

# Civil War Sites

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The Midland Trail (U.S. Route 60) follows, nearly identically, a route used by the opposing armies in the Civil War. It became strategically important as an east-west gateway into Ohio and Virginia when, during four years of bloody conflict, North and South sought dominance in the region.

In 1861 this area was strongly Confederate in sympathy. In the spring of 1861, recruitment and training camps were established at present-day St. Albans, Charleston, and Gauley Bridge. This Southern military activity brought an "invasion" of the Kanawha Valley by Union troops in July 1861.

Approximately 3500 troops in the Kanawha Valley withdrew in advance of the Union Army, establishing camps near Lewisburg and White Sulphur Springs. During their retreat, the Confederates set fire to the span at Gauley Bridge. An original stone pier from the bridge stands today as a silent reminder of those four long years when America divided against itself.

### Traveling West to East on the Trail

**1. Huntington:** During the first weekend of November the Reenactment of the Battle of Guyandotte takes place.

**2. Milton:** Union Baptist Church - Located at 1295 James River and Kanawha Turnpike in Milton. During the Civil War, the church was occupied by Union Troops, the 7th West Virginia Calvary who used the facility as a garrison to protect the one lane covered bridge that crossed the Mud River, just below the church. This covered bridge was a vital link in the James River and Kanawha Turnpike. By the war's end, the troops had completely gutted the church.

As the nation healed, so did the congregation. By 1867 the sanctuary had been restored and regular services were resumed. A Historical Marker acknowledges the role of the Union Church in West Virginia's colorful history.

**3. Putnam County:** The last weekend in March annually, over 300 reenactors commemorate the Skirmish at Hurricane Bridge and the Battle of Scary Creek, with everything from battle maneuvers to a Civil War Ball.

**4. St. Albans:** St. Mark's Episcopal Church -Used by Union Troops during the Civil War. Morgan's Plantation Kitchen, also located on the scenic riverfront, is a good example of a detached kitchen typical of the 1840s. Originally part of Morgan's Plantation, near the present John Amos Power Plant, Union soldiers were served meals in the Kitchen during the Battle of Scary Creek, the area's first significant battle of the Civil War.

**5. Charleston:** Craik-Patton House-Built in 1834 and later purchased by George S. Patton, a prominent Charleston lawyer and colonel in the Confederate Army. George S. Patton III, his grandson, was a famous World War II general.

**6. Cedar Grove - Virginia's Chapel and Slave Cemetery,** the historic "Little Brick Church," built in 1853, served as a Confederate hospital and a stable for Union Cavalry. After the war, the federal



government paid \$700 for war damages. The slave cemetery is behind the church.

**7. Glen Ferris:** The Glen Ferris Inn - Constructed in 1815, the inn was used as a Union Army headquarters and supply depot in 1861. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1991.

**8. Camp Tompkins:** Many well-known people, including future presidents Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley of the 23rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry, served at this large Union army campsite from 1861-1864.

**9. Chimney Corner** – This sharp and sudden switchback in the road was known as “Devil’s Elbow” and was the scene of fighting on September 3, 1861.

**10. Ansted:** Numerous military skirmishes took place at Hawks Nest in 1861 and 1862.

**11. Ansted:** The main structure of the Contentment Historic Complex was built in 1830 and was the post-war home of Confederate Colonel George W. Imboden, commander of the 18th Virginia Cavalry. It is on the National Register of Historic Places and is open for tours daily June through September.

**12. Ansted:** The mother of “Stonewall” Jackson, the legendary Confederate general who was a native of West Virginia, is buried at West Lake Cemetery.

**13. Sewell Mountain Area:** General Lee camped at Lee’s Tree, on the eastern slope, during the Sewell Mountain campaign in September and October of 1861; here he first saw his famous horse, Traveller. At the eastern foot of the mountain, the gently rolling plains held a number of military encampments, and several skirmishes occurred in the area.

**13. Lee’s Headquarters** – Known in decades past as “Grandview,” this house, constructed in 1840, was

used by General Lee as his headquarters during the Sewell Mountain campaign. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1992.

**14. Lewisburg:** The Visitor Center, in the heart of town, offers information about the many points of interest closely associated with the Civil War, as well as Appalachian history from pioneer days to the present.

