

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(January 2025)



Remembering Those We Lost The Simpsonville Massacre 160 Years Later

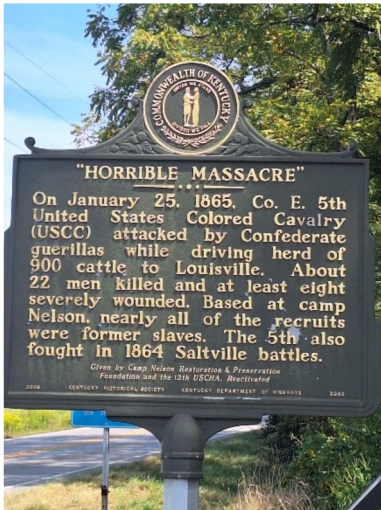
SHELBY COUNTY, KY – Its been 160 years since 22 African American soldiers were massacred in Simpsonville, KY. This horrific event took place on January 25, 1865 when these men, who belonged to the 5th US Colored Cavalry, were ambushed and murdered by Confederate guerillas while herding cattle from Camp Nelson (Nicholasville, KY) to Louisville, KY. The 5th US Colored Cavalry was formed at Camp Nelson, Kentucky during the American Civil War. This incident from Shelby County history is the focus of a PBS documentary. **“Secrets of the Dead: The Civil War’s Lost Massacre”** was co-produced by KET and WNET Group. It revisits these events by tracing the stories of several of the Kentucky soldiers and their families with help from guest historians and Shelby County Historical Society members, Jerry Miller and Juanita White.

Two upcoming public programs will commemorate these soldiers and the significance of this event:

Saturday, January 25, 2025 from 10 am - 1 pm at Camp Nelson National Monument – A program to pay tribute to the soldiers who died. Held inside the Reconstructed Barracks and outside at the 5th US Colored Cavalry Memorial, located directly west of the White House at the park – please dress appropriately for the weather. Also included will be presentations by NPS staff, historians, genealogists, and archeologists, including an update of the ongoing project to determine the final mass grave of the slain soldiers, and a panel discussion including Miller and White. For more information on this event: Steve T. Phan, Chief of Interpretation, Education, and Visitor Services & Historic Weapons Supervisor, (859) 382-6902, tuan_phan@nps.gov, or www.nps.gov/cane. Camp Nelson is located at 6614 Danville Rd, Nicholasville, KY 40356.

“Secrets of the Dead: The Civil War's Lost Massacre” Screening Event on **Tuesday, February 18, 6 - 7:30 pm** at the Muhammad Ali Center, 144 N. 6th St., Louisville, KY. Free (Garage Parking is \$6). Admission to the event is free, but registration is required. This event is produced in partnership with

KET, the Muhammad Ali Center, The Filson Historical Society and the Shelby County Historical Society. For more information on this event or to register contact Garret McCorkle, Education Manager, MUHAMMAD ALI CENTER, (502) 992-5310, gmccorkle@alicenter.org, or alicenter.org.



“Secrets of the Dead” is a series which uses the latest science to challenge prevailing ideas and share fresh perspectives on historical events. The episode includes interviews with several of Kentucky’s Civil War scholars including Jerry Miller, a former state legislator from Louisville, and Juanita White, a docent at Farmington Historic Plantation in Louisville. Aided by University of Kentucky archaeologist Philip Mink and the university’s EduceLab Mobile Team, the episode shows viewers how historians have searched the land surrounding the massacre site, hoping to find the mass grave where the soldiers were hastily buried.

This episode originally premiered in Frankfort at the Kentucky Historical Society on September 28, 2024 for Civil War History Day. It publicly aired on KET on October 23rd, 2024.

The Shelby County Historical Society is a 501©3 organization whose mission is to *preserve and promote the knowledge and appreciation of Shelby County and Kentucky history*. For more info contact the Shelby County Historical Society at (502) 513-5555 or email director@shelbykyhistory.org.

Photos at top of release:

Photo 1: Shelby County Historical Society members Jerry Miller (fifth from left in photo) and Juanita White (third from left in photo) are featured in “Secrets of the Dead: The Civil War’s Lost Massacre”. They are pictured with Kentucky Historical Society staff and KET members at the KHS premier in September 2024. Photo provided by Bonnie Burks Gray.

Photo 2: Publicity photo.

Photo 3: Jerry Miller during the Q & A session following the premiere of “Secrets of the Dead.” Seated to his right are Shelby County Historical Society members Laura Miller (spouse) and William Whitie” Gray. Photo provided by Bonnie Burks Gray.

Historical Marker Photo: Marks the site in Simpsonville, KY near US 60. Photo provided by Helen McKinney.

Countdown to USA 250!

Celebrating 250 years of American History

July 4, 1776 – July 4, 2026

Logo created by Shelby County student Ester Van Zee

