<sup>86</sup> In addition to the

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<sup>82</sup> "To Study Battlefields," *Washington Post*, 9 June 1912, 9.

<sup>83</sup> Letter, H.L. Ward to The Quartermaster General (28 August 1924), File 601.53 Ann Arbor – 611 Antietam, Box 56, Entry 1891—Office of the Quartermaster General, General Correspondence, Geographic File 1922-1935 (hereafter Entry 1891), RG 92, NARA II.

<sup>84</sup> "Thousands to view marines in battle program this week," *Washington Post*, 7 September 1924, 14.

<sup>85</sup> "29<sup>th</sup> Staff Studies Battle of Antietam," *Washington Post*, 7 May 1933, 11.

<sup>86</sup> Smith, 113.

Superintendent's careless actions, vandals treated the Tower poorly by covering it with graffiti.<sup>87</sup> However, the vandals not the only group of people to misuse the Tower. The lack of a formal comfort station on the Battlefield led a number of tourists to use the Tower as a substitute instead.<sup>88</sup> From 1896 until 1933, when the Antietam National Battlefield was transferred to the National Park Service, the Observation Tower witnessed a number of changes and developments in and through the landscape. Despite these changes, the Tower had remained an important—and sometimes misused—part of the War Department's efforts to commemorate and educate.

#### *After the War Department Era*

Under the National Park Service, the Tower continued to function as a central component of experiencing and seeing the battlefield. In 1935 the Chief of the Eastern Museum Division, C.P. Russell, reiterated the centrality of the Tower in understanding the Antietam landscape. He wrote, "It was not until I had gained the view and the information offered in the Antietam tower that I was able to understand the Antietam story—this in spite of the fact that I had travelled over much of the area under guidance of one familiar with the terrain and the history of events that transpired there."<sup>89</sup> Interestingly, notes for a proposed film tour suggested a *new* way of "seeing" the battlefield from the Tower. It included a narrator who guided the viewer across the battlefield landscape and to the Tower. At this point the narrator explained, "At the highest point along Bloody Lane, this observation tower for tourists has been built. Let us go to the top and see what we can see." Once at the top of the observation platform, film viewers were greeted with a 360 degree narrated tour of the landscape below before heading off to Burnside's Bridge.<sup>90</sup> Like the late nineteenth century panoramas, the film proposed bringing the historic landscape to those who could not physically access it.

In addition to serving as a tool to support visual understanding of the battlefield, the Tower persisted as a witness to the battlefield's promotion of reconciliation and nationalism.

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<sup>87</sup> Report, "October 10<sup>th</sup> 1933 visit to Antietam National Cemetery," James R. McConaghie to the Director, Office of National Parks (20 October 1933), File No. c 0-31, Part I – Antietam National Cemetery General (from August 12, 1933 – December 12, 1935), Box 2699, Entry 7—Central Classified Files, 1933-1949, Record Group 79—Records of the National Park Service, (hereafter Box 2699, Entry 7, RG 79), NARA II. The report stated the following: "Tower: A stone tower on the Battlefield is in good condition. This tower has heretofore been left open at all times but the Superintendent has been requested to lock it in the evening in order to prevent anyone from being injured in it at night and to prevent acts of vandalism."

<sup>88</sup> Snell, 122.

<sup>89</sup> Memorandum, C.P. Russell to Mr. Chatelain (4 June 1935), File No. 620-37, Part I – National Military Parks Antietam Lands, Buildings, Roads and Trails Buildings Lookout Stations, Box 2605 - National Park Service Central Classified File 1933-1949, National Battlefield Sites - Antietam 601.03-621, Entry 7, RG 79, NARA II. In addition, Russell explained, "If a museum is to be developed at Antietam I believe that it should be established on the site of the present tower and that special provision should be made for an observation or orientation room so elevated as to command a view very much like the one that is opened to the visitor who now goes to the top of the Antietam tower."

<sup>90</sup> Proposed film script, (n.d.), Box - "1934 Reports," Antietam National Battlefield library, Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, MD

Under the NPS, the message of nationalism was even stronger than it had been before. Antietam was incorporated into a park system that, up until 1933, had focused primarily on natural landscapes of the West—such as Yosemite and Yellowstone. These natural landscapes were used to promote rugged individualism and progress of Anglo-American civilization. By incorporating east coast sites such as Civil War battlefields into the National Park System, the agency could tell a more complete story of American history.<sup>91</sup>

In 1937, at the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Antietam, President Roosevelt “spoke barely a stone’s throw from the famous Sunken Road.” His speech was reconciliatory in nature. Following in the footsteps of his predecessors, he too spoke ill of Reconstruction and its divisive powers over the nation. In the midst of the Great Depression, the President pushed aside the sectional differences that had led to the battle and instead focused on the nationalism of World War One that helped bring the nation back together. He “commend[ed] the nation for ‘not only acting but also thinking in national terms’ under his administration.” Afterwards, more than 25,000 spectators watched as National Guard and regular troops reenacted the fight for the Sunken Road.<sup>92</sup>

Along with serving as a tool to promote contemporary issues, the Antietam landscape still promoted military education and Civil War memorialization. In 1939, the Army War College toured the battlefield, stopping to have their photograph taken in front of the Tower.<sup>93</sup> As late as 1997, a white granite memorial to the Irish Brigade was placed outside of the tower’s entrance. The monument was “erected in memory of those members of the Irish Brigade who were killed or wounded during the infamous one-day battle.”<sup>94</sup>

Despite a number of continuities, the Park Service also proposed a number of changes that would impact the Observation Tower. As early as 1934, the Park Service considered purchasing parcels of land in the vicinity of the tower “so as to enable [them] to improve the road corner, provide parking for automobiles and a location for a comfort station.”<sup>95</sup> Roadways had been widened to accommodate larger automobiles and a parking lot next to the Tower was in place by 1965.<sup>96</sup> Nonetheless, the park continued to struggle with public accessibility. The

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<sup>91</sup> See Shaffer’s Chapter 3: “The National Parks as National Assets,” 93-129.

<sup>92</sup> Photo Standalone 19 – No Title, *New York Times*, 26 September 1937, 173. This photo shows the battle reenactment with the observation tower in the background. See also: “Roosevelt Acclaims Nation’s United Spirit,” *Los Angeles Times*, 18 September 1937, 6; Staff Correspondent, “Roosevelt Extols Reunion of States,” *New York Times*, 18 September 1937, 20; “Roosevelt Cites Unity of Nation,” *Atlanta Constitution*, 18 September 1937, 1. A number of the photographs showing the reenactment show the Observation Tower in the background.

<sup>93</sup> Photograph, “Tour of Army War College June 10, 1939,” *Tours* notebook, WPA photograph collection, Antietam National Battlefield Library, Sharpsburg, MD

<sup>94</sup> Randi Kest, “Best Bets: [Final Edition 1],” *Baltimore Sun*, 23 October 1997, 6.

<sup>95</sup> Memorandum, Oliver G. Taylor to Mr. Chatelain (2 January 1934), File No. 630, Part I – Antietam Lands, Buildings, Roads & Trails – Roads (General), Box 2606, Entry 7, RG 79, NARA II.

NPS's Six Year Plan (circa 1936) allotted \$9,000 for the construction of a water and sewer system to accommodate a comfort station at the Tower.<sup>97</sup> The Plan justified these actions by explaining,

As there is only one Comfort Station in the Battlefield area which is located at the Antietam National Cemetery, the need of further facilities of this kind is urgent, as most all visitors stop at the Tower, and as this is frequently their first stop when they arrive on the Field it is very important that some comfort conveniences be supplied. This has had the approval of the Service and was set up as a PWA project, but not approved.<sup>98</sup>

The NPS never constructed the restrooms, however, and another proposal in 1990—this time including an exhibit station—was considered to encompass the Tower. To date, the addition of restrooms and/or an exhibit station have yet to be realized.<sup>99</sup>

In addition to dealing with the challenges of accommodating the modern tourist, the NPS also works to protect the Observation Tower. As recently as 2007, the Tower was closed for repair work on the tile roof and the lightning protection system. The iron stairs and metal railing were also worked on.<sup>100</sup> However, the Tower still faced threats from vandals. As early as 1934, Superintendent Beckenbaugh complained of vandalism. The Tower and a number of monuments were defaced with lipstick writing, and Beckenbaugh threatened the vandals with “a fine of \$1,000 or a year’s prison sentence.”<sup>101</sup> In 1969, the 1896 Lamont Plaque that sat above the arched doorway was stolen.<sup>102</sup> Today, small amounts of graffiti are scrawled on the tower’s interior walls, as well.

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<sup>96</sup> Photograph, “Richardson Avenue Leading to Tower,” *Roadways* notebook, WPA photograph collection, Antietam National Battlefield Library, Sharpsburg, MD; photograph, “1966 Bloody Lane,” Box - *Bloody Lane*, Antietam National Battlefield Library, Sharpsburg, MD. See also drawings “Reconstruct Bloody Lane, Burnside Bridge Road, McKinley Monument & Hawkins-Zouave Walks,” (March 1966), Drawing No. 302/3111A, 5 sheets.

<sup>97</sup> National Park Service, Antietam National Battlefield Site, “Antietam National Battlefield Site – Program of Employment Stabilization Projects – Six Year Program,” File No. 600-02, Part I – Antietam National Military Parks Lands, Buildings, Roads & Trails Six Year Program, Box 2604, Entry 7, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>98</sup> National Park Service, Antietam National Battlefield Site, “Antietam National Battlefield Site – Program of Employment Stabilization Projects – Six Year Program, Justification Sheet No. 1 – Comfort Station at Observation Tower – Page 1 and 2,” File No. 600-02, Box 2604, Entry 7, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>99</sup> “War Department Observation Tower Closed for Repairs,” US Fed News Service, 18 July 2007. See also various unbuilt plans in the Technical Information Center online collection ([etic.nps.gov](http://etic.nps.gov)), Denver Service Center, National Park Service (listed in bibliography).

<sup>100</sup> “War Department Observation Tower Closed for Repairs.”

<sup>101</sup> “Lipstick Writing Defaces Antietam Battle Markers,” *Washington Post*, 15 July 1934, M9.

<sup>102</sup> Internal Memo, National Park Service, Antietam National Battlefield, “observation tower missing plaque,” 20 June 1983, Box - *Bloody Lane*, Antietam National Battlefield Library, Sharpsburg, MD

In 1896, the Observation Tower was constructed by the War Department as a tool to view the landscape otherwise inaccessible to visitors. In many regards, it was intended to be an invisible part of that landscape, used to view the portions of the Antietam Battlefield that were both historic and important. By the time that the National Park Service took over the battlefield in 1933, however, the Tower had transformed into a highly visible part of the landscape. It was not seen as an intrusion on the historic battlefield but rather a part of it. Photographs and postcards detailing the picturesque beauty and calm of the battlefield often included the Tower.<sup>103</sup> In 1940, the *Antietam Sentinel* provided a weekly “resume of this historic battlefield.” In its inaugural edition, a large photograph of the Observation Tower is positioned adjacent to the title, “Antietam Battlefield Site, One of the Most Historic Spots of War Between the States.”<sup>104</sup>

By incorporating the Tower into the battle landscape of 1862, the Tower’s significance as a product of the War Department era is minimized. In 1996, Peter Jensen of the *Baltimore Sun* noted the preservation achievements made at Antietam and compared its lack of commercialism to Gettysburg. In his jab against the Pennsylvania battlefield, Jensen stated, “In contrast to Gettysburg, where strips of fast-food restaurants, souvenir shops and even an observation tower mar the landscape, a visitor to Antietam will see only modest signs of intrusion from the 20th century.”<sup>105</sup> In 2002, reporter Bob Downing from San Antonio, Texas explained his fascination with Antietam. While acknowledging the stone observation tower as a good place to get an aerial view of the battlefield, Downing explains his love of Antietam with the following:

Gettysburg is too overdone with monuments. Vicksburg is too far away. Virginia has too many battlefields. So I keep coming back to Antietam National Battlefield in western Maryland...The area has the look and feel of 19th-century farmland, complete with wooden split-rail fences, stone bridges and rock walls.<sup>106</sup>

The stone Observation Tower does compliment the surrounding landscape, as the War Department intended. Therefore, it is perhaps less intrusive than a modern, commercially operated tower at Gettysburg—which has since been torn down. However, Antietam’s Observation Tower is not native to the Civil War landscape of farmland, split-rail fences, and stone bridges. Instead, it is a physical artifact from the War Department era that documents the

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<sup>103</sup> Maryland State Department of Education, “Bloody Lane,” c. 1954 (Washington County – Number 2108), “Antietam, Battle of – Bloody Lane” vertical file, Washington County Historical Society, Hagerstown, MD. The image of Bloody Lane is for educational purposes and provides historical background on Bloody Lane at the time of the battle. Interestingly, the image on the front of the education card includes the tower.

<sup>104</sup> Edna Earley, “Antietam Battlefield Site, One of the Most Historic Spots of War Between the States,” *Antietam Sentinel*, 17 January 1940, 1.

<sup>105</sup> Peter Jensen, “Victory close at hand in Battle of Antietam; Preservation: The national park, once threatened by unruly development, now is one of the nation's best-preserved Civil War sites,” *Baltimore Sun*, 20 September 1995, 1B.

<sup>106</sup> Bob Downing, “Battle site keeps history intact,” *San Antonio Express-News*, 20 January 2002, 4L.

rise of late nineteenth century commemoration practices, as well as twentieth century heritage tourism and its impact on the Antietam battlefield.

## II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The structure is a rusticated stone tower with minimal decorative detailing.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: The tower is 54 feet, 4 inches in height (along with an additional 17 feet from the columns and roof), 15 feet, 8 inches square in plan.<sup>107</sup>
2. Foundations: Documentation indicates that the tower has a slow setting cement and sand foundation 2 feet 6 inches deep except where solid rock was struck.<sup>108</sup> This portion of the foundation is below ground level. The above ground section is constructed of rusticated limestone. It terminates in a simple water table approximately three feet above ground level along the south elevation and one and a half feet on the north, due to the sloping terrain.
3. Walls: The exterior walls are made of rusticated limestone.<sup>109</sup> A portion of the stone is “blue Indiana Limestone,” which actually appears greyer in color. Other pieces quarried from local deposits are tan or sand colored in appearance. The masonry is a broken rangework ashlar pattern which is enhanced by the multi-colored stone. One belt course of more smoothly dressed stone runs around the tower approximately one third of the way up.
4. Structural System, Framing: The tower has load bearing stone walls with an iron staircase that may provide some additional bracing. The observation deck is supported by iron I beams.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> “Stone Tower at Antietam Battlefield, MD,” (July 1896), RG 92 – Office of the Quartermaster General Blueprint file, Cartographic and Architectural Branch, NARA II.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> “Stone Tower at Antietam Battlefield, MD,” (July 1896), RG 92 – Office of the Quartermaster General Blueprint file, Cartographic and Architectural Branch, NARA II.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: An arched door opening with a wrought iron gate, stone sill and one-step stoop is located on the south elevation.<sup>111</sup> The arch has smooth dressed limestone voussoirs.

b. Windows: The tower windows are plain openings that do not contain sashes. The east elevation has one window opening, while the north, south, and west elevations have two. The lowest window on the north elevation has a single iron bar in it that was added in 1993, perhaps to deter loiterers when the park is closed.<sup>112</sup>

6. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The tower has a pyramidal roof with wood decking and exposed rafters reinforced by an iron tie-rod. The eaves have a slight kick and it is sheathed with red clay tile. The roof is supported at each corner by a rusticated limestone pier. The tower roof was not added until 1908-09.<sup>113</sup> Until that time, the observation deck was uncovered and surrounded by a high parapet. The cornice below the parapet consists of three courses of smoothly dressed blue limestone approximately eight inches thick each. The upper course is covered in copper flashing. The lowest course features dentils. The parapet's coping consists of one course of smoothly dressed blue limestone approximately eight inches thick. On top of the coping are five bronze plates made from melted Civil War cannon. These plates are use as directional guides for visitors. Three of the plates are missing and the corners were cut away when the roof piers were installed.

b. Eaves/Drainage: A drain pipe is located in the center of the tower platform. The drain pipe runs down the Northwest corner of the stairway and out the north elevation wall. Today, the piping has come dislodged inside of the tower.

7. Other exterior features: A lightning rod is located on the top of the roof.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The tower is one vertical, square, narrow space entered from the south elevation. A cast iron stairway with a series of quarter-turn landings is accessible from the northeast corner and leads to an observation platform approximately 50 feet in the air. The platform provides a 360 degree view of the surrounding landscape.

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<sup>111</sup> Based on photo documentation, the entrance step of the observation tower was replaced in May 1999. Photograph, "new step to Ob. Tower 5/99," Observation Tower photograph collection, Cultural Resources Department, Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, MD

<sup>112</sup> "Renovation of Stone Tower," (1 April 1993), Drawing No. 302/80032, 6 sheets, Technical Information Center, Denver Service Center, National Park Service.

<sup>113</sup> Letter, E.G. Mitchell to Depot Quartermaster (22 April 1909); Letter, A.B. Shattuck to Office in Charge, Quartermaster's Depot (10 July 1908).

2. Stairways and ramps: Two stone steps and a landing along the northeast corner of the tower lead to eight runs of cast iron stairs and quarter turn landings that travel up along the walls beginning on the north elevation. The last run ends with a kite winder that emerges onto the observation platform. Made by the Springfield Architectural Iron Works, the stairs have a diamond patterned tread, raised paneled risers, and two iron pipe railings with an additional diamond patterned metal screen. The stairs are secured by angle iron bolts, rivets, and four vertical posts.

3. Flooring: The floor at the base of the tower is smoothed concrete. However, parts of a rough stone surface are visible beneath. Opening and closing the iron gate over the years has worn away the floor, leaving grooves in the cement. The observation deck is made of a concrete slab supported by iron channel and I beams.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: The interior walls of the tower are not finished but rather pointed limestone, as they are on the outside walls. In 1908-09, when the War Department added the roof, it also touched up the tower itself. The “inside walls of tower below observation floor [were] to be thoroughly cleaned, sized and painted with two coats best lead and oil tinted as directed.”<sup>114</sup> Some remnants of this interior work remain today. As is typical with tall masonry construction, the tower walls get progressively thinner as their elevation rises. The walls begin at approximately 30 inches thick, progress to 23 and eventually to 18 inches thick.<sup>115</sup>

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: N/A

b. Windows: The window openings are canted inward, creating a slightly larger opening on the interior.

c. Others: At the top of the last flight of stairs is an opening in the cement slab that leads to the roof top observation deck. Although covered by the roof, the observation platform is open to the elements.

6. Hardware: A cast iron gate with diamond patterned guards and angle iron bolts surrounds the opening to the stairs below the observation deck. An additional piece comprised of a diamond patterned metal safety screen and scroll ornamentation is attached to the top of the gate and covers the floor opening. These pieces were most likely added over a period of time for further visitor protection.

7. Mechanical Equipment:

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<sup>114</sup> “Specifications for Tile Roof for the Observation Tower on the Antietam Battlefield, MD,” (26 September 1908), File No. 220405, Entry 89, RG 92, NARA I.

<sup>115</sup> “Stone Tower at Antietam Battlefield, MD,” (July 1896), RG 92 – Office of the Quartermaster General Blueprint file, Cartographic and Architectural Branch, NARA II.

- a. Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation: N/A. The tower is open to the elements.
- b. Lighting: The structure is lit naturally.
- c. Plumbing: N/A

D. Site:

1. General Character: The observation tower is located to the east of the historic sunken road known as Bloody Lane, perhaps the most prominent landmark of the Battle of Antietam, and adjacent to the tour road system established by the War Department. Agricultural fields are located to the north and east while Richardson Avenue – part of the War Department-built road system - leads south away from the tower and toward Shepherdstown Pike/Route 34. Although the surrounding landscape has gently rolling slopes and several one and two-story structures, the approximately 60-foot tower rises high above the landscape.

2. Walkways and Hardscape Features: A parking lot constructed in during the Mission 66-era of park improvements runs parallel to Bloody Lane west of the observation tower. Next to a portion of the parking lot is a random rubble masonry wall about two feet high that extends away from the west elevation wall approximately 75 feet. The tower is surrounded by a walkway on the west and south elevations comprised of approximately six-by-six square concrete pavers.<sup>116</sup> Directly to the southwest of the tower, the pavers surround the Irish Brigade monument, dedicated in 1997.<sup>117</sup> In front of the tower entrance, the walkway abuts a low, half-circle stoop made of smoothed random rubble masonry. The stoop is now flush with a recent concrete paver walkway that continues along the east elevation and leads to an elevated pad along the north elevation with stone benches.

### III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings: A July 1896 blueprint drawing including an elevation, section, and plans of the Antietam Observation Tower is available in RG 92 – Blueprint Files at the Cartographic and Architecture Branch at the National Archives in College Park. An early elevation rendering of the tower can be found in File No. 220405, Entry 89, Record Group 92 at the National Archives in Washington, DC.<sup>118</sup>

B. Early views: An early twentieth century photograph of the Tower—prior to roof construction can be found in the Battlefield Commission's files at the National Archives in

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<sup>116</sup> Photo documentation indicates that the walkway along the west elevation was extended to its current position in May 1999. Photograph, "Continuation of stone walkway from Tower 5/99," Observation Tower photograph collection, Cultural Resources Department, Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, MD

<sup>117</sup> Kest.

<sup>118</sup> A sketch of the partially built and then demolished 1895 tower from May 1896 is amongst the textual records at the National Archives I - File No. 552, Entry 707, Record Group 92.

Washington, D.C. (“Tower on Antietam Battlefield Before Roof was put on,” RG 92, Entry 89, File No. 220405). Most of the other early photographs of—or with—the Tower can be found at Antietam National Battlefield’s library, including in a blue spiral notebook entitled “Bloody Lane.” These include several additional photographs prior to the 1909 construction of the red tile roof. One photograph is taken along Richardson Avenue looking at the south elevation/entrance of the Tower (“Roadways” spiral notebook). Another photograph is taken of the southeast elevation while a third—a photocopy of the original—is taken from the same direction but shows visitors on the parapet. The notebook also includes a 1966 photograph of the Tower from the east elevation along Bloody Lane. This image includes a number of automobiles. A “Miscellaneous” spiral notebook includes an undated photo—from the 1930s—showing the southwest corner of the Tower with the caption “Proposed Site at Tower for Comfort Station.” A “Tours” spiral notebook includes photographs of a civilian tour group in front of the Tower entrance, as well as photographs documenting the Army War College’s tour on June 10, 1939. The “Miscellaneous” notebook includes two photographs taken from the Tower’s parapet looking north and west—to Bloody Lane. Historic postcards of the Tower can be found on Antietam’s website at <http://www.nps.gov/anti/photosmultimedia/antiquepostcards.htm>.

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Note: See footnotes for a more detailed listing of relevant archival materials from the National Archives, Antietam National Battlefield Library and Cultural Resources Department, as well as newspaper and periodical articles.

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Entry 707—Records of Cemeterial Commissions, 1893-1916, Antietam Battlefield Commission, Letters and Reports to Secretary of War, 1894 – 98

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#### **National Archives, College Park, MD (NARA II)**

Record Group 92 – Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General

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Record Group 79 – Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified Files

Entry 7 – Central Classified Files, 1933-1949

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*The Atlanta Constitution* (Atlanta, GA)  
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*New York Times* (New York, NY)  
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Box - *Bloody Lane*, Antietam National Battlefield Library, Sharpsburg, MD

**Washington County Historical Society, Hagerstown, MD**

“Antietam, Battle of – Bloody Lane” vertical file, Washington County Historical Society, Hagerstown, MD

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“Proposed Comfort Station Additions to Observation Tower,” (1 June 1979), Drawing No. 302/41033.

“Bloody Lane Plaza Conceptual Plans,” n.d. [c. 1980], Drawing No. 302/20010, 1 sheet.

“Bloody Lane Plaza Visitor Experience,” n.d. [c. 1980], Drawing No. 302/20008, 1 sheet.

“Bloody Lane Observation Tower Design Concept,” (22 August 1990), Drawing No. 302/41041, 1 sheet.

“Renovation of Stone Tower,” (1 April 1993), Drawing No. 302/80032, 6 sheets. [includes repairs to roof, stair mounts, and drains; installation of lightening protection and window bar]

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