

Who in the world was Julian Scott and why should I care?

Julian Scott was an acclaimed Civil War and Native American artist, as well as a bona fide war hero. At just 16, he became one of the youngest individuals and the first Vermonter to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor for his extraordinary battlefield bravery. Howard Coffin, noted Civil War author and historian recently commented at a Johnson Historical Society presentation that Scott's actions as a soldier were truly extraordinary.

Born and raised in Johnson, Vermont, on February 14, 1846, Scott was the fourth of eight children born to Charles Walter and Lucy Kellum Scott. Too young to be a standard soldier, he enlisted as a fifer in the 3rd Vermont Infantry at age 15, serving from 1861 until he was wounded and discharged in 1863. His brothers, Lucian and Charles, also served the Union; Lucian was severely wounded and nearly died in the notorious Libby Prison.

Several family members including his mother Lucy, siblings Lucian, George, and Alice, and grandparents Jonathan and Sophia, are buried in Johnson's Whiting-Hill Cemetery. His brother, Charles Winfield Scott, is buried nearby in Lamoille View Cemetery.

Having sketched throughout the war, Scott later studied at the National Academy of Design and in Paris and Stuttgart. Philip Roberston, director of the Julian Scott Gallery at Vermont State university, states that Scott is recognized today as a top-five Civil War painter. His masterpiece, *The Battle of Cedar Creek*, was commissioned by the Vermont Legislature to honor local veterans. It now hangs in the Vermont Statehouse alongside several of his other works.

Located at 384 Lower Main Street West in Johnson, Scott's historic birthplace faces demolition under a FEMA floodplain buyout program. To honor his legacy, the Johnson Selectboard has formed a Task Force actively exploring alternative ownership and use options to save the historic structure.

Help protect this historic building! Contact your local, state, and federal elected officials today to advocate for preserving Julian Scott's enduring legacy. For more information go to the Town of Johnson webpage and look for the Julian Scott Task Force page.

