

New Market AT WAR

Battlefield Driving Tour The Battle of New Market

Campaign Timeline

1864 Lynchburg Campaign

Early May

Sigel begins to move south in the Valley to meet Crook in Staunton.

May 15

Breckinridge's hastily gathered Confederate army confronts and defeats Sigel at New Market.

Late May

Union leaders replace Sigel with Hunter, who begins to move south.

June 5

Hunter defeats Confederates at the **Battle of Piedmont**, east of Staunton.

Early June

Hunter continues south, looting Staunton and destroying much of the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington.

June 17-18

Hunter moves toward Lynchburg where he is defeated by Early's arriving forces.

Late June

Hunter retreats into the mountains of West Virginia.

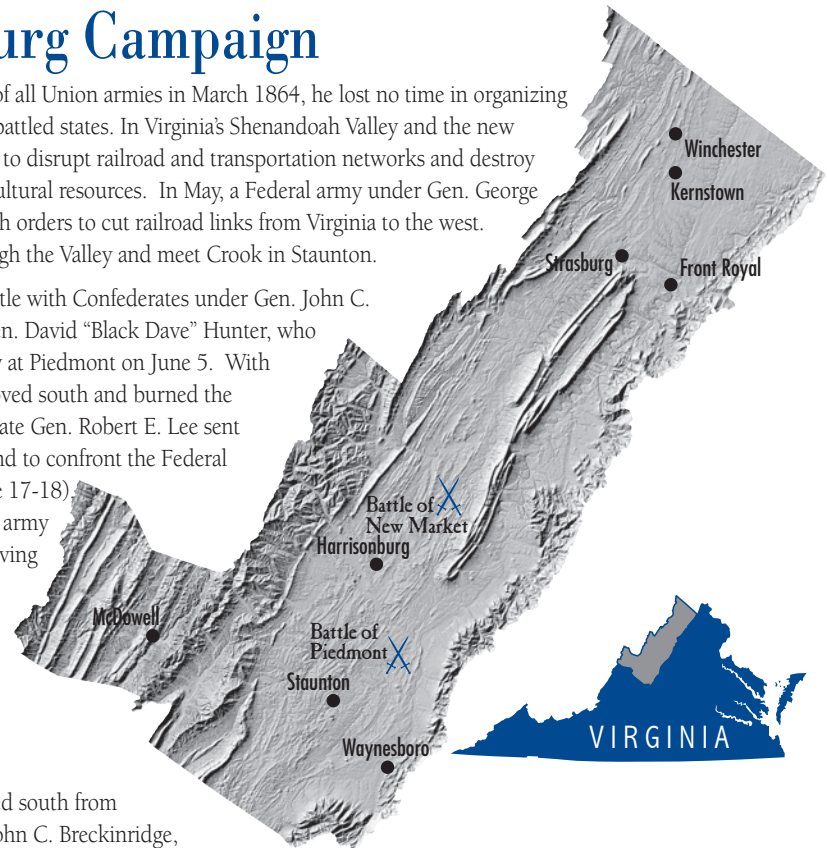
"Put the boys in... and may God forgive me for the order."

— Confederate Gen. John C. Breckinridge, ordering the VMI Cadets into battle

1864: The Lynchburg Campaign

With Ulysses S. Grant's promotion to command of all Union armies in March 1864, he lost no time in organizing a huge offensive across the entire front of the embattled states. In Virginia's Shenandoah Valley and the new state of West Virginia, Union forces were ordered to disrupt railroad and transportation networks and destroy Confederate forces and their economic and agricultural resources. In May, a Federal army under Gen. George Crook advanced south through West Virginia with orders to cut railroad links from Virginia to the west. Union Gen. Franz Sigel was to move south through the Valley and meet Crook in Staunton.

Sigel met defeat at New Market (May 15) in a battle with Confederates under Gen. John C. Breckinridge. Sigel was promptly replaced by Gen. David "Black Dave" Hunter, who advanced back up the Valley and gained a victory at Piedmont on June 5. With most Confederate resistance checked, Hunter moved south and burned the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington. Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee sent Gen. Jubal A. Early from the defenses of Richmond to confront the Federal threat. Early defeated Hunter at Lynchburg (June 17-18) on the east side of the Blue Ridge, and the Union army retreated into the mountains of West Virginia, leaving the way clear for Early to drive northward in an audacious campaign that would threaten Washington, D.C. and endanger Abraham Lincoln's chances for reelection.



Advance to Battle

On May 2, 1864, Union Gen. Franz Sigel marched south from Winchester with 9,000 men. Confederate Gen. John C. Breckinridge, in command of southern forces in the region, hastily gathered together whatever forces he could find. His army numbered only about 5,300 troops, including 257 cadets from the Virginia Military Institute. Sigel's advance was slow and careful. On May 13, a small Federal cavalry force that had crossed over the New Market Gap was ambushed and destroyed by Imboden. Sigel arrived in the area around Woodstock and Mount Jackson on May 14 and ordered Col. Augustus Moor to take an improvised brigade to New Market, where they forced Confederate troops under Imboden to withdraw, then took up a defensive position.

Battle of New Market (May 15, 1864)

Gen. Breckinridge, who had been hurrying north along the Valley Pike, arrived at New Market on the morning of May 15 and sent his cavalry and artillery to harass the Federals under Col. Moor. Confederate artillery on Shirley's Hill, overlooking the town, exchanged fire with Federal guns in St. Matthews cemetery, on the northern edge of town. About noon, Sigel arrived and ordered the Union line pulled back to a stronger position on Bushong's Hill, stretching between the North Fork and Smith's Creek. Breckinridge deployed on both sides of the Valley Pike and advanced his infantry in force, with a second line of massed artillery and infantry deployed just to the south and east of the main line, driving back Union skirmishers. Sigel withdrew from New Market.

Breckinridge launched an all-out assault against the Union position. When the attack stalled, the VMI Cadets were ordered to fill a gap in the line near the Bushong House. The Federal cavalry attacked south up the Valley Pike and were repulsed with heavy casualties; Sigel then directed a confused counterattack which was also thrown back. Rebel sharpshooters began picking off Union gunners on Bushong's Hill, and Sigel ordered the batteries withdrawn. When the artillery fire slackened, Breckinridge ordered a general advance, which included the VMI Cadets, that swept the Union line off Bushong's Hill. To the east, near the Valley Pike, elements of the 34th Massachusetts and 54th Pennsylvania continued to resist, covering the Union retreat, but were eventually driven back. Union Capt. Henry DuPont used his artillery battery to cover the retreat and slow the pursuit, enabling the badly-beaten Union army to escape – and bringing an end to the battle, one of the last major Confederate victories in the Valley.

New Market Driving Tour

Directions to Tour Starting Point: Virginia Museum of the Civil War (8895 George Collins Parkway, New Market). George Collins Parkway is immediately west of Exit 264 from Interstate 81; US-211 intersects with the interstate at this point. (East of the interstate, the road is officially State Route 211.) From US-211, turn north onto George Collins Parkway and continue for just over a mile to the entrance to the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park. (En route, you'll pass a museum/visitor center on your left that is not affiliated with the park.) At the entrance, the road will curve left and take you to the museum. (Look for the circular building.) The museum is open daily from 9 am-5 pm. Admission is: Adults \$10; Senior (Age 65+) \$9; Youth (Age 6-12) \$6; Children 5 & under free. Tickets are good for 7 days.

Stop 1 ~ Virginia Museum of the Civil War (8895 George Collins Parkway)

The Virginia Museum of the Civil War includes the 300 acre New Market Battlefield State Historical Park and historic Bushong Farm, which stood at the center of fighting. Begin your exploration at the museum, which includes artifacts and dioramas telling the story of Virginia during the Civil War; a stained glass mural wall depicting the war; the Emmy Award-winning film, "Field of Lost Shoes"; the Kaminsky Gallery of Civil War Firearms; and displays about the Battle of New Market, including rare artifacts.

There is a visitor's guide with self-guided tour of the battlefield park available at the desk. You can take that tour now, but if you'd like to follow the stops in more chronological order, begin the driving tour by preceding to Stop #2; you'll return here at Stop #6.

Directions to Stop #2 (Smith Creek Cavalry Fight): Exit the battlefield park on George Collins Parkway. Continue for 1.2 miles to the intersection with Route 211 (West Old Cross Rd.), and turn left. Drive 0.4 miles to the intersection with US-11 in downtown New Market, then turn left. Drive for 0.3 miles and turn right onto Route 211 E. Continue for 1.5 miles to Smith Creek Rd. (Route 620) on your right, then park on the shoulder of the road.

Stop 2 ~ Smith Creek (Imboden-Boyd Cavalry Fight) (Intersection of US-211 E and Smith Creek Road)

To the east is Massanutten Mountain, the imposing 45-mile-long ridgeline that bisects the Valley into two parts – the main Valley (where you are now) and Page Valley, on the other side of Massanutten. The New Market Gap, where today's US-211 climbs over the mountain, was the only route between the two Valleys. At the foot of this mountain gap is the site of the fight between Confederate Gen. John Imboden's cavalry and Union Col. William Boyd's troopers on May 13. Boyd had been detached from the main Federal army with 300 men and advanced down the Page Valley, then crossed over to this side. Imboden, who was at Rude's Hill, spied the Federals coming down the gap and sent one part of his force to block the Federals at the creek and led another part to circle around the Yankees and cut them off. The resulting ambush destroyed the Federal force. Boyd lost nearly half his command (most captured) and the remainder were forced to hide on the slopes of the mountain before making their way back to their own lines under cover of darkness. One Federal said that "The wonder was that the whole of Boyd's command was not captured."

Directions to Stop #3 (Strayer House): Pull onto US-211 heading west (back the way you came). In 1 mile, turn left onto State Route 1002/E Old Cross Rd. Continue for 0.7 miles then pull into the parking lot behind the Strayer House (the Headquarters of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District) on your left. Enter through the back door (and go up one floor) or walk around to the front to see the Civil War Orientation Center, including exhibits, artifact displays, and a theatre. The center is open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm. The National Historic District offices are located one floor up

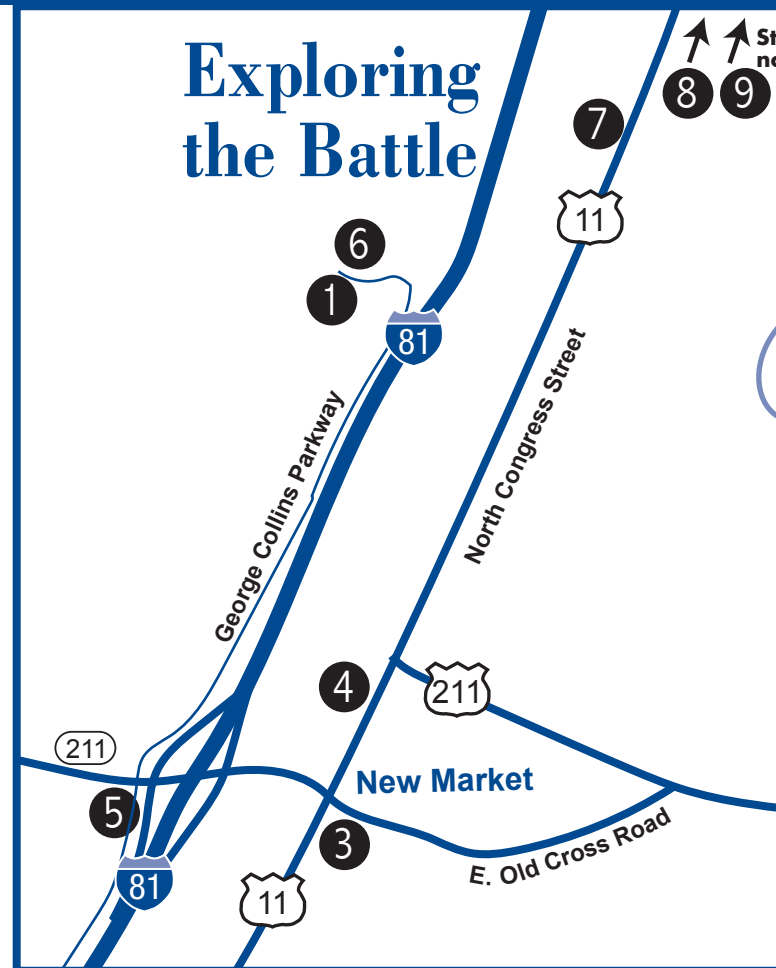
Stop 3 ~ Strayer House (Lee-Jackson Headquarters) (9386 S. Congress St.)

The original portion of the Strayer House was built c. 1808 by John Strayer, who was married to Dorcas Lincoln, a first cousin of Abraham Lincoln's father. Located at one of the Valley's most historic crossroads, some of the earliest fighting of the Battle of New Market took place near here. The house was between the battle lines as skirmishing began early on the morning of May 15, with Confederate cannon fire from Shirley Hill crashing into the streets of the town, and then was engulfed as the Confederates swarmed north, straddling the Valley Turnpike, driving the Federals out of town. Jessie Rupert, who witnessed the battle from her home several doors north, wrote that, "The streets were at once deserted, and cannon balls and shells rolled and exploded in every direction... The air was filled with dust and smoke, and curses, and shrieks."

Directions to Stop #4 (Reformation Lutheran Church, 9283 South Congress Street): Exit the parking lot through the marked "Exit" and turn left on John Sevier Road, then take an immediate left onto East Old Cross Road. After approximately 85 feet, take the next right onto N. Congress St. (US-211). Continue for 0.2 miles, then turn left onto Breckinridge Road. Proceed to the parking lot on your right behind the Reformation Lutheran Church.

Stop 4 ~ St. Matthew's Lutheran Church (Reformation Lutheran Church, 9283 S Congress St, New Market)

On the morning of the battle, Federal artillery located here engaged in an artillery duel with Confederate guns on Shirley's Hill (your next tour stop). Capt. Alonzo Snow had set his guns here the night before. Early on May 15 he advanced one section about 400 yards south (near the modern-day Burger King sign), where they duelled with Confederates on Shirley's Hill, but that position was so dominated by the Rebel artillery that the Federals pulled back to their positions by the church. During the war, Breckinridge Road was known as the River Road. (Most of that road was lost to the construction of the Interstate.) Union Col. August Moor's initial infantry line was positioned along that road, extending past the location of I-81. The Federals were driven from this line shortly after noon.



Stops 8 and 9 are farther north on US-11

The cemetery contains Confederate graves and a Confederate monument. After the battle, five VMI cadets were interred at this cemetery. Their remains were exhumed on May 15, 1866 and transported back to VMI for burial. If you walk back to the entrance to the church (near US-11), you'll see a post containing a wooden replica of a conical bolt fired by a Federal battery (after the Federals had been pushed out of town). Allegedly, Gen. Breckinridge and his staff were clustered near the post when the bolt or shell struck (but did not explode) – but the story of Breckinridge's "near-miss" is probably apocryphal.

Directions to Stop #5 (Shirley's Hill): Return to N Congress St (US-11) and turn right. In 0.2 miles, turn right on West Old Cross Road. Continue for 0.3 miles (passing under the Interstate) and turn left and park in the parking lot of the 7-11 just west of the interstate.

Visitor Information



Brochures and information about Civil War sites, other sites, lodging, restaurant, and other information are available at:

Civil War Orientation Center at Strayer House

9386 South Congress Street, New Market
540-740-4545 • www.ShenandoahAtWar.org
Open Monday-Saturday, 9am-5pm

Shenandoah Valley Tourist Information Center Virginia Museum of the Civil War

8895 George Collins Parkway, New Market
866-515-1864
<http://vmi.edu/museums-and-archives/virginia-museum-of-the-civil-war/>
Open daily, 9am-5pm

Shenandoah County Tourism

600 North Main Street, Suite 101, Woodstock
888-367-3965 • www.shenandoahtravel.org
Open Monday-Friday, 8:30am-5pm

Stop 5 ~ Shirley's Hill (7-11 Parking Lot)

You're in the New Market Valley. To the south (behind the 7-11) is Shirley's Hill, where the Confederate artillery that dueled with the Federal guns near St. Matthew's Church (your last stop) were located. That hill is also where the main Confederate infantry line formed for their attack. To the north, across US-211, you'll see Manor's Hill and Bushong Hill, the main part of the battlefield. During the Confederate movement forward, Gen. Gabriel Wharton's brigade came over Shirley's Hill and ran down the slope to avoid the Federal artillery fire. The VMI Cadets, however, came down in parade formation – offering an easy target for the Union guns at the Lutheran Church. Four cadets were hit and wounded, although none fatally.

Directions to Stop #6 (New Market Battlefield State Historical Park): From the 7-11 parking lot, turn right (east) onto Route 211. In just 150 feet, take an immediate left (north) onto George Collins Parkway. (Traffic can be busy here, so be careful). Follow the parkway back to the Virginia Museum of the Civil War (New Market Battlefield State Historical Park).

Stop 6 ~ New Market Battlefield State Historical Park (Virginia Museum of the Civil War)

Refer to the museum's visitor guide, available at the front desk, and follow it to the battlefield stops, which include: • **The Bushong House and Farm** – The Bushong family stayed in the basement during the battle. After the battle the house and bank were used as field hospitals. • **Jackson's Battery** – The gun here marks the position of Jackson's Virginia Battery, which offered the nearest support for the Confederate line at the Bushong Farm. • **The Fatal Orchard** – The VMI cadets dressed their lines in this apple orchard before charging into battle. One cadet called this the "most awful spot on the

battlefield [as] shot and shell tore over and around us." Four cadets were mortally wounded here. • **The Woodson Monument** – This monument honors Co. A, 1st Missouri Cavalry (Confederate), who lost 40 of their 62 men during the battle. • **The "Field of Lost Shoes"** – A wheat field at the time of the battle, this is where the VMI Cadets plugged the gap in the Confederate line and made their famous charge. Rain had turned the field into a quagmire of thick mud that pulled the shoes off the cadets' feet. • **Van Kleiser's 30th New York Battery** – The Union artillery position charged by the cadets, who captured one of the 12 pound Napoleon guns.

Directions to Stop #7 (54th Pennsylvania Monument): Exit the battlefield park on George Collins Parkway. Continue for 1.2 miles until the intersection with Route 211 (West Old Cross Rd.), and turn left. Drive 0.4 miles to the intersection with US-11 in downtown New Market, then turn left. Continue for 1.3 miles to the 54th Pennsylvania Monument on the left. When safe to do so, turn into the pull-off area in front of the monument. Walk to the monument and to the Civil War Trails marker about "The Bloody Cedars."

Stop 7 ~ 54th Pennsylvania Monument and Stahel's Cavalry Charge (US-11, north of New Market)

The monument marks the eastern limit of the final Union infantry line established by Gen. Sigel about noon on 15 May. The 54th Pennsylvania troops marched here about 2:20 pm, less than 40 minutes before the decisive Confederate charge. They first occupied the low ground north of the monument, then charged south approximately 200 yards toward the tree line before being forced back. A few minutes before their charge, the Federal cavalry had attempted to advance along the Valley Turnpike. However, as the cavalry galloped across a small stone bridge to the east (70 yards northeast of the monument) it came under devastating artillery and rifle fire from both sides of the Pike that shattered their charge, repulsing it with heavy loss.

Directions to Stop #8 (DuPont's Rear Guard Action): When safe to do so, turn left back onto US-11, heading north. Continue for 2.0 miles to the Summers-Koontz Monument site on the left. Again being careful, turn into the pull-off in front of the monument when safe to do so.

Stop 8 ~ Du Pont's Rear Guard Action (Summers-Koontz Site)

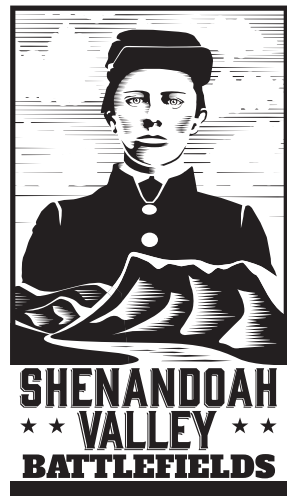
Union Capt. Henry DuPont placed his 6-gun artillery battery near here to protect the Federal army during its retreat from New Market – and to delay Confederate pursuit. DuPont retired his guns in "leap-frog" fashion, pulling back a few guns at a time while the others fired to keep the Rebels at bay. Read the Civil War Trails marker at this site for more details.

Directions to Stop #9 (Shenandoah River Bridge): When safe to do so, turn left back onto US-11, heading north. You'll pass over the key feature of Rude's Hill as you head north. Continue for 2.5 miles to the gravel pull-off on the right.

Stop 9 ~ Shenandoah River Bridge (The Federals Escape)

About 200 yards north of here is the modern bridge over the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. The bridge is in the same location as the wartime covered bridge. When Confederate Gen. John Breckinridge reached Rude's Hill to the south, he could see the bottleneck at the bridge as Union soldiers, horses, and vehicles jammed together, struggling to cross. He ordered his artillery to open fire. Confederate Lt. Carter Berkeley described how "Relentlessly we poured shot and shell" into the "poor, panic-stricken wretches." Capt. DuPont and his guns were the last Federals to cross the bridge. Some Federal cavalry were loitering around the bridge, looking to have the honor of being the last to cross, but when DuPont told them he was about to set the bridge on fire – and they had better cross or be left stranded – the horsemen crossed, with some annoyance. DuPont himself was the last to cross, then had his men set the bridge ablaze. The Battle of New Market was over.

AT WAR



Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District was created by Congress to protect and interpret the Valley's Civil War story. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, the authorized management entity for the National Historic District, proudly shares this unique history with people around the world.

The National Historic District lies in northwest Virginia, within an easy drive of Richmond, Tidewater, and the DC metropolitan area.

Interstate 81 runs the length of the District, linking with I-66 in the north and I-64 in the south. From the east and west, the District is also served by US Routes 250 (Staunton), 33 (Harrisonburg), 55 (Strasburg), 50 and 7 (both in Winchester).



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



www.CivilWarTrails.org

www.ShenandoahAtWar.org



www.VirginiaCivilWar.org

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www.Virginia.org

To sign up for our monthly "Shenandoah At War" e-newsletter, email us at info@svbf.net. For more information, call 540-740-4545.