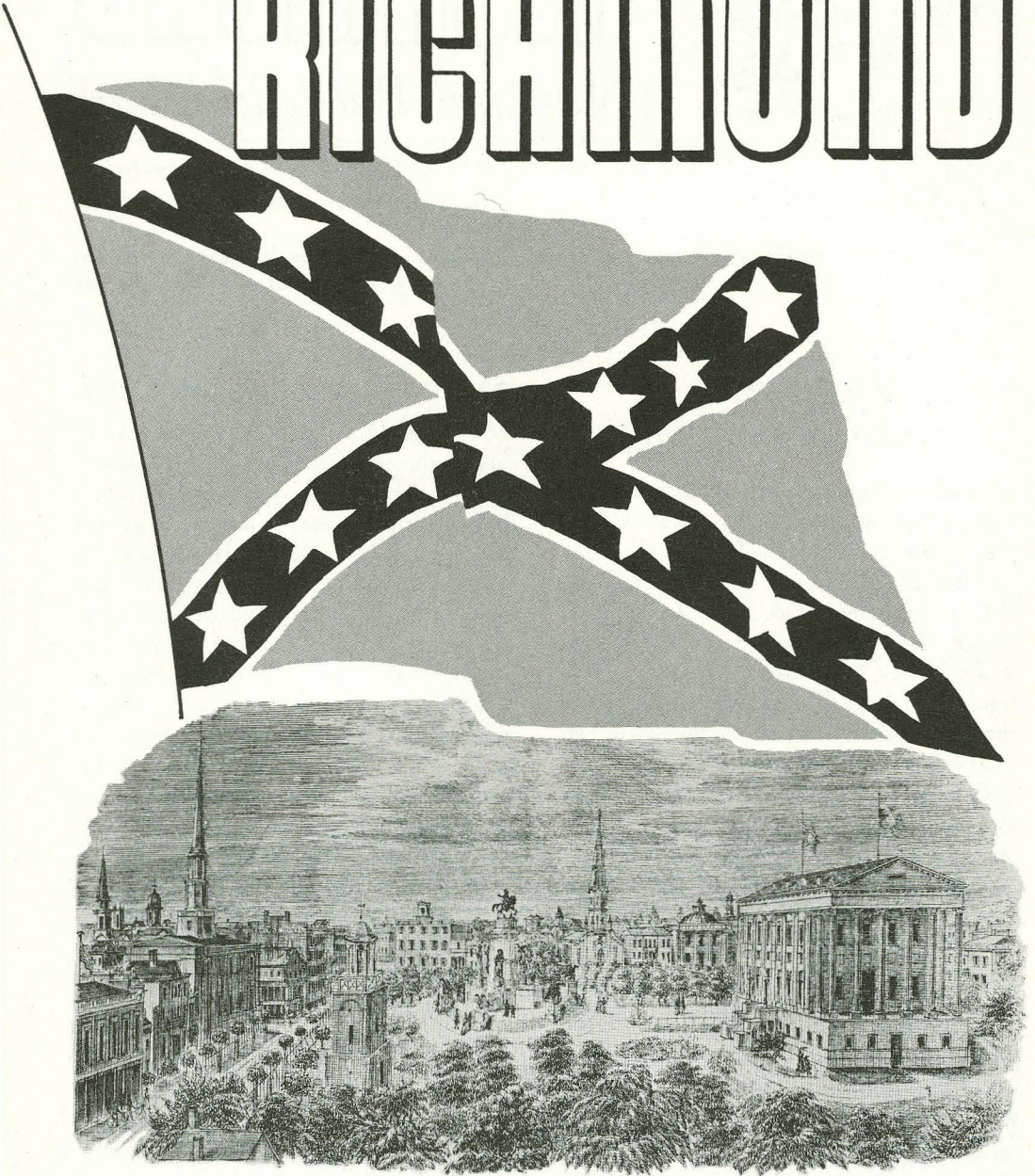
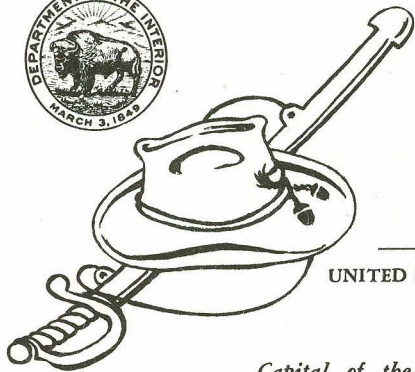


RICHMOND



NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK • VIRGINIA



RICHMOND

National Battlefield Park

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR • J. A. Krug, *Secretary*

National Park Service • Newton B. Drury, *Director*

Capital of the Confederacy, Richmond became for 4 years the objective of the Federal Armies in the East

RICHMOND SYMBOL OF THE SOUTH

RICHMOND, VA., as capital of the Confederate States of America during the Civil War, 1861–65, was regarded as the symbol of the Southern Government. In consequence, throughout the conflict, Federal Armies made repeated attempts to capture this important city. Seven "on to Richmond" drives, in the Eastern Theater of War, were aimed at the Confederate Capital. Five of these were turned back some distance away, two at Manassas and three in the vicinity of Fredericksburg, while two actually brought the fighting dangerously close to the Capital. From a strategic point of view the selection of Richmond, near the head of the navigable James River and within 110 miles of the Federal Capital at Washington, D. C., was not ideal. Nevertheless, for 4 years the city was successfully defended against all attacks and was not evacuated until after General Grant had broken the Confederate lines at Petersburg, April 2, 1865. By then almost every part of the South had been overrun. When Richmond was abandoned, on April 3, there followed swiftly the surrender of General Lee at Appomattox, and the end of the Southern Confederacy.

THE PENINSULA CAMPAIGN

GEN. GEORGE B. McCLELLAN'S ill-starred campaign in the spring and summer of 1862 brought battles to the very gates of Richmond, which in the aggregate surpassed in magnitude any previously fought in the Western Hemisphere. The Federal plan of attack involved a giant pincer movement against the Confederate Capital. McClellan, with the Army of the Potomac, was expected to effect a landing on the peninsula between the James and the York Rivers and to advance from the east, while Gen. Irvin McDowell, with a second Federal Army, marched overland from Washington to join McClellan's troops as they approached Richmond. McClellan brought his forces to the peninsula by water, and, after compelling the Southern forces to withdraw from their fortifications at Yorktown, pushed steadily forward. Toward the end of May, he had reached a point so close to Richmond that his observers in balloons could see the church spires of the city. McDowell, on his southward march, had arrived at Fredericksburg and expected to join McClellan for the final move on Richmond. In the meantime, however, Gen. T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson, at the head of the Confederate troops in the Shenandoah Valley, made a series of

COVER: Capitol Square, Richmond, about 1860. *From a contemporary print.*
Courtesy Library of Congress.

lightning-like moves which endangered the National Capital, and McDowell was recalled for the protection of Washington.

On May 31, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the defense of Richmond, attacked McClellan in the Battle of Seven Pines, or Fair Oaks as it is also called. The Confederates were repulsed and Johnston was wounded, but the battle disclosed to the Federals the immense difficulties that would be experienced should they continue the march on Richmond.

When the two armies next clashed, Robert E. Lee was at the head of the Southern forces, and the Federals were on the defensive. McClellan had delayed too long before the city, and the interval of calm had given Lee time to gather reinforcements from Georgia and the Carolinas. Toward the end of June the Confederates took the offensive in an attempt to cut the Federals from their supply base at White House on the Pamunkey River. On June 26, Lee attacked and dislodged the Federal outposts at Mechanicsville, but was severely repulsed at Beaver Dam Creek nearby. McClellan, however, fell back that night to the vicinity of Gaines' Mill where, the next day, he received an assault delivered with such violent impact that he was compelled to begin a hasty though masterfully organized retreat to the James River.

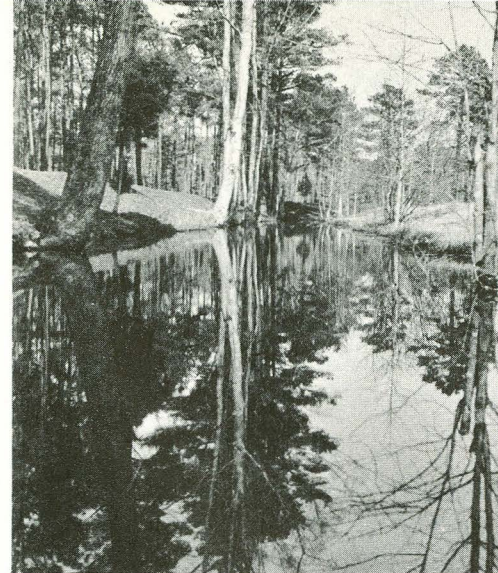
In rapid succession followed the bitterly contested battles of Savage Station, June 29; Frayser's Farm, June 30; and Malvern Hill,

July 1. At Malvern Hill the Federals, in a strong position commanding the James River, resisted the Confederate attacks; that night they moved away to their new base at Harrison's Landing. Only McClellan's skillful handling of his unwieldy masses in retreat, combined with Confederate mistakes, saved the Army of the Potomac from destruction. In the Peninsula campaign the defense of their Capital cost the Confederates 28,431 men out of 69,732 engaged, while the Federals lost 23,119 out of a total number of 116,102 troops.

After the Seven Days' Battles and McClellan's withdrawal from Harrison's Landing, nearly 2 years passed before the armies returned to the gates of Richmond to fight again. In the meantime, the earthen forts and breastworks were strengthened and extended until, by 1864, the city was almost encircled by three lines of defense. During this time also, three Federal attempts on Richmond were turned aside—at Second Manassas and Fredericksburg, in August and December 1862, and at Chancellorsville, in May of 1863. In this interval the Confederate forces had twice invaded Northern territory, meeting with defeat at Antietam, September 1862, and at Gettysburg, July 1863.

COLD HARBOR

IN MAY 1864, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, newly appointed supreme commander of the Federal forces, personally joined his troops in the field,

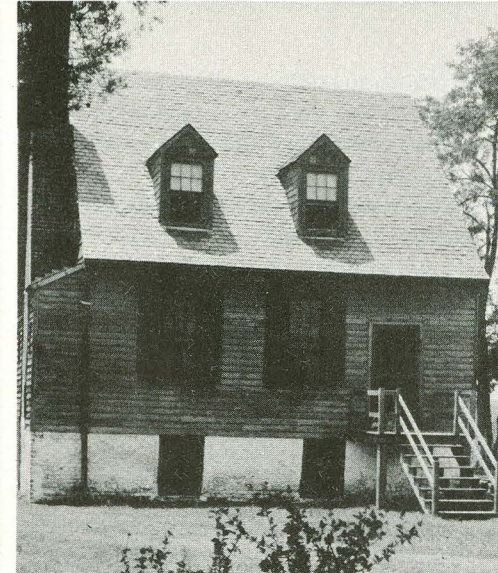


The moat in front of Confederate trenches, Fort Harrison.

with the avowed objective of crushing Lee's army and capturing Richmond. A month of hard fighting left the battlefields of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House, North Anna, and the Totopotomoy behind, and by June 1 his troops were moving in on Cold Harbor, a strategic crossroads in the approach to Richmond.

The one day for which the Battle of Cold Harbor is best remembered is June 3, 1864. Here, on part of the old battlefield of Gaines' Mill, Grant shifted his five corps, 117,343 troops, into position along a 6-mile front and issued orders for an attack on Lee's lines for 4:30 a. m., June 3. Lee, with approximately 60,000 troops, posted his men and artillery behind earthworks which commanded every field of approach on a front extending from near Grapevine Bridge to a point beyond Mechanicsville.

Grant's orders were executed promptly. The troops advanced under a deafening roar of artillery and rattle of musketry that was immediately echoed by Lee's lines. Soon all was confusion. Federal soldiers penetrated the Confederate right flank only to be repulsed. Lee's position was well selected, and the cross-fire of his artillery was deadly in its effect. In 30



The Watt House, Gen. Fitz-John Porter's headquarters, Gaines' Mill.

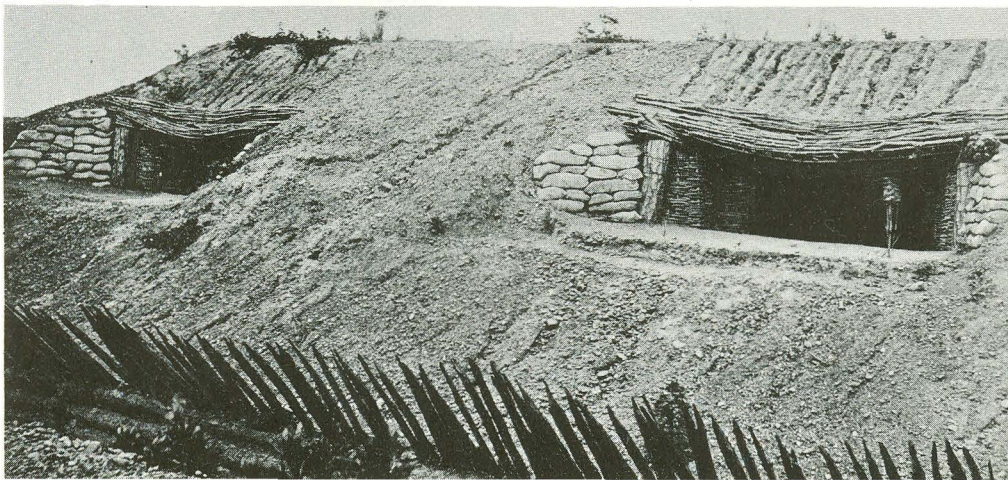
minutes Grant's fate in this engagement was definitely sealed, and in that brief period his casualties exceeded 7,000 in killed and wounded. Desultory fighting continued until noon.

The Battle of Cold Harbor, which saved Richmond for another 9 months, proved to be Lee's last major victory in the field. Grant, in later years, acknowledged his mistake at Cold Harbor and wrote in his *Memoirs*, "I have always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made." His losses for the period June 2-15, 1864, numbered 12,737, while Lee's losses for the same period are estimated to have been under 2,000. The use of field fortifications in this battle further established their value in modern warfare.

THE LAST 10 MONTHS

BY JUNE 15, Grant had moved south of the James River to Petersburg. Here the conflict continued, chiefly in the form of siege operations, until April 2, 1865, when the Confederate lines were severed. In the meantime, several thrusts were made against Richmond from north of the James. The most important of these culminated in the capture of Fort Harrison, a strongly fortified position considered the key to Richmond. The Confederates built new

The parapet of Union Fort Burnham (formerly Confederate Fort Harrison).
From a wartime photograph.



fortifications to compensate for this loss and along these respective lines the opposing forces faced each other until Richmond was abandoned on April 3, 1865.

Upon evacuation of the city, the Confederate government authorized the burning of warehouses and supplies. This resulted in considerable destruction to houses in the business district. The end of the war was now close at hand. Lee, with the remnant of his army, surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Court House, April 9, 1865.

THE PARK

RICHMOND National Battlefield Park was established July 14, 1944, in accordance with an act of Congress dated March 2, 1936. The property was originally acquired by a group of public-spirited Virginians who donated it to the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1932. The 8 parcels of land, containing 684 acres, preserve portions of the fields of combat, massive forts, and an intricate system of field fortifications; two houses possessing wartime associations—Watt House (Gen. Fitz-John Porter's headquarters) and Garthright House (Union field hospital); and a museum. Other national areas in Virginia of the Civil War period closely related to this park are: Manassas National Battlefield Park; Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National

Military Park; Petersburg National Military Park; and Appomattox Court House National Historical Monument.

HOW TO REACH THE PARK

The park headquarters and museum, located at Fort Harrison, 10 miles southeast of the Capitol Square in Richmond, is reached by way of Broad Street and Virginia Routes 5 and 156. A complete tour of the battlefield requires a 57-mile drive and is outlined on the map.

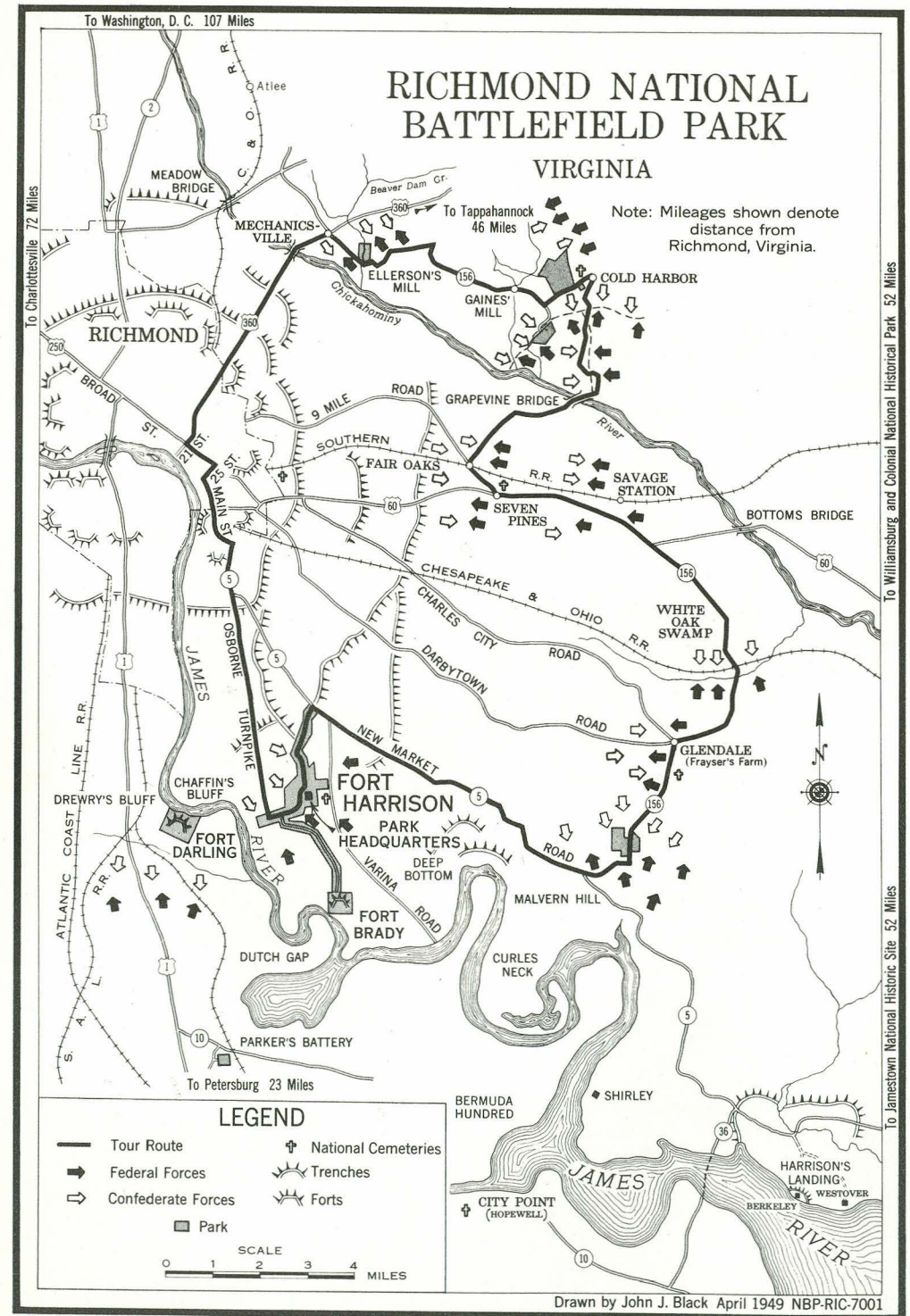
FACILITIES

MARKERS, maps, and interpretive devices situated along the 57-mile battlefield park route help the visitor to understand the military operations. Additional information may be obtained at park headquarters, where a small museum and library are located.

ADMINISTRATION

RICHMOND National Battlefield Park is a part of the National Park System owned by the people of the United States and administered for them by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. Communications should be addressed to the Superintendent, Richmond National Battlefield Park, R. F. D. 14, Box 140, Richmond 23, Va.

Confederate trenches, Cold Harbor. *Courtesy Virginia State Chamber of Commerce.*



Drawn by John J. Black April 1949 NBP-RIC-7001