NEWS CLOSEUP

REMAINS OF REVOLUTION

REPORT SEES UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR REVOLUTIONARY, WAR OF 1812 SITES

In response to a congressional directive, the National Park Service has produced a first-of-its-kind report on some of the earliest historic military sites in the American story. Battlefields and other properties associated with the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 were the subject of a four-year study, prompted by concern over rapidly encroaching development and a dearth of information. Among the findings are that more than two dozen highly intact major sites have little to no protection, and that within the next decade about a quarter of the sites studied are expected to be completely destroyed or dramatically altered.

Led by the National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program and Cultural Resources Geographic Information Systems Program, the project was the first to focus on these two early conflicts in such a comprehensive fashion. Many sites associated with the wars are now occupied by subdivisions, highways, and shopping centers. The study's goal was to develop a clear picture of how many sites remain, describe their significance, and determine whether they are threatened. Congress also asked that researchers consider which places, if any, could be added to the National Park System. The report will be delivered to Congress in early 2008.

More than 2,700 properties made up the initial pool. A panel of scholars rated the significance of each, with 677 deemed worthy of further study. What followed is what the report calls "perhaps the broadest federal effort ever undertaken" to determine the status of such sites. Aside from battlefields, the project included encampments, hospitals, supply centers, and headquarters.

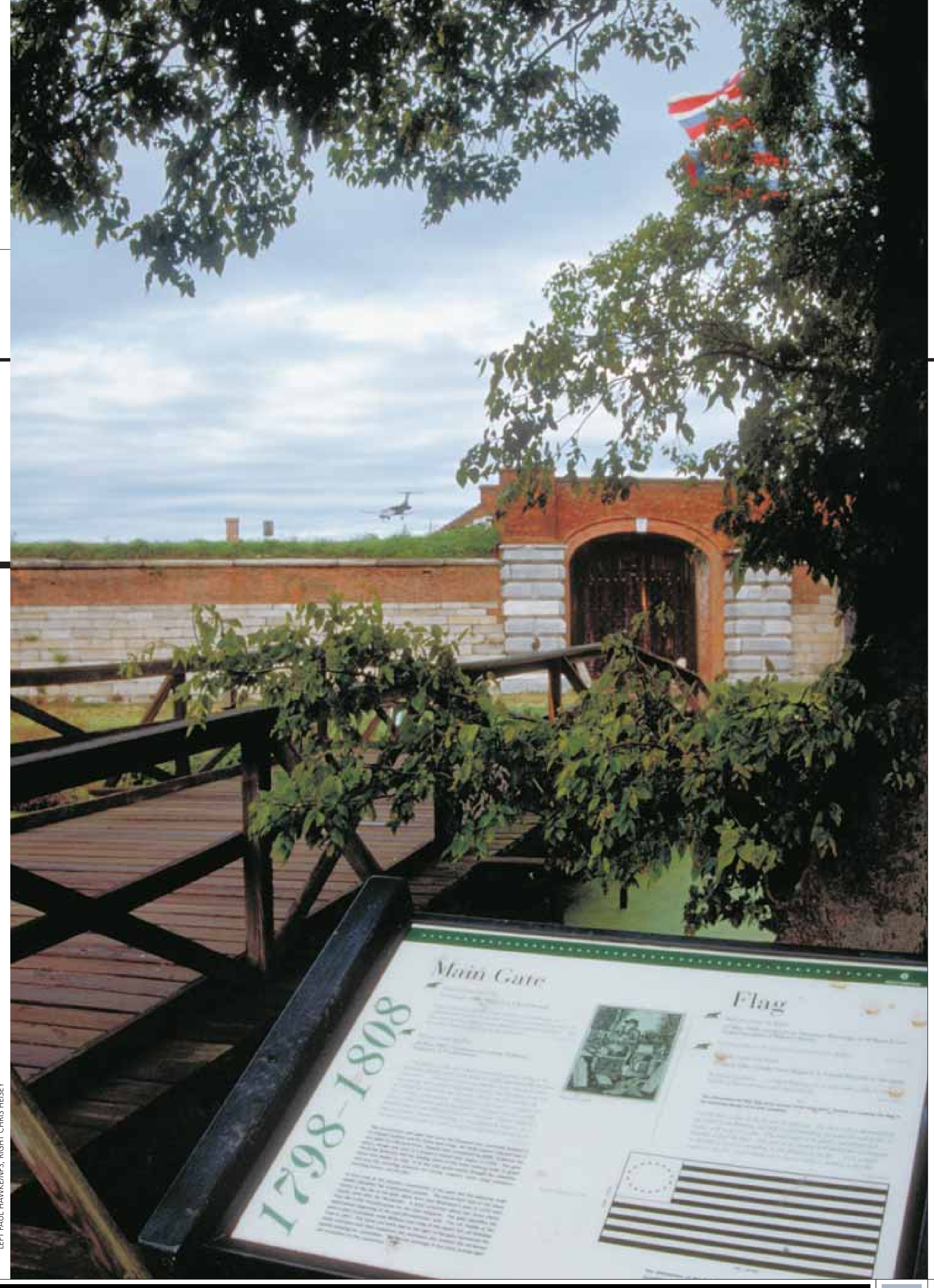
WHILE PLACES SUCH AS BRANDYWINE AND FORT MCHENRY ARE WELL KNOWN, THERE IS A MULTITUDE OF RELATED SITES FLUNG far over the 31-state research area. British troops moved down Pennsylvania Avenue in their 1814 assault on Washington, DC, for example, but the modern thoroughfare offers no hint of the event. Other properties like little known rural mills, forgotten farmhouses, and isolated stone buildings also hide their connection to the wars. Documentation is sparse. These properties posed a challenge to researchers, who often had little more to go on than anecdotal evidence or an assertion that a given structure was standing at the time of war. Some are shipwrecks, others are archeological sites.

The report's authors cite how important "authenticity of place" is in interpreting the past. Referring to the Revolution, they write, "At Concord Bridge, one comes to terms with a simmering frustration that finally exploded in a volley of musketry." The War of 1812, "America's forgotten war," remains relatively obscure in the national consciousness. Burnt Corn, Fort Mims, and Tallussahatchee do not carry the same patriotic resonance as Yorktown, Saratoga, or Bunker Hill. Nonetheless, the war represents an important time in history, when a young nation sensing the possibility of empire flexed its muscles against its former master.

The study was an outgrowth of a similar effort in the early 1990s. At that time, the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, a congressionally appointed body, worked with the National Park Service to produce an extensive survey of Civil War battlefields. The same approach was used for this study, except this time it was led solely by National Park Service researchers and the scope was far more ambitious, focusing on more than the battlefields themselves.

The Park Service enlisted the help of state historic preservation officers—who had the best in-depth knowledge of their own locales—and hired consultants to fill out the ranks of the surveyors. The state and local researchers

Above: Fort Ticonderoga, overlooking Lake Champlain in New York State. Right: Fort Mifflin, on the Delaware River, site of a siege in 1777.



LEFT PAUL HAWKE/NPS, RIGHT CHRIS HEISEY

LEFT STEPHEN D. SMITH, RIGHT CHRIS HEISEY

conducted the initial work, poring over battle records, documents, and personal accounts. Then, before heading into the field to conduct surveys, participants were trained by National Park Service specialists in how to use GIS and GPS technology. One of the specialists, Deidre McCarthy, says the work represents "a completely new approach to landscape and battlefield survey."

America's oldest wars were indeed the focus of something new: surveyors walking about with handheld GPS receivers. Centuries-old information was compared to the scene today, a quest that sometimes ended in the presence of a big-box store or a parking lot. In less disturbed areas, the detective work began in earnest. The information was ultimately compiled into a comprehensive and versatile database. A user can search for specific features or view landscape attributes in relation to one another. The boundaries of a skirmish can be drawn in GIS, then laid over a modern aerial photograph. Software can determine a battlefield's exact acreage, assess

Left: The ruins of Sheldon Church in Beaufort County, South Carolina, burned by the British in 1779, rebuilt, and burned again by General Sherman during the Civil War. Below: The William Brinton House, a national historic landmark, survived the Battle of Brandywine.

urban encroachment, and show the extent of properties whose owners are sympathetic to preservation.

Of the battlefields and other properties that survive, many enjoy at least partial protection from public or non-profit agencies. However, the extent of this protection varies. Significant portions of most of these sites are privately held, making them vulnerable to sale, subdivision, and destruction. About 85 are owned entirely by private individuals, and tend to be high priorities for preservation.

The report categorizes the threats as short or long term, offering suggestions for preserving and interpreting what remains, like having public agencies and nonprofits collaborate to purchase land or have it donated. New partnerships are urged, as well as innovative arrangements that work toward recognizing this fast disappearing legacy. Some possibilities include local friends groups, a national advocacy organization, and partnerships with private landowners. Working to designate sites as national historic landmarks and listed in the National Register of Historic Places are also recommended. Of the sites already commemorated, there is little in the way of interpretive displays. Engaging visitors will be a critical component of any preservation strategy.

As an example of the possibilities, Tanya Gossett of the American Battlefield Protection Program points to South Carolina's Camden Battlefield. The site of a Revolutionary War battle where the British consolidated their hold on the Carolinas, Camden became a national historic landmark in 1962. Local concern elevated it to the point where it is now the subject of a special resource study to determine if it could become a national park. "There's been a lot of movement to get it designated," says Gossett. Camden enjoys the benefits of a good public-private partnership. Bowater, Inc., a paper company, was recognized by the National Park Service for its part in preserving the battlefield. It donated a 310-acre conservation easement and has provided over half a million dollars. Camden has also received grants from the NPS-administered Save America's Treasures Program and American Battlefield Protection Program.

Left: Cannon and shot at Baltimore's Fort McHenry, target of a British naval bombardment and inspiration for the "Star Spangled Banner." The site, unlike many from the War of 1812, enjoys protection as a national park.

From an educational standpoint, the wars hold a great deal of potential. Both conflicts had a profound effect on Native Americans and persons of African descent, whose participation is not always recognized. Thoughtful interpretation could expose visitors to what the report calls "provocative stories" and their parallels in today's world. The researchers list sites related to the Native and African American perspectives, addressing not only their roles in the wars but the consequences that followed.

To explain the importance of saving sites associated with long-ago turmoil and uncertainty, the authors of the report point to the world of today. "In times when our nation faces troubling challenges in the world, Americans instinctively seek the authentic fabric of history."

For more information, email Tanya Gossett at tanya_gossett@nps.gov.

SUNSET ON SUNRISE

BOOM AND BUST IN THE IRON-RICH HILLS OF A HIGH DESERT MINING TOWN

"The now abandoned town . . . lies on the floor of Eureka Canyon, surrounded by [walls]. Red dust covers everything . . . including the trees and the buildings. The property is overgrown with native shrubs and grasses [amidst] the remains of domestic fruit trees, roses, lilacs, and perennial flowers." This description of Sunrise, a defunct mining town in eastern Wyoming, leads off the narrative part of its documentation in the National Register of Historic Places. Like many towns that grew up around extracting valuable metals out of the earth, Sunrise appears stripped and empty. The impression is misleading, though, because the lonely site actually contains a very full story of technology, labor, and immigration in what's left of its small town setting.

Far left: Shower house for mine workers. **Near left:** Wyoming's first YMCA, built for the company town in 1917. **Right:** Boiler house that supplied heat to the train depot, the general store, and the YMCA.

THE SUNRISE MINE HISTORIC DISTRICT, LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER IN 2005, is a 225-acre property in the foothills of Wyoming's high desert, about halfway between Casper and Cheyenne, owned today by a private citizen. It is the site of one of the West's earliest and longest-lived iron mining operations, where several technical developments were pioneered, and significant in the history of community planning.

The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, which ran both mine and town, wielded enormous influence over how its employees lived. Immigrants flocked to the remote area in search of work, which saw a unique ethnic intermingling, and in later years was a lab for evolving relations between labor and management.

The iron-rich hills went undiscovered until relatively late. In 1880, after gold had fizzled, copper replaced it as the moneymaker. But within seven years the cost of hauling ore via mule to a smelter—coupled with a 40 percent drop in the price of copper over a four-year period—spelled the end.

A sharp-eyed local rancher, who had visited Minnesota's iron mines, started buying up Sunrise claims. Samples of the local ore were displayed at Chicago's 1893 World's Fair and—at 60 percent pure—were billed as "superior to all other domestic and foreign samples." Iron mining began in earnest. In the next few years, the rest of the West caught on and it wasn't long before deep-pocketed corporations showed up. The Colorado Fuel & Iron Company, which was putting heavy capital into the ore as part of an expansion, bought the mine for $500,000.

THE TOWN FUNCTIONED FROM 1898 TO 1980 AND WHILE THE UNCHANGING nature of the low scrubby hills might suggest timelessness, global developments—both technological and social—took firm root here.

Today's historic district comprises about 20 buildings along with an assortment of ruins and foundations. With around 500 residents at its peak, Sunrise was laid out in a grid pattern with tree-lined streets. World War I-era photos taken from a hill depict a settlement of hip-roofed cottages and a church steeple amidst a series of smokestacks.

The mine was crucial in the development of both Wyoming and Colorado, since it fed smelters elsewhere. At first, miners simply blasted the ground apart with dynamite, then picked out the ore

ALL PHOTOS RICHARD COLLIER/WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

SUNRISE WAS A COMPANY TOWN IN A TIME BEFORE

Above: Lonely remnants of Colorado Fuel & Iron's once pervasive presence. The building on the left was one of many that housed boilers to power mining equipment and provide heat. In the shower house, on the right, miners washed the red dust off their bodies after a day spent working hills rich with hematite, an iron oxide Indians used as a paint pigment.

with a steam shovel. A company railroad carried it 375 miles to a smelter in Pueblo, Colorado, which was rapidly expanding to meet demand.

After a few years, the pits became so deep they were impossible to get at from the surface. This brought about an innovation called the "glory hole," which included excavating chutes in areas that rail cars and other equipment could no longer reach. The chutes were linked to tunnels lined with a system of tracks and cars. As before, the pits were blasted except now the broken rock fell down the chutes to be collected and hauled out of the mine via a hoisting shaft.

In 1927, another innovation replaced the glory hole. "Block caving" undercut large sections so they would collapse and break on their own. These city-block-size portions would fall into a newly excavated void where the ore could be hauled out.

World War II demand fostered major changes. Sunrise was one of just a few underground iron mines in the United States and the only one west of the Missouri. Structures known as head frames were built at the tops of shafts, which housed hoisting and loading systems. In 1945, one head frame nearly topped 200 feet, the nation's tallest. Today the site gives a picture of technology whose impacts are still felt. According to the National Register description, the setting is intact, with no modern intrusions. What remains as well are the ghostly traces of personal lives. Sunrise was a company town in a time before organized labor. The paternal presence permeated the place—including the company houses, which workers were required to rent, and the company newspaper, *Camp and Plant*, published in Italian, German, Spanish, and English for everyone whose labor supported the far-flung CF&I empire.

THE IMMIGRANTS FIRST ARRIVED IN THE EARLY STAGES OF MINING, COMING in numbers as it thrived. Greeks were among the most numerous, forming Greek work gangs, living in Greek houses, and founding a Socrates society to help sick and struggling countrymen. The Italians had a social group called the Dante Alighieri Society. The nationalities were many, extending beyond Europe and into Asia and the Middle East. Many of the immigrants who came to Sunrise quickly sent word back home that there was work in the American West, with the resulting diversity still visible today in the face of the population.

In 1902 the company built the Sociological Hall, a recreational building. In 1917 a YMCA went up. The Italian Renaissance revival structure, which still stands, was the community centerpiece. The

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Above: The hoist house, the largest building still standing in the historic district. Built in 1944, it once housed the machinery to move ore and equipment through mine shafts hundreds of feet deep.

'20s brought duplexes for the increasing number of workers. At its peak, the town had about 50 houses, a train depot, and a filling station. Today, the site still bears evidence of a carefully planned community. Bridges, sidewalks, sewers, and rock-walled terraces extend up the hillsides, with clothesline poles still marking now-overgrown yards.

CF&I HAD ITS SHARE OF LABOR TROUBLES IN ITS MINES, PLANTS, AND TOWNS. In April 1914, National Guardsmen fired on striking miners and their families in a now infamous showdown at Ludlow, Colorado. The dead included 11 women and 2 children.

John D. Rockefeller, a major CF&I investor determined not to repeat the experience, set up one of the first company-run unions. Although miners could elect representatives to discuss concerns with management, it was a far cry from a real union. The arrangement was influential in the later years of labor relations.

With the advent of the automobile, workers no longer had to live in town. Sunrise began a slow decline. While World War II brought a burst of prosperity—plus unprecedented feats to reach deeper veins of ore—the domestic steel market eventually faced tough competition from foreign suppliers. The mine continued profitably until 1959, when a strike shut down the steel industry for nearly four months. Manufacturers turned to less expensive Japanese and Korean imports. This was the beginning of American steel's gradual demise. The Sunrise mine eked along until 1980, when it closed. Many of the buildings were either burned or torn down. Six remaining houses, the Y, the old boiler structures, and other remnants today comprise what the National Register nomination calls a "quiet testament to a major mining operation of the last century."

A research project at the University of Wyoming's American Studies Program yielded the National Register nomination, with students and faculty visiting the site and interviewing retired mine workers and their families. The Bessemer Historical Society, based in Pueblo, Colorado, has published *Sunrise, a Chronology of a Wyoming Mine*, an exhaustive history of the operation from its beginnings to its end. Today, the owner of the historic district would like to see the interpretive potential, inherent in both the nomination and the book, realized.

For more information, contact the Bessemer Historical Society at info@cfisteel.com or Kara Hahn at the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, khahn@state.wy.us.

Witness to Infamy

Sand Creek Massacre Site Memorialized by the National Park Service

THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM BECAME ONE PARK RICHER THIS PAST APRIL WITH the designation of the Sand Creek Massacre battlefield as a national historic site. "The massacre was a defining event in both tribal and western history," says former superintendent Alexa Roberts, now in charge of nearby Bent's Old Fort and the Southeast Colorado Group. "Its untold story is long overdue." Roberts, who recently won a National Park Service Appleman-Judd-Lewis Cultural Resource Stewardship award for her work at the massacre site, says that turning the land into the 391st unit of the National Park System was not an easy task. "Sand Creek took the effort of a lot of people."

The tumultuous journey began in 1999 when former Colorado Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell sponsored legislation to get the site recognized. A Cheyenne himself, it was something he had wanted for decades. "The massacre is a real black eye in Colorado history," he says.

Located on the rural southeastern plains of Colorado, the infamous field, bordered by a dried up streambed and a number of "witness trees," is where Colonel John Chivington and his 700 volunteer soldiers, acting on tensions between settlers and Native Americans, ignored a waving white flag and brutally attacked a Cheyenne and Arapaho village on November 29, 1864. Taken by surprise, the Indians were defenseless against weapons such as 12-pounder mountain howitzers, and over 160 people, most of them women, children, and the elderly, lost their lives. The soldiers lost 16.

MOST OF THE INDIANS NEVER REALIZED THE IMPENDING DANGER, PARTLY because they had received word from the government to await instructions for peace negotiations. "They were placid, peaceful, and unsuspecting," Campbell says. One Cheyenne chief, White Antelope, stoically repeated a death chant, "Nothing lives long except the earth and the mountains," as bullets tore into him.

After mutilating the corpses and burning the village, Chivington and his men were paraded as heroes until the ugly truth led to three federal investigations. No one ever spent a day in jail, however, and the only justice was a U.S. Army condemnation calling the attack "a cowardly and cold-blooded slaughter, sufficient to cover its perpetrators with indelible infamy, and the face of every American with shame and indignation."

BEFORE THE FIELD COULD BE MEMORIALIZED ITS LOCATION HAD TO BE IDENTIFIED. For decades people thought the massacre was in a bend in Sand Creek. But its boundaries had never been definitively recorded, and a metal detector search turned up little. "It wasn't a place you could point to, like a tree or a rock—it was a running massacre that stretched miles," Campbell says. The area was finally pinpointed three quarters of a mile away, through oral histories and old maps, confirmed by the metal detector discovery of Indian village artifacts and the remnants of the ammunition used against them. Most telling were fragments of the howitzer cannonballs.

Left: Cheyenne artist Howling Wolf depicts himself fighting the militiamen in an example of "ledger art," pictures that Indians drew on sheaves of accounting paper they got through trade or capture. Right: "Witness trees" at the site.

BUT THEN CAME THE CHALLENGE OF WORKING WITH THE 17 OWNERS OF THE 12,488-acre patch, as well as the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes, the Conservation Fund, Kiowa County, and the Colorado Historical Society—all key to acquiring the site.

Given the unfulfilled treaty to repay the Indians, it's probably too late for justice, but not for awareness. Roberts is using her award as seed money for an archives and research center in the park's gateway community. "I hope it's a place where people can reflect on the relevance of the massacre to the timeless issues of fear, territorialism, and genocide that afflict people all over the world throughout history," she says. With the site's new designation, that's just as the Cheyenne would want it, Campbell says. "It's now a sanctuary and a place to pray."

Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site is on the web at www.nps.gov/sand.

RIGHT BOB SMITH, LEFT ALLEN MEMORIAL ART MUSEUM, OBERLIN COLLEGE, OHIO; GIFT OF MRS. JACOB D. COX, 1904