Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania

NATIONAL MILITARY PARK, VIRGINIA

National Parks Centennial 1872-1972

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As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

National Park Service

U. S. Department of the Interior

Here, midway between Washington and Richmond, Union and Confederate armies fought four major battles: Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania Court House. The Confederates won the first two. After the last two engagements, Federal troops continued a drive that eventually culminated in the destruction of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia.

The war's first "On to Richmond" campaign failed in July 1861, as shattered Union troops streamed back into the Washington defenses from the Battle of First Manassas. The second thrust, up the Peninsula between the James and the York Rivers during the spring and summer of 1862, ended with the Seven Days' Battles before Richmond and the return of the Union army to Washington. A third push in the late summer of 1862 resulted in the Confederate victory of Second Manassas.

Having stopped the Federal Army of the Potomac three times, Gen. Robert E. Lee now led his Army of Northern Virginia into Maryland. There, in September 1862, George B. McClellan defeated the invasion at Sharpsburg on Antietam Creek. Lee fell back into Virginia. McClellan, however, failed to exploit his advantage.

FREDERICKSBURG

After Antietam, Ambrose Burnside took command of the Army of the Potomac and launched a December 11 attack across the Rappahannock River. Under cover of a thick fog his engineers started building pontoon bridges. When the fog lifted, Confederate sharpshooters halted the work. Though Burnside's artillery devastated the town, the cannon failed to drive out the sharpshooters. Federal infantry, using the pontoons in the manner of modern assault landing craft, then crossed the river and drove the Confederates from Fredericksburg. On the Federal left, southeast of the town, more Northern soldiers crossed the river.

The following day both armies massed their forces. Lee held the well-nigh impregnable heights. On the 13th, Union troops attacked at two points: through open fields downriver and toward Fredericksburg itself. Downriver they were stopped. At Fredericksburg they were slaughtered. On the night of December 15-16, the Federal forces recrossed the Rappahannock and the Battle of Fredericksburg was over. Lincoln relieved Burnside of command.

CHANCELLORSVILLE

Joseph Hooker took command of the Army of the Potomac in January 1863. He moved in April. On the 27th he left a holding force across the Rappahannock from Fredericksburg and marched the bulk of his army up the northern bank to cross and turn eastward against Lee's rear. The plan was a good one—so logical, in fact, that Lee anticipated it. He, too, left a holding force behind and moved most of his army upriver to concentrate around Chancellorsville, a crossroads 10 miles from Fredericksburg. Surprised, Hooker went into a defensive position, leaving his right flank unprotected. On May 2, Lee again divided his army and sent Stonewall Jackson around the Union front to attack the right. Jackson rolled up the Union flank, but the day ended tragically for the Confederates. That night Jackson was mistakenly shot by his own men. He died 8 days later at Guiney's Station on the R.F. & P. Railroad.

On May 3, Lee lashed out against Hooker's newly formed lines and drove them toward the river. But in Fredericksburg Union troops pushed back the Confederates and moved westward. Once more Lee divided his small army and hurried toward the town. On the 4th and 5th he concentrated against the Federals at Salem Church, 4 miles west of Fredericksburg, and forced them to retreat across the river.

Hooker now retired his entire force north of the Rappahannock. Like his unsuccessful predecessors, he too found himself relieved of command. George G. Meade became his successor.

From Chancellorsville Lee marched into Pennsylvania where Meade mauled the Confederate Army at Gettysburg, forcing the defeated Lee into Virginia, followed cautiously by Meade. After an indecisive autumn campaign, both armies settled into winter quarters.

THE WILDERNESS

Gen. Ulysses S. Grant now appeared in Virginia. Although he commanded all Union armies, he made his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac. In early May 1864, he ordered Meade, who was south of the Rappahannock, to move between Lee and Richmond. Lee promptly attacked the Federals in the Wilderness, a dense forest west of Fredericksburg. The fighting ended in stalemate, which Grant broke by marching Meade eastward and southward in another attempt to get between Lee and Richmond.

SPOTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE

When Grant pulled out of the Wilderness, both armies raced for the key road junction of Spotsylvania Court House. Lee got there first and dug in. After 13 days of intermittent fighting, marked by heavy losses to both sides, particularly at the Bloody Angle, Grant again realized he could not smash through Lee's front. Again he sidestepped to the east and moved south toward Richmond. Then came the North Anna and Cold Harbor operations and the relentless siege of Petersburg. Petersburg and Richmond fell in April 1865. A week later, Lee surrendered.

ABOUT YOUR VISIT

A visitor center with a museum is in Fredericksburg on U.S. 1 at the foot of Marye's Heights. Another visitor center and museum is on the Chancellorsville Battlefield 10 miles west of Fredericksburg on Va. 3. Uniformed interpreters are at both places to give information and directions. The illustrated handbook and an auto tour guide on sale there will add greatly to your understanding of the fighting.

ADMINISTRATION

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The Park covers 3,672 acres and includes parts of the four battlefields. All are within 17 miles of Fredericksburg. Two outlying points of interest are the historic Salem Church building and the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Shrine at Guiney's Station (now Guinea, Va.), the house in which Lee's famous lieutenant died.

The National Park System, of which this park is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the great historical, natural, and recreational places of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of all the people.

A superintendent, whose address is Box 679, Fredericksburg, VA 22401, is in immediate charge of the park.

JACKSON SHRINE

FREDERICKSBURG AND SPOTSYLVANIA NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

To Culpeper
To Warrenton
To Washington
To Orange, Charlottesville and Shenandoah National Park
To George Washington Birthplace National Monument
To Richmond, Williamsburg, and Colonial National Historical Park
To Richmond
To Richmond

WILDERNESS TAVERN (SITE)
START OF JACKSON'S ATTACK
WILDERNESS
WILDERNESS CHURCH
VISITOR CENTER MUSEUM
BULLOCK ROAD
CHANCELLORSVILLE
HOOKER DRIVE
CHANCELLORSVILLE SITE
MILES DRIVE
STUART DRIVE
BERRY-PAXTON DRIVE
LEE - JACKSON BIVOUAC
SLOCUM DRIVE
SICKLES DRIVE
Mc LAWS DRIVE
CATHARINE FURNACE (REMAINS)
HILL-EWELL DRIVE
PARKER'S STORE (SITE)
LONGSTREET DRIVE
JACKSON TRAIL
TODD'S TAVERN (SITE)
SHADY GROVE CHURCH
HANCOCK ROAD
GRANT DRIVE WEST
ANDERSON DRIVE
BLOODY ANGLE DRIVE
GRANT DRIVE EAST
GORDON DRIVE
SPOTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE
SPOTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE
ZOAN CHURCH
SALEM CHURCH
MASSAPONAX CHURCH
FALMOUTH
FREDERICKSBURG
VISITOR CENTER HEADQUARTERS MUSEUM
NAT. CEM.
LEE DRIVE
FREDERICKSBURG
OLD HAMILTON'S CROSSING
JACKSON SHRINE TURN LEFT AT THORNBURG
RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER
BANKS' FORD
Hazel Run
MASSAPONAX CREEK
NY RIVER
PO RIVER
R.F. AND P. R.R.
ELY'S FORD ROAD
U. S. FORD ROAD
ORANGE PLANK ROAD
ORANGE TURNPIKE
UNFINISHED RAILROAD (WARTIME)
CATHARPIN ROAD
SHADY GROVE CHURCH ROAD
PINEY BRANCH ROAD
GORDON ROAD
MINE ROAD
SPOTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE ROAD
LANSDOWNE VALLEY

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

Scale in Miles 0 1 2 3

Park Land
Visitor Center
Major Road CONNECTING ALL BATTLEFIELDS
Park Road
Minor Road
Exhibit

NMP. F. S. 7000 REVISED 1971

FREDERICKSBURG VISITOR CENTER

CHANCELLORSVILLE VISITOR CENTER

NATIONAL CEMETERY—FREDERICKSBURG