

The Mosby Heritage Area
SAMPLER



*A Motoring Tour in the Historic
Northern Virginia Countryside*



*The Mosby Heritage
Area Association*

with

NOVA Parks

The Mosby Heritage Area

The Mosby Heritage Area was created from the grass roots in 1995 by a variety of historical, preservation, and conservation organizations as well as interested individuals. Obtaining resolutions of support from the county boards of supervisors and town councils within the proposed heritage area, they produced a model for the nation of a new tool for historic preservation and stewardship education.

The heritage area covers some 1,600 square miles, encompassing parts of the Virginia counties of Loudoun, Fauquier, Prince William, Clarke, and Warren. The Mosby Heritage Area features heart-catching "lay of the land," indigenous architecture, handsome farms, distinctive speech, historical villages and small towns, a network of miles of small country roads including many still unpaved, the Shenandoah River and the world famous gentle Blue Ridge and its misty foothills.

From our multi-cultural 18th century roots brought by Quaker, German, Scots-Irish, and Tidewater English settlers through the years of serving as a key trunk of the Underground Railroad, from the cavalry battles and guerrilla warfare in our region during the Civil War to the creation of freedmen's villages and the nation's hunt country, this historic landscape is a key piece of America's history.

Yet it is not just those stories and the treasured landscape on which they occurred that make the Mosby Heritage Area special. It is also the years of individuals, non-profits organizations, and local governments working together to leave future generations some of the best preserved 19th century landscape in America. It shows what civic effort can do for a historic landscape, even near a large metropolitan area like Washington, D.C.

The non-profit **Mosby Heritage Area Association** administers the heritage area. Its mission is to promote and support the preservation of the region's historic, cultural, and scenic resources through programming, publications, and advocacy.

Learn more about us at www.mosbyheritagearea.org. We are a non-profit membership organization-join!

NOVA Parks

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Mill, and Mt. Defiance. Individually, they each have
stories to tell of their 19th and 20th century histories.
Yet together, they form a narrative of the 1863 Cavalry
Battles of Aldie, Middleburg and Upperville—a crucial
time in our American Civil War just before the Battle
of Gettysburg. NOVA Parks invites you to visit these
and other of our park sites, and learn the history of this
rich area of Virginia.

For more information, visit

www.novaparks.com.

Eastern Starting Point

(Refer to map on pg. 17)

1. Mt. Zion Church



Mt. Zion Historic Park, the entry to the Mosby Heritage Area, sits beside a Rt. 50 roundabout at 40309 John S. Mosby Highway, a mile east of Gilbert's Corner, where Rt. 50 intersects with Rt. 15.

Built in 1851, this historic yet simple brick church with no steeple is typical of the country churches in the Mosby Heritage Area. Just east of here, a battalion of New York and Massachusetts cavalry under Major William Forbes paused on this turnpike at the Samuel Skinner farm late on the afternoon of Wednesday, July 6, 1864 to water the horses and have coffee. They were on the third day of an expedition to find the Confederate guerilla Mosby. Earlier that day, as Forbes had left Leesburg, Mosby's Rangers followed behind them. Guessing their movements, the Rangers used a different route that put them on this same road east of Forbe's location. Using a mountain howitzer and cavalry charge, Mosby's men furiously attacked west along the old turnpike late in the afternoon. "Mosby and his rangers were upon us, swooping down like Indians, yelling like fiends, discharging their pistols

with fearful rapidity,” a Union officer recalled. The speed of the attack enveloped the Union force, pushing them back to Mt. Zion Church. Here the Federals made a stand, but they were totally crushed, losing 14 killed, 37 wounded, and 55 captured of 150 men. Today in the old church graveyard there are markers for the Union troopers killed that day. There are also two Mosby Rangers buried here—43rd Battalion of Virginia Cavalry—but they were not victims of this engagement. Just beyond the stone walls of the cemetery in the woods are two worn stones, all that now mark Mt. Zion's slave and free black cemetery. African-Americans sat in the church balcony.

The church served as a hospital several times during the War. It was also used to imprison civilian supporters of Mosby from the area in 1865. Occasionally Mt. Zion Church is open, but you can always look in the windows, read the interpretive signs, and wander the grounds and graveyard during daylight hours. The Church is a property of NOVA Parks and features many weekend programs between April and November.

2. Aldie and Aldie Mill

Go 270 degrees at Mt. Zion's circle to head west on Rt. 50. Drive 1.9 miles to Aldie—just across the old stone bridge is the brick Aldie Mill on the left.

This 1807 two-wheeled gristmill was built by Charles Fenton Mercer, who also laid out the historic village of Aldie at the juncture of what were then three new turnpikes. Mercer was not only a businessman, but a Whig Congressman as well. He was very active in the “colonization movement” to free slaves and send them to Africa. At the time of the Civil War, Captain John Moore, then owner of the mill, opposed secession. The fighting overtook him anyway. On Monday, March 2, 1863, John S. Mosby and 16 Rangers attacked 59 troopers of the 1st Vermont Cavalry

as they watered their horses and made coffee at the mill.



Aldie Mill.

Mosby was then in pursuit of another Federal cavalry unit who had been searching for him in Middleburg, and in the process, had arrested and harassed innocent civilians. Mosby came into Aldie at full gallop. The Federals at the mill broke and ran. Some hid in the mill's flour bins. Mosby captured 19 of these flour-covered soldiers who looked like ghosts themselves when discovered!

The restored Aldie Mill operates today as it did in the early 19th century, when owner Charles Fenton Mercer had the latest technology installed using the Oliver Evans wholly automated system. Also on the property are the original smaller country mill for custom grinding, a granary, and store. Walk around; interpretive signs will tell you more.

Owned by NOVA Parks, the mill is open for tours and grinding demonstrations mid-April through mid-November on Saturdays and Sundays. There is a visitor center with exhibits. Mercer's 19th century home sits on the hill across Rt. 50, and the original miller's home is behind the mill on private property just across the millrace. The mill village of Aldie has historic homes, shops, and churches all along Rt. 50 to explore.

3. Snickersville Turnpike AND A CIVIL WAR MONUMENT TO THE 1ST MASSACHUSETTS CAVALRY



From Aldie Mill, turn left (west) onto Rt. 50, and drive through the village of Aldie. After 0.6 mile, as you go down a slight hill at the west end of the village, look for Rt. 734, the Snickersville Turnpike, which will be on your right. Head up this old road 1.3 miles to the Civil War marker on your right.

The old Snickersville Turnpike is a rolling 1810 road through horse country, running from Aldie to Snickersville, now renamed Bluemont. With original bridges and near original width, only the macadam has changed from crushed, rolled stone to asphalt. The signature Mosby Heritage Area stone walls grace its sides. It is easy to see why it is designated a Virginia Byway! On a bend in the road 1.3 miles from Rt. 50, you will see on your right an interpretive marker telling of the Battle of Aldie as well as a monument to the First Massachusetts Cavalry that was engaged at this location. On a stifling hot June 17, 1863 Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart took on General Alfred Pleasanton's Union cavalry in a battle along this road and stretching down into Aldie. When you stop, be sure to carefully cross the old turnpike to take in the view of the Bull Run Mountains.

4. Dover

Continuing briefly on the Snickersville Turnpike for another 0.3 mile, turn left onto Cobb House Road, Rt. 629. This dirt road goes 1.1 miles to the tiny village of Dover on Rt. 50. There, turn right.

Unpaved by choice as are many of the old roads in the Mosby Heritage Area, this winding road works its way through farms and forest to Dover, a large brick house, small mill, and intersection along old Rt. 50. Mosby and his men would have known the road, as they so often used the back roads for scouting Federal troops, who usually traveled on the larger, paved Rt. 50 (Ashby Gap Turnpike).

Looking today much as it did, Dover was named for the large brick house on the south (left) side of Rt. 50. It was used often as a meeting place for Mosby Rangers prior to a raid. The most famous Dover “rendezvous” took place on the sleety, snowy Sunday afternoon of March 8, 1863. The raid that followed resulted in the capture of Union General Edwin H. Stoughton, at Fairfax Courthouse to the east. Washington, D.C. found it hard to rest easy after a defending Union general was stolen from his very bed! Poet Herman Melville would write of Mosby, “as glides in seas the shark, rides Mosby through green dark.” You can well imagine the shark on this road.



Continue 0.8 miles west on Rt. 50 and look for Oakham on the right in a grove of trees.

Oakham Farm

Oakham Farm was owned by the very secessionist Hamilton Rodgers family. Rodgers was instrumental in forming the Loudoun Artillery, among other feats. The Hamilton women were said to be among the region's prettiest. This may explain why Confederate cavalry General J.E.B. Stuart's post-Christmas raid from Fredericksburg into Northern Virginia ended here on December 29, 1862! The morning after a fine evening's rollicking festivities, Stuart's top scout, John Singleton Mosby, proposed that he remain here behind Union lines with a small detachment of cavalry for purposes of reconnaissance and guerilla warfare. Stuart agreed, but gave Mosby initially just nine cavalymen for this "special operation." The "Gray Ghost" soon built on that. This is the birthplace of the so-called "Mosby's Confederacy."

5. St. Stephen's Catholic Church

Exactly 2.0 miles further along, you will see a sign for St. Stephen's on the right side of the highway, at the intersection with Sam Fred Road. The church is a short distance up this road on the left.

This pretty little church was built near Middleburg when President John F. Kennedy and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy began to come to this area in 1961 to enjoy its beauty and equestrian pursuits. The closest Roman Catholic Church at that time was in Loudoun's county seat at Leesburg. The Kennedys initially rented "Glen Ora" near Middleburg, and then had "Wexford" built near Atoka to the west. Both "Wexford" and this church were completed in 1963. The Kennedy family enjoyed only one glorious weekend at "Wexford"—in November, 1963. Several days after, the President was assassinated. Still, many famous pictures of their time here survive—and so does the church, which continues to serve the Catholic community in the area. Jackie Kennedy later returned to the Middleburg area many times to ride, foxhunt, and visit friends.



*St. Stephen's with added stairs and portico, 2008;
JFK leaving St. Stephen's after mass, October 27, 1963 (inset)*

6. The Lorman Chancellor House **MIDDLEBURG**

On Rt. 50 again, coming into Middleburg, 0.2 mile from Sam Fred Road, you will see a large stone house with brown shutters and a cream-trimmed veranda on your left, at the near corner of South Jay Street.



The Lorman Chancellor House.

At the time of the Civil War, Lorman Chancellor, the Mayor of Middleburg, lived here. With the town being regularly searched from stem to stern by Union troops looking for Mosby, it is certain that Mayor Chancellor and his fellow townsmen had a difficult time. In

early 1863, shortly after Mosby began operating in the area, a petition was sent begging him to move his operations elsewhere lest the town be burned. Mosby refused, and the Mayor supported him in this. Here, at Mayor Chancellor's home, Mosby enjoyed Sunday dinner before heading on his most famous raid to Fairfax Courthouse, March 8, 1863. Said Mosby to the Mayor before leaving for the Ranger rendezvous at Dover, "I shall mount the stars tonight or sink lower than the plummet ever sounded." Chancellor's support for Mosby eventually got him arrested.

7. The Red Fox Inn

MIDDLEBURG

Continue on the main street of Middleburg (Rt. 50) several hundred yards and you will come to the small town's only stoplight. At the light on the right near corner is the ancient stone hostelry currently known as the Red Fox Inn, a veritable symbol of Middleburg and Virginia Hunt Country. Turn right here onto North Madison Street, and park along the street as close as possible to the inn.



The Red Fox Inn, Middleburg.

The Red Fox, a good stopping point for "victuals or libation," was "Beveridge's Hotel" in 1863. Even then it was said to be one of Virginia's oldest continuously run inns. Here, on Wednesday, June 17, 1863, Mosby met with Confederate

cavalry chief General J.E.B. Stuart to share crucial intelligence. Beginning that day and lasting until June 21, Stuart's cavalry would fight off repeated efforts by Union General Alfred Pleasonton's cavalry to force their way west to Ashby's Gap, where Rt. 50 crosses the Blue Ridge. Pleasonton had to know where Lee's Army was. Of course, we know—on the way to Pennsylvania and Gettysburg. The resulting five-day running fight that began at Aldie constitutes the second largest cavalry battle in the history of the western hemisphere (Brandy Station was the largest).

Beside the handsome old inn on North Madison Street is a small "island" with a Virginia Civil War Trails sign telling of Middleburg's Civil War experiences. You will see a number of other similar signs in the area telling of the 1863 fighting. Across from the island is "the Pink Box," Middleburg's visitor center. Middleburg has many old homes, restaurants, and shops to visit. It has a fine historic cemetery off South Jay Street on the east end. For many, Middleburg is the heart of the Mosby Heritage Area and of Virginia Hunt Country.

Rolling Virginia Hunt Country

You will want to leave Middleburg on North Madison Street, passing the brick Middleburg Elementary School. This street soon becomes Foxcroft Road, Rt. 626, heading out into Loudoun County's classic Hunt Country. You will go 6.3 winding miles to Unison Road, where you will turn left and come into the village of Unison.

Keep your eyes peeled for riders, deer, Range Rovers, horse vans, and above all, the exhilaratingly sharp turns! This old road passes Glenwood Park on the right after 1.4 miles (home of the Middleburg Races), goes over meandering Goose Creek with its sharp sides at 0.9 miles further, then goes by Foxcroft School (for girls) another 1.4 miles on the right. It goes through the tiny crossroads village of Pot House, known well to Mosby's men, then past a number of handsome farms. You will cross St. Louis Road, slow down to go over a one-lane bridge, and then finally intersect with Unison Road. There, turn left; the pristine Civil War-era village of Unison awaits you.

8. The village of Unison



Brief parking can be had at the brick Unison Methodist Church at the far end of this tiny village on the left. Please do not park here during services.

Unison was the village of "Union" in 1861 when the Civil War began, but since the locals voted 150-0 for secession, some thought a name change might be in order. On November 2, 1862 war with all its horror arrived in the village. The armies were moving again after a six-week pause following the bloody battle of Antietam in Maryland. Union General Alfred Pleasonton's cavalry pushed south that day through the village ahead of McClellan's infantry, and Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart's mounted and dismounted cavalymen and "flying artillery" desperately fought to stop or slow them. Fighting on horseback was heavy in the fields behind the Methodist Church, with artillery shells from Southern cannon coming from the high ground to the south (right) of the church. This 1830s church inevitably became a hospital for the casualties of that day. Graffiti from soldiers hospitalized there still can be seen in the second floor balcony. Five days after the battle, a wounded Pennsylvania soldier wrote on a wall near a front window, "In some lone hour of bliss, when sorrows are forgot, then cast a happy glance at this, and read 'forget me not.'" Today Unison is a National Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.

9. Bloomfield

AND THE EBENEZER CHURCHES



The Ebenezer Churches.

Turning right from the church parking lot at Unison, drive north 0.15 mile back to the Unison Store. Take the left there, Bloomfield Road, and go 2.5 miles through handsome farm county to Airmont Road, Rt. 719, where there is a “T” intersection. There, at the tiny historic village of Bloomfield, turn right.

Mosby's Rangers frequently came through Bloomfield after a rendezvous to the south at Upperville or Rector's Crossroads, then headed northwest to Snickers Gap to cross the Blue Ridge into the Shenandoah Valley where fighting was heavy in the late summer and fall of 1864.

Go 0.6 mile north from Bloomfield on Airmont Road (Rt. 719) to the two small unsteeped Ebenezer Churches behind a stone wall on your left. Drive up the dirt lane to the churches. Park, taking care not to block the driveway.

The two Ebenezer Churches (1765 on left, 1855 on right) came as a result of an 1850s church split. The older stone church is one of the oldest Baptist churches still standing in the region. These historic churches are used now for weddings and for two annual church services. Look in the windows (for the white church, look in the right

side windows)! Be sure to walk through the old cemetery to the left of the smaller church.

There is a wonderful Mosby connection here, too. Early on the chilly, starry morning of Friday, October 14, 1864, some 85 Mosby Rangers had waited in a railroad cut just west of Duffields Station near Harpers Ferry. Their objective was to overturn a Baltimore & Ohio Railroad train and rob it, thereafter tying up more Federal troops in guarding the railroad. After some experimentation, the Rangers loosened the rails just so, then waited. The west-bound train came on schedule. In the words of Ranger James Williamson, "*the engine performed the turn-over trick quite to our most sanguine expectations.*" Shortly after, the locomotive's boiler exploded. As planned, the partisan rangers robbed the passengers and looted the train. On one car, German immigrants going to the West refused to debark. Only when the Rangers began to burn the train did these terrified passengers leave. One might wonder what they thought of America! Lining up the passengers before leaving, Mosby told them, "*General Stevenson will not guard this railroad and I am determined to make him perform his duty!*" When the Rangers did leave, they left with the train's most important cargo: a valise that had been carried by two U.S. Army paymasters containing some \$172,000 in "*greenbacks*" to be paid to Union troops. This would certainly be a blow to Union morale!



View from Ebenezer Church.

Here by these handsome side-by-side Ebenezer Churches, Rangers who had participated in the raid gathered on Saturday morning October 15, 1864. Dividing up the loot, each Ranger received about \$2100—a huge sum then—and their Federal greenbacks soon oiled the local economy of “*Mosby’s Confederacy*.” Mosby himself would not take any of the money, so his men purchased him a fine horse at Oatlands Plantation near Leesburg. [You passed it if you came south from Leesburg to begin the tour.] “*Coquette*” soon became Colonel Mosby’s favorite ride.

Newstead Farm

AND MOUNT WEATHER

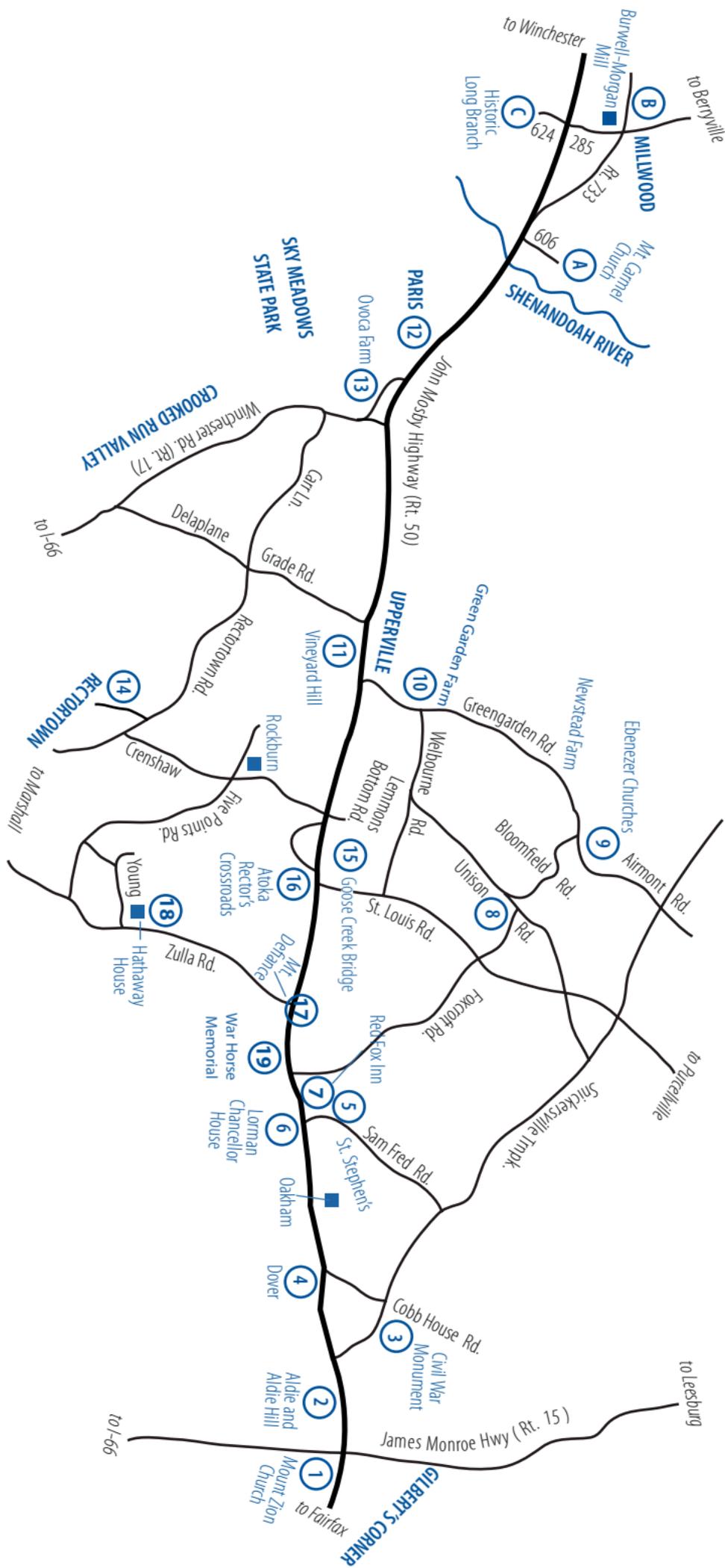
Turn right out of the church yard back onto Airmont Road, Rt. 719, returning to Bloomfield. Continue on through the village, and at 1.6 miles south on the right, behind the dark colored fencing on your right, you will see Newstead Farm, followed by several more horse farms.

Here at the Newstead Farm retired Genuine Risk, the 1980 Kentucky Derby winner raised by Bert and Diana Firestone at Catoctin Stud, their other Loudoun County farm near Waterford. The Mosby Heritage Area has long been horse country. There



is a nice view of the Blue Ridge beyond to the west. The configuration of buildings atop the mountain constitute the only

visible part of “Mount Weather,” the Federal government’s huge west-of-Washington underground complex. Rumor has it that the government would go here in time of nuclear disaster. If you watch closely, helicopters sometimes fly right into the mountain; at the last second a huge door opens to admit them. It’s been a cause of local gossip since construction began in the 1940s! Newstead Farm is privately owned; please respect their privacy. We suggest you don’t even go near Mount Weather!



10. Greengarden Farm

A MOSBY “SAFEHOUSE”



Continue south 1.6 miles on Airmont Road, Rt. 719, until it becomes a gravel lane known as “Greengarden Road.” It may be bumpy, but we think heading 1.5 miles further south on this old road is worth it when you see Greengarden Farm. This privately-owned farm sits on your right atop a little rise, at #22439, up a tree-lined private drive. Pull over with your flashers on, and look up the drive toward this handsome antebellum home.

Greengarden was the home of Major Dolly Richards, who commanded one of two battalions of Mosby’s Rangers in 1864-65. His home near Upperville was a “safe house”—a hiding place and billet—for the Rangers. Here, on the frigid night of Saturday, February 18, 1865, Federal cavalry surrounded the house and forced Richards and several other rangers to dive beneath a first floor closet’s floorboards, a pre-arranged hiding place. Richards lost a new uniform to the “Yankees” but then went on to lead a brutal counterattack against the same Union force at Mount Carmel Church in Clarke County, 5 miles west over Ashby’s Gap, which you can visit at Optional Clarke County Stop A. The home is now a private residence; please respect their privacy.

11. The Vineyard Hill fight

Continue on Greengarden Road, Rt. 719, over the creek 0.7 mile out to the John S. Mosby Highway, Route 50. There, turn right onto the highway and travel 0.3 mile until you see a Virginia Civil War Trails sign on the left, just as you come to Upperville. It is near a service station. Turn left into the small circular dirt drive and park by the Virginia Civil War Trails wayside exhibit.

From this vantage point on Upperville's "Vineyard Hill," you look east on fields over which masses of Federal cavalymen charged on the afternoon of Sunday, June 21, 1863. Where you stand, General J.E.B. Stuart's Confederate cavalry, mounted and dismounted, waited. When the firing began, it was part of the last desperate effort by General Alfred Pleasonton's Union units to force Ashby's Gap three miles west on the Blue Ridge. How else to see what General Lee was up to on the other side during these tense days just before Gettysburg? The Virginia Civil War Trails signs will give you a feel for the fierce fighting at this location on that brutally hot June afternoon. Union troops did take this field, but further fighting west of town brought the day to a close without them crossing over Ashby's Gap.

Upperville

Turn left out of Stop 11 back onto Rt. 50. Go slowly through the historic village of Upperville.



Upperville (cont.)

Then continue 3.1 miles to Federal Street, Rt. 759, a left just beyond the stoplight at Rts. 50 & 17.

Dating to the 1780s, Upperville is one of Virginia's most handsome small towns, featuring a veritable feast of historic Virginia architecture. You will note the English pub on the right, the tiny post office, the state's smallest library, and the striking Norman architecture of Trinity Episcopal Church. This was built in 1961 with substantial help from the late Paul Mellon, philanthropist and nearby resident. Mosby's men frequently had their rendezvous in Upperville. "Yankees" often came looking for them!

OPTIONAL CLARKE COUNTY MINI-LOOP—

“LAND OF THE TUCKAHOES”

-IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO TAKE THIS 10-MILE WESTERN DETOUR, GO ON TO STOP 12-

OPTIONAL CLARKE COUNTY STOP A:

Mount Carmel Church

Just over 3 miles west of Upperville, you will come to a stoplight at Rt. 17. Go through this intersection when the light permits, rising up Ashby's Gap, and over the lovely Blue Ridge into the Shenandoah Valley, continuing 1.6 miles to Mount Carmel Road, Rt. 606, on the right. Go up this steep road a short distance, and on your right you will see the simple clapboard Mount Carmel Church. Park here.

On the wooded low cliffs beside the church parking lot, Mosby's Rangers had gathered in the snow on the near-disastrous night of February 18-19, 1865. Major Dolly Richards and several other Rangers had just escaped with their lives at Greengarden. Now,

with additional Rangers gathered, it was payback time for the Union cavalry headed up this byway to cross the Shenandoah at Shepherd's Ford. Ranger J. Marshall Crawford wrote of the result when the Rangers charged out of their hiding place:

“The enemy, seeing with what resolution the charge was made, and imagining that 5000 guerrillas were after them, broke and retreated by the road they came. It was a narrow defile through the mountains, just wide enough for one wagon to pass... When they broke and got onto this road, Richard's men closed in on them and the slaughter was terrible. Along this road, clean down... [to] the river, were strewn the dead [and] wounded... It was indeed a sickening sight. The snow this entire distance was crimson with... the dead and wounded. Every man...[the Yankees] had captured... was retaken, besides one hundred horses and mules they had taken from the citizens.”

--RANGER J. MARSHALL CRAWFORD



Mount Carmel Church.

OPTIONAL CLARKE COUNTY STOP B: Millwood



Turning left out of the church parking lot, return to Rt. 50, then turn right, heading towards the Shenandoah River. You will cross the beautiful Shenandoah on a wide bridge with good river visibility. Shortly after crossing the river, you will come to Millwood Road, Rt. 723, on your right, signposted “Millwood.” Take this pretty drive about 2.4 miles into Millwood, a tiny Clarke County village where you will first see a small stone mill at a curve on your right, then after an intersection, a larger green and stone mill on your left. The latter is the Burwell-Morgan Mill, your initial Millwood destination. There is a parking lot beside the mill at Tannery Lane; park there.

The Burwell-Morgan Mill was a business jointly owned by Nathaniel Burwell and Revolutionary War General Daniel Morgan in the late 1700s. General Morgan’s house, Saratoga, is up Millwood Road—left out of the mill parking lot 1.5 miles on the left—but it is not visible from the road. Burwell’s famous home, Carter Hall, is just up the road opposite the mill, Bishop Meade Road, Route 255 North. As with Saratoga, it cannot be viewed from the road. Burwell was of the Tidewater aristocracy—the Tuckahoes, as they were known locally—having moved west to the Shenandoah Valley because of soil exhaustion in eastern Virginia, and the need for fine soil to replace tobacco agriculture with that of

wheat. Southeastern Clarke County had a veritable colony of Tuckahoes.

This ancient mill, built in 1782, can be visited from May through October from 10:00 to 5:00 on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, and noon to 5:00 on Sunday. You can see them actually grind grain on Saturdays. The mill is operated by the Clarke County Historical Association. Find out more about the mill at www.clarkehistory.org. Should the mill be closed, walk around; see if you can figure out how the mill works! You will see Brookside, a gray house behind the mill, once used by the Carters before Carter Hall was built. Just below is the miller's home. Both are private.

There are picnic tables near the stream Spout Run behind the mill. Should you wish to picnic, venerable Locke's Store across the street has sandwiches, snacks, cold drinks, and ice cream. When you are done at the mill, walk up the street (left out of the mill parking lot) to the second house on the left.

Clarke's Hotel. This is the Clarke House, or “Clarke’s Hotel” as it was known during the Civil War. Here, on April 18 and again on April 20, 1865, more than a week after General Lee surrendered his army at Appomattox, Colonel John Mosby met with Union General Winfield S. Hancock to discuss surrendering Mosby’s Rangers. At the last moment on April 20th, Mosby and his men “spooked,” suspecting a trap. They did the famous Mosby “skedaddle”—bolting every which way as fast as they could go. The next day, Friday April 21, 1865, Mosby’s Rangers met in a drizzle at Salem (now Marshall) over the mountain in Fauquier County. Mosby ordered them to “disband” and go home.

OPTIONAL CLARKE COUNTY STOP C: Historic Long Branch



Turning right out of the Burwell-Morgan Mill parking lot, go to the fork in the road just south of the mill and this time bear right onto Bishop Meade Road, Rt. 255 South,. It goes one mile out to Rt. 50. There, cross the highway, and continue south on Red Gate Road, Rt. 624, going 0.7 mile to Nelson Road, Rt. 626. Turn right, and almost immediately on the left you will see the entry to Historic Long Branch. Park in the main parking lot.

This lavish plantation and mansion was started before the War of 1812 by Robert Carter Burwell of the Tidewater gentry, with advice from the architect of the U.S. Capitol, Benjamin Latrobe. When the war came, Burwell was a captain in the Virginia militia, and died of disease near Norfolk in the fall of 1813 while defending against British attack. If he ever lived in the house, it was not for long. It was enlarged and changed to the Greek Revival style with pillars in front and back by a relative, Hugh Nelson, himself a grandson of Thomas Nelson, Jr., a signer of the Declaration of Independence. When the Civil War threatened, Hugh Nelson was one of Clarke County's two representatives to the Virginia Secession Convention in 1861. Addressing the convention, he pleaded with his fellow delegates:

“I come from the banks of the sparkling Shenandoah. Those green fields... may become fields of blood. Can you blame me, then, if I wish to try all peaceful means, consistent with Virginia’s honor, of obtaining our rights, before I try the last resort? I promise you that when the contest does come, if come it must, the people whom I have the honor to represent... will meet it like men...”

--*REPRESENTATIVE HUGH NELSON*

Later a Confederate officer, Nelson died in the Civil War.

From the parking lot, you are looking at the *back* of the house. Be sure to walk around front to see the majestic portico. Visible through the windows on the portico is the magnificent “flying” staircase in the front hall. This handsome historic house is open for tours Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 4:00 p.m., April through October. On other days, you may walk around the grounds from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Historic Long Branch has provided picnic tables with a beautiful view of the Blue Ridge near the house that you may use.



View from Historic Long Branch.

Western Starting Point

(For those coming from Berryville, Winchester, Front Royal, I-81, and other points WEST)

NOTE: It is strongly recommended that those coming from the west consider beginning with the westernmost stops on the Sampler Tour that are part of the Optional Clarke County Mini-Loop on the previous pages. Start with Stop B, Millwood. Beginning at the Rt. 50/Rt. 340 stoplight, head east on Rt. 50 three miles to Rt. 255, Bishop Meade Road, on your left. Rt. 255 comes to Millwood in one mile. Continue on to Stop C, then to Stop A (over the Shenandoah River across the divided Rt. 50 on your left). Finally, go to Stop 12 at Paris by going 1.6 miles further east on Rt. 50 to Rt. 759, Federal Street, a right turn just before the light at Rt. 17.

12. Paris



Turning off Rt. 50 onto Rt. 759, Federal Street, you will see another intersection almost immediately as you come in. This is Paris—Virginia! Turn right here (at the Ashby Inn) and go to the end of a continued Federal Street. Then reverse direction, returning to the inn.

Paris is both a fine collection of classic Virginia architecture and was a village known well to Mosby's Rangers. They would ride through Paris on Federal Street, heading west towards Ashby's Gap for scouting or raids over the Blue Ridge in the Shenandoah Valley. A stroll down this street is always worthwhile. The first house on the right past the intersection with tiny Columbia Street was the home of Dr. Albin Payne. This was a "safe house" in 1864-65 for one of Mosby's Rangers, Lewis Thornton Powell. Powell would hide on the mountain when the Yankees came looking. In early 1865, Powell inexplicably left Mosby's Rangers. He teamed up with one John Wilkes Booth. On April 14, 1865, the night Booth shot President Lincoln, Powell (taking Dr. Payne's last name—Lewis Payne) attacked Secretary of State William Seward with a knife, trying to assassinate him. Seward lived, and two years later, helped the U.S. buy Alaska. Payne did not do so well. He was captured and hanged on July 7, 1865. Mosby was disgusted with Powell/"Payne" and disavowed any connection with the assassination operation.

13. The View at Ovoca Farm



At the Ashby Inn, turn right on to Gap Run Road, Rt. 701, heading away from Rt. 50. This road will go down-hill, and shortly after, it turns 90 degrees to the left. From here, you will see one of Virginia's best views-gaze to the right over the stone wall. When you see the sign for "Ovoca Farm," pull off the road to look.

The view over Ovoca Farm looks toward the Crooked Run Valley, with the Blue Ridge Mountains to your right. This land is now in “conservation easement,” a Virginia program to encourage keeping open space and maintain scenic viewsheds. The Crooked Run Valley has been designated a Rural Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. Beyond the pond in the background is Sky Meadows State Park, providing visitors a chance to hike the fields and Blue Ridge mountainside of this beautiful valley. The Park was donated by the late philanthropist Paul Mellon to the Commonwealth of Virginia. There is also picnicking, camping, and horseback riding. A small entry fee is charged.

Cow Country

Continue out Gap Run Road, Rt. 701, a short distance to Rt. 17, Winchester Road. Turn right onto Rt. 17, being careful due to the high speed of the traffic. Go 0.9 mile to Carr Lane, Rt. 710, which will be on your left. Turn there. [NOTE: You will pass the entrances to Sky Meadows State Park.] Carr Lane runs just over 3 miles to Rt. 712.

Carr Lane is a dirt lane like those Mosby's men knew well. Take your time; the vistas are wonderful. The road goes right through some handsome farms, with cows on either side of the road (and now and again, in it!). They like to look in your windows to see who has come visiting. We suggest diplomacy with these bovine emissaries of the Old Dominion. A worthy task is to count just how many you see.

Southern Starting Point

(For those coming from Marshall, Manassas, Warrenton, Fredericksburg, Charlottesville, I-66, and other points SOUTH)

NOTE: For those joining from the south via I-66, take Exit 28, Rt. 17/17 Business-Marshall/Warrenton and head north on Business Rt. 17 into Marshall. If coming north on Rt. 17 from Warrenton, continue over I-66 the 0.7 mile into Marshall. There is a stoplight in the center of Marshall; continue through it onto Rt. 710, Rectortown Road. You will come in to the village of Rectortown in 4.1 miles; look for Rt. 713, Maidstone Road, 0.4 mile further on the left. Go 0.5 mile on Maidstone Road to the Virginia Civil War Trails sign at the warehouse on your left.

14. Rectortown



At Rt. 712, Delaplane Grade Road, turn left, then immediately right on Rt. 710, Rectortown Road. This road runs 3.8 miles through beautiful countryside, reminiscent of England. Just as you enter the tiny historic village of Rectortown, turn right onto Maidstone Road, going 0.5 mile to a warehouse on the left with a Virginia Civil War Trails sign in front. Park there.

Rectortown was once one of Fauquier County's busiest villages. Today, it seems a tiny backwater, but has many historic houses and a delight-fully quaint Virginia charm. Take a moment to read the Virginia Civil War Trails sign. You will learn of two critical Civil War events that happened here at Rectortown—the firing of Union General McClellan by President Lincoln in November, 1862 and the grisly Mosby execution lottery of November 1864. Mosby used the warehouse behind the Virginia Civil War Trails sign to hold prisoners, perhaps those involved in that lethal lottery. There is still said to be graffiti from soldiers on the walls inside. The railroad tracks just beyond are part of the Manassas Gap Railroad, which Mosby attacked several times in October 1864 when Union troops tried to rebuild it in order to supply General Sheridan's army in the Shenandoah Valley. This railroad still exudes the feel of 1864, yet is still active.

A Scenic 19th Century Road



Retrace your route back to Rt. 710, Rectortown Road. Turn right, onto Rt. 710, then after a few yards turn left onto Crenshaw Road, Rt. 624. Take this old road 5 miles out to Rt. 50.

This is arguably the prettiest road in the Mosby Heritage Area. When it turns to dirt, it will narrow, run right along meandering Goose Creek, and be much like the lonely lanes Mosby's men know for their

operations and reconnaissance. You will truly escape to the 19th century! Take your time; much of the road is dirt and narrow. The first house on the left after the intersection with Five Points Road is Rockburn, where a wounded Mosby was brought on the night of December 21, 1864. He had been shot through a window at nearby Lakeland, the home of Ludwell Lake, by Union cavalry while dining on ribs and biscuits (and of course, coffee). Badly bleeding, Mosby was mistaken for a Lt. Johnson of the 6th Virginia Cavalry (for so he claimed to be), and was left by the Federals for dead. A slave boy with an ox cart delivered him in the ice and sleet overland to Rockburn, saving his life. Mosby would be moved many more times, eluding capture. While Union newspapers declared him dead, his reappearance in the winter of 1865 once recovered truly earned him the sobriquet “*Gray Ghost*.” Perhaps you can imagine that ox cart hurriedly rumbling along in the dark on this ancient road. Having suffered an 1862 fire, the main house at Rockburn was in ruins in 1864, so Mosby stayed in an outbuilding with the family.

15. Goose Creek Bridge

At Rt. 50, cross over onto Rt. 832, Lemmons Bottom Road, directly opposite. Look for the Virginia Civil War Trails marker on the lane on the right that leads down to the overlook.

This ancient stone bridge visible from the overlook is the oldest in Fauquier and Loudoun counties, letting scenic Goose Creek pass beneath its four stone arches. Thomas Jefferson was President when it was built in 1801-03! Until 1957, the bridge was used as part of the old turnpike between Alexandria and Winchester, now Rt. 50, the John S. Mosby Highway. On this side of the bridge, on the hills behind you, Confederate cavalry and "horse artillery" made a



Goose Creek Bridge.

stand against Union infantry trying to cross during the Battle of Upperville, June 21, 1863. On the heights opposite, one of the four Union regiments involved was the 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry, soon to be immortalized for holding Little Round Top on the Second Day at Gettysburg. Signs explain what happened here. Mosby sought to attack a Union column on this bridge on March 22, 1865, but was warded off by the wise placement of Union troops on the hillsides as they crossed. Before returning to your motorcar, be sure to walk on the ancient structure!

16. Atoka (Rector's Crossroads)

Go back out to Rt. 50, turn left, then take your next right a short distance up the highway onto Rector's Lane, Rt. 828. This is the back way into Atoka. Go through the crossroads by the Atoka Store, then turn into the stone-walled parking lot of the Caleb Rector House on your right. This will be the second house beyond the intersection.

During the Civil War, this intersection was called Rector's Crossroads, named for the owner of this 1801 stone house. On June 10, 1863 in the parlor (on the left side in front), Major John S. Mosby, following orders, converted his rangers into a formal unit of the Confederate Army-Company A of the 43rd Battalion Virginia Cavalry. The first four officers were appointed



The Rector House, Headquarters of The MHAA.

by Mosby here, then paperwork was filled out on a table in the center of the room. Shortly afterwards, these four were “elected” as required by the Confederate Army by Mosby Rangers waiting in a wood just up the road that goes south to Rectortown. Within 48 hours, one of these new officers was dead, and the new captain had been captured while getting a haircut in Middleburg. It was a rough, dangerous life being a Mosby Ranger. Nonetheless, 1,911 men joined the unit between January of 1863 and April of 1865. At the end of the Civil War, there were eight companies of Mosby Rangers!

You can visit the Rector House during most weekdays. It is the headquarters for the Mosby Heritage Area Association, which administrates the heritage area. There is an interpretive sign in the front yard, and you will see a Virginia Civil War Trails sign to the left of the parking lot. Across the street is a restored stone springhouse where Mosby’s men watered their horses on the way to the Fairfax Court House raid, March 8, 1863, when Union General Stoughton was kidnapped. Across the street is the Atoka Store, built in 1893, where aging veterans of Mosby’s Rangers often sat around the store telling stories of their adventures years before. They helped keep the “*Gray Ghost*” legend alive.

17. Mount Defiance

Turn right out of the Rector House parking lot. At Rt. 50, just a few feet away, turn right again, taking the aptly named John Singleton Mosby Highway 3 miles east to Mount Defiance Regional Historical Park on the right.

Where the highway has been dueled, you will see a rise ahead known locally as Mount Defiance, on which sits a stone tavern, a blacksmith's shop, and the blacksmith's house. Here in June 1863, fighting took place between opposing cavalry during the pre-Gettysburg cavalry battles of Aldie, Middleburg, and Upperville. On June 19, during the Battle of Middleburg, J.E.B. Stuart's dismounted Confederate cavalry and horse artillery held Mount Defiance. Pleasonton's Union cavalry forces, attempting to force the gaps in the Blue Ridge, attacked from Middleburg a mile to the east and drove Stuart off this height after a sharp fight.

Earlier, on April 28, 1863, two Union brigades with four cannon under General Julius Stahel camped here on a search for Mosby. They were so wary of the "Gray Ghost" that they lobbed shells in all directions before Taps, and kept half the men awake at all times. Mosby's men nicknamed the expedition "the Great Owl Shoot Raid" from the many dead birds they found afterwards. The blacksmith shop still standing here was used as a Mosby rendezvous point several times, including for the famed May 1863 Catlett Station Raid. Owned and developed by NOVA Parks, the site has a Virginia Civil War Trails marker and soon will have a walking trail with interpretive signage.

18. The Hathaway House

As you descend from the ridge known as Mount Defiance, turn onto Zulla Road, Rt. 709, on your right. Drive 3.0 miles to Young Road, Rt. 708, on your right, then 0.5 mile to the first house on the right, you will come to the famed "Hathaway House."

Here, in the home of James Hathaway, in a wing off the back still visible on the near side of the house, Mosby climbed out onto a walnut tree limb to hide for eight hours as Union troops of the 1st New York Lincoln Cavalry searched the house for him

on the night of June 8-9, 1863. They found his pregnant wife, Pauline, who had been brought to Northern Virginia to visit with him. They also found Mosby's spurs, even his horse-but *not* him. Like a squirrel, the bantam Mosby stayed hidden from view. You can still see the tree from the road, although the branch closest to the window is gone.



19. War Horse Memorial

Retrace your steps back to Rt. 50 and turn right. Heading east, you will come in to Middleburg as the dual highway ends. Just over the long hill coming into town, turn right onto Rt. 626, The Plains Road. Take the first right into the National Sporting Library and Museum. Note the golden statue of a horse in the entry circle.

Tessa Pullan's moving 1997 statue honors the millions of horses who served during the Civil War, capturing in mute pain their loyalty and sacrifice, and recalling the over one million horses who died. As you end your tour of the Mosby Heritage Area, recall the stories you have learned, take a careful look from all sides of this carefully accurate sculpture-and *remember*. The library and superb art museum are worth a visit.



Return to Rt. 50. Turning right, go through Middleburg, heading east towards Aldie (5 miles) and Gilbert's Corner Circle at Rt. 15 (6 miles). Mt. Zion Church-a mile further east-Stop 1-allows those joining the tour at Paris or Rectortown to continue on.

The Mosby Heritage Area Sampler

Now in its 4th edition, this classic historical motoring tour takes you through Virginia's legendary Northern Virginia Countryside on historic Rt. 50-the John S. Mosby Highway-and on winding side roads through foxhunting country that once saw the Gray Ghost, John Singleton Mosby, as the wily fox with Union cavalry in pursuit. You will see the Northern Virginia that once existed, and yet almost unbelievably, still does through magnificent preservation efforts. The carefully selected route will make your heart sing and your camera snap. The sites chosen as stops are tactile places that will beckon you to touch and linger, each a story in itself. You will be reminded just how much Virginia reflects the English countryside, with estates and villages, old roads and handsome vistas, and a story around every corner. And you will discover a key part of the American story in the shadows of Virginia's lovely Blue Ridge.

A Partnership

The SAMPLER is a partnership between the Mosby Heritage Area and NOVA Parks, the park authority whose many parks make up a number of the stops on this tour. The Mosby Heritage Area and NOVA Parks frequently partner on programming and historic preservation initiatives.



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