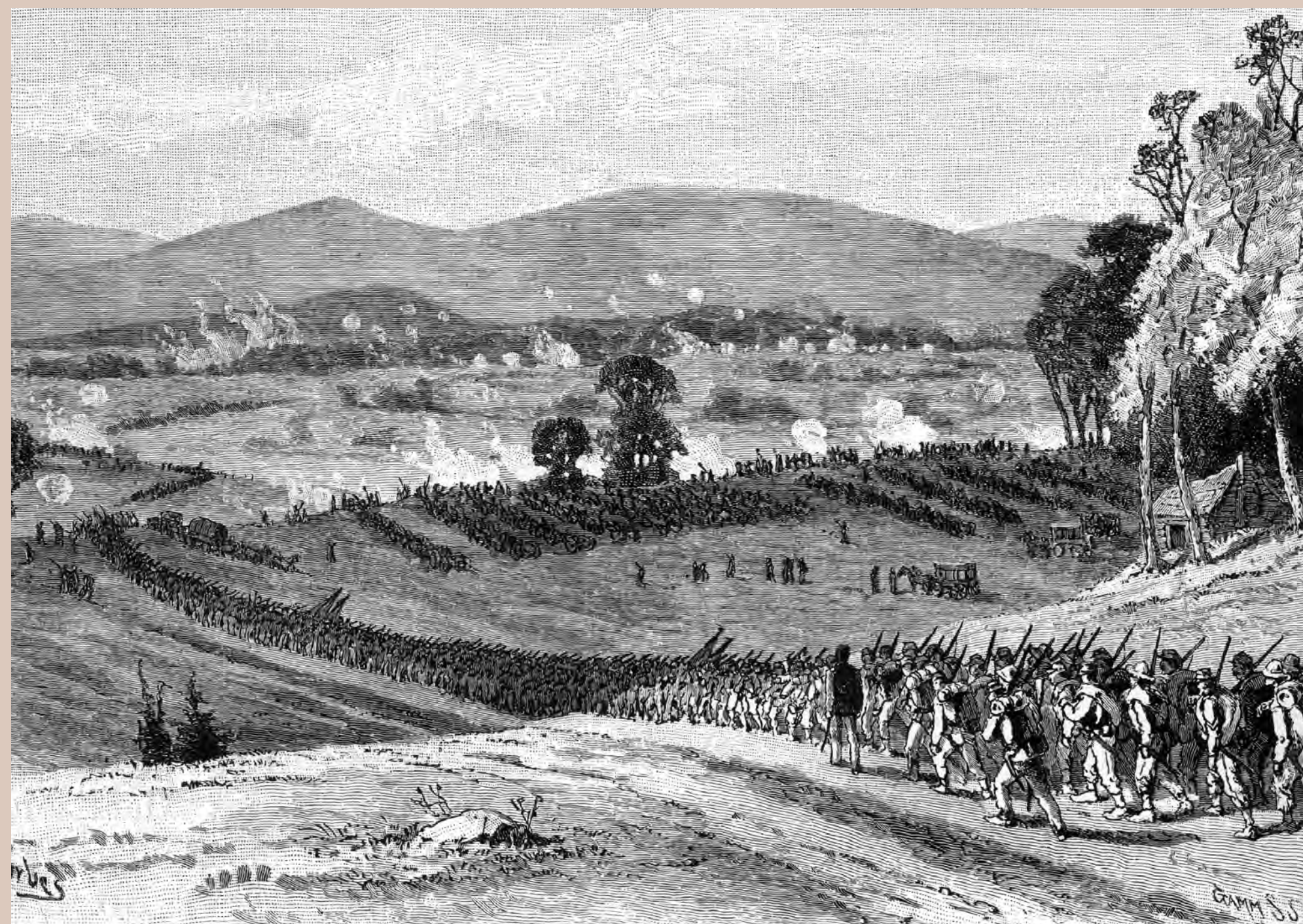


# STAUNTON NATIONAL CEMETERY



*Battle of Cross Keys, one of four major battles fought during Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign. Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, 1887.*

## Jackson's Valley Campaign

Confederate Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson's thirty-four day campaign was a remarkable feat. His command marched 245 miles, fought four major battles, and swept the Union forces out of Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. General Jackson's May 1862 victories at McDowell, Front Royal, and Winchester caused Union Gen. Nathaniel Banks to retreat across the Potomac River to Maryland.

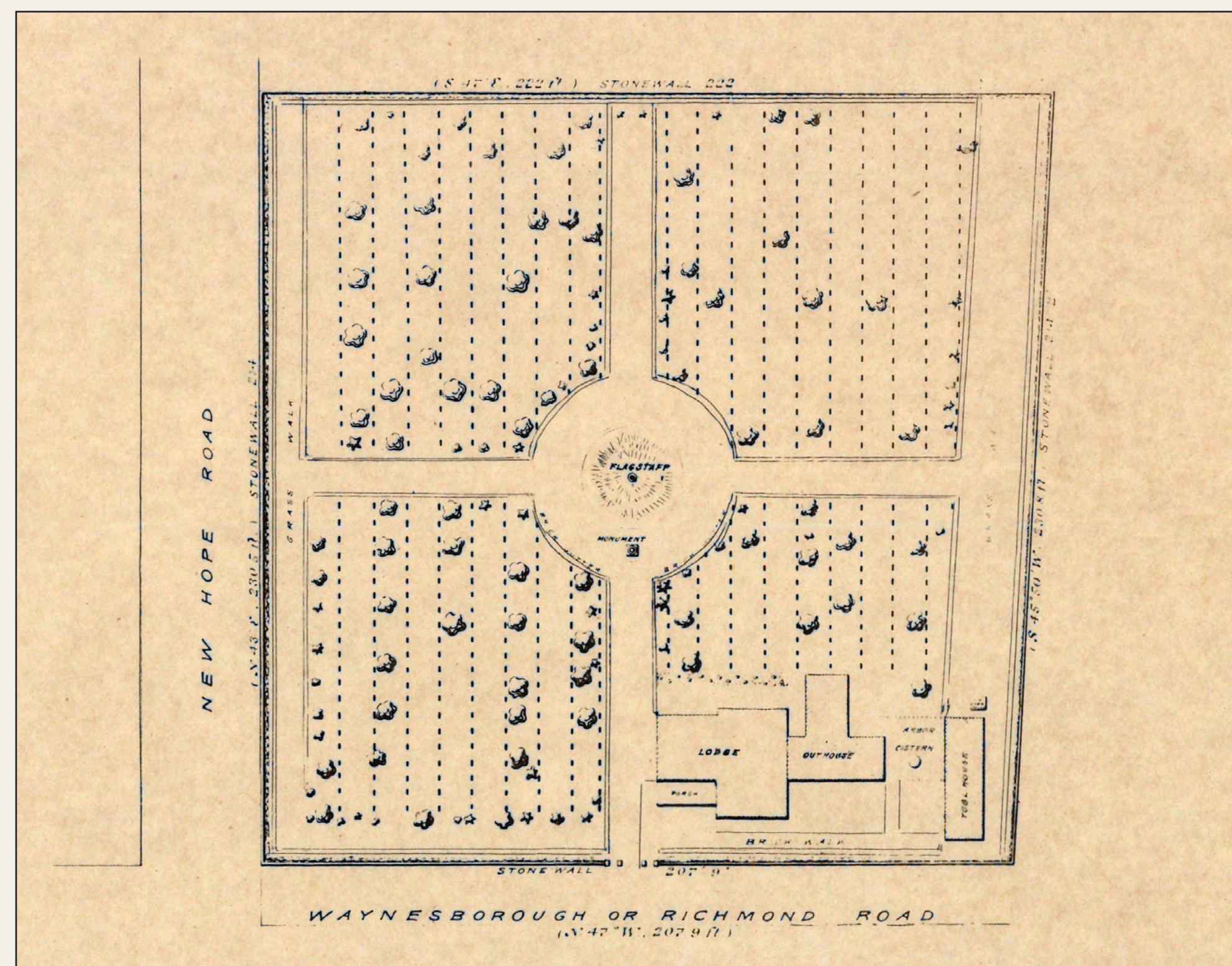
The Union defeat forced Gen. John Frémont into action. He and Gen. Irvin McDowell were ordered to catch and crush Jackson. The Union's 40,000 men faced 18,000 led by Jackson. But the two Union armies were separated by Massanutten Mountain, which divides the valley. Jackson raced south and defeated Frémont at Cross Keys on June 8, then crossed the North River and defeated another Union column at Port Republic. These losses forced Union troops to retreat from the Shenandoah Valley.

## National Cemetery

Staunton National Cemetery was established in 1867. The remains of 753 Union soldiers, of which 521 are unknown, lie here. The remains came from Staunton and Waynesboro city cemeteries, and the battlefields at Cross Keys, McDowell, Piedmont, Port Republic, and nearby locations. Sixty-seven Union prisoners who died in Confederate hospitals also lie here.

Gravel paths originally divided the 1.15-acre cemetery into four sections with a flagstaff mound at the center. In 1874, a stone Second Empire-style lodge and enclosure stone wall were completed.

After the Civil War, African Americans settled near the cemetery. The area became known as Uniontown Village. The neighborhood was home to the "Cemetery School." Throughout the nineteenth century, the community held annual Memorial Day services at Staunton National Cemetery.



*Cemetery plan, 1892. National Archives and Records Administration.*

## Immigrant Veterans

Nicolae (Nicholas) Dunca, a Romanian, arrived in New York four months before the Civil War began. He enlisted in the 12th New York Infantry. In March 1862, Gen. John C. Frémont appointed Captain Dunca to his staff. Dunca was killed on June 8, 1862, while delivering orders on the battlefield. He was reinterred here in Section B, Grave 292.



*Lodge with unknown grave markers at Staunton National Cemetery, 1908. National Archives and Records Administration.*

Maj. William O'Brien was the superintendent at Staunton National Cemetery when he died in February 1899. An immigrant from Ireland, he enlisted in the regular army and served on the western frontier before the Civil War. His regiment returned east for the duration of the war. Injured in battle at Frederick, Maryland, he recuperated in Alexandria, Virginia. After the war he resumed his military duties. Prior to Staunton, he was in charge of Loudon Park, Fayetteville, and New Bern national cemeteries. He was buried in Section C, Grave 762.