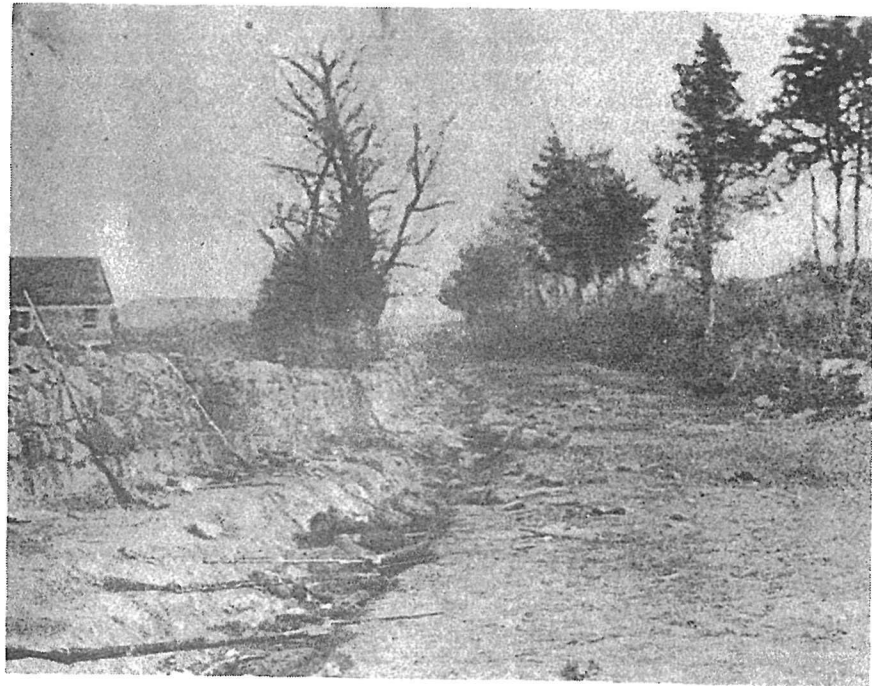


BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG, DECEMBER 13, 1862.  
 CHANCELLORSVILLE CAMPAIGN (CHANCELLORSVILLE,  
 SECOND FREDERICKSBURG, AND SALEM CHURCH)  
 APRIL 27 - MAY 6, 1863.  
 BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS, MAY 5 - 6, 1864.  
 BATTLE OF SPOTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE,  
 MAY 8 - 21, 1864.



The Sunken Road, 1863  
 (Signal Corps, U.S. Army, photo)

FREDERICKSBURG AND SPOTSYLVANIA  
 COUNTY BATTLEFIELDS MEMORIAL  
 NATIONAL MILITARY PARK.  
*Virginia*

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HAROLD L. ICKES, Secretary

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
NEWTON B. DRURY, Director

FREDERICKSBURG AND SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY BATTLEFIELDS MEMORIAL  
NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

Fredericksburg, Virginia.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, established by act of Congress approved February 14, 1927, embraces portions of the battlefields around Fredericksburg on which were fought four major battles of the War Between the States:

The Battle of Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862;  
The Chancellorsville Campaign, including Second  
Fredericksburg and Salem Church, April 27-May 6,  
1863; Battle of the Wilderness, May 5-6, 1864; The  
Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, May 8-21, 1864.

In addition to the Battlefields, the Park administers the Fredericksburg National Cemetery on Marye's Heights overlooking the town. 15,260 Federal dead removed from the battlefields at the close of the war are buried here. Of this number, 12,770 are unknown dead. Also included in the Park is the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Shrine at Guinea Station, the original house where the Confederate General died after his mortal wounding at Chancellorsville.

The battlefields have changed but little since the period of the war. In the woods and on the high ground, miles of trench remains and gun pits trace the lines of battle. On each of the battlefields, park drives constructed by the Federal Government now make these remains accessible to the visitor.

THE BATTLES AROUND FREDERICKSBURG

Fredericksburg, on the Rappahannock River, halfway between Washington and Richmond, the opposing capitals, was early recognized as an important point and occupied successively by both Confederates and Federals in the early part of the War Between the States.

After the Battle of Antietam (Maryland), September 17, 1862, Lee's Confederate army, unsuccessful in its first invasion of the North, returned to Virginia. Burnside replaced Federal General McClellan and pushed over the barrier of the Rappahannock, at Fredericksburg, on the direct route to Richmond.

The Confederate Army of Northern Virginia held the high ground behind Fredericksburg, dominating the river valley. At Marye's Heights, just west of the town, Lee's artillery crowned the ridge; his infantry, along the foot of the slope, manned the Sunken Road behind an old stonewall. December 13, 1862, Burnside hurled the Army of the Potomac to the attack. Not one of his men reached Marye's Heights. Four miles south, near Hamilton's (RR) Crossing, the Federals penetrated the Confederate line, but were ejected. December 15-16, Burnside recrossed the river and went into winter quarters. During the winter, Hooker, his successor, built up the morale of the dispirited Union army.

April 27, 1863, Hooker divided his force, advancing his main body up the Rappahannock to come in on Lee's rear, while the other wing faced the Fredericksburg lines. Lee, in turn, divided his army and outgeneralled Hooker at Chancellorsville, 10 miles west of Fredericksburg. The Chancellorsville Campaign (April 27 - May 6, 1863) comprised the three-day Battle of Chancellorsville, the Second Battle of Fredericksburg, and the Battle of Salem Church. Again the Federals were driven across the river.

Lee now invaded the North for the second and last time. July 1, 2, and 3, he was defeated at Gettysburg by Meade, who had succeeded Hooker and was to retain command of the Army of the Potomac until the end of the war.

Back in Virginia, the opposing armies maneuvered during the autumn of 1863 before settling into winter quarters on either side of the Rapidan, a confluent of the Rappahannock. Grant, appointed head of all the Federal armies, chose to accompany Meade and joined him, March 1864.

When spring had dried the winter's mud, Grant marched southeast around Lee's right flank, hoping to destroy the Confederates in the open country toward Richmond. At a point about 17 miles west of Fredericksburg, Lee struck Grant's columns as they traversed the belt of dense second growth timber, called the Wilderness.

Two days of indecisive fighting (May 5-6, 1864) caused Grant to break off the battle. He moved in the direction of Lee's rear and Richmond, however, instead of back over the Rappahannock or Rapidan.

Near Spotsylvania Court House, 12 miles southeast of the Wilderness and about the same distance southwest of Fredericksburg, the fighting continued, May 8-21. Here was the Bloody Angle, where on May 12 the armies locked in a desperate hand-to-hand struggle lasting fifteen hours.

Again unable to dislodge the grim Confederates, Grant sidestepped towards Richmond. Lee, as before, was forced to follow and put himself between the invader and the Confederate Capital.

From then on until Lee's surrender at Appomattox, April 9, 1865, the armies were in constant contact. (Parks at Richmond and Petersburg continue the story of the War Between the States in Virginia.)

HOW TO REACH THE PARK

Historic Fredericksburg, starting point for a tour of the battlefields, is located on U. S. Highway No. 1, 50 miles south of Washington and 55 miles north of Richmond; on U. S. Highway No. 17 (to Williamsburg); Virginia State Highway No. 3 (to Charlottesville and the Skyline Drive in the Shenandoah National Park); and the R. F. & P. RR connecting Richmond and Washington. Buses arrive and leave regularly.

Visitors to the Park are cordially invited to make use of the facilities provided by the National Park Service. Direction to the fields may be secured at the Park Headquarters Building, on the corner of Lafayette Boulevard (U. S. Highway No. 1) and the Sunken Road, Fredericksburg. For students of the history of the War Between the States good library facilities are available at Park Headquarters. The same building contains a museum, open daily and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., featuring a diorama of Fredericksburg in 1862, relief maps, an excellent firearms collection, wartime photographs, and many relics. The admission fee is 10 cents for adults.

Conducted tours of the Fredericksburg Battlefield under the guidance of park historians are scheduled daily at 9 and 11 a.m., and 2 and 4 p.m. Each tour takes an hour and one-half. No charge is made for this service. Tours begin at Headquarters.

At Headquarters and in Visitors' Information Stations on each of the battlefields trained men explain the battles. Outdoor maps and markers along park drives further interpret the history of the area.

For the convenience of visitors, picnic grounds, equipped with fireplaces and tables, are located on all fields. Foot trails, supplementing the park drives follow trench remains. A bridle path has been constructed on the Fredericksburg battlefield. Horses are for hire at a privately owned riding academy.

ADMINISTRATION

The Park is administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. Communications and inquiries relative to the Park should be addressed to the Superintendent, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

July 1941.

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Park Headquarters and Museum