

Civil War Roundtable Origins of Freedom trip – October 18-21, 2018

This was the first trip which combined sites of the Civil War and the Revolutionary War. It made for an interesting mix of locations and added a lot to the trip.



This is the Gaines's Mill Battlefield showing the historic Watt house in the background. This battle was fought in 1862 and resulted in a Confederate win by General Robert E. Lee over Union General McClellan. Fitz John Porter was the Union commander who was tasked with holding the line while the rest of the Union army escaped back to the James River. He held until dusk and then was overwhelmed by a massive attack from the Confederates. This area is almost the same exact location of Grant's battle of Cold Harbor which took place in 1864. We visited some of the fortifications of that battlefield. Lee won the battle of Cold Harbor, but that did not stop Grant from moving south again, forcing Lee to move to Petersburg in order to defend Richmond.

Yorktown, on the other hand, was the last major battle of the Revolutionary War and a victory for General George



Washington's combined forces of the Continental and French armies against the British forces of General Cornwallis. We walked parts of the battlefield and visited the museum there. The battlefield lies right by the York River, so it was easy to see how the French fleet, after defeating the British fleet, was able to prevent Cornwallis from fleeing the site.



The National Mariner's Museum and U.S. Monitor Center were a surprise and extremely interesting. We could have spent a lot more time there as there was so much to see. The museum is international in scope with its displays and contains thousands of items. The USS Monitor was discovered in 1973 and the innovative turret and other items, including personal ones from the crew, have been brought to the U.S. Monitor Center. This is the ironclad ship made famous in the Battle of Hampton Roads in 1862. A full scale replica of the USS Monitor sits on the grounds of the museum.



A visit to the early settlement of Jamestown was fascinating, even in a downpour of heavy rain. We managed to see some of the archaeological portions of the site and spent quality time in the Archaearium, their archaeological museum. That was a very educational stop and well worth the effort to see it. We also visited Monticello and Colonial Williamsburg, along with a stop at the Staunton National Cemetery on this trip.