

Fredericksburg

Fredericksburg/Spotsylvania
National Military Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



From the painting Battle of the Bloody Angle by Thure de Thulstrup. Courtesy The Veterans of the Seventh Regiment, NY.

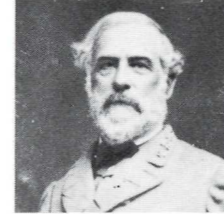
In 1861, Fredericksburg was a quiet city of 5,000 inhabitants nestled along the Rappahannock River. Its strategic location midway between Washington and Richmond caused it to become a focal point during the Civil War.



Confederate infantrymen standing in a sunken road and concealed from view by a stone wall repulsed thousands of attacking Federals during the 1862 Battle of Fredericksburg.



Robert E. Lee led the Confederate forces at all four battles around Fredericksburg. His most trusted subordinate, Stonewall Jackson, fell victim to the mistaken fire of his own men at Chancellorsville.



Valentine Museum, Richmond, VA



The first two battles of the campaign that led to final Union victory in Virginia were fought at the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House west of Fredericksburg. Some of the most savage fighting occurred at Spotsylvania during

the Union attack on the Confederate-held "Bloody Angle" (depicted above). Losses were fearful, but U.S. Grant (right), commanding all Union armies, called the results "important" to his overall plan to capture Lee's army and end the war.



"Where Uncommon Valor Was Common Place"

The countryside in and around Fredericksburg, depicted on the map at right much as it appeared in 1860, provided the setting for four major battles of the Civil War, resulting in over 100,000 casualties.

Fredericksburg

The Union army commanded by Ambrose E. Burnside arrived on Stafford Heights overlooking Fredericksburg in mid-November 1862. Not until December 11, however, did the Federals cross the Rappahannock River. By this time Lee's forces were firmly posted on the high ground west of the city. On December 13 Burnside ordered two attacks. The assault on the left, led by George Meade, against Jackson's corps at Prospect Hill, achieved temporary success before Confederate reserves drove Meade back to his original position. The second attack

focused against the heart of Lee's defenses on Marye's Heights directly beyond Fredericksburg. Union soldiers were slaughtered in masses by fire from artillery on the heights and infantry behind a stone wall. When the day ended, Lee had won his most one-sided victory of the war.

Chancellorsville

Following the Fredericksburg debacle, Lincoln replaced Burnside with Joseph Hooker. On April 27, 1863, the new commander marched most of his army upstream, crossed the rivers at shallow fords, and within 3 days was at the Chancellorsville crossroads. Lee discovered this threat to his position and rushed westward, prompting Hooker to abandon the initiative and establish a defensive line which was vulnerable on the right flank. Stonewall Jackson exploited this weakness on May 2

by leading his corps on a risky 19-kilometer (12-mile) march around the Union army and destroying Hooker's right in a spectacular surprise attack. Ironically, the day ended in tragedy for the Confederates when Jackson was unwittingly shot and mortally wounded by his own troops. Lee pressed his advantage for 3 more days and eventually drove the Federals back across the river.

Wilderness

The first of the classic encounters between Lee and Grant took place in the dense thickets and tangled overgrowth of the Wilderness on May 5-6, 1864. Along the Orange Turnpike the armies sparred indecisively for 2 days. To the south, on the Plank Road, the Federals almost crushed A. P. Hill's troops on May 5, only to be thrown back by a dramatic Confederate counterattack

the next day. Tactically the battle was a draw, but Grant broke the stalemate by marching his army south toward Spotsylvania Court House.

Spotsylvania Court House

On May 7, 1864, both armies raced for the vital intersection at Spotsylvania Court House which controlled the shortest route to Richmond. Lee arrived first, entrenched, and successfully withstood a series of small-scale Union attacks. On the morning of May 12, two Federal corps charged from the woods opposite a vulnerable section of the Confederate line known as the mule-shoe salient. Thanks in part to a thick fog and wet Confederate gunpowder, the initial Union advance overwhelmed the Southerners. As another assault reached the Confederate line, Lee's rein-

forcements crashed into the oncoming Federals and for the next 20 hours the men in this sector engaged in the most intense hand-to-hand combat of the war. This desperate fighting at the "Bloody Angle" earned Lee enough time to build new earthworks which he defended until Grant abandoned the field on May 21.

Stonewall Jackson Shrine

Following his accidental wounding on the night of May 2, 1863, Jackson was removed to a field hospital near Wilderness Tavern where his left arm was amputated. On May 4, he endured a 43-kilometer (27-mile) ambulance ride to T. C. Chandler's Fairfield Plantation at Guinea Station. Here, well behind Confederate lines and at a point convenient to the railroad, Jackson was placed in a small frame

office building. The general's wounds were complicated by pneumonia and he died in this structure on May 10.

Old Salem Church

Built in 1844 to provide the Baptists of upper Spotsylvania County a more geographically convenient place of worship, this structure served during the Battle of Fredericksburg as a refugee center for scores of forlorn women and children who fled the city with a few meager belongings. Following the Battle of Salem Church, fought in and around the sanctuary during the Chancellorsville Campaign, the building was used by Confederate surgeons to attend the wounded of both sides.

The map at right, based on historical sources, portrays Fredericksburg and vicinity during the Civil War years. Green areas represent heavy vegetation.

Chatham

The large Georgian mansion known as Chatham had stood on Stafford Heights near Fredericksburg for 90 years before the outbreak of the Civil War. In the 18th century it was the home of William Fitzhugh, one of the wealthiest landowners in Virginia. In 1862 it became a frontline headquarters for various Union generals. At that time the structure was referred to as the Lacy House, after its wartime owner, J. Horace Lacy.



During the Battle of Fredericksburg, Chatham served as the command post for Right Grand Division commander Gen. Edwin V. Sumner as well as a strategic artillery and communications center. Two pontoon bridges spanned the Rappahannock River immediately below the mansion. The house also served as a field hospital in which hundreds of wounded Union soldiers received treatment from regular medical per-

sonnel and volunteers like Clara Barton and Walt Whitman.

The plantation declined after the Civil War and diminished from almost 520 hectares (1300 acres) to barely 12 (30). During the early 20th century, several of Chatham's owners invested considerable time and resources in renovating the structure and by the 1920s the estate became known as one of the most beautiful in the State. Industrial-

ist John Lee Pratt donated Chatham to the National Park Service in 1975. The house is a part of the battlefield tour that begins in Fredericksburg at the Battlefield Visitor Center on Lafayette Blvd.



Fredericksburg

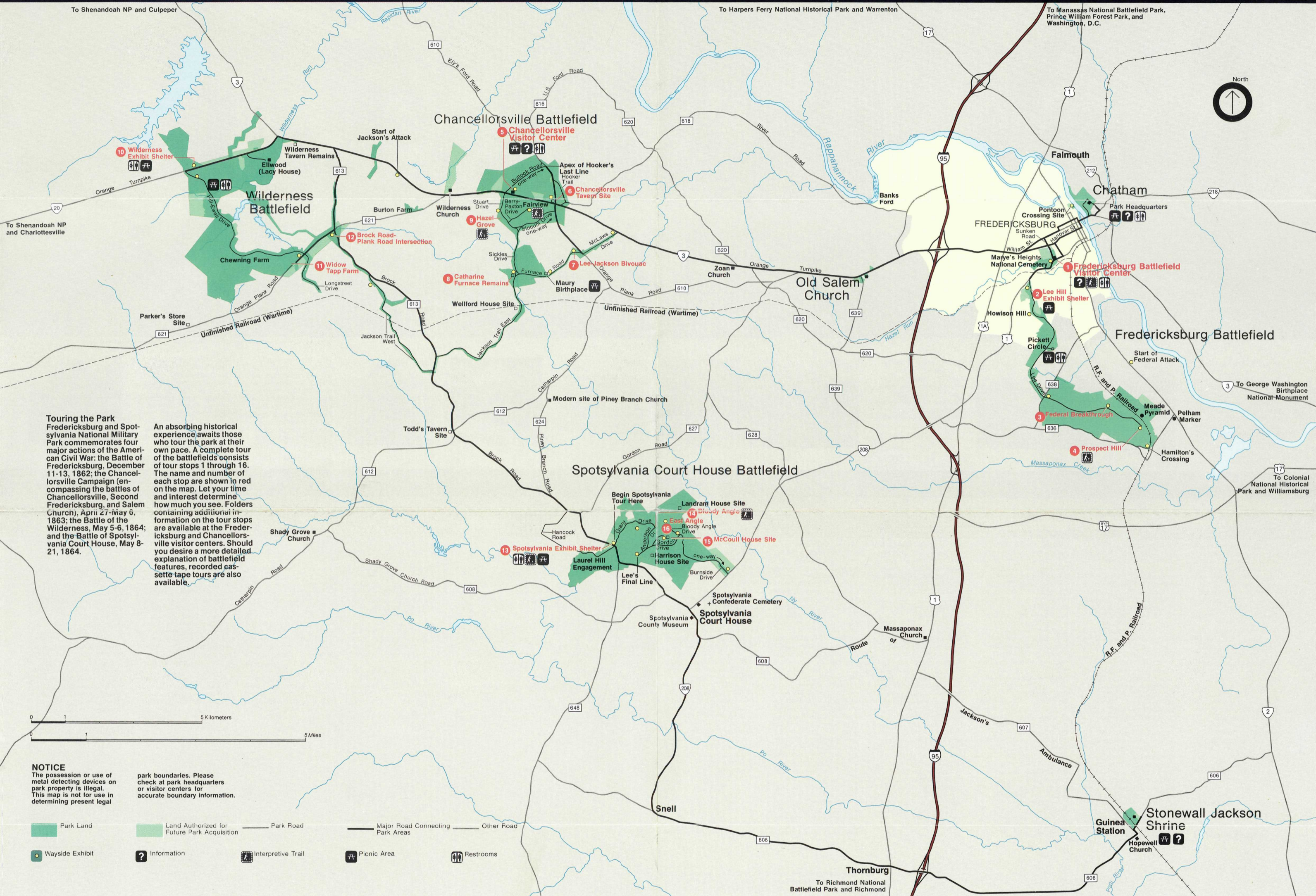
Park employees accurately portray Civil War soldiers during the summer.

Stonewall Jackson Shrine, 24 kilometers (15 miles) south of Fredericksburg.



Fredericksburg National Cemetery contains the graves of over 15,000 Union soldiers.

Old Salem Church, 5 kilometers (3 miles) west of Fredericksburg on Va. 3.



Touring the Park
Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park commemorates four major actions of the American Civil War: the Battle of Fredericksburg, December 11-13, 1862; the Chancellorsville Campaign (encompassing the battles of Chancellorsville, Second Fredericksburg, and Salem Church), April 27-May 6, 1863; the Battle of the Wilderness, May 5-6, 1864; and the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, May 8-21, 1864.

An absorbing historical experience awaits those who tour the park at their own pace. A complete tour of the battlefields consists of four stops 1 through 16. The name and number of each stop are shown in red on the map. Let your time and interest determine how much you see. Folders containing additional information on the four stops are available at the Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville visitor centers. Should you desire a more detailed explanation of battlefield features, recorded cassette tape tours are also available.

NOTICE

The possession or use of metal detecting devices on park property is illegal. This map is not for use in determining present legal

park boundaries. Please check at park headquarters or visitor centers for accurate boundary information.

- Park Land
- Land Authorized for Future Park Acquisition
- Wayside Exhibit
- Information
- Interpretive Trail
- Picnic Area
- Restrooms
- Park Road
- Major Road Connecting Park Areas
- Other Road

About Your Visit

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park contains 2,257 hectares (5,644 acres) dispersed in seven major units. A self-guided tour of all four battlefields and three historic buildings begins at the Fredericksburg Battlefield Visitor Center on U.S. 1, Lafayette Blvd. Another visitor center is at Chancellorsville, 16 kilometers (10 miles) west of Fredericksburg on Va. 3.

Park rangers are on

duty daily at both visitor centers and at Chatham to provide information and interpretation of the park story. The Jackson Shrine is open daily during the summer, with reduced hours the rest of the year. Walking tours, living history talks, and other interpretive programs are presented from early June through Labor Day.

A variety of informational publications con-

cerning Civil War history are available for purchase at both visitor centers, at Chatham, and at Stonewall Jackson Shrine.

Special facilities for the handicapped, including easy access to the museum, auditorium, and rest rooms, are provided at Chancellorsville Visitor Center.

Picnic facilities are provided in each battlefield unit as well as at Chatham and Stonewall Jackson Shrine.

An 11-kilometer (7-mile) loop hiking trail connecting important sites at Spotsylvania Battlefield begins at Stop 13, the exhibit shelter. Other interpretive trails are located along the Sunken Road, at Old Salem Church, and between Hazel Grove and Fairview at Chancellorsville. There are no overnight camping facilities in the park. A National Park Service campground is at Prince William Forest Park, 37 kilometers

(23 miles) north of Fredericksburg.

Regulations
To help us preserve this historic area for future generations, please observe the following regulations:

- Hunting for relics is strictly forbidden.
- All pets must be kept on a leash.
- Climbing on canons, monuments, or historic ruins is not allowed.
- Fires are permitted only at picnic areas in grills. Extinguish fires completely before leaving.
- Washing, polishing, or repairing motor vehicles is prohibited except in emergencies.
- Groups of 10 or more persons wishing to use a picnic area must make prior arrangements at visitor centers or park headquarters.
- All motor vehicles

must stay on established roadways that are open to the general motoring public.

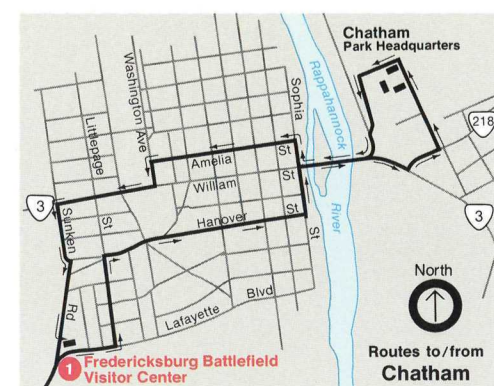
- The possession or use of firearms in the park is prohibited.
- Cutting or gathering firewood, including dead and down wood, is not allowed without written permission from park headquarters.
- Hunting, trapping, or intentionally disturbing wildlife in any manner is forbidden.

For Your Safety
Battlefield driving tours require turning onto and off of heavily traveled highways. Hiking, jogging, and bicycling are encouraged in the park and these activities call for special awareness by motorists.

In addition to traffic hazards, you may encounter stinging insects and poisonous plants during your visit. Wear proper walking shoes while hiking park trails, espe-

cially at Spotsylvania, and be alert for hidden footing hazards which will require your attention. Please use caution while you are with us and have a safe and enjoyable visit.

Handicapped Access
The Chancellorsville Visitor Center is completely accessible to wheelchairs; handicapped visitors are especially encouraged to visit that site.



Administration
Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is P.O. Box 679, Fredericksburg, VA 22404, is in charge.