



Abandoned Confederate defenses at Atlanta (GA)

**Cape May County Civil War Round Table  
Newsletter  
April 2017**

**Meeting Dates for 2017**

**20 April:** Our presentation in April will be by long time member Hank Heacock. He will be discussing the Sioux Uprising in Minnesota in 1862, and its interaction with the Civil War.

**Refreshments:** Andy Lolli

**18 May:** Mr. Carmen Fiori will be telling us about *The Two Custers*; the “Civil War” Custer compared to the “Plains Indian” Custer. **Refreshments:**

**15 June**

**20 July:** Mr. Rich Chimeminto of Cape May will be lecturing about Civil War music. **Refreshments:**

**17 August**

**21 September**

**19 October**

**16 November**

**?? December**

**LIST OF LOCAL EVENTS!!!**

If anyone knows of local Civil War related events for 2017, please contact the Secretary so the information can be added to future issues of the newsletter.

**Mid Atlantic Center for the Arts**

**May**

**Armed Forces Day Celebration = 20 May**

Join the Friends of the World War II Tower in a tribute to those who served our country.

**Cold Spring Village**

**June**

**Military Timeline Weekend = 17 – 18 June:**

Interested in the Civil War or World War II? Want to learn about the weaponry and tactics used by the British infantry in the Victorian Era? Or maybe you are just a history buff who loves it all.

Historic Cold Spring Village will host its annual Military Timeline Weekend on Saturday and Sunday, June 17-18, which will feature encampments, weaponry displays and demonstrations from living history groups depicting various conflicts throughout the centuries.

- **Civil War Weekend = 16 – 17 September**

Visitors can tour Union and Confederate camps and meet authentically clad and equipped military and civilian reenactors who will discuss the everyday lives of Civil War soldiers and the roles civilians played in supporting them.

**Cape May County Historical Society & Museum**

The County Historical Society and Museum would like us to add that they are looking for volunteers to help with many aspects of their work – from helping in the library, working in the gardens, to acting as tour guides/docents in the museum. They also have lost a huge amount of funding from the county; please support their fund raising efforts!! They are also always ready to welcome new members as well.

**Round Table Officers**

President: Andy Lolli

17 Delaware Ave, Del Haven, NJ 08251

609-889-0061

Email: andylolli@comcast.net

Vice President: Lou Bishop Jr.

21 Schoolhouse Ln, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

609-463-9277 or 741-5438

[southwiltiseagain@aol.com](mailto:southwiltiseagain@aol.com)

Secretary: Pat Munson-Siter

42 Franklin Ave., Villas, NJ 08251-2407

609-287-5097

patms1766@outlook.com

Treasurer: Jim Marshall

202 Bartram Ln., Ocean City, NJ 08226

609-602-3243

[jim@jimocnj.com](mailto:jim@jimocnj.com)

*as of 1 April Treasurer will be John Herr, but send dues to Jim for the moment as John will not be back into the area until then.*

**PLEASE NOTE: DUES ARE DUE!**

Please mail your dues to our Treasurer, Jim Marshall. His address is above. Dues help pay for speakers for the group. Those who want hard copies of the newsletter pay more to help defray copy and postage costs. Dues are: \$30 for electronic newsletter and \$35 for snail mailed hard copy

**THERE WAS NO MEETING IN January so there are no minutes**



## Civil War Timeline for April

### 1860

No Major Events

### 1861

- 6 Arkansas secedes
- 7 Tennessee negotiates alliance with Confederacy
- 20 North Carolina secedes
- 21 Confederate legislators vote to move capital to Richmond
- 23 Virginia secedes (after popular vote)
- 24 Union soldiers occupy Alexandria (VA)
- 6 Arkansas secedes

### 1862

- 4 Confederates evacuate Yorktown
- 5 Battle of Williamsburg (VA)
- 8 Battle of McDowell (VA)
- 15 Battle of Drewry's Bluff (VA)
- 23 Battle of Front Royal (VA)
- 25 Battle of Winchester (VA)
- 31 Battle of Seven Pines (Fair Oaks) (VA)

### 1863

- 1-4 Battle of Chancellorsville
- 10 Stonewall Jackson dies
- 16 Battle of Champion's Hill (MS)

### 1864

- 5-6 Battle of the Wilderness (VA)
- 6 Atlanta Campaign opens
- 7-19 Battle of Spotsylvania (VA)
- 11 Battle of Yellow Tavern (VA)
- 12-13 Second Battle of Drewry's Bluff (VA)
- 15 Battle of New Market (VA)
- 24 Battle of the North Anna River (VA)
- 25-27 Battle of New Hope (GA)

### 1865

- 10 Confederate president Davis captured in Georgia
- 26 Smith surrenders Trans-Mississippi Confederate army



## Civil War Related Events for May 2017

6 **DC | VA** Bus tour, "New Market and Fisher's Hill," Smithsonian tour leaves from 550 C St SW, Washington. 8 am-6:30 pm. \$180. [smithsonianassociates.org](http://smithsonianassociates.org) (click on Civil War).

6 **MD** Open house, free tours at the Surratt House Museum in Clinton. Noon-4 pm. [surrattmuseum.org](http://surrattmuseum.org)

6 **VA** Living history, "Legends by Lanternlight: 'Like a Horrid Dream,' Middleburg's Civil War," at the Middleburg Baptist Church, 209 E Federal St, Middleburg. 7:30 pm. [mosbyheritagearea.org](http://mosbyheritagearea.org)

6 **VA** Walking tour of Fort Huger, a Confederate fort on the James River, 15080 Talcott Terrace, Isle of Wight County, near Smithfield. 10 am. Free. [historicsisleofwight.com](http://historicsisleofwight.com)

6 **VA** Special restoration tour of Liberia, a Civil War-era headquarters (8601 Portner Ave) in Manassas. Includes Civil War graffiti, stories. 2 pm. \$10. [manassasmuseum.org](http://manassasmuseum.org)

6-7 **VA** Living history and other anniversary activities on the Wilderness Battlefield near Fredericksburg. Special programs at Ellwood and the Tapp Farm Field. 9 am-5 pm. Free. [nps.gov/frsp](http://nps.gov/frsp)

12-14 **PA** Seminar, "A Contrast in Commanders: Meade, Lee and Their Commands at Gettysburg," lectures, field programs and tours based at the Gettysburg NMP. \$90. [nps.gov/gett/planyourvisit/2017-seminar.htm](http://nps.gov/gett/planyourvisit/2017-seminar.htm)

13 **MD** Battlefield hikes at the Monocacy National Battlefield in Frederick. Two-hour ranger-guided tours of different parts of the battlefield begin at 9 and 11:30 am and 2 pm. Free. [nps.gov/mono](http://nps.gov/mono)

13 **DC | VA** Bus tour, "The Ride to Yellow Tavern: Stuart Confronts Sheridan," Smithsonian tour with Ed Bearss leaves from 550 C St SW, Washington. 7:30 am-7:30 pm. \$190. [smithsonianassociates.org](http://smithsonianassociates.org) (click on Civil War).

13 **VA** Hike, "Spotsylvania History Trail," fit-history 5.7-mile guided tour begins at the Spotsylvania Battlefield Exhibit Shelter on the battlefield near Spotsylvania Court House west of Fredericksburg. 10 am. Free. [nps.gov/frsp](http://nps.gov/frsp)

13 **VA** Lecture, “Last Days of the CSS *Virginia*,” at the Mariners’ Museum in Newport News. 2:30 pm. Free with admission. [marinersmuseum.org](http://marinersmuseum.org)

14 **VA** Lectures, “The Role of Women in the Civil War,” at the Petersburg National Battlefield visitor center. 11 am and 2 pm. Free with park admission. [nps.gov/pete](http://nps.gov/pete)

14 **VA** Living history, “Mothers’ Day Tea,” at the Kernstown battlefield south of Winchester. 11 am-2 pm. \$10. [kernstownbattle.org](http://kernstownbattle.org)

15 **VA** Tour, “Battle of New Market,” director’s tour of the battlefield. 2-4 pm. Registration required: 866-515-1864.

18 **VA** Lecture and reception, “Combat, Racial Violence & Resilience: Life-altering experiences during and after the Civil War,” at Historic Tredegar in Richmond. 6 pm reception, 6:45 pm lecture. \$10. [acwm.org](http://acwm.org)

19-21 **VA** Living history, live-fire competition with Civil War weapons at the North-South Skirmish Association’s National Competition at Fort Shenandoah near Winchester. Free. Details, directions: [n-ssa.org](http://n-ssa.org)

20 **VA** Motorcycle tour of the Petersburg National Battlefield. 46-mile guided tour begins 10 am. Space limited. Reservations: 804-732-3531 extension 202. [nps.gov/pete](http://nps.gov/pete)

20 **VA** Van tour, “The Seven Days Battles Part II,” through Berkeley Plantation. Leaves from Lee Hall in Newport News. 8 am-4 pm. \$50. More info, reservations: 757-888-3371 extension 306.

20 **VA** Lecture, “Loudoun Boundary Line and Stuart’s Significant Achievement,” J.E.B. Stuart’s journey June 27, 1863, at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. 2 pm. Free. 703-591-0560.

20-21 **VA** Anniversary living history and talks at Drewry’s Bluff, part of the Richmond National Battlefield south of Richmond. Camp and demonstrations all weekend. Talks at 11 am and 2 pm each day. Free. [nps.gov/rich](http://nps.gov/rich)

20-21 **VA** Reenactment, “Battle of New Market,” at the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park in New Market. Grounds open 10 am each day with tours and demonstrations on the grounds. Cavalry

battle 2:30 pm Saturday, battle reenactment 2 pm Sunday. \$10/adult at gate. [vmi.edu/museums-and-archives/virginia-museum-of-the-civil-war](http://vmi.edu/museums-and-archives/virginia-museum-of-the-civil-war)

20-21 **VA** Reenactment, “Fort Pocahontas (Wilson’s Wharf)” at the site off Route 5 between Richmond and Williamsburg. Living history and other programs 10 am-4 pm each day. Battles at 1 pm each day. \$10/adult. [fortpocahontas.org/reenactments.html](http://fortpocahontas.org/reenactments.html)

24 DC Book talk and reception, *The Quartermaster: Montgomery C. Meigs, Lincoln’s General, Master Builder of the Union Army*, at President Lincoln’s Cottage, 140 Rock Creek Church Road NW, Washington. 6 pm reception, 6:30 lecture. \$10 each. [lincolncottage.org](http://lincolncottage.org)

25 **VA** Talk and reception, “Appomattox’s Peace Memorial,” 6:30 pm reception, 7 pm talk. \$10. [acwm.org](http://acwm.org)

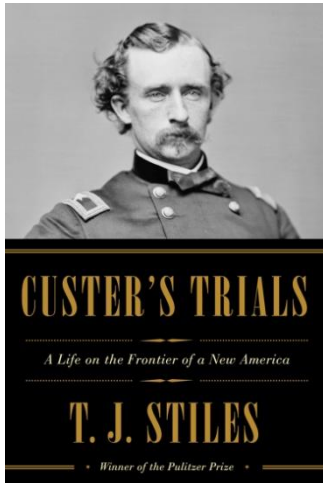
27-28 **MD** Living history, infantry camp and demonstrations at the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg. . Demonstrations 11 am, 1 pm and 3 pm Saturday; 11 am and 1 pm Sunday. Free with park admission. [nps.gov/anti](http://nps.gov/anti)

27-29 **VA** Memorial Day talks and tour at the Poplar Grove National Cemetery near Petersburg. Talks 11 am and 1 pm, tour 3 pm Saturday. Tour 11 am, talk 1 pm Sunday. Tour 11 am, talks 1 and 3 pm Monday. Free. [nps.gov/pete](http://nps.gov/pete)

28 **VA** Lecture, “The Most Magnificent Battlefield in the World: Gettysburg Visitation in the Postwar Era,” at the Graffiti House (Brandy Station Battlefield), 19484 Brandy Road, Brandy Station. 2 pm. Free. [brandystationfoundation.com](http://brandystationfoundation.com)

28 **VA** Living history, “Confederate Artillery Demonstration,” at the Petersburg National Battlefield. 1-4 pm. Free with park admission. [nps.gov/pete](http://nps.gov/pete)





**Custer's Trials: A Life on the Frontier of a New America**

by Stiles, T.J.

**Publisher:** Knopf

**Retail Price:** \$30.00

**Issue:** Summer 2016

**ISBN:** 9780307592644

**Custer in Context: An Insightful Look at a Controversial Figure**

When one produces a book about such a well-covered topic as the life of George Armstrong Custer, he or she must face the daunting challenge of explaining why the world needs yet another book about that subject. That question, after all, will be among the first that a shrewd reviewer will ask upon picking up that book. In his latest work, *Custer's Trials: A Life on the Frontier of a New America*, acclaimed biographer T.J. Stiles ably addresses that concern, arguing that a key to understanding Custer and the American public's enduring fascination with him is examining his life within its relevant historical context. Stiles, the author of *The First Tycoon: The Epic Life of Cornelius Vanderbilt* and *Jesse James: The Last Rebel of the Civil War* as well as winner of the Pulitzer Prize in Biography and the National Book Award, offers a fresh look at a familiar subject by immersing readers in the story of how Custer struggled to adapt to a modernizing America.

Stiles asserts that Custer lived on a frontier in time, as his life unfolded as the United States entered a period of rapid modernization in the

mid-nineteenth century. Although he contributed to the nation's changing landscape as a hero of the Civil War and famed Indian fighter, Custer found himself stuck between the past and the future, ambivalent toward the present. His Civil War exploits helped to destroy slavery while he proved to be no champion of African American rights as well as expressed what we might call white supremacist views. Similarly, he was romantic in many of his tastes and actions yet he expressed enthusiasm for some innovations. His fame placed him in the spotlight and his struggles earned him lasting public attention, for, according to Stiles, "Custer's contradictions spoke to the millions Americans who also failed to root themselves in the new world" (xix). Furthermore, the author concludes that Custer's inability to adapt to modernity helps to explain his personal instability and tumultuous military career.

Another overarching theme of Stiles' book is that ambition drove Custer and made his life into a series of trials. From a young age, Custer was insecure, feared obscurity, and desperately sought the approval of others. This began within his household as a child as he sought to please his father while pursuing his own course through life and continued through his military career, right up to his demise at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Custer's ambition led him to be reckless at times, to the point of teetering on self-destruction, but his acumen as an army officer – particularly his leadership in combat – time and time again saved his life and career. That, of course, came to an end in 1876, but Stiles contends that we must not fixate on Custer's death to the neglect of the rest of the story. As he ably demonstrates, looking at the totality of Custer's life and not treating it as a mere prelude to the Little Bighorn is a fruitful exercise, for doing so highlights the many forces that shape an individual – and public memory of that historical figure.

There is much to praise about *Custer's Trials*. It is a balanced book that treats Custer as neither a hero nor a villain, but rather a complex and often contradictory individual. It is also a well-rounded book that covers many facets of Custer's life and

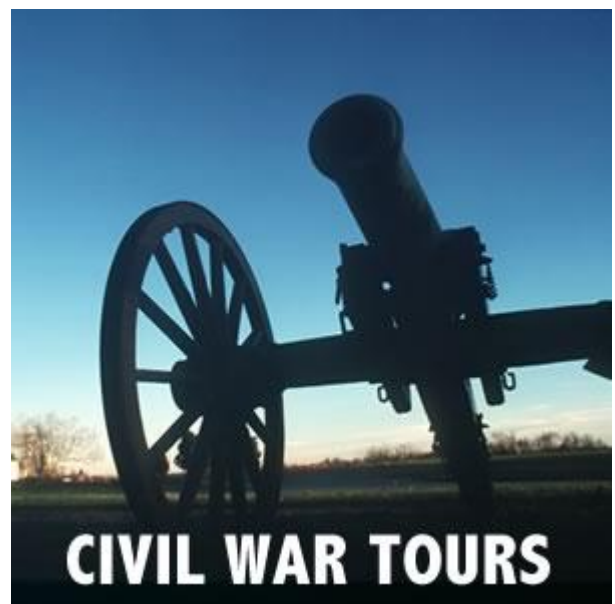
times. Indeed, it is far more than a mere military biography, as Stiles closely investigates Custer's private life, especially his passionate yet troubled marriage with Elizabeth Bacon Custer, provides concise yet insightful biographical sketches of key players in Custer's life, tackles issues of race and gender in the nineteenth century, and incorporates relevant discussions of Native American cultures and United States government actions. Firmly placing Custer's story within its historical context not only provides that narrative with a rich backdrop, but it enables readers to better appreciate the array of forces that shaped the man and his legacy. Stiles bases his study on a strong research base, for in addition to consulting relevant literature on a wide variety of topics ranging from Native American and Western history to key works on the Civil War and biographies of Custer and many of his contemporaries, he also heavily references and quotes letters, diaries, reports, and other historical documents that shed light on Custer and those around him.

There are some points of caution worth mentioning. For one, Stiles does not delve much into the events that unfolded during the Little Bighorn Campaign, as he devotes only a portion of the Epilogue to highlighting some testimony presented during Frederick W. Benteen's Court of Inquiry proceedings. Similarly, although Stiles alludes to the significance of discourse that followed Custer's demise in shaping popular memory, he does not explore Custer's afterlife trials as his image evolved over time. Also, it is worth pointing out that Stiles occasionally indulges in speculation, especially regarding Custer's possible extramarital activities. Although the historical record is not conclusive regarding whether or not Custer remained faithful to Libbie, Stiles repeatedly intimates that he was not. As a case in point, on page 155, as part of his discussion of Custer's relationship with alleged Confederate spy Annie Jones, Stiles writes, "He had allowed her to stay at his "headquarters" (in her own tent? in his tent? in his bed?) as he made inquiries at army hospitals."

Ultimately, scholars and general readers alike should find value in *Custer's Trials*. The book is well-written and engaging, including vivid descriptions of detail (such as of Custer's many outfits) as well as effective overviews of the "big picture" (such as of the U.S. government's Indian policy). Stiles enables readers to better understand Custer the man while also highlighting the early roots of the mythic Custer. Scholars should appreciate that Stiles throws new light on an old topic while general readers should value the book's accessibility and insight. For these reasons and others, *Custer's Trials* merits a place on the bookshelf alongside Robert M. Utley's *Cavalier in Buckskin*, Evan S. Connell's *Son of the Morning Star*, and other top Custer biographies.

*Adam R. Hodge is Assistant Professor of History at Lourdes University in Sylvania, Ohio. His recent publications include a historiographic essay on Indian scouts that appeared in A Companion to Custer and the Little Bighorn Campaign (Wiley-Blackwell, 2015) and an article entitled "Our women and children cry for food, and we have no food to give them": The Environmental Dimensions of Eastern Shoshone Dispossession," which appeared in The Confluence (2016).*

#### PODCASTS



Walk with a noted historian as your personal audio guide on fields where decisive, dramatic battles took place. The battlefield podcasts are narrated by National Park Service historians and recorded on the battlefields. They feature introductions by John Fieseler and Marc Ramsey and the period music of Southern Horizon, Al Neale, Vaughn and Starbuck, and Chris Jackson. The podcasts are complemented with detailed maps, so that you can follow the action easily.

### Battle of Cedar Creek (Virginia)

In the fall of 1864 Gen. Philip Sheridan's Union army appeared to have Southern forces in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley at bay. But Gen. Jubal Early's Confederates weren't dead yet. On Oct. 19, Early attacked Sheridan's unsuspecting army as it camped around Cedar Creek, just north of Strasburg. Initially routed, Sheridan's troops faced disaster until their commander's dramatic appearance on the battlefield, resulting in one of the great reversals of fortunes on any battlefield during the war.



Sheridan's Ride to the Front

This driving tour begins at the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation visitor center, 8437 Valley Pike, Middletown VA 22645.

**Notes:** It's very important to download and print out both the tour map and the driving directions (see below) because no signs mark the route and no driving directions are given in the audio.

Many of the roads used in this tour are rural. Please be cautious and respect private property.

10-stop driving tour

Narration: Eric Campbell, NPS

Introduction: John Fieseler

Music: Music: Wayne Erbsen (**Native Ground Music**)

Production: CivilWarTraveler.com and the **Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park**

Playing time: 41:38 minutes

File size: 10.8MB

### Henry Hill: First Manassas (Bull Run)

This July 21, 1861, battle was the first big fight of the war, giving the country a taste of



Stonewall Jackson Monument at Manassas National Battlefield Park.

what was to come.

This walking tour covers the intense fighting on Henry Hill where the tide of the battle turned from Union success to a decisive Confederate victory. The fighting on the hill was marked by charges and counter charges, often ending in hand-to-hand fighting.

One of the Confederate leaders on Henry Hill was Gen. Thomas J. Jackson, who would become "Stonewall" that day. This tour begins just outside the Manassas National Battlefield Park visitor center. Park fees apply.

9-stop walking tour, approximately one hour

Narration: Greg Wolf, NPS

Introduction: Marc Ramsey [**Owens and Ramsey Books**]

Music: Chris Jackson [**Chris Jackson Music**]

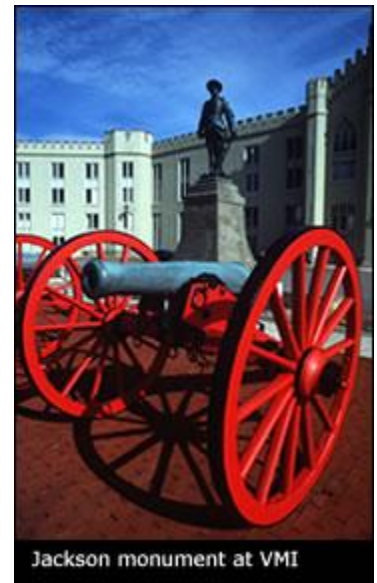
Production: CivilWarTraveler.com and the **Manassas National Battlefield Park**

Playing time: 40:34 minutes

File size: 10.6MB

### Virginia Military Institute

The Virginia Military Institute, founded in 1839, made significant contributions to the Confederate war effort from the beginning. VMI cadets helped train the thousands of raw recruits pouring into Virginia in the spring of 1861. A few months later some of them fought under one of their old instructors at the Battle of Manassas. That teacher, Thomas Jonathan Jackson, won his famous nickname



Jackson monument at VMI

"Stonewall" during that battle. The cadets themselves played a key role in the Confederate victory at New Market in May 1864. Ten cadets lost their lives in that battle. This tour covers many of the sites familiar to the cadets in the Civil War era.

5-stop walking tour, approximately 45 minutes

Narration: Col. Keith Gibson

Introduction: Marc Ramsey

Music: VMI Regimental Band and Pipes and Drums

Production: CivilWarTraveler.com and the VMI Museum

Playing time: 22:23 minutes  
File size: 6.1 MB

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### Fort Fisher, North Carolina Historic Site, Kure Beach NC

This massive Confederate fort between the Atlantic Ocean and the Cape Fear River 20 miles south of Wilmington protected that critical port until the final months of the war.



Fort Fisher's guns also shielded blockade runners as they traveled in and out of the Cape Fear River carrying important supplies in and cash crops out. This walking tour describes the fort and the battle that finally conquered it.

5-stop walking tour, approximately 45 minutes  
Narration: Amy Thornton, Fort Fisher interpreter  
Introduction: Marc Ramsey [**Owens and Ramsey Books**]  
Music: **The Huckleberry Brothers**  
Production: CivilWarTraveler.com and **Fort Fisher**  
Playing time: 18:59  
File size: 4.9MB

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### Poplar Grove National Cemetery, Petersburg VA

Established in 1866, this cemetery holds the remains of nearly 6,000 soldiers, most of them Union soldiers who died during the actions around Petersburg, 1864–1865.



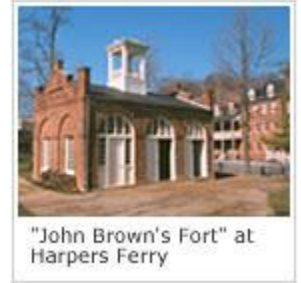
13-stop walking tour, approximately one hour  
Narration: Betsy Dinger, Petersburg National Battlefield  
Introduction: Marc Ramsey [**Owens and Ramsey Books**]  
Music: Chris Jackson [**Chris Jackson Music**]  
Production: CivilWarTraveler.com and the **Petersburg**

**National Battlefield**  
Playing time: 34:09 minutes  
File size: 7.8MB

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### Harpers Ferry: John Brown's Raid

Late in the evening on Oct. 16, 1859, John Brown and a small band of insurgents entered Harpers Ferry (then Virginia), planning to ignite and arm a slave insurrection. This tour covers raid-related sites in the national park at Harpers Ferry (now West Virginia).



7-stop walking tour, approximately 45 minutes  
Narration: Dennis Frye, chief historian, Harpers Ferry NHP  
Introduction: John Fieseler  
Music: **Al Neale**  
Production: **CivilWarTraveler.com** and the **Harpers Ferry National Historical Park**  
Playing time: 28:02 minutes  
File size: 6.9 MB

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### New Market Battlefield

In May 1864, new overall Union commander U.S. Grant ordered a Federal army under Gen. Franz Sigel to march south in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley to destroy transportation hubs and deprive the Confederacy of an important source of food. On May 15, 1864, Confederate Gen. John C. Breckinridge's small force — including 257 cadets from the Virginia Military Institute — met Sigel's advance in the small crossroads town of New Market. The battle here halted the Union advance and gave the Confederacy much-needed breathing space in the Valley.



This walking tour through the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park covers the Confederate advance and the charge by the VMI cadets.

9-stop walking tour, approximately 90 minutes  
Narration: Scott Harris, park director  
Introduction: Marc Ramsey (**Owens and Ramsey**)

**Books)**

Music: **Al Neale**

Production: **CivilWarTraveler.com** and **New Market Battlefield State Historical Site**

Playing time: 26:08 minutes

File Size: 6.0 MB

**Appomattox Court House**

The dignified surrender of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia to Union Gen. U.S. Grant at Appomattox is one of the most dramatic and familiar moments in American history. Yet little is known about the event beyond the April 9, 1865, meeting between the generals in the McLean house parlor.



McLean House

This walking tour sheds light on other moving moments in the days following that meeting and describes the town that found itself in the national spotlight.

5-stop walking tour, approximately 45 minutes

Narration: Patrick Schroeder, Appomattox Court House NHP historian

Introduction: Marc Ramsey (**Owens and Ramsey Books**)

Music: **Al Neale**

Production: **CivilWarTraveler.com** and the

**Appomattox Court House National Historical Park**

Playing time: 23:55 minutes

File size: 5.5 MB

