



August 2022

License Plate to the Battle Above the Clouds

Your license plate dollars at work!



This battlefield supporter has parked on the western slope of Lookout Mountain where a dilapidated motel, a “relic” of the pre-interstate era, mars the historic landscape. Recently purchased by the American Battlefield Trust, this eyesore, adjacent to the boundary of Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park, will be rehabilitated to a natural appearance after the purchase is complete. Remnants of the old Wauhatchie Pike, originally built as part of the “Federal Road” system through Cherokee territory and by the 1860’s, the main wartime road across Lookout Mountain, remain in the woods adjacent to the old motel. Union and Confederate soldiers would fight across the property during the battle of Lookout Mountain in November 1863.

A grant from the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association, made possible by your purchase of the “Battlefield Preservation” license plate, contributed to the purchase of this property.



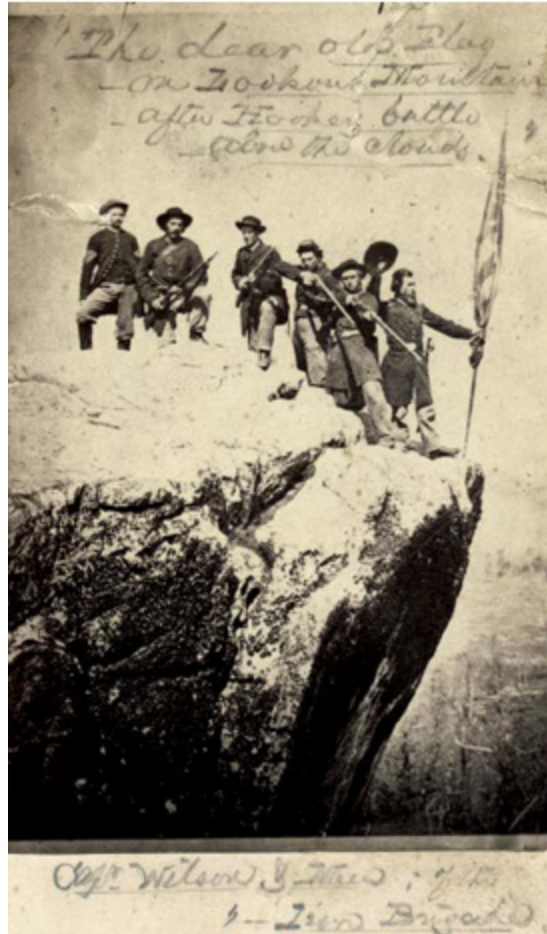
Painting of the Battle of Lookout Mountain commissioned by General Joseph Hooker and displayed in the Lookout Mountain NPS Visitor Center. The recently purchased property is located just below the cloud line and directly above the head of General Hooker, who is mounted on the white horse in foreground.

Fought as a thick, low hanging fog covered much of Lookout Mountain, General Joseph Hooker’s capture of the mountain citadel has gone down in history as the “Battle Above the Clouds.” Occupied by the Confederates shortly after the battle of Chickamauga, a Southern officer described the task of defending the mountain’s slopes near our target property: “...it devolved on me to occupy a picket line extending about a mile up Lookout Creek from a point near its mouth then up the mountainside to the cliff. From the creek up to the bench of the mountain, the surface was so broken that the rapid or orderly movement of troops was impossible. The batteries on Moccasin Point commanded at easy range the only route by which troops could come to my support or my own could retire upon the main army. These batteries were trained to sweep the slope of the mountain from the wagon road to the palisades. Communication with my superiors on the mountain top was difficult and slow, the route by which the messengers must travel being circuitous as well as rugged. Such was the isolated and exposed position of this outpost brigade...”



American Battlefield Trust map showing troop movements across the property during the Battle of Lookout Mountain.

Attacking the mountain fortress was no easier than defending it. A Union staff officer remembered, “...it being impossible, owing to the rough nature of the ground to ride a horse through the woods and over the rocks and felled trees. I followed, with the other members of the staff and the General, immediately behind the line of battle...” An enlisted man found the going for the men in the ranks and the advance on the mountain’s slopes even more difficult, “...we clambered over rocks and tumbled into gulleys, but kept going and finally struck the last line of rifle pits that made a stand and scattered them like sheep, capturing hundreds and driving them to the rear, not taking trouble to send a guard with them. Trusting to the troops behind to take care of them, we pushed on until we reached the nose of the mountain, which we found covered with a mist or fog. The rebels made a show of fighting, but most of them kept on going.”



As the fog burned off Lookout Mountain on the morning after the battle, the sun revealed the color guard of a Kentucky unit atop the mountain's summit, waving the Stars and Stripes to announce the Union victory to those in the valley.

The victories at Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge pried open the "Gateway to the Deep South". Chattanooga, and the city would serve as a base for the Union drive to Atlanta in the following Spring and Summer.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF TCWPA'S "PRESERVATION LICENSE PLATE"



SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!

If you have a "Save our Battlefields" license plate, please consider stopping by and taking a photo of your plate at a battlefield or other battle-related Civil War site in your area... we're especially interested in sites that don't always get the historians' spotlight! If you're looking for a site in your area, we can help find one nearby – just email us - or if you've already got that special photo please send to info@tcwpa.org.

You can purchase the license plate at your County Clerk's office for \$36.00 plus your regular registration fees. Proceeds from the sale of the plate will help protect and interpret important battlefields in Tennessee.

For more information, visit: tcwpa.org/license-plate

The Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association preserves and interprets Tennessee's Civil War Battlefields and their contributing landscapes for present and future generations.

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