

Camp History

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The Hessian Barracks, located on the grounds now known as the Maryland School for the Deaf, were built during the Revolutionary War.

Declaration of Independence and a speech by Col. William P. Maulsby.

A deep sense of anxiety must have pervaded the scene at the barracks on that unusual Fourth of July. Frederick diarist Jacob Engelbrecht noted that unlike the usual raucous Independence Day celebrations of the past, "I saw no person intoxicated ... all went off peaceably and quiet."

Less than three weeks later, the Confederate and United States armies clashed in the first full-scale battle of the war at Manassas, Va. In the coming years, thousands of soldiers marched through Frederick County, received care in local field hospitals and ultimately achieved a Union victory that abolished chattel slavery and greatly expanded the promises made in the nation's founding document. **FM**

Few local landmarks have witnessed more pivotal moments of American history than the Hessian Barracks. Constructed between 1777 and 1781, thousands of British and German prisoners were held at the barracks during the Revolutionary War. Supplies for the Lewis and Clark Expedition were gathered there in 1804. During the War of 1812, the barracks housed local militia units and captured British soldiers. The stone barracks were already 60 years old when Frederick artist John Johnston Markell painted them in this scene of an 1843 encampment of the Maryland Militia.

In July 1861, with the Civil War just three months old, 1,000 soldiers of the 1st Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers camped at the Hessian Barracks. On July 4, hundreds of Frederick residents gathered alongside the soldiers at the barracks to hear the reading of the