

Driving Tour of the Battlefield

Except for the North Anna Battlefield Park, the battlefield is privately owned. Please respect private homes and no trespassing signs.

1 Stop 1 - Mt. Carmel Church. The Federal Army arrived here on the morning of May 23, 1864. Hancock's corps turned south on Telegraph Road, Burnside's corps followed for 1.2 miles then turned right to Ox Ford. Warren's corps moved west and south to Jericho Mills followed by Wright's corps. Telegraph Road was the main north-south road connecting Fredericksburg with Richmond. It was a dirt road wide enough for two wagons, and ran parallel to present US Rt. 1 approximately 200 yards to the west. Proceed south on Rt. 1 4.5 miles to Rt. 684, Verdon Road. Turn right and go 2.5 miles. On the right is a sign to North Anna Battlefield Park. Follow the dirt road 1/2 mile to the parking lot.

2 Stop 2 - North Anna Battlefield Park and Site of the Battle of Ox Ford. There are two walking trails. The Gray Trail has 10 stops and the new Blue Trail has 13 stops. Each stop has an interpretive sign with narrative and map; some have pictures.

- **The Gray Trail** follows General Hill's line to Ox Ford on the North Anna River. The earthworks are largely intact and their strength is clear, especially since Union forces had to advance across open fields. This is part of the western wing of Lee's inverted V defensive line.

- **The Blue Trail** begins at Gray Trail Stop 7 and leads to the killing field, site of General Ledlie's defeat, and to fighting positions dug by Confederate pickets. The trail then follows the river upstream to Union trenches dug by men of Crittenden's division, Burnside's Corps, on May 25 after General Grant understood the danger posed by General Lee's inverted V defensive line. The battlefield covered by the Blue Trail has never before been open to the public.

Walking Distances: **Gray Trail**, round trip from the parking lot is 2 miles. Allow 90 minutes that includes a 4-minute stop at each sign. **Blue Trail**. A round trip from the parking lot is 3.8 miles. Allow 2 hours and 15 minutes, including a 4-minute stop at each sign. A round trip, beginning and ending at Stop 7 on the Gray Trail, is 2.6 miles. Allow 1 hour and 50 minutes.

The distance from the parking lot to Gray Trail Stop 7 is one-half mile.

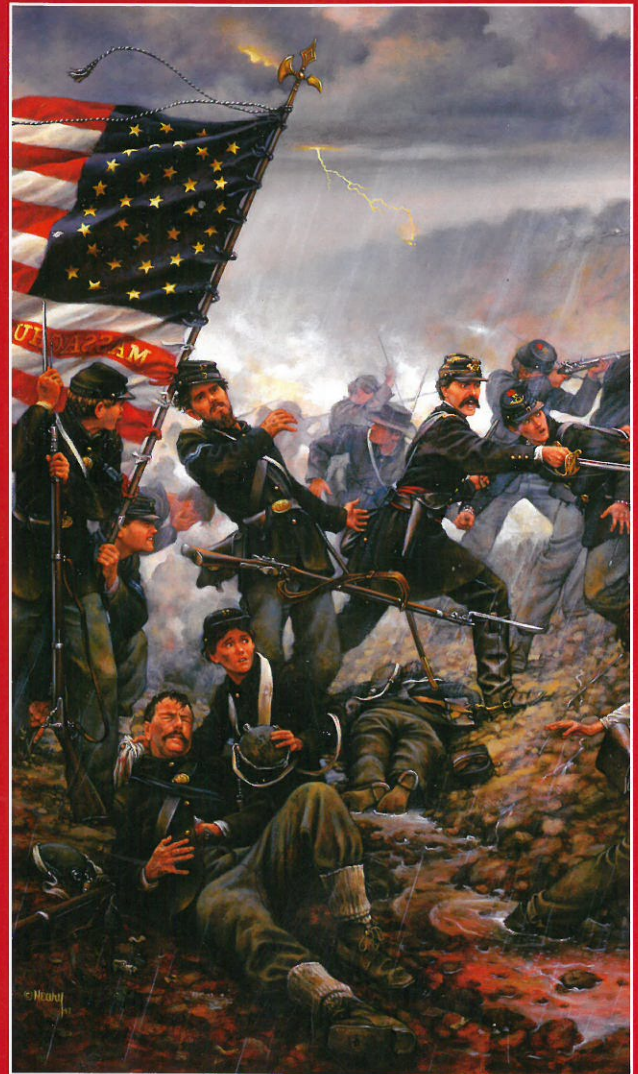
When finished, return to Rt. 684, turn left and drive 2.5 miles to Rt. 1. Turn right, go 0.4 mile and turn left on Rt. 688, Doswell Road. Proceed 0.3 mile to Hanover Junction, now named Doswell. Cross the tracks, pull off the road and park.

3 Stop 3 - Hanover Junction (today called Doswell). Directly in front stood the vital junction of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad, and the Virginia Central Railroad to the Shenandoah Valley. Lee's tent was in the southwest angle of the railroad intersection. Here he lay ill on May 24, unable to direct an attack on Hancock's corps. This concludes the tour. Thank you. (6-1-2015)

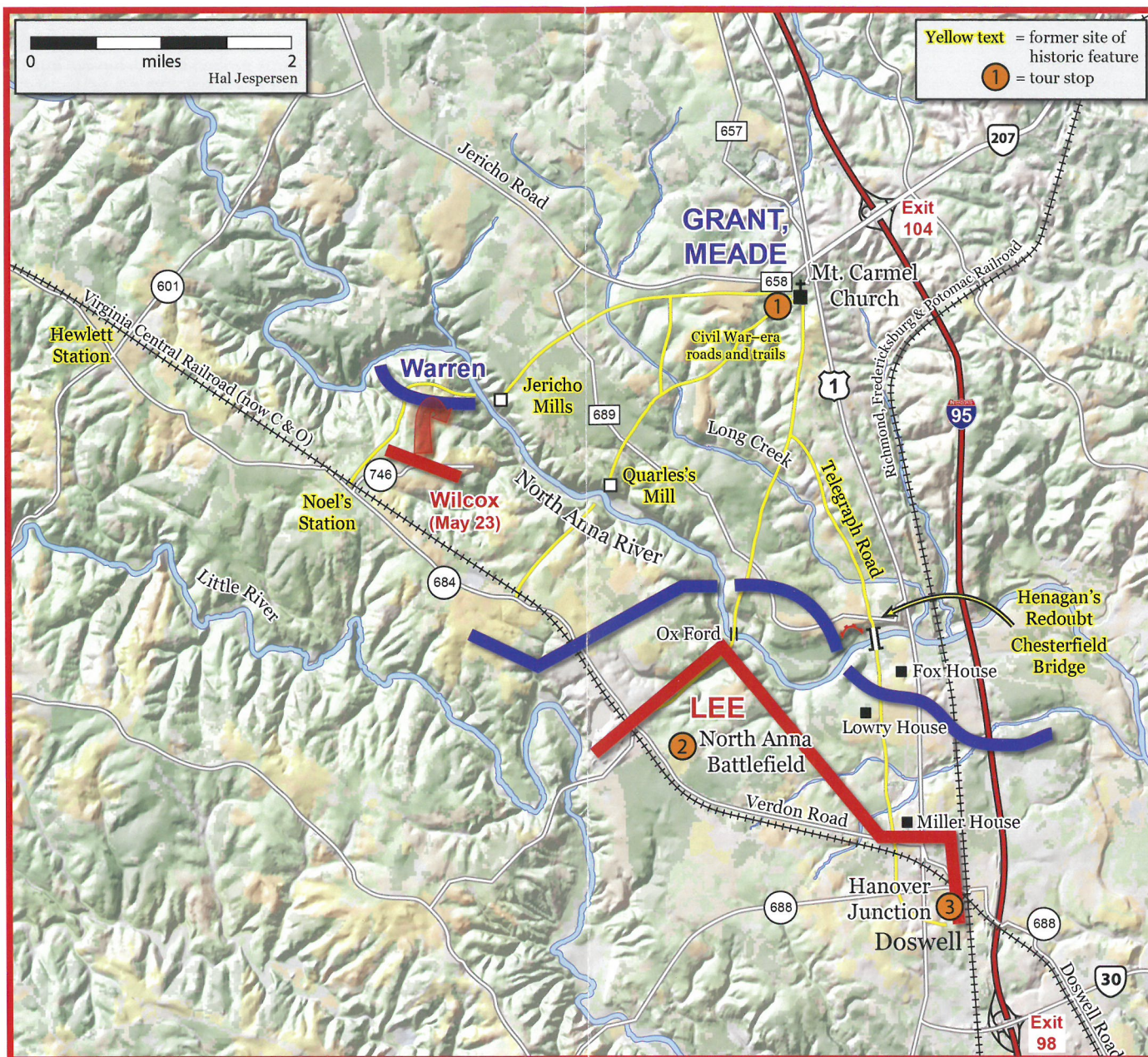
(Painting on front of Brochure: "Even to Hell Itself", The Battle of North Anna - Used with permission from the artist, Donna J. Neary.)

The Battle of North Anna River

May 21-26, 1864



*A Part of
General Grant's Overland Campaign and
General Lee's Last
Chance To Win A Decisive Victory Over
The Army Of The Potomac*



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- Martin Marietta Materials, Inc.-Doswell Quarry donated land for the North Anna Battlefield Park.
 - Hanover County Parks and Recreation Department administers and maintains the park.
 - Blue and Gray Education Society placed 23 interpretive signs along the Gray and Blue Trails.
- Suggested reading:** To the North Anna River, Grant and Lee, May 13-25, 1864 by Gordon C. Rhea

Note: For additional information about North Anna Battlefield Park trails and facilities, go to: <http://hanovercounty.gov/parks-and-rec/north-anna-battlefield-park/> The Blue and Gray Walking Trails have also been designated as Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trails. For information about the types of birds that may be seen in the park, go to: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/vbwt/site.asp?trail=3&loop=PHE&site=PHE01A>



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The Battle of North Anna River

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Background

The Civil War began on April 12, 1861 when Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. As the war entered its fourth year, President Abraham Lincoln summoned Major General Ulysses S. Grant to Washington, D.C. On March 8, 1864, he promoted Grant to lieutenant general commanding all

Union armies, a rank last held by George Washington. Grant accompanied the Army of the Potomac, and told army commander George G. Meade, "Lee's army is your objective, wherever Lee goes, there you will go also." Grant's goal was to destroy Confederate armed forces in Virginia and his campaign is known as the Overland Campaign. Starting on May 4 from camps around Culpeper, Union forces crossed the Rapidan River and in 30 days advanced nearly 85 miles, fighting Lee's army in a place called The Wilderness, at the village of Spotsylvania Court House, at the North Anna River, and finally at the crossroads town of Old Cold Harbor. Fighting was nearly continuous and casualties were horrific. Grant began the campaign with 118,000 men and suffered 55,000 casualties. Lee began with approximately 64,000 and lost 32,000. The north could replace losses like this but the south could not. Lee could no longer wage offensive warfare.

Key Site to Visit

North Anna Battlefield Park. The Battle of North Anna is noted for General Lee's ingenious inverted V or hog snout defense. The western-facing side of the Inverted V, defended by General A.P. Hill's corps, is largely intact including the apex or snout overlooking Ox Ford. Two walking trails are available. The Gray Trail leads visitors along one of the best-preserved Confederate trench fortifications in existence. A new Blue Trail includes the site of the Battle of Ox Ford and the killing field, the scene depicted on the front cover, and other sites open to the public for the first time.

Directions to the Battlefield

From Fredericksburg. Drive south on I-95 to Exit 104, Carmel Church. Turn right on Rt. 207 and go west for 0.5 mile. Cross Rt. 1, and turn left into the Carmel Church parking lot. To continue to North Anna Battlefield Park, turn south on Rt. 1, go 4.4 miles to Rt. 684, Verdon Road, and turn right. A road into the park is 2.5 miles ahead on the right. Watch for a sign. -From Richmond. Take I-95 north to Exit 104, Carmel Church. Turn left on Rt. 207 and go

west for 0.5 mile. Cross Rt. 1 and turn left into the Carmel Church parking lot. From there, follow directions above to North Anna Battlefield Park.

Opposing Forces

Army of the Potomac. General George G. Meade. Second Corps, General Winfield S. Hancock; Fifth Corps, General Gouverneur K. Warren; Sixth Corps, General Horatio G. Wright; Ninth Corps, General Ambrose E. Burnside; Cavalry Corps, General Philip H. Sheridan. General Grant provided operational direction for the Army.

Army of Northern Virginia. General Robert E. Lee. First Corps, General Richard H. Anderson; Second Corps, General Richard S. Ewell; Third Corps, General Ambrose P. Hill; Cavalry Corps, General James E. B. Stuart. Mortally wounded May 11, not replaced during campaign.

Approximate Strength. Union: 68,000, Confederate: 53,000. Each army had received replacements. They were often new recruits for Grant and experienced veterans for Lee.

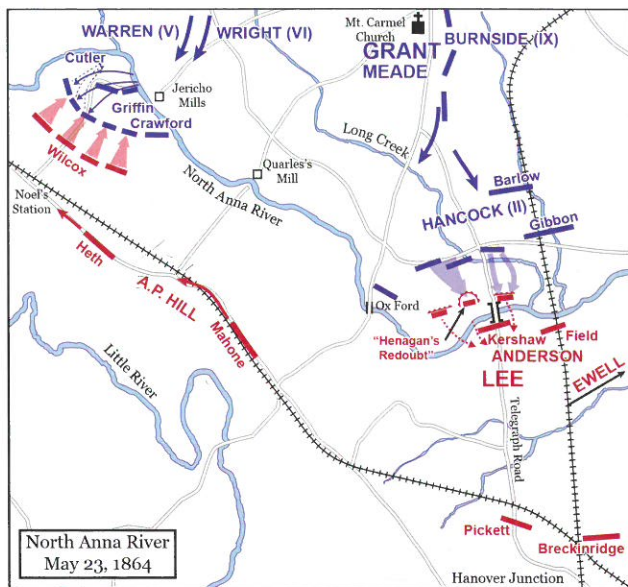
The Battle of North Anna River

May 20. Grant withdrew Hancock's corps from the line at Spotsylvania to draw Lee out of his trenches.

May 21. Thinking Grant was attempting to turn his right flank, Lee ordered the Confederate army to move south of the North Anna River, 22 miles, to protect the vital rail and road intersection at Hanover Junction. Through Hanover Junction passed the Virginia Central Railroad from the Shenandoah Valley, the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad (RF&P), and Telegraph Road.

May 22. Anderson and Ewell's corps crossed the North Anna River over Chesterfield Bridge and went into camp around Hanover Junction. Hill's corps crossed 5.7 miles to the west and camped at Hewlett Station. Lee posted Colonel John Henagan's South Carolina brigade at a small earthen fort or redoubt on the north side of the North Anna River to guard Chesterfield Bridge. The Army of the Potomac began its march south from Spotsylvania. Lee did not entrench along the North Anna River.

May 23. The Army of the Potomac arrived at the North Anna River. Birney's division, Hancock's corps, overran Henagan's Redoubt and captured Chesterfield Bridge plus the RF&P railroad bridge. Warren's corps crossed the North Anna River at Jericho Mills. Wilcox's division, Hill's corps, attacked Warren near Noel's Station and drove the Federals back in disorder. Federal units counter-attacked, pushed Wilcox back and entrenched. This fighting is known as the Battle of Jericho Mills. Lee was critical of A. P. Hill for not attacking with his entire corps, as "Jackson would have done". With Warren's corps firmly in place south of the river, Lee changed his tactics. Meeting near the Miller House with his corps commanders and chief engineer, Lee determined to defend Hanover Junction by an ingenious defensive plan using the natural contours of the land. The five-mile line would be

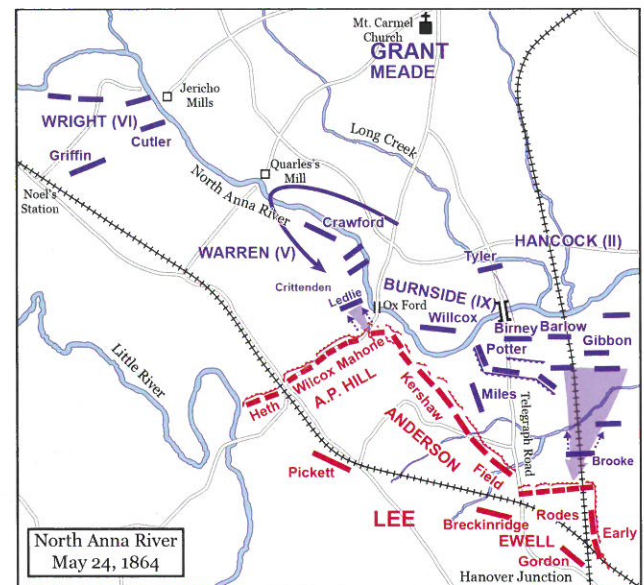


shaped like an inverted V with its apex at Ox Ford, its left or west wing anchored at Little River and its right or east wing at a swamp below Hanover Junction. The plan could split Grant's army into three parts. One part north of the river at Ox Ford, one part south of the river at Jericho Mills, and one part north of the river at Chesterfield Bridge leading to Hanover Junction. Lee would have short lines of movement within his defensive position. Meanwhile, six miles and two river crossings would separate Grant's forces, and slow reinforcements moving from one side to the other. If Hancock's corps crossed the river to the east side of the V, he could be attacked by superior numbers and crushed before reinforcements arrived. The plan would take advantage of Grant's aggressive nature. Lee's troops worked through the night of May 23-24 digging entrenchments. Hill's corps defended the west wing and apex overlooking Ox Ford. Anderson's corps held the upper half of the east wing and Ewell's corps held the lower half. Grant believed Lee was continuing to withdraw. Grant and Meade made their headquarters at Mt. Carmel Church.

May 24. The Federals reacted as Lee anticipated. Hancock's corps attacked at Chesterfield Bridge and crossed the river but was unable to drive the enemy in his front. The point of the V at Ox Ford divided the Union army. Grant recognized this and ordered General Burnside to take Ox Ford and reunite the army. Burnside attempted to cross the North Anna River at Ox Ford but resistance was too stiff. He then sent General Thomas Crittenden's division across at Quarles's Mill to gain the high ground and advance east to clear the Confederates from Ox Ford. Brigadier General James Ledlie led the lead brigade. He ran into the inverted V defensive line and rashly ordered an unsupported attack. The attack failed and his brigade was driven from the field. These

actions are known as the Battle of Quarles's Mill and the Battle of Ox Ford respectively. Wright's corps crossed at Jericho Mills. The fifth and sixth corps probed Lee's defensive line in front of Hill's corps but did not attack. When Hancock advanced across Chesterfield Bridge, he stepped into Lee's trap. He was opposed by Lee's first and second corps and outnumbered. However, Lee was suffering from severe dysentery and lay prostrate in his tent, unable to oversee an aggressive attack on Hancock. Further, he did not have confidence in his three corps commanders to direct such a complex attack, and the opportunity to strike Hancock soon passed. By mid-day, Grant and Meade realized Lee's army was not retreating but was entrenched in their front, and the Federal army was divided and vulnerable to attack. Meade ordered the army to entrench. Lee's inverted V had stopped the Union army.

May 25. By noon Grant fully understood Lee's deployment and the strength of his line. Union forces entrenched



opposite Lee's line, and destroyed sections of railroad under their control. Grant decided to withdraw and maneuver to the southeast around Lee.

May 26. At dark, Union forces pulled back to Mt. Carmel Church and there turned east toward Hanover town. After the battle, both sides concluded the other had lost its morale and willingness to fight. Both were wrong. After clashing at Haw's Shop and Bethesda Church, the two armies met again at Cold Harbor a week later. On June 14-15 the Army of the Potomac moved south across the James River toward Petersburg, 25 miles south of Richmond. The Siege of Petersburg followed from June 18, 1864 until the Union breakthrough on April 2, 1865 and the pursuit to Appomattox. There, General Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to General Grant on April 9, 1865.