# Shenandoah Valley Battlefields
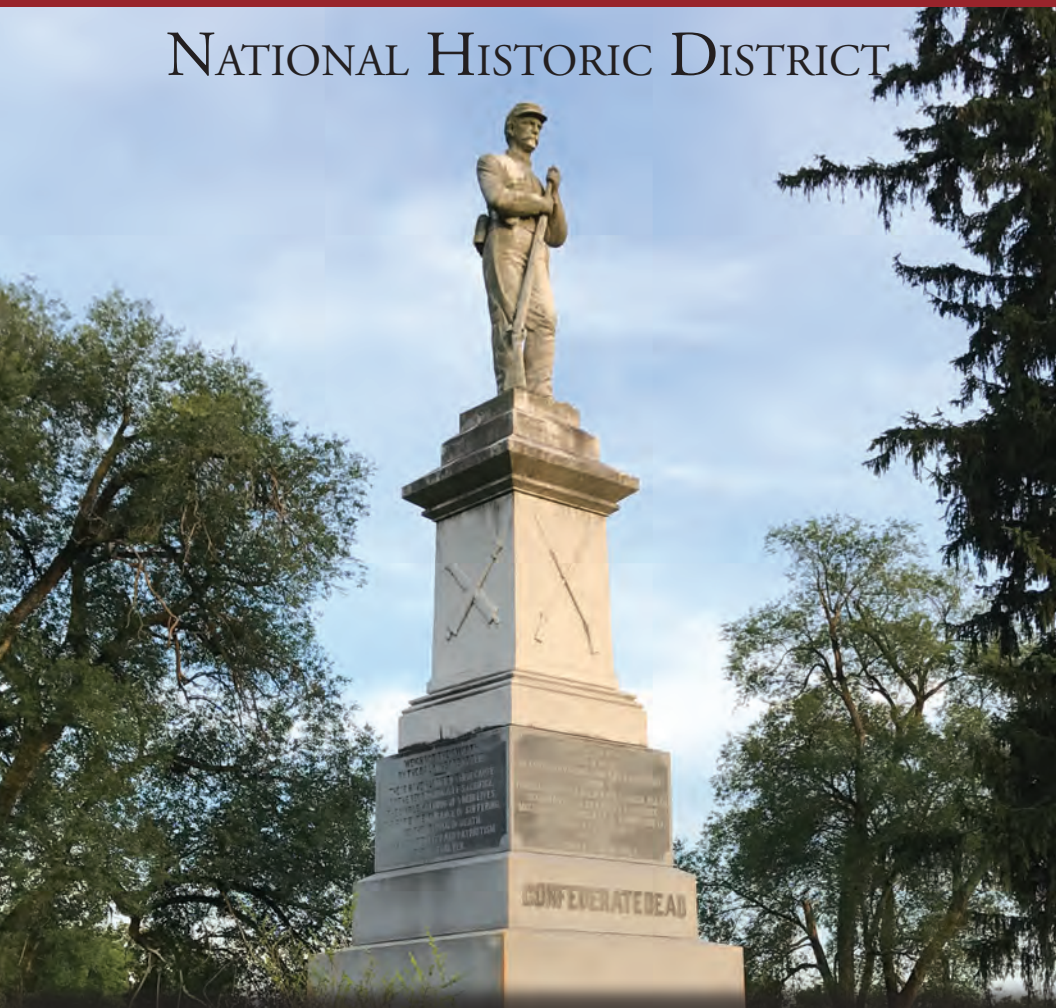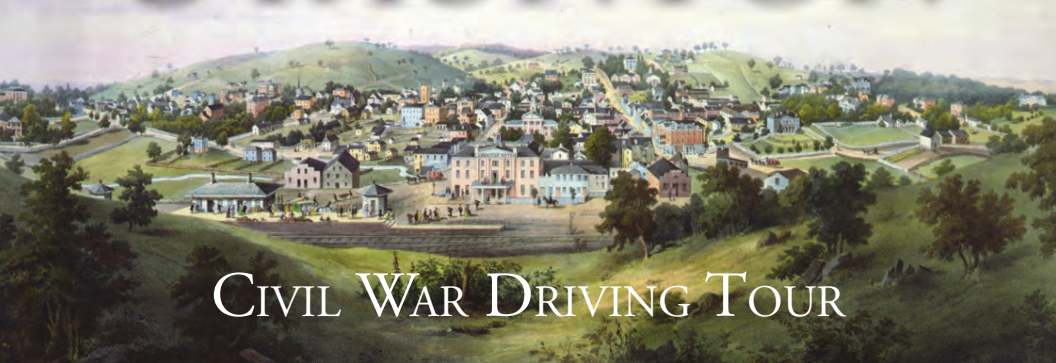
## National Historic District

# Staunton

## Civil War Driving Tour

During the Civil War, Staunton was a critical strategic site in the Shenandoah Valley, much valued by Confederates and Federals alike. While no battles took place inside the city, the battles of McDowell, Cross Keys, Port Republic, Piedmont, and Waynesboro were all fought in the vicinity and impacted the community.



Prior to the war, prominent Staunton citizens John Brown Baldwin and Alexander H.H. Stuart (pictured at left) traveled with delegations to meet with Abraham Lincoln in an attempt to avoid armed conflict. But when Lincoln called for troops to put down the "insurrection" after Confederates fired at Fort Sumter, both men advocated secession – although both would also work to bring Virginia back into the Union after the war.

During the war, Staunton's strategic location at the intersection of the Valley Turnpike, the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike, and the Virginia Central Railroad made it a much-traveled transportation

*Stuart*



hub, a vital supply depot, an important troop assembly point, and a major hospital site. Soldiers and supplies constantly passed through, while refugees and wounded came for longer stays, putting enormous strain on the once-prosperous community, with commodities dwindling and prices skyrocketing.



Distance and the vulnerability of lengthy supply lines kept Staunton out of the reach of Union troops for much of the war, but that changed after the Federal victory at Piedmont on June 5, 1864. Union Gen. David Hunter marched into Staunton and laid waste to much of the city, destroying the railroad station and burning mills, factories, warehouses, foundries, stables, and more – the dawn of a new era of systematic destruction in the Valley.

*Hunter*
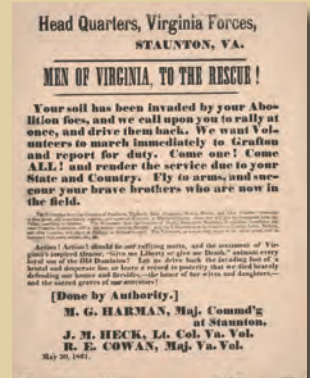
Staunton served as a hospital site for sick and wounded during the war, as well as a waypoint for patients who were shipped on to Richmond. The Virginia School for the

Deaf and Blind was a hospital throughout the conflict, but the entire community was inundated by wounded not only after nearby battles, but also after more-distant major battles such as Antietam and Gettysburg when Confederate wounded were transported up the Valley Turnpike to Staunton.

> *"If we were not so used to it, the sight of the multitudes of wounded and suffering soldiers constantly arriving, would be shocking…Many of the soldiers are walking about bare-footed — feet sore and unable to wear shoes."*
> – Staunton resident Joseph Waddell, September 23, 1862

Staunton was left devastated by the war, its economy in shambles, but local citizens, including returning veterans such as John Echols and Jedediah Hotchkiss – and even transplanted Yankees such as Thomas Jasper Collins – worked to rebuild the shattered economic base.  And newly freed African Americans sought to build new lives in the new, uncertain future.

# Tour Guidelines

## About the Tour: Walking and Safety

The tour includes some stops where you're encouraged to park and walk; and others that can be seen from the roadside or while driving.  Only a couple of sites require walking of any distance, or climbing stairs – most notably the Sears Hill overlook in Woodrow Park (Stop #3).

**Please drive with care.**  The tour will take you through narrow city streets and residential neighborhoods.  Drive carefully and pay attention to your surroundings and only read the tour when pulled over.  In addition, a number of the stops are private residences.  Please respect the privacy and property of the owners.

## QR Codes

Throughout the tour you'll find occasional QR codes, such as the one at right.  You can use a (free) QR code-reading app on your smartphone or tablet to scan the codes, which will then take you directly to websites and other online resources.

## Tour Starting Point:
## Staunton Depot/Railroad Station

### Site #1

## Staunton Depot/
## Railroad Station



**(1 Middlebrook Avenue)**

During the Civil War, the Virginia Central Railroad was a key link for the Confederacy. The railroad first reached Staunton in 1854; the first brick train station was built on this site in 1860; and the first depot in 1861. During the war, troops, supplies, wounded men, and prisoners were all shipped through Staunton. In 1862, after a Federal approach from the west seemed to threaten the city, Stonewall Jackson brought much of his army here by train (after first feinting as if to leave the Valley), then hurried into the mountains to earn the first victory of his famed Valley Campaign at McDowell, a village to the west in Highland County.

After the war, the rebuilding and expansion of the railroads played a major role in Staunton's recovery. The Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad (formerly the Virginia Central Railroad) and the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad crossed in Staunton, and dozens of passenger and freight trains passed through the city daily. A new station was built after the war, but it was destroyed in 1890 by a runaway train. In 1891, a Union Civil War veteran named Thomas Jasper Collins arrived in Staunton, where he played a key role in shaping the city's economic recovery. Collins designed more than 200 public and private buildings, including (with his son Sam) the elegant C&O railroad station, which opened in 1906. Today this station serves Amtrak, continuing Staunton's connection to its rich railroad heritage.

**Directions to next site (#2):** *Walk to the east end of the depot. Directly across the street you'll see the American Hotel.*

*"James Calhoun arrived this evening with the remains of Charles, rejoicing in the midst of his grief that his son died in the faith of the Gospel. One or more other corpses were brought on the same train — the slain have been coming ever since the battle, as well as the wounded. How the heart sickens at this carnage."*

– Joseph Waddell, May 13, 1863

4

# Site #2

## American Hotel

**(125 South Augusta Street)**



The American Hotel was built by the Virginia Central Railroad in 1855, one year after the railroad first reached the town. It was one of the finest hotels of its day, offering such then-rare amenities as bathtubs. When Federal troops occupied Staunton in June 1864, it was spared the destruction that so many other structures suffered. Union Col. David Strother met here with the mayor and other prominent citizens, including Alexander H.H. Stuart. During the war it was used as a Confederate receiving hospital – so much so that Joseph Waddell would refer to it as the "American Hotel Hospital" in his diary.

**Directions to next site (#3):** *At the west end of the modern railroad station you will find stairs that lead to an overpass above the railroad.*

# Site #3

## Sears Hill Overlook



Walk to the west end of the station, near the interpretive makers, and climb the steps to the bridge that crosses over the railroad tracks to Sears Hill in Woodrow Park. Cross the bridge, then follow the walkway to the overlook that offers a view of downtown Staunton. At the the overlook, you'll find three interpretive markers. The one on the right features an 1857 lithograph of Staunton by Edward Beyer, showing the city as it looked on the eve of the Civil War. (This same image is shown on the cover of this tour.) Beyer was a native of Germany who first traveled to the United States in 1848. Beyer created over 40 landscape paintings in Virginia before returning to Germany in 1857.

**Directions to next site (#4):** *Return to your vehicle. Leaving the train station area, turn left onto Middlebrook Ave., heading west along the Wharf area. Continue for 240 yards, then turn right (north) onto Church St., just before the road goes under the railroad bridge. Continue north on Church St. In about 200 yards you'll see the Alexander H.H. Stuart House on your left.*

# Site #4

## Alexander H. H. Stuart House (en route)

(120 Church Street)



This is the home of Alexander H. H. Stuart, a leading citizen of Staunton during the Civil War era. The original portion of the home was built in 1791. (Stuart inherited the home from his father.) Stuart was a U.S. Congressman from 1841-1843 and U.S. Secretary of the Interior from 1850-1853. Stuart opposed secession, and was part of a three-man delegation that met with Abraham Lincoln in a futile attempt to avoid war. After the war, he chaired the "Committee of Nine," which worked to restore Virginia to the Union, and also served as president of the Virginia Historical Society. He is buried in Thornrose Cemetery. This is a private home; please respect the privacy of the owners.

**Directions (continued) to Site #5:** *Continue north on Church St. for 200 more yards, then turn right (east) onto W. Beverley St. In about 0.5 miles you'll see the John Echols House on the right. (Important note: Stay in the left lane [this is one-way traffic] until you pass the intersection of Market Street, as the right lane is right-turn-only at that intersection; after that intersection, stay in the right lane, as the left lane is left-turn only at Coalter St.)*

# Site #5

## John Echols House (en route)

(324 E. Beverley Street)



This is the post-war home of Confederate Gen. John Echols. Echols fought in various theaters and battles during the war, including the valley battles of First Kernstown (March 23, 1862), during Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign, where he was wounded, and New Market (May 15, 1864), where he commanded the right flank of the Confederate forces. After Lee's surrender at Appomattox, he accompanied Confederate President Jefferson Davis to Augusta, Georgia, during Davis's unsuccessful attempt to evade Union troops. After the war, he returned to his law practice and to the Virginia House of Delegates (where he had also

served before the war), became president of the Staunton National Valley Bank, and helped organize the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad. Although he moved away from Staunton, he died in the city while visiting his son in 1886, and is buried in Thornrose Cemetery. This is a private home; please respect the privacy of the owners.

> *"I called at Davis Kayser's to see Col. Echols, who had just arrived, badly wounded in the arm."* – Joseph Waddell, March 27, 1862

**Directions (continued) to Site #6:** *Continue on E. Beverley St. for 0.2 miles until you come to the entrance to the grounds of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind on the right. Park in a spot alongside Beverley Street. Please DO NOT enter the school grounds, which are not open to visitors without prior permission. Walk to the entrance to the school.*

## Site #6

## Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind

**(Entrance to school, intersection of VSDB Drive and E. Beverley Street)**



During the war, the school was converted into a Confederate Military Hospital and the residents of the school were moved to the Staunton Female Academy. The school was officially turned over for military use on July 19, 1861; by that August, there were already 500 sick soldiers at the facility. The hospital hosted not just Confederate casualties (wounded and sick), but also Federal prisoners. The hospital served 8,390 casualties in the month of July 1863 alone – the numbers swelled by the horrendous casualties from the Battle of Gettysburg (July 1-3), and other fighting during that campaign. PLEASE NOTE: The school grounds are not open to visitors without permission.

**Directions to next site (#7):** *From the school entrance, cross to the north side of the road, turn left, and walk 100 yards west to see the Oaks, Jedediah Hotchkiss's post-war home. See image with listing for reference. This is a private residence, so please DO NOT ENTER the grounds.*

> *"The stream of wounded arriving has been uninterupted, and not a third part has arrived yet."* – Joseph Waddell, July 12, 1863, following Gettysburg
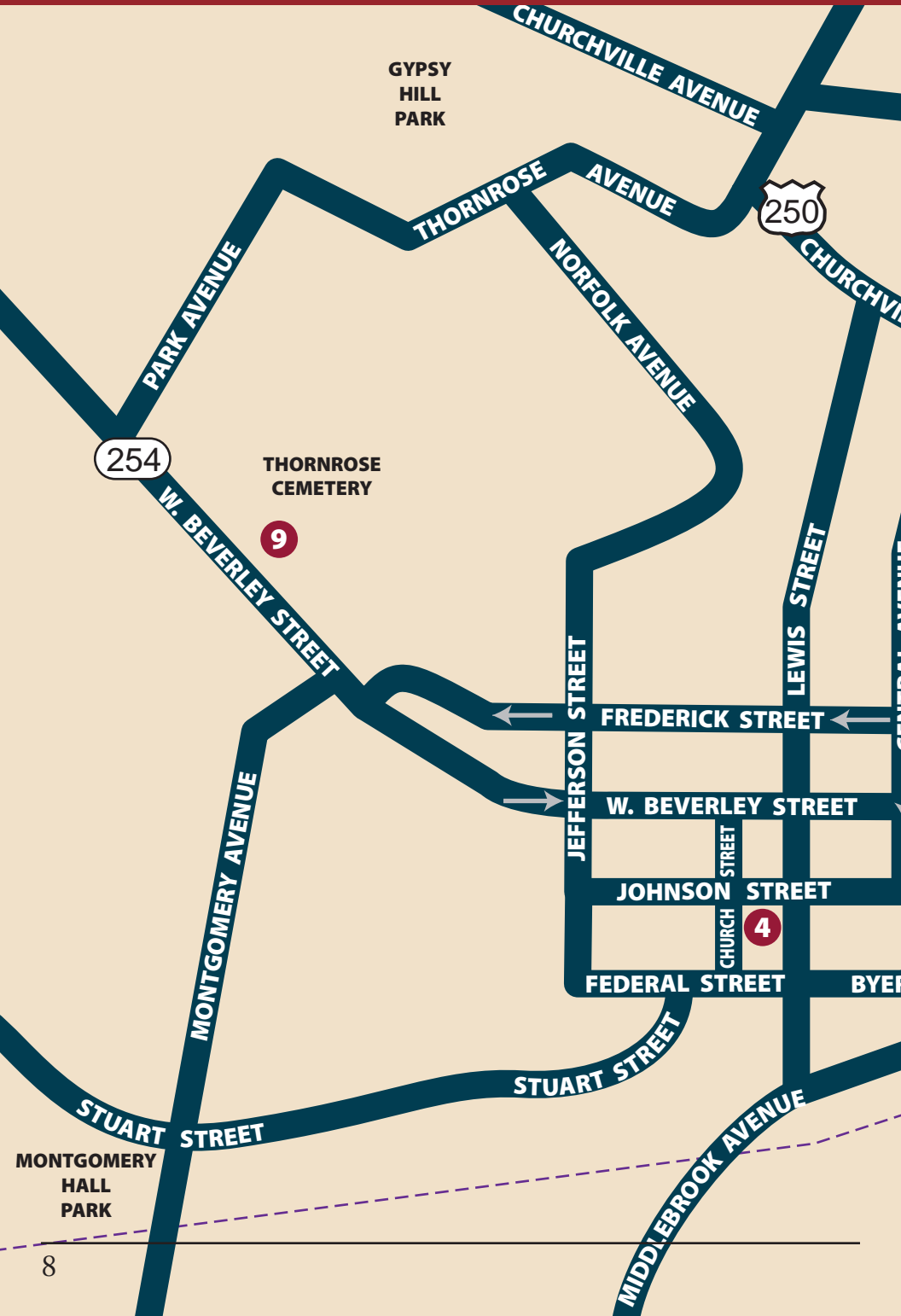
GYPSY
HILL
PARK

CHURCHVILLE AVENUE

THORNROSE AVENUE

250

CHURCHVI

PARK AVENUE

NORFOLK AVENUE

254

THORNROSE
CEMETERY

9

W. BEVERLEY STREET

LEWIS STREET

JEFFERSON STREET

FREDERICK STREET

MONTGOMERY AVENUE

W. BEVERLEY STREET

STREET

JOHNSON STREET

CHURCH STREET

4

FEDERAL STREET

BYE

STUART STREET

STUART STREET

MONTGOMERY
HALL
PARK

MIDDLEBROOK AVENUE

FAIRVIEW CEMETERY

**10**

LAMBERT STREET

11

AUGUSTA STREET

EGDEWOOD ROAD

LLE AVENUE

AUGUSTA STREET

11

PROSPECT AVENUE

STATLER BLVD

N. COALTER STREET

CENTRAL AVENUE

NEW STREET

VISITOR CENTER

**8**

**7**

E. BEVERLEY STREET

**6**

AUGUSTA STREET

MARKET STREET

S. COALTER STREET

**5**

260

11

NEW STREET

GREENVILLE AVE

COMMERCE ROAD

STATLER BOULEVARD

RS STREET

**1** **2** **3**

RICHMOND ROAD

11

GREENVILLE AVENUE

STATLER BOULEVARD

250

NATIONAL CEMETERY

**11**
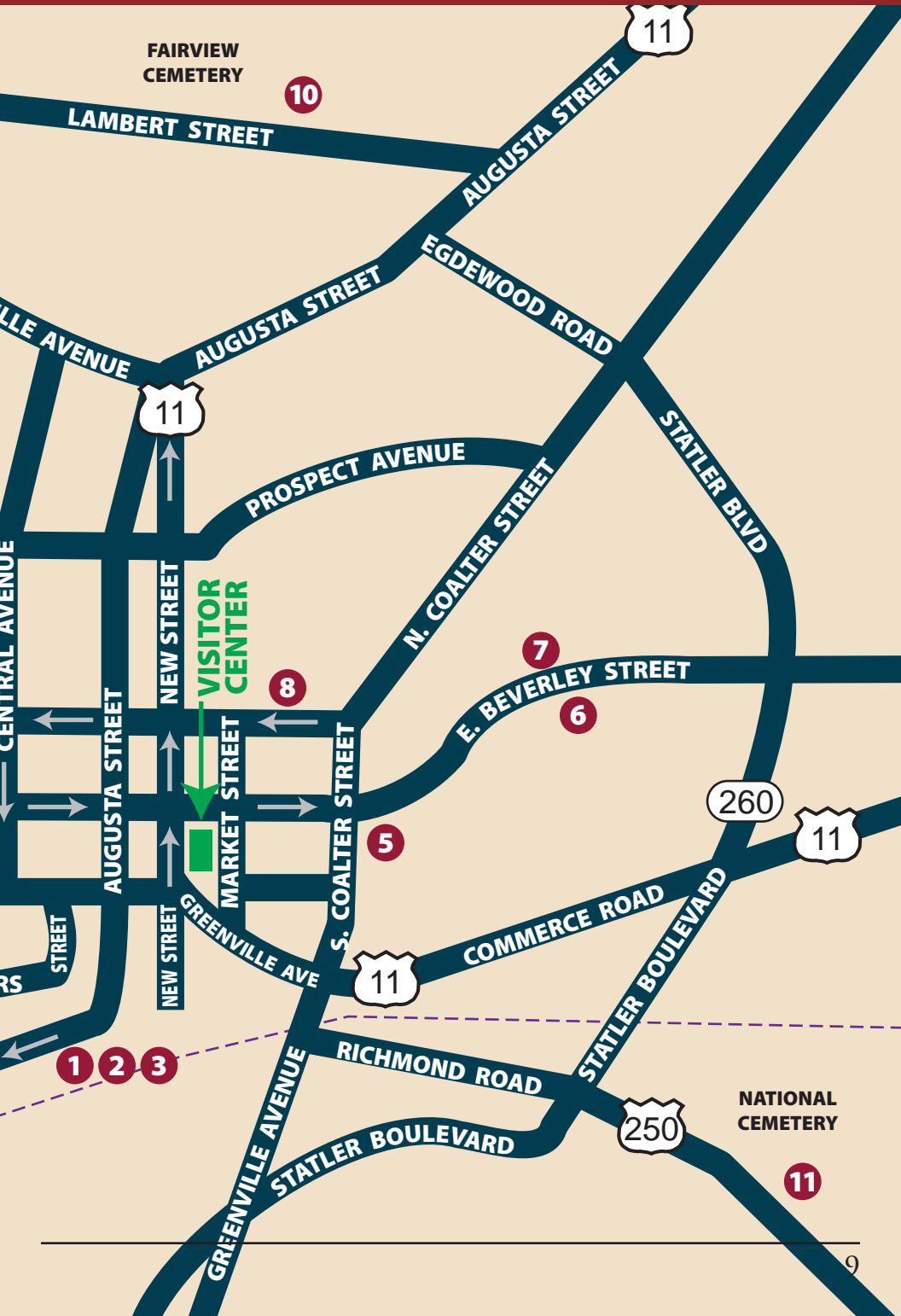
# Site #7

## "The Oaks" – Jedediah Hotchkiss's Postwar Home

**(437 E. Beverley Street)**



A native Yankee who became the Confederacy's greatest mapmaker, Jedediah Hotchkiss moved to the Shenandoah Valley in 1852 to teach school, eventually founding Loch Willow Academy in Churchville with his brother. When the Civil War broke out, Hotchkiss joined the Confederate cause. He earned his greatest fame as Stonewall Jackson's topographical engineer and mapmaker during the 1862 Valley Campaign when Jackson issued him the famous order "Make me a map of the Valley." Hotchkiss's remarkable wartime and postwar maps continue to be admired and studied today.
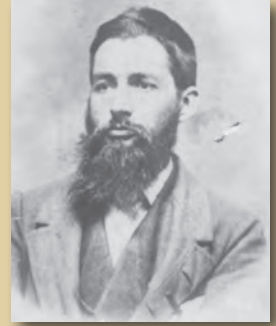




After the war, Hotchkiss settled in Staunton and initially continued teaching, but by 1867 had turned his attentions to engineering, promoting economic development in Virginia, and writing and corresponding about the war. He purchased his home, "The Oaks," shortly after the war, extensively remodeling it in 1888. He lived there until his death in 1899, after which he was buried in Thornrose Cemetery. His wife Sara continued to live in the home until her death in 1908. Today it is a private residence. (Please respect the homeowners' privacy.)

**Directions to Next Site (#8):** *Return to your vehicle. U-turn when you safely can and return the way you came, west on E. Beverley St. In 0.1 miles, turn right onto Berkeley Place. In 0.1 miles turn right onto N. Coalter St. In 100 feet, turn left onto E. Frederick St. As you continue west on Frederick St., you'll pass Mary Baldwin University on your right.*

# Site #8

## Mary Baldwin University (en route)

**(101 East Frederick Street)**



Mary Baldwin University was originally founded as the Augusta Female Seminary in 1842. Among its first students was Mary Julia Baldwin. In 1863, Ms. Baldwin was named principal of the seminary and saw the institution through the Civil War, even though all other schools in the area had closed due to the depressed economy and dangerous conditions of the wartime South. Augusta Female Seminary was renamed Mary Baldwin Seminary in 1895 in honor of Miss Baldwin, and became Mary Baldwin College in 1923 and Mary Baldwin University in 2016.

*(The information on Mary Baldwin is from the university's website, http://www.marybaldwin.edu)*

*"During the war years, there were few men to offer protection from marauding soldiers, stragglers, and thieves. On at least one occasion, at night when the panicked cry of "A man, a man!" arose, Miss Baldwin chased the intruder into the yard, raised a poker which she was carrying as though it were a gun, and ordered him to leave. He did, speedily."* – From *To Live in Time,* a historical account of Mary Baldwin University by Patricia Menk

**Directions to Next Site (#9):** *Continue 0.7 miles to W. Beverley St. Turn right onto W. Beverley, and continue 0.1 miles to the entrance of Thornrose Cemetery. Drive through the arch for 0.1 miles (under the stone bridge), then turn right. Continue for 130 yards and take the second left. Continue for 85 yards and the Confederate section of the cemetery will be on your right.*

*"No citizen of Staunton above the age of infancy, then living, will ever forget Sunday, the 5th of June, 1864...I cannot depict the horror of the feelings."* – Joseph Waddell, writing of the day of the Battle of Piedmont. The Union victory there exposed Staunton to Federal occupation and the destruction of Hunter's Raid.

# Site #9

## Thornrose Cemetery

*(1041 W. Beverley Street)*



The first burial in Thornrose Cemetery (which was established when the cemetery in the center of town became overcrowded) took place in 1853. After the Civil War, Confederate dead from the battlefields of Camp Alleghany, McDowell, Cross Keys, Port Republic and Piedmont were interred in a newly created soldiers' section. This led to the establishment in 1870 of the Augusta Memorial Association, which eventually



spearheaded the 1888 dedication of the cemetery's Fort Stonewall Jackson. Its centerpiece, an Italian marble statue of a Confederate infantryman, rises 22 feet above the graves of some 1,700 fallen Southern soldiers. Among those buried in Thornrose are Alexander H. H. Stuart, Jedediah Hotchkiss, John Echols, and Joseph Waddell.
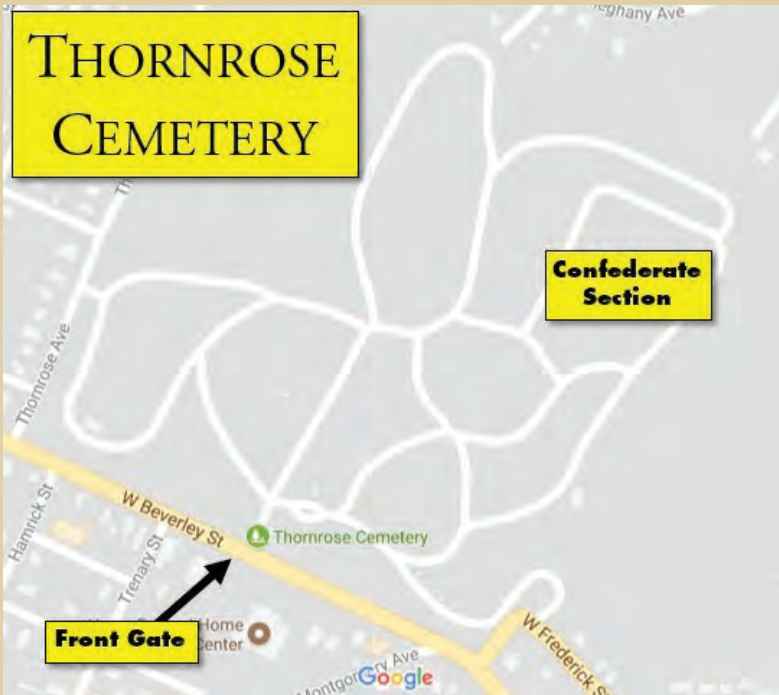
**Directions to Next Site (#10):** *Return to the cemetery's main gate and turn right onto W. Beverley St. After 0.1 miles, turn right onto Thornrose Ave. After 0.7 miles, turn left onto Churchville Ave. In approximately 180 yards, take a slight right onto Donaghe St. After 0.4 miles, turn right onto Lambert St. After 0.3 miles, the entrance to the cemetery will be on your left. BE VERY CAREFUL when crossing the street to enter the cemetery, as the rise of the road blocks your view of oncoming traffic.*

# Site #10

## Fairview Cemetery

**(Lambert Street)**



Fairview Cemetery was founded in 1869 by Mount Zion Baptist Church and Augusta Street United Methodist Church. In the mid-19th century the cemetery was located outside of the Staunton city limits in the heart of an African-American community named Sandy Hollow, one of several African-American communities in Augusta County. The cemetery is one of the few vestiges remaining of the Sandy Hollow community.

Fairview Cemetery was developed during two different time periods, the mid-1800's and the early 1900s. The 19th-century period can be identified in the landscape by randomly placed, unmarked graves, and mature vegetation. These characteristics are similar to those of a rural cemetery, illustrating patterns of Free Black and slave burial traditions. The portion of the cemetery developed after 1900 can be characterized as a typical park cemetery of its time. The cemetery as a whole represents changing patterns in gravestone styles.

Among the individuals interred in Fairview is Willis McGlascoe Carter (1852-1902). Born into slavery, Carter became one of the leading African Americans in Staunton in the decades following the Civil War, an educator, author, advocate for social justice and political and civil rights, and editor and owner of the *Staunton Tribune* newspaper.

*(Text from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, "Fairview Cemetery," African American Historic Sites Database. http://www.aahistoricsitesva.org/items/show/133.)*
*Open dawn to dusk.*
*For more information, call 504-294-2474.*
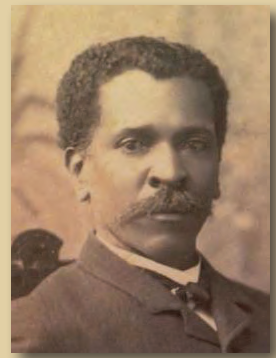


Carter

**Directions to Next Site (#11):** *Continue on the paved road to exit the cemetery. (The road is too narrow to u-turn.) When leaving the cemetery, turn left (east) on Lambert St. Continue for approx. 200 feet then turn right onto N. Augusta St. Continue south for approximately 0.3 miles, then turn left onto Edgewood Rd. Continue on Edgewood Rd. (which will become Statler Blvd. after approx. 0.4 miles) for 1.7 miles until it intersects with Richmond Ave. (US 250). Turn left onto Richmond Ave. After 0.4 miles turn right onto Powell St. After 100 yards Powell St. turns left and becomes Alta St. After 160 yards Alta St. turns left and becomes Bell St. After 100 yards, turn left onto Richmond Ave. In 125 yards the entrance to the cemetery will be on your right. Please note that parking is very limited here, either straight ahead or behind the superintendent's lodge.*

# Site #11

## Staunton National Cemetery

**(901 Richmond Avenue)**



In order to provide a burial ground for Union soldiers who died during the battles of the Shenandoah Valley, the Federal Government established the Staunton National Cemetery in 1866. Of the first 749 burials at the cemetery, 518 were unknown soldiers, reinterred from western Virginia battlefields. Also buried here are 67 Union prisoners of war, two buried as unknowns. Today the cemetery is the final resting place for nearly 1,000 veterans. The cemetery closed to new interments in 1983, and contains the remains of veterans from every major conflict

from the Civil War to Vietnam. (As well as one veteran of the Iraq Conflict, who was interred in 2010.) The superintendent's lodge, located just inside the main entrance, was built in 1871 and designed by Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs.

Open from dawn to dusk. No cemetery staff is present onsite. The administrative office is located at the Culpeper National Cemetery. For more information, please contact the cemetery office at 540-825-0027.

*(Description from the NPS.gov listing for Staunton National Cemetery.)*

**This concludes your tour.** For information on additional sites you can visit while in the Staunton area, as well as the many other things to do, and places to eat, shop, and stay, please see below.

# VISITOR INFORMATION

## Staunton Visitor Center (Downtown)

35 South New Street, Staunton – 540-332-3971
Open daily, 9am-6pm (April-October), 9:30am-5:30pm (November-March)
www.visitstaunton.com

### *Gibraltar of the Shenandoah*

For a much more detailed tour of Civil War sites in Staunton, as well as other Civil War sites throughout Waynesboro and Augusta County, see Robert H. Moore II's outstanding *Gibraltar of the Shenandoah: Civil War Sites and Stories of Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County, Virginia.* Published by the Augusta County Historical Society, Moore's book is a thorough and indispensable guide to these sites, and served as a valuable resource for this project.

The book is available at www.AugustaCountyHS.org (the Augusta County Historical Society website) under "Gift Shop" and at the www.ShenandoahAtWar online store.
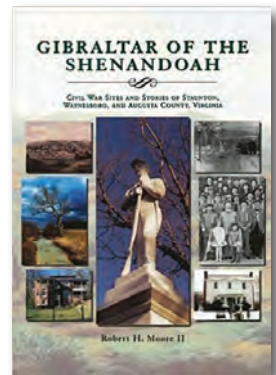
**SHENANDOAH
★ ★ VALLEY ★ ★
BATTLEFIELDS
NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

*Recognized as the most extensively protected,
well-preserved, and accurately interpreted
collection of Civil War sites in the United States,
centered in the Shenandoah Valley, and as a place of
unmatched scenic beauty where generations
can gather to understand, commemorate, and
draw meaning from our nation's heritage.*

## Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District

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www.ShenandoahAtWar.org