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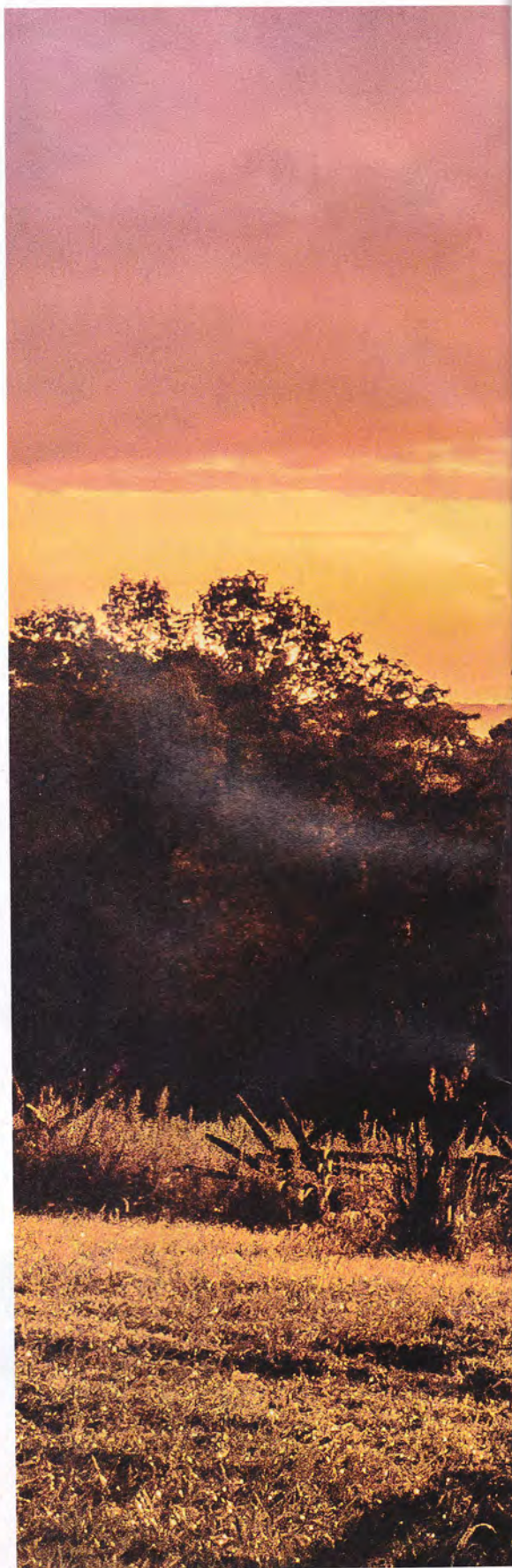


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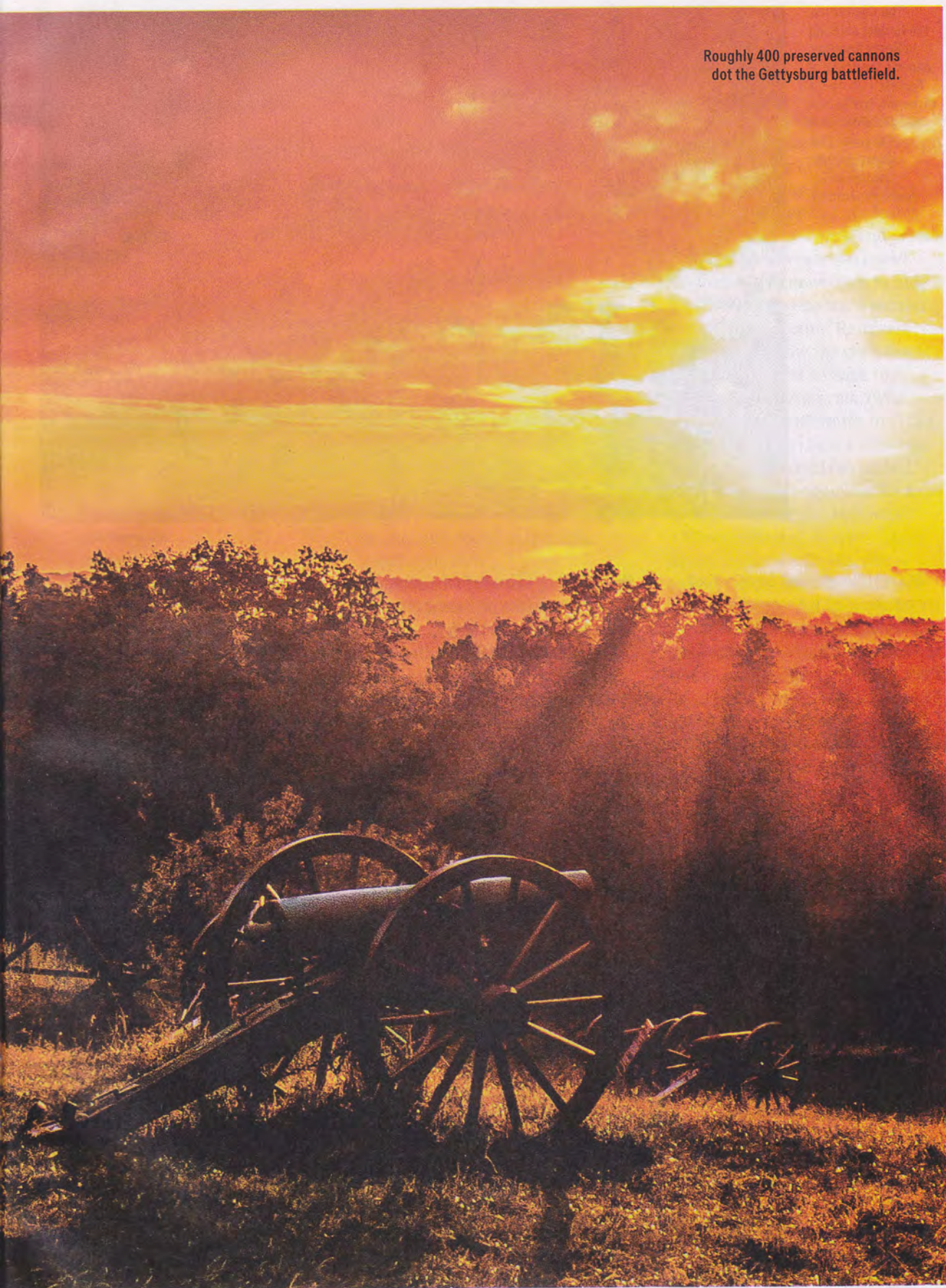
Civil War lore comes to life through the places and people of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

BY JENNY WISNIEWSKI

Our summer drive into Gettysburg followed in the footsteps of Confederate soldiers as they marched nearly 158 years earlier into what would be a pivotal battle in America's Civil War. Their journey, too, took place on a hot July day along what was then called Chambersburg Pike, one of 10 roads leading into Gettysburg. As my husband, John; our son, Ryan; our goldendoodle, Tilly; and I passed through southeastern Pennsylvania's countryside with its distinctive saltbox farmhouses, I could feel my curiosity growing about this place that I knew of only from my school history books.



Roughly 400 preserved cannons
dot the Gettysburg battlefield.



The Cyclorama, the largest painting in North America, depicts the scene of Pickett's Charge, a three-day battle that changed the course of the war. This shows just one section of the massive painting.



Many friends and family had recommended we stop to see the impressive 377-foot Cyclorama at the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center. The next day we were to learn the Cyclorama's positive reviews held true, but also that there is much more to Gettysburg beyond it.

HISTORICAL SLEEPING QUARTERS

At the aptly named Battlefield Bed and Breakfast Inn, a friendly innkeeper greeted us and led us on a short tour of the 1809 house once owned by abolitionists Cornelius and Anna Houghtelin and used by Brigadier General Wesley Merritt as his headquarters during the battle. The narrow staircase, worn wide-planked floors, ornate fireplace and deep-set window bays reminded us of the history we were intimately inhabiting.

A small display case hanging on the wall of what was the original parlor held the preserved detritus of battle—buttons, buckles and military insignia—all found by visitors on the 30-acre property. I was feeling fully immersed in Civil

War history even before listening to our breakfast presentation, a morning ritual at the inn.

Dressed as a Union soldier, Mike, a retired Gettysburg National Military Park Museum curator, recounted stories of valor and suffering, drawing the war's outlines as we sipped hot coffee with our country breakfast.

the expanse of Gettysburg. The National Military Park sits on nearly 6,000 acres with more than 26 miles of road connecting the various sites.

Fred pointed out the memorial commissioned by our home state to honor its veterans—one of 30 state-commissioned memorials. More than 1,300 monuments and

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MONUMENTS TO STRUGGLE

As we toured the vast battlefield, I found the preservation of some details and the re-creation of others awe-inspiring. I felt keenly attached to history.

With our licensed guide, Fred, leading the way in his sedan, the four of us followed close behind during the three-hour, pandemic-safe tour. The drive to our first point of interest gave us a feel for

memorials honoring soldiers exist, along with about 400 cannons.

We traveled to what had been a peach orchard, listening as Fred explained that because bullets rocketed through the air from so many different directions in this small area, later, bullets that had fused together midair were found lying on the ground.

And on our final stop at the portentously named Cemetery

Take a Tour!



GETTYSBURG GHOST TOURS

In Gettysburg, ghost tours abound. With its violent history and preserved sites, sightings of ghosts are a part of the borough's lore. If you love a good ghost story, check out one of the tours, such as **Ghostly Images of Gettysburg** or the **Historic Farnsworth House Inn's** ghost tours. gettysburgbattlefieldtours.com
farnsworthhouseinn.com

8 MILES FROM SLAVERY TOUR

Although only 8 miles from the slave state of Maryland, Gettysburg had a large Black community in the years leading up to the Civil War. This walking tour includes their stories, such as the establishment of **Lincoln Cemetery**, where 30 members of the U.S. Colored Troops were laid to rest after being denied burial at Arlington National Cemetery. gbltg.com

EISENHOWER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The president we usually associate with Gettysburg is Abraham Lincoln, who recited his famous Gettysburg Address while dedicating the National Cemetery. However, **President Dwight D. Eisenhower** built his home and farm on 189 acres in this bucolic setting. nps.gov/eise

Ridge, we stood on the high ground where Union forces had held a defensive position. We reflected on the site of Pickett's Charge and the Confederate Army's last gasp.

BEYOND THE BATTLEFIELD

Although the town of Gettysburg revolves around its history, it also has more than 7,600 residents, the 189-year-old Gettysburg College and a thriving foodie scene. We began with a dinner at Dobbin House Tavern. Although dinner is served in seven historic rooms, we chose to sit outside under a large tent, a soft summer breeze keeping us cool and social distancing keeping us safe.

The restaurant had once served as a Civil War hospital, and I had to wonder, *Did every place around here serve as a Civil War hospital?* Given that at least 7,000 soldiers died on the battlefield, that might not be far from the truth.

The musty scent of timeworn wood hit us as we walked through the door of the old house. As we made our way up a winding staircase, we noticed intricately handcarved woodwork and paused to peer into a preserved crawl space that was once used to hide fugitive slaves who were escaping on the Underground Railroad.

The cellar, now the restaurant's pub, transported us back to Revolutionary America. (The house was actually built in 1776.) The room-length bar, waitresses dressed as barmaids in period garb, and the wooden booths were illuminated only by lanterns.

We ended our trip with a walk down Baltimore Street, where clusters of people waited for one of Gettysburg's many ghost tours.

Though the battlefield's bloodstains are buried, Civil War lore lives on, and Gettysburg's descendants remain committed to telling it. For this, I felt grateful. ●



A monument dedicated to General Winfield Scott Hancock overlooks Gettysburg National Military Park.