

FROM BERLIN TO BUFFINGTON

Tour Directions

Start the tour at the Berlin Crossroads Interpretive Stop (39.08081, -82.53821), located at 6761 OH-327, Wellston, OH 45692.

1. Berlin Crossroads (JHMHT Sign 18) - Shortly before 11:00 A.M. on July 17th, Colonel Basil Duke's brigade of Confederates were approaching this area from the direction of Jackson. Encountering Union militia pickets, Morgan decided to brush aside this force blocking his way to the Ohio River. This militia force, 1,500 men under command of Colonel Benjamin Runkle, had deployed on the high ground to the northeast. The three-hour action between Morgan's command and the Ohio militia here at Berlin Crossroads resulted in Morgan being momentarily delayed, allowing pursuing Federal forces to narrow the gap with the Confederate raiders.

Turn right onto OH-327 then left onto OH-124. Drive 0.9 miles to Salem Road and turn right. You are now following the wartime road. Drive one mile to Salem Church on the right.

2. Salem Church - Located to the right of the church in the cemetery is a recent monument to those Confederates killed at the engagement at Berlin Crossroads. Facing the church, you can see the monument along the fence to the right. After the fighting at Berlin Crossroads the raiders spent time resting along the Salem Road, including the cemetery. Note that there are also several Civil War veterans buried in the cemetery.

Continue on Salem Road. In 0.5 mile, turn right onto OH-124. Drive 9.7 miles to Wilkesville and turn right onto OH-160/OH-124. Drive 0.3 miles and turn right at the fork onto OH-160 and then an immediate left to view the interpretive sign.

3. The Cline House (JHMHT Sign 19) - This structure to the left is the postwar home of Dr. William C. Cline. Cline's wartime home, which served as Morgan's headquarters on the night of July 17, stood in the lawn directly behind the JHMHT sign.

Return to the fork and bear right onto OH-124. Drive 11.7 miles to Miles Cemetery and turn left to enter. Stay left at both forks and drive 25 yards to the beginning of the retaining wall on your right. Exit your vehicle and walk west, carefully crossing the drainage ditch, and look for the upright rectangular stone for William and Samaria McKnight.

4. Miles Cemetery (William McKnight) - Buried in Miles Cemetery is Second Lieutenant William McKnight and his wife Samaria (the informational sign is incorrect as McKnight was not confirmed as a captain). McKnight, a local resident, was an officer in Company K of the Seventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, a portion of which was among Morgan's pursuers.

McKnight himself was not in Ohio at this time, having participated in an earlier raid in eastern Tennessee with another detachment of the regiment, which was then refitting in Kentucky. Samaria had given birth to twin girls on July 4, 1863, and Morgan is to have said to have visited with her and the McKnight's six children at their home near Langsville. William McKnight would be mortally wounded in battle with Morgan's command on June 12, 1864, at Cynthiana, Kentucky, leaving Samaria a widow with six children, aged nine and under. She never remarried.

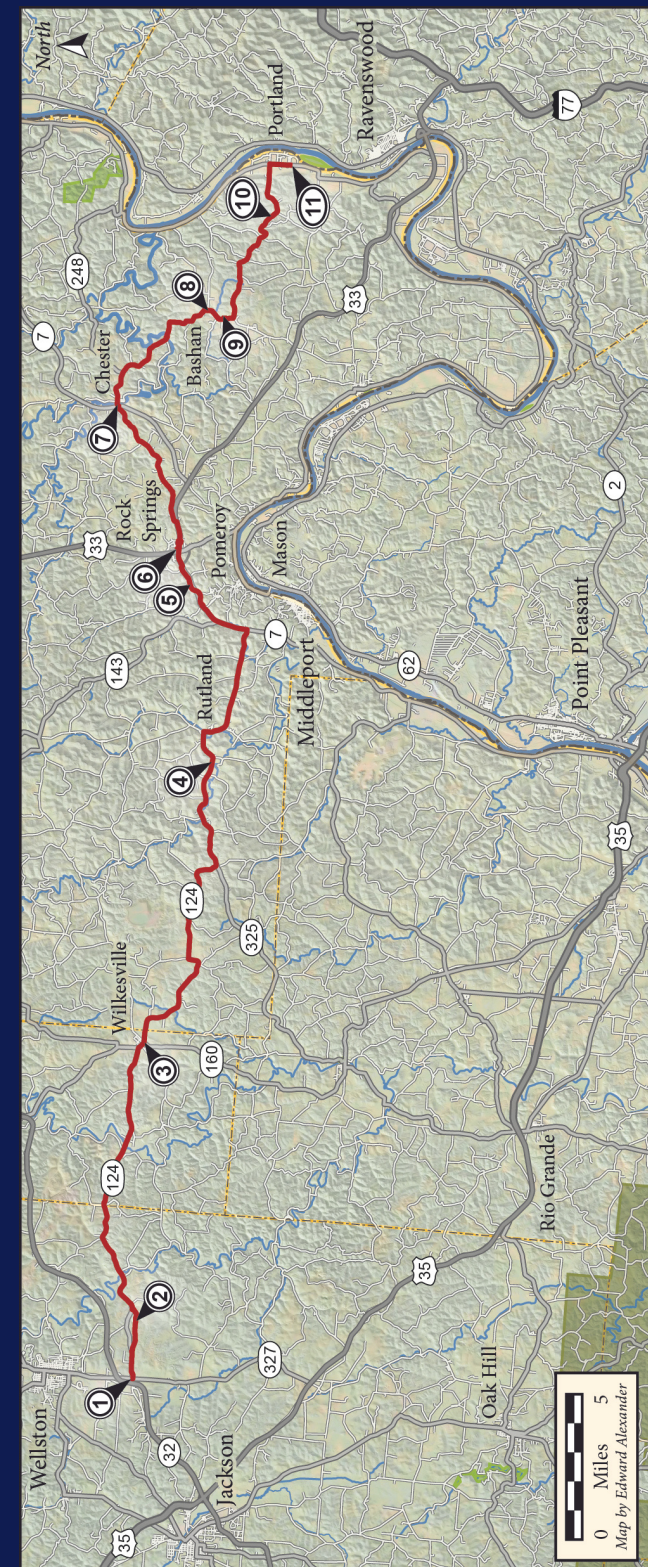
As at Salem Cemetery there are several Civil War veterans buried here.

Return to OH-124 and turn left. Drive 5.3 miles (passing through Rutland) to OH-7/OH-124 and turn left. Drive 1.8 miles to C-75 and turn right. Turn left onto Laurel Cliff Road. Drive 0.9 miles to the intersection of Laurel Cliff and Burdette Roads.

5. The Gauntlet (JHMHT Sign 20) - This is a portion of "The Gauntlet," a narrow area in which the Confederates had to ride and fight through in order to get around Middleport and Pomeroy, two places that were being defended by large numbers of Federal troops and militia. Laurel Cliff Road is the wartime route. Two future United States presidents, Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley, fought near this site.

Continue 0.7 miles on Laurel Cliff Road to OH-7/OH-124 and turn left. Continue on OH-7 for 0.8 miles. Turn right onto C-20, then an immediate left onto C-25 (Pomeroy Pike) then left onto Crew Road, then left onto Rocksprings Road (follow the JHMHT directional signs). Proceed 0.3 miles.

6. Rock Springs (JHMHT Sign 21) - This is the end of "The Gauntlet." With no Federal troops or local militia in front of them at the springs, the raiders were able to regroup and water their horses. The Ohio Historical Marker mentions the wounding of Isaac Carleton, Jr. - he and one other local had been captured by the Confederates. In an attempt to escape, eighteen-year-old Carleton was shot in the back and left for dead. However he would survive his wound.



Tour Directions, Continued

Return to OH-7 by making four rights to retrace your steps. The fourth right will turn east onto OH-7/U. S. 33. In 0.7 miles turn left onto C-25 (also known as the Pomeroy Pike). Drive 4.8 miles, and then cross over OH-7 onto OH-248. Drive 0.2 miles and pull over onto the gravel on the right at the intersection with Scout Camp Road. Walk across OH-248 to the memorial.

7. Chester (JHMHT Sign 22) - On the rise above are two historical structures - the Old Meigs County Courthouse (1823) on the left is Ohio's oldest standing courthouse. On the right is the Chester Academy (1840). Here at Chester, Morgan paused to rest his troops, allowing the Federal pursuers to close the gap. This three-hour stop meant that the Confederates would not reach Portland Bottoms until it was dark, delaying their crossing of the fords at Buffington Island.

The two historic buildings are managed by the Chester Shade Historical Association (chestercourthouse.com).

Continue on OH-248 1.1 miles and turn right onto Riebel Road. Drive 0.4 miles. Riebel Road will turn into Oak Hill Road (C-59). Continue on Oak Hill Road for 1.7 miles. Turn left onto Scout Camp Road and drive 0.6 miles, crossing over the scenic Shade River. Turn right onto Sugar Run Road, cross over the creek, and drive 0.8 miles to Eagle Ridge Road. Turn left, drive 0.6 miles, then turn right onto Racine-Bashan Road. Drive 0.1 miles and turn left into the Bashan Volunteer Fire Department.

8. Bashan (JHMHT Sign 23) - In the immediate aftermath of the battle at Buffington Island, groups of Confederates were roaming the countryside in an effort to escape the pursuing Federal forces. Here in the fields east of Bashan an encounter took place between Federals under command of Brigadier General James M. Shackelford and nearly 200 retreating Confederates from several different regiments being led by Morgan's brother Richard. Running desperately low on ammunition, the Confederates would surrender after a one-hour fight (the Ohio Historical Marker incorrectly indicates 400 Confederates having surrendered).

Bashan is also the birthplace of Ambrose Bierce. Born on June 24, 1842, Bierce's family would move to Indiana before the Civil War. Bierce would serve as a member of the Ninth Indiana Infantry, rising to the rank of First Lieutenant. He was a noted author after the war. He disappeared in Mexico in 1914 while covering the Mexican Revolution. His body was never found.

Leaving Bashan on July 18, the Confederates encountered local militia which they easily routed.

Continue south on Racine-Bashan Road for 0.7 miles and after you pass a utility sub-station on your right, a short distance on the left is a lane that leads to the Red Brick or Brick Church Cemetery. Turn onto the lane and drive 0.1 miles to the cemetery.

9. A Tragic Funeral - The funeral cortege mentioned on JHMHT Sign 23 was proceeding to this cemetery when Morgan's men took the hearse and the horses, leaving the casket along the roadside. One report mentioned that they actually dumped the coffin on the road. The deceased person is unknown as there is only one known 1863 burial in the cemetery, which did not take place until October.

Continue south on Racine-Bashan Road for 0.3 miles. Turn left onto Bald Knob-Stiversville Road (C-31). Continue for 4.2 miles and turn left into the Stiversville New Hope Church lot.

10. Encountering Pickets - On the night of Saturday, July 18th, Morgan posted pickets 0.4 miles to the west (the present day intersection of Durst Ridge and Bald Knob-Stiversville Roads). Morgan had been closely chased across Indiana and Ohio by Federals under the overall command of Brigadier General Edward H. Hobson and placed pickets at the intersection to warn of Hobson's approach.

Continue on Bald Knob-Stiversville Road for 2.0 miles. You will pass JHMHT Sign 24 at 1.8 miles, but if you choose to take the Buffington Island self-guided driving tour, you will return to this stop (tour brochures are available at the Buffington Island Battlefield Memorial Park). Turn right onto OH-124 and drive south for 0.8 miles, turning right into the Memorial Park.

11. Buffington Island (JHMHT Sign 25) - In the foggy early morning hours of Sunday, July 19, 1863, the Battle of Buffington Island started at a point one mile south of the memorial park. Over the next two hours the fighting raged throughout the Portland Bottoms, ending with Morgan's command scattered and in full retreat one and a half miles to the north. To learn more about the Indiana-Ohio Raid and the Battle of Buffington Island, please visit the kiosk in the park and consider taking the 7.5-mile driving tour that covers the battle (tour brochures are available in the kiosk).

This concludes the From Berlin to Buffington Self-Guided Tour.

FROM BERLIN TO BUFFINGTON

A Self-Guided Driving Tour

On July 17, 1863, Brigadier General John H. Morgan's Confederate command departed nearby Jackson and approached the community of Berlin Crossroads. Waiting on the heights to the northeast of the crossroads were Ohio militiamen who were rushed to block Morgan's movements towards the Ohio River and a crossing at Buffington Island into West Virginia.

The action at Berlin Crossroads was part of Morgan's Indiana-Ohio Raid, also known as the Great Raid, of July, 1863. The raid started at Burkesville, Kentucky, on July 2nd and continued through the states of Kentucky and Indiana before crossing into Ohio on July 13th at Harrison. Morgan and his cavalrymen rode through southern Ohio, foraging for food and fresh horses and fighting Ohio militia.

This eleven-stop, two-hour tour will take you along the scenic and historic sixty miles between Berlin Crossroads and Buffington Island. The Battle of Buffington Island, fought on July 19th, was the climatic encounter of the raid. Most of this driving tour follows the John Hunt Morgan Heritage Trail (JHMHT), and the interpretive panels and other signage will tell the story. At other times you will be following wartime roads that are not part of the JHMHT. Please note that some of the roads are of dirt and gravel, but are accessible to vehicles.

The following organizations made this brochure possible.



Meigs County
Chamber of Commerce
(meigsohio.com)



Vinton County
Convention and Visitor's Bureau
(visitvintoncounty.org)



Buffington Island Battlefield
Preservation Foundation
(buffingtonislandbattlefieldfoundation.org)