

Discovery Tour of the Vicksburg Campaign Trail



Friends of the Vicksburg Campaign and Historic Trail, Inc.

Campaign for Vicksburg

The primary strategic objective of the Union in the western theater of the Civil War was to obtain full control of the entire course of the Mississippi River, thus making it available for Northern commerce. Also, Union control of the Mississippi would geographically cut the Confederacy in two. By the winter of 1862-63, Union control had been established as far south as Vicksburg, and as far north as Baton Rouge. However, the Confederacy had retained control of the Mississippi between those points by holding powerful fortresses at Vicksburg and Port Hudson.

Lt. Gen. John C. Pemberton commanded the Confederate Department of Mississippi and East Louisiana. Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant commanded the Union Army of the Tennessee. Both assumed command during October 1862 and both were West Pointers.

Grant's initial offensive to gain control of the Mississippi using the railroads of western Mississippi as a main supply line failed on 20 December 1862 when Confederate cavalry destroyed his base of supply. This forced Grant to return to Memphis, and sealed the fate of Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's cooperating

Grant's first plan was to cross the Mississippi River at Confederate occupied Grand Gulf. At Grant's request, on the night of 16 April, Flag Officer David D. Porter ran the Vicksburg batteries. Porter's seven ironclads and four transports were to provide gunnery support and transport for Grant's troops.

By 28 April, the bulk of Grant's army had assembled at Hard Times Plantation, Louisiana, with plans to land at Grand Gulf, Mississippi. The next day, a determined effort by Porter's ironclad gunboats failed to knock out the Grand Gulf guns. Undaunted, Grant moved his army further south to Disharoon's Plantation. On 30 April his men, transported by Porter's boats (which had run the Grand Gulf batteries the previous night), landed unopposed at Bruinsburg.

Moving inland, on 1 May the Union force encountered Brig. Gen. John Bowen's Confederates five miles west of Port Gibson. Though the Confederates were greatly outnumbered, they fought so tenaciously that an entire day was required to drive them back across Bayou Pierre. Grant then outflanked Bowen by a river crossing of Bayou Pierre at Grindstone Ford and

after a brief fight with Grant's soldiers. The next day the Union army turned toward Vicksburg, leaving Sherman's corps behind to destroy the city.

Pemberton had moved 23,000 men eastward out of Vicksburg to defend his railroad supply line. On 15 May, he marched to interdict the Union supply line at Dillon's farm. The Union and Confederate armies clashed at Champion Hill on 16 May, where a decisive Confederate defeat forced Pemberton to withdraw toward Vicksburg.

Pemberton withdrew the bulk of his army across the Big Black Bridge, leaving Bowen with a force of 7,000 men to defend a fortified bridgehead. Bowen's defenses collapsed under Union assault early on 17 May, turning an orderly retreat into the Vicksburg defenses into a rout. By nightfall, Sherman had bridged the Big Black River at Bridgeport, and was on the road to Vicksburg.

Pemberton was able to rally his disorganized and demoralized troops in the trenches of Vicksburg. On 19 May they repulsed an assault, primarily by Sherman's corps. On 22 May a second assault by Grant's entire

amphibious expedition at Chickasaw Bayou on 27-29 December 1862.

Early in 1863, Grant moved the bulk of his army from Memphis to three camps in Louisiana opposite Vicksburg: Lake Providence, Milliken's Bend, and Young's Point. During a miserably wet winter, Grant's attempts to bypass Vicksburg by digging canals at Lake Providence, DeSoto Point, and Duckport all failed. Other Bayou Expeditions also failed: The Yazoo Pass Expedition at Fort Pemberton on 20 March, and the Steele's Bayou Expedition on Rolling Fork Creek in late March. The Vicksburg defenses seemed invulnerable. However, Grant never lost sight of his objective: "To secure footing upon dry ground on the east side of the river from which the troops could operate against Vicksburg." On 31 March, Grant marched his army southward through Louisiana, corduroying roads and building bridges as he went. He hoped to find a lightly-defended point on the Mississippi shore south of Vicksburg.

advanced to Hankinson's Ferry on the Big Black River. This forced Bowen to evacuate Grand Gulf. Grant immediately converted Grand Gulf to a forward supply depot.

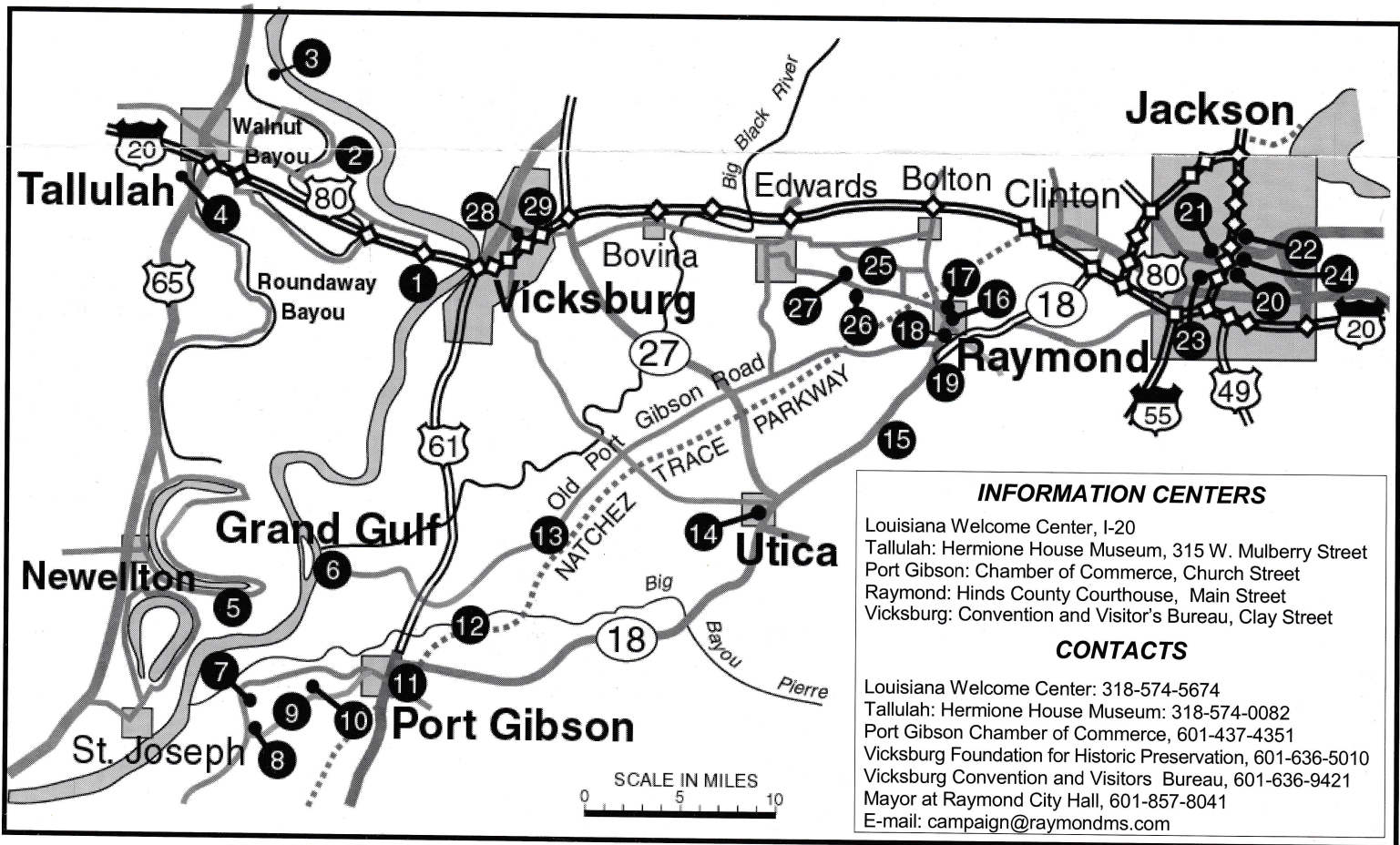
Grant decided not to advance directly on Vicksburg from Hankinson's Ferry because of considerations of terrain and tactics. He boldly turned northeast toward Edwards to cut the railroad. He planned to cut off Pemberton's supplies, as well as to draw the Confederates out of their fortifications. Grant's plan changed after the battle of Raymond on 12 May, when Maj. Gen. James McPherson's corps was attacked by Confederate Brig. Gen. John Gregg's brigade. While at Dillon's farm Grant was informed of the Union victory at Raymond. He daringly decided to turn his army toward Jackson, assuming that a large Confederate force was assembling there.

Gen. Joseph E. Johnston had recently arrived at Jackson with 5,000 Confederate troops. He abandoned Jackson on 14 May

army was also repulsed.

Unwilling to expend more lives in attempts to take the city by storm, Grant began siege operations. By the end of June, with all communication by either land or river cut off, Pemberton realized that he could neither break out nor hope for rescue by Johnston's Army of Relief. After 47 days of siege, Pemberton accepted Grant's terms, including the parole of all Confederate troops. Fortress Vicksburg was officially surrendered at 10:00 a.m. on 4 July 1863.

Port Hudson on the Mississippi River was now flanked and rendered inconsequential due to the surrender of Vicksburg. The river fortress was surrendered on 9 July 1863. Union control of the Mississippi was complete, and the strategic objective in the west had been achieved. Grant would write, "The fate of the Confederacy was sealed when Vicksburg fell."



INFORMATION CENTERS

- Louisiana Welcome Center, I-20
- Tallulah: Hermione House Museum, 315 W. Mulberry Street
- Port Gibson: Chamber of Commerce, Church Street
- Raymond: Hinds County Courthouse, Main Street
- Vicksburg: Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Clay Street

CONTACTS

- Louisiana Welcome Center: 318-574-5674
- Tallulah: Hermione House Museum: 318-574-0082
- Port Gibson Chamber of Commerce, 601-437-4351
- Vicksburg Foundation for Historic Preservation, 601-636-5010
- Vicksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, 601-636-9421
- Mayor at Raymond City Hall, 601-857-8041
- E-mail: campaign@raymondms.com

Discovery Tour of the Vicksburg Campaign Trail

Be more than a tourist as you revisit the places that became history. For the first time since U. S. Grant determined to capture Vicksburg in 1862-1863 these historic sites are again united. Experience the rare opportunity to return to the fields, bayous, and country roads of Louisiana and Mississippi to revisit history – to sites along Grant's Trail that have not been connected since that fateful time.

Discover the story leading up to the siege and surrender of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863. Visit famous battlefields and little known ones, antebellum homes, courthouses, and churches that played pivotal roles in the Campaign. Pay homage to those who fell in battle at cemeteries all along the Trail. See for yourself the wealth and diversity of a significant historical resource, little known outside the focus of the culmination of the campaign, The Vicksburg Military Park.

Sponsored by Friends of the Vicksburg Campaign and Historic Trail, a 501-c3 organization created to become a management entity that would hold, manage, restore, interpret and market the nation's significant Vicksburg Campaign sites.

Friends of the Vicksburg Campaign
and Historic Trail, Inc.
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Pemberton's Headquarters



Ruins of Windsor



Raymond Courthouse



Rocky Springs Methodist Church



Battery DeGolyer, Vicksburg Military Park

- 1 Grant's Canal**
In Delta, LA. From I-20, take Exit 186 to US-80. A segment of the Williams/Grant canal still exists. The canal was started by Brig. Gen. Thomas Williams and Rear Adm. David Farragut in late June, 1862. The effort was abandoned in late July, 1862. Grant resumed work on the project in the winter of 1863, but abandoned it when floods forced evacuation of the area.
- 2 Duckport Canal**
On the Thomastown Road, 2.7 miles north of US-80. The site of a Union attempt to create a water route for supplies from the Mississippi River to New Carthage via Walnut and Roundaway Bayous. An unusual drop in the river stage in early May of 1863 forced abandonment of the canal.
- 3 Milliken's Bend**

two miles to the west. Built by Smith Coffee Daniell III, the 5-story mansion burned in 1890, leaving only the 22 magnificent Corinthian columns as a reminder of its former grandeur.

- 8 Bethel Presbyterian Church**
Three miles south of Windsor on MS-552. After marching from Windsor on the afternoon of 30 April 1863, the Union soldiers of Grant's army reached the road junction at Bethel Church. At the junction a Union officer directed the column into the historic Rodney Road leading east toward Port Gibson. Heavily damaged by a tornado in 1943, the present structure is a restoration of the 1863 building.
- 9 Historic Rodney Road**
Now known as the Russum-Westside Road and the Shaifer Road, this road was the Rodney Road in 1863. The original width of the road is preserved

crowd was gathering up the articles and got a couple of books." Grant arrived here with Union General McPherson on 7 May from Hankinson's Ferry. Another soldier noted, *"here we have good, cold spring water, fresh from the bosom of the hills."* The only remnant of the 1863 town is an old cistern, an abandoned bank safe, and the old red-brick Methodist church and its cemetery.

- 14 Utica Cemetery**
Located near the town center. The cemetery is the final resting place of many of the town's founding citizens. Maj. Gen James McPherson's XVII Corps passed through Utica on 10 May 1863 and encamped at the A. B. Weeks and later the Roach Plantations north of town.

- 21 Governor's Mansion**
In the city center at 300 E. Capitol St. Designed in 1842 by William Nichols who was also the architect of the Old Capitol. It is an excellent example of Greek Revival architecture. It is the oldest occupied governor's mansion in the United States. Tours available.
- 22 Manship House**
Located at 420 E. Fortification Street. Built in 1857, the restored house is a rare example of the Gothic Revival residential style of architecture. The house survived the destruction of Jackson during the Union occupations of 14-15 May, and 17-23 July 1863. Entrance fee.
- 23 Greenwood Cemetery**
Located at 324 George Street. Established in 1823, Greenwood's burials include seven of Mississippi's governors. A Confederate Cemetery is

At the end of Thomastown Road, 10.5 miles north of US-80. This was the camp of Maj. Gen. John McClelland's XIII Corps before 1 April 1863, and site of the Battle of Milliken's Bend, 7 June 1863. Maj. Gen. Richard Taylor attacked the post with Brig. Gen. H. E. McCulloch's Texas brigade. The defense of the post was the first major action involving African-American soldiers. They suffered the highest casualty rate of any Union garrison that successfully defended a post during the Civil War.

4 Historic Richmond

Two miles south of the center of Tallulah. Now gone without a trace, in 1863 Richmond was the largest town in Madison Parish. Here, on 31 March 1863, the advance guard of the Union army forced a crossing of Roundaway Bayou, compelling Confederate Maj. Isaac F. Harrison's Fifteenth Louisiana Cavalry to withdraw to the south. Richmond was used as a forward supply depot by the Union army from 1 April to 16 May 1863. It was later used as base by Confederate Maj. Gen. John Walker's Texas Division from 5-15 June 1863. A Union task force led by Brig. Gen. Joseph A. Mower forced Confederate evacuation after a sharp skirmish on 15 June 1863.

5 Winter Quarters

On LA-608, 6.5 miles southeast of Newellton. Owned by Dr. Haller Nutt, this was one of the largest plantation homes on Lake St. Joseph, and the only one not burned in 1863. Used on 27 April 1863 as a bivouac by Union soldiers en route to Hard Times Plantation on the Mississippi River 3 miles to the east. Entrance fee.

6 Grand Gulf Military Park

Seven miles northwest of Port Gibson. Grand Gulf was once an important port on the Mississippi River. By 1862 the river had washed away much of the town. Union Flag Officer David D. Porter attacked the newly constructed batteries on 29 April 1863, hoping to silence them in preparation for a landing by Grant's army. Defeated in his attempt, Porter then regrouped at Hard Times Plantation, 4 miles up-river. Grand Gulf State Park features a Civil War museum, an antebellum Catholic church and houses, a section of the original parapet of Fort Coburn, one of the 13-inch mortars used to bombard Vicksburg, and other attractions. Entrance fee.

7 Ruins of Windsor Plantation

Ten miles west of Port Gibson on the Rodney Road. On 30 April 1863 Grant and McClelland conferred briefly at this site after landing unopposed at Bruinsburg Plantation

in the abandoned section north of Bethel church. The road served as the main axis of advance for the Union army to Port Gibson. A Union soldier described his experience: "*The moon is shining above us and the road is romantic in the extreme. The artillery wagons rattle forward and the heavy tramp of many men gives a dull but impressive sound.*"

10 Shaifer House

Four miles west of Port Gibson on the Shaifer Road (the historic Rodney Road). The house was used by Maj. Gen. John McClelland as headquarters during the Battle of Port Gibson. It was later used as a hospital by both Union and Confederate troops. The Battle of Port Gibson began at this site when, near midnight on 30 April 1863, Confederate pickets fired on the Union advance guard as it marched eastward toward Port Gibson. Much of the battle was fought on the ridges immediately to the east as well as along the road 2 miles to the north. The site is now owned by the State of Mississippi.

11 Wintergreen Cemetery

One mile southwest of the Claiborne County Court House in Port Gibson. Wintergreen Cemetery began in 1807 as the family burial plot of Samuel Gibson. The cemetery is noted for its enormous Eastern red cedar trees and cast-iron ornamental fences. It is the final resting place of Brig. Gen. Benjamin G. Humphreys, first post-war governor of Mississippi, Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn, and many of the soldiers killed in the Battle of Port Gibson.

12 Grindstone Ford

Accessible only from the Natchez Trace Parkway, this historic river crossing is 4.5 miles northeast of the junction of MS-18 and the Trace. On the evening of 2 May 1863, Confederate troops retreating after the Battle of Port Gibson set fire to the wooden decking of the suspension bridge. Union troops extinguished the blaze and repaired the damage. They crossed early the following morning and flanked Grand Gulf. Ruins of the stone foundations can still be seen by walking the Old Natchez Trace.

13 Rocky Springs

Sixteen miles northeast of Port Gibson on the Natchez Trace. Union General McClelland arrived here on 6 May 1863 from Willow Springs. One of his soldiers wrote, "*came to... Rocky Springs several stores and fair buildings. I called at one, where a*

Eight miles northeast of Port Gibson on MS-18. Lebanon Church, one of the oldest churches in the state, was passed by Maj. Gen. James McPherson's XVII Corps on its way from Utica to the Battle of Raymond. The old roadbed may be seen in front of the church. MS-18 closely follows the route of McPherson's march.

16 Hinds County Courthouse

Located in Raymond. The Courthouse was constructed by the famous Weldon Brothers of Natchez between 1857-1859 using skilled slave labor. One of the most elegant examples of Classic Revival architecture in Mississippi. It served as a Confederate hospital following the Battle of Raymond, 12 May 1863.

17 St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Next to the Raymond Courthouse. Built in 1854, St. Mark's is the only antebellum church in Raymond and is still in use. The church was used as a hospital to treat Union soldiers following the Battle of Raymond. Bloodstains are still visible on the old wooden floors.

18 Raymond Confederate Cemetery

Located in the Old Raymond Cemetery on Port Gibson Street, 0.4 miles from the town center. The Confederate Cemetery is the final resting place for 140 men who were killed during the Battle of Raymond. Most of the dead are from the Third Tennessee and Seventh Texas Infantries.

19 Raymond Battlefield

On the MS-18, 2 miles southwest of town center. Confederate Brig. Gen. John Gregg's brigade of 3,000 men attacked Union Maj. Gen. James McPherson's 11,500-man XVII Corps late on the morning of 12 May 1863. After an all-day battle, Gregg's brigade was forced to withdraw through Raymond and retreat toward Jackson. A monument honoring the Seventh Texas Infantry can be seen beside MS-18 at Fourteenmile Creek. The Union victory at the Battle of Raymond caused Grant to change his offensive plan and attack Jackson on 14 May 1863.

20 Old Capitol Museum

Located near the center of Jackson at 100 South State Street. One of three public buildings in the city not destroyed by Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's army when it occupied the city on 17-23 July 1863. The historic building, built in 1836 by William Nichols, architect from England and a resident of Raymond, is now a museum. Free.

located within the oldest public cemetery in the city of Jackson.

24 The Oaks House Museum

Located at 823 North Jefferson Street. The museum interprets the life of the Boyd family from the 1840's to 1860's. It is one of the few houses to survive the burning of Jackson during the Union occupation of 17-23 July 1863. Fee charged.

25 Historic Middle and Jackson Roads

Now known as the Billy Fields Road, this road joins the Champion Hill Road 4 miles east of Edwards. *The Crossroads*, a strategic junction of the Jackson and Middle Roads was a focal point of heavy fighting during the Battle of Champion Hill. It is located 1.5 miles east of the junction of the Champion Hill Road. In 1977, Champion Hill was designated a National Historic Landmark.

26 Coker House

Four miles southeast of Edwards on MS-467. It was used as a hospital following the decisive Union victory at the Battle of Champion Hill on 16 May 1863. The house fronts on modern MS-467, which very closely follows the alignment of the historic Raymond Road, one of three axes of advance of the Union army.

27 General Lloyd Tilghman Monument

On MS-467, 3.5 miles southeast of Edwards. Confederate Brig. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman was killed at this spot by Union artillery near the close of the Battle of Champion Hill as his men were delaying the Union advance along the Raymond Road. The Tilghman monument north of the road was placed by his sons in 1907.

28 Pemberton's Headquarters

Located at 1018 Crawford Street, near city center. Confederate Lt. Gen. John Pemberton used this house as his headquarters. Here, on the night of 2 July 1863, Pemberton met with his commanders to discuss surrender, and on the following day, sent a message to Grant to "*arrange terms of capitulation of Vicksburg.*" Vicksburg and the Confederate army were surrendered on 4 July.

29 Vicksburg National Military Park

Clay St. just off I-20. Established by Congress on February 21, 1899, to commemorate the most decisive campaign of the Civil War. The park includes 1,325 historic markers and monuments, a 16-mile tour road, the antebellum Shirley House, one hundred and forty-four cannons, the USS *Cairo* Museum, and the Vicksburg National Cemetery. Entrance fee.