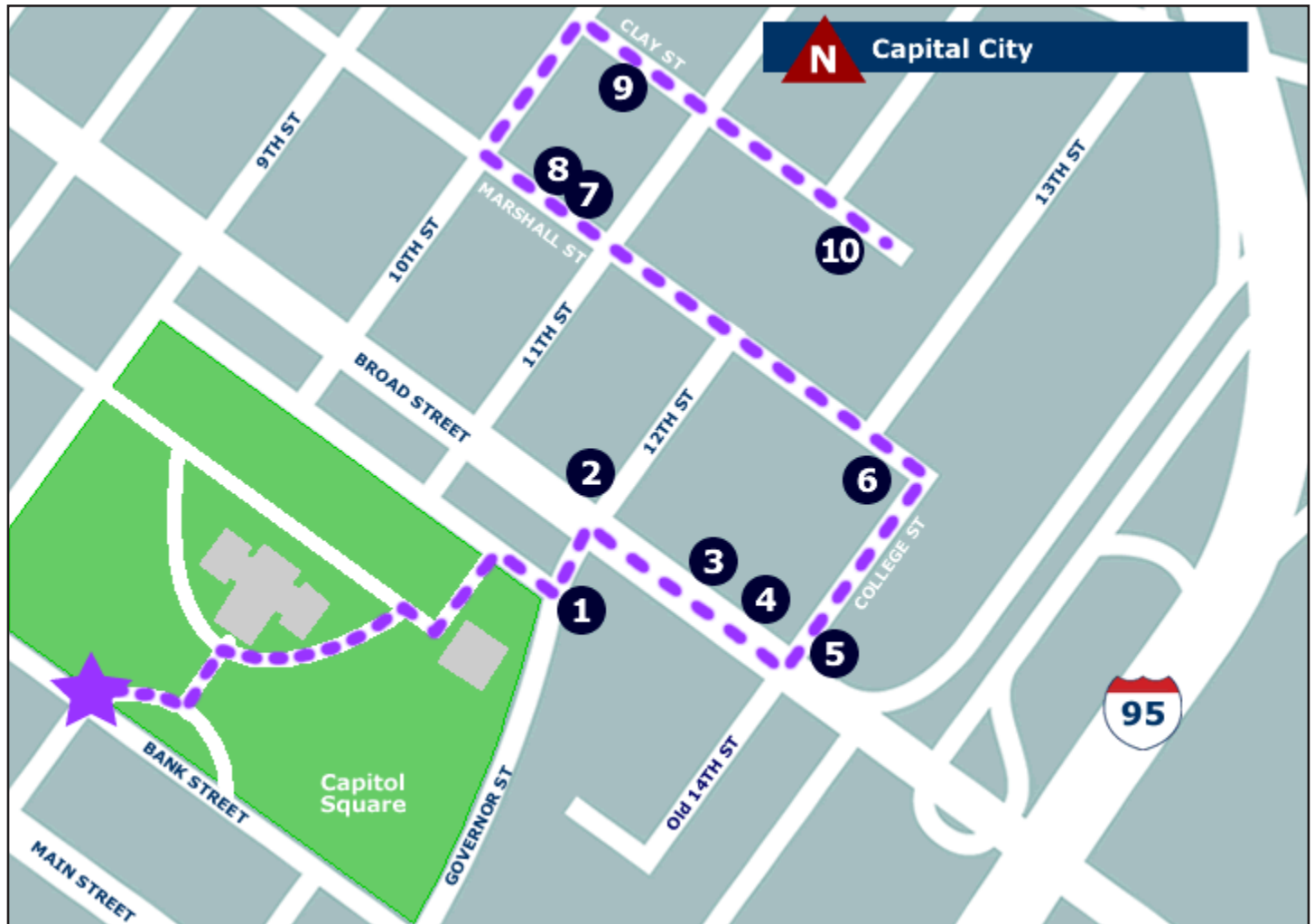


The Eye of the Storm: Civil War Richmond

Capital City Walking Tour



Introduction

The Capital City tour begins in front of the Virginia State Capitol tour entrance on Bank Street and takes you through Capitol Square on the way to a wartime residential neighborhood, one of the finest in Richmond. It should take about an hour to walk. You may want to plan time for a visit to the Museum and White House of the Confederacy, the last stop on this tour.



Virginia Capitol, Visitor Entrance

1 Wartime residences, Morson's Row

219–223 Governor St
Date: 1853



Morson's Row

2 First Baptist Church

1110 E Broad St
Northwest corner, 11th and East Broad streets
Date: 1841

The First Baptist congregation, dating from the early 19th century, was a mixture of whites, free blacks and slaves until this building was opened in 1841. Black members then retained control of the original church building a block east (East Broad and College streets), creating the First African Baptist Church.

The church bell was almost donated to the Confederate government in 1862 to be recast into cannon but was saved by a parishioner's offer of gold coins in exchange. The



Old First Baptist Church

Civil War-era bell is now on display at the congregation's current location on Monument Avenue at the Boulevard.

This building no longer houses an active church. *"When the fires that lighted the evacuation of Richmond had died away... there was little left of Richmond's skyline to mind the frantic inhabitants of the past. Here and there, though, there were left old landmarks and amongst them the most beloved of those was the old First Baptist Church..., whose tall steeple stood like a sentinel against the sky at the top of the hill."*

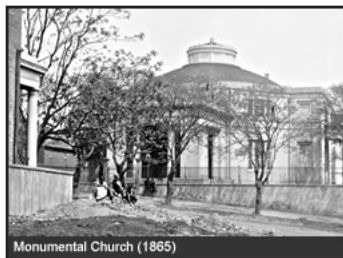
— from a Richmond newspaper, April 1865

3 Monumental Church

Middle of the 1200 block of East Broad Street, north side

Date: 1814

Robert Mills, who designed the Washington Monument and other public buildings in Washington DC, designed this church, which was built on the site of an 1811 tragedy. A fire during the Christmas holidays that year killed 72 people including the governor of Virginia. The ashes of many of those victims are interred in the basement of the building. Among those attending church here in its early years were John Marshall and Edgar Allan Poe.



Monumental Church (1865)

Shortly after Richmond's fall in 1865, stunned parishioners recalled watching Union troops "with fine uniforms" marching past the church.

The building is no longer an active church. It's open to the public a few times a year during special tours.

4 Wartime residence

1228 E Broad St

Date: 1839

5 First African Baptist Church (site)

301 College St

Date: Early 19th century

The current building (1870) replaced an earlier structure used first by a mixed congregation, then an all-black one after the white members moved to the new building in 1841. An estimated 20 percent of Richmond's black population worshiped here (under a white minister) before and during the war.



First African Baptist Church (1865)

This church offered the largest public meeting space in town during the war (an estimated 1,000 could be accommodated) and was the site of many public meetings for white audiences. One of the most important meetings here was convened by Gov. William "Extra Billy" Smith days after a peace negotiation failed in February 1865. President Jefferson Davis, haggard and worn, marched down the aisle and gave, according to Richmond Examiner editor Edward Pollard, "the most remarkable speech of his life."

Davis roundly criticized President Lincoln's approval of the Thirteenth Amendment ending slavery. He argued that if the South could match Virginia's fighting spirit, Lincoln would beg for peace "before the summer solstice."

Confederate Richmond fell a few weeks later. The black congregation here reacted to the city's surrender with elation. On April 6, 1865, three days after the Union occupation, the church was the scene of a "Jubilee Meeting" of newly freed slaves and members of the United States Colored Troops (who were among the first Federal soldiers to enter the city)..

6 Egyptian Building

1223 E Marshall St

Southwest corner, College and Marshall streets

Date: 1845

During the war this unusual building housed the Medical College of Virginia. Reported numbers vary, but nearly 300 doctors graduated from this building during the war, many serving in the Confederate armed forces.

It is the only medical school still surviving in the South that continued to graduate doctors throughout the Civil War. The building also served as a hospital during the conflict.

On the eve of the war, Virginia doctor Hunter Hol-

mes McGuire (whose statue is on Capitol Square) led a contingent of hundreds of Southern medical students here from Philadelphia, reacting to John Brown's 1859 Raid on Harpers Ferry. More than 140 prospective doctors from that group stayed here, forming the basis for many wartime graduating classes.



Egyptian Building

The building is still part of the Virginia Commonwealth University Medical College, dwarfed by the school's modern structures surrounding it.

Be sure to notice the building's original cast iron fence and the mummy posts — with toes.

The building now serves as a lecture hall as it has since 1845.

7 Wartime residence

1012 E Marshall St
Date: 1859



Marshall Street Houses

8 Wartime residence

1010 E Marshall St
Date: 1861

9 1000 Block of East Clay Street

Standing in this block is about as close as we are going to come to visiting the finest Richmond neighborhood during the Civil War. Its elevation far above Shockoe Bottom (to the east) allowed residents of these fine houses to stand on their roofs and observe artillery flashes from the nearby battlefields in 1862.



Grant House

This block boasts five pre-Civil War buildings:

- 1000 E Clay St (1810)
- 1007 E Clay St (1840, moved to this location in 1952)
- 1008 E Clay St (Grant House, 1857)
- 1015 E Clay St (Wickham House, 1812)
- 1016 E Clay St (Maury House, 1846, moved to this location in 1993)

The house now located on the northeast corner of 11th and Clay streets (1016) is the Maupin–Maury House where famed oceanographer Matthew Fontaine Maury experimented with electronically fired underwater “torpedoes” — or mines. The structure was moved from its original location at 1105 E Clay St.

The Valentine Richmond History Center (1015 E. Clay St.) is the city's history museum and includes a good Civil War section in its permanent exhibit, “Settlement to Street Car Suburbs: Richmond and Its People.” Guided tours of the restored 1812 Wickham House also are offered. Admission fee charged. See an online slide show of the Wickham House interior on the museum's website.

10 Museum/White House of the Confederacy

1201 E Clay St
Date: 1818 (White House)

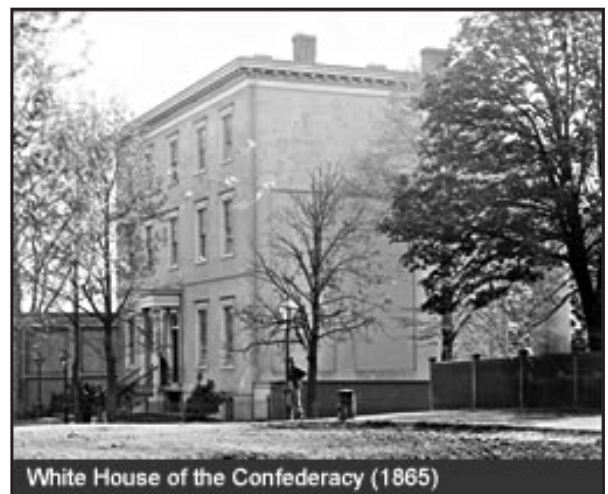
The Museum of the Confederacy, established in 1896, holds the largest and most significant collection of Confederate artifacts in the world. The main exhibition area, “The Confederate Years,” displays items belonging to the famous — Robert E. Lee, J.E.B. Stuart and Stonewall Jackson — as well as ordinary soldiers and citizens. Flags from the museum's premier collection are highlighted throughout the building.



Museum of the Confederacy

The Confederate Executive Mansion, built in 1818, has been restored to its appearance when the Jefferson Davis family lived here, 1861–1865. Most of the Davis furnishings are original; and these are noted during guided tours.

The museum is open 10 am–5 pm Monday–Saturday and noon–5 pm Sunday. Adult tickets for the museum and Executive Mansion tour are \$12.



White House of the Confederacy (1865)