

Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery  
2900 Sheridan Road  
St. Louis, Missouri 63125

## Description

The Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, established in 1866, is located ten miles south of St. Louis in St. Louis County. The site, located on bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River, can be described as having moderate to severely rolling topography. The original national cemetery is located in the northeastern section of the present national cemetery. This portion of the national cemetery has maintained its historic integrity and appearance in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. There are three historic buildings: a former lodge/administration building, constructed circa 1895, and an adjacent tool house and garage, constructed in 1872, both located between Sections 53 and 54; and a former cow barn which was converted into a maintenance building, date of construction unknown, located near the original entrance gate.



The original national cemetery also included the Jefferson Barracks post cemetery and is enclosed by a stone wall, which was constructed in 1872. To the west of this entry is a circular drive on which a flagpole is located. The original iron entrance gate supported by limestone piers is located in the northeastern corner. This entrance is no longer used. The cemetery was expanded further to the west and southwest, and new main entrance gates and flagpole, as well as new administration and maintenance facilities, were built. All of this area is enclosed by chain link fencing, except for the area near the main entry, which is enclosed by wrought-iron fencing. The main entrance gate, constructed in 1973, is located along Sheridan Road. From this entrance, Jefferson Drive leads to a circle where a second flagpole is located. The administration building sits just to the north of this flagpole, and the maintenance area is located to the west of the administration building, off Gentry Road and Miravelle Drive. A contemporary memorial chapel is located within a semicircle just southwest of the maintenance area. Graves are marked with upright marble headstones, except for seven sections, which are marked with flat granite markers.

A lodge constructed circa 1895 was remodeled in 1935 and converted into the cemetery administration building. The structure has an asphalt shingle roof and a simple porch. It was renovated after a fire in 1941 and used as the cemetery office until 1974. The building is now used for storage.



Adjacent to the former administration building is a brick and concrete tool house and garage, constructed in 1872. The roof is asphalt. In 1935 a brick and concrete addition of 33 feet by 22 feet, which included a basement, was constructed. The roof of the garage was replaced in 1963 with asphalt felt and self-sealing composition shingles. Three overhead metal garage doors were installed in 1965. This building is now used for storage.



A block and brick building, 32 feet by 205 feet, was used originally as a cow barn. The date of construction is unknown. Records indicate that in 1936, it was converted into a paint shop. It was used as the maintenance facility for the cemetery until the new maintenance building was constructed. The roof is asphalt shingles. Seven overhead metal doors were installed in 1966. The building is now used as a carpenter shop and for storage.

The brick administration building with a tar roof was constructed circa 1974.

The maintenance complex, constructed in 1973, consists of three brick buildings, each with an asphalt shingle roof. One building is used as the mechanical shop and contains three garage bays; one is used as a storage bay and contains eight garage bays; and the remaining building is used as an employee locker and lunch room.



In 1970, the Korean and Vietnam Gold Star Mothers and Fathers sought a perpetual living memorial "to remember the sons and daughters who paid the supreme sacrifice in defense of the principles in which they believed." As a result of their efforts, a chapel was constructed in the cemetery. A ground breaking ceremony was held on Veterans Day 1976. A model of the chapel was unveiled during the ceremony that was attended by VA officials, state and local government representatives, members of the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery

Committee and area residents. In his speech before the gathering, Carl T. Noll, then Deputy Director of the National Cemetery System, told how the chapel will honor the dead of all wars and be a "place of serenity and beauty that will always be a source of solace and consolation, strength and pride to the relatives of our deceased veterans." The nonsectarian memorial chapel was dedicated on April 30, 1978, and has a seating capacity of 104 persons.

A stained glass skylight that floods the interior with color and light, was installed at the chapel in 1985. The 60- by 20-foot multi-colored overhead window depicts the history of man from ancient Egypt to the present. It is set five feet below an exterior skylight where it dominates the chapel ceiling. The skylight was designed and hand-crafted by St. Louis artist Robert Frei, as were stained glass windows on each side of the nave and a 30-foot by 10-foot glass panel in the narthex. The Jefferson Barracks Chapel Association continues to spearhead a fund drive for donations to the chapel.

There are five metal committal service shelters throughout the cemetery. All were constructed between 1978 and 1996.

An inspector's report for 1870 states that there were eight guns planted vertically as monuments in different parts of the cemetery grounds. Three of these monuments remain at the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, one near Section 44 1/2, one near Section 45, and the third near Section 40. Each monument is made of an original cast-iron seacoast artillery tube and secured by a concrete base.



A water fountain located on Monument Drive near Section QQ was donated by the 35th Division Association and dedicated on May 30, 1952.

### Noted Burials

There are seven Medal of Honor recipients buried in the cemetery. The headstone at each grave is inscribed with an enlarged gold-leafed replica of the medal of the awarding service and the words "MEDAL OF HONOR." The names and grave locations are as follows:

Lorenzo D. Immell, Corporal (later 1st Lieutenant), Company F, 2nd U. S. Artillery - Section 4, Grave 12342.

Martin Schubert, Private, (later 1st Lieutenant), Company E, 26th New York Infantry - Section 4, Grave 12310.

Alonzo Stokes, First Sergeant, Company H, 6th U. S. Cavalry - Section 63, Grave 11450.

David Ryan, Private, Company G, 5th U. S. Infantry - Section 59, Grave 11715.

Ralph Cheli, Major, U. S. Army Air Corps - He is one of twenty-one in a group burial in Section 78, Graves 930-934.

Donald D. Puckett, First Lieutenant, U. S. Army Air Corps, 98th Bombardment Group - He is one of six in a group burial in Section 84, Graves 270-272.

Bruce Avery Van Voorhis, Lieutenant Commander, U. S. Navy - He is one of six in a group burial in Section 79, Graves 279-281.

### Significant Monuments/Memorials

Fort Bellefontaine Monument - A reddish granite boulder, donated in 1904, by the Daughters of the Revolution, located in Old Post Section 1, commemorates the burial place of the unknown officers and soldiers who died while stationed at Fort Bellefontaine, Missouri, located on the Missouri River bluffs near St. Louis, in the early 1800's. The fort was deactivated in 1826, and the troops moved to Jefferson Barracks, leaving behind those interred in the post cemetery.

In 1904, the unidentified remains of the men buried in the post cemetery were removed by the United States Government and reinterred in the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery.

Memorial to the Unknown Dead - A rough granite monument with a polished face, measuring 45 inches high and 36 inches wide, and located in Section 14. It was dedicated by Annie Whittenmyer, Tent No. 3, Daughters of Veterans, U.S.A., St. Louis, Missouri.



Minnesota Monument - Erected in 1922 by the State of Minnesota to the memory of 164 soldiers from that state who served the Union cause during the Civil War and whose remains are interred in the national cemetery. Many of these men died of wounds or sickness while enroute back to their native state. The monument is located at Longstreet and Monument Drives near Section 4. Visitors to the cemetery will note a bronze female figure of heroic size holding in her hands a wreath, and showing an expression representing memory; it is firmly fixed upon a massive granite pedestal. This statue was erected by the State of Minnesota and dedicated on May 15, 1922, to the memory of the 164 soldiers from that state who served the Union cause during the Civil War and whose remains are now interred in the cemetery.



During the war, about 6,000 Minnesota soldiers were on duty at one time or another in the lower Mississippi Valley, and many of them passed through St. Louis. Six regiments of Minnesota infantry did important service in Missouri. The 4th Infantry was on duty at Benton Barracks in April 1862. The 7th, 9th, and 10th Infantry began provost and garrison duty in St. Louis in October 1863. The 7th and 10th Infantry left the area in April 1864; the 9th Infantry departed a month later. The 5th Minnesota Infantry played a role in defending against General Price's raid into Missouri in 1864. The 6th Infantry arrived in St. Louis in October 1864, to recuperate from the effects of "malaria and kindred diseases" encountered during the summer around Helena, Arkansas, "a country reeking with miasma." The 6th Infantry performed provost duty in St. Louis into 1865.

The 164 soldiers buried here represent all of Minnesota's first ten infantry regiments, an infantry battalion, a cavalry regiment, a cavalry battalion, and one heavy and one light artillery unit. All but three of the burials were during the war years. Nearly all the wartime deaths were the result of disease. Among the dead are 8 sergeants, 15 corporals, 139 privates, and 2 wagoners. The 6th Infantry was particularly hard hit; 45 of the 164 soldiers are from its ranks. The 7th Regiment yielded 30 from its ranks, and the 1st Minnesota Light Artillery Battery buried ten men here, a high proportion considering the smaller size of a battery.

One soldier, Sergeant Major Edward S. Past (Section 3, Grave 6891AA), represents the 1st Minnesota Infantry Regiment. On July 2, 1863, his regiment was called on to make an attack at Gettysburg in an attempt to stop Confederate pursuit, following the route of the Federal III Corps. It cost the regiment 215 of its 262 men engaged, the highest casualty rate (82 percent) of

any Union regiment in any battle of the war. Of the attack, General Winfield Hancock is reported to have said: "There is no more gallant deed recorded in history." Past was buried here on November 13, 1914.

56th Infantry Regiment, United States Colored Troops Monument - An obelisk in Section 57 at Grave 15009 honors the memory of 175 non-commissioned officers and privates of the 56th United States Colored Infantry who died of cholera August 1866. Through the combined efforts of the War Department and concerned citizens, the monument and remains were removed from Quarantine Station, Missouri, by authority of the War Department in collaboration with a citizens' committee chaired by Mr. Joseph E. Mitchell. Graves 15008 and 15010 on either side of the monument are dedicated to "Unknown Soldiers, 56th U. S. Colored Infantry." Ceremonies were held in May 1939 for the placement of the obelisk and reinterment of the remains.

The 56th Regiment was originally organized at St. Louis on August 12, 1863, as the 3rd Arkansas Infantry Regiment (African Descent). The 3rd Arkansas was ordered from St. Louis to Helena, Arkansas, and served on post duty there and at Little Rock until March 1864. On March 11, 1864, the designation of the unit was changed to 56th Infantry Regiment, U. S. Colored Troops. At one point, an inspector found the 56th Regiment to be "unsoldierlike" but went on to report that the regiment had "good material, and its bad condition was the fault of its company officers." With a few notable exceptions, all officers of the U. S. Colored Troops were white.

One line of the inscription, "Their memory will not perish," is a quotation attributed to Brigadier General Napoleon Bonaparte Buford, on July 27, 1864. The unit's connection with Buford, half-brother of Union cavalry leader and Gettysburg hero John Buford, began in January 1864. The regiment was one of 14 units in the District of Eastern Arkansas that Buford commanded. On July 26, 1864, the day before Buford's quotation, the 56th was in action with two other black units (Co. E, 2d Cavalry and the 60th Infantry) and the 15th Illinois Cavalry against Confederate forces at Wallace's Ferry and Big Creek, Arkansas. Union losses in the battles were 20 killed, 40 wounded, and four missing. General Buford and the 56th Regiment remained together until March 1865, when he was transferred to other duties. In August, the 56th Regiment became part of the Department of Arkansas until it was mustered out of the service on September 15, 1866. Before the unit mustered out, tragedy occurred that contributed to the reason for this monument.

The 56th was traveling aboard two steamers from Helena to St. Louis to be mustered out. During the trip, several soldiers died of an undiagnosed illness. When the steamers reached Quarantine Station near St. Louis, Colonel Charles Bentzoni, the regimental commander, asked a surgeon to inspect the men. The surgeon reported no cholera among them. The regiment continued to St. Louis and arrived at night, but Bentzoni kept the men on board rather than allowing them to roam the town. The next morning, it was clear the 56th Regiment had cholera. Ordered back to Quarantine Station, the unit lost 178 enlisted men and one officer to cholera in the next few weeks. If Bentzoni had allowed the men into the city on the night of their arrival, the results could have been as devastating to St. Louis as they were to the 56th Regiment, U. S. Colored Troops.

Memorial to the Confederate Dead - On May 1, 1988, this rough granite monument measuring 69 inches high and 40 inches wide, was dedicated to the memory of Confederate veterans. It was donated by the Jefferson Barracks Civil War Historical Association, Missouri

Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans, and the Military Order of the Stars and Bars. It is located in Section 66.

Memorial to the Union Dead - This rough granite monument, measuring 103 inches high and 42 1/2 inches wide, is located between Sections 12 and 13. It was erected by the Julia Dent Grant Tent #16, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and dedicated September 17, 1995.

Memorial to Honor The Women Who Helped Union Forces in the Civil War - This rough granite monument, measuring 44 ¼ inches high and 36 inches wide, is located in Section 13. It was erected by the Julia Dent Grant Tent #16, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and dedicated on June 2, 1996.

### Civil War Activity in Area

The national cemetery derives its name from the adjacent Jefferson Barracks, a military post established on October 23, 1826, to replace Fort Bellefontaine on the Missouri River, which had been declared unhealthy and unsatisfactory. To honor President Thomas Jefferson, whose death preceded occupation of the post by six days and during whose administration the Louisiana Purchase was made, orders were issued to name the post Jefferson Barracks. Jefferson Barracks served the United States as the first permanent military installation west of the Mississippi. During the 1840's, it was the largest military establishment in the United States. During the years prior to the Civil War, Jefferson Barracks served as a distribution point for troops and munitions destined for isolated posts scattered throughout the wild frontier.

At various times it was duty station for many officers of the United States Army who were destined to serve in the Civil War. Lieutenant Jefferson Davis first came to Jefferson Barracks in 1828 after graduation from West Point, and in 1832 he returned with the captured Chief Black Hawk as his prisoner. He later became President of the Confederate States of America. Another West Pointer, Second Lieutenant Ulysses S. Grant, was stationed at this post in 1843. In 1855, Colonel Robert E. Lee assumed command of Jefferson Barracks. He later resigned his commission in the United States Army and was named a general in the Confederate forces.

Jefferson Barracks played an important role in the early days of the Civil War in Missouri, providing housing and training for Missouri's Union volunteers in the days prior to the capture of Camp Jackson. The post's most important function during the Civil War was as a military hospital. In March 1862, the buildings were turned over to the Medical Department for its use.

The first regiment of Dragoons of the United States Army was organized at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, on March 4, 1833. The new regiment consisted of five companies with 34 officers and 714 men. Colonel Henry Dodge was personally appointed by President Andrew Jackson to command the new regiment. Other officers assigned to the regiment whose names and careers became famous throughout American history were: Lt. Colonel Steven Watts Kearney (later first governor of California), Major Richard B. Mason, Captain Edwin V. Summer, Captain David Hunter, Captain Nathan Boone (son of Daniel), First Lieutenant Jefferson Davis, First Lieutenant Philip St. George Cooke, and First Lieutenant Thomas Swords. Dragoon Regiments officially were redesignated as cavalry in 1861 and cavalry companies officially redesignated as troops in 1883. After assignments of officers and men from the ranks of regular Army itself,

recruitments of men from outside the Army began in earnest with newspaper advertisements and recruiting posters.

No incident is more important to an understanding of the Civil War in St. Louis than the events at Camp Jackson. On May 10, 1861, Union forces under the command of Captain Nathaniel Lyon marched to the city's western outskirts to surround and capture the Missouri Volunteer Militia drilling at Camp Jackson in Lindell Grove, ostensibly because of the threat those troops posed to the United States Arsenal. Camp Jackson was named in honor of the Governor, Claiborne Fox Jackson. The Federal troops prepared to march their prisoners and their prisoners' commander, Missouri militia general Daniel M. Frost, to the U. S. Arsenal as an angry crowd collected around the column. Shots were fired, and the Union volunteers reacted spontaneously and fired into the crowd. Nearly three dozen people died, most of them civilians, and many more were wounded. The capture of Camp Jackson came after weeks of tension in the city over the control of its military resources, the ambitions of Missouri's pro-Confederate governor Claiborne Fox Jackson, and the sentiment of the pro-Union Constitutional Convention. States' rights adherents and Southern sympathizers saw the Camp Jackson affair as an illegal act of aggression by the United States against Missouri, arguing that the militia had been assembled by a lawful order of the Governor. Ardent Unionists, led by Frank Blair and Lyon, were unwilling to allow the military resources of the U. S. Arsenal to fall into "traitorous" hands. Despite the storm of criticism from both secessionists and moderates, Lyon's action held St. Louis, and therefore Missouri, in the Union. One week after the incident, Lyon was commissioned a brigadier general of U. S. Volunteers.

After the events of Camp Jackson, there was never a serious military threat to Union control of St. Louis. Clashes between soldiers and civilians occurred in May and June of 1861, but as the city grew rapidly in importance as a troop and supply staging area for the Union army, the overwhelming might of the Federal government made secessionist sympathizers very cautious. Taking no chances, Federal military authorities ringed the city with fortifications in the war's first summer. Thousands of troops were quartered at Jefferson Barracks, Benton Barracks (located on the northern side of St. Louis), and other sites throughout the city. By fall, gunboats were being launched from the boatyards in south St. Louis, further deterring any thoughts of advance on the city by Confederate forces.

In the summer of 1861, St. Louis was a collection point for troops from all over the midwestern United States. General Lyon and General John Charles Fremont both sought to protect the city by a series of fortifications along its western edge and through batteries along the river. In September, Secretary of War Simon Cameron visited St. Louis and, because of a lack of funds, he directed that the building of fortifications stop. Despite Cameron's directive, work somehow continued. By the end of 1861, St. Louis was enclosed within a ring of ten forts and several detached batteries. The forts were not large, but it was hoped they would offer good rallying places in the event of a Confederate incursion. However, the forts were never tested by the actions of Missouri's Confederates.

On October 12, 1861, the first ironclad warship built by the United States slipped down the marine railway of Captain James B. Eads's boatyard in south St. Louis and floated free in the Mississippi River. Seven months earlier, Attorney General Edward Bates had asked Eads to come to Washington, D. C., and present his ideas concerning the use of gunboats to close the Mississippi River to the seceding states. Eads received a warm reception for this idea from

Lincoln's cabinet, except for Secretary of War Simon Cameron, who was not impressed. After several weeks, Cameron changed his mind, and army authorities began to consider plans for gunboats seriously. The overall responsibility for creating the fleet of river gunboats was assigned to Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs. Bid opening took place on August 5, 1861, and Eads's bid, \$89,600 per boat, was the lowest of the seven received. Eads had three months in which to build seven ironclad gunboats and have them ready to receive their armament. On October 12, 1861, two days beyond the due date, Eads launched Carondelet. St. Louis followed; Louisville and Pittsburgh came next; followed by three boats, Cincinnati, Mound City, and Cairo. As they were commissioned, the Eads gunboats became part of the Western Gunboat Flotilla. The steamers were commanded by navy officers, though operated by the Army. Five survived the war. Cairo and St. Louis were both lost in the Yazoo River.

During February 1862, the casualties of the war in Tennessee, first from Fort Donelson and later from Shiloh, flowed up the Mississippi River to St. Louis and into one of the city's 16 hospitals. General Ulysses S. Grant had taken 12,000 prisoners at Fort Donelson, more than a thousand of them wounded. By February 20, the first of the Confederates began arriving in St. Louis, many to be rerouted to prison camps in Alton, Chicago, and other points. The steamer War Eagle arrived on February 26 with 150 Union and Confederate wounded to be treated in area hospitals.

On May 11, 1863, St. Louis came to a halt. The occasion was to commemorate the capture of Camp Jackson just two years earlier. A column of 6,000 Union soldiers marched through downtown St. Louis to Lindell Grove, where 30,000 citizens waited. Charles W. Drake, a lawyer-politician, spoke. Just two days later, a pathetic display at the riverfront showed just how far the fortunes of the city's Southern sympathizers had fallen. On May 13, 21 St. Louisans were put aboard the steamer Belle Memphis to be banished to Confederate-held territory south of Memphis, Tennessee. Most of the exiles were guilty of holding the wrong political convictions, although some of the women were guilty of aiding their Confederate husbands, brothers or friends too openly. The Belle Memphis landed in Memphis on May 15. Eventually, the exiles were escorted to Holly Springs, Mississippi, where they were left to their fate.

On July 28, 1863, General Orders No. 236 created a separate Cavalry Bureau to establish depots to collect, care for, and train cavalry horses. The bureau was organized into Eastern and Western Divisions. The Western Division chose existing facilities in St. Louis as its depot, and it began operations on October 26, 1863. Horses for sale were brought to the depot by their owners. After an examination, the horses were purchased for artillery or cavalry duty. The depot also received horses deemed no longer fit for active service with the army, and these animals were either recuperated and reissued, or they were sold for nonmilitary use. The Cavalry Bureau existed for a little over a year and was discontinued on April 17, 1864.

In August of 1864, the 10th Missouri Infantry Regiment, U. S. A., returned to St. Louis to muster out at the expiration of its three-year term of service. The regiment formed in column and marched through the city, past the headquarters of General William Rosecrans, commander of the Department of the Missouri. They paused briefly at headquarters and gave three cheers before continuing the march. Then, a reception was held in their honor. The men spent the night at Schofield Barracks and then moved to Benton Barracks, where they made out their discharge papers. A month later, they were mustered out and sent home with pay.



Homecoming for Missouri's Confederate soldiers was a much different experience than it had been for Missouri's Union veterans. On June 20, 1865, the veterans of the 9th Missouri Infantry Regiment, C. S. A., arrived at the St. Louis riverfront aboard the steamer Maria Denning. It was followed by the 8th, 10th, 11th and 16th Missouri Infantry regiments and the 3rd and 4th Cavalry Battalions. Before men were allowed to leave their steamers, they were required to take the oath of allegiance to the United States. Paroled officers and men of the late rebel armies were forbidden to wear the uniform, or any part thereof, or other insignia of said rebel service. Exceptions would be made, however, in the case of private soldiers who are destitute of means; they would be permitted to wear such clothing for a short period of time after stripping from the same all Confederate or state buttons and other insignia of the rebel service. No exceptions would be made for officers of any rank. Any violation of these terms would be considered an act of hostility to the United States Government, and the officers or soldiers would be punished accordingly.