National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2002

Revised: 1/2026

Drewry's Bluff

Richmond National Battlefield Park

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Introduction

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

The Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) is a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the National Park System. Landscapes that are listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources and in which the National Park Service has, or plans to acquire, legal interest are included in the inventory. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, and condition. Cultural landscapes have approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into the Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS-CL) database. In addition, for landscapes not currently listed on the National Register and/or without adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, or the Keeper of the National Register.

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is compiled from primary and secondary sources and through on-site surveys of the landscape. The level of investigation is dependent upon scoping the need for information. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's integrity and an assessment of the landscape's condition. The CLI also includes historic maps, drawings, and images; photographs of existing conditions; and a site plan that indicates major features. The CLI documents the existing condition of park landscape resources and identifies impacts, threats, and measures to stabilize condition. This information can be used to develop strategies for improved stewardship. Unlike a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), the CLI does not provide management recommendations or treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape, but it may identify stabilization measures.

The Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS)

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources, and cultural landscapes. Cultural Resources Inventory System (CRIS) replaces three legacy inventory systems: ASMIS (archeology), CLI (cultural landscapes), and LCS (historic structures); and it reinstates the former ERI (ethnographic resources). This Cultural Landscape Inventory document reflects the information in a corresponding CRIS Cultural Landscape record.

Statutory and Regulatory Foundation

The legislative, regulatory, and policy directives for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are:

- National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)) Sec. 110
- Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3 (a and c)
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs
- Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Std. 2
- Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22; issued pursuant to Director's Order #28 (DO-28)

The NHPA requires the identification, evaluation, and nomination of historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places and the maintenance and expansion of an inventory of cultural resources. DO-28 requires a cyclic assessment of the current condition of cultural landscapes based on an assessment interval, with a default of six years.

Use

Beyond fulfilling legal and policy requirements, park staff can use the Cultural Landscape Inventory in the following ways:

- To learn about park cultural landscapes (all staff)
- To inform management decisions (park managers)
- To inform project planning and development (park managers, facility managers, project managers, compliance specialists)
- To monitor the condition of the cultural landscape and take measures to protect its significance and integrity (cultural resource managers, facility managers)
- To recognize the stabilization and treatment needs of landscape features and plan work within cultural landscapes to address the needs (facility managers, cultural resource managers)
- To understand the cultural value of natural systems in a cultural landscape (natural resource managers)
- To create programming and educational materials based on site history (interpretation and education specialists)
- To recognize impacts within cultural landscapes and enforce protection measures (visitor and resources protection staff)

General Information

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name: Drewry's Bluff

Resource Classification: Component Landscape

CLI Identification Number: 300098

Parent Landscape: 300092

Inventory Status: Complete

Park Information

Park Name: Richmond National Battlefield Park

Alpha Code: RICH

Park Organization Code: 4800

Park District: RICH

Region: Northeast

Restricted: Yes

Landscape Description:

Drewry's Bluff is one of twelve units of Richmond National Battlefield Park (NBP) in Virginia. The park preserves, protects, interprets, and commemorates Richmond Civil War battlefield landscapes, struggles for the capital of the Confederacy associated with the 1862 Seven Days' Battles, the 1864 Overland Campaign, and the 1884-1865 Richmond and Petersburg Campaigns, including the American military, social, and political history as exemplified by the New Market Heights Battlefield. The site became part of the park in 1929 and was expanded in 1955 and 1960.

The fort and associated earthworks on Drewry's Bluff were critical for the defense of Richmond from Federal naval attacks. The battle fought here on May 15, 1862, proved to the Federal navy that the Confederate defense of the James River would be very difficult to breach. After defeating the Federals in 1862, the Confederates improved the fortification and added more guns and a permanent garrison. The site also was the headquarters for the Confederate Marine Corps and the Confederate Naval Academy. The fort saw action again in May 1864.

The 39-acre property is located 8 miles down the James River from Richmond, Virginia, between the river and Interstate Route 95. The site includes the earthen fieldworks remains of Fort Drewry, an original cannon mounted on a reproduction carriage, a bombproof, a pedestrian interpretive trail with waysides, an overlook, and visitor parking. Maintained lawns edge the entrance road, while woodlands dominate the majority of the site, including the earthwork remnants. In 1927 the Richmond Battlefield Association acquired the land to preserve the site from development, and placed a Freeman Marker on the site to commemorate its role in the war.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Drewry's Bluff, part of the Richmond National Battlefield Park Historic District, possesses significance under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A, C, and D. Drewry's Bluff is nationally significant under Criterion A in the area of Military for its association with the 1862 Peninsula Campaign and the 1864 Bermuda Hundred Campaign. The site is nationally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Conservation and Commemoration for its associations with the Civil War battlefield memorialization and preservation movement, including work by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The site is nationally significant under Criterion C in the area of Engineering for its remaining military fortifications.

Lastly, Drewry's Bluff is nationally significant under Criterion D in the area of Historic Archeology (Non-Aboriginal) for its surviving earthworks and the potential to investigate the evolution of nineteenth-century military engineering, design techniques, and technology over the course of the war. The overall period of significance is 1862-1944, beginning with the construction of the earthworks and ending when initial national park development of battlefield lands was completed by the NPS and the transfer of title of all the state park lands was finalized.

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION SUMMARY AND CONDITION

The historic integrity of Drewry's Bluff is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance, 1862-1944, with the existing conditions as assessed in 2023-2025. Many landscape characteristics and features from the period of significance remain today. The 39.15-acre property features the remains of the earthen fort, an enclosed series of earthworks perched on a bluff above the James River. The park provides an overlook for views up and down the river, a reconstructed battery position that includes an original cannon, interpretation of a well and collapsed bombproof, and a bridge over the covered way demonstrating its use during the war. The fort possesses integrity as an earthen fortification, but most of the housing and headquarters features that stood nearby are now part of the archeological record. The site also features a Freeman Marker, one of many historic markers set out around Richmond in 1925. A short road leads to a parking area, from which a pedestrian-only road leads to an interpretive trail that tracks through the fort.

Since 1944, some landscape characteristics and features at Drewry's Bluff have changed. There is considerable erosion affecting the earthworks. Large amounts of earth, at least an inch per year with some catastrophic sloughs, are eroding from the fort's river face. The interior of the fort is maintained within woodland of deciduous trees, with grass and evergreen groundcover. The trees post-date the Civil War, but aid in protecting the interior earthworks from catastrophic erosion. While the area surrounding Drewry's Bluff has become industrialized, the views up and down river have been minimally impacted so far. The view during the period of significance would have been of open farmland with a few woodlots, but today the visitor can still appreciate the advantageous position of this fort by looking up and downstream at the land covered by woodland.

Condition:
The property is in "Poor" condition, due to continued erosion of the bluff face and, to a lesser extent, erosion of the earthworks. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values. Preservation maintenance and/or use must be combined with corrective action to halt deterioration.

Landscape Hierarchy Description:

Drewry's Bluff is a component landscape within the Richmond National Battlefield Landscape, which comprises the entire Richmond National Battlefield Park. In addition to Chickahominy Bluff, there are nine park units categorized as component landscapes: Beaver Dam Creek Battlefield, Chickahominy Bluff, Cold Harbor Battlefield, Fort Harrison and vicinity, Gaines' Mill Battlefield, Glendale Battlefield, Malvern Hill Battlefield, Parker's Battery, and Totopotomoy Creek Battlefield at Rural Plains. Pending additional research, future component landscapes may include North Anna Battlefield and Chimborazo.

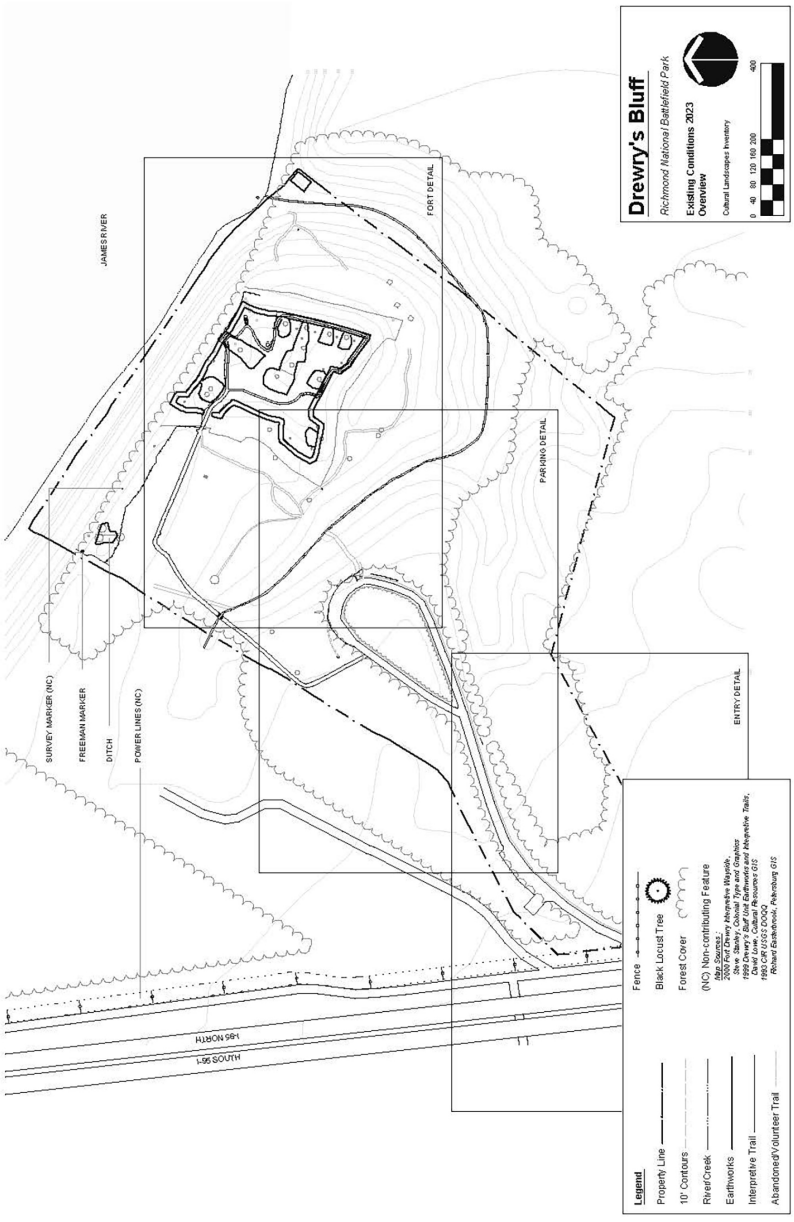
Landscape Type:

Historic Site

Other Names:

Other Name:	Drewry's Bluff	**Other Name Type:**	Both Current And Historic
Other Name:	Fort Darling	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Fort Drewry	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Ward's Bluff	**Other Name Type:**	Historic

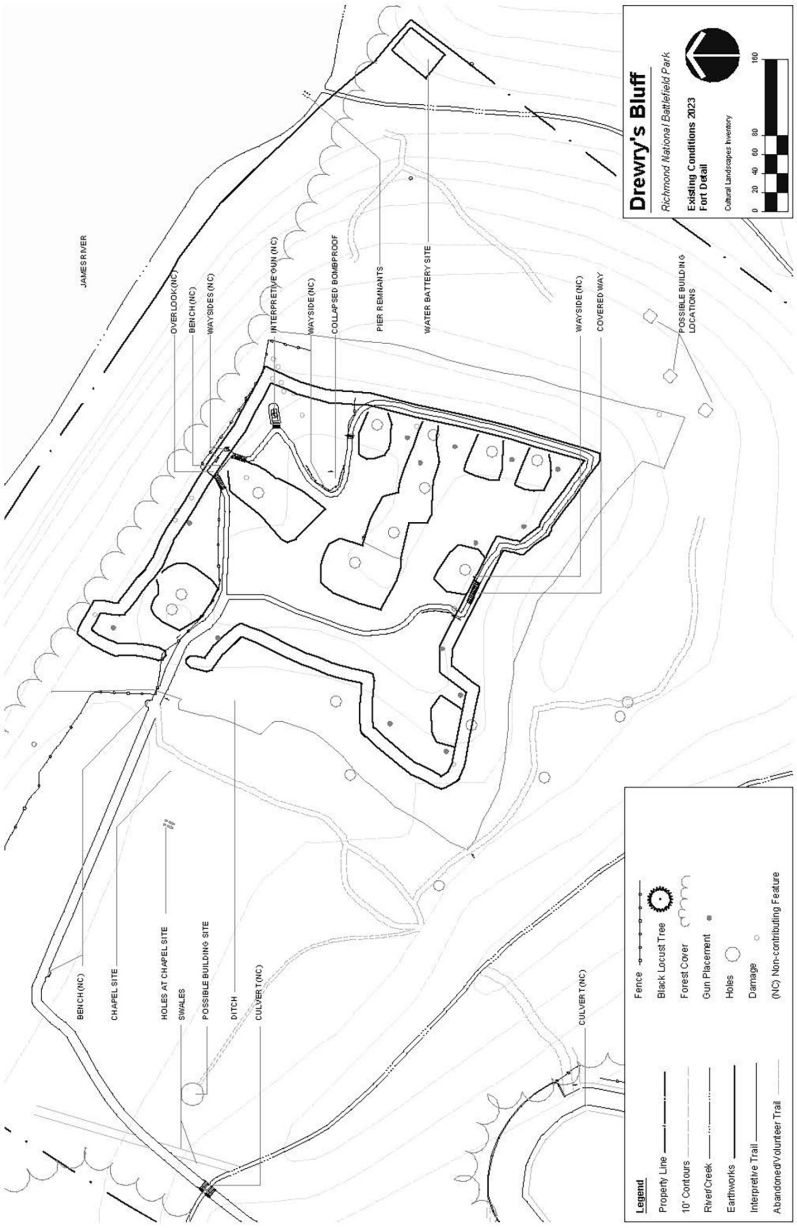
Site Plan



Site map, 1 of 4.

Site map, 2 of 4.

Site map, 3 of 4.



Site map, 4 of 4.

Concurrence Information

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence: Yes

Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: 06/13/2002

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

The original CLI for Drewry's Bluff was approved by the Superintendent on June 13, 2002. A condition reassessment for Drewry's Bluff was approved by the superintendent on August 14, 2008. Level II field survey work was performed by Nancy J. Brown, Cheryl Sams and summer intern Tim Layton in July 2000. Sams completed additional research, writing and editing in 2001 under the guidance of Brown. Existing conditions maps were prepared by Layton and Sams. Sams entered the information into the CLAIMS database.

This update was completed by Meaghan Papeika, Architectural Historian, and Tim Layton, Historical Landscape Architect, and reviewed by Jeff Killion, Historical Landscape Architect, at the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation. Field work was completed in February 2023 by Layton and Papeika. The cultural resource contact for the park is Lexie Lowe, Park Archeologist, who may be reached at alexandra_lowe@nps.gov or 804-904-7443.

SUMMARY OF CLI REVISIONS, 2026

Three levels of effort have been developed for CLI Updates: A, B, and C. Level C is limited to a condition reassessment of the landscape; Level B includes C and is a targeted update of select data fields; Level A includes C and is a comprehensive update of all data fields. This 2026 update to the Drewry's Bluff CLI has been conducted at a Level B effort. The following edits have been made:
• The management category remains, "Must be Preserved and Maintained."
• The areas and period of significance are Military, Conservation, Commemoration, Engineering, and Historic Archeology (Non-Aboriginal) for 1862-1944. The areas and period align with the 2018 National Register documentation. The area of Politics/Government identified in the 2002 CLI has been deleted because it is not relevant to the site's significance. The 1951 end date in the 2002 CLI, which coincided with the National Register 50-year rule, which is no longer applicable, is changed to 1944 in this CLU Update, the year the NPS officially accepted management of Richmond NBP, per the National Register.
• The Chronology and Physical History chapter documents changes in the landscape since the original CLI was completed in 2002.
• Inventoried features in the Analysis and Evaluation chapter are consistent with the findings of the 2018 National Register. The steps and waterbars, identified as noncontributing in the 2002 CLI, are no longer extant. The Archeological Sites section is revised to direct readers to the 2018 National Register documentation.
• The overall landscape condition was evaluated as "Poor" in 2002 and 2008. The proposed landscape condition evaluation for 2025 is "Poor."
• Updates to existing condition photographs and the site map.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Attachment File Path

Cultural Landscapes Inventory
Level II
Richmond National Battlefield Park: Drewry's Bluff

Richmond National Battlefield Park concurs with the findings of the Level II inventory for Drewry's Bluff including the following specific components:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: Must be Preserved and Maintained (Category A)

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Poor

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements, will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The Level II Cultural Landscapes Inventory for Drewry's Bluff in Richmond National Battlefield Park is hereby approved and accepted.

Cynthia MacLeod 6.13.02

Superintendent, Richmond National Battlefield Park Date

Park concurrence form, June 13, 2002.

JUN-26-2002 09:58 RICHMOND NBP 804 771 8522 P.02

Can 10-3-02
More work

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Historic Resources

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2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

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September 13, 2001

Ms. Cynthia MacLeod
Superintendent
National Park Service
Richmond National Battlefield Park
Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site
3215 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23223

Re: Drewry's Bluff Cultural Landscape Inventory
Richmond, Virginia
DHR File Number 2001-1130

Dear Ms. MacLeod:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Cultural Landscape Inventory for Drewry's Bluff, Richmond National Battlefield Park (the Park). Overall, the DHR finds that the document provides a comprehensive inventory of the landscape and structures at the Park. We offer the following comments with regards to the NPS' general recommendations:

- The DHR concurs with the NPS that the Drewry's Bluff Landscape is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the overall defense of Richmond during the Civil War, Criterion C for military engineering, and Criterion D for archaeological potential to yield important information.
- The DHR also concurs that the period of significance includes the Civil War era (1861-1865), the Conservation Movement (1925-1951), and the New Deal (1933-1941).

We offer the following comments with regard to specific resources at the Park:

- The DHR concurs that Fort Drewry is a contributing landscape element.
- The DHR concurs that the entry drive, parking areas, covered way bridge, culvert under the interpretive trail, and river overlook are non-contributing elements of the landscape. We believe, however, that further research is necessary to determine whether the interpretive trails follow the historic roadbed and are therefore contributing. We also believe that if the battery reconstructions date to the conservation period (roughly 1925-1951) and retain integrity, they may in fact be contributing.
- The DHR concurs that the view shed up and down the James from the fort is contributing, but that the view from the overlook toward the fort is non-contributing.
- The DHR concurs that Freeman Marker #59 is a contributing element but that all other small structures at the Park are non-contributing.
- With regard to archaeological sites (the dock remains, chapel site, officers quarters, structure outside SE corner of the fort, and water battery), the DHR believes that they require further

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SHPO concurrence letter, September 13, 2001 (2 pages).

archaeological investigations to determine whether they are contributing resources. Until such investigations are undertaken, the archaeological resources at the Park should be considered potentially contributing. In addition, we request information concerning any archaeological site numbers that have been established for Drewry's Bluff. Please let us know if the Bluff will be assigned one site number with locations or if each archaeological site will receive its own site number. The DHR concurs that the bombproofs and well are contributing archaeological resources.

The DHR also offers the following comments with regard to the report:

- We recommend that a phase I archaeological survey be conducted at the Park in order to determine the potential eligibility of the known archaeological resources and to locate any previously unidentified resources. The Park may want to consider conducting a metal detector survey as well.
- We would like to note that earthworks are technically structures and should therefore be analyzed as both structural and potential archaeological elements of the landscape.

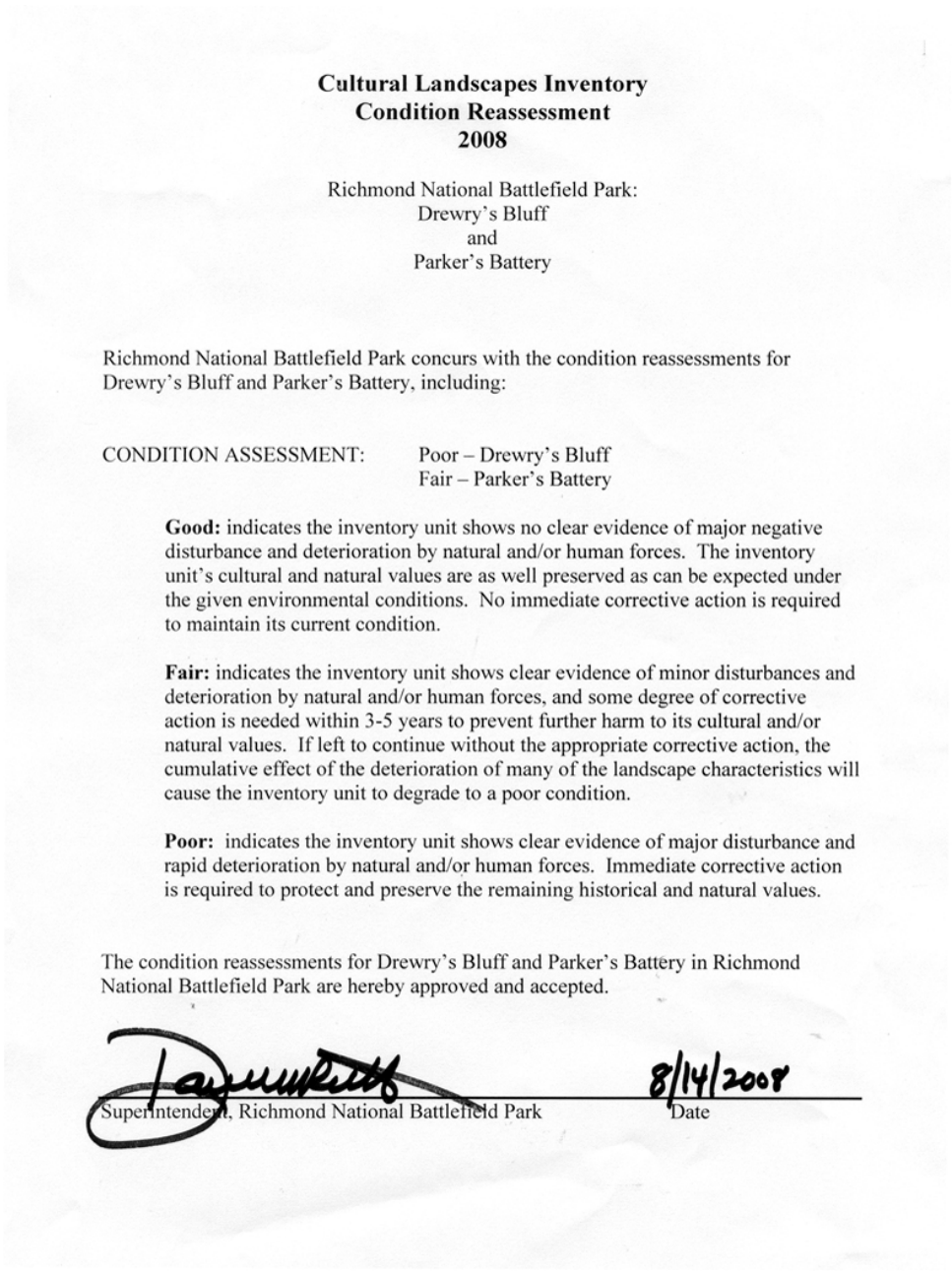
Thank you again for consulting with us. If we can be of any further assistance, do not hesitate to contact me at (804) 367-2323 ext. 140 or lrichards@dhr.state.va.us.

Sincerely,

Lily A. Richards
Archaeologist and Historian, Division of Resource Services and Review

C. Nancy Brown, NPS Philadelphia

TOTAL P.03



Cultural Landscapes Inventory
Condition Reassessment
2008

Richmond National Battlefield Park:
Drewry's Bluff
and
Parker's Battery

Richmond National Battlefield Park concurs with the condition reassessments for Drewry's Bluff and Parker's Battery, including:

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: Poor – Drewry's Bluff
Fair – Parker's Battery

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The condition reassessments for Drewry's Bluff and Parker's Battery in Richmond National Battlefield Park are hereby approved and accepted.

Superintendent, Richmond National Battlefield Park — 8/14/2008 Date

Park condition reassessment form, August 14, 2008.

Cultural Landscapes Inventory
CLI Updates Certification Form
2026

Richmond National Battlefield Park

Chickahominy Bluff, Drewry's Bluff, Fort Harrison, Glendale Battlefield, Malvern Hill Battlefield, Parkers' Battery

Richmond National Battlefield Park certifies the CLI updates for the following sites, including:

CONDITION ASSESSMENT:
Fair – Chickahominy Bluff
Poor – Drewry's Bluff
Good – Fort Harrison
Fair – Glendale Battlefield
Good – Malvern Hill Battlefield
Fair – Parkers' Battery

Good: indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character defining elements, will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

The CLI updates for the sites listed above at Richmond National Battlefield Park are hereby approved and accepted.

JENIFER EGGLESTON Digitally signed by JENIFER EGGLESTON
Date: 2026.01.12 18:58:50 -05'00'

Superintendent, Richmond National Battlefield Park Date

Park concurrence form, January 12, 2026.

Revision:

Revised By	Type of Revision	Revision Date	Revision Narrative
Cheryl Sams	Change in Condition	04/08/2002	Upon final review of the Drewry's Bluff CLI, with the condition definitions listed with the condition assessment, the park staff strongly felt that the unstable condition of the eroding bluff warranted a poor condition assessment rather than fair. Due to the importance of the bluff to the understanding of Drewry's Bluff role in the Civil War along with the further understanding of the precarious situation of possibly losing Civil War topographic features if the erosion is not halted, the PHSO CLI staff agreed that Drewry's Bluff should be listed in poor condition
Jeff Killion	Change in Condition	08/14/2008	Condition reassessment completed as scheduled.
Jeff Killion	CLI Update	01/12/2026	Three levels of effort have been developed for CLI Updates: A, B, and C. Level C is limited to a condition reassessment of the landscape; Level B includes C and is a targeted update of select data fields; Level A includes C and is a comprehensive update of all data fields. This 2026 update to the Drewry’s Bluff CLI has been conducted at a Level B effort.

Geographic Information

State and County:

State	County
Virginia	Chesterfield County

Size (Acres): 39.15

Land Tract Number(s)

The Drewry's Bluff Unit is comprised of five land tracts: 03-101, 03-102, 03-108, 03-110, and 03-112.

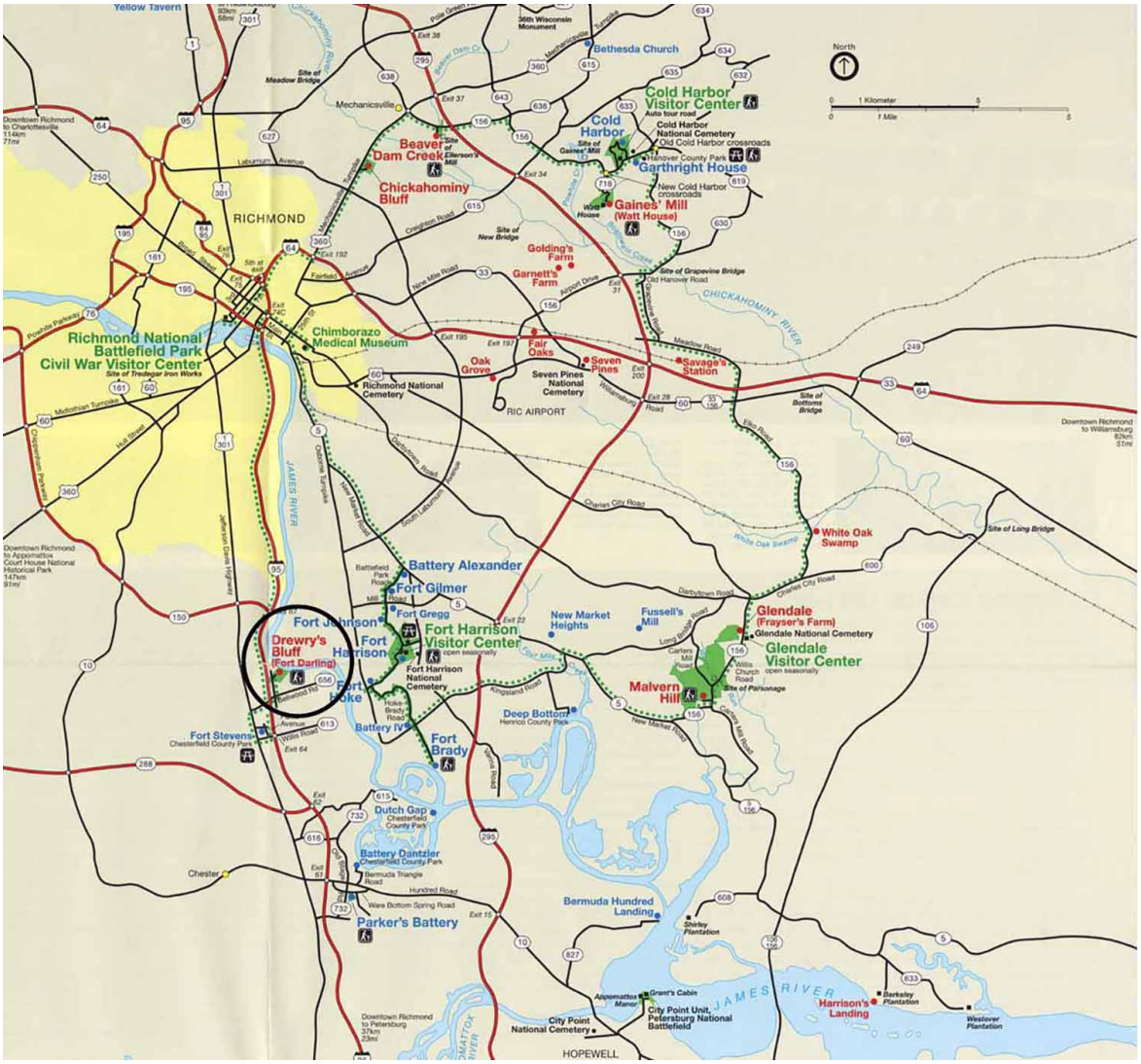
Boundary Description:

The CLI boundary for the Drewry's Bluff unit of Richmond NBP is coterminous with the tract boundary. The northwestern corner of the unit is located along the banks of the James River, one-quarter mile east of Interstate Route 95 and one and one-half miles north of Interchange 64. The park unit boundary follows the bank of the river in a southeasterly direction for 1,200 feet, to a point south of a drainageway emptying into the James River. The boundary subsequently turns to the southwest at an obtuse angle and travels for 700 feet in this direction. Subsequently, the boundary turns to the southwest, continuing in this direction for 1000 feet until reaching Fort Darling Road east of Interstate 95. The boundary parallels this roadway for 400 feet in a northwesterly direction, and then turns to the northeast, paralleling the park entrance road to its west. After traveling 600 feet in this direction, the boundary line turns more steeply to the north for an additional 1,200 feet until it reaches the northwestern corner of the park unit boundary" (Oculus 1996, Vol. II 4:5).

Boundary Coordinates

Source	Type of Point	Latitude	Longitude	Narrative
	Area	37.523263	-77.423855	
	Area	37.421839	-77.419892	
	Area	37.418783	-77.422504	
	Area	37.418214	-77.426852	

Location Map:



This map shows the location of all component landscapes in Richmond National Battlefield Park. (Park brochure, 2000)

Regional Landscape Contexts:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

This context concerns the general human overlay on the physical form of the landscape. Drewry's Bluff is located in an industrialized area south of Richmond, Virginia. The meadow in the southern portion of the site was used as a landfill from 1963-1972.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

This context concerns the large-scale physical forms and patterns of the landscape such as hill, plateau, ravine, drumlin, etc. Drewry's Bluff is located in the relatively flat lands of the Atlantic Coastal Plain Province, but just east of the fall line of the Piedmont Province. The topography east of the fall line includes large, relatively level terraces or plateaus bounded by steep embankments associated with the margins of the waterways, many of which are edged by swamps and other wetlands over much of their floodplains. Drewry's Bluff is situated in the Virginia Tidewater, on an alluvial terrace built up by streams draining into the James River. The river is located directly northeast of the unit, and it flows in a meandering southeasterly direction. (OCULUS 1996, Vol. I 2:1)

The soils of the area are made up of Coastal Plain sediments, which are found deep beneath the park. These sediments are "primarily Tertiary sands and gravels, and shallow clayey silts, overlying thicker Tertiary and Cretaceous clayey silts, quartz sands and interbedded limestones found at deeper points. The oldest and deepest Cretaceous sediment, the Patuxent Formation, is a source of potable water in the general eastern Richmond area. (GMP 1996: 112

Type of Context: Political

Description:

This context concerns the overlay imposed on the landscape through general land use, zoning, legal restrictions, transportation, utilities, population, and political jurisdiction (e.g., state, county, city, borough, or village). Drewry's Bluff is located in Chesterfield County, Virginia. The parcel of land lies directly east of Interstate 95 several miles south of the city of Richmond.

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 06/13/2002

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

As approved on June 13, 2002, the Drewry's Bluff meets the "Must be Preserved and Maintained" management category because the property is related to the park's legislated significance and is nationally significant as defined by National Register of Historic Places criteria.

The 1936 enabling legislation for Richmond National Battlefield Park, amended in 1995, states, "In order to preserve the site of the 1862 Peninsula Campaign and the 1864-65 battle of Richmond, in the vicinity of Richmond, Virginia, as a national battlefield park for the benefit and inspiration of the people of the United States, there is hereby established, subject to existing rights, the Richmond National Battlefield Park." Drewry's Bluff was part of the park's original acreage. In 2018 the property was identified as nationally significant under Criteria A, B, C, and D of the National Register of Historic Places, as part of the Richmond National Battlefield Park Historic District. (Act of March 2, 1936, Chapter 113; 49 Stat. 1155; NR 2018, Sec.8: 41-43,92)

Management Agreements:

Type of Agreement: None

Management Agreement Expiration Date:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

Legal Interests:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Narrative: The Drewry;s Bluff unit is comprised of four land tracts owned in fee simple by the NPS: 03-101, 03-102, and 03-108, and. Tract 03-112 is a federal right-of-way.

Type of Interest: Less Than Fee Simple

Narrative: Tract 03-110.

Located in managed wilderness?: Unknown

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

Adjacent Lands Narrative:

Adjacent lands are lands outside the cultural landscape boundary, including lands inside or outside the park. The area surrounding the Drewry's Bluff unit is very industrial, but because the earthworks are in a wooded area, the adjacent land does not impact the experience on the site. There are some industrial features within the viewshed of the overlook, but their impact is minimal at this time. Further development along the river viewshed could significantly impact the visitor's experience of the site. The land directly opposite Drewry's Bluff in Henrico County played an important role during the war as the location where the pontoon bridge across the James River landed. Development in this location would have an adverse impact on the Drewry's Bluff site as well.

National Register Information

National Register of Historic Places

Documentation Status: Entered Documented

Documentation Narrative Description:

Drewry's Bluff is part of Richmond National Battlefield Park (NBP), which encompasses a series of non-contiguous sites authorized on March 2, 1936, "for the purpose of protecting, managing, and interpreting the resources associated with the Civil War battles in and around the City of Richmond, Virginia," and established on July 14, 1944. The Chickahominy Bluff site belonged to the original state park established in 1932 and was transferred to the National Park Service in 1960.

Richmond NBP was administratively listed without documentation in the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966, with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. Initial documentation of resources occurred on January 16, 1973 when the park was listed on the Virginia Landmark Register under the name "Richmond National Battlefield Park." For this listing, a National Register form was prepared but was not approved by the Keeper of the National Register. The documentation accepted by Virginia indicated that the site was significant under Criterion A in the areas of politics and social/humanitarian, Criterion C in the area of architecture, and Criterion D for archeology (historic-aboriginal). The period of significance was identified as the nineteenth century, but no specific dates were given. The documentation itemized resources under four headings: earthworks (11 areas), monuments (approximately 80), Watt House, and Garthright House.

On February 18, 2000, the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "The Civil War in Virginia, 1861-1865: Historic and Archeological Resources" was accepted by the Keeper. The MPDF identified property types and historic contexts with which to evaluate historic and archeological resources related to the Civil War. The six property types were battlefields, earthworks, campsites, military hospitals, military headquarters, and military prisons. Richmond NBP was identified under the battlefields, earthworks, military hospitals, and military headquarters property types under Criteria A, C, and D. The historic contexts were organized by the Civil War campaigns in Virginia, most of which were conducted along the principal transportation routes.

On September 13, 2001, the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with the findings of the Drewry's Bluff CLI. The CLI found that the Chickahominy Bluff landscape was eligible for listing on the National Register under Criteria A, C, and D in the areas of Military (1862-1864), Conservation (1925-1951), Politics/Government (1933-1941), Engineering (1862-1864), and Archeology (1862-1864), with an overall period of significance of 1862-1951, beginning with the Peninsula Campaign and ending when conservation/commemoration activities ended (fifty years before initiation of CLI in 2001). Features that contributed to the historic period of significance were identified as Drewry's Bluff, Fort Drewry, and Freeman's Marker #59. The findings of the CLI were confirmed in a letter to the Virginia SHPO on October 5, 2009, as part of an update to the NPS Historic Structures Inventory (formerly List of Classified Structures).

On April 27, 2018, the Keeper accepted the first comprehensive park-wide National Register documentation for Richmond National Battlefield Park. According to the documentation, the park is primarily significant as the site of major Civil War battlefields and related properties associated with the Union's attempts to take the Confederate capital city of Richmond during the Peninsula Campaign of 1862, the Overland Campaign of 1864, and the Richmond-Petersburg Campaign of 1864–1865. Significance for the 2,879.42-acre federally owned historic district was identified under criteria A, B, C, and D at the national level in the areas of Military, Ethnic Heritage-Black, Conservation, Other (Commemoration), Science, Engineering, Architecture, and Archeology-Historic (Non-Aboriginal). Robert E. Lee, George B. McClellan, and Ulysses S. Grant were identified as significant persons. The district's contributing commemorative monuments were evaluated as meeting Criteria Consideration F (Commemorative

Properties) because they possess significance from their age, design, and symbolic values. The period of significance for the district was listed as c.1720-1944, beginning with the construction of the Garthright House and ending when the NPS officially accepted management of the park. For archeology, the period of significance was listed as c.1720-1864 for historic archeology. The documentation identified the entire site as a contributing resource, along with two other contributing features. An amendment to the National Register documentation is currently underway, which will address 635 acres of North Anna Battlefield (new park unit, acquired from ABT c. 2016/2017); a 50-acre tract at Cold Harbor, which includes Fort Fletcher; 380 acres at Malvern Hill; and 15 acres at Glendale.

According to research conducted for this CLI and the categories of National Register documentation outlined in the "CLI Professional Procedures Guide," the areas and periods of significance, and evaluations of historic resources for Drewry's Bluff has been identified through consultations with the Virginia SHPO in 2002 and updated National Register documentation in 2018. Therefore, for purposes of the CLI, Drewry's Bluff is considered "Entered-Documented."

Eligibility: Eligible - Keeper

Concurrence Eligibility Date: 04/27/2018

Concurrence Narrative:

Significance Level: National

Contributing: Contributing

Classification: Site

Statement of Significance for National Register of Historic Places:

Richmond National Battlefield Park:
The Richmond National Battlefield Park Historic District (the District) is significant at the national level under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A, B, C, and D. The District is primarily significant under Criterion A in the area of Military as the site of major Civil War battlefields and related properties associated with the Union's attempts to take the Confederate capital city of Richmond during the Peninsula Campaign of 1862, the Overland Campaign of 1864, and the Richmond-Petersburg Campaign of 1864–1865. The District has additional significance under Criterion A in the areas of Military and Ethnic Heritage: Black for the valiant role played by United States Colored Troops in the September 29–30, 1864, Battle of Chaffin's Farm/New Market Heights. Under Criterion B in the area of Military, the District is significant for its associations with Union Major General George B. McClellan and Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant and Confederate General Robert E. Lee, each of whom devised the strategy and tactics that led to and determined the outcome of the battles fought around Richmond in 1862 and 1864–1865. (NR 2018: Sec.8: 43)

The early twentieth-century efforts to commemorate and preserve the Richmond battlefields are related to national trends in the veneration and protection of Civil War battlefields and lend the District significance under Criterion A in the areas of Commemoration and Conservation. The Richmond Weather Station at Chimborazo, as an example of a purpose-built observation station constructed during the early twentieth century by the United States Weather Bureau, has significance under Criterion A in the area of Science and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The well-preserved earthworks within the District are highly important examples of Civil War field fortifications that are significant under Criterion C in the area of Engineering. The Garthright House, Watt House, and Shelton House are significant under Criterion C for their representative eighteenth- and nineteenth-century architecture. Under Criterion D, the District

possesses significance in the area of Archeology: Historic, Non-Aboriginal for the data it has yielded, and has the potential to yield, about the military and medical experiences of the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War. The District also possesses significance for its demonstrated and potential ability to provide information about the evolution of the agrarian economy and landscape in antebellum Piedmont Virginia and the enslaved and free black people who lived on it. Lastly, the District's contributing commemorative monuments meet Criteria Consideration F because they possess significance engendered from their age, design, and symbolic values. (NR 2018: Sec.8: 43)

The period of significance for the District extends from ca. 1720, the earliest date associated with a standing historic resource within the District, to 1944, the end of the initial national park development period. The primary period of significance for the District corresponds to the years between the construction of the Richmond defensive fortifications in 1861 and the conclusion of the Richmond-Petersburg Campaign in 1865. The period of significance for commemorative activities associated with the District begins in 1866, almost immediately after the Civil War ended, and extends through 1944 to encompass the initial development of the battlefield lands as a national park under the NPS. After 1944, austerity measures throughout the National Park System curtailed development at the park for several decades, and the System-wide Mission 66 initiative of the 1950s and 1960s had little impact at Richmond. Additional land acquisition and resource rehabilitation has occurred only within the last two decades, i.e. the late–1990s to the present (2015). The period of significance for historic archeology under Criterion D is ca. 1725–1864. (NR 2018: Sec.8: 43)

Drewry's Bluff:
Drewry's Bluff, part of the Richmond National Battlefield Park Historic District, possesses national significance under Criterion A in the area of Military, Conservation, and Commemoration, Criterion C in the area of Engineering, and Criterion D in the area of Archeology-Historic (Non-Aboriginal). The period of significance is 1862-1944, beginning with the construction of the earthworks and ending when initial national park development of battlefield lands was completed by the NPS and the transfer of title of all the state park lands was finalized.

CRITERION A

Military:
Drewry's Bluff is nationally significant under Criterion A in the area of Military for its association with the 1862 Peninsula Campaign and the 1864 Bermuda Hundred Campaign. In May 1862, only a system of land batteries along the James River and a few lightly armed vessels protected Richmond from attack. The Union Navy's modern ironclad gunboats forced their way up the river to take the city by artillery bombardment, and faced little resistance until they reached Drewry's Bluff, located about 7 miles south of Richmond. Drewry's Bluff rose 90 feet above the water at a bend in the James River that provided a clear field of fire for more than a mile in each direction. The Confederate Army Corps of Engineers placed obstructions, including pilings and stone cribs, in the river below the bluff to impede passage, but spring freshets and a lack of men and materiel slowed the work. When McClellan began advancing up the peninsula after Yorktown fell, the obstructions and Fort Drewry were incomplete. The importance of the bluff as the last best defense against naval attack prompted the Confederate high command to frantically shift resources to the site. Several Confederate vessels were intentionally sunk to fill gaps in the obstructions, and artillery guns were mounted behind the fort's earthen parapets. On May 15, Union Commander John Rodgers brought the Galena, wooden boat with armor plating, to within about 400 yards of the bluff, after which both sides traded gunfire and suffered damage. Two other Union craft, the Monitor and Naugatuck, joined the fight but the results on both sides were the same. The artillery exchange continued for about four hours before Rodgers, running low on ammunition on the Galena, gave the signal to discontinue the action. Fort Drewry and its defenders had, for the time being, saved Richmond from a naval assault that might have turned the tide of the war. (NR 2018, Sec.8: 47-48)

The Confederate stronghold at Fort Drewry was tested again in May 1864 when Union Major General Benjamin F. Butler decided to make a concerted attack that he hoped would open the way to Richmond. Butler's plan involved a concentrated infantry assault on the Confederate lines established to guard the approach to Fort Drewry, assisted by a naval bombardment from gunboats on the James. By the time Butler was ready to move in force, Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard had received significant reinforcements from General Robert E. Lee and other sources that put his force on more equal footing with

the Federal troops. Butler's infantry began its march on May 12 and, on the following day, struck the right flank of the Confederate line at the Wooldridge House. After carrying the first line of the Confederate position, however, Butler became cautious as the promised support from the navy never materialized. Butler's hesitation gave Beauregard time to concentrate his forces to meet the Federal threat. The opposing forces sparred on the May 14 and 15 but did not bring on a general engagement. On May 16, Ransom's Confederate division was successful in rolling up a portion of Butler's right flank. Although subsequent Confederate assaults were largely ineffective and lost direction in a thick fog that developed during the morning hours, they had the effect of demoralizing and disorganizing the Federals in their front. Butler decided to extricate his forces from the sharp battle, withdrawing once again to his Bermuda Hundred line. (NR 2018, Sec.8: 64-65)

Conservation and Commemoration:
Parker's Battery is nationally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Conservation and Commemoration for its associations with the Civil War battlefield memorialization and preservation movement. The 1862 and 1864 Civil War battlefield sites surrounding Richmond did not benefit initially from the federal battlefield preservation efforts in the 1890s that resulted in the creation of the country's first four national military parks, all at other Civil War sites, under the management of the War Department. Over the next few decades, numerous individuals and groups petitioned Congress for additional parks and memorials at other deserving American battlefields. To assist in prioritizing these requests, in 1926, Congress authorized a study of all the nation's battlefields. (NR 2018, Sec.8: 81)

At about the same time, Richmond journalist and historian Douglas Southall Freeman led a group of interested residents in forming the Battlefield Markers Association (BMA) to raise money for the identification and erection of 59 commemorative markers at various battlefield sites in and around the city. The collection of so-called "Freeman Markers"—15 of which are located within the District—is the earliest known series of nongovernmental historical markers in the country. From 1925 to 1928, the BMA erected 59 numbered roadside markers in the Richmond area, 15 of which are located within the District. Freeman Marker #59 a cast iron tablet set at an angle on a granite base, was installed at Drewry's Bluff. The BMA subsequently formed a local corporation to preserve portions of the Richmond battlefield lands through private land acquisition. In 1932, the Commonwealth of Virginia took over ownership of the lands, establishing the Richmond Battlefield Park as its first state-managed public park. (NR 2018, Sec.8: 81,91)

The transfer of the country's national military parks from the War Department to the NPS in 1933 brought about significant changes in the direction of battlefield preservation and interpretation efforts. At the same time, Virginia's government initiated the transfer of the Richmond Battlefield Park lands to the federal government. Congress passed legislation authorizing Richmond National Battlefield Park (NBP) on March 2, 1936. Following a lengthy legal process, the NPS officially accepted management responsibility for the park on July 14, 1944. The Commonwealth of Virginia, together with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) under the supervision of the Park Service, developed the battlefield park between 1927–1944 according to the prevailing principles of battlefield preservation and commemoration. The CCC made improvements at Drewry's Bluff in 1935. Austerity measures associated with World War II curtailed Park Service development at Richmond, as at most national parks, after 1944. (NR 2018, Sec.8: 81)

CRITERION C

Engineering:
Drewry's Bluff is nationally significant under Criterion C in the area of Engineering for its remaining military fortifications. The permanent earthworks that ringed the city were part of the most extensive network of fortifications constructed during the Civil War. The sophisticated systems of trenches and forts constructed by the Confederate and Union armies represent the state to which field fortification engineering advanced during the Civil War and are generally regarded as the forerunners of the static trench warfare methods used in Europe in World War I. In addition to the permanent fortifications, numerous examples of temporary field fortifications are located on the battlefield units within the District. These field fortifications are representative of the military tactic of an active defense espoused most prominently by West Point engineering professor and military tactics author Dennis Hart Mahan (1802–1871). They were hastily established lines of defense scouted and selected by military engineers based on the natural advantages a position offered. The fortifications themselves were dug or otherwise constructed by the troops as they arrived at the select position. In places like Cold Harbor where the armies faced one another for relatively

long periods of time, the field fortifications evolved into elaborate systems. (NR 2018, Sec.8: 97)

Drewry's Bluff was developed independently of the Richmond land defenses. It was part of a system of forts constructed along the James River in 1861 and 1862 to guard against an attack on the city by Union gunboats. Fort Drewry proved to be the strongest and most important in the system of river forts. Perched high on a bluff that offered commanding views of the James River in both directions of its flow, the fort began as a two-sided bastioned fort constructed by landowner Captain Augustus H. Drewry and members of his volunteer Southside Artillery battery in March 1862. They constructed earthworks, erected barracks, dug artillery emplacements, and mounted three large seacoast guns (one 10-inch Columbiad and two 8-inch Columbiads) in the fort. A line of entrenchments consisting of batteries, redans, and lunettes connected via rifle pits surrounding the fort and obstructions were placed in the river below to make the river impassable. After the Army of the Potomac evacuated the Peninsula, the fort was expanded and strengthened. A system of earthen entrenchments were added to protect the land approach to Richmond, and a magazine, chapel, barracks, and officers' quarters were constructed. In the spring of 1864, Benjamin Butler sent a force to take Fort Drewry, but once again the position proved too strong to be taken. (NR 2018, Sec.8: 101-102)

CRITERION D

Archeology – Historic (Non-Aboriginal):
Drewry's Bluff is nationally significant under Criterion D in the area of Archeology – Historic (Non-Aboriginal) for its surviving earthworks and the potential to investigate the evolution of nineteenth-century military engineering, design techniques, and technology over the course of the war. The construction and elaboration of field fortifications is the most visible relic of the Civil War on the extant landscape, and perhaps one of the most important contributions that the war made to the field of military engineering. Championed by Confederate General James Longstreet and adopted by both armies as the war dragged on, these fortifications created a durable "defensive" military landscape. The earthworks at Drewry's Bluff, as well as Chickahominy Bluff, Totopotomoy Creek, Cold Harbor, Fort Harrison, and Parker's Battery, provide particularly valuable resources for examining those issues as they were variably constructed at the beginning and near the end of the war. In many cases, the earthworks were captured by the opposing army, which then reconfigured them to meet specific offensive or defensive needs. (NR 2018, Sec. 7: 109)

National Register Significance Criteria:

Significance Criterion A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

Significance Criterion C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

Significance Criterion D - Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history

National Register Criteria Consideration:

Consideration F -- A commemorative property

National Register Periods of Significance (with Historic Context Themes):

Time Period: CE 1862 - CE 1865

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Shaping the Political Landscape	The Civil War	Battles In The North And South	

Time Period: CE 1925 - CE 1944

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Expressing Cultural Values	Other Expressing Cultural Values	Other Expressing Cultural Values	Commemoration

Time Period: CE 1933 - CE 1944

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Shaping the Political Landscape	Political and Military Affairs 1865-1939	The Great Depression And The New Deal, 1929-1941	

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Military

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Other

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative: Commemoration

Area of Significance Category: Conservation

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Engineering

Area of Significance Subcategory:

Explanatory Narrative:

Area of Significance Category: Archeology

Area of Significance Subcategory: Historic-Non-Aboriginal

Explanatory Narrative:

NRIS Information:

NRIS Name:	Richmond National Battlefield Park
NRIS ID:	66000836
Primary Certification Date:	04/27/2018
Other Certifications and Date:	MM/dd/yyyy

State Register Documentation:

Identification Number:	043-0033
Name:	Richmond National Battlefield Park
Listed Date:	01/16/1973

National Historic Landmarks:

National Historic Landmark? No

Theme:

Contributing:

NHL ID:

NHL URL:

Date:

Statement of Significance for National Historic Landmark:

World Heritage Site:

World Heritage Site? No

Category:

WHS ID:

WHS URL:

Date:

Is Resource within a designated National Natural Landscape: No

Chronology and Physical History

Chronology:

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 200 - 1697	Settled	Various Algonquin-speaking groups settle in Drewry's Bluff area.
CE 1607 - 1775	Colonized	English settlers colonize the region.
CE 1607 - 1775	Farmed/Harvested	English settlers farm tobacco for shipment to England.
CE 1775 - 1800	Built	Both canals and roads are built to improve shipment of goods from region.
CE 1800 - 1860	Developed	Region becomes rich in industrial development, such as flourmills, sawmills, and sugar refineries.
CE 1862	Military Operation	The first battle of Drewry's Bluff is May 15, 1862.
CE 1862	Built	Fort Drewry is built by Confederates in March through May. After the first battle it is strengthened and enlarged. Fieldworks are extended westward from the fort for approximately 4 miles.
CE 1862	Built	Pontoon bridges are constructed to help troop movements.
CE 1862 - 1864	Established	Headquarters of Confederate Marine Corps and Confederate Naval Academy. Other features included roads, barracks, a chapel, cemetery, and possibly a hotel.
CE 1864	Military Operation	The second battle of Drewry's Bluff is May 16, 1864.
CE 1865	Abandoned	April 2, Confederates evacuate Drewry's Bluff one week before Lee's surrender at Appomattox.
CE 1925	Memorialized	Freeman marker is placed on site.
CE 1927 - 1929	Purchased/Sold	Richmond Battlefield Parks Corporation acquires battlefield lands including Drewry's Bluff in 1929.
CE 1932	Land Transfer	State of Virginia acquires Richmond Battlefield Park's land and establishes the first state park of Virginia.
CE 1933	Established	Civilian Conservation Corps' (CCC) Colored Company 1375 established at Richmond Battlefield Park.
CE 1935	Preserved	CCC clears brush and opens Drewry's Bluff to the public.
CE 1936 - 1944	Established	President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs enabling legislation for National Park Service (NPS) to establish Richmond National Battlefield Park. The process to transfer state park lands to the NPS begins.
CE 1944	Land Transfer	On July 14, 1944, NPS officially accepts management responsibility for Richmond National Battlefield Park.
CE 1955 - 1960	Purchased/Sold	The park receives additional parcels of land at Drewry's Bluff to bring it to its current 39-acre size.
CE 1963	Altered	By 1963, an interpretive trail is cleared and completed.
CE 1963	Established	In 1963 a landfill adjacent to Fort Darling is operated by Chesterfield County Virginia for disposal of residential and industrial waste.
CE 1963	Built	By 1963, a river overlook is constructed on bluff's edge.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1963	Reconstructed	By 1963, the battery is reconstructed and an interpretive gun is added.
CE 1972	Abandoned	The landfill adjacent to Fort Darling is closed. Shortly after, the county and NPS cover it with topsoil and recontour it.
CE 1999	Altered	NPS builds a new interpretive trail from parking lot to fort.
CE 2007 - 2008	Altered	The parking loop is closed, and parking is reconfigured near the site's entry. (PEPC #17439)
CE 2008	Built	Standard detail worm fencing is installed at the entrance of the unit. Protective chain link fencing located on the slope just below the Fort's viewing platform is replaced. (PEPC #21050, 21084)
CE 2016 - 2017	Altered	A portion of the walking trail running along the top of Fort Drewry is resurfaced and revetments are replaced. (PEPC #66711)
CE 2018 - 2019	Rehabilitated	Interpretive concrete "sandbags" are repaired, and the design is extended by several feet in order to block off an unauthorized footpath used by visitors to climb the fortification. (PEPC #84098)
CE 2022	Stabilized	New guardrail is installed, and the wooden trail support wall is repaired in order to stabilize the trail inside the fort. (PEPC #105589)
CE 2022	Altered	A 5-hole split rail fencing is replaced with 3-hole split rail fencing around the fort.
CE 2023	Repaired	The park replaces entrance gates at Drewry's Bluff. (PEPC 119242)
CE 2024	Repaired	The park makes improvements to observation deck on top of fortifications, including replacing the wooden deck and stairs with metal staircases and composite decking. (PEPC 123613)

Physical History:

NATIVE AMERICAN SETTLEMENT/HABITATION, to 1607

The settlement and habitation of various Algonquin-speaking groups took place in the region during this period. While the 2002 CLI did not discover any documentation of actual Native American settlements at the Drewry's Bluff unit, villages sprang up and remained near rivers to take advantage of their numerous resources, so it is conceivable that there were settlements in the region.

ENGLISH COLONIZATION, 1607–1775

With the settlement of Jamestown in 1607, Virginia entered the period of English colonization. English explorers discovered many natural resources available to ship back to England, and the land was very good for growing tobacco, a lucrative crop. Thus, the British settlers started to force the Native Americans from their land. The late 17th century saw typical rural settlement through the area with mills and trading posts located along the river.

AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND AFTERMATH, 1775–1800

After the American Revolution, the area around Richmond, Virginia, began to bustle with manufacturing establishments to supply the new nation. The Colonies were now able to manufacture supplies locally instead of sending the raw materials to England, who in return, forced the colonies to purchase their finished goods. The area's vast growth resulted from a number of factors, including its navigable waterways, rich soils, and access to ores and other natural resources. The aftermath of the American Revolution also demonstrated a shift of some agricultural lands surrounding Richmond to produce grains instead of tobacco. Due to Drewry's Bluff's location adjacent to the James River and the fertile soil in the area, the CLI can infer that the agricultural lands near the Drewry's Bluff site were producing grains at this time.

The roads of eastern Henrico County served to link the small rural communities with the wholesale markets for the agricultural produce. These markets were located primarily in Richmond, which contained grain mills and was a commercial transportation hub for the Mid-Atlantic and even Trans-Atlantic markets. Besides River Road, the fan-like network of roads emanating from Richmond toward southeastern Henrico County included Darbytown Road, New Market Road, Varina Road, and Osborne Turnpike.

This time period ushered in another important advancement: the canal system. A system of canals, the James River and Kanawha Canal, opened the James River to the west beyond the series of falls at the end of the piedmont. These canals enabled rural farms to export grains more expediently. While Drewry's Bluff lies south of Richmond, the canal system helped the exporting infrastructure to be established in Richmond. Thus, the farmers in the Drewry's Bluff area would benefit as well.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, 1800–1860

With the completion of the canal system, Richmond became a premier industrial city. Tobacco began to dominate commercial activities as manufacturers set up warehouses and factories to store and process it. Coal was shipped via the canal to Richmond to be used locally and to be shipped to other markets. Several of the other industries established in Richmond were flourmills, cotton-clothing manufacturers, sawmills, sugar refineries, and many others. Some industries were more successful than others were, but in general Richmond's industry thrived during the first half of the 19th century. Little is currently known about any industrial development of the Drewry's Bluff area, but Richmond's industrial development would have impacted the farmers around the city.

THE CIVIL WAR, 1861–1865

With the start of the Civil War, Richmond gained additional significance when it became the capitol of the Confederacy in 1861. Richmond's industrial strength was also a great contrast to the South's mostly agricultural economy. For these two reasons, control of Richmond became a key factor for both sides to win the war.

Richmond was located at the fall line of the James River. While this proximity to the river was advantageous for Richmond's industrial growth, it proved to be a liability in wartime, making the city vulnerable to naval attack. At the outbreak of the war, the Confederate military scouted the river for potential defense posts, and found Drewry's Bluff was ideal location for defending the river. The bluff had a relatively level top located 90 feet above a narrowed bend in the river and a nearly 90-degree slope to the river. From March to May 1862, the Confederate army hastily built a fort on the bluff between the James and an unnamed hook-shape creek leading to the river (Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6). Soldiers also blocked the river with a series of concrete cribs and sunken vessels (Figures 7 and 8).

The Confederates did not have the fort completed by the time they saw a Federal flotilla heading up the James on May 14. Federal Commander John Rodgers led five ships: 3 ironclads, including [Galena], a steam frigate with newly applied 3-1/8-inch armor, as well as [Monitor] and [Naugatuck]; the wooden sidewheeler [Port Royal]; and wooden screw steamer [Aroostook]. Rodgers, leading the way in the Galena, noticed the fort on the bluff and the debris in the river, so he decided to spend the night of May 14 harbored at the mouth of Kingsland Creek to plan his attack for the morning.

Many of the fort's defenders were up all night preparing for the attack. At 7:30 am, May 15, 1862, the engagement began. Even thought it had weaker armor than the Monitor, the Galena led the attack because of its six guns, while the 2-gunned Monitor followed. The Naugatuck and the wooden vessels stayed downstream to provide support from a safer distance. The ships fired at the fort for four hours but inflicted little damage. In contrast, the defenders were able to fire down directly on Galena, and its armor was not strong enough to withstand the barrage. When the Monitor saw that the Galena was enduring extensive damage, it moved forward to shield it from the fort's fire. However, from this position the ironclad could not raise its guns high enough to hit the top of the fort. Rodgers finally signaled a retreat, marking the first time that an ironclad had been defeated in combat.

The Confederate victory at Drewry's Bluff demonstrated to the Federal navy that Fort Darling's (the Federal code name for the fort) defense of the James River would be impossible to defeat without land troops working in cooperation with a naval attack. For the Confederates, the victory proved to the importance of a stronghold at this location and they set forth to improve and expand the fort, named it Fort Drewry, and assigned a permanent garrison to patrol it. The Confederate Marine Corps and Naval Academy were also headquartered at Fort Drewry. Michler's 1867 map of Chesterfield and Henrico Counties indicated a road leading to the bluff's edge from the southwest and another road running along the bluff's edge leading to the military barracks (Figure 9). The map and photos also depicted a chapel and graveyard were directly adjacent to the fort's southwest side (Figure 10). There is also documentation of a hotel near the fort, but more research will be necessary to discover its precise location.

The fortifications at Drewry's Bluff did come close to seeing action again during the Bermuda Hundred campaign in 1864. In May of that year, Federal Major General Benjamin F. Butler saw that the Bermuda Hundred peninsula would be very advantageous in cutting Richmond's supply route of the Richmond-Petersburg railroad and turnpike. He launched 30,000 troops of the Army of the James on the south bank of the James River on May 5. After landing the Union troops built a 3-mile long defensive line of fortifications across the neck of the peninsula.

Butler started advancing towards Richmond winning small clashes from May 6-10. However, Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard was able to gather together 18,000 troops to defend the Drewry's Bluff area, which was located just five miles north of the Bermuda Hundred. The second

battle of Drewry's Bluff, which occurred south of the Confederate fortifications, was fought on May 16, 1864, and was a defeat for Butler's men. The Confederate attacked and forced the Federals back, with heavy losses, to their defensive line of fortifications across the Bermuda Hundred neck. At this point the armies were at a standoff, and the Richmond-Petersburg railroad was again under Confederate control.

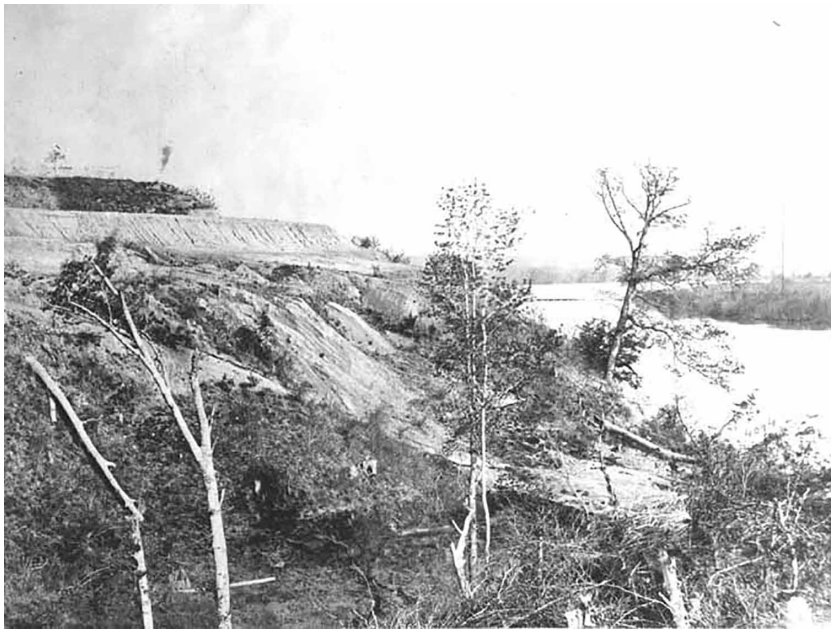


Figure 1. View of Fort Drewry from the water battery at river's edge. (RICH archives, no date)

Figure 2. Entry to fort in the 1860s. (Richmond NBP archives)

Figure 3. Interior view looking east of Fort Drewry during the war. (Richmond NBP archives, no date)

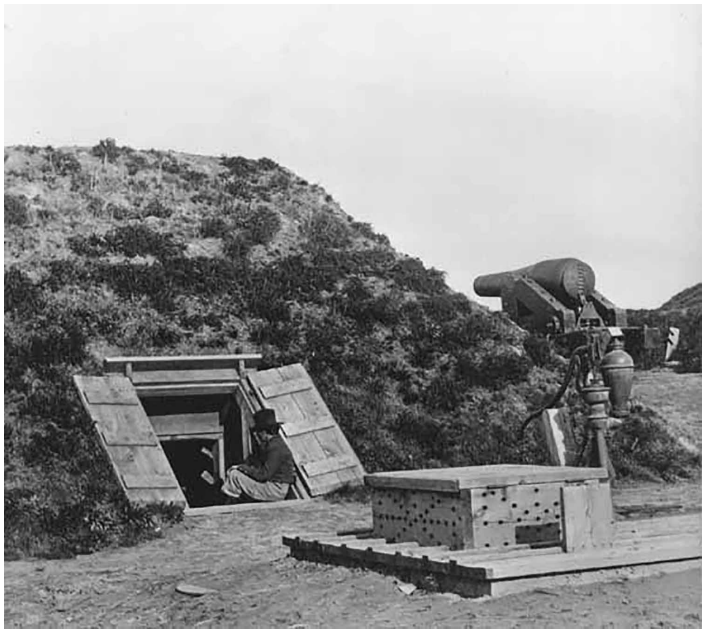


Figure 4. Well and bombproof during period of significance. (Richmond NBP archives. no date)

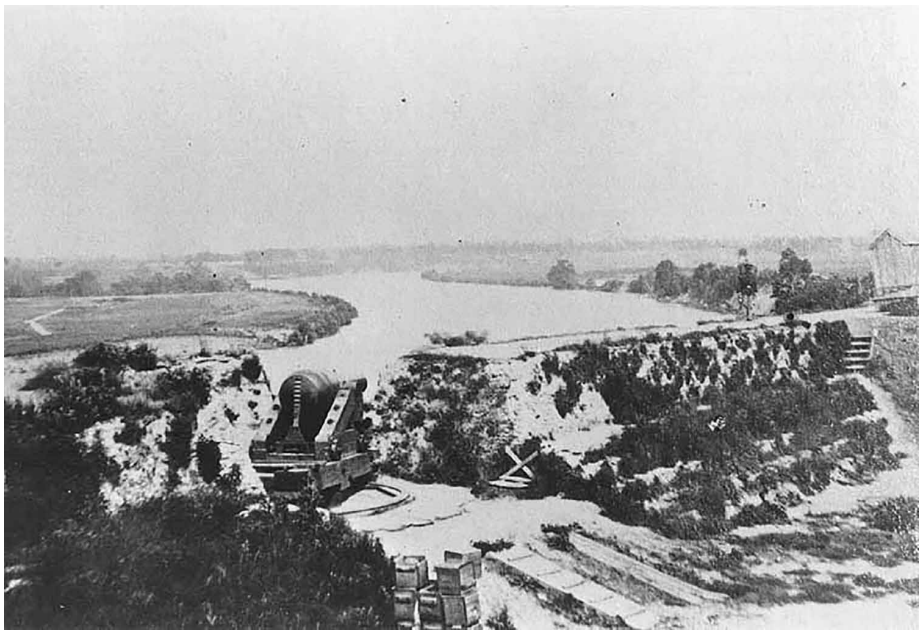


Figure 5. View downstream during the period of significance. (Richmond NBP archives, no date)

Figure 6. Historic photo of water battery at Drewry's Bluff. (Richmond NBP archives, no date)

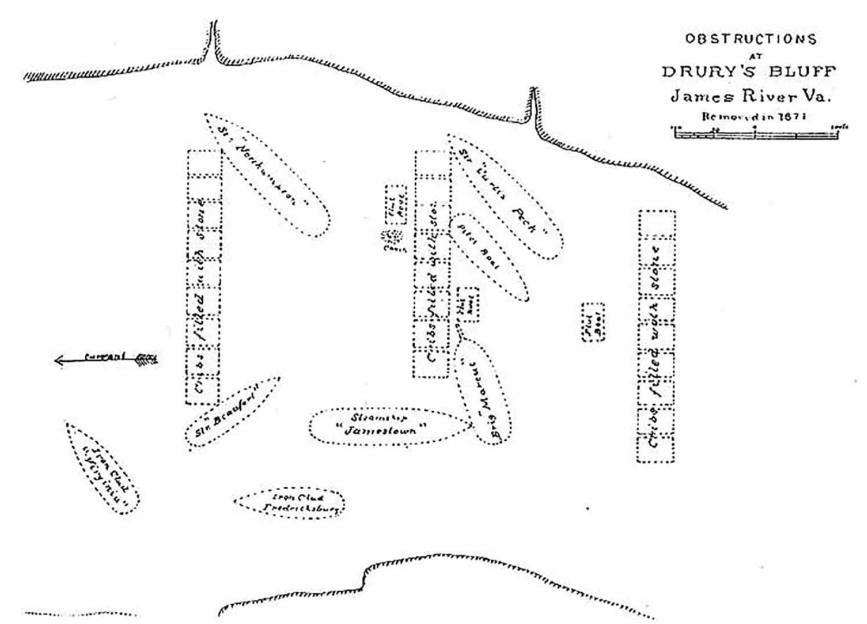


Figure 7. Obstructions at Drewry's Bluff. (Oculus, 1996)

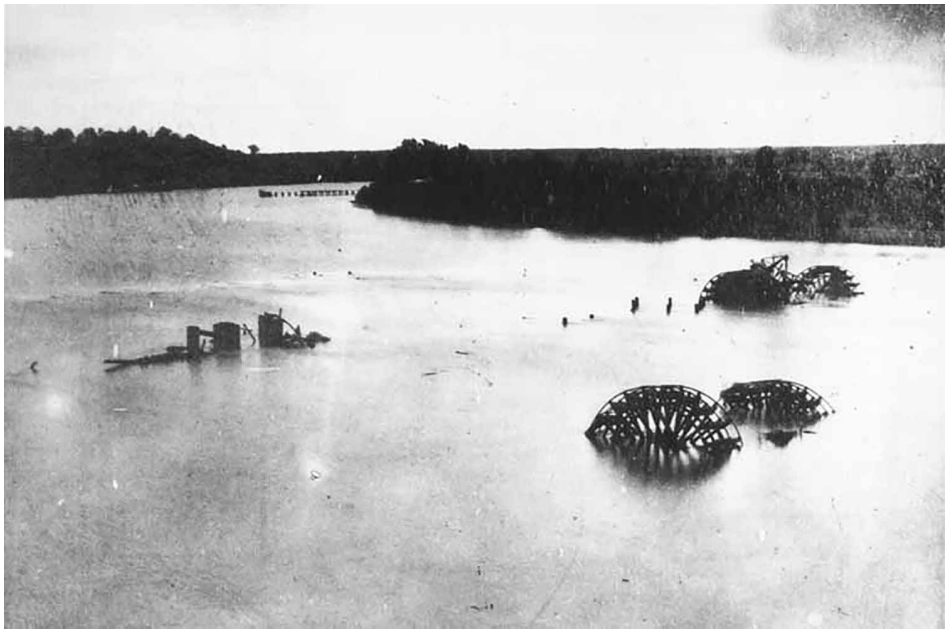


Figure 8. Obstructions in the James River. (Richmond NBP archives, no date)

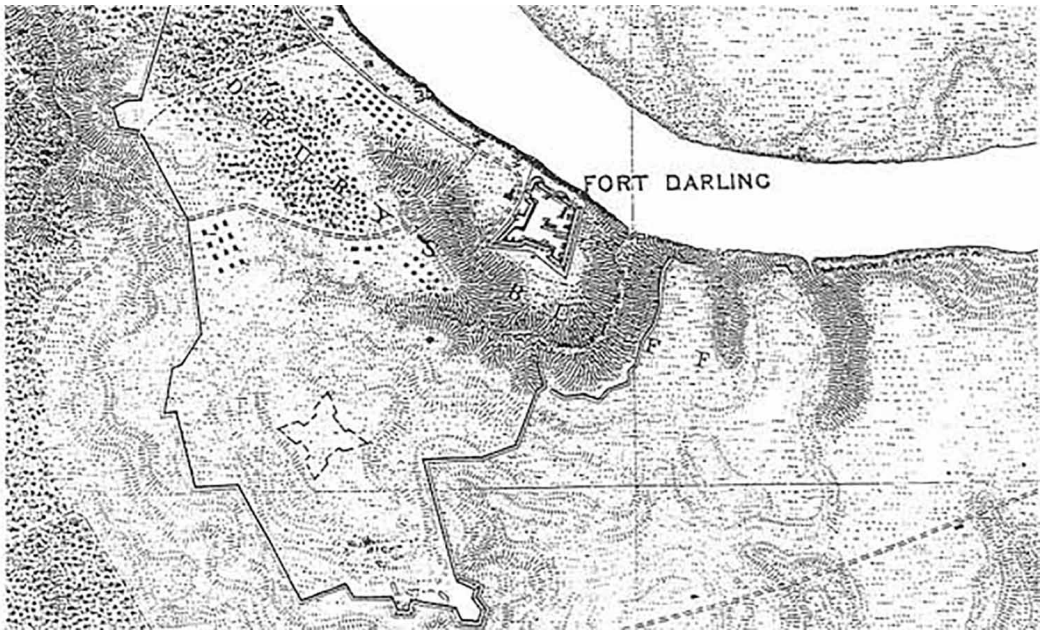


Figure 9. Fort Darling circulation pattern during war. (Michler, 1867)

Figure 10. View of the chapel and graveyard at Fort Drewry. (Richmond NBP archives, no date)

BATTLEFIELD COMMEMORATION, 1866–1944

While the United States saw a commemoration movement around the Civil War begin almost immediately after the war's end, the Richmond battlefields did not benefit from congressional preservation efforts beyond the establishment of National Cemeteries such as Cold Harbor, Richmond, and Fort Harrison National Cemeteries built in 1866.

In 1914 the president of the C & O Railroad led one of the earliest attempts to memorialize the Richmond battlefields, proposing a road to link the significant battles of the Civil War fought near Richmond. Plans were postponed by the United States entering World War I, but the effort to commemorate the Civil War was resumed in 1925 with the placement of 59 "Freeman Markers" throughout the Richmond area. Douglas Southall Freeman, a Richmond journalist, began a group named The Battlefield Markers Association, whose mission was to memorialize important battles of the Civil War through the placement of commemorative markers. One of these markers, which became known as Freeman Markers, was placed within the current Drewry's Bluff unit of the park. In 1927 the Richmond Battlefield Parks Corporation (RBPC) was formed to quietly purchase crucial battlefield land to avoid inflating real estate prices. The group purchased approximately 550 acres of battlefield lands around Richmond and developed a road system, later known as State Route 156, linking the parcels. This included 6.8 acres of the Drewry's Bluff site acquired in 1929.

Aware of their lack of resources to maintain and manage these lands, the RBPC successfully advocated for creation of a state park. Richmond Battlefield Park, therefore, became the first state park of Virginia on January 12, 1932, which was managed by the Virginia Conservation Commission. However, like the RBPC, an immediate problem for the commission was a lack of funds for the development or maintenance of the park. Thus, there was a push to transfer the park to the National Park Service (NPS), an effort that culminated on March 2, 1936, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the enabling legislation for Richmond National Battlefield Park. However, complexities in land transfers delayed official acceptance of the park to July 14, 1944.

Before the state park was officially transferred to the NPS, federal dollars were already being spent on its development through the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a work program associated with Roosevelt's New Deal. In 1933 a CCC camp was established in the immediate vicinity of Fort Harrison.
"There was a dichotomy in camp management. Actual supervision of the camp was assigned to the US Army. By contrast, management of the work projects was assigned to the host agency. Thus, the NPS found it necessary to hire employees at CCC sites that were located in National Parks and elsewhere. Since there was some impetus to absorb Richmond Battlefield State Park into the national system, the NPS hired among others, Floyd B. Taylor, a young man with no prior experience in land management work as a Junior Historian and assigned him to Richmond." (Baril n.d.: 1)

In July 1933, CCC Junior Colored Company 1375, a group comprised of about two hundred young African American men, was assigned to the state park.

The CCC primarily focused on improvements to the Fort Harrison area in the first couple of years, but by 1935 their scope expanded to other park areas. By September, the CCC enrollees had cleared out a dense wilderness at Drewry's Bluff, after which the site was opened to the public. In 1935 the CCC also spent substantial time making maps of the properties, including Drewry's Bluff. With the departure of the CCC camps in 1941 and the US entry into World War II in 1942, most work at the park came to a halt, and much of the work performed by the CCC became overgrown again. (Baril n.d.: 12-13)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE STEWARDSHIP, 1944–2025

The NPS assumed management of Richmond National Battlefield Park in 1944, but little work was accomplished until after World War II. The park was administered in conjunction with Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County National Military Park until 1951. After that, the park then had its own administrative staff. In 1955 and 1960 the park received additional parcels of land at Drewry's Bluff to bring it to its current 39-acre size.

By the mid-1950s, increasing park visitation had taken a toll on parks nationwide, many of which had been properly maintained since the CCC development period. Recognizing this shortfall, NPS Director Conrad Wirth initiated the Mission 66 program, in which Congress agreed to allocate a billion dollars over a ten-year period so that parks across the country could be developed and improved in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the system in 1966. To meet the goals of Mission 66, Richmond NBP prepared a master plan to guide its improvements. As part of the master plan, the park sought to acquire a large building in Richmond, the Weather Bureau building Chimborazo, to serve as park headquarters and visitor center.

Photographs in the Richmond NBP archives indicate that by 1963 the NPS had cleared a trail to the fort, and installed a bridge over the unnamed creek, the river overlook platform, and the interpretive cannon (Figures 11, 12, 13, and 14). In 1999-2000, the bridge over the creek was deteriorated and the steep path was determined to be a safety liability, so the park staff took this opportunity to lay out a new interpretive trail and footbridge to the northeast, which approximated the historic circulation pattern used in the 1860s.

Landscape Changes Since 2008:
Changes to the landscape since the original CLI was completed in 2002 include:
• Study of erosion of the James River embankment is ongoing.
• A new parking lot and gate are built just beyond the park entrance in 2007-2008. The remainder of the entrance road, and the original terminating loop and parking lot, are abandoned and restricted to emergency and park vehicles use only. (PEPC #17439)
• Installation of standard detail worm fencing at the entrance of the unit in 2008. Protective chain link fencing located on the slope just below the fort's viewing platform is also replaced. (PEPC #21050, 21084)
• A portion of the walking trail running along the top of Fort Drewry is resurfaced and revetments are replaced in 2016-2017. (PEPC #66711)
• In 2018-2019, interpretive concrete "sandbags" are repaired, and the design is extended by several feet in order to block off an unauthorized footpath used by visitors to climb the fortification. (PEPC #84098)
• In 2022, installation of a new guardrail and repair to the wooden trail support wall stabilizes the trail inside the fort. (PEPC #105589)
• In 2022, a 5-hole split rail fencing is replaced with 3-hole split rail fencing around the fort.
• In 2024, the park made improvements to the observation deck at Drewry's Bluff. This included replacing the wood deck and stairs with metal staircases and composite decking to prolong the life of the deck and minimize slipping hazards. (PEPC #123613)

Figure 11. View looking southwest at the original alignment of the interpretive trail and footbridge over the unnamed creek, 1963. The visitor parking lot is in the background. (Richmond NBP archives)

Figure 12. View looking northeast at the original footbridge and alignment of the interpretive trail, 1963 A "Fort Darling" sign is visible in the background.(RICH archives)

Figure 13. River overlook platform with interpretive gun in background, 1963. (Richmond NBP archives)

Figure 14. Battery reconstruction in 1963. Note that reinforced concrete sandbags are not in place at this time. (Richmond NBP archives)

Uses

Functions and Uses:

Major Category	Category	Use/Function	Historic	Current	Primary
Defense	Fortification	Battery (Defense)	Yes	No	No
Defense	Military Facility (Post)		Yes	No	No
Landscape	Leisure-Passive (Park)		No	Yes	Yes
Defense	Battle Site		Yes	No	Yes
Education	Interpretive Landscape		No	Yes	No
Recreation/Culture	Monument (Marker, Plaque)		Yes	Yes	No
Recreation/Culture	Outdoor Recreation	Outdoor Recreation-Other	No	Yes	No

Public Access:

Public Access: Unrestricted

Public Access Narrative:

All units of Richmond NBP are closed from sunset to sunrise daily and all day on Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1, but there are no gates, fences, or admission fees restricting public access to public roads, parking lots, and the trail system.

Associated Ethnographic Group

Ethnographic Study Status: No Survey Conducted

Ethnographic Narrative:

Authors of this CLI update consulted with David Goldstein, Ph.D., Tribal and Cultural Affairs Lead, NPS, DOI-Region 1. No ethnographic study of the Gaines' Mill Battlefield, nor the Richmond NBP, has been conducted. The park currently consults with following Federally Recognized tribes: Delaware Nation, Catawba, Chickahominy East, and Pamunkey.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The historic integrity of Drewry's Bluff is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance, 1862-1944, with the existing conditions as assessed in 2023-2025. Many landscape characteristics and features from the period of significance remain today. The Drewry's Bluff unit of Richmond NBP contains an important Civil War resource, the earthworks of Fort Drewry, or as the Federal army referred to it, Fort Darling. This fort was the primary reason why Richmond, the capitol of the Confederacy, was not vulnerable to a Federal naval attack via the James River. The Confederates successfully stopped a Federal naval attack on May 15, 1862 and proceeded to deploy a permanent garrison at this location as well as establishing the Confederate Marine Headquarters and Naval Academy.

The 39.15-acre property features the remains of the earthen fort, an enclosed series of earthworks perched on a bluff above the James River. The park provides an overlook for views up and down the river, a reconstructed battery position that includes an original cannon, interpretation of a well and collapsed bombproof, and a bridge over the covered way demonstrating its use during the war. The fort possesses integrity as an earthen fortification, but most of the housing and headquarters features that stood nearby are now part of the archeological record. The site also features a Freeman Marker, one of many historic markers set out around Richmond in 1925. A short road leads to a parking area, from which a pedestrian-only road leads to an interpretive trail that tracks through the fort.

Since 1944, some landscape characteristics and features at Drewry's Bluff have changed. Due to the fort's natural location on an outer bend of the James River, earth is eroding from the fort's river face. Older studies suggested at rate of 1 inch per year with some catastrophic soughs. More recent LiDAR comparisons made between 2013 and 2020 showed minimal soil change on the bluff. Of 104 soil profiles along the length of the bluff, change was detected in 7 profiles. Park will continue monitoring. The interior of the fort is maintained within woodland of deciduous trees, with grass and evergreen groundcover. The trees post-date the Civil War, but aid in protecting the interior earthworks from catastrophic erosion. While the area surrounding Drewry's Bluff has become industrialized, the views up and down river have been minimally impacted so far. The view during the period of significance would have been of open farmland with a few woodlots, but today the visitor can still appreciate the advantageous position of this fort by looking up and downstream at the land covered by woodland.

INTEGRITY

Overall, Drewry's Bluff retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association. The National Register of Historic Places defines integrity as the ability of a property to convey its significance through physical resources. The National Register program identifies seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Retention of these qualities is necessary for a property to convey its significance; however, not all seven aspects must be present to retain integrity. The following evaluation is based on an 1862-1944 period of significance for Drewry's Bluff.

Drewry's Bluff retains sufficient characteristics and historic features to convey its significance. The landscape retains the integrity aspects of location, design, setting, and association, clearly exhibiting important spatial relationships between the fort, river, topographical features, and earthworks necessary to convey the site's significance. The aspects of materials and workmanship are exhibited in the constructed earthworks that convey historic significance of the site. The aspect of feeling is diminished by continued industrial development of adjacent lands, impacting historic views from the fort.

Landscape Characteristics and Features
The next section presents an analysis of landscape characteristics and their associated features and corresponding Historic Structures Inventory names and numbers, if applicable. It also includes an evaluation of whether the feature contributes to the property's National Register eligibility for the historic period 1862-1944, contributes to the property's historic character, or if it is noncontributing, undetermined, or managed as a cultural resource.

Landscape Characteristic: **Archeological Sites**

Archeological sites are the locations of ruins, traces, or deposited artifacts in the landscape and are evidenced by the presence of either surface or subsurface features. Only sites identified in approved National Register documentation are identified in this report.

The Richmond NBP Historic District encompasses more than 2,800 acres spread across multiple units, all
but two of which lie north and east of the James River. To date, only the Malvern Hill, Glendale, Gaines' Mill, and Totopotomoy Creek units have undergone systematic, unit-wide archeological review or survey. Smaller-scale, primarily compliance-related projects have been conducted at Drewry's Bluff, Totopotomoy Creek, Cold Harbor, Beaver Dam, and Fort Harrison, most of which resulted in the identification of low-density pre- and post-contact artifact scatters without clear temporal or cultural affiliations. (NR 2018, Sec.8: 107; Review comment, L. Lowe, 28 July 2025)

The entire Drewry's Bluff site has been assigned CRIS-CL number RICH00001. For additional information on this site, see the 2018 National Register documentation. (NR 2018, Sec.7: 39-40)

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Dock remains	93447	Undetermined					No
Fort Drewry bomproofs and well	93448	Contributing					No
Holes at chapel site	93449	Undetermined					No
Holes in woods - possible officer's quarters	93586	Undetermined					No
Possible structure sites outside fort's southeast corner	93587	Undetermined					No
Water battery	93588	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic: **Buildings and Structures**

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Buildings are elements constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activity in a landscape, while structures are elements constructed for functional purposes other than sheltering human activity. The historic records indicated that there were many buildings and structures at Drewry's Bluff that are now part of the archeology record. Historic photos indicate that there were several guard shacks on the fort's parapets, a chapel in the fort's immediate proximity, doors and reinforcements on the bombproofs, several bridges within the fort, and at the water's edge was a boardwalk/bridge to the water battery. Archeological investigations will be necessary to document the exact location of these features.

The four extant structures at Drewry's Bluff today are not historic: the James River overlook, the bridge over the covered way remain, a culvert under the main trail, and the battery reconstruction. The overlook is a wooden structure located northeast side of the fort on the bluff's edge (Figure 25). Two 15-step stairways are attached to each end of the 32- by 10-foot overlook. The platform is constructed with 2 by 4-inch planks, and is bound by galvanized steel guardrails. The overlook has a recycled plastic bench and two waysides. The bridge over the covered way is located on the southwest side of the fort between the bastions (see Figure 24). The 24.5-foot long wooden structure has wooden guardrails and a wayside to interpret the covered way. The culvert under the main trail is approximately 15 inches in diameter and has been set into concrete. The culvert allows the creek to run under the trail while supporting the asphalt and gravel with 4x4-inch ties. The battery reconstruction contains an original 8-inch Columbia cannon resting on an olive-painted wooden carriage (see Figure 25). The cannon has been mounted on a platform constructed of 4x4-inch planks. The walls of the battery have been supported with reinforced concrete poured to resemble sandbags. These sandbag wall measure 5 feet tall on the sides and 3 feet tall at the embrasure at the cannon's mouth (Figure 26). Lastly, foundation ruins of a former Mission 66 era building (former restrooms?) are located north of the loop road that is now decommissioned.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Battery Reconstruction	93589	Noncontributing			Location	15767	Yes
Covered Way Bridge	93590	Noncontributing			Asset	6256	Yes
Culvert Under Interpretive Trail	93591	Noncontributing			Asset	6250	Yes
River Overlook	93592	Noncontributing			Asset	1443145	Yes
Foundation Remnants	209942	Noncontributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Figure 25. View looking northwest at the battery reconstruction and river overlook. (OCLP, 2023)

Figure 26. View of the concrete sandbag replica. (OCLP, 2023)

Landscape Characteristic: Circulation

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Circulation refers to the spaces, features, and applied material finishes that constitute systems of movement in a landscape. According to Nathanial Michler's 1867 map of Chesterfield and Henrico Counties a road ran from northwest side of the fort and headed northwest along the bluff's edge. The road also branched off to the southwest shortly after leaving the fort to cross the creek before curving west to head for a second line of earthworks. The current interpretive trail appears to generally follow this path, but additional research is needed.

Today the vehicular circulation at Drewry's Bluff consists of the entry drive and parking area. Vehicles access the site from the southwest via a 24-foot wide entry drive paved with pea gravel imbedded in asphalt. After approximately 500 feet there is a parking pullout and a gate (Figure 22). The road originally continued northeast beyond the gate for another 400 feet before terminating as loop with parking, but this section is closed to visitor vehicular traffic. Emergency and maintenance vehicular access is provided along the closed road section and an interpretive trail leading to the fort's entrance.

The pedestrian circulation consists of the interpretive trail system through the earthworks. The main trail is located at the west end of the former parking area (Figure 23). The trail takes the visitor along the northwest boundary before turning southeast to enter the fort. This section of the trail appears to run closely to the historic road trace, but there was no archeological testing done at the site to ascertain the exact road trace, so this feature is listed as noncontributing until further research proves otherwise. This main trail is a 10-foot wide path covered with loose pea gravel over asphalt. The gravel is laid fairly thick except where it has washed out on the descending slopes. Just inside the fort a loop trail of compacted soil takes the visitor through the fort, passing the river overlook, gun embrasure, and collapsed bombproof and covered way (Figure 24). The fort loop trail runs directly atop several of the Fort Drewry earthworks.

The Drewry's Bluff property also has several abandoned trails. The first was accessed via the northeast side of the parking area, but it is now blocked by a rail fence. The trail's surface is broken-up asphalt and compacted soil. It leads down grade until it reaches the creek ravine, which is 10-12 feet deep and at least 15 feet wide, where a bridge once stood. The washed-out bridge is the reason this trail has been abandoned. A second abandoned trail heads southwest from the point where the main trail leads into the fort. This trail leads past the site where the chapel was located then continues down the slope to the other side of the creek from the first abandoned trail. Several social trails can also be found on the property, including a spur trail that due to a broken fence leads to the Freeman Marker near the bluff's edge.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Abandoned/Social Trails	93593	Noncontributing					No
Entry Drive	93594	Noncontributing			Location	102658	No
Interpretive Trail	93595	Noncontributing			Location	15766	Yes
Parking Area	93596	Noncontributing			Location	102658	No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Figure 22. View of entry road, gate, and wayside. Vehicular access for visitors is prohibited beyond the gate. (OCLP, 2023)

Figure 23. View looking northeast at the entrance to the interpretive trail. (OCLP, 2023)

Figure 24. View looking northwest west at the footbridge within the fort, which serves to interpret the covered way. (OCLP, 2023)

Landscape Characteristic: Land Use

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Land uses are the principal activities in a landscape that form, shape, and organize the landscape as a result of human interaction. Drewry's Bluff, or Fort Darling, was used for military purposes during the Civil War. The location of a fort on the bluff overlooking the James River was ideal for defending Richmond from a Federal naval attack. The fort's location at a narrowed bend in the river allowed the Confederates to blockade the river and stall enemy boats, and provide a protected angle to fire on the advancing ships. After the 1862 battles, the Confederates expanded the earthworks and built navy and army quarters. A chapel, graveyard and hotel were also part of the Drewry complex.

Today primary purpose of Drewry's Bluff is for passive recreation and commemoration of the role that the site played in protecting Richmond from Federal attack during the Civil War. The site has also been a place of commemoration, as evidenced by a Freeman Marker erected in 1925. The potential locations of quarters, the chapel, and hotel are interpreted with wayside signs (Figures 15 and 16). Industrial development that is present adjacent to the site does impact the historic character.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
	93597	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Figure 15. Location of probable chapel site. (Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation--hereafter OCLP--2023)

Figure 16. One of two visible depressions in the woods, possibly the site of the hotel or officer's quarters. (OCLP, 2023)

Landscape Characteristic: **Natural Systems and Features**

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Natural systems and features are the natural aspects that have influenced the development and physical form of the landscape, and can include geology, geomorphology, hydrology, ecology, climate, and native vegetation. The reason for choosing the location of the fort at Drewry's Bluff during the Civil War was due to its features relating to the natural systems in the area. The fort was located at the top of a bluff overlooking the James River at a point where the river narrows and curves. While scouting out possible positions for defending Richmond from a naval attack via the James River, the Confederates seized on the opportunity afforded by a relatively level plateau between the top of a steep bluff overlooking the river and a ravine cut by an unnamed creek.

Today Drewry's Bluff retains these relationships with the natural systems and features. The bluff remains perched above the James River at a narrowed bend in the river, although erosion has cut into the side of the hill in the years since the war. Large amounts of earth, at least an inch per year with some catastrophic sloughs, are eroding from the bluff. The site also still features a creek, unnamed, running southeast through the site before turning northeast to head down into the James River.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
	93598	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic: **Small Scale Features**

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Small-scale features are elements that provide detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in the landscape. The Fort Darling Freeman Marker represents the only contributing small-scale feature at the site. Freeman Marker #59, commemorating Fort Darling, is located in the north corner of the property (Figure 28). The cast-iron inscription tablet is mounted on a slant on a concrete slab, which rests on a granite block base. The overall dimensions of the marker are 4 x 3 feet, and 4 feet high. The marker faces upstream so that when reading the tablet the reader faces the fort. The Freeman Marker is set far back from the interpretive trail, beyond the chain link fence in dense vegetation. However, the fence has been vandalized, which has allowed development of a social trail to the marker. The park plans to repair the fence and possibly relocate the marker to a more accessible location.

Several noncontributing features direct visitors and interpret the significance of the site. A Park Service sign at the site's entrance is a 6- x 3-foot wooden sign mounted on 2 posts. Continuing along the road, a three-panel wayside/information sign stands next to a parking area, worm fencing, and a closed metal gate. From here visitors can walk along the former road to the loop and parking lot, which are restricted to maintenance and emergency vehicles. A series of waysides and benches on the interpretive trail, portions of which are bound by split rail fencing in certain locations to keep the visitor safely on the trail (Figure 29). The bluff's edge has been blocked to the visitor by black chain link fencing, while the property boundary is also marked with chain link fence. A well, described by a 4-foot square concrete cap with a metal pump top, is located approximately 50 feet off the former parking lot in the woods. Lastly, there is a small metal counter box along the entry drive to assess visitation rates.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Freeman Marker #59	93606	Contributing	081637		Asset	1442971	Yes
Bench, Wood	93599	Noncontributing			Asset	6264	No
Benches, Recycled Plastic	93600	Noncontributing			Asset	6264	No
Bollards	93601	Noncontributing					No
Chain-Link Fencing	93602	Noncontributing					No
Counter Box	93603	Noncontributing			Asset	6235	Yes
Directional Signs	93604	Noncontributing			Asset	6266	No
Entry Signs	93605	Noncontributing			Asset	6266	No
Guard Rails	93607	Noncontributing					No
Split Rail Fencing	93608	Noncontributing			Asset	6265	Yes
Waysides/Bulletin Boards	93611	Noncontributing					No
Well	93612	Noncontributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Figure 28. Freeman Marker #59, "Fort Darling." (OCLP, 2023)

Figure 29. This section of split rail fence is located at the fort's sally port. (OCLP, 2023)

Landscape Characteristic: **Spatial Organization**

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Spatial organization is the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in a landscape, including the articulation of ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces. The site's spatial relationships during the period of significance were oriented around the fort. The fort was built between the bluff's edge and a hooked creek draining into the river. Originally, the earthworks of the fort were well defined with three-gun embrasures pointing down to the river. Later the fort was expanded to include at least eight additional gun emplacements upriver. The interior of the fort had several bombproofs and wells. Historic photographs indicate that there were guard shack-like structures on the parapets as well. Michler's 1867 map of Chesterfield and Henrico Counties indicated a road leading to the bluff's edge from the southwest and another road running along the bluff's edge leading to the military barracks. The map and photos also depicted a chapel and graveyard were directly adjacent to the fort's southwest side. There is also documentation of a hotel near the fort, but more research will be necessary to discover its precise location.

The spatial organization of Drewry's Bluff today is organized around the circulation system to bring the visitor into the park and lead them through the earthworks of the fort. The vehicular circulation is limited to the southwest portion of the site. There is an entrance drive with a loop to bring the cars to the parking area. The interpretive trail system then directs pedestrians to the fort alongside the site's northwest boundary before heading east into the fort, which is located in the northeast portion of the site. This trail system appears to follow the path of the historic roadbed. Natural features, such as the creek southwest and southeast of the fort and the meadow southeast of the entry drive, also organize the site. Visitors cannot view the overall spatial organization of the site due to the wooded nature of the vegetation.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
	93613	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic: **Topography**

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Topography is the three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features (such as slope and articulation) and orientation (such as elevation and solar aspect). The natural topographic characteristics of the bluff and the creek ravine influenced the siting, and ultimately the success, of the fortification. The earthworks at Drewry's Bluff were originally constructed very quickly in preparation for the battle on May 26, 1862. These sculpted landforms were reinforced with sandbags and wood. They were in an open setting of agricultural fields.

Today Drewry's Bluff is marked by distinctive natural and manmade topography. The primary natural topographic feature is the 90-foot bluff positioned above the James River. The topography at the top of the bluff is relatively flat. The steep cliff, nearly 90 degrees, made it a desirable location to build the fort. Another notable natural topographic feature on the site is the ravine cut by the creek as it runs through the site. The first part of the ravine measures 3-4 feet wide to 3-4 feet deep. The ravine cut becomes increasingly wider and deeper as the creek heads down the steeper slope toward the James.

The manmade topography is the earthworks (Figures 17 and 18). Embankments framing the fort form a 350 square foot interior. The fort has several bombproofs and wells in the interior (Figure 19). The remains of a covered way on the southwest side of the fort are interpreted by a wayside and a footbridge. Most of the earthworks measure approximately 12 feet high. The interior earthworks exhibit signs of erosion: rounded, sloped angles, collapsed bombproofs, and social trail paths. The riverfront side of the fortification is eroding at a dangerous rate into the James River. The earthworks are primarily protected under forest cover; while this is not the way the fort appeared during the period of significance, the protection provided by the trees and leaf litter help keep the earthworks from eroding further.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Fort Drewry	93614	Contributing	006743		Asset	1166859	Yes

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Figure 17. View facing east of Fort Drewry earthworks. (OCLP, 2023)

Figure 18. Interior view of the fort facing, west. (OCLP, 2023)

Figure 19. Site of the well and bombproof. (OCLP, 2023)

Landscape Characteristic: Vegetation

Historic and Existing Conditions:
Vegetation includes deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, and herbaceous plants and plant communities, whether indigenous or introduced in the landscape. The vegetation at Drewry's Bluff during the Civil War consisted primarily of farm fields and wood lots. However, many of the wood lots were cut for defensive purposes, so the land was mostly bare of vegetation.

As illustrated in the 2008 report, "Vegetation Classification and Mapping at Richmond National Battlefield Park," Drewry's Bluff includes three classes of vegetation: Mesic Mixed Hardwood Forest, Loblolly Pine-Hardwood Forest, and Acidic Oak-Hickory Forest. (Patterson 2008: 59)

The Drewry's Bluff site is primarily set in deciduous woodland today (Figures 20 and 21). The earthworks at Drewry's Bluff are all covered in woodland. The leaf litter from the trees does a good job protecting the earthworks from erosion, but there has been some herbaceous vegetation growth on most earthworks. The types of vegetation at the site corresponds with elevation, slope, and proximity to the river. The upper elevations are covered primarily with sweetgum (Liquidambar styraciflua), maple (Acer sp.), oak (Quercus sp.), sassafras (Sassafras albidum), willow oak (Quercus phellos), and cherry (Prunus sp.). Species in the creek ravine tends to be mountain laurel (Kalmia latifolia), wild ginger (Asarum canadense), and maple. The meadow located to the southeast of the entry drive is covered in high grass. The site has some invasive species, including tree-of-heaven (Ailanthus altissima) and Chinese privet (Ligustrum sinense) as well as native poison ivy (Rhus radicans).

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
	93615	Undetermined					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Figure 20. View facing northeast showing forest and ground cover at Drewry's Bluff. (OCLP, 2023)

Figure 21. View of vegetation in the unnamed creek ravine. The original bridge and portion of the interpretive trail was located in this area. (OCLP, 2023)

Landscape Characteristic: **Views and Vistas**

Historic and Existing Condition:
A view is the expansive and/or panoramic prospect of a broad range of vision that may be naturally occurring or deliberately contrived. A vista is a controlled prospect of a discrete, linear range of vision, which is deliberately contrived. The best view from Drewry's Bluff is at the overlook on the northeast side of the fort. The upstream and downstream views of the James River are contributing features due to the integrity of the viewshed. While military and agrarian land uses would have resulted in more open conditions during the period of significance, the current view still allows the visitor to understand why the Confederates built a fort at this location (Figure 27). The interior view of the fort from the overlook also allows visitors to see the overall layout of the fort and the complexity of the fort's defenses.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Views Up and Down James River	93617	Contributing					No
View of Fort from River Overlook	93616	Noncontributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Figure 27. View looking east down the James River, from the overlook. (OCLP, 2023)

Condition

Assessment Interval (Years): 4

Next Assessment Due Date: 01/12/2030

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Poor

Assessment Date: 01/12/2026

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The property is in “Poor” condition, due to continued erosion of the bluff face and, to a lesser extent, erosion of the earthworks. The instability of the soils, steep slopes, and vulnerability to rainstorms contribute to the erosion of Drewry’s Bluff. As published in the 2025 “CLI Professional Procedures Guide,” the definition of “Poor” is:
The property shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values. Preservation maintenance and/or use must be combined with corrective action to halt deterioration.

Condition Assessment: Poor

Assessment Date: 09/21/2021

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Provisional. The condition reassessment for this CLI has been delayed due to Covid-19 travel restrictions and staffing shortages. In the meantime, the most recent condition assessment will remain in place until it is reassessed as part of a comprehensive update of the entire CLI. Planning and scheduling this update will occur in FY 2022.

Condition Assessment: Poor

Assessment Date: 08/14/2008

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

This reassessment was made in consultation with the park superintendent. The bluff remains in unstable condition. A "Poor" assessment indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

Condition Assessment: Poor

Assessment Date: 04/08/2002

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Upon full understanding of the precarious situation of the bluff, the condtion of the component landscape has been determined to be poor.

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 09/30/1999

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

A superintendant's signature for this fair condition was never obtained. The condition has been changed to poor.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Adjacent Lands

Other Impact:

External or Internal: External

Impact Narrative: There are no zoning restrictions in the neighboring lands to protect the Drewry's Bluff viewshed, which is very important in understanding Fort Drewry’s role in the Civil War.

Date Identified: 07/29/2005

Type of Impact: Erosion

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: The primary cause for concern pertaining to erosion is the bluff face. Given the complexity of the issue, and the park is exploring options that include bluff stabilization.

Date Identified: 01/12/2026

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: The internal earthworks and much of the site are covered with successional deciduous tree growth. While the trees help maintain the earthworks by slowing erosion, they need to be monitored to assess tree health and stability to insure visitor safety and prevent damage to the resource. Trees that are dying need to be removed manually before they topple naturally or get knocked down by wind, where the root structure of the tree can do considerable damage to the earthworks.

Date Identified: 07/29/2005

Type of Impact: Vandalism/Theft/Arson

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: There is an ongoing issue with dirt bikes and ATVs. Riders come into the park along the power lines ROW and there has been consistent evidence of bikes being used on some of the earthworks. The recent practice of closing the entrance gate during after hours has helped mitigate this issue.

Date Identified: 01/12/2026

Type of Impact: Release To Succession

Other Impact:

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Narrative: The internal earthworks and much of the site are covered with successional deciduous tree growth. While the trees help maintain the earthworks by slowing erosion, the park should continue to monitor to assess tree health.

Date Identified: 01/12/2026

Treatment

Stabilization Measures

Treatment Documents

Treatment Type: Rehabilitation

Treatment Completed: No

Document Type: General Management Plan

Document Date: 1996-06-07

Title:

IRMA Link:

Narrative:

The management objective outlined in the park's 1996 General Management Plan (GMP) is, "to identify, evaluate, protect, restore, and preserve park cultural resources important to the understanding of the military actions during the 1862 Peninsula Campaign and the 1864 and 1865 battle actions that resulted in the final struggle for Richmond." Regarding Drewry's Bluff, the GMP recommended:
• Restore key interpretive elements
• Relocate parking lot
• Outline Civil War resources
• Relocate overlook platform away from the gun emplacement earthworks, but still offer a view of the river
• Relocate access trail to bring visitors through the restored sally port
• Stabilize bluff to prevent further erosion
• Build a dock to provide river access
• Build a foot trail from the bluff to the river, following a historic trail is possible
• Maintain upstream and downstream vistas, and view across river to Chaffin Farm area (through MOAs, easements, etc.) (GMP 1996: 40)

Drewry's Bluff does not have a Cultural Landscape Report or Treatment Plan with in-depth information regarding landscape treatment philosophy, strategies, or tasks. The growing availability of digital geospatial data, including LIDAR point-cloud data and aerial photo data, has assisted in the documentation of the cultural landscape's physical attributes in the past several years.

Additionally, Drewry's Bluff is included in the park's Earthworks Management Plan and Fire Management Plan. The plan, based on earthwork management guideline documents, plant ecology, and soil science, describes the park's practices to preserve earthworks while showcasing key areas for visitors and minimizing maintenance costs. It outlines that full forest coverage is the best way to protect soil from erosion and to monitor for and remove hazard trees where applicable. (PEPC 115308; Review comment, K. Allen, 28 July 2025)

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography:

Citation Author	Citation Title	Year of Publication	Citation Publisher	Citation Type	Citation Location	Citation Number
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Baril, Peter E.	“They Found a Jungle and Made a Park” The Civilian Conservation Corps at Richmond National Battlefield Park, ND, PHSO Library.		n/a			
Bearss, Edwin C.	Battle of Drewry's Bluff	1961	n/a			
Cullen, Joseph P.	Richmond Battlefields	1961	n/a			
Iris Williams, Peter	Conserving Richmond's Battlefields	1990	n/a			
Oculus et al.	Documenting Richmond's Civil War Battlefields	1996	n/a			
Olausen, Stephen A., Laura J. Kline, Kristen Heitert, and Gretchen Pineo	National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Richmond National Battlefield Park	2018	n/a			
Patterson, K.D.	Vegetation Classification and Mapping at Richmond National Battlefield Park, Virginia. Technical Report NPS/NER/NRTR—2008/128	2008	Philadelphia, PA: National Park Service			

Robbin B. Sotir & Associates	Bank Stability and Erosion Problems at Fort Darling/Drewry's Bluff Field Report	1997	n/a			
Sams, Cheryl and Nancy J. Brown	Drewry’s Bluff, Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Richmond National Battlefield Park, National Park Service	2008	n/a			
Staff	General Management Plan, Environmental Impact Statement	1996	n/a			
Staff	Resource Management Plan, Richmond National Battlefield Park	1994	n/a			
Staff	Sketches on the Battlefields Around Richmond, Virginia	1937	n/a			
Willett, John T.	A History of Richmond National Battlefield Park	1957	Richmond: Richmond National Battlefield Park			

Supplemental Information:

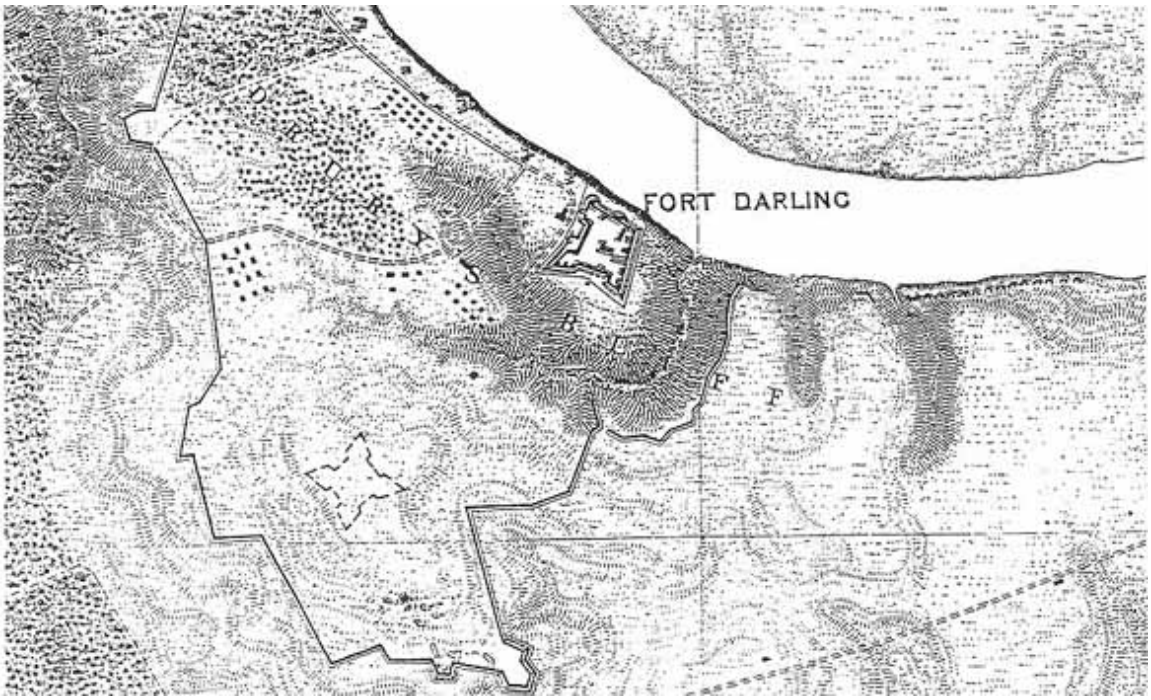
Supplemental Information Title: CIR USGS DOQQ

Supplemental Information Narrative:

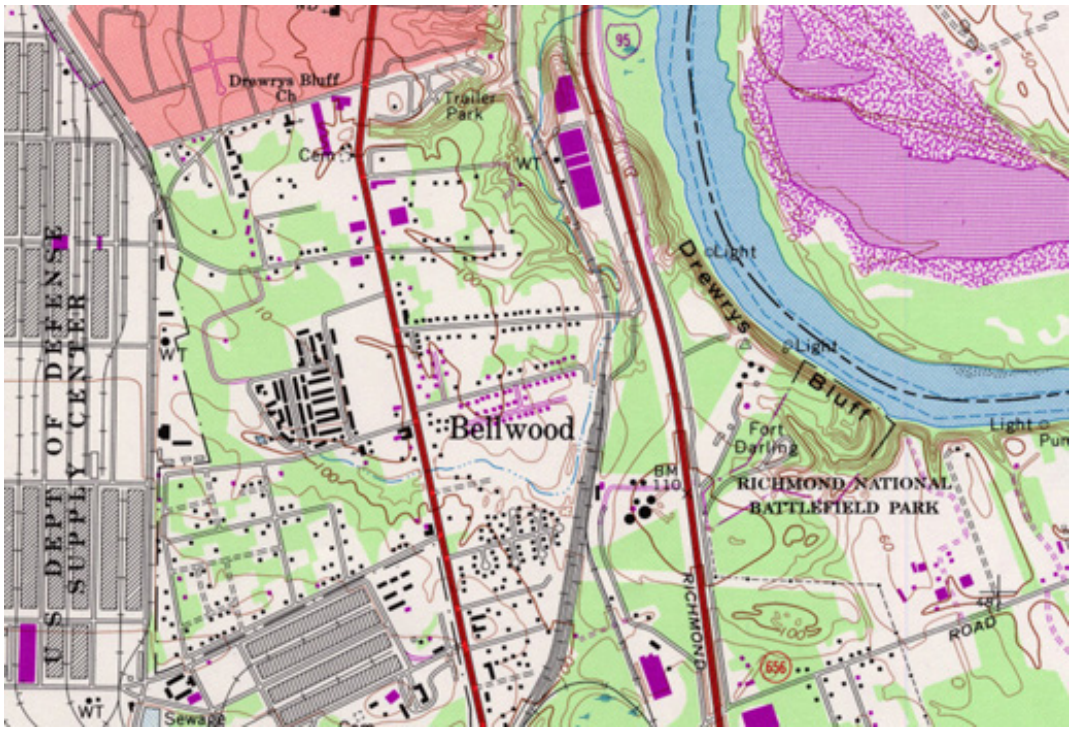
1993, Richard Easterbrook, Petersburg GIS

Supplemental Information File:

Fort Drewry Interpretive Wayside



Map illustrating historic conditions at Fort Darling.



USGS Drewry's Bluff Quad

Supplemental Information:

Supplemental Information Title: Drewry's Bluff Unit Earthworks and Interpretive Trails

Supplemental Information Narrative:

1999, David Lowe, Cultrual Resources GIS

Supplemental Information:

Supplemental Information Title: Fort Drewry Interpretive Wayside

Supplemental Information Narrative:

2000, Steve Stanley, Colonial Type and Graphics.

Supplemental Information:

Supplemental Information Title: Map of Chesterfield and Henrico Counties

Supplemental Information Narrative:

Nathanial Michler, 1867

Supplemental Information:

Supplemental Information Title: USGS Quad: Drewry's Bluff

Supplemental Information Narrative:

1969, Revised 1994, 1:24,000

Landscape Documents:

File Name	Date	Attachment Type
CL-FMSS_crosswalk-RICH_Drewry_CLIUpload.xlsx		Other Report

Source