

# ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

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## The Fall of Richmond

By Mary DeCredico, United States Naval Academy

### Resources

#### If you can read only one book

Author	Title. City: Publisher, Year.
Thomas, Emory M.	<i>The Confederate State of Richmond – A Biography of the Capital</i> . Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971.

### Books and Articles

Author	Title. City: Publisher, Year.
Chesson, Michael Bedout and Leslie Jean Roberts, eds.,	<i>Exile in Richmond: The Confederate Journal of Henri Garidel</i> . Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2001.
Crofts, Daniel	<i>Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis</i> . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989.
DeLeon, Thomas Cooper	<i>Four Years in Rebel Capitals: An Inside View of Life in the Southern Confederacy</i> . Mobile, AL: Gossip Printing, 1890.
J. B. Jones, James I. Robertson Jr., ed.	<i>A Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate States Capital</i> , 2 vols. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2015.
Link, William A.	<i>Roots of Secession: Slavery and Politics in Antebellum Virginia</i> . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
McGuire, Judith	<i>A Southern Refugee's Diary</i> . New York: E.J. Hale & Son, 1867.

Putnam, Sallie Brock	<i>Richmond During the War: Four Years of Personal Observation</i> , New York: G. W. Carleton, 1867.
Wiggins, Sarah Woolfolk, ed.	<i>The Journals of Josiah Gorgas, 1857-1878</i> . Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1995.

## Organizations

Organization Name	Description, Contact information including address, email
The American Civil War Museum	The American Civil War Museum comprises three sites: The Museum and White House of the Confederacy as well as Historic Tredegar, both in Richmond, and The Museum of the Confederacy-Appomattox in Appomattox, Virginia 1201 East Clay Street Richmond VA 23219 500 Tredegar Street Richmond VA 23219 159 Horseshoe Road Appomattox VA 24522. Their website is: <a href="https://acwm.org/">https://acwm.org/</a>
Virginia Historical Society	The Virginia Historical Society collects, preserves and interprets the history of Virginia. 428 North Boulevard Richmond VA 23220 Their website is: <a href="https://www.virginiahistory.org/">https://www.virginiahistory.org/</a>

## Web Resources

URL	Name and description
<a href="http://www.civilwartraveler.com/EAST/VA/va-central/richmond.html">http://www.civilwartraveler.com/EAST/VA/va-central/richmond.html</a>	The CivilWarTraveller provides useful information on Civil War events and locations in and around Richmond.
<a href="http://www.mdgorman.com/">http://www.mdgorman.com/</a>	Civil War Richmond is an online research project to collect documents, photographs and maps pertaining to Richmond during the Civil War.
<a href="http://www.civilwarphotos.net/files/richmond.htm">http://www.civilwarphotos.net/files/richmond.htm</a>	Civil War Photos has a page dedicated to Richmond.

<a href="http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/richmond_during_the_civil_war">http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/richmond_during_the_civil_war</a>	The Encyclopedia Virginia entry on Richmond During the Civil War was authored by Mary DeCredico and Jaime Amanda Martinez.
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### Other Sources

Name	Description, contact information including address, email
Richmond National Battlefield Park	<p>The Richmond National Battlefield Park is operated by the National Park Service. The park offers an eighty-mile driving tour covering 13 separate sites and four visitor centers. Contact the park service at 3215 East Broad Street Richmond VA 23223 804 226 1981</p> <p>A list of the addresses for the 13 sites of the park is available at:  <a href="https://www.nps.gov/rich/planyourvisit/address-list.htm">https://www.nps.gov/rich/planyourvisit/address-list.htm</a></p> <p>The home page for the park is:  <a href="https://www.nps.gov/rich/index.htm">https://www.nps.gov/rich/index.htm</a></p> <p>The park driving map is available at:  <a href="https://www.nps.gov/rich/planyourvisit/maps.htm">https://www.nps.gov/rich/planyourvisit/maps.htm</a></p>

### Scholars

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## Topic Précis

Lee had battled Grant throughout the spring of 1864 in the Overland Campaign. Able to thwart Grant's attempts to flank the Army of Northern Virginia, Lee was finally forced to dig in on the outskirts of Petersburg, Virginia, a significant industrial and supply hub about thirty miles south of Richmond. From June 1864 until March 1865, Grant steadily extended his lines. Lee's men, clad in tatters and starving for want of provisions, held on as best they could. At the Battle of Five Forks on April 1, 1865 Grant's forces defeated the Confederates and ordered a general offensive forcing Lee to abandon the Petersburg trenches which necessitated the evacuation of Richmond. On April 2 the Confederate government abandoned Richmond. Confederate troops ordered to destroy tobacco stored in the city started fires which spread quickly and were soon out of control, engulfing the lower part of the city. Residents began looting, barrels of liquor were broken open and drunken citizens and soldiers added to the destruction. The Tredegar Battalion, a group of workers organized by General Joseph Reid Anderson, owner of the Tredegar Iron Works, defended the Works against the angry mob. Only the Tredegar, of all the Richmond war establishments, escaped the torch. Mayor Joseph Mayo and other members of Richmond's City Council rode out of town to meet the advance elements of the Union army and returned to Richmond to await the arrival of the Union vanguard, the XXV Corps, which was largely composed of U.S. Colored Troops, under the command of Major General Godfrey Weitzel. At 8:15 a.m. on April 3, General Weitzel officially accepted the surrender at Richmond's City Hall. General Weitzel faced a herculean task. Not only did the fires threaten more private homes, but the population was destitute. He immediately ordered that rations be distributed to the groups huddled in Capitol Square. Steaming towards the Confederate capitol with Admiral David Dixon Porter was Abraham Lincoln with his son Tad. Lincoln, Porter and Tad went ashore, where masses of African Americans greeted the President. Other Northerners also flocked to Richmond to see the city that had symbolized the rebellion and that had withstood capture for four long years. The *Richmond Examiner* opined "The evacuation of Richmond would be the loss of all respect and authority towards the Confederate Government, the disintegration of the army, and the abandonment of the scheme of an independent Southern Confederation. Each contestant in the war has made Richmond the central object of all its plans and all its exertions. It has become the symbol of the Confederacy. Its loss would be material ruin to the cause, and in a moral point of view, absolutely destructive, crushing the heart and extinguishing the last hope of the country." With the fall of Richmond, the Confederacy lasted but one week before Lee surrendered his battered army to Grant at Appomattox Court House.

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