

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XLV, Battlefield Tour Number

Chicago, Illinois

May 1-5, 1985

35th Annual Battlefield Tour: Petersburg/Appomattox, The 1864-1865 Campaign

The Civil War Round Table has chosen the 1864/65 Campaign from Petersburg to Appomattox as the area for its 35th Annual Battlefield Tour. This year's tour features an all day, leisurely trip to Lee's surrender site at Appomattox. Not since 1960, a period of 25 years, has The Round Table returned to Appomattox.

The main tour begins on Wednesday night, May 1st, and ends Sunday afternoon, May 5th. A second and unusual feature of this year's tour is a special "extra day" tour to be held on Wednesday, May 1st, the day before the main tour begins. It will be led by Bill Mallory and Merl Sumner, and on it we will visit many unusual and rare Civil War sites in and around Richmond, Virginia.

Our bivouac for the entire tour will be the Ramada Inn in Petersburg, Virginia, conveniently located at the intersection of interstates I-95 and I-85. The Ramada Inn features luxurious accommodations, banquet rooms, the Eagles Nest restaurant, a lounge, a heated indoor pool, and plenty of free parking. When checking in (either Tuesday night, April 30th for the "extra day" tour, or Wednesday night, May 1st for the main tour), please identify yourself as a participant in The Civil War Round Table Tour and pick up a tour kit and badge, which will be distributed in the lobby of the hotel.

Our chief guide will be our close friend and life member, National Park Service Chief Research Historian, Ed Bearss. Helping Ed will be Chris Calkins, Park Historian at the Petersburg National Military Park, and Ron Wilson, who is the Park Historian at Appomattox National Park. We are fortunate and very proud to have people of this caliber and knowledge guide our tour. As is our custom, we will travel in air-conditioned, wide-windowed, modern tour buses, equipped with loud speakers, toilets, and the usual assortment of cold liquid refreshments.

On Thursday, our day will start at the Visitor's Center of the Petersburg National Military Park for an orientation of the battles and events we will be seeing as we follow the armies during the 1864/65 campaign. Afterwards, we will tour the Petersburg National Military Park with stops at Battery Five (opening battle for Petersburg), Ft. Stedman, the Crater, and City Point, plus a short visit to historic sites in Petersburg as we return to the hotel.

On Friday, the main tour will start at the Battle for the Weldon Railroad and continue generally westward to the battles of Reams Station, Peeble's Farm, Hatcher's Run, Five Forks and Ft. Gregg. The alternate tour will go to Jefferson's home, Monticello, after stopping for lunch at

Cost of tour

\$260.00 per person, double occupancy, or \$320.00, single accommodation. (Please indicate the person with whom you wish to share a room.) Transportation to and from Petersburg, Virginia is not included.

Includes: Motel room, all lunches and dinners (breakfasts are on your own), bus transportation in the field, tour kits and badges, group service tips, admission fees where required, refreshments on buses, and a non-refundable \$10.00 registration fee per person.

Extra day "Preliminary Tour" (Wednesday, May 1, 1985) cost is \$20.00. This includes bus transportation and refreshments on bus. All meals on Wednesday are on your own. Hotel reservations for Tuesday night (April 30th) cost \$26.00 for double occupancy (please indicate the person with whom you wish to share a room); a single room costs \$42.00. All fees for the extra day's tour are due with tour registration.

For Variations: portions of the tour, joining enroute, individual meetings, write or phone Registrar Leslie MacDonald, 2744 W. Rascher Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60625. Phone (312) 878-1599.

Local Civil War Round Table groups and others joining in lunches or dinners, please make reservations through the Registrar so that caterers can be notified of the number to prepare for, and so payment can be made.

the historic Michie Tavern. Dan Jordan, who is the Director of the Monticello Foundation, will be our guide.

Saturday we will leave early to follow Lee's army as it retreated to Appomattox Court House. We'll stop at Saylor's Creek before spending the afternoon at Appomattox. The day will conclude with the traditional "Fun Night," highlighted by Harold Howard, who will perform his enactment of a Confederate soldier returning to his home.

On our final day, Sunday, we will cross the James River and tour the Cold Harbor battlefield. Afterwards, we will have a special luncheon. The afternoon will be spent restfully at a cocktail party at the Confederate White House with many of our friends from the Richmond Round Table and saying "goodby" to one another. Note: we will not return to the motel; you must check out before boarding the buses in the morning. Transportation from the cocktail party to the airport will be provided.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

18 East Chestnut Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611
Phone: (312) 944-3085

Officers

President	J. Robert Ziegler
Senior Vice President	Paul I. Kliger
Vice President	William J Sullivan
Vice President	Patricia K. Sumner
Secretary	David G. St. John
Treasurer	Paul M. Klekner
Assistant Secretary	Leslie W. MacDonald
Assistant Treasurer	Richard W. McAdoo
Inspector General	Wayne J. Anderson
Commissary General	William J. Sullivan
Registrar	Leslie W. MacDonald
Newsletter Editor	David R. Richert
Assistant Editors	C. Robert Douglas Wayne J. Anderson
Contributing Editors	Richard E. Clark Marshall D. Krolick
Founding Newsletter Editor: Gil Twiss, 1954-1968	

Board of Trustees

Terms expiring in 1985: Sidney S. Bernstein, J. William Gimbel, William A. Margeson, Joseph L. Wisehart
Terms expiring in 1986: Mary J. Abroe, Martin P. Dutch, James Vlazny, Daniel R. Weinberg

1985 Tour Committee

Co-Chairmen

Marvin Sanderman, Paul I. Kliger

Committee Members

Mary J. Abroe, John B. Carter, Daniel J. Weinberg
--

Registrar

Leslie W. Mac Donald

Registrar Emeritus (1951-1984)

Margaret April

Tour Kit

Mary J. Abroe

Newsletter

Marvin Sanderman, David R. Richert

Book List

Marshall Krolick

Bus Marshalls

Marshall Krolick, Donald E. Jensen, Terry Carr, Bob Franke

Itinerary

Edwin C. Bearss, Chris Calkins, Ronald Wilson, John B. Carter, William F. Mallory, Merlin E. Sumner
--

Chief Guide

Edwin C. Bearss



Petersburg: The 1864/65 Campaign

On June 14, 1864 the Army of the Potomac began a secret crossing to the south side of the James River. It was a bold attempt to capture Petersburg, Virginia, an important railroad junction and the back door to Richmond, before General Robert E. Lee could fully grasp the situation and move the Army of Northern Virginia into the strong defensive works that defended the Confederate Capital and Petersburg to the south. Early on June 15th, all four infantry corps plus four batteries of artillery had crossed the James. Meanwhile, Grant ordered General William F.

“Baldy” Smith’s 18th Corps to move directly upon Petersburg and attack early on June 15th. To the north of the James, the Union cavalry skirmished near Harrison’s Landing, giving Lee false evidence that the Union Army planned to give him battle near that location. Lee held the bulk of his army north of the James in order to defend Richmond.

South of the James, the Confederate’s had but 3,000 troops, commanded by General Beauregard, with which to defend Petersburg against Baldy Smith’s 16,000 men. By most estimates, Petersburg should have fallen, but Smith was overly cautious and his attack merely captured Battery Five and a mile or so of the outer works. On the 18th, Lee and his main army arrived, and Grant decided that Petersburg could not be carried by assault; it would have to be invested and the railroads cut off. There would be approximately 100,000 Federals against 50,000 Confederates.

On June 22, Grant tried to extend the siege lines to the south and west by sending the 2nd Corps and the 6th Corps to cut the Weldon Railroad. Lee dispatched troops which struck the Union forces in a sharp engagement near the Jerusalem Plank Road. The Federals withdrew and the railroad was saved for a while longer, but the Jerusalem Plank Road, an important supply artery, was lost to the Confederates, and Lee was forced to stretch his defensive line.

For more than a month, the 48th Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, many of whom had been coal miners, worked at digging a 586-foot-long tunnel between the Federal and Confederate lines at Elliott’s Salient. They tunneled two branches, right and left, paralleling the Confederates’ trenches above, and filled them with 8,000 pounds of black powder. At 4:45 a.m. on July 30th the mine was exploded. About 278 Confederates were killed from the blast, which blew a hole 170 feet long, 60 to 80 feet wide, and 30 feet deep. The object was to blast a hole in the Confederate line, advance Union troops through this sudden breach, and roll up the Confederate defense line.

Men from General Ledlie’s division were to charge first, followed by the other divisions, including the 4th (Colored) division, of the Union’s 9th Corps. But Union preparations for the attack were horribly planned and miserably executed. Ladders were not available for the troops to scale the walls of their own intrenchments. When they finally improvised by placing their bayonets between the logs in the works and using them as steps, they were not prepared for what they would witness at the “Crater,” and they were struck dumb with astonishment. Soon no one was moving forward and brigades of men were gaping and milling in and around the Crater. These delays proved fatal. In a short time the Confederates recovered and counterattacks halted the Federal advance. By early afternoon, the Federal troops were ordered back. The “Battle of the Crater” as the disaster was to be called, cost the North 4,000 casualties to 1,500 for the South.

On August 18th, Warren’s 5th Corp moved out to the west and occupied over a mile of the Weldon Railroad, taking the area around Globe Tavern and Blick’s Station, before turning northward and advancing toward Petersburg. The next day, A. P. Hill’s Corps counterattacked, and drove Warren’s men back toward Globe Tavern. But the Union held onto the important railroad. Lee’s lines were stretched again, and he lost a vital supply line.

From September 29 to October 2nd, General Meade pressed the Union 5th and 9th Corps to the southwest in an effort to get around the Confederates and capture the South Side Railroad. A. P. Hill counterattacked and the 4-day engagement became known as the “Battle of Peeble’s

Farm." The fighting ended with the Federal's forming a new line forward on the Squirrel Level Road, thus extending the Southern lines another 3 miles to the west.

On October 27th, the Union Army moved once more to the left toward the Boydton Plank Road and Hatcher's Run near Burgess' Mill, about 12 miles west and south of Petersburg, again aiming to cut the South Side Railroad. The Federal's were unsuccessful due in part to poor coordination and co-operation and they had to retire. As a result, the vital Boydton Plank Road and the South Side Railroad remained in Southern control for the winter.

After over 3 months of relative inactivity, on February 7, 1865, Grant ordered the 5th and 2nd Corps plus cavalry to push westward to secure the Boydton Plank Road and to push on to Hatcher's Run. However, the 5th Corps was forced back when Confederate reinforcements came in, and the battle ended with the Federals abandoning the Boydton Plank Road; but they were able to fortify their new lines to Hatcher's Run at the Vaughan Road Crossing. The Confederates now had to defend a line lengthened to 37 miles and had to do the job with only 46,000 remaining troops.

On March 25th, the Confederates made their last offensive move; their target was Fort Stedman. Here the picket lines were only 50 yards apart; and it lay near the Federal's major supply line, the City Point Railroad. Almost half of the Confederate forces were used in the attack. At first the attack went well as the Federal pickets were quickly silenced and the Fort, with its defenders surprised, was easily captured. But then things started to go wrong; like most of the Confederate attacks late in the war, they did not have the manpower to continue the assault. The attack lost its momentum, giving time for the Union troops to rally and drive Gordon's men back into Fort Stedman. By 7:45 pm the Federal line was completely restored.

The end to the siege came soon. General Sheridan had returned from the Shenandoah Valley and Grant immediately put him in command of the entire Union left. Sheridan soon pushed his forces northwest toward Five Forks, located about 18 miles southwest of Petersburg. The Confederates hastily threw up fortifications and prepared to resist, but Sheridan's attack crushed the defenders. Now Grant's forces were near the vital South Side Railroad. General Lee advised President Davis and the Confederate government to flee Richmond.

On April 2nd, Grant ordered a general assault all along the line. The Confederates were routed and came streaming back across the Appomattox River in retreat. While trying to rally his men, Lt. General A. P. Hill was killed. By noon the entire outer line was overrun with the exception of Forts Gregg and Whitworth, which held open Lee's escape route to the north. Desperate, heroic Southern resistance by a few hundred soldiers held these two forts long enough to enable most of Lee's army to escape.

The rapid, forced march retreat, which was to end seven days later at Appomattox Court House, was on.

The Retreat to Appomattox

In the afternoon of April 2, 1865, General Lee issued orders to evacuate Petersburg and for the defenders north of the James River to retreat through Richmond. President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet fled westward.

The retreat began, with Amelia Court House, about 40 miles west, as the concentration point. Lee hoped to unite
(continued on page 4)

Tour Schedule

Variations in schedule will be announced at lunch, dinner, or on the bus. Times are approximate.

Wednesday, May 1, 1985 (Preliminary Tour)

Breakfast on your own, as on each day of the tour.

8:30 a.m.—Board buses at Ramada Inn, Petersburg

12:30 p.m.—Lunch (on your own)

6:00 p.m.—Return to hotel (dinner on your own)

Thursday, May 2, 1985 (Regular Tour)

8:30 a.m.—Board buses

9:00 a.m.—Visitors' Center, Battery Five, Ft. Stedman, Crater

12:30 p.m.—Lunch

1:30 p.m.—City Point

3:30 p.m.—Historic points City of Petersburg

5:00 p.m.—Return to hotel

6:30 p.m.—Command Post

7:30 p.m.—Dinner, Speaker: Dr. John B. Carter on "The Winter Campaigns—Hatcher's Run to Five Forks."

Friday, May 3, 1985

Regular Tour

8:30 a.m.—Board buses

8:45 a.m.—Ft. Davis, Battles of Weldon R.R., Reams Station, Peeble's Farm

12:30 p.m.—Lunch

1:30 p.m.—Battles of Hatcher's Run, Boydton Plank Rd, Five Forks, Sutherland's Station, Ft. Gregg, and site of A.P. Hill's death.

6:00 p.m.—Return to hotel

Alternate Tour

8:30 a.m.—Board Buses to Monticello

11:00 a.m.—Historic Michie Tavern

11:30 a.m.—Lunch at Michie Tavern

1:00 p.m.—Tour of Monticello, Dan Jordan, guide

3:30 p.m.—Leave Monticello

6:00 p.m.—Return to hotel

Combined Group

7:00 p.m.—Command Post

7:30 p.m.—Dinner, Speaker: Edwin C. Bearss

Saturday, May 4, 1985

7:45 a.m.—Board buses

9:00 a.m.—Amelia Court House

10:00 a.m.—Saylor's Creek

11:30 a.m.—Lunch

12:30 p.m.—High Bridge, Cumberland's Church (these stops only if time permits)

2:00 p.m.—Appomattox Court House; Free time

3:30 p.m.—Surrender site presentation

3:45 p.m.—Appomattox Battlefields

4:45 p.m.—Leave Appomattox

6:30 p.m.—Return to hotel

7:30 p.m.—Command Post

8:00 p.m.—Dinner, Fun Night

Sunday, May 5, 1985

Check out of motel.

9:00 a.m.—Board buses

10:00 a.m.—Cold Harbor Battlefield

12:30 a.m.—Lunch

2:00 p.m.—Afternoon cocktail party at Confederate White House

Armchair Generalship



by Marshall D. Krolick

The literature of these campaigns is so vast that any bibliography must be very selective. Emphasis has been placed on more recent books and those more readily available.

Campaigns of 1864 and 1865 generally

- Catton, Bruce. *Grant Takes Command*.
Catton, Bruce. *Never Call Retreat* (Vol. III of the Centennial History of the Civil War).
Catton, Bruce. *A Stillness at Appomattox*.
Foote, Shelby. *The Civil War: A Narrative*, Vol. III.
Freeman, Douglas S. *Lee's Lieutenants*, Vol. III.
Freeman, Douglas S. *R.E. Lee*, Vol. IV.
Fuller, J.F.C. *The Generalship of Ulysses S. Grant*.
Grant, Ulysses S. *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, Vol. II.
Humphreys, Andrew A. *The Vir. Campaign of '64 and '65*.
Johnson and Buel. *Battles and Leaders*, Vol. IV.
Miers, Earl Schenck. *The Last Campaign*

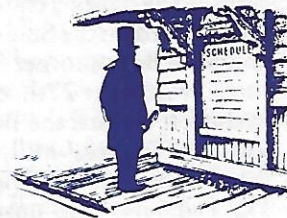
Cold Harbor and Petersburg

- Cullen, Joseph P. "The Battle of Cold Harbor", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Nov., 1963.
Cullen, Joseph P. "The Siege of Petersburg", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Aug., 1970; special issue.
Dowdey, Clifford. *Lee's Last Campaign*.
Klein, Frederick. "Lost Opportunity at Petersburg", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Aug., 1966.
Longacre, Edward. "The Petersburg Follies", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Jan., 1980.
Lykes, Richard W. *Campaign For Petersburg*. (National Park Service History Series).
Lykes, Richard W. *Petersburg National Military Park*. (National Park Service Handbook).
Pleasants, Henry. *Inferno at Petersburg*.
Sommers, Richard. "The Battle No One Wanted", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Aug., 1975.
Sommers, Richard. *Richmond Redeemed*.
U.S. War Dept. *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. XXXVI.
Wert, Jeffrey. "One Great Regret: Cold Harbor", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Jan., 1980.

Appomattox

- Calkins, Christopher M. *Thirty-Six Hours Before Appomattox*.
Chamberlain, Joshua L. *The Passing of the Armies*.
Davis, Burke. *To Appomattox*.
Davis, William C. "The Campaign to Appomattox", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, April, 1975; special issue.
Hatcher, Edmund N. *The Last Four Weeks of the War*.
Kurtz, Henry I. "Five Forks—The South's Waterloo", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Oct., 1964.
Luvaas, Jay and Joseph P. Cullen. *Appomattox Court House* (National Park Service Handbook).
Mahone, William. "On the Road to Appomattox", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Jan., 1971.
Mitchell, Joseph B. "The Battle of Saylor's Creek", *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Oct., 1965.
Rodick, Burleigh C. *Appomattox: The Last Campaign*.
Schaff, Morris. *The Sunset of the Confederacy*.
Stern, Philip V.D. *An End to Valor*.
Tremain, Henry E. *Last Hours of Sheridan's Cavalry*.
U. S. War Dept. *Official Records*, Series I, Vol. XLVI.
Wise, John S. *The End of an Era*.

BULLETIN BOARD



On the Tour: Please be prompt in boarding the buses at the appropriate time each morning to allow maximum time for touring. A bus marshal will be on each bus to help you. If you plan a side excursion, join a car group, or for any other reason will not be on the bus, you must notify your bus marshal so that buses are not detained waiting for you.

(continued from page 3)

his army with General Joseph E. Johnston, who was retreating northward ahead of Sherman's army in North Carolina. On April 3, Lee's troops struggled westward toward Amelia Court House. General Grant's troops pursued on a somewhat parallel route heading toward Burkeville to intercept Lee and keep him from turning southward to effect a junction with Johnston.

On April 4th there was skirmishing at Tabernacle Church and Amelia Court House. The next day saw Lee's entire army assembled at Amelia Court House, but the expected supplies were not there and Lee's men had to scrounge the neighborhood for food. During this delay, Sheridan arrived at Jetersville on the Danville Railroad and blocked Lee's use of that route to North Carolina.

Lee was forced to continue his retreat westward. The last major battle between the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia occurred on April 6th at Saylor's Creek. A gap in the Confederate's retreating column occurred in the bottom land of the creek. Lee, with Longstreet and Mahone at Rice's Station, was unaware of the split between their columns and those of Anderson and Ewell. The Federals quickly seized upon the opportunity.

The Southerners were pressed back, attempted to countercharge, but failed in the face of overwhelming Union artillery fire. Federal flanks closed in toward the middle and Ewell was forced to surrender. Farther north along Saylor's Creek at Lockett's Farm (or Double Bridges), Gordon's rearguard was heavily engaged by Humphrey's II Corps at Saylor's Creek. Some 8,000 Confederates surrendered, an estimated one third of the men Lee had when he left Richmond. Federal losses were about 1,180.

On April 7th, Grant began his correspondence with Lee. The Confederates repulsed an attack near Farmville and crossed the Appomattox River. The Southerners attempted in vain to burn the bridges. Skirmishes continued as Lee's army moved westward during the 8th. By now, Sheridan's cavalry, with infantry behind them, were able to move west and north to block Lee at Appomattox Court House. Behind Lee was Meade with the Federal II and VI Corps. Thus, what remained of the Army of Northern Virginia was about to be squeezed between vastly superior Federal forces from all directions. That night Lee held his final council of war.

At dawn, on April 9th, the Confederates attacked Sheridan's troops near Appomattox station with the hope of forcing a passage. At first they were successful, but Federal infantry arrived and the road was blocked. Escape was impossible. That afternoon, Lee met with Grant in the home of Wilmer McLean and surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia.