

Tour Descriptions:

For those of you unable to do a lot of walking, or standing for lengthy periods of time, please sign up for the limited walking tours.

Vicksburg Campaign Part 1: Louisiana Circle, Grant's Canal, Grand Gulf, Willow Springs, Rocky Springs, Dillon Plantation, Raymond

In early 1863, the North had grown impatient and President Lincoln urgently needed what General-in-Chief Halleck described as "an important and decisive victory." Halleck also wrote to one of his generals; "The president regards the opening of the Mississippi River as the first and most important of all our military and naval operations." But General Grant's Army of the Tennessee was mired in the muddy wetlands of Louisiana, General Rosecans' Army of the Cumberland had gone into winter camp at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and General Hooker was re-organizing the bloodied Army of the Potomac near Fredericksburg, Virginia. Only Grant sensed the president's dilemma and leaned to the front. "There was nothing left to be done but to go forward to a decisive victory," he later wrote, "despite the "long, dreary, and for heavy and continuous rains and high water, unprecedented winter." Grant chomped down on his cigar and continued to try to find a way into Vicksburg. "The problem," he wrote, "was to secure a footing upon dry ground on the east side of the river from which the troops could operate against Vicksburg." This tour will take you to the Mississippi River and into Louisiana, where Grant's soldiers and Porter's sailors worked so hard to achieve that first objective. Then, the bus will go southward to Grand Gulf where, after Porter's gunboats were pounded by the Confederate guns, Grant flanked the Grand Gulf fortifications, forced their abandonment, and set up a supply base, thus achieving his second objective. The bus will then follow Grant into the interior of Mississippi on the scenic back roads along which the troops marched toward the railroad, Grant's third objective. Sit back; this will be a **bus tour with numerous stops and a moderate amount of walking.**

Vicksburg Campaign Part 2: Jackson, Mead plantation site in Clinton, Coker house at Champion Hill, Big Black River Bridge, Vicksburg NMP

Grant, after achieving his third objective of severing Pemberton's line of communications, captured the capital city of Mississippi on May 14, 1863. This feat drove Joe Johnston's reinforcing troops away from Pemberton while providing President Lincoln much needed good press, for Jackson was only the third Confederate state capital to fall. Then, while in Jackson, Grant achieved an intelligence coup. Quickly reacting to this information the next morning, Grant marched his army westward to Bolton to interpose his forces between Johnston's and Pemberton's. En route, in Clinton, the intelligence network Grant had established through the capable efforts of Grenville Dodge again reaped huge rewards, and on the morning of May 16, Grant rode confidently to victory at Champion Hill. The following day, Grant pursued his defeated and divided foe to the Battle of Big Black Bridge, and then on to Vicksburg, arriving outside the citadel on May 18. Hoping to end the matter before the summer miasmas set in, Grant attacked and failed, first on May 19, and again on May 22. Knowing the end had to be near, but wishing to avoid needless casualties, Grant ordered siege operations to begin on May 25. The summer heat and humidity arrived and life was miserable for both sides, but infinitely more so for the entrapped Confederates and the civilians in the city. Finally, on July 4, the "Gibraltar of the Confederacy" fell. Grant had delivered to Lincoln "an important and decisive victory." Not only had an entire Confederate army been captured, the Mississippi River, as Lincoln described it, ran "unvexed to the sea." Like Part 1, **this tour will include numerous stops and a moderate amount of walking.**

The Battle of Vicksburg Tour

In May and June of 1863, Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's armies converged on Vicksburg, engaging the city and entrapping a Confederate army under Lt. Gen. John Pemberton. On July 4, Vicksburg surrendered after prolonged siege operations. Described as the "spinal column of America" and "the nailhead that held the South's two halves together," Vicksburg remains one of the most significant battles of the Civil War because of its strategic geographical importance. This **limited-walking** battlefield tour will take participants over the rolling hills and deep ravines of this strategic location, while detailing troop movements, long-term ramifications and immediate consequences of the siege.

Siege of Port Hudson and Battle of Port Gibson

Stops to include Port Hudson, LA and Port Gibson, MS. Detailed description coming soon. **Limited walking** tour. Please note that this tour will have a lengthy bus ride. It is a 2 hr and 45 min drive to Port Hudson, LA. This tour will run from 7 am to 5:30 pm.

The Battle of Vicksburg **Heavy Walking** Tour (Saturday Only)

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Connecting with Civil War Vicksburg

This combination bus and walking tour will explore the Vicksburg Battlefield, the goliath USS Cairo and will include a foray into the City of Vicksburg. A thorough coverage of the decisive summer 1863 actions will be combined with a focus on lesser known places, triumphs and tragedies that make the struggle relevant today. The focus will not only be upon the siege and the fighting but upon the battlefield itself and images of it. By combining the known and less-known with photos, accounts and the sites themselves, a meaningful connection is formed with this already-hallowed ground. Expect short hikes of up to 500 yards each, some of it over rugged terrain.

Jackson in the War Tour (Friday only)

Limited Walking. This tour will be a relaxed examination of Jackson, Mississippi's, critical role in the Civil War. We will cover the major events that occurred in the city, including the state's secession convention, the coordination of Mississippi's war effort, and the effect of military actions on the city and state. We will see many famous sites such as the Old State Capitol, City Hall, the Governor's Mansion, the modern state capitol (which was the state penitentiary during the war), and Greenwood Cemetery, burial site of several famous Mississippians including Confederate general William Barksdale, who was killed at Gettysburg. This tour will be shorter than the others, running from 9 am to 4 pm

Historic Homes and Gardens of Vicksburg (Friday only)

Additional details will be available in early April. This tour will visit a number of historic homes in Vicksburg. This tour can accommodate limited walkers, with an opportunity to sit down if you don't want to tour the entire home. **Limited Walking.**

Jackson Today (Saturday only)

Additional details will be available in early April. This will stop at a number of places in Jackson highlighting the city. Stops may include: The Governor's Mansion, The Old State Capitol, and The Eudora Welty Home. This tour can accommodate **limited walkers**, with an opportunity to sit down if you don't want to tour museum or home.

Color Bearer Tours – Thursday only

Chickasaw Bayou Tour with Terry Winschel

"The campaign of Vicksburg was suggested and developed by circumstances," wrote Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. "The elections of 1862 had gone against the prosecution of the war: voluntary enlistments had nearly ceased, and the draft had been restored to; this was resisted, and a defeat, or backward movement would have made its execution impossible." To a man of Grant's character there was only one course of action: "A forward movement to a decisive victory." In the fall of 1862, Grant would launch that forward movement. With a portion of his army, Grant would push south into Mississippi and draw Confederate forces responsible for the defense of the Vicksburg/Jackson enclave into the northern portion of the state. There he would keep them pinned, while the other portion of his army under Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman, moved down the Mississippi River from Memphis and seized what would hopefully be a lightly defended city of Vicksburg. The campaign ended disastrously for the Federals as Sherman's force was quickly, easily, and bloodily repulsed along Chickasaw Bayou, north of Vicksburg, on December 29.

Although adjacent to Vicksburg National Military Park, the battlefield at Chickasaw Bayou has no protection other than that provided by nature, and only one historical marker for interpretation. Few, even among the most-serious students of the Civil War, have ever toured the battlefield. This tour will take you through the streets of Vicksburg and out to the Union landing sites along the Yazoo River. From there you will follow the same dirt road over which the Federals advanced to the site where the action took place that cold winter day in 1862. Numerous stops will be made along the route, including one at the USS Cairo display, with **walking limited** to just a few yards at each stop.

Raymond Archaeology Tour with Parker Hills

The Battle of Raymond was fought on May 12, 1863, as Maj. Gen. Ulysses Grant's Army of the Tennessee swung toward the Southern Railroad of Mississippi to cut off Confederate General John Pemberton's Army of Vicksburg from reinforcing troops. For 137 years after the battle, the farmlands of the battlefield remained largely undisturbed, with the only battlefield interpretation being a weathered 7-line roadside state historical marker. Then, in 1998, the citizens of Raymond formed Friends of Raymond to preserve and interpret the history of the Raymond area. With the help of the Civil War Trust, 40 acres were purchased, and now 136 acres have been permanently protected. Still, there remains the task of interpretation of the battlefield actions. Unlike most of the national military parks which were established at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, in modern times there remain no veterans to provide eyewitness accounts. Friends of Raymond had only the written reports, which, while detailed enough to interpret the general actions, fell far short of describing anything but approximate locations on the ground. So, where to place the cannons and the interpretive markers? The answer was in the axiom, "history turns the pages and archaeology turns the ground." The ground, complemented by the records and documents, had a historical archaeology story to tell. This tour will read the story through a **moderate amount of walking on the battlefield**, and will include a visit to the new Raymond artifact collection.