

# History 216-01: "From the American Revolution through the American Civil War"

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Clearly, this isn't your typical class. For one thing, we meet all day on Fridays. For another, we will spend most of our class time "on-site" at museums, battlefields, or historic buildings. This class will concentrate on the period from the end of the American Revolution through the end of the American Civil War, but it is not at all a narrative that follows a neat timeline. I'll make no attempt to touch on every important theme and we'll depart from the chronological approach whenever targets of opportunities present themselves. I'll begin most classes with some sort of short background session—a clip from a movie, oral reports, or maybe something from the Internet. As soon as possible, though, we'll be into a van and on the road. Now, travel time can be tricky and I do hate to rush students when we are on-site. I'll shoot for getting people back in time for a reasonably early dinner—say 5:00. **BUT** there will be times when we'll get back later than that. There will also be one **OPTIONAL** overnight trip—to the Harper's Ferry and the Civil War battlefields at Antietam and Gettysburg. If these admitted eccentricities are deeply troubling, I'd recommend dropping the course. No harm, no foul—and no hard feelings.

I've always held discussions in this class over lunch and the food has added considerably to the fun of the course, and I'd like to retain the feature. We'll picnic some of the time. On those days, I will take orders for food by email and you can reimburse me. When we eat at a sit-down restaurant, I'll usually put the entire bill on a credit card and, again, you can reimburse me. Costs beyond the food might include some printing and photocopying. This is all "heap cheap," especially in view of...

**Readings:** Everything is available **FREE** on-line! All of the readings we'll use are available from **Blackboard** under this course—History 216-01. Just go to "**COURSE DOCUMENTS.**"

The readings include both essays from the country's leading professional journals and chapters from key monographs. You may read these essays and book chapters on-line or print them out first. No need to bring them to class. Typically, there will be three or four essays or chapters to mull over for each Friday. Our Blackboard site also includes a digital copy of the writing guide for this course: Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (2006). If you would like to purchase a paper copy, I'd suggest doing it on-line. The ISBN is 1031244673X. Any edition is fine. To view the readings on Blackboard, you'll need *Adobe Acrobat Reader*, available free here:



**Requirements & Grades:** Students generally want to know every little thing about the grading system, but truth be known, it is all pretty-much a subjective process and in the end I will evaluate the totality of your work over the course of the semester. Admittedly, many students find this ambiguity unsettling during the semester, but few seem to think the grades unfair in the end. Keep in mind that **A** grades are reserved for **EXCEPTIONAL** work, and to win an **A** for the course means hitting on just about all cylinders just about all of the time. The grade of **B** covers a much wider range of perfectly acceptable, even superior, performance. Any student who scrambles over all the course requirements and delivers even a modest effort should have no trouble attaining a **C**: acceptable, but undistinguished. To receive a final grade lower than **C**, a student in this class would simply have to stop trying. I do use pluses and minuses, by the way. As I am incapable of higher mathematics, I have devised "the rule of quarters." Each component of the course will determine 25% (more-or-less) of your grade for the course:

### **I. Electronic Journal (25%):**

The writing you do in this class will take the form of an electronic journal in which you will write a weekly entry that includes both text and images pertaining to our field trips, readings, and class discussions. You can check out some recent examples of these electronic journals here: <http://niahd.wm.edu>. You will log on at this site to begin and maintain your own journal. These journals are on-line, so anyone with access to the Internet (like parents and deans) can view them. Please use good taste. *What* you write is the key, and the greatest tool you have is the English language. It is the medium of William Shakespeare and Jane Austen; James McPherson and Annette Gordon-Reed. It is free to you for the taking. Don't abuse it.

I will assign you a very simple digital camera with which you will be able to record field trips in a visual way and from which you may upload images to your on-line journal. If you have your own camera, you are certainly free to use it instead. You may also use absolutely any appropriate images you can find on the Internet. While it is certainly true that what you write is more important than these digital images, the photos can provide very useful "talking points" for your prose. In any event, you **MUST** post at least three images per field trip. They can come from the Internet, indeed from any source, as well as from the digital camera.

The electronic journal must be complete by 5:00 pm on the Friday following the end of class (Friday, 11 December). Length is unimportant. Quality is everything. I will expect to see evidence of (1) a grasp of the major points in the readings, (2) critical evaluation of the meaning of the historic sites in relationship to the themes expressed in the readings, (3) an understanding of the class discussions.

### **II. Oral Reports (25%):**

Each of you will undertake two oral reports that stress the presentation of factual information linked in some way to the week's topic. The research should be easily accomplished from readily-available material on the Internet, in Swem Library or from the Colonial Williamsburg Research Library (where you will be welcome, by the way, and where you will have borrowing privileges if you fill out some paperwork). I'll be happy to guide you to additional places to look. My purpose is to have you become familiar with a few of the most basic sources of factual information about early American History and to provide in your reports some "take off points" for class discussions. You'll get the topic assignments approximately one week ahead of time. If you will email me an outline of the report by 5:00 pm on the Thursday prior to your time at center stage, I'll alert you if anything is amiss and suggest additional sources if you need them. These are to be **SHORT** reports—no more than 5

minutes—sometimes delivered before we depart, sometimes at lunch, sometimes in the middle of a site visit. *Think of them this way: You are standing near the punch bowl at a party. Two or three people come up and demand that you explain your topic to them. In the space of consuming one glass of punch and two crackers loaded with Brie, what would you tell them?*

**Note:** Over the last couple of years that students have come to rely on Wikipedia almost exclusively for these reports. I'm instituting a requirement that there be at least two sources, one of which must be print (and that can be a tradition print source that is now available on-line such as the journals on Jstor). You may simply identify the sources at the end of your report. Swem Library's homepage can help: <http://www.wm.edu/academics/libraries/index.php>

### **III: Classtime Discussions (25%):**

As much of the discussion for any week will take place over lunch, we'll often do a lot of talking before we even see whatever it is we came to see after lunch, which in turn privileges the readings. Indeed, the only preparation I will expect is that you have a firm grasp of the readings. There will be also ample opportunity to talk as we poke around the places we visit and on the way home—anyplace we have an opening for an impromptu seminar session. Here again you are subject to my appallingly subjective evaluation of your participation in all class time activities.

### **IV: Final Exam (25%):**

The exam will consist of short-answer questions that will require you to know the readings—essentially who wrote what and advanced what thesis—and to be able to relate them to the sites we'll visit and the discussions we'll have. Our exam is scheduled for 9:00-12:00am on Monday, 7 December. I'll talk more with you about this component toward the end of the course.

**Meet Amy Green, an advanced doctoral student in History who is assisting me with this course:**



Amy will be along on many of our fieldtrips and will run some of our lunch-time discussions, but her primary role will be to give you feedback on your journals. This she will do via email, but you may make appointments to talk with Amy face-to-face by emailing her at: [pimpernelle@verizon.net](mailto:pimpernelle@verizon.net).

# Schedule

The schedule below is tentative, but probably about right. The underlined portions are “live” links to websites about the places we’ll visit and the food we’ll enjoy.

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## 28 August: The Merchant of Norfolk

**Theme:** The 1787 passage of the Bill of Religious Toleration by the state of Virginia seems to have been the spur to merchant Moses Myers’s decision to relocate from New York City to Norfolk, where Moses and his wife Eliza, established the first Jewish household in the town. Moses Myers soon emerged as the most important merchant in the port and one of the most important in the new nation. As his financial standing rose, so did his social prominence. In 1792 Myer built a two-story brick townhouse in the Federal style to reflect that rising status. About 1796, he completed a large dining room addition as a space in which to take advantage of the new trends in entertaining. The Myers family represents the positive side of the just-post-Revolutionary period—sometimes called the "Revolutionary Settlement." With seemingly everything in flux, the times were ripe for success, if one could be bold, skillful, AND fortunate. As the Meyrs’ townhouse illustrates, the acquisition of “gentility” through displays of goods and behavior was an important means of maintaining—and improving—one’s position in early American society. In that sense, did the ideal of “gentility” serve a *democratic*, even *republican*, purpose?

### Sites:

Moses Myers House (Norfolk, VA)

### Readings:

Richard L. Bushman, "Bodies and Minds," chapter 3 from his book, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (1992), pp. 61-99.

Bernard L. Herman, "The Merchant Family's House," chapter 2 from his book, *Town House: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780-1830* (2005), pp. 33-76.

“Moses Myers House,” in *The Early Architecture of Tidewater Virginia* (2002), 45.

**Lunch:** Doumar's Cones & Barbecue, (Norfolk, VA)

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## 4 September: Well, Hello Dolley!

**Theme:** At the time James Madison left the White House for retirement at his plantation home, Montpelier, in Orange County, VA, his two-term presidency was roundly considered a great success. Today it is mostly remembered for the burning of Washington during the War of 1812. Like his close political ally and neighbor, Thomas Jefferson, Madison was born into the top ranks of Virginia gentry society. Slightly younger than Jefferson (1743-1826), Madison (1751-1836), was a political "player" during the struggle for independence, but it was his contribution to national politics during the years after independence that earned him the titles of "Father of the Constitution" and "Author of the Bill of

Rights." Madison was a far more successful planter at Montpelier than Jefferson was at Monticello, but like Jefferson, Madison was a slaveowner all his life. Also like Jefferson, Madison married a young widow. Dorothea Payne Todd Madison (1758-1849), a vivacious woman with an astute political mind, became the first president's wife carry the title "First Lady." Also the first "First Lady" to be photographed, Dolly Madison was a political icon in the new nation until her death in 1849. While women did not vote and did not hold political office during the early years of the new republic, by Dolley Madison's time they had taken on a political role the "Founding Fathers" never envisioned.

**Sites:**

Montpelier (Orange County, VA)

**Readings:**

Kenneth R. Bowling, "'A Tub to the Whale': The Founding Fathers and Adoption of the Federal Bill of Rights," *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1988), pp. 223-251.

Catherine Allgor, "Sex, Lies, and the Election of 1808," chapter 6 from her book, *A Perfect Union: Dolley Madison and the Creation of the American Nation* (2006), pp. 121-138.

Catherine Allgor, "Washington Women in Public," chapter 3 from her book, *Parlor Politics, In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government* (2000), pp. 102-146.

**Lunch:** Hickory Notch Grille (Maidens, VA)

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## **11 September: Two Gentlemen from William & Mary**

**Theme:** William & Mary alumnus Thomas Jefferson mirrored the contradictions in early American life involving race. The quintessential advocate of liberty for white men, he owned slaves his entire life, including Sally Hemings, who was the half-sister of his wife and with whom Jefferson had several children. At Monticello, Jefferson's material and intellectual world is well documented and displayed in meticulous detail. Insights into the mind of Sally Hemings require more thoughtful analysis, like the research that undergirds Annette Gordon-Reed's recent Pulitzer Prize winning *The Hemings of Monticello*. Neighbor James Monroe, also an alumnus of the College of William & Mary, was heir to the Republican Ascendancy that began with Jefferson's election in 1800 and that had continued during James Madison's presidency. Dolly and James Madison gave way to James and Elizabeth Monroe. The beautiful and refined seventeen-year-old Elizabeth Kortright of New York City caught James's eye in 1785 when he was a twenty-seven-year-old member of the Continental Congress. Unlike Jefferson and Madison, James Monroe had not inherited great wealth and Elizabeth's loyalist father had lost his during the Revolution. Yet their home, "Highland," reflects the couple's quest for gentility, if on a lesser scale than one encountered at either Montpelier or Monticello.

**Sites:**

Monticello (Charlottesville, VA)

Highland, aka, "Ash Lawn" (Charlottesville, VA)

## Readings:

Annette Gordon-Reed, "The Teenagers and the Woman," and " 'His Promises on Which She Implicitly Relied'," and " 'The Treaty' and 'Did They Love Each Other' ", chapters 15, 16, & 17 from her book, *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family* (2008), 308-375.

**Lunch:** The Cafe' at Monticello

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## 18 September: Frontier Culture & Southern Honor

**Theme:** Exactly what was the "frontier"? Was it a place? a process? How was the western frontier different from the older settlements along the eastern seaboard? Was it merely a crude copy of eastern norms or something new and somehow intrinsically "American"? Most historians recognize on the frontier a mixture of people of widely differing cultures who borrowed in eclectic manner from each other. Certainly, that is the message of the Frontier Culture Museum, which concentrates especially on various farm houses—German, Irish, English, and American houses, plus barns and other outbuilding—that have been brought from their original settings and reassembled for us in Staunton, Virginia. But some scholars see the material culture of the frontier as evidence that both confirms and yet undercuts some American assumptions about it. Similarly, when assessing frontier society in the South we must remember that it was deeply affected by the existence of slavery, and again, the question arises: how different was slavery on the frontier from slavery in the longer-settled regions of the country? Closely associated with white perceptions of slavery was their conception of "Honor." Was that conceit also different on the frontier, or was it the same idea in a different guise?

## Sites:

Frontier Culture Museum (Stanton, VA)

## Readings:

Elliott J. Gorn, "'Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch': The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 90, No. 1, Supplement to Volume 90. (1985), pp. 18-43.

Kenneth S. Greenberg, "The Nose, the Lie, and the Duel in the Antebellum South," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 95, No. 1 (1990), pp. 57-74.

Gail S. Terry, "Sustaining the Bonds of Kinship in a Trans-Appalachian Migration, 1790-1811: The Cabell-Breckinridge Slaves Move West," *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography*, 102 (1994), pp. 455-476.

**Lunch:** Michie Tavern (Charlottesville, VA)

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## 25 September: Antebellum Richmond

**Theme:** The capital of Virginia since 1780, Richmond developed into a city with a significant industrial/commercial base, lavish displays of "high style," and deep involvement in national politics.

Future Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court John Marshall built one of the first homes in fashionable "Court End." Down the street, super-lawyer John Wickham built a townhouse that rivaled any in northern cities. Marshall (presiding judge) and Wickham (defense council) were involved in the 1807 treason trial of former vice-president Aaron Burr, a premier event in the nation's early history that drew crowds so large that the proceedings had to be shifted to the state capitol building. Later, Marshall and Wickham were instrumental in the building of Monumental Church as a memorial to the 72 people who died in a theater fire on the site in 1811. Along the James River, Tredegar Iron Works became merely the best known of many industrial enterprises made possible by the Kanawa Canal. Those industries drew a mixture of white workers—many of them immigrants from Europe—and black workers—enslaved, free, and escaped slaves—to “Shockoe Valley” between fashionable “Church Hill” (where Patrick Henry delivered his “Liberty or Death” speech at St. John’s Church) and “Shockoe Hill” (where the state capitol building, designed by Thomas Jefferson, dominated the skyline). Richmond seemed poised to become very much like Philadelphia, but slavery remained a hovering presence. In 1800, for example, 27 black men were publicly hanged for their roles in Gabriel’s Rebellion only a few hundred yards from the governor’s mansion where Governor James Monroe resided.

**Sites:**

[John Marshall House \(Richmond, VA\)](#)

[John Wickham House \(Richmond, VA\)](#)

[Monumental Church \(Richmond, VA\)](#)

[Virginia State Capitol & the Capitol Square Neighborhood \(Richmond, VA\)](#)

[Tredegar Iron Works](#)

**Readings:**

Elizabeth R. Varon, “Tippecanoe and the Ladies, Too: White Women and Party Politics in Antebellum Virginia,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 82, No. 2 (1995), 494-521

Joshua D. Rothman, “ ‘The Church and the Brothel are Only Separated by a Pane of Glass’: Sex and Race on the Streets of Richmond,” chapter 3 from his book, *Notorious in the Neighborhood: Sex and Families across the Color Line in Virginia, 1787-1861* (2003), pp. 92-132.

Douglas R. Egerton, “Gabriel’s Conspiracy and the Election of 1800,” *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (May, 1990), pp. 191-214.

**Lunch:** [Café Richmond \(Valentine Richmond History Center\)](#)

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**2 October: Somerset Place**

**Theme:** Is there a more powerful American story than the rise and fall of slavery? Enslaved people were employed in all manner of occupations but most were agricultural workers. They produced enormous profits, and not merely for the planter class. The fortunes of manufacturers in the northeastern states and in English cities such as Liverpool depended upon the supply of cotton from slave-worked fields in the south. Indeed; workers in American, English, and French factories depended upon the cotton produced by southern slaves for employment and a majority of all southern whites were to some degree dependent on the profits from slavery whether or not they owned slaves

themselves. But what of the lives of the enslaved people who created all this wealth? Somerset Place in Creswell, North Carolina, took form in 1786 and lasted until the end of slavery in 1865. It was an anomaly all along. For one thing, in the early eighteenth-century Somerset Place produced rice in a region generally considered too far north for that crop. (Later, the owners turned to wheat and corn.) It was also huge. Indeed, with 100,000 acres and nearly 300 enslaved people, Somerset Place was one of the largest plantations in the upper South. Perhaps that is why it has survived to become a state park where the State of North Carolina attempts to tell the stories of the enslaved families who lived there.

**Sites:**

Somerset Place (Creswell, NC)

**Readings:**

John Michael Vlach " 'Snug Li'l House with Flue and Oven': Nineteenth-Century Reforms in Plantation Slave Housing," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, Vol. 5, *Gender, Class, and Shelter* (1995), pp. 118-129.

Ann Smart Martin, "Suckey's Looking Glass: African Americans as Consumers," chapter 6 from her book, *Buying into the World of Goods: Early Consumers in Backcountry Virginia* (2008). pp. 173-193.

Shane White & Graham White, "Slave Clothing and African-American Culture in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Past & Present*, No. 148 (1995), pp. 149-186.

**Lunch:** Picnic at Somerset Place

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**9 October: The Peninsula Campaign**

**Theme:** Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Emancipation Proclamation is the document Americans most associate with freedom for the slaves, but it was actually General Benjamin Butler's 1861 legal theory of "contraband of war" that first began to wear away the chains of slavery. As commander at Fort Monroe, Butler refused to return escaped slaves to their confederate masters, prompting thousands of African-Americans to escape to seize freedom for themselves by escaping to Union lines. In 1862, Fort Monroe was the jump-off point for a Union drive on Richmond. General George McClellan's plans were interrupted, however, when the Confederate ironclad, C.S.S. *Virginia*, appeared in the James River. On March 9, 1862, the Union ironclad, U.S.S. *Monitor*, squared off against the *Virginia* (perhaps better known by its former name, the "*Merrimac*") in the "Battle of Hampton Roads." Although the battle was indecisive, naval warfare changed forever that day, as wood and sail gave way to iron and steam. Meanwhile, McClellan's 100,000-man Union Army had fought its first major battle at Williamsburg, where students at the College of William & Mary had eagerly formed their own elite unit in the Confederate army and where college president Benjamin S. Ewell had become the Confederate colonel who laid out the earliest design for "Williamsburg Line" of massive earthworks built with slave labor. After the battle, the area from Williamsburg down to Fort Monroe remained under Union control for the rest of the war. There was no more precarious existence for civilians than life in occupied territory, but as the fighting dragged on, enthusiasm for "the cause" everywhere in the South declined, especially among the women left behind when their husbands, fathers, and brothers marched away to war.



**Sites:**

The Wren Building (Williamsburg, VA)

"Battle of Williamsburg" Earthworks (Williamsburg, VA)

Fortress Monroe (Hampton, VA)

USS Monitor Center at the Mariners Museum (Newport News, VA)

**Reading:**

James M. McPherson, "Who Freed the Slaves?," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 139, No. 1 (1995), pp. 1-10.

Barbara J. Fields, "Who Freed the Slaves?" in Geoffrey C. Ward, *The Civil War: An Illustrated History* (1990), pp.178-181.

Robert F. Pace, "Honor and Violence," chapter 4 from his book, *Halls of Honor: College Men in the Old South* (2004), pp. 82-97.

Scott Reynolds Nelson & Carol Sheriff, "'War's Miseries': The Confederate Home Front," chapter 12 from their book, *A People at War: Civilians and Soldiers in America's Civil War* (2007), pp. 260-285.

Drew Gilpin Faust, "Altars of Sacrifice: Confederate Women and the Narratives of War," *Journal of American History*, 76 (1990), pp. 1200-1228.

**Lunch:** Mariners Museum Cafe

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**16 October: Lee Takes Command: The Seven Days Battles**

**Theme:** After the Battle of Williamsburg, the Confederate army retreated to the outskirts of Richmond, then attacked McClellan's Army of the Potomac at the indecisive Battle of Seven Pines. When Joseph Johnston was severely wounded, Robert E. Lee replaced him as commander of the "Army of Northern Virginia." The ever-aggressive Lee soon took the offensive against McClellan in a series of battles we call "The Seven Days." It is at least plausible either side might have won the Civil War during the Seven Days. Instead, poor intelligence, the inability to coordinate the armies, and "the fog of war" on both sides produced savage fighting, but no decisive outcome. The two armies would pound each other for the rest of the war, but the essential toughness of each was forged at battles like Gaines's Mill and Malvern Hill. In the long run, perhaps the key outcome of the Seven Days Battles was a decided move by the Lincoln administration toward a "hard" war that made the destruction of slavery, rather than just the preservation of the Union, a Northern war aim. The Seven Days Battles were no masterpieces of the military art, but the Union had been turned back from the gates of Richmond, Lee had emerged as the great hero of the South, and the Army of Northern Virginia he had stitched together was set for a long run of victories that ultimately ended with the final repulse of "Pickett's Charge" at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on 3 July, 1863.

**Sites:**

Gaines Mill Battlefield (Henrico County, VA)

Malvern Hill Battlefield (Henrico County, VA)

Berkeley Plantation, aka "Harrison's Landing" (Charles City County, VA)

### **Readings:**

William A. Blair, "The Seven Days and the Radical Persuasion: Convincing Radicals in the North of the Need for a Hard War," in Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *The Richmond Campaign of 1862: The Peninsula & The Seven Days* (2000), pp. 153-180.

Lesley J. Gordon, "Virginia, 1862: Shaking with the Thunders of Battle," chapter 7 from her book, *General George E. Pickett in Life & Legend* (1998), pp. 84-95.

Joseph T. Glatthaar, "The Battle for Richmond: The Seven Days' Campaign," and "Combat," chapters 12 & 25 from his book, *General Lee's Army: From Victory to Collapse* (2008), pp. 135-149; 315-333.

**Lunch:** Picnic at Berkeley Plantation

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## **23 October: Invasion!: The Antietam and Gettysburg Campaigns**

### **AN OPTIONAL THREE-DAY, TWO-NIGHT TRIP TO HARPER'S FERRY, WV; ANTIETAM BATTLEFIELD, MD; AND GETTYSBURG, PA**

**Theme:** The stage set by his resounding victory over Union General John Pope at Second Bull Run, Robert E. Lee invaded the North in 1862 with a multifaceted agenda: influence northern politics, "liberate" Maryland, and convince European powers to mediate a peace. Lee may well have lost his chance at victory in Maryland by sending most of the Army of Northern Virginia to capture the Union garrison at Harper's Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia) where in 1859 Lee himself had commanded the U.S. Marines who captured the abolitionist, John Brown. In the bloodiest single day of fighting in American history, George McClellan, recently returned to command of Union forces in the East, blunted Lee's invasion attempt at the Battle of Antietam, but failed to crush or even vigorously pursue the southern army as it retreated into Virginia. For this Lincoln removed McClellan from command. In the wake of Antietam, Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, once again altering the trajectory of the war and probably sealing the fate of the Confederate cause. After defeating Union forces again at Fredericksburg and at Chancellorsville, Lee once more invaded the North in 1863. Almost a year to the day after the conclusion of the Seven Days Battles, the Army of the Potomac, now under the command of George Meade, defeated Lee at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. In popular works of both history and fiction, the south's effort at Gettysburg is often presented as both desperate and doomed from the outset. In fact, the Confederates came within a hair's breath of winning on both days one and two, and George Pickett's famous charge on the third day might well have succeeded.

### **Sites:**

Harper's Ferry (Harper's Ferry, WV)

Antietam Battlefield, (Sharpsburg, MD)

Gettysburg Battlefield (Gettysburg, PA)

## Readings:

James M. McPherson, "The Beginning of the End," chapter 5 of his book, *Antietam: The Battle That Changed the Course of the Civil War* (2002), pp. 133-156.

Joseph T. Glatthaar, "Taking the War to the Enemy," and "The Failure at Gettysburg" chapters 13 & 22 from his book, *General Lee's Army: From Victory to Collapse* (2008), pp. 150-173; 268-288.

**Meals:** To Be Determined

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## 6 November: FREE DAY!!!

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### 13 November: Confederate Capital

**Theme:** As the seat of the rebel government, Richmond was under great stress throughout the war. Quite apart from the Union armies that threatened it, the city struggled to feed its burgeoning civilian population and to care of the deluge of wounded that flowed back to it from battlefields as far away as Gettysburg, PA. To house President Jefferson Davis, the Confederate government acquired a mansion that, although gray in color, became known as "The White House of the Confederacy." Nearby in 1863, a mob of perhaps 1,000 women confronted Davis in the famous "Richmond Bread Riot." With the business district in flames when the Confederate forces withdrew from the city in 1865, many Richmonders took refuge on the grounds of the state capitol. Among the refugees were the wife and daughters of General Robert E. Lee, who resided in a modest brick house not far away. President Jefferson Davis and his family had already fled the town by railroad. A short time later, Davis and his wife, Varina Howell Davis, were captured in Georgia and, as we have seen earlier in the course, Jefferson was imprisoned at Fort Monroe. Many other Richmond women played important roles during the war, and not all in the Confederate cause. For example, Elizabeth Van Lew, whose fine home once stood not far from the huge military hospital the Confederates established on Chimborazo Hill, was the prime force behind the remarkably successful Unionist underground in Richmond.

## Sites:

Capitol Square Area (Richmond, VA)

Chimborazo Hospital (Richmond, VA)

White House of the Confederacy (Richmond, VA)

Shockoe Cemetery (Richmond, VA)

## Readings:

Nelson Lankford, "Upon the Wings of Lightning," chapter 13 of his book, *Richmond Burning: The Last Days of the Confederate Capital* (2002), pp.156-167.

Joan E. Cashin, "Run with the Rest," chapter 7 from her book, *First Lady of the Confederacy: Varina Davis's Civil War* (2006), pp.152-170.

Elizabeth R. Varon, “ ‘Our Flag was Gone’: The War’s First Year” & “ ‘The Bright Rush of Life’: The Making of the Richmond Underground,” chapters 3 & 4 of her book, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy: The True Story of Elizabeth Van Lew, a Union Agent in the Heart of the Confederacy* (2003), pp. 3-76 & 77-106.

Michael B. Chesson, “Harlots or Heroines? A New Look at the Richmond Bread Riot,” *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography*, Vol. 92, No. 2 (1984), pp.131-175.

**Lunch:** Bottoms Up Pizza (Richmond, VA)

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## **20 November: The Lives of Civil War Soldiers**

**Theme:** Who were the soldiers on both sides during the Civil War and what were their peacetime backgrounds and their wartime stories? Contrary to popular stereotypes, most Union soldiers were from rural backgrounds, while not a few Confederates were from towns like Richmond. Both sides claimed to be the legitimate heirs of the struggle for independence during the American Revolution and of the enshrinement of liberty during the years of the New Republic. If the soldiers were so similar, why then did they kill each other by the thousands? Is *slavery* the answer? Is *honor* an important factor? We'll address these questions at Pamplin Park, a museum on the site of the Union breakthrough against Lee's entrenchments at Petersburg on April 2, 1865. After the breakthrough, the Confederates immediately evacuated nearby Richmond and on April 9 Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant. Pamplin Park gives us the opportunity to explore the nature of soldier life on both sides during the Civil War, from the ferocity of combat to the boredom of camp existence between battles.

### **Sites:**

Pamplin Park Military Museum (Petersburg, VA)

### **Readings:**

Joseph T. Glatthaar, “Why They Enlisted,” “Desertion” & “The Grind of War,” chapters 4, 32, & 33 from his book, *General Lee's Army: From Victory to Collapse* (2008), pp. 29-41, 408-420, & 421-441.

Scott Reynolds Nelson & Carol Sheriff, “The Male World of the Camp,” chapter 10 from their book, *A People at War: Civilians and Soldiers in America's Civil War* (2007), pp. 214-228.

**Lunch:** Hardtack & Coffee Cafe (Pamplin Park)

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## **27 November: Thanksgiving Holidays**

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## **4 December: Memory and the Civil War**

### **Theme:**

Memory is a tricky thing. Less than two days after Richmond fell to Union troops in 1865, Abraham Lincoln and his son Tad walked from Rocket's Landing at the base of Church Hill up Main Street into downtown surrounded by throngs of liberated African Americans. Regrettably, no northern photographers had reached the city, so there are no photographs of Lincoln's visit. When photographers did arrive, they mostly photographed the burned-out business district. When the National Park Service placed a bronze statue of Lincoln and Tad on the grounds of NPS Richmond headquarters at Tredegar Iron Works in 2003, protesters were kept at the gates to the place, but regaled the people in attendance with versions of the rebel yell. Jefferson Davis was born midway between the founding of Jamestown and the present. Last year marked the two-hundredth anniversary of his birth. Recently, the American Civil War Center, a private museum on the grounds of the federally-funded National Park Service headquarters at Tredegar Iron Works, agreed to accept a costly bronze statue of Jefferson Davis from the Sons of Confederate Veterans, but also warned that the statue might simply go into storage. How should Americans in the 21st century remember the Civil War? We'll take a look at a few places in Richmond that will cover aspects of the attempt there to preserve—and to manipulate—the memory of the Civil War, a process that began almost as soon as the fighting stopped in 1865.

**Sites:**

[American Civil War Center \(Richmond, VA\)](#)  
[Museum of the Confederacy \(Richmond, VA\)](#)  
[Monument Avenue \(Richmond, VA\)](#)  
[Hollywood Cemetery \(Richmond, VA\)](#)

**Readings:**

Charles Reagan Wilson, "The Religion of the Lost Cause: Ritual and Organization of the Southern Civil Religion, 1865-1920," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (1980), pp. 219-238

Tony Horwitz, "Confederates in the Attic," chapter 1 from his book, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (1998), pp. 3-17.

Nelson Lankford, "Epilogue: Blunt and Withered Laurels," Epilogue from his book, *Richmond Burning: The Last Days of the Confederate Capital* (2002), pp. 241-248.

John M. Coski, "Vindication of the Cause," chapter 9 from his book, *The Confederate Battle Flag* (2005), pp. 184-202.

Elizabeth R. Varon, "Epilogue: Van Lew's Ghost," from of her book, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy: The True Story of Elizabeth Van Lew, a Union Agent in the Heart of the Confederacy* (2003), pp. 257-261.

**Lunch:** [Bill's Barbecue \(Richmond, VA\)](#)