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**Long After the Battle:
James Hope's "Authentic" Commemoration of Antietam's Bloody Lane**

by

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ABSTRACT

James Hope's 1888 painting *After the Battle* was his initial composition commemorating the Civil War battle of Antietam. Supposedly based on Hope's own eyewitness sketches, the painting and its copies have been valued mainly as accurate documentary images. However, *After the Battle* was an imaginative reconstruction, compiled from multiple sources more than two decades after the war. Hope incorporated specific figures from Alexander Gardner's photographs of the dead at Antietam into a participatory experience, using the evidence of the photographs to authenticate his panoramic painting of the post-battle landscape. *After the Battle* was a purposefully retrospective memorial image, one that supported sectional reconciliation in post-Reconstruction America.

Between 1888-1892, American artist and Civil War veteran James Hope (1818-1892) created a series of paintings that commemorated the 1862 battle of Antietam. Eventually including five separate images, Hope's series was composed in the large-scale, horizontal format of panoramas. The first of these images that Hope painted was a picture of scores of dead soldiers filling a narrow country lane. Titled *After the Battle* (1888), this painting depicted the casualties along Antietam's "Sunken Road," a site subsequently known as "Bloody Lane." This initial image is the most fundamental to Hope's commemoration of the battle and best exemplifies his process and motivations in creating this body of work.

Purportedly, this image evolved from a sketch that James Hope made on the site, in the immediate wake of the fighting. However, when he created his panoramic version of this image, more than twenty-five years after the battle, Hope drew heavily on published accounts and images of the scene. Significantly, Hope incorporated specific photographic images of dead soldiers in the Sunken Road that had been recorded by photographer Alexander Gardner in the days following the battle. Both photography and panoramic paintings represented a desire to preserve, replicate, and transport instances of "authentic" experience. Both mediums developed over the course of the nineteenth century (years largely synchronous with James Hope's life) and influenced the development of the American Romantic "Hudson River School" landscape aesthetic. Drawing on this tradition of spiritually significant landscapes, James Hope's painting of the aftermath of Bloody Lane combined the authenticating power of photography with the narrative reenactment of the panoramic format.

Historians have frequently acclaimed the “authentic” value of James Hope’s eyewitness depictions of Antietam, and especially his image of the carnage at Bloody Lane.¹ Hope’s painting *After the Battle* has been considered primarily important as an empirically accurate depiction of the aftermath of the fighting at the Sunken Road, since it was based on his contemporaneous, onsite sketches. However, while the painting may represent Hope’s experiences at Antietam, it is predominantly an imaginative reconstruction, rather than a disinterested historical document. The authenticity of Hope’s *After the Battle* painting lies not in its proof of what the aftermath of battle looked like, but rather in what it felt like to witness the original scene.

By combining his own memories of the scene with photographic evidence, Hope synthesized a demonstrably “inaccurate” image. Semiotically, however, Hope’s decisions in creating and presenting this image promote a Romantic notion of authenticity, which was essential to inscribing the heretofore unmarked battlefield with meaning a quarter century after the Civil War. Documentary authenticity, represented by photography, provided evidence that specific bodies of dead soldiers had in fact existed at a verifiable location on the battlefield, evidence of the intensity of the battle. Hope’s Romantic authenticity offered a way for viewers to vicariously re-connect with the original

1. V.G. Leimar, “Management Statement of the Use of the Hope Paintings at Antietam Battlefield,” April 10, 1980. James Hope file, Antietam National Battlefield Park. Leimar, former Superintendent of the Antietam National Battlefield Park, wrote: “These paintings were not created by someone with a second or third hand knowledge of the battle or by someone who has done research on the subject. The paintings, as mentioned above, were created by a soldier who saw the action first hand and was an intimate part of that action. Color prints...will be photographically made from these paintings and will be exhibited at the site of the battle action...so that the visitor can stop at these points and become aware of the realities of what took place.”

experience. By re-enacting Hope's position as a privileged witness to the scene, viewers could discern national meaning(s) from the depiction of the carnage.

By communicating an aura of authenticity, James Hope's painting empowered viewers, both veterans and non-veterans, to imaginatively travel across time and space to virtually experience the battlefield of Antietam. This virtual "tourism" framed the meaning of the battle in specific ways and held much in common with the simultaneous national movement to preserve and mark Civil War battlefields that emerged in the late 1880s and early 1890s. *After the Battle* offered a thrillingly sublime spectacle of death, a "stunning" image in Hope's own words.² But Hope's formal, iconographical, and compositional decisions in the painting also presented a nuanced observance of sectional reconciliation in post-Reconstruction America.

James Hope produced at least three painted versions of *After the Battle: Bloody Lane*. (See Appendix A.) In collaboration with his son, professional photographer James Douglas Hope (1846-1929), the elder Hope also published photographic reproductions of the canvases, replete with descriptive captions and commemorative poems. To explore the relationship between photography and panoramic painting (and authenticity and commemoration), this paper will focus on two related objects: Hope's sixteen-foot-wide version of *After the Battle (B)* and one specific example of the photographic reproduction of that painting (*E*) (Figure 1). Hope's largest panoramic painting translated original photographic source material into a shared, participatory experience on a spectacular scale. The subsequent photographic reproduction then re-translated that hand-painted image back into a miniaturized, private encounter that could be disseminated widely.

2. James Hope to John Howe, August 31, 1889, Castleton University Archives.



Figure 1. *After the Battle: Bloody Lane (E)*, Dickinson College Archives.

John Hays II, a veteran of the fighting at Antietam who later played an active role in the 1890s' commemoration of the Sunken Road, owned the particular photographic print analyzed here. Hays represents a fascinating point of connection between James Hope's and Alexander Gardner's images of the aftermath at Antietam. Members of Hays' regiment, the 130th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, buried the dead at Bloody Lane, and were pictured in Alexander Gardner's photographs taken there. James Hope not only used one of these same photographs as source material for his painting but also cited John Hays in his own description of the painted scene. Viewing James Hope's *After the Battle* image through Hays' veteran perspective affords a better understanding of how empirical documentation recorded in 1862 was transformed into a Romantic, commemorative experience more than a quarter century later.

***After the Battle* in the Context of James Hope's
Panoramic Paintings of the Battle of Antietam**

Although James Hope created *After the Battle* before, and independently of, any of his other Antietam paintings, over time this particular image has become inextricably linked to the subsequent paintings in the series. Hope himself exhibited the entire group of panoramic paintings at an 1892 meeting of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), a national organization of Union veterans. The strain of this enterprise weakened the health of the already debilitated artist, and Hope died soon afterwards. Following his father's death, James Douglas Hope continued to orchestrate national exhibitions of the paintings. The series of five images, including *After the Battle*, became well known around the turn of the twentieth century. Hope's Antietam paintings were the centerpiece of an extensive retrospective of his artwork in the New York State Building at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. In 1904, a two-day auction of many of Hope's works was organized in New York City. The five Antietam panoramas were the culmination of the auction, and the sixteen-foot-wide version of *After the Battle (B)* was the climactic work presented.

Evidently, few of Hope's works sold at this auction, and so the majority returned to the family's gallery and souvenir emporium in Watkins Glen, New York. Though they remained on display in the Hope Gallery there, the Antietam paintings became largely disregarded in the early decades of the twentieth century. In 1935 a massive flood inundated Watkins Glen and swamped the gallery where the works were stored. Considered a total loss by the Hope family, the paintings were left in the debris for nearly two decades. Eventually, art collector and Watkins Glen native Larry Freeman acquired many of the paintings from Hope's descendants in the 1950s.

Freeman recounted that four of the large Antietam battle panoramas were largely unscathed by the floodwaters that had swept through the Hope Gallery twenty years earlier, but the “pride of the lot,” the 102 x 196” canvas of Bloody Lane, was found on the floor buried under tons of silt and debris.³ It was “beyond recovery,” and he could salvage only a 48 x 60” fragment. Freeman also recovered a second large, damaged canvas from the mud-caked floor of the ruined gallery. He identified this painting as a scene of the battle of Gettysburg. However, a close examination of his photograph of the badly scuffed canvas reveals that it shares the composition of Hope’s other depictions of Antietam’s Bloody Lane, and it most likely was the initial eight-foot version of *After the Battle (A)*.⁴

The popular rediscovery of James Hope’s Antietam paintings began when the National Park Service acquired the series from Larry Freeman in 1979. Four of the Antietam panoramas were conserved and installed in various locations in the Antietam National Battlefield Park Visitor Center by the early 1980s. Each of these four canvases measures approximately 66 x 144” and depicts a view of part of the Antietam landscape during the battle. Though Hope meant for them to be seen as a group, there is no definitive order for the canvases.⁵ Each painting condenses an hour or more of events that

3. Larry Freeman, *The Hope Paintings* (Watkins Glen, NY: Century House, 1961), 91-93.

4. Freeman, *The Hope Paintings*, 33, 36-37. I believe the photograph on page 33 of Freeman’s book illustrates the 50 x 96” version of *After the Battle (A)*, Hope’s original panoramic version of the carnage at the Sunken Road. While the other Antietam panoramas, including the fragment of the largest Bloody Lane painting (*B*), were kept together as a group, this initial 50 x 96” *After the Battle (A)* is now unaccounted for.

5. James Hope apparently assigned numbers, as well as geographical titles, to the four Antietam battle panoramas created between 1890-1892. While each panorama was

transpired on a specific part of the battlefield, so the paintings could be ordered to read either geographically or chronologically. Although these four paintings were on display at the Antietam Visitor Center by the early 1980s, *After the Battle* was not among them. Almost as an afterthought, Freeman donated the 48 x 60” fragment of Hope’s largest *After the Battle (B)* painting to the National Park Service in 1979. Initially, the fragment was considered too badly damaged to be exhibited, and it remained in storage.

Despite their renewed accessibility at the Antietam National Battlefield Park, Hope’s panoramic paintings became most extensively known and appreciated through their reproduction in the Time-Life Books volume on the battle of Antietam.⁶ This 1984 publication re-introduced Hope’s series to a wide audience. In a ten-page spread titled “An Officer’s View of the Battle,” the book presented full-color reproductions of the four 66 x 144” paintings on display at the Antietam Visitor Center, but concluded the section with a reproduction of Hope’s smallest, 19 x 36” version of *After the Battle (C)* (Figures 2-6). The accompanying text makes no mention of the discrepancy in size between the first four images of the battle and the culminating image of the aftermath at Bloody Lane.

titled *Battle of Antietam*, his subtitles were *No. 1 (Looking South)*, *No. 2 (Looking West)*, *No. 3 (Looking North)* and *Burnside Bridge* (which was not numbered). This inscrutable numbering system does not represent a logical chronological or geographic order. It could represent the order in which they were painted. To avoid this confusion, the National Park Service has assigned new titles to the four paintings: *Artillery Hell*, *A Fateful Turn*, *Wasted Gallantry*, and *A Crucial Delay*.

6. Ronald H. Bailey, *The Bloodiest Day: The Battle of Antietam* (Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, Inc., 1984), 110-119. The reproductions of the paintings in the book are not individually titled, but each is accompanied by a caption noting important elements. The introductory text asserts (incorrectly) that “Hope labored the better part of two decades creating the five paintings shown here.” This introduction notes that Hope “retained sharp memories of the terrible details of combat” such as the dead soldier kneeling in the Sunken Road. It also states that “veterans of the battle praised the accuracy of his work.”

The uniform format of the images in the Time-Life segment minimizes the physical impact of the panoramic scale of Hope's original canvases and serves to incorporate the small *After the Battle (C)* as an integral component of the five-part series. Furthermore, by ordering the five images according to the chronology of the battle, the book presents *After the Battle* as the inevitable conclusion of the preceding images, rather than as an image that could (and did) once stand alone as a representative commemoration of the entire battle.



Figure 2. James Hope, *Battle of Antietam, No. 2 (Looking West)*, 66 x 144", c. 1890-1892. Antietam National Battlefield Park.⁷

7. In this painting, James Hope has replicated the Dunker Church from a photograph taken by Alexander Gardner in the days after the battle. Hope included a group of dead Confederate artillerymen in front of their limber, a vignette copied from Gardner's photograph. This is perhaps the most obvious example of Hope's reliance on the Gardner images in all of his Antietam panoramas, but represents an approach Hope first developed in the *After the Battle* painting. I am confident that others have long noticed the inclusion of details of Alexander Gardner's images into James Hope's panoramas, but there is little published material that explicitly references this aspect of the paintings. National Park Service Ranger Manny Gentile published a blog post specifically about Hope's Dunker Church painting. (<http://volunteersinparks.blogspot.com/2010/01/details.html>).



Figure 3. James Hope, *Battle of Antietam, No. 3 (Looking North)*, 66 x 144", c. 1890-1892. Antietam National Battlefield Park.



Figure 4. James Hope, *Battle of Antietam, No. 1 (Looking South)*, 66 x 144", c. 1890-1892. Antietam National Battlefield Park.



Figure 5. James Hope, *Battle of Antietam: Burnside Bridge*, 66 x 144", c. 1890-1892. Antietam National Battlefield Park.



Figure 6. James Hope, *After the Battle (C)*, 19 x 36", undated, c. 1888-1892. United States Army Center for Military History.

Perhaps based on the renown of James Hope's Antietam paintings, including the easel-sized *After the Battle (C)* reproduced in the Time-Life Books volume, the National Park Service reinstalled the large Hope paintings in the Antietam Visitor Center in the early 2000s. Since then, James Hope's Antietam panoramas have hung together in a

single exhibition gallery. This exhibit, titled *Witness to Battle*, uses Hope's paintings to introduce visitors to the principal sites and chronology of the one-day battle. Cases displaying uniforms, weapons, and other artifacts fill the gallery. Hope's paintings are presented simultaneously as contextual frames for the other period artifacts and as artifacts themselves, bearing the aura of James Hope's participation in the battle. Rather than in chronological sequence, here the paintings are installed according to the geographical orientation of the scenes, reflecting the physical landscape outside the Visitor Center.

A text panel at the gallery's entrance communicates the conventional mythology of James Hope's Antietam paintings. Hope, an artist by profession, had enlisted in the 2nd Vermont Infantry regiment in 1861. He first experienced combat at the battle of First Manassas and went on to participate in about a dozen engagements during 1862. He recorded scenes of camp life and battles in his sketchbooks. Because of his expertise in rendering landscapes, he was often detached from his company to serve as a scout and mapmaker. This strenuous special duty left him physically infirm, and by the September 1862 Maryland campaign, he was unfit to fight with his regiment. Hope's exact whereabouts during the Battle of Antietam remain uncertain, but he supposedly sketched the battle as it "unfolded around him."

Even a cursory glance around the gallery reveals a striking difference between *After the Battle (B)* and the other four paintings. Four of the paintings are the 66 x 144" framed canvases, each depicting a scene of the battle in progress, familiar from their reproduction in the Time-Life Books volume. The fifth work is the framed 48 x 60" fragment of the original and considerably larger *After the Battle (B)* (Figure 7). When the

Hope paintings were reinstalled in the early 2000s, the National Park Service decided to include this fragment along with the other battle panoramas. To supplement its truncated condition, Park Service curators augmented the damaged canvas with a photographic enlargement of the smaller 19 x 36" version of the scene (C). Nearly sixteen feet wide, this hybrid reconstruction of James Hope's largest painting contrasts markedly with the other panoramic paintings in the room. The reconstructed image measures three feet taller and more than four feet wider than the uniform size of the other canvases.



Figure 7. James Hope, *After the Battle (B)*. Installation view of the painted fragment and its photographic supplement at the Antietam National Battlefield Park Visitor Center.

Its physical condition also undermines the straightforward utility of the image as a document of the battle. Visitors are instead forced to reflect on the contingent nature of the fragmented canvas as an artistic construction. The scuffed, partial figures on the canvas suggest an irretrievably lost original experience, one that can only now be

approximated through recourse to ancillary documentation. Still, the physical presence of the massive reconstructed image allows the modern viewer to feel embedded in the scene, in a way much different from viewing a reproduction in a book. The commendable decision by the National Park Service to present Hope's fragmented canvas encourages a deeper consideration of when, how, and why James Hope originally created these panoramic paintings and how they affect views of history.

Beyond the physical differences among the canvases on display, there is a striking difference in the rhetorical quality of *After the Battle* in comparison with the others. While the other four images depict lines of charging soldiers and artillery shells bursting in the air and fields, the reconstructed *After the Battle* presents a scene of absolute stillness. The luminous background landscape, shrouded in mist (or smoke) gives way to a shocking foreground view of a dirt road packed with contorted dead bodies. The road cuts horizontally across the foreground of the image before curving into the background and is eroded several feet below the level of the surrounding fields. Bodies dressed in the motley gray and brown "uniforms" of Confederate soldiers cover the bottom of the roadbed as far into the distance as the eye can see. Lining the banks of the Sunken Road are more dead bodies. Those on the left side include blue-coated Union soldiers interspersed with the Confederate casualties. Some of the dead on the right side are draped over a rail fence separating the Sunken Road from a cornfield.

In the Visitor Center's hybrid reconstruction, the enlarged photographic backdrop furnishes most of the surrounding landscape and peripheral dead soldiers. The actual remnant of James Hope's original painting provides a central vignette of dead bodies (Figure 8). Despite the severe paint loss, parts of about a dozen figures are visible,

nestled below the fence-lined far bank of the Sunken Road. Several of these abraded figures exhibit garishly painted red wounds, graphically illustrating the nature of the “Bloody Lane.” Curiously, one of the least damaged, and therefore most discernible, figures in the fragment is a light-coated soldier facing away from the viewer. The upright torso and bowed head of this soldier immediately stand out from both the depicted carnage and the physical ravages inflicted on the canvas by water and time.



Figure 8. James Hope, *After the Battle (B)*, 48 x 60” fragment. Antietam National Battlefield Park.

In the Visitor Center gallery, viewers are physically separated from the reconstructed image of Bloody Lane by a waist-high text panel. This panel not only blocks physical proximity to the canvas fragment but also positions the fragment and its photographic reconstruction within a historical framework. The text accounts for the physical state of the fragment and briefly recounts the painting’s journey over the roughly

ninety years from its creation until its eventual purchase by the National Park Service and arrival at the Antietam Visitor Center. This panel is titled “Hope Restored,” a play on the artist’s name and the unlikely reclamation of this very damaged painting. The text explains that the enlarged photographic reproduction surrounding the fragmented painting was taken from Hope’s smaller version of the same scene, but again reiterates that collectively, the Hope paintings “provide us one veteran’s vision of the battle of Antietam.”⁸

Perhaps most significantly in this exhibit titled *Witness to Battle*, the text panel accompanying *After the Battle* presents a reproduction of a black and white photograph by Civil War-era photographer Alexander Gardner depicting bodies of dead soldiers in the Sunken Road. The caption under this image states: “Alexander Gardner’s photograph taken two days after the battle depicts a scene dreadfully similar to Hope’s painting.” This caption might lead viewers to the logical conclusion that Gardner’s photograph depicts the same group of bodies, in the same location, as Hope’s “eyewitness” record. Attentive viewers might even compare some of the painted figures in Hope’s fragmented canvas with the figures in the reproduction of Gardner’s photograph and notice some distinct similarities in the poses of many of the bodies. The parallels between the fragmented painting and Gardner’s close-up photograph seem to suggest that Hope’s expansive composition was indeed an accurate recording of a factual scene that both men witnessed.

8. Text panel in front of James Hope’s *After the Battle: Bloody Lane* in the Antietam National Battlefield Park Visitor Center. Similar text and images appear in the pamphlet “Witness to Battle: The Story of September 17th, 1862, as Told Through the Paintings of Captain James Hope,” designed by Park Ranger Keith Snyder.

The text panel indirectly hints at the complexity involved in understanding the meaning of an image such as Hope's painting of Bloody Lane. Despite its presentation as a document of Hope's direct wartime experience, the painting must also be considered in relationship to other contemporaneous records of the battle, in particular, Alexander Gardner's famous photographs. A fuller understanding of the painting would also need to reckon with how its form was influenced by both the aesthetics of Hudson River School Romantic landscapes and the popular resurgence of the panorama format. These various influences converged twenty-five years after the event and together led James Hope to create this particular scene in this particular way.

The reconstructed image and accompanying text panel at the Antietam Visitor Center suggest the need to piece together the different elements of Hope's large painting to understand how it was created and how it originally functioned. Together, the image(s) and text assert that Hope created multiple versions of *After the Battle* and imply that photography played an essential role in both the creation and dissemination of Hope's painting. However, the hybrid Visitor Center installation does not allow a very precise understanding of Hope's compositional decisions in the entire *After the Battle* painting. The combination of the fragmented canvas with the photographic enlargement of an easel-sized version of a similar scene provides only an estimation of the original composition. The brushwork in the small 19 x 36" canvas is too broad, especially in extreme enlargement, to clearly see how Hope detailed each of the figures in the landscape. Crucially, the missing paint in many of the figures on the canvas fragment prevents a clear understanding of how these figures originally looked.

Analysis of a Photographic Reproduction of *After the Battle*

A contemporaneous photographic reproduction of James Hope's 102 x 192" *After the Battle (B)* panorama offers a better document of the once-intact painting (Figure 9).

While obviously lacking the scale and color of the Visitor Center reconstruction, this late-nineteenth-century photographic reproduction affords modern viewers the best understanding of the original composition. Most importantly, the clear details in the photographic reproduction allow viewers to see how Hope compiled and altered some of his source material to compose his supposedly "accurate" scene of the aftermath at Bloody Lane.



Figure 9. *After the Battle (E)*, gelatin silver print, 8.5 x 17", c. 1892, Dickinson College Archives.

The photographic print presents a coherent scene of carnage. It depicts prostrate bodies of soldiers promiscuously scattered across bucolic fields and choking the bed of a sunken, fence-lined road. The image is formatted horizontally, with the width about twice the measure of the height. This horizontal view is divided roughly in half: a misty sky fills the upper part, while rolling hills occupy the lower half. The landscape in the bottom half of image is further subdivided. About a quarter of the way up from the bottom of the picture, a rail fence enters the right side of the frame and creates a bold horizontal line cutting across the image to the center left. Here, a line of dark trees, emerging from behind the brow of a ridge, continues this horizontal thrust across to the left side of the frame. This implied horizontal boundary sharply delineates the foreground of the scene from the middle ground. The fields in the middle distance, along with the background mountains, comprise the second quarter of the overall image up to the center where the mountains meet the sky.

Viewed separately from the expanse of sky, the panoramic quality of the landscape becomes immediately apparent (Figure 10). The viewer's eye enters the scene in the lower right corner and proceeds to the left, following the bank of the road and the cornfield-lined fence to the tall tree just left of center. Here the banks of the road converge at the vanishing point, situated at eye level as the viewer scans the horizon. This gradual convergence seems to funnel the dead bodies in the road into an undifferentiated mass. The horizontal fence line and brow of this foreground plateau provide a momentary pause, and then the viewer picks up the course of the road as it re-emerges to the right of the central group of trees. From this central point, the road angles sharply to the right and climbs diagonally up the hillside in the middle distance. Two trees mark the high point of

the road on the crest of the distant elevation. Beyond this ridgeline, a range of more distant forested hills and mountains frames the vista.



Figure 10. *After the Battle (E)*, detail.

There is a striking contrast between the lowest two quarters of the image. The more distant hillside is lighter, and much more open. Occasional trees break up the fields, and a fairly consistent scattering of tiny bodies dots the hillside. The bottom quarter of the image, in comparison, is much more densely packed with bodies. Their closer proximity, both to one another and to the viewer, creates a gruesomely textured foreground. In the left half of the foreground, bodies lie in a range of positions, some face up and some face down, and have evidently fallen in various directions. Still, there is some space in between them, and few touch. However, in the center and right of the foreground, in the lane, the viewer can see only occasional glimpses of the roadbed between the tightly packed bodies. The bodies are stacked in a jumble; arms and legs emerge at all angles. This mass creates a dense network of shapes and shadows, riveting the viewer's attention formally, even before the comprehension of the human subject matter sinks in.

Such a full and complicated composition of bodies in the immediate foreground tends at first to overwhelm the viewer. But gradually, as the eye moves through the mass of corpses, the viewer can begin to distinguish individual figures. A few of these bodies seem to be especially noteworthy, and from the chaotic mounds of the dead, an aesthetically composed vignette presents itself. The most significant section of this image is the central third of the foreground (Figure 11). To the left in this section, a bearded Union sergeant lies dead on his back. Even in this neutral monochrome photographic print, his dark coat signifies Federal blue. He lies perfectly horizontal, parallel to the picture plane, with his feet pointing towards the center. To the right in this section, a clean-shaven Confederate officer mirrors the pose of the Union sergeant. He also lies on his back, on the same horizontal plane as the Union figure, with a lighter gray uniform and sword belt signifying his allegiance and rank. It seems apparent that James Hope intended for these two figures to mark some special significance.



Figure 11. *After the Battle (E)*, detail.

In the space between these two horizontal, supine bodies, one particular figure quickly catches the viewer's focus. Near the feet of the dark-coated Union sergeant, the

foreshortened body of a Confederate soldier emerges from the bottom frame. The apex of the right angle formed by these two bodies directs the eye to another figure in the lane, directly above the foreshortened soldier. While this Confederate soldier faces away from the viewer, the black belts across his shoulders form a distinctive “X,” which contrasts strongly with the light gray color of his coat. Compared with the scores of other prone Confederate bodies in the lane, this particular figure appears to be kneeling. Moreover, this figure is placed at the intersection of the implied line of the Sunken Road as it moves diagonally across the background hillside and towards the dark-coated Union sergeant in the foreground. The thicket of dark trees that marks the curve where the road disappears behind the embankment, which serves as a visual anchor for the entire image, is situated directly above this figure.

This kneeling Confederate figure, which functions as the focal point for Hope’s entire painting, is still clearly visible in the fragmented remnant of Hope’s canvas in the Antietam Visitor Center today. With his arms at his side and his head bowed forward, the soldier’s upright pose suggests an attitude of prayer. From behind the left side of his body, the barrel of a rifle projects towards the left. It does not quite seem to rest on the rocky embankment that separates the immediate foreground from the space of the road where the man kneels, and so it appears that this kneeling figure still holds the gun erect.

The group of about a dozen bodies in the roadbed surrounding this kneeling figure, bracketed by the paired bodies of the Union sergeant and the Confederate officer, is crucially important for understanding this image. Together, they comprise a central vignette that James Hope presents within this broader image of Bloody Lane. Denotatively, this group represents a collection of intermingled dead bodies, more of the

same that appear throughout this image. But connotatively, this central group of dead bodies in the road carries additional meaning. A closer examination reveals that they are copied almost exactly from a photograph that Alexander Gardner made in the Sunken Road in the days after the battle. While the borders between the painted fragment and its low-resolution photographic supplement in the current Visitor Center display now obscure this group, the nineteenth-century photographic reproduction reveals just how precisely James Hope appropriated these figures from Gardner.

The caption information printed below the mounted photograph of Hope's painting elides direct citation of sources other than the artist's own experience (Figure 12). To the right of the printed title a block of text reads: "From the Original Painting by Captain James Hope, From a Sketch Taken by Him on the Spot." This brief, but highly significant text deepens the meaning of the image considerably. First, this sentence reminds viewers that they are looking at a copy of an original work of art, a photograph of a painting. What's more, the painting was based on an earlier sketch, and the artist himself was a soldier—an officer—and witnessed the scene firsthand. The caption suggests that Captain James Hope was not only present at the battle of Antietam but "on the spot" at the *actual site* of Bloody Lane. The viewer's perspective becomes Hope's original vantage point.

abiding personal interest in the Antietam battlefield, and especially the Sunken Road, might account for his possession of this photograph of James Hope's painting.

John Hays' ownership of this photograph of the *After the Battle* painting also connects Hope's artwork, made in the late 1880s, to two other important records of the aftermath made in the days immediately following the battle. Burial parties of the 130th Pennsylvania Regiment, overseen by John Hays, worked on September 19th to bury the dead that had been killed at the Sunken Road during the battle two days earlier. Members of these 130th Pennsylvania burial crews are recorded in Alexander Gardner's photographs and also in a hand-drawn sketch made by artist-correspondent Frank H. Schell on September 19th. Hays' regiment, therefore, featured in two of the contemporaneous records of the immediate aftermath of the battle at the Sunken Road.

That a veteran of this event, such as Hays, found value in Hope's later depiction of the spectacle gives credence to that depiction. In the absence of Hope's original sketches, it is important to first examine these other contemporaneous records to better understand how Hope might have later incorporated them, along with the testimony of fellow veterans like John Hays II, into his commemorative painting.

It bears repeating that James Hope was unwell at the battle of Antietam and was likely detached from his regiment. Therefore, while the actions and positions of his 2nd Vermont Regiment and its parent organization, the Vermont Brigade, can be established with relative certainty, whether or not Hope himself shared their experiences and witnessed what they saw remains a question. Still, the Vermont Brigade was deployed to the area of the Antietam battlefield overlooking the Sunken Road. Whether Hope was with them initially, joined them later, or just heard their accounts of what they had

witnessed, it seems plausible that the experiences of the Vermont Brigade would form the foundation for Hope's memories of Antietam.

Witnesses' Accounts of the Aftermath at Bloody Lane

The Vermont Brigade played a limited, supporting role in the battle of Antietam. Though they avoided much direct combat, they occupied an exposed forward position and bore witness to the immediate aftermath of the struggle for the Sunken Road.⁹ Just before noon on September 17th, The Vermont Brigade was ordered to support the battered Union divisions fighting in the vicinity of the Sunken Road, including John Hays' 130th Pennsylvania Regiment. The Vermonters deployed into battle lines and connected with the right flank of the existing Union battle line. James Hope's comrades in the 2nd Vermont Regiment faced south, in a line parallel to and about 150 yards away from the Sunken Road.¹⁰ The Vermonters never directly entered the attack on the Sunken Road, but had an immediate view of its capture by Union forces and the aftermath. Throughout the afternoon, artillery rounds and small-arms fire occasionally wounded soldiers in their ranks, but the Brigade's casualties were negligible compared to the carnage all around them.

9. Paul G. Zeller, *The Second Vermont Infantry Regiment, 1861-1865* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2002), 99-100.

10. This information comes from the stone marker to General William Brooks' Vermont Brigade, located on the hillside between the current Visitor Center and the Sunken Road at the Antietam National Battlefield Park. (<http://antietam.stonesentinels.com/monuments/vermont/vermont-brigade/>).

The Vermont Brigade held its exposed position overlooking the Sunken Road from the afternoon of the 17th until the morning of the 19th of September. The Vermonters were among the furthest advanced of any Union troops, facing the no-man's land between the two armies. Though the battle had ended by sunset on the 17th, the Confederate army remained on the field until finally withdrawing during the night of the 18th and 19th. Though the Confederates attempted to collect their wounded, they left their dead on the field when they retreated. The Union soldiers seemed to focus on the visual spectacle of the dead bodies covering the ground, especially in the Sunken Road. A corporal in the 2nd Vermont wrote in a letter home:

A short distance from me is a road with a rail fence on each side and for nearly ½ mile the road is so full of dead rebels that one could hardly step between the bodies. Some places one or two deep or lying over each other. On the fence is dead men partly over when killed. The sight is awful. ¹¹

Another soldier concurred:

The battlefield is beyond description. The dead and mangled forms of our men in many cases lay side by side with those of the rebels; for the ground had been fought over many times. In a narrow road in our front [the Sunken Road], a rebel regiment has been posted and was most destroyed by the fire in front and enfilading batteries. In crossing this road it was impossible not to step on a dead body. Some were shot while attempting to get over the fence in their rear and their remains were hanging there. ¹²

John Conline was a sixteen-year-old soldier in the Vermont Brigade. Describing his experiences at Antietam many years later, Conline's recollections echo other soldiers' accounts of the Sunken Road:

...The sight, which met our gaze, was so shocking and frightful as to be almost beyond belief. The Confederate dead were laid out in rows on boards, so close

11. Paul G. Zeller, *The Second Vermont Infantry Regiment*, 101.

12. Ibid.

together that one could hardly take a step without stepping on the slain. The sunken road was also partially filled with dead all along our front. One of the sights not to be forgotten, was that of a Confederate trying to escape to the rear across a rail fence on the west side of the sunken road; he had his right foot across the rail, the left in a partial kneeling position, with one hand holding a piece of apple in his mouth, shot dead transfixed and erect with seven bullet holes in his back. Lieutenant-Colonel Lightfoot, of the Confederate army, was left dangerously wounded on this scene of death.¹³

As the sun rose on the morning of September 19th, the Union soldiers realized that the Confederates had vacated their defenses and retreated. While Union cavalry was sent out to scout for the Rebel army, the thousands of Union soldiers remaining on the field set about burying the dead, digging pits to dispose of dead animals and collecting discarded weapons and equipment. Many soldiers not detailed for other duties took stock of the immensity of the experience of the preceding days. They wandered the field, visiting “different points of interest on the battlefield nearby.”¹⁴ These soldiers

13. John Conline, *Recollections of The Battle of Antietam And the Maryland Campaign: A Paper Read Before the Michigan Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, January 7, 1897* (Detroit: Stone Printing Company, 1898), 110-119. (<http://suvcw.org/mollus/warpapers/Miv2p110.htm>). Some of the details Conline recounts are strikingly similar to Hope’s painting of the scene. Indeed, Conline may have been familiar with Hope’s *After the Battle* painting when he made his remarks in 1898. Conline seems to conflate the sight of dead Confederate soldiers attempting to escape over the fence into Piper’s cornfield with the sight of dead Confederates in life-like postures. He also reiterates the spurious story of the capture of the wounded Lieutenant-Colonel Lightfoot of the 6th Alabama Regiment, who is represented by the prominent Confederate officer depicted in Hope’s painting. I believe that photographic reproductions of Hope’s painting influenced many veterans’ memories of the Sunken Road.

14. Miles Clayton Huyette, *The Maryland Campaign and the Battle of Antietam* (Buffalo, NY: M.C. Huyette, 1915), 35-37. Huyette uses James Hope’s painting of the battle around the Dunker Church to illustrate the section on the morning phase of the battle. The reproduction includes numbers superimposed on the painting with a key below to identify important landscape features. The author noted it was painted by “Capt. James Hope, who participated in the battle.”

represented the first sightseers to the battlefield of Antietam, and their voyeuristic tourism began before the smoke had cleared and the dead had been buried.

As the battle subsided, the ranks of the Vermonters and other Union units, including the 130th Pennsylvania Regiment, remained in line about a hundred yards parallel to the carnage in the Sunken Road. After the Confederates retreated and curious sightseers began to throng the field, the 130th Pennsylvania was ordered to bury the Confederate dead along its front. John Hays II, then a young officer in the 130th Pennsylvania, oversaw the nauseating work. Hays recalled the burial of the dead at Bloody Lane:

The Regiment was detailed two days after the battle to bury the rebel dead on a designated portion of the field.... The dead bodies were two and three deep in that sunken roadway, and it was almost impossible to cross it without stepping on dead bodies.¹⁵

The 130th Pennsylvania removed more than five hundred bodies from the half-mile stretch of the Sunken Road opposite its position. Recalling the experience years later, Hays asserted that “anyone who ever saw Bloody Lane as the tide of battle left it could appreciate the overwhelming injury our regiment helped inflict on that enemy.... It was a fearful sight and attested to the bravery of the men in blue and the men in gray.”¹⁶ This last sentence from Hays is particularly interesting, since he seems to first celebrate the triumph of his Union soldiers over the “enemy,” but then reiterates that both the Union and Confederates had displayed incredible valor. Perhaps his partisan, sectional

15. John Hays II, “Address to Reunion of the 130th Pennsylvania by John Hays II,” 1908, pp. 7-8. John Hays II Papers (MC 2001.1, B8, F5), Archives and Special Collections, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA.

16. Hays II, “Address to Reunion of the 130th Pennsylvania,” 7-8.

pride was tempered by a later desire for reconciliation. Hays made these remarks at a reunion of his regiment in 1908, nearly fifty years after the battle. It is noteworthy that he specifically cited “anyone who ever saw Bloody Lane as the tide of battle left it” as being particularly endowed by this powerful experience. In addition to the soldiers and civilians thronging the field on September 19th, this select group would include James Hope, photographer Alexander Gardner, and Frank H. Schell, a sketch artist for *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*.

Frank H. Schell drew the 130th Pennsylvania digging trenches and carrying the dead Confederates out of the Sunken Road and laying them on the grass of the Roulette Farm (Figure 13). He dated this drawing September 19th, and though the viewer can see that bodies are still sprawled on the ground, the roadbed of the lane is empty. Perhaps John Hays II was one of the Union officers pictured overseeing the burial parties. Schell’s sketch also includes the ubiquitous tourists mingling with the working soldiers. Children and at least one woman mix with the civilian men that gesture at the dead bodies. One well-dressed man holds a child by one hand, and covers his nose with the other. The frenetic activity in Schell’s sketch is a far cry from the desolate stillness of Hope’s *After the Battle*.

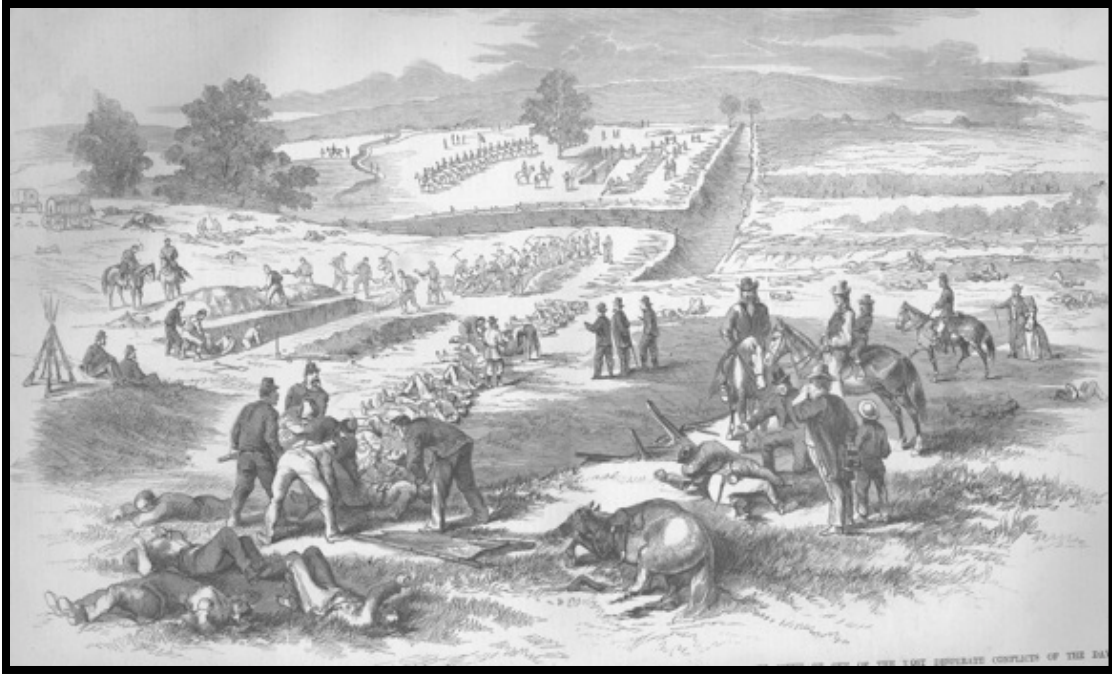


Figure 13. Francis H. Schell, *Battle of Antietam-The 130th Pennsylvania Regiment of Volunteers Buying the Rebel Dead, Friday, Sept. 19-This Spot Was the Scene of One of the Most Desperate Conflicts of the Day*, Published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, October 18, 1862.

Schell's sketch is striking for another reason. It uses almost the same vantage point as Hope's image of the Bloody Lane. In the middle ground, the Sunken Road enters from the right side of the frame and then makes an abrupt angle and heads uphill, away from the viewer, to two small trees on the crest of the distant ridge. On the left side of Schell's image, the tree-lined Roulette farm lane emerges and intersects with the Sunken Road. James Hope's vantage point for his own sketch of Bloody Lane, on which he supposedly based his painting, would have been slightly to the right of Schell's vantage point for this drawing. Though nothing would preclude both artists from making similar drawings of this spectacle, could James Hope have encountered Schell's published drawing, and might it have influenced his later work?

Schell's drawings, published as wood engravings in the illustrated press, allowed readers far removed from the scene to visualize the scope of the carnage on the landscape around Antietam. However, working on the same day and in nearly the same location, photographer Alexander Gardner was undertaking documentation that would more significantly alter the public's appreciation of and demand for authentic images of battle.

Alexander Gardner's Photographs of the Dead at Antietam

Alexander Gardner, working with his assistant James Gibson, photographed the Antietam battlefield beginning on September 19th, before all of the dead had been buried. Gardner made three images at the Sunken Road, recording images of dead Confederate bodies. Modern critics and historians of photography have cited Alexander Gardner's Antietam images as a turning point in the development of the photographic medium. Gardner's pictures were displayed in Mathew Brady's fashionable New York City gallery and published as both photographic prints and engraved illustrations. The mass consumption of these mediated images offered Americans a shared experience of current events. These were among the first pictures of slain American soldiers ever recorded and were instrumental in defining a new role for documentary photography. With an immediacy beyond written and drawn accounts, these photographs granted civilians far removed from the site a clear look at the consequences of modern warfare. The assumed

veracity of Gardner's images helped photography eclipse handmade pictures as the "preeminent form of visual communication" in America.¹⁷

Though the photographic medium was only about twenty years old, by the 1860s technological and economic factors had rendered it accessible to all classes and pervasive in American society. Up to this point, photography had been primarily a portrait medium. The early Daguerreotype process produced images of incredible clarity and detail, but each was unique. While this process sufficed for studio portraits, the long exposure times and irreproducibility of Daguerreotypes discouraged scenic photography. It made little economic sense for a photographer to document views of significant landscapes.

However, technological developments on the eve of the Civil War opened new possibilities. The collodion wet-plate glass negative and albumen paper printing processes introduced in the 1850s meant that a single negative could now produce a nearly unlimited number of prints of the same scene. It became commercially viable to equip photographers so that they could make the arduous attempt to capture images of noteworthy places, since the potential financial reward would be great. Photographic entrepreneurs could sell thousands of albumen prints of the same image. Photographers across the country began to produce photographic souvenirs of the landscape sites made famous by Romantic landscape painters. In turn, landscape painters like James Hope attempted to render their painted views in the same exacting detail as the camera now offered.

17. Jeff L. Rosenheim, *Photography and the American Civil War* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013). See also Eleanor Jones Harvey, *The Civil War in American Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 240-241.

The new American enthusiasm for documentary landscape views was spurred in large measure by the burgeoning popularity of stereoscopic prints.¹⁸ Special stereoscopic cameras, with two lenses spaced several inches apart, captured two nearly identical images on a single collodion glass plate negative. When printed and viewed through a stereoscopic viewer, the two images merged, enabling viewers to perceive the scene in three dimensions. Americans began to avidly collect stereoscopic prints, especially in the wake of the release of an inexpensive stereoscopic viewer invented by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., an early champion of photography for educational purposes. Stereoscopic photographs allowed viewers to experience scenes far removed from their own environments. People all over the country, and eventually the world, could experience the same scenes. These shared images became the standard by which people everywhere would understand the momentous events of the nation.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., published articles extolling the benefits of photographic documentation of places and events. He claimed that “the stereoscopic figure spares us nothing...there is such a frightful amount of detail, that we have the same sense of infinite complexity which nature gives us.”¹⁹ Holmes contended that such “realistic” images granted viewers the opportunity to experience remote places in a way that rivaled and even surpassed the experience of actually visiting the site. The clear, organized view presented by the photograph was even better than the cluttered confusion

18. Elizabeth Lindquist-Cock, *The Influence of Photography on American Landscape Painting, 1839-1880* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977), 46-47.

19. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., “The Stereoscope and the Stereograph,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 3, no. 20 (June 1859) : 738–748. See also Lindquist-Cock, *The Influence of Photography on American Landscape Painting*, 37.

of actual experience. Printed information accompanying the images guided viewers' comprehension. In effect, Holmes argued that stereoscopic photographs provided much the same virtual touristic experience as did the pre-existing medium of painted panoramas, but with the added benefit of seemingly accurate, mechanically captured images. He claimed that the stereoscope produced a "surprise such as no painting ever produced."²⁰ That surprise was the semblance of authenticity.

Presented with new opportunities to record history as it unfolded, Civil War-era photographers undertook extensive documentation of the ongoing military campaigns. Early in the war, leading American photographer Mathew Brady decided to document the conflict as it progressed. Brady claimed altruistic motives to preserve an "authentic" document of the momentous national events, but he also understood that Americans wanted to purchase and own images of sites of interest. In his wartime effort to capitalize on the popularity of stereoscopic views, Mathew Brady increasingly relied on the expertise of the manager of his Washington, D.C., gallery, Alexander Gardner.²¹ Like James Hope, Gardner had been born in Scotland. By 1855, Gardner had immigrated to New York, and become Brady's key assistant. While skilled in portrait photography, Gardner also excelled at outdoor views, often made with the stereoscopic camera. His photographic compositions drew upon the aesthetic conventions of picturesque landscape painting, and he developed a method for capturing significant events through carefully composed images of the landscape on which the events had transpired. Gardner later

20. Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph".

21. Anthony W. Lee and Elizabeth Young, *On Alexander Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 5.

claimed that it was his own idea, rather than Brady's, to systematically document the war through a published series of photographs.

The American public avidly followed the progress of the war through newspaper accounts, and grew accustomed to seeing engraved images of the sketches of artist-correspondents like Frank H. Schell. However, the conventions of photographic and panoramic authenticity fueled public demands for ever more accurate depictions of important battle sites. Photographers attempted to satisfy this desire, but the technological restrictions of their medium limited the possibility in crucial ways. Unlike sketch artists, photographers could not capture the violent action of battles in progress. The long exposure time not only precluded photographers from capturing rapid movement, but the laborious process could only be carried out on a peaceful field in the possession of friendly forces. Photographers like Mathew Brady and Alexander Gardner could document the sites of battles only retrospectively, after the action itself had subsided, on fields under Union control.²²

Because of the technical limitations of collodion wet-plate photography, Alexander Gardner could not record images of actual battles in progress. He could record only the sites or evidence of battles after the fact. This retrospective aspect of Civil War photography meant that Gardner and other photographers had to initially record views of largely depopulated landscapes. They composed images of buildings,

22. William A. Frassanito, *Antietam: The Photographic Legacy of America's Bloodiest Day* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978), 21. Frassanito's explanation of the logistics of Civil War-era battlefield photography influenced subsequent histories of Alexander Gardner's approaches. See also Bob Zeller, *The Blue and Gray in Black and White: A History of Civil War Photography* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005) and Jeff L. Rosenheim, *Photography and the American Civil War*.

earthworks, and eventually graves, to give evidence of the events that had transpired there. However, this technological limitation forced Gardner to consider how to frame scenes so that the viewer would be encouraged to imagine the action that had previously taken place there. Though somewhat underappreciated at the time, the greatest aesthetic contribution of Gardner's photography was to "accentuate the belatedness of photography."²³ Photographs isolate, record, and preserve a moment in time. However, the recorded image always references the irretrievability of the wider context from which that moment was extracted.

Nineteenth-century photography could not adequately picture action, so photographers like Alexander Gardner excelled at documenting scenic views and still-lives of objects that implied actions that had already taken place. These motionless subjects could be considered the "markers of history," encouraging viewers to engage with them and imaginatively reconstruct or reenact the foregoing actions.²⁴ The public demand for authentic pictures of battle led photographers to seek more consequential subject matter. The most effective subjects to indicate the violent authenticity of the experience of battle were the bodies of dead soldiers. The presence of these bodies alluded to the preceding struggle but simultaneously acknowledged a sense of loss and absence. In creating his *After the Battle* painting around images copied from Gardner's series, James Hope might have intuitively recognized the significant elegiac quality of all photographs, but especially those of the dead.

23. Lee and Young, *On Alexander Gardner's Sketch Book of the Civil War*, 26.

24. *Ibid.*, 30-31.

The circumstances at Antietam provided Alexander Gardner with the first opportunity to record images of the dead on the battlefield before the bodies were buried.²⁵ Travelling from his Washington, D.C., gallery, Gardner followed the Union army into Maryland and may have arrived in time to watch the fighting on September 17th.²⁶ After the fighting subsided, the two armies remained on the field that night and all the next day. Although newspaper sketch artists and correspondents documented the scene, Gardner had no opportunity to move freely or set up his cumbersome equipment. During the night of the 18th, the Confederate army retreated back across the Potomac River into Virginia. On the morning of September 19th, with the Union army in possession of the battlefield, Gardner finally ventured on to it and encountered a devastated landscape covered with unburied bodies.

Gardner attempted to quickly record as many quality images of the scarred landscape and especially of dead soldiers as he could, even as Union burial parties began their task of interring the dead. It seems that he began photographing the northern part of the battlefield, and his images of dead Confederate artillerymen near the Dunker Church were among the first he captured. Most of these images were made with a stereoscopic camera, since Gardner knew these would be the most marketable prints.

25. Bob Zeller, *The Blue and Gray in Black and White*, 72-77. See also: William A. Frassanito, *Antietam: The Photographic Legacy of America's Bloodiest Day*, 52. Modern historians have attempted to reconstruct Gardner's movements around the area of the battlefield to determine the dates, times and order in which he exposed his images.

26. Kathleen A. Ernst, *Too Afraid to Cry: Maryland Civilians in the Antietam Campaign* (Stackpole Books: Mechanicsburg, PA, 1999), 141-142. Gardner may have watched the battle from the Pry House, where Union General McClellan had established his headquarters. This property, atop a hill on the north side of Antietam Creek afforded a "panoramic view" of the battlefield, and thousands of soldiers and civilians watched the progress of the battle from here.

Gardner spent most of the morning documenting the northern part of the battlefield but likely encountered soldiers and civilians who told of the even more horrific scene a half-mile to the south. He packed up his darkroom wagon and relocated to the vicinity of the Sunken Road. It was late afternoon by the time he arrived and got set up.²⁷ Federal burial parties had already interred the Union dead and were clearing the Sunken Road of the Confederate bodies. On the morning of the 19th, John Hays' regiment, the 130th Pennsylvania, had commenced burying the decomposing Confederate dead in long trenches dug in the Roulette farm fields adjacent to the Sunken Road. Soldiers from the 130th Pennsylvania were nearing the completion of this odious duty when Gardner arrived on the scene. Only isolated groups of dead Confederate soldiers remained in the bed of the Sunken Road, and Gardner must have worked quickly with his stereo camera to record these remaining bodies before the spectacle of "Bloody Lane" disappeared.²⁸

Gardner's first stereo image of the Sunken Road was made at a position near the center of the Confederate defensive line.²⁹ Here, the road dips downhill slightly and makes a slight bend where it meets the Roulette farm lane. The trees in the background of this image mark the position of the Roulette lane, just over the crest of the hill. Gardner positioned his camera on the southern bank of the Sunken Road, and recorded the fields

27. Zeller, *The Blue and Gray in Black and White*, 75.

28. Frassanito, *Antietam*, 205-206.

29. William Frassanito pioneered the technique of determining the exact location of Gardner's camera position. He systematically walked each section of the battlefield until he could precisely match up topographical features with the lay of the land in the background of the photographs. He stated that all three camera positions for Gardner's Sunken Road negatives were determined easily.

to the northeast over which the Union soldiers had attacked. Gardner labeled this stereo image #565 in his catalogue (Figure 14).



Figure 14. Alexander Gardner, #565. *View of ditch which had been used as a rifle-pit at the Battle of Antietam, 1862, albumen print (Library of Congress).*

In Gardner's image #565, several dead Confederate soldiers lie in the foreground. Fence rails that had been piled up as breastworks lie to the left of the Sunken Road, and some are scattered into the lane itself. Some of the Confederate bodies appear to have dried blood caked on their faces, and one of the foreground bodies may be missing its head.³⁰ On the opposite side of the road, in the middle ground sits a man on horseback,

30. Robert K. Krick, "It Appeared as Though Mutual Extermination Would Put a Stop to the Awful Carnage: Confederates in Sharpsburg's Bloody Lane," in *The Antietam Campaign*, edited by Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 222-258. It is unclear if the soldier in Gardner's image #565 is missing a head, or if the angle at which he lies hides the head from view. Additionally, there has been vigorous debate about whether Gardner's image may include the body of Confederate Colonel Charles C. Tew of the 2nd North Carolina Regiment. Tew was mortally wounded during the fighting but was still alive when the Union troops overran

either a soldier or civilian. A single soldier stands in front of the horseman, his head blurred from movement. Further down the opposite bank of the Sunken Road stands a group of about fifteen Union soldiers, some with their jackets removed. Some of these standing men look at the road and some in the direction of Gardner's camera. These Union soldiers may be part of a burial detail of the 130th Pennsylvania Regiment who were finishing burying the Confederate dead in this section of the lane as Gardner worked. Though a considerable number of bodies remain in the road, the bodies from the surrounding fields have already been cleared.

The second two images that Gardner recorded at Bloody Lane on the afternoon of September 19th were exposed about 125 yards farther east along the Sunken Road. Gardner likely proceeded downhill and around the bend in the Sunken Road where it intersected with the Roulette farm lane. From there, the Sunken Road runs uphill. Gardner exposed two stereo negatives that portray the same general stretch of the Sunken Road. Gardner likely first took the image he labeled #563, which shows a more expansive view of the road as it runs east up the hill (Figure 15). He then took a second photograph, #553, which depicts the same group of dead Confederate soldiers, but this time from a much closer vantage point (Figure 16).

the position. When Union soldiers tried to take his sword, he clung to it with his last remaining strength before he died. It may be possible that somehow this story was misremembered by Union veterans, and the identity of Colonel Tew was confused with that of Lieutenant-Colonel James N. Lightfoot of the 6th Alabama Regiment. Hope identifies the dead Confederate officer in his painting as Lieutenant-Colonel Lightfoot. In any case, the location of Hope's painting corresponds with that of Gardner's photograph #565.



Figure 15. Alexander Gardner, #563. *View in the Ditch on the right wing, after the Battle of Antietam, 1862, albumen print (Library of Congress).*

In image #563, Gardner's camera is positioned on the north side of the Sunken Road, facing east. In the background a damaged fence line separates the Sunken Road from the Piper cornfield. Along the horizon line, at the vanishing point of the road stands a group of trees which may be the same ones marking the high point of the Sunken Road in Frank Schell's sketch and in James Hope's paintings. In the foreground, the roadbed is filled with detritus, including boards and fence rails, discarded equipment, and broken cornstalks. In the upper left corner of the image stands a Union soldier in a long frock coat. He stares back at Gardner's camera with arms folded. Behind this soldier are a number of other standing figures, blurred by motion. Below the standing Union soldiers lie a number of dead bodies in the roadbed. In this image, these Confederate bodies are fairly distant and thus indistinct. It is apparent, however, that the Sunken Road at this point had been generally cleared of its dead. Because the dead lie in a clump, it can be

assumed that other bodies have already been collected and removed for burial. It is possible that Gardner had asked the Union soldiers standing on the bank to pause in their work while he made the exposure. Perhaps because the nearly cleared road did not fully communicate the original full condition of Bloody Lane, Gardner likely moved closer to the group of bodies to record his final image at the Sunken Road.



Figure 16. Alexander Gardner, #553. *Ditch on Right Wing, where a large number of Rebels were killed at the Battle of Antietam, 1862, albumen print (Library of Congress).*

In image #553, Gardner depicts the same group of bodies as in #563, but this time from a much closer perspective. His camera position is still on the north rim of the Sunken Road, but now nearly directly above the group of dead Confederate bodies. In this closer view, the bodies more completely fill the frame, and the viewer can discern individual bodies from among the dozen or so intermingled human forms. Though the areas around this central group of dead seem to have already been cleared, the contorted poses of the Confederate bodies communicate that they lie just as they fell during the fury of the fighting at Bloody Lane.

Despite the presence of two Union soldiers calmly gazing down at the dead Rebels from the far bank of the Sunken Road, this image most clearly connotes the violence of the battle and the “heaped” bodies left in its aftermath. Gardner’s photograph #553 is certainly the image that James Hope used when he composed his *After the Battle* panoramic painting. Hope not only copied the poses of these specific figures but also likely drew upon Gardner’s image to activate his own memory and imaginatively reconstruct the scene of the Bloody Lane *before* the Union burial parties had removed any bodies. Yet James Hope didn’t create his painted version of *After the Battle* for more than twenty-five years following the event. To understand how and why Hope might have returned to Gardner’s image in 1888, it is first necessary to outline the reception and publication history of Gardner’s shocking images. It is also important to trace the history of James Hope’s postwar career and to establish the professional and social climate that encouraged him to re-engage with Civil War imagery a quarter century after the battle of Antietam.

The Publication and Re-Publication of Alexander Gardner’s Antietam Photographs

In October 1862, a month after the battle, Mathew Brady opened an exhibition of Alexander Gardner’s photographs in his New York Gallery entitled “The Dead of Antietam.” This was the public’s first exposure to images of dead soldiers on a Civil War battlefield. Especially for Northern audiences, geographically removed from the sites of the conflict, the images were shocking. But viewers were also fascinated, and eagerly

sought out the photographs, which sold well.³¹ An anonymous critic for the *New York Times* wrote a memorable (and often-cited) summary of the exhibition:

Mr. Brady has done something to bring home to us the terrible reality and earnestness of war. If he has not brought bodies and laid them in our dooryards and along the streets, he has done something very like it...Of all objects of horror one would think the battle-field should stand preeminent, that it should bear away the palm of repulsiveness. But, on the contrary, there is a terrible fascination about it that draws one near these pictures, and makes him loth to leave them. You will see hushed, reverend groups standing around these weird copies of carnage, bending down to look in the pale faces of the dead, chained by the strange spell that dwells in dead men's eyes.... These pictures have a terrible distinctness. By the aid of the magnifying glass, the very features of the slain may be distinguished. We would scarce choose to be in the gallery, when one of the women bending over them should recognize a husband, son, or a brother in the still, lifeless lines of bodies, that lie ready for the gaping trenches.³²

The “Dead of Antietam” exhibition and the subsequent publication of stereographs and larger prints of the images proved a critical and commercial success for Mathew Brady. Alexander Gardner, perhaps piqued by the credit Brady received for the Antietam series, soon left Brady’s employ and opened his own photographic studio and gallery. The standard set by the photographs of dead soldiers at Antietam pushed Gardner and other photographers to redouble their efforts to record dramatic images of the dead during future campaigns. Perhaps the most striking example of this is when Gardner posed a

31. Harvey, *The Civil War in American Art*, 82.

32 “Brady’s Photographs; Pictures of the Dead at Antietam,” *New York Times*, October 20, 1862, 5. This *New York Times* review is cited in nearly every study of Civil War–era photography and forms the basis of much of the critical analysis of Gardner’s contributions to documentation and art. Reflecting on the possibilities raised in this review, I believe that James Hope carefully examined the individual features of the dead in Gardner’s images, in some cases further personalizing their faces in his painting. There is also a story, recounted by Hope’s descendants, that echoes this *New York Times* review. Supposedly, an old woman fainted after recognizing her own son among the dead bodies represented in Hope’s painting on display at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo. See Elizabeth Theriault Strum, “Nineteenth Century American Painter,” 57-58.

dead Confederate soldier in Devil's Den after the battle of Gettysburg to create a more poignant image.³³

When he parted with Mathew Brady in late 1862, Alexander Gardner took all of his own original negatives, including the Antietam images. In addition to publishing prints under his own name, he made innovative use of his photographs during the remainder of the war. In the summer of 1864, Gardner partnered with an inventor who had patented a "stereopticon," a powerful projector that could display an image from a glass slide onto a twenty-four-foot-wide screen. Titled "Incidents of the War," these lantern slide shows were performed for packed houses in New York City theaters. Advertisements for the shows proclaimed that the presentations included images "from the first battle of Bull Run up to the present position...in the most faithful and vivid manner, each view being reproduced on a canvas covering a surface of over 600 square feet."³⁴ These stereopticon presentations featured Gardner's most famous images, including his Bloody Lane photographs. A review of the spectacular presentation noted that "the dead appear almost to speak; the distant to overcome space and time and be close and palpable."³⁵ Both the scale and the promotion of Gardner's stereopticon shows were redolent of panorama displays. Instead of viewing the photographs in the staid

33. William A. Frassanito, *Gettysburg: A Journey in Time* (New York: Scribner, 1975). See also Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2004). Frassanito first proposed the idea that Gardner posed dead bodies for dramatic effect, blurring the line between Realist and Romantic documentation. Sontag and others have furthered the debate on the moral ramifications of Gardner's images.

34. Harvey, *Civil War in American Art*, 93-94.

35. *Ibid.*

environment of a portrait gallery or in the isolation of one's own home, audiences could view them collectively, in an immersive public experience.

James Hope had been discharged from the army for disability in December 1862. By the summer of 1864, he was again living in New York City and had resumed his painting career. Perhaps he was among those who paid the twenty-five-cent admission fee to view Gardner's stereopticon display. This spectacular display of recent history might have influenced Hope's decision to begin work on a panoramic canvas of his own. Hope began a large painting of the Army of the Potomac's 1862 encampment at Cumberland Landing on the Pamunky River. He based the canvas on his own eyewitness sketches of the scene, but Brady's photographers had recorded similar panoramic views. Could Hope have drawn upon these photographic sources as well?

Alexander Gardner's photographs remained popular through the war years, and continued to sell steadily in the later 1860s.³⁶ By the 1870s, with the nation mired in economic recession and struggling with the politics of Reconstruction, images of the Civil War fell from favor. The E. & H. T. Anthony Company, which had been the wholesale distributor of Gardner's images during the war, finally pulled the images from publication and placed Gardner's original negatives into storage in 1873. Alexander Gardner moved west and died in 1882. His Antietam images continued to circulate as

36. Lee and Young, *On Alexander Gardner's Sketch Book of the Civil War*. In 1866 Alexander Gardner compiled one hundred of the best photographs of the war into a publication he titled *Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the War*. In the introduction to the book, Gardner wrote: "Verbal representations of such places, or scenes, may or may not have the merit of accuracy; but photographic presentments of them will be accepted by posterity with an undoubting faith." Though it was important as an aesthetic document of the War, the book itself was an expensive item and relatively few sold, so the popular impact of Gardner's sketchbook may have been minimal at the time.

stereographs and photographic prints, but it was not until the late 1880s that the images were republished and found wider visibility.

In the 1880s, John C. Taylor, a Union veteran and commander of the Grand Army of the Republic post in Hartford, Connecticut, purchased a huge collection of original glass negatives from an apparently neglected storage space owned by the Anthony Company.³⁷ This collection included all of Alexander Gardner's wartime negatives, including the original glass stereo-plates exposed at Antietam. Taylor and other veterans' groups tried to persuade the United States government to acquire the collection, but to no avail. Taylor had also discovered a huge stock of unsold Anthony Company Civil War stereographs, including Gardner's images of Bloody Lane, and began selling these with his own labels pasted over the original ones. Taylor discovered that there was a new audience, and a lucrative new market, for these images. Civil War veterans had reached middle age and had begun to commemorate their wartime service. Viewers were now interested in these images not as current events, but as history.³⁸

Around 1890, John C. Taylor formed a partnership called Taylor & Huntington and produced a new series of stereographs from the original Alexander Gardner negatives that he owned. Changing their name to the descriptive War Photograph and Exhibition Company, Taylor and Huntington titled their new series "War Memories," and published a catalogue containing more than 220 images (Figure 17). The War Photograph and

37. Zeller, *The Blue and Gray in Black and White*, 191-193.

38. Some of Alexander Gardner's images were also used to illustrate a series of articles that appeared in the *Century Magazine* during the 1880s. These articles, written by both Union and Confederate veterans, were eventually incorporated into the multi-volume *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, published in 1887, just before James Hope embarked on his series of Antietam panoramas.

Exhibition Company also produced stereopticon slides, similar to those Gardner had developed during the war. But the promotions for both the stereographic prints and the lantern slides now stressed nostalgia and reminiscence as the driving factors behind the value of these images. The War Photograph and Exhibition Company catalogue read:

Just how things looked "at the front," during the great war, is, with most of us, now, after the lapse of more than twenty-five years, only a fading memory, cherished, it is true, and often called up from among the dim pictures of the past, but after all, only the vision of a dream. Artists have painted, and sketched, and engraved, with more or less fidelity to fact and detail those "scenes of trial and danger," but all of their pictures are, in a greater or less degree, imaginary conceptions of the artist. Happily our Government authorized, during the war, skillful photographers to catch with their cameras the reflection, as in a mirror, of very many of those thrilling and interesting scenes. These views vividly renew the memories of our war days.³⁹

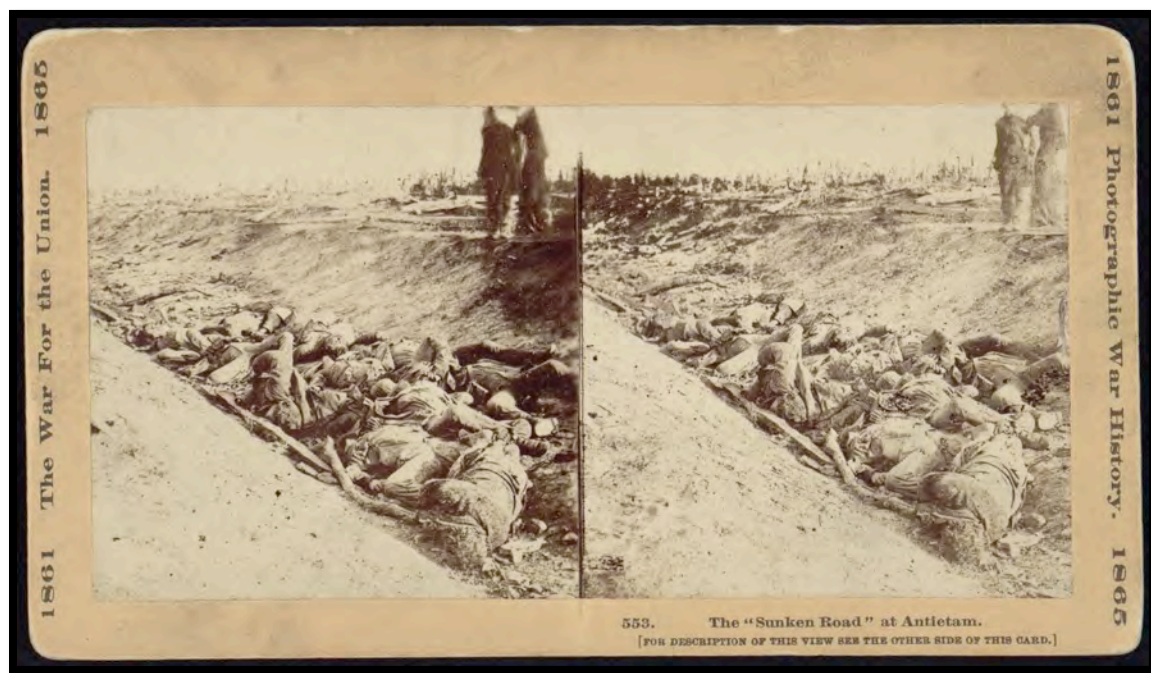


Figure 17. Alexander Gardner, #553. *The Sunken Road at Antietam*, stereograph from the War Photograph and Exhibition Company series, c. 1890s. (Library of Congress).

39. *War Memories: The War for the Union: Views Made by Government Photographers During the Great War: Catalogue of Original Photographic War Views* (Hartford, CT: The War Photograph & Exhibition Company, 1891).

The same spirit of nostalgia and renewed interest in “war memories” represented by the re-emergence of Civil War photographs in the late 1880s perhaps affected James Hope as well. As an artist, he was among those who had sketched and painted the scenes of the war. But the Civil War paintings that Hope produced up to this point were not, by and large, “scenes of trial and danger.” Most of Hope’s Civil War paintings were produced in two distinct periods.⁴⁰ The first period dates from the time of Hope’s discharge from the Union army in late 1862 through the remainder of the war. However, Hope seems to have largely stopped painting Civil War subjects in the later 1860s. Following his move to Watkins Glen, throughout the 1870s and 1880s, he focused on picturesque natural landscapes, only to return to Civil War imagery in his first scene of Antietam in 1888.

Between 1862 and 1865 Hope had painted at least five scenes based on life in army camps. These include the relatively small oils of *The Bivouac Near the Chickahominy at Burned Ordinary, Virginia* and *On The Banks of the Pamunkey Near White House Landing, Virginia*. The culmination of these serene genre paintings was the panoramic 54 x 126” canvas of *The Army of the Potomac at Cumberland Landing on the Pamunkey*. The painting depicted the entire Union army encampment, which Hope had supposedly sketched from life on May 12, 1862. When it was unveiled in Hope’s New York studio, contemporary reviewers lauded the painting for its accuracy in documenting the topography of the landscape and its detailed depictions of the camps of more than 80,000 troops. One critic wrote:

40. Strum, “James Hope,” 51-52.

All the details of this work are admirably managed, and the artist, being a soldier himself, knew both what to depict, and what to leave out in a scene like this....The picture, in short, is one of power and ability, and cannot fail of holding a place in the future among the best pictures of the war.⁴¹

Such reviews made no mention of the contemporaneous photographic documentation of the same wartime scene. While the critics highlight Hope's nearly photographic details, they also emphasize his artistic ability to edit elements to best capture the spirit of the place. *The Army of the Potomac* canvas established Hope's reputation in the New York art world and ushered in his most successful professional period. Hope continued to travel to Vermont during the summers to sketch but maintained his New York studio during the winter. Although he had shown paintings at the annual National Academy of Art exhibitions since the 1850s, it wasn't until 1871 that he was elected as an Associate member of the National Academy. This recognition surely helped attract clients for his detailed, picturesque Romantic landscape works.

In 1871, a visitor to Hope's Fifth Avenue studio in New York offered him a \$10,000 commission to paint a large depiction of Rainbow Falls in Watkins Glen, New York. That summer, instead of working in Vermont, James Hope travelled to Watkins Glen to complete the commission. The narrow gorge that comprised the Glen had once been a working stream that powered a mill at the entrance to the gorge. However, in 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, a local entrepreneur had purchased the land surrounding the gorge and developed it as a picturesque tourist attraction. Wooden walkways and platforms were constructed along the precipitous cliffs, allowing visitors to view the pools and waterfalls. By the time James Hope visited in 1871, Watkins Glen

41. Freeman, *The Hope Paintings*, 88. Freeman reproduced an excerpt from a contemporaneous review in *Watson's Weekly Art Journal*.

was a thriving tourist attraction, due in large part to the stereographs and other souvenir photographs marketed by railroad promoters and local photographic studios.

James Hope evidently saw a professional and personal opportunity in Watkins Glen. Although he had served only eighteen months during the Civil War, Hope suffered lifelong complications due to the strain of his campaigning. He had been a robust man before the war, often traveling far on foot laden with painting supplies. However, his exposure to the elements during the war had left him with a chronic cough and diarrhea, and he suffered from “partial paralysis,” unable to walk well. He also had lost hearing in his left ear, and claimed that it was specifically caused by the incessant noise of the battle of Antietam.⁴² Worn out by the physical and financial strain of living between Vermont and New York City, Hope decided to move permanently to Watkins Glen in 1872. He established himself as a local painter of Glen scenes, with a ready audience of visiting tourists. He constructed a small home with an attached gallery on the edge of the gorge. From 1872 until his death in 1892, Hope focused on painting landscapes, almost exclusively of Watkins Glen and the gorges and waterfalls of the surrounding region. He exhibited these in his gallery alongside his earlier Civil War camp scenes, and charged a modest entry fee to visitors.

Within a few years, James Hope’s younger son, James Douglas Hope, moved from Vermont to join his parents in Watkins Glen. During the early 1870s, James Douglas Hope had spent several years learning the profession of photography in Niagara

42. Donald H. Thompson and Carol L. Thompson, *Perseverance: The Life and Work of Painter James Hope* (Kingston, NY: ColorPage, 2016), 38-39. Hope’s ailments were detailed in pension affidavits filed in the 1880s and 1890s.

Falls, the archetypical American tourist site.⁴³ When he joined his father in Watkins Glen, James Douglas brought the skills to capture and market photographic images, satisfying tourists' desire to preserve a memento of their encounter with the picturesque location. James Douglas Hope originally operated his photography studio out of his father's Hope Glen Art Gallery, but eventually the Hope family purchased a second building closer to the Glen's entrance, where they sold souvenirs in addition to displaying photographs and paintings.

During the 1870s and 1880s, it appears that the elder James Hope became less focused on selling new paintings. He began to warehouse his Watkins Glen paintings alongside his older New England landscapes and Civil War-era scenes in the Hope Glen Art Gallery. Watkins Glen tourist guidebooks touted the twin attractions of "Captain" Hope's large 96 x 72" *Rainbow Falls* painting and his celebrated panoramic canvas of the *Army of the Potomac at Cumberland Landing*. But Hope produced less new work, often repainting compositions like *Rainbow Falls* on multiple small canvases. Although he continued to send occasional paintings to the National Academy exhibits, Hope increasingly distanced himself from the New York art world, purposefully isolating himself in the small upstate tourist town.⁴⁴ By the 1880s, Hope was engrained in the society of Watkins Glen. The local newspaper noted the seasonal opening of his gallery. He taught Sunday School and was a member of the local chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic.

43. "Extracts from a Biographical Record of Schuyler County, NY," (S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1903). (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyschuy1/1903Bio2.html>).

44. Strum, "James Hope," 61.

James Hope's Return to Painting Civil War Images in the Late 1880s

Perhaps the increasing social and political importance of the G.A.R. during the decade influenced Hope's decision to return to painting scenes of the Civil War in the late 1880s. By this point, he was nearly seventy years old, and the events of the Civil War were more than twenty-five years in the past. After eschewing war subjects for roughly twenty years, James Hope embarked on a second period of depicting the conflict in 1888. In the late summer of 1888, James Hope travelled to Sharpsburg, Maryland, to attend a reunion of Civil War veterans on the site of the Antietam battlefield. This reunion near the twenty-sixth anniversary of the battle gave him the opportunity to share stories and compare recollections of the battle. Perhaps Hope met John Hays II of the 130th Pennsylvania Regiment at this gathering. The question remains as to what exactly prompted Hope's artistic re-engagement with Civil War imagery, but this trip to the Antietam battlefield seems to have stirred his memories and his desire to commemorate the event. It is clear that the aftermath of Antietam's Bloody Lane was the subject he first chose to revisit and present.

The painting that marked James Hope re-engagement with the Civil War, eventually titled *After the Battle (A)*, was evidently completed between October and December of 1888, following his return from Maryland. This canvas measured approximately 50 x 96", on the scale of his most celebrated paintings up to this point, *The Army of the Potomac* and *Rainbow Falls*. It was the first of several versions of this same

scene, and marked the beginning of a prolific final phase of his career.⁴⁵ Between 1888 and 1892, Hope would create and exhibit two large versions of *After the Battle*, followed by four other panoramic canvases of the battlefield of Antietam. These large paintings were augmented by smaller versions of most of the same scenes, as well as published photographic reproductions of the paintings. This intensive project also marked the coda of Hope's life's work, as he died in October 1892 while promoting this endeavor.

The most direct evidence of Hope's creative process in his first Antietam painting is an article published in the *Watkins Express* newspaper, dated September 27th, 1888.

The notice stated:

Twenty-six years ago while camping on the [Antietam] battlefield, Hope began a sketch for the purpose of painting a picture of its battle scenes. The army broke camp before the sketch was completed, and his most recent visit was to get the lay of the land for a painting to be known as "After the Battle." The main scene of the picture is a rifle pit, improvised from a sunken roadbed, in which at the close of the great carnage the bodies of the dead lay so thickly as nearly to cover the ground. This pit was photographed and the picture is in the Captain's possession, but a visit to the field was necessary to locate its surroundings in detail.⁴⁶

45. Freeman, *The Hope Paintings*, 19. Multiple sources claim that Hope painted the small 19 x 36" canvas of *After the Battle (C)* first, and that it served as the model for the later panoramic versions. Perhaps these claims all stem from Larry Freeman's questionable assertion that Hope started on a series of small canvases depicting battles immediately after his 1862 discharge from the Union Army. Freeman wrote: "These first 18 x 26 inch paintings were done at the 5th Avenue studio in preparation for much larger panoramas he later hoped to create." Perhaps based on this assertion, *After the Battle (C)* has sometimes been dated to 1862. If it were actually painted in 1862, it would have been made within about two months of Hope's actual experience of the battle. This seems unlikely, since Hope was not discharged until December 1862. I believe these small paintings were produced much later, in the 1880s and 1890s, for the reasons I outline in this paper. It is possible that *After the Battle (C)* was a study for the larger panoramas, but I believe that since the figures are more painterly, it likely came after Hope first figured out the composition in the larger canvases.

46. *Watkins Examiner*, September 27, 1888, p.3. This article suggests that Hope's "sketch" made at Antietam in 1862 may have included other views as well, as it was intended to record the field's "battle scenes."

This newspaper story promulgates the essential features of the mythology of Hope's *After the Battle* painting. The *Watkins Express* reporter had learned, apparently from James Hope himself, that the image was based on a sketch Hope had started on site at the battlefield in September 1862. Since the "main scene" was the Sunken Road filled with dead, this suggests that Hope had spent considerable time overlooking that precise area of the field during or just following the battle. Whether or not he was with the 2nd Vermont Regiment during the fighting, Hope could have been among the crowds of soldiers and civilians drawn to the spectacle of Bloody Lane. The fact that he had sketched it in person suggests a direct and authoritative transcription of the scene.

The most significant feature of this brief *Watkins Express* notice, however, is the disclosure that Hope possessed a photograph of the "pit" of the Sunken Road. Far from hiding his reliance on this secondary source, by sharing this fact with the reporter Hope would seem to be vouching for the veracity of his image. Since the article states Hope needed to locate the "surroundings" of this photographic image, it is safe to speculate that Hope was looking at Alexander Gardner's image #553. This was the most closely framed and detailed of the three photographs that Gardner made in the vicinity of the Sunken Road following the battle. Even a brief comparison of Gardner's photograph with Hope's resulting image shows how closely Hope copied the picture.

James Hope's Adaptation of Alexander Gardner's Photograph

James Hope analyzed some version of Alexander Gardner's image #553 quite carefully. Though the "War Memories" series of re-issued Civil War photographs may

not have yet been published when Hope began his first *After the Battle* painting in 1888, Hope may have had access to one of the older stereographs re-circulated through G.A.R. channels during the 1880s. It is also possible that Hope might have acquired an original print issued by Mathew Brady or the Anthony Company during the war, and kept it as a memento of his own service at Antietam.

Hope could have had access to either a single print mounted on a card or a full stereographic print. In either case, the printed image measured only several inches in each dimension. However, since stereographic images were ubiquitous in Watkins Glen, and especially in the Hope Glen Art Gallery, we can assume that James Hope would have studied a stereograph through a stereoscopic viewer. The image of the dead Confederate bodies would have filled his field of vision, in striking three-dimensionality, and he could have focused intently on transcribing the specific pose of each of the bodies he discerned.

In Alexander Gardner's photograph #553, a group of about twelve Confederate bodies lie intermingled on the bed of the Sunken Road. A close comparison between Gardner's image and a detail of the photographic reproduction of James Hope's largest *After the Battle (B)* painting shows how Hope employed the visual record from Gardner's image (Figure 18). Since Hope's original 50 x 96" version (*A*) is now lost, the reproduction of his largest panorama (*B*) offers the best illustration of Hope's original decisions. In the central section of this composition, bracketed between the bodies of the Confederate officer and the Union sergeant, Hope transcribed all twelve of the bodies pictured in Gardner's photograph. Beginning on the right side, Hope included the foreshortened figure with his back facing the viewer. Behind this prone body, Hope carefully copied the three supine figures, expending considerable effort on the details of

their uniforms. He augmented the disheveled folds of the shirts and coats with bloody wounds. Hope adapted the light-colored shape behind the middle body into a bald head for this figure.



Figure 18. Comparison between details of Gardner's #553 and Hope's *After the Battle (B)*.

In addition to personalizing this body, Hope also inserted several other faces that are not visible in Gardner's original photograph. Resting on the arched chest of the now baldheaded figure, Hope added a bloodied face to the figure with an upraised, bent right arm. The other foreshortened body, lying against the fence rail in the foreground, now has a clearly observable, mustachioed face. To the left of this figure, wedged under the bent knee of a supine body, Hope inserted an upside-down face. Surmounting this central section of bodies, Hope copied the figure from Gardner's photograph with the visible face. In Hope's rendition, this figure takes up even more space, with both arms flung wide to his sides. Though his swollen lips and closed eyelids are reproduced from Gardner's image, Hope has turned the man's head to more squarely face the viewer.

The most drastic alteration that James Hope made was to insert the completely new kneeling figure into the midst of the bodies from Alexander Gardner's photograph. In Gardner's original image, just behind and to the left of the body with its head resting on the fence rail, lies the body with widespread knees. The right arm of the body on the fence rail overlaps the left knee of the background figure. In Hope's image, the same angle of this bent left knee appears twice, on two different bodies, on each side of the kneeling figure facing away from the viewer. In effect, Hope painted the vertical shape of the figure against the fence rail twice, the second time transforming the vertical form into the body of the kneeling figure (Figure 19). Once James Hope had inserted the new figure, he continued transcribing the rest of the body with spread knees to its left. Hope included a few additional details from the most distant bodies in Gardner's image, but beyond these, Hope invented all of the additional figures in his *After the Battle* painting.



Figure 19. Comparison of Gardner's Image #553 and Hope's *After the Battle (B)*, showing how Hope inserted the kneeling figure.

When he travelled to Sharpsburg in September 1888, James Hope not only met with other veterans but also sought to augment his wartime sketches of the landscape. The September 1888 *Watkins Express* article describing James Hope's new project stated that the artist had travelled to Sharpsburg that month in part to verify the "surroundings" of Alexander Gardner's photographic image. This can be understood broadly to mean the general area around the Sunken Road, which spans more than half a mile. But when one examines the resulting painted landscape into which Hope inserted the figurative details from Gardner's photographic image #553, it becomes apparent that this was not the specific section of the Sunken Road where these particular bodies were originally photographed. Instead, Hope painted the landscape of the Sunken Road from a perspective closer to that from which his own 2nd Vermont Regiment, as well as the 130th Pennsylvania Regiment, had surveyed the scene twenty-six years earlier.

James Hope extracted the images of the dozen dead Confederates Gardner recorded in one part of the Sunken Road and translated them to another location in his

painting.⁴⁷ Viewed from a position near the location of the present-day 130th Pennsylvania Monument, looking east, the landscape very precisely matches the topography in James Hope's painting (Figure 20). From this perspective, the Sunken Road dips downhill and also angles to the right. This accounts for the disappearance of the roadbed behind the Piper cornfield on the far embankment. The Roulette Farm lane enters the view at the low ground, marked by a line of trees in Hope's painting. The Sunken Road then climbs the hill to the crest of the ridge, where it again disappears on the horizon. This marks the point where the Sunken Road makes an abrupt right angle and turns south. Today, an observation tower is situated at this apex point and is visible along the crest of the hill, silhouetted against the distant ridge.

⁴⁷ Onsite investigation determined how James Hope likely composed the landscape scene depicted in his paintings during his trips to the battlefield in the late 1880s and early 1890s. I applied the methodology developed by Civil War photographic historian William Frassanito and walked the battlefield with a photographic reproduction of Hope's painting in hand. The National Park Service has encouraged this type of then-and-now comparison through the publication of pamphlets that detail the precise locations of some of Alexander Gardner's views on the battlefield.



Figure 20. Modern photograph and detail of *After the Battle (E)* showing the same landscape.

After establishing the precise vantage point of Hope's *After the Battle* painting, and using previous research about the locations of Alexander Gardner's photographs, one can better ascertain how Hope incorporated Gardner's image of dead Confederates into his own composition. The bodies of the dead Confederate soldiers pictured in the center of Hope's painting, those he copied directly from Gardner's photograph #553, were never at this precise location on the battlefield. Instead, the location of Gardner's stereo #553

was much farther east, approximately halfway up the hillside in the background of Hope's painting.

Somewhat surprisingly, though, the vantage point of Hope's composition corresponds almost exactly with the camera position of Alexander Gardner's stereo #565, the first negative he recorded at the Sunken Road. Gardner was on the south side of the Sunken Road, looking northeast, back at the Roulette farm fields over which the Union soldiers, including the 130th Pennsylvania, had advanced (Figure 21). Hope was positioned almost directly across the Sunken Road, on the north bank of the lane, facing east. This means that Hope extracted the shapes of the bodies from Gardner's close-up view from stereo #553, and reinserted them into the location depicted in Gardner's stereo #565.



Figure 21. Comparison of modern photograph and Gardner's #565 showing the same location.

Even though he had been on the site, and perhaps witnessed both locations depicted in Gardner's Sunken Road photographs, it is doubtful James Hope would have known precisely where the bodies had originally been photographed. To Hope, what likely seemed most important about photograph #553 was not its precise location, but that it carried the strongest associative resonance for the general notion of "Bloody Lane."

Gardner's photograph #553 functioned as a representative example of many such groups of the dead and signified them all. Viewers of Hope's painting might have had knowledge of Gardner's image, either directly or indirectly, and so the denotative information of the recognizable bodies served to authenticate Hope's image. The photographic proof offered by Gardner's image, that these bodies existed "just as they fell," semiotically verified Hope's project of re-constructing the overall scene of the Bloody Lane at its most poignant. The confidence that nineteenth-century viewers held in the truthfulness of the photographic medium guaranteed its "authenticity."⁴⁸

If Hope had originally viewed the Sunken Road from the vantage point in his painting, during the forty-eight hours between the end of the fighting and the burial of the dead, it would have indeed been choked with Confederate bodies. But this section of the Sunken Road that Hope would have surveyed did not contain the *same* bodies that Gardner depicted in his close-up photographic image #553. Ironically, the photographic proof of the existence of these exact bodies in Gardner's image invalidates Hope's use of them in his painting, at least from a documentary perspective. But while they do not depict the same bodies in the same location, both Hope's painting and Gardner's photograph function "authentically" in their own ways.

The Spiritually Expressive Potential of Picturesque Landscape

48. Charles Rosen and Henri Zerner, *Romanticism and Realism: The Mythology of Nineteenth-Century Art* (New York: The Viking Press, 1984), 108.

At first glance, the sheer number of dead bodies packing the lane in *After the Battle* overwhelms the viewer. There is a shocking sublimity to this astounding number of corpses. The bodies in the immediate foreground allow the viewer to inventory the motley assortment of “uniforms” and the variety of postures of the Confederate dead. Then, as the lane curves into the background, this array compounds itself into a multitude. The cumulative effect drives home the scale of the carnage and challenges the viewer to imagine the intensity and duration of the gunfire that would have resulted in such casualties. The initial shock gives way to a thrilling, macabre fascination. Though Hope doesn’t depict stripped or dismembered bodies (like those depicted by other contemporary sketch artists at the scene), the frequent bloodstains in Hope’s foreground figures serve to titillate viewers, arousing a desire for the sensational. The very excess of dead human bodies in this limited a space becomes a sublime spectacle, which threatens to deprive the dead figures of their humanity.

James Hope followed the prevailing mythology about Bloody Lane in his emphasis on the concentration of the dead. Nearly every eyewitness account stressed the number of dead bodies in the Sunken Road and observed that many were “stacked” or “heaped” on top of others. Such voyeuristic accounting slips quickly into sensationalism, and in some ways Hope delivers an almost entertainingly frightening spectacle of death and destruction.

Hope’s version is redeemed from being simply an exploitative spectacle, however, by the way he balances the carnage in the lower half of his composition with the more traditionally transcendent landscape in the background. While historians have noted Hope’s fidelity to the topography of the scene, they do so in order to endorse the

accuracy of this view as a historical record.⁴⁹ However, Hope's handling of the landscape should also be read as an expressive balance to mitigate the horror of the foreground slaughter. While the topography of hills and mountains is verifiably accurate from this particular vantage point on the battlefield, the crystalline atmosphere seems eerily calm for the immediate wake of a cataclysmic fight. The juxtaposition of these two extremes within a single painting, the human detritus of violent battle and the redemptive beauty of the natural landscape, signifies a higher moral purpose in contemplating the dead in the *Sunken Road*.⁵⁰

Alexander Gardner's photographs were taken as reportage, in the midst of an unfolding event, the full significance of which could not yet be known. In effect, Gardner's photographs were understood as empirical, Positivist works. They extracted detailed information from the world and presented it in a relatively neutral manner. There was little context to the information provided in Gardner's images, other than the fact that these bodies had indeed existed, and that he had seen and documented them.⁵¹ From a Positivist perspective, the realism of photography exists in its mechanical proof that the subject existed just as it is pictured. The authenticity of the photograph resided in the

49. Strum, "James Hope: Nineteenth Century American Painter," 56-58.

50. Harvey, *The Civil War and American Art*, 7-8. Eleanor Jones Harvey does suggest that Hope's painting moved beyond simple documentation, based on Gardner's photographs, to create something "resembling a morality play." She interprets his intention as a "mournful meditation on the true toll of battle." While she reads the setting as "twilight horror," I think Hope's intended sunrise casts the scene in a more redemptive light.

51. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010), 76.

empirical data captured on the negative, which could then be translated to identical copies.

As images, Gardner's photographs were relatively mute until activated by captions, display, and proximity to other images that began to craft a narrative. James Hope's painting, in contrast, was a decidedly Romantic image. *After the Battle* operates according to the Romantic ideals of the picturesque.⁵² The carefully observed details were orchestrated into an overall effect, subsumed into the landscape and unified by the pervading morning light. Hope incorporated elements of Gardner's fragmented, empirical photograph into a continuous, coherent painted composition. The broad perspective and deep space of Hope's panoramic painting allowed viewers to comprehend and imaginatively possess the battlefield environment. From a Romantic perspective, photography was unable to adequately "idealize" the components of a scene. For a Hudson River School artist like James Hope, intent on capturing "realistic" details, the orchestration (and subtle manipulation) of the various components was still the most crucial aspect of establishing the unifying aura or significance of a place.

As important as his inclusion of accurate landscape and figurative details may have been, Hope's choices to eliminate certain details from his source material are equally important to consider. By choosing to remove any and all living figures from his painting, Hope enabled his viewers to privately contemplate the scene and to commune

52. John Conron, *American Picturesque* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000). Conron explains how the contrasting internal details in Romantic "Picturesque" painting provoke the viewer's intellectual curiosity, while the pervading light unifies these conflicting aspects into an emotionally cohesive whole which transcends the constituent parts.

with the dead. Each of Gardner's photographs of the Sunken Road depicts living soldiers and civilians gazing at the remaining bodies that have not yet been removed from the Sunken Road. The presence of these onlookers and the partially cleared bodies will always bind Gardner's photographs to a specific time: late afternoon on September 19th, 1862. Hope's *After the Battle* painting, though presumably set at dawn on September 19th, captures Bloody Lane in a state of immutable timelessness. The Sunken Road is depicted at its "fullest," but with an uncanny absence of wounded living soldiers and with no hint of the tens of thousands of nearby Union troops. In its stillness and tranquil isolation, Hope's painting casts the Sunken Road in a transcendent light.

After the Battle in the Context of the Late Nineteenth-Century Panorama Revival

Beyond its picturesque landscape and photo-realistic details, an important part of the semiotic work of communicating "authenticity" was accomplished through Hope's choice of scale and format for his painting. Though his initial framed 50 x 96" (A) canvas might not be technically described as a "panorama," by painting the scene in a large and detailed horizontal format, Hope drew upon viewers' familiarity with and expectations of the panorama experience.

While broad, horizontally formatted paintings, drawings, and prints had existed for centuries, "panoramas" were essentially a nineteenth-century phenomenon.⁵³ They

53. Stephen Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium* (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 5-6. See also Ralph Hyde, *Panoromania!: The Art and Entertainment of the All-Encompassing View* (London: Trefoil Publications in Association with Barbican Art Gallery, 1988), 13-14.

had their roots in Renaissance-era topographical images of sacred places such as Jerusalem. Comprehensive and coherent maps of such places allowed viewers to grasp the relative locations of notable sites and to imaginatively travel through this sacred environment. Topographical accuracy became increasingly important, since it conferred the legitimacy of authentic experience, including the spiritual benefits of actual pilgrimage.

In the late eighteenth century, all classes of urban society increasingly sought this type of virtual travel experience. The term “panorama” was invented to define the specific form of landscape painting that replicated a 360-degree view from a stationary vantage point. Beginning in Britain and spreading across Europe and to the United States, the art form evolved through the nineteenth century as a commercial spectacle, both entertaining and didactic, that generally imparted an orthodox social and political view of its subject.⁵⁴ Panoramas, though related to Romantic “fine art” landscape painting, were a communication medium aimed squarely at a mass audience. Though some panoramas were exquisitely painted, in general the amount of detail and sheer size of the images trumped the aesthetic effects.

Panoramas were primarily a physically experiential medium. Because of the broad scale of the painted canvases, viewers would forget that they were standing in front of a work of art and instead feel as though they were looking at nature or “reality.” The all-encompassing panoramic view evoked a feeling of freedom and enabled visual agency. In scanning the canvas, the viewer aimed to comprehend and ultimately control

54. Oettermann, *The Panorama*, 6-7.

the scene. Panoramas organized visual experience to equate the visual perception of a “sight” with a knowledge and ownership of the essential spirit or aura of that place or “site.”⁵⁵

From the inception of the medium, both producers and consumers of panoramas were obsessed with accuracy and authenticity.⁵⁶ The paintings were supplemented by printed keys that identified important features and by guidebooks that supplied facts and background information. These guides often stressed that the paintings were produced directly from sketches taken on the spot, without artistic license or invention. By the 1840s, following the invention of photography, advertisements for panoramas touted the veracity of the scenes by citing their photographic sources. As with photography, the “transparency” of the panorama medium was an essential part of its semiotic claim to objectivity and accuracy. However, the supposed “artlessness” of panoramas masked their necessarily ideological view of the world.

The initial American fascination with panoramas had waned even before the Civil War, but the panorama’s influence lived on in mid-century Hudson River School–style landscape painting. American painters such as Albert Bierstadt and Frederic E. Church produced immense canvases, often including minuscule details of the natural world. Both painters relied on photography to capture these details and to help compose their massive

55. Alison Byerly, “‘A Prodigious Map Beneath His Feet’: Virtual Travel and the Panoramic Perspective,” *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 29 (June/September 2007) : 162.

56. Ralph Hyde, *Panoromania!: The Art and Entertainment of the All-Encompassing View* (London: Trefoil Publications in Association with Barbican Art Gallery, 1988), 36-39.

paintings.⁵⁷ These paintings would be exhibited along with keys describing the various elements and emphasizing their fidelity to the scenes depicted. James Hope drew on these panoramic conventions of his artistic contemporaries in his own paintings, notably his large *Army of the Potomac*, created in New York City during the war years.

By the late 1880s, when James Hope embarked on his first large scene of Antietam, the United States was experiencing a wave of renewed interest in panoramas. New 360-degree canvases, dubbed “cycloramas,” were introduced from Europe in this period and generated great excitement. These were often exhibited in temporary iron-framed rotunda buildings at industrial fairs and expositions and included three-dimensional scenery and props to enhance the realism of the scenes.

The “second wave” of cycloramas had been initiated in 1876, when a group of American investors commissioned the French panoramic artist Paul Philippoteaux to create a huge 360-degree painting of the battle of Gettysburg. Working from photographs of the Gettysburg battlefield to accurately present the terrain, Philippoteaux’s team would eventually paint four copies of the massive composition. His Gettysburg panorama also spawned nearly identical copies by American firms replicating his design. Between 1883 and 1889, teams of mainly European artists working in the United States created cycloramas of many other Civil War battles, including Manassas, Shiloh, and two versions each of the battles of Missionary Ridge and Atlanta.⁵⁸ James Hope conceived of his own Antietam painting in the context of this panorama revival. Lacking the resources

57. Lindquist-Cock, *The Influence of Photography on American Landscape Painting*, 81, 115.

58. Hyde, *Panoromania!*, 169-172.

to execute an endeavor on such a grand scale, he nonetheless must have felt compelled to paint his own commemorative image of his own wartime experience in response to these immense and popular spectacles.

From his studio and gallery in Watkins Glen, James Hope must have noted the 1880s' panoramic boom with great interest. The renewed popularity of panoramic Civil War battle scenes would have undoubtedly been a topic of conversation among the veterans at the local Grand Army of the Republic post. Beyond his status as a Union combat veteran, as an artist steeped in the Hudson River School-style, Hope understood how a painted composition could convey an aura of authenticity.

As a professional landscape painter, James Hope spent the years before and after the war developing his craft among the leading American Romantic painters of his generation. He understood that to compose a picturesque landscape was to imbue it with meaning. This was a technique Hope perfected in his subsequent work at Watkins Glen. By 1888 James Hope had spent the previous seventeen years as the proprietor of a tourist destination in Watkins Glen. He understood the psychological draw of stepping outside their everyday lives to experience something novel and thrilling. The spectacles of the new Civil War cycloramas being produced were not dissimilar from the sublime spectacle of viewing the cliffs and waterfalls in the Watkins Glen gorge. No other cyclorama created in the 1880s took Antietam as its subject, so James Hope likely considered himself uniquely qualified to render an authentic and meaningful painted depiction of the battle of Antietam.

After completing his initial 50 x 96" version of *After the Battle (A)* towards the end of 1888, James Hope installed the painting in the Glen Art Gallery. The *Watkins*

Express newspaper again referenced the new painting in early January 1889. Though there must have been few visitors to the Hope's gallery in the dead of winter, the reporter mentioned that Hope had a "chart of the line of battle...and with this supplementary to the painting, his description of the field of Antietam is a graphic one."⁵⁹ Hope compiled his military and topographical research into a didactic primer for the painting. While he might have personally guided viewers in the space of the gallery, he also printed an official text to accompany the painting (See Appendix C).

James Hope's "chart" and written supplement followed the didactic conventions of panorama displays, and oriented viewers to the specific landscape features seen in the painting. Beyond establishing geographic points of interest, the key serves to emphasize the topographical accuracy of the painting. The verifiable precision of the enduring landscape in turn vouches for the reliability of Hope's depictions of the impermanent presence of the dead. Hope's written description proves that he wanted viewers to focus on such figures as the dead Confederate officer (whom he specifically identifies as "Colonel Lightfoot"), the dead soldier draped over the fence and the dead figure kneeling in the midst of the bodies in the lane.⁶⁰ Hope wrote: "The man kneeling down in the

59. *Watkins Express*, January 3, 1889, 3.

60. Robert K. Krick, "It Appeared as Though Mutual Extermination Would Put a Stop to the Awful Carnage: Confederates in Sharpsburg's Bloody Lane," 222-258. Lieutenant-Colonel James N. Lightfoot was second-in-command of the 6th Alabama Regiment defending the Sunken Road. The more famous commander of this regiment, Colonel John B. Gordon, was severely wounded at Bloody Lane but survived. Though Lightfoot issued an order that precipitated the eventual collapse of the Confederate defensive line, he was not killed or captured at Antietam. Hope's inclusion of him here is erroneous. However, many other Confederate officers were casualties at the Bloody Lane.

foreground was in that position firing, was struck in the brain, and was so perfectly balanced that he never fell over.”⁶¹

In his written description of the painting, Hope asserted: “This was the most terrible slaughter seen during the war.”⁶² Hope’s emphasis on the *sight* of this slaughter is noteworthy. While the perspective of the painting suggests that it was Hope’s own sight, he also cites the testimony of other eyewitnesses to corroborate his memories. Hope specifically quotes “the officer who had charge of the working party here” in describing the magnitude of the carnage.⁶³ Might this unnamed “officer” have been John Hays II, who had supervised the burial parties of the 130th Pennsylvania on this particular sector of the field? It is possible that Hope might have encountered Hays on the battlefield in the days following the fighting. But it is equally plausible that the two met at the veterans’ reunion in Sharpsburg in 1888, and that their shared reminiscences about the fighting and aftermath stimulated Hope’s desire to recreate the scene in this large-scale painting. If so, then *After the Battle* was not merely Hope’s recollection of his experience twenty-six years earlier, but was really a collaborative re-creation arising from the artistic, political and social contexts of the late 1880s.

After the Battle in the Context of

61. *Catalogue of the Eighty-Three Famous Canvases by the late James Hope, A.N.A.* (New York: The Alexander Press, Astor Place, 1904). (<https://archive.org/stream/frick-31072000206690/31072000206690#page/n109/mode/2up>).

62. *Catalogue of the Eighty-Three Famous Canvases by the late James Hope, A.N.A.* Parts of the text of this auction catalogue are reproduced in Freeman, *The Hope Paintings*.

63. *Ibid.*

Late Nineteenth-Century Battlefield Commemoration

Of particular concern to veterans, and related to the re-issue of Civil War photographs and the emergence of cycloramas of Civil War battles, was the drive to commemorate the actual battlefields on which the soldiers had struggled. James Hope's journey from Upstate New York to Maryland in 1888 suggests his commitment to the idea that the physical landscape carried significant historical aura. At the time, Antietam had no monuments or markers detailing the positions of the battle lines or the positions where particular regiments fought. The Gettysburg battlefield, however, was already experiencing a wave of commemoration. Individual Union regiments and state commissions erected monuments to commemorate the land on which their soldiers had fought and died.

In the late summer of 1889, James Hope wrote from Watkins Glen to a friend in Castleton to inquire about the plans for the dedication of the Vermont State monument at Gettysburg. He was interested in attending the reunion of the old Vermont Brigade, not only to reconnect with his former comrades, but also to exhibit the 50 x 96" *After the Battle (A)* that he had painted the previous winter. Hope wrote:

Do you know the day of the month (Sept.) that Vt. Society dedicate their Monument at Gettysburg? I want to meete with them there, but I don't know when it is. I painted a picture last Winter, 8 feet long, of "Bloody Lane" at Antietam where we fought and layed out the "rebs" three deep. I made a careful sketch on the spot, while the cavalry were gone to ascertain the whereabouts of Lee's Army. It makes a stunning picture, and I want to get it before the "Boys" that saw the original scene.⁶⁴

64. James Hope to John Howe, Watkins, NY, August 31, 1889. This original letter is now in the Castleton University Archives. According to archivist Karen Sanborn, John Howe was a lawyer and the property manager for Hope's Castleton home once the Hope family moved to Watkins Glen. The letter was found in the barn of Castleton's Moriarty

James Hope clearly recognized that his Bloody Lane painting made a “stunning picture,” one that would profoundly impact his fellow veterans, whom he affectionately refers to as the “boys.” Many of these aging veterans had also witnessed the original vision of Bloody Lane before the dead had been buried, and Hope’s new painting presented an opportunity to reconnect with that affecting spectacle. Even though the veterans were to meet at Gettysburg, and not Antietam, Hope’s painting offered a means of imaginative travel to that other battlefield. Hope evidently considered broader audiences for his image as well. Before he travelled to Gettysburg that autumn, James Hope also sent a letter to Redfield Proctor, a veteran Vermont officer and the current U.S. Secretary of War. Hope apparently asked Proctor to buy his “historical paintings” on behalf of the federal government. Though Proctor replied that he would be “very glad to see your pictures,” he declined Hope’s proposal, stating: “Appropriations for such a purpose are not common or easily obtained.”⁶⁵

Undaunted, Hope made the trip south to Gettysburg in October 1889 and, from there, revisited the Antietam battlefield in Maryland as well. At Antietam, Hope not only

House when the college acquired that building. This letter was written just days after Hope had secured the copyright to his *After the Battle* image. The copyright, dated August 28, 1889, appears prominently on the photographic reproduction of Hope’s 102 x 196” version of *After the Battle (B)*. It was hand-lettered onto the lower left of the canvas itself and reiterated in the printed caption below the photograph. However, it seems that Hope had copyrighted a photographic image of the original 50 x 96” painting, since this was the only painted version completed by the summer of 1889. I believe the Aug. 28, 1889, copyright inscribed on the panoramic *After the Battle (B)* predates the completion of that painting.

65. Redfield Proctor to James Hope, Washington, DC, 4 September, 1889. Vermont Historical Society, James Hope letters.

toured the Sunken Road but expanded his study of the battlefield landscape to include other notable sites. A *Watkins Express* article from 1889 references this second research trip.⁶⁶ Hope likely again interviewed Antietam veterans but perhaps also met with tour guides, such as Oliver T. Reilly, who escorted the increasing number of visitors around the field. Following this trip, Hope developed his plans for a broader project of large panoramic paintings to mark the other notable sites of the battlefield. The first work that Hope undertook when he returned to Watkins Glen was to enlarge his 50 x 96" *After the Battle (A)* into an immense panoramic image, double the size of the eight-foot original.

The resulting canvas, *After the Battle (B)*, fully encompassed viewers' peripheral vision. It presented an immersive landscape, allowing viewers to feel fully present in the scene. The Sunken Road, awash in dead bodies, appeared to spread out from the viewers' feet. Indeed, the cropped bodies along the lower edge of the canvas gave the sensation that the lane continued behind the viewers. At this scale, the central group of dead figures, those copied from Alexander Gardner's stereo #553, measures about 48 inches across and appears to be about twelve feet away from the viewer. Though this simulated distance is nearly the same as in Gardner's photograph, in Hope's largest panoramic painting each figure is nearly a foot tall. The colorful details of uniforms, wounds, and facial expressions seem nearly palpable. *After the Battle (B)* fully exploited its panoramic scale to offer a virtual experience of Bloody Lane. Though viewers had an intense sensory encounter, the actual experience remained purely visual. There were obviously none of the sounds or smells of the battlefield to interfere with the meditative reverie evoked by the spectacle.

66. *Watkins Express*, October 17, 1889, 3.

Surveying this panoramic painting in an exhibition, viewers could believe that they bore exclusive witness to the scene. With no other living figure depicted in the image, each viewer was granted imaginative possession of the entire landscape. This was a fundamentally different experience from looking at Gardner's documentary photographs of the Sunken Road, which each showed living onlookers sharing the sight. Of course, in an exhibition of panoramic canvases, viewers often had to physically share the space with other spectators. This proximity could enhance the communal bonds among the audience, who were now virtual "veterans" of the same significant experience.

But viewing the panoramic *After the Battle (B)* was a fleeting encounter. James Hope resorted to photography to preserve the physical and emotional experience of his painting. Hope's son, James Douglas Hope, photographed the large canvas, and the pair sold 8.5 x 17" gelatin silver prints through the Hope Gallery in Watkins Glen (See Appendix A.) The translation of the painted image back into a photograph transforms the physical experience of perceiving the canvas into that of holding a document in the hands. Though the photographic reproduction (*E*) is twelve times smaller than the panoramic painting (*B*), it appears at first glance less like a document of a painting and more like a record of the landscape itself. The reduction in scale enhances the scene's already potent realism. In the photographic reproduction of *After the Battle (E)*, the facture of the painting's surface is minimized, encouraging a viewer to suspend disbelief that this is a manufactured image. Moreover, the fine-grained surface and crisp details of the photographic medium grant semiotic authority to the scene.⁶⁷ The conventions of

67. Rosen and Zerner, *Romanticism and Realism*, 108. See also Mary Price, *The Photograph: A Strange Confined Space* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

photography allow the viewer to forget about the edges of the image, overcoming a limitation of the panoramic canvas. Because the photographic reproduction could be purchased, collected, and looked at repeatedly by viewers, it also afforded an intimacy with the image beyond that available from a temporary encounter with the panorama.

This sense of intimate connection was central to the way *After the Battle* functioned. Whether in its largest or smallest manifestation, the image principally served as a conduit to the spiritually significant original scene of the battle's aftermath. The desire to revisit and reconnect with that place and moment, and to create meaning out of the chaos and destruction, exemplified the nostalgia many aging veterans felt decades after the Civil War. The drive to preserve and mark the Civil War battlefields, led by Union veterans' groups, was essentially a Romantic phenomenon. By commemorating the physical landscape where they had fought and where comrades had died, the nostalgic veterans hoped to access the aura that they believed the landscape retained.

The process of battlefield commemoration progressed fitfully, especially at Antietam. In 1865, just after the close of the Civil War, the state of Maryland had established the Antietam National Cemetery to inter the bodies of Union soldiers who had fallen in the battle.⁶⁸ The federal government took over administration of the National Cemetery in 1877. Bodies of the Confederate soldiers killed at Antietam were purposefully excluded from the National Cemetery, and many were exhumed from their original burial trenches and re-interred in a separate cemetery in a nearby town. With

68. Charles W. Snell and Sharon A. Brown, *Antietam National Battlefield and Cemetery, Sharpsburg, Maryland: An Administrative History* (Washington, D.C. : U.S. Department of the Interior/ National Park Service, 1986), xvii-xviii.

most of the previously buried bodies removed, the landscape around Sharpsburg resumed its bucolic appearance, and by the 1880s there was little evidence to mark the places where the battle had raged.

Gettysburg was the first battlefield to be preserved and marked in an organized fashion, and by the 1880s it was serving as a model for other fields. It is significant that James Hope's initial exhibition of his *After the Battle (A)* image came in the context of a veterans' reunion at Gettysburg. While Gettysburg was being commemorated with an ever-increasing array of monuments, Antietam remained essentially unchanged from its wartime appearance. In 1890, the federal government allocated funds to construct a road from the Sharpsburg train station to the Antietam National Cemetery, which increased the visitation to other parts of the field as well. Tour guides like Oliver T. Reilly, who had been a boy at the time of the battle, showed veteran and civilian visitors sites such as the Sunken Road. In 1888 and 1889, when James Hope visited Antietam, the Sunken Road was still in use as a farm lane, and there were no signs other than bullet holes in the few remaining fence rails to mark its significance as Bloody Lane. His decision to paint a series of panoramas, centered on Bloody Lane, anticipated the national movement to memorialize the site.

Union veterans, represented by the G.A.R., lobbied Congress to preserve the site, and in an 1891 report the Committee on Military Affairs reasoned:

A nation should preserve the landmarks of its history. The bill under consideration proposes to preserve and properly mark with plain, enduring tablets the field of Antietam, on which was fought, September 17, 1862, the bloodiest battle of the war of the rebellion...To a clear understanding of the field and illustrate for historical purposes the unparalleled deadly fighting which

distinguishes it above all others, it is absolutely necessary that the lines of both sides to the persistent struggle should be marked.⁶⁹

Between 1890 and 1894, Congress sponsored a survey of the field and marked the various battle lines with temporary stakes. In its reports, the commissioners of the Antietam Board acknowledged the difficulty of placing lines caused by the loss of some official reports and from the “natural influence of a period of twenty-nine years.” They concluded, however, that the field had been marked with “all the accuracy of which it is now susceptible.”⁷⁰ This period of federal intervention overlaps with James Hope’s final prolific creation of his five large Antietam panoramas, which began around 1890 with the 102 x 196” version of *After the Battle (B)* and continued until Hope’s death in late 1892. The federal commissioners faced similar challenges to Hope’s in reconstructing the battle lines along the Sunken Road. They also wished to “illustrate” the deadly and persistent fighting “for historical purposes.” This intention of battlefield commemoration seems to echo the professed purposes of Hope’s project. But beyond establishing the positions of the contending forces, what was the underlying national narrative of the “history” of the “bloodiest day?”

After the Battle in the Context of Late Nineteenth-Century

National Reconciliation

The 1890s marked a crucial change in the perceptions of Union veterans about their former Confederate foes. As the United States emerged as a worldwide industrial

69. Snell and Brown, *Antietam National Battlefield and Cemetery*, 72.

70. *Ibid.*, 74.

and military power, the older sectional conflicts that had spawned the Civil War began to subside. As Union members of the Civil War generation began to face their own mortality, they actively engaged in a project of reconciliation with their aging Confederate counterparts. Lingering animosity from the war, and especially from Reconstruction in the 1870s, waned. In its place, veterans from both sides looked back on their common sacrifices. Political divisions, especially over slavery and race relations, gave way to nostalgia. White male Americans from both sides celebrated their presumed shared qualities of courage and honor.⁷¹ While the monuments that marked the newly established battlefield parks predominately honored Union units, Confederate veterans came to be viewed less as traitors and more as wayward but worthy opponents.

James Hope's *After the Battle* image can be understood in this reconciliatory context. It provides retrospective clarity on two related, but seemingly contradictory, interpretations of the carnage at the Bloody Lane. On one hand, Hope's painting presents an almost triumphant delight in the Union victory signified by such slaughter of the rebellious foe.⁷² But simultaneously, *After the Battle* appears to acknowledge that the Confederates were also laudable adversaries and should be commemorated as valiant

71. Timothy B. Smith, *The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation: The Decade of the 1890s and the Establishment of America's First Five Military Parks* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2008), 5-7. See also Michael G. Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1991).

72. Perhaps the dead Confederate draped over the fence in Hope's painting best represents the defeat of the treasonous "rebels." In contrast to honorable figures like the dead soldier kneeling in the lane, this "cowardly" Confederate tried to flee. In death he hangs in an "unmanly" pose, highlighted by multiple accounts that dead Confederates on the fence were shot repeatedly in the "posterior."

fellow Americans. Historians of Civil War–era photography have noted that the interpretation of the re-issued images in the 1880s and 1890s followed similar patterns.⁷³ Companies like Taylor & Huntington initially marketed re-issued photographs to the G.A.R. and Union veterans’ groups, often with partisan Republican messages. However, the same photographic images were also used to craft more reconciliatory memories as the conflict became more distant in the 1890s. Hope’s painting appeared just at this transitional moment, and perhaps represents both sentiments.

An image like James Hope’s *After the Battle* might not have been possible in the 1860s or even the 1870s. But by the late 1880s, the national audience was at a point in the process of reconciliation where a painting sanctifying this violent site could be considered desirable, and perhaps even necessary. Resulting in nearly 23,000 casualties, the battle of Antietam was the “bloodiest” single day of the American Civil War.⁷⁴ Even on that horrific field, the carnage at Bloody Lane was especially shocking, presenting an unsurpassed spectacle of death. Bloody Lane represented a microcosm of the entire battle of Antietam, just as Antietam represented a microcosm of the entire war. Set in the “no-

73. William Gleeson, “Waving the Black-and-White Bloody Shirt: Civil War Remembrance and the Fluctuating Functions of Images in the Gilded Age,” *E-rea* 8.3 (2011). <http://erea.revues.org/1791>.

74. Stephen W. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983), 252-254, 296. The total Union losses at Antietam were 12,401, including 2108 dead, 9540 wounded, and 753 missing. The total Confederate losses in the battle were 10,318, including 1546 dead, 7752 wounded, and 1018 missing. The fighting around the Sunken Road resulted in about 3,000 Union casualties and about 2,600 Confederate casualties. This represented about 30 percent of the total number of Confederates engaged in this phase of the fighting.

man's land" between the contending armies, *After the Battle* signified the contested boundary between North and South, within the disputed border state of Maryland.

Thus, Hope's panoramic painting of the aftermath at Bloody Lane served as a single-image encapsulation of the entire Civil War. It offered those who had lived through the period a means to comprehend the extent of the physical and emotional trauma of the war.

The middle foreground section of Hope's panorama, the portion centered on the figures copied from Alexander Gardner's photograph, serves as the key to this reconciliatory meaning. Here, the dead Union sergeant to the left and the dead Confederate officer to the right mirror one another along the same horizontal plane. These two supine figures equate the sacrifice of both North and South in the deadly strife. Though Hope identified the Confederate officer as Colonel Lightfoot, and made no mention of the anonymous Union sergeant in his written guide, the Union enlisted man seems every bit the equal of the more renowned officer. Whatever their political motivations, both of these men died honorably, just feet away from one another on the edge of the Sunken Road.

Despite the obvious parallels between these two bracketing figures, it seems that the spiritual focus of Hope's entire composition is the dead Confederate soldier kneeling between them. The vertical shape of this figure contrasts with the scores of prostrate bodies around him, and he at first appears to be a lone living figure amid a carpet of corpses. But James Hope explained in his written guide to the painting that this soldier had been "struck in the brain" and, though dead, had been "so perfectly balanced that he never fell over." This lifeless, but seemingly animated, figure represents an intermediary

figure between the living and the dead.⁷⁵ Even in death, he remains faithfully at his post, still clutching his rifle pointed in a northward direction. Positioned among the verifiably dead bodies copied from Gardner's photograph, this kneeling figure symbolizes an honorable legacy for all of the Confederate soldiers killed defending the Sunken Road. With his bowed head, the kneeling figure also assumes an attitude of prayer, encouraging reverence for the sacrifice of these fallen soldiers. Through this surrogate figure, viewers are encouraged to meditate on the transcendent significance of the Bloody Lane.⁷⁶

If viewers were liable to overlook these reconciliatory meanings in the presence of the largest *After the Battle (B)* panorama, James Hope made certain that they would fully apprehend the meaning when looking at its photographic reproduction. Copies of the photograph were supplemented with a printed poem glued to the reverse of the mounting board (See Appendix C.) The unsigned verse presents a decidedly fraternal Union perspective on the slain Confederates in Bloody Lane.

Far up where the battle had hottest been,
Where French and Hill contended,
Lay slaughtered heaps of gray-coat men,
Through "Bloody Lane" extended.

We were sad for the work our hands had wrought,
When we thought of the terrible sorrow,
Of the tens of thousands of desolate homes,
And the rivers of tears to follow...

75. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 79. Barthes asserts: "A photograph of a corpse certifies, so to speak, that the corpse is alive, as corpse: it is the living image of a dead thing." James Hope literally transformed the image of a fallen dead soldier in Gardner's photograph #553 into the kneeling dead soldier in his painting, "a living image of a dead thing."

76. Barbara Novak, *Nature and Culture: American Landscape Painting 1825-1875* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 190-193.

The poem concludes with several verses about burying the dead, including details about carrying the mangled bodies to burial trenches. Yet the poet emphasizes that the dead were laid in the trenches “like warriors taking their rest” and that both the victorious Union dead and the vanquished Confederate dead will lie together “waiting the judgment day.” The imagery of this poem, like Hope’s painting, reunites both Union and Confederate bodies as integral parts of the American landscape.

The Lasting Influence of Photographic Reproductions of *After the Battle*

The photographic reproductions of Hope’s *After the Battle (B)* helped to disseminate the image widely enough that it became the standard depiction of Bloody Lane in the popular imagination. Well after Hope’s own death, the photograph was used as a common reference in histories of the battle published around the turn of the twentieth century, in both the North and South. One book eulogizing the Confederate soldier (and by implication the Confederate cause) reproduced *After the Battle* in its section on Antietam. The author noted: “No spot on the battlefield of Antietam presented a more ghastly spectacle than did the ‘Sunken Road’ or ‘Bloody Lane.’”⁷⁷ Though cited as a

77. Ben LaBree, ed., *The Confederate Soldier in the Civil War, 1861-1865: Prefaced by a Eulogy by Major General Fitzhugh Lee* (Louisville, KY: The Prentice Press, 1897), 113. Ben LaBree was also the editor of *The Confederate War Journal*. He noted that *After the Battle* was based on a sketch that Captain Hope made of the scene on the evening of September 17th, 1862. Hope himself said the image represents the early morning on the 19th.

factual representation of the scene, in this context Hope's painting clearly serves as a melancholic celebration of Southern valor.

Reproductions of Hope's *After the Battle* also appealed to Northern veterans and were likewise cited as historical truth in their commemorations. Even veterans who had witnessed the aftermath at Bloody Lane firsthand deferred to details of Hope's painting to describe the scene. Veterans of the 130th Pennsylvania Regiment erected a substantial monument at Antietam on the battle's forty-second anniversary in 1904. At the dedication, one veteran remarked during his oration on the fight for Bloody Lane:

A correct sketch of this lane, filled with dead Confederates, as well as of the one hanging over the rail, was made by Captain Hope on the spot, immediately after the retreat of the enemy. It was literally packed with their dead. At one point, according to Captain Hope, thirteen dead bodies lay on a heap.⁷⁸

The photographic reproductions of Hope's painting had become the standard by which veterans remembered the scene. Paradoxically, the "thirteen dead bodies" the veteran mentions were the dozen Confederates that Hope had appropriated from Alexander Gardner's photograph #553 and integrated with the single kneeling Confederate body in his painting. Just as Gardner's photographs of the dead might have supplanted Hope's personal recollection of the scene, photographs of Hope's image, such

78. "Address by Edward W. Spangler, private, Co. K., One Hundred Thirtieth Regiment, in the Maryland Campaign," in Oliver C. Bosbyshell, ed., *Pennsylvania at Antietam: Report of the Antietam Battlefield Memorial Commission of Pennsylvania and Ceremonies at the Dedication of the Monuments Erected by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to Mark the Position of Thirteen of the Pennsylvania Commands Engaged in the Battle* (Harrisburg, PA: Harrisburg Publishing Company, 1906), 174-175.

as that owned by John Hays II of the 130th Pennsylvania (*E*), effectively blocked and replaced these veterans' own memories.⁷⁹

John Hays II played an instrumental role in the erection of the 130th Pennsylvania monument, and participated in its dedication. The monument was placed on the north side of the Sunken Road near the curve featured in James Hope's *After the Battle*. A granite statue of a standing Union soldier tops the monument, and this figure gazes southward across Bloody Lane. This figure represents the enlisted men of the 130th Pennsylvania, and stands near the spot where the dead Union sergeant lies in Hope's depiction of the same location. Perhaps Hays drew this connection, as the granite figure symbolizes the same sacrifice pictured more directly by Hope. While no monuments to Confederate units were erected at Bloody Lane, perhaps Hope's renowned image also functioned as an imaginary memorial to counterbalance the Union statues.

Two years after the dedication of the 130th Pennsylvania monument, Sharpsburg tour guide Oliver T. Reilly published an illustrated guidebook to the Antietam battlefield.⁸⁰ His photograph of Bloody Lane recreates nearly the exact vantage point and composition of Hope's *After the Battle*, suggesting his acquaintance with James Hope, John Hays or both (Figure 22). Most likely, Reilly knew the photographic reproduction of

79. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 65. See also Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 89. Sontag argues that to remember is to "be able to call up a picture" and that remembering only the photographs "eclipses other forms of understanding, and remembering through narratives."

80. R.C. Miller and Oliver T. Reilly, *The Battlefield of Antietam* (Hagerstown, MD: Hagerstown Bookbinding and Printing Co., 1906). The book calls Oliver T. Reilly the "official guide for Antietam and South Mountain battlefields, having 50 years' experience." (<https://archive.org/stream/battlefieldofant00mill#page/n35/mode/2up>).

Hope's panorama, and assumed his readers' familiarity with the image.⁸¹ Reilly framed the 130th Pennsylvania's granite statue on the left side of his photograph, echoing the placement of the Union sergeant in Hope's image. More intriguingly, Reilly's photograph also depicts a solitary man standing in the bed of the Sunken Road, visible only from the waist up. While the man may have been placed there to demonstrate the depression of the road, he occupies nearly the exact position of the kneeling Confederate in Hope's parallel composition. While it could be coincidence, might this tourist be reenacting the role of the dead kneeling figure, attempting to access the "authentic," auratic power of the battlefield? Hope's painting captured the original spectacle of Bloody Lane at its fullest, and the immortalized central figure of Hope's image haunts subsequent representations of the site.

81. Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 86. See also Mike Robinson and David Picard, eds., *The Framed World: Tourism, Tourists and Photography* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 8.



Figure 22. Comparison of Oliver T. Reilly's photograph of 130th Pennsylvania Monument at Bloody Lane with a detail of *After the Battle (E)*.

Since James Hope's *After the Battle* panorama has gained so much of its cultural currency through photographic reproduction, it is valuable that the remaining fragment of the physical canvas is now on display in the Antietam Battlefield Visitor Center. During the period between the 1935 Watkins Glen flood and the twenty-first-century re-installation of the Hope paintings, the "original" *After the Battle (B)* was all but lost and was accessible only through its reproductions. The mythology of the image as an "authentic" portal to the 1862 battle threatened to overwhelm the nuanced history of the

painting as a collaborative document of the 1880s and 1890s. Now that viewers can once again view the surface of the canvas, this mediation is made more visible. The visible brush strokes in the disintegrated surface remind contemporary viewers that the image is not a transcription of an objective past, but rather a carefully composed reconstruction.

The portion of the panorama salvaged from the ruins of the flooded Hope Gallery happens to be the very section that epitomizes James Hope's Romantic, artistic re-creation. Portions of the dozen figures from Alexander Gardner's photograph remain, evincing Hope's copying from that specific image. Gardner's Antietam photographs are now recognized as symbolically important because they registered the "markers of history," shattered landscapes and dead bodies, as implications of significant events. Historical events, like the fighting at Bloody Lane, could never be surveyed or understood except retrospectively.⁸² By setting his commemoration of Antietam, and in turn, the entire Civil War, *after* the battle, James Hope seemed to presciently appropriate Gardner's aesthetic methodology, as well as his images.

Photographic images of the past activate imaginative journeys.⁸³ The seemingly objective documents provoke psychological longing to reconnect with the original, but ultimately irretrievable, scenes. A yearning for authenticity represents the Romantic belief that such a re-union with a transcendent past is possible. Despite the ostensible realism of his painting style, James Hope "dreamed into" Gardner's photograph to

82. Lee and Young, *On Alexander Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War*, 38. See also Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 65.

83. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 9, 20. See also Price, *The Photograph: A Strange Confined Space*, 174-175.

imaginatively recreate his own memories of the scene.⁸⁴ The dead, kneeling Confederate in the midst of the “heaped” bodies manifests Hope’s desire to retrospectively create redemptive meaning out of the carnage. A danger, perhaps, is that Hope’s seemingly authentic vision valorizes the Confederate dead and naturalizes the “Lost Cause” and reconciliatory mythology of the 1890s and early 1900s. Subsequent viewers who “dream into” photographs of Hope’s *After the Battle* risk assimilating this mythology as empirical truth about the 1860s. The insistent materiality of the damaged fragment of Hope’s *After the Battle (B)* panorama serves as a defense against historical amnesia. Gazing at the chipped paint on the back of the kneeling Confederate body, observant viewers remain aware of the contingent process of commemoration and the ultimate futility of Romantic hopes for reunion with an authentic past.



Figure 23. Fragment of *After the Battle (B)*, Antietam National Battlefield Park.

84. Peter D. Osborne, *Traveling Light: Photography, Travel and Visual Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 80-82.

Appendix A.

James Hope's *After the Battle* Paintings and Their Photographic Reproductions**A. James Hope, *After the Battle*, oil on canvas, 50 x 96", 1888.**

This was the first version of *After the Battle* that James Hope produced. A 1904 auction catalogue of Hope's work calls this 50 x 96" version the "study" for the 102 x 196" *After the Battle (B)*. This painting was damaged in the 1935 Watkins Glen flood. In the 1960s it was in the possession of Dr. Larry Freeman, but its location is now unknown. The top image is included in Freeman's book but labeled as a "Gettysburg Panorama." The lower, unattributed image comes from the website Feel the History.com, and I believe it depicts this original 50 x 96" version of *After the Battle* before the 1935 flood. (<http://www.feelthehistory.com/civil-war/antietam/antietam.html>)



B. James Hope, *After the Battle*, oil on canvas, 102 x 196", c. 1889-1890.

This painting was damaged in the 1935 Watkins Glen flood. A 48 x 60" fragment was salvaged by Dr. Larry Freeman and given to the National Park Service in 1979. The fragment is now on display at the Antietam National Battlefield Park.



C. James Hope, *After the Battle*, oil on canvas, 19 x 36", c. 1888-1892.

This painting is now in the Army Art Collection, U.S. Army Center of Military History. Hope family descendants likely sold the painting in the 1960s through gallery auction and not to Dr. Larry Freeman. It has been dated to c.1862, but I believe that this date comes from twentieth-century auction catalogues and is based on the 1862 date of the battle rather than the context of Hope's 1888-1892 series of Antietam paintings.



D. James Hope, *After the Battle: "Bloody Lane"*, Antietam, gelatin silver print, 8.5 x 17" (mounted to 12 x 19"), c. 1889-1892.

This photographic print was sold by Cowan's Auctions in 2016. I believe it is an early version of a photographic print of the 102 x 196" painting of *After the Battle* (B). The caption on the mount indicates the painting was photographed by James Douglas Hope, but the reproduction is offered for sale by Capt. James Hope, Watkins, NY, so was published before the elder Hope's death in 1892. There is a label with an anonymous poem titled "Bloody Lane" affixed to the reverse side of this mount board. This poem is reproduced in its entirety in Appendix C.



E. James Hope, *After the Battle: "Bloody Lane", Antietam*, gelatin silver print, 8.5 x 17" (mounted to 12 x 19"), c. 1892

This photographic print was owned by John Hays II, formerly of the 130th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Regiment. It is now in the collection of the Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections. While this is a photograph of the 102 x 196" painting of *After the Battle*, I believe this version of the photograph was published slightly later than the previous photographic reproductions, because of changes in the captions. Notably, the caption states that the photograph is offered for sale by J.D. Hope, rather than Capt. James Hope, possibly indicating it was published after the elder Hope's 1892 death. Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections, PC 2001.1, F5.



F. James Hope, *After the Battle: "Bloody Lane", Antietam*, gelatin silver print, 8.5 x 17" (mounted to 12 x 19"), c. 1892.

This is a photographic print of the 102 x 196" painting of *After the Battle (B)*. It is in the J.N. Heiskell (1872-1972) Photograph Collection in the Center for Arkansas History and Culture at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. It has the same caption information as the photographic reproduction in the Dickinson College Archives (*E*), but the hills and mountains in the background seem to have been retouched with an aquatint-like pattern. This was evidently done on the photographic negative, as opposed to the painting.



**G. James Hope, *After the Battle: "Bloody Lane", Antietam*, albumen print (?)
3.8 x 5.5" (mounted on slightly larger card), c. 1892**

This small card was sold by Old World Auctions in 2008. It was included in a lot with three other photographic reproductions of James Hope Antietam paintings. These included: *No. 1 (Looking South)*, *No. 2 (Looking West)*, and *Burnside Bridge*. This set proves that J.D. Hope also photographed Capt. James Hope's other Antietam paintings and offered them for sale as photographs. However, J.D. Hope's caption information has been pasted over by a later label, which states that these small photographic cards were available for sale by Sydney M. Southard of Burlington, VT. I suspect these were unauthorized reproductions made sometime post-1892, from a larger photographic reproduction like (*E*).



Appendix B.

The following description was apparently written by James Hope to be presented with his painting. It was later printed in a 1904 catalogue accompanying the auction of Hope's works, including his series of Antietam panoramic paintings. The 102 x 196" version of *After the Battle (B)* was the ultimate work presented in the two-day, eighty-three work auction. The 50 x 96" version (*A*) was presented earlier and identified as the "study" for the largest *After the Battle (B)*.

See: *Catalogue of the Eighty-Three Famous Canvases by the late James Hope, A.N.A.* (New York: The Alexander Press) 1904.

This was the most terrible slaughter seen during the war; the Confederate dead lay in the sunken road on an average of three deep for half a mile, and there was only one man who breathed in all that distance. The officer who had charge of the working party here says: "Round the point, just beyond the foreground of this painting, for three rods, they lay five and six deep." On the hills to the left of the lane, there were five charges made, and the dead of blue and gray are about equal, but in the lane and in the cornfield to the right all are Confederates. This was largely the work of Infantry. The living man that lay in the road said: "When I fell I had one bullet in me, now I have five!" The man kneeling down in the foreground was in that position firing, was struck in the brain, and was so perfectly balanced that he never fell over. The young officer in front was said by a Confederate to be Colonel Lightfoot. The man hanging over the fence had eight bullets in him. One Georgia Regiment, that fought here reports their loss at 86 6-10 per cent. Our front line as we lay on the hill to the left was only 50 yards from the lane. And Longstreet says: "The fresh troops of McClellan mowed down the already ragged army of Lee like grass before the scythe." The first mountain in the distance is Elk Ridge, a notch in the forest on top of the highest point is McClellan's chief signal station. Directly behind this ridge is "Crampton's Pass," in the Blue Ridge, or South Mountain, as it is called here, where the Sixth Corps fought three days before; and at extreme left of the painting is seen "Turner's Gap," where the rest of the army fought the battle of South Mountain. (height 8 1/2" feet; width, 16 feet).

Appendix C.

The following poem was printed on a label affixed to the reverse side of the mount board on a copy of the photographic reproduction of *After the Battle (D)*. This poem is unattributed, but since James Hope was known to have composed Romantic poems about nature, perhaps he himself wrote the verses.

“Bloody Lane”

The Battle of Antietam was fought Sept. 16, 17, and 18, 1862, by the forces of McClellan and Lee. It was one of the hardest fought and bloodiest battles of the war. In a sunken road in the center, since known as “Bloody Lane,” the Confederates lay three deep, which the poet describes as follows:

The foe had fled, and the fight was done,
 And morning in stillness was reigning,
 The wounded had been gathered in,
 And the dead lay uncomplaining.

Far up where the battle had hottest been,
 Where French and Hill contended,
 Lay slaughtered heaps of gray-coat men,
 Through “Bloody Lane” extended.

We were sad for the work our hands had wrought,
 When we thought of the terrible sorrow,
 Of the tens of thousands of desolate homes,
 And the rivers of tears to follow:

Of the broken hearted mothers and wives,
 The fathers, the sisters and lovers;
 For these quiet sleeps every one,
 Had somebody somewhere that loved him.

“Not a drum was heard nor a funeral note,”
 As the mangled men we carried;
 “Not a soldier discharged a farewell shot”
 O’er the trenches where they were buried.

“No useless coffins inclosed their breasts,”
 “Nor in sheet nor in shroud we bound them,”
 “But we laid them like warriors taking their rest,”
 With their old gray blankets ‘round them.

And so they lie, “Under the sod and dew,
 Waiting the judgment day,-
 Under the laurel the blue
 Under the willow the gray.”

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