



# BURLINGTON, VERMONT

## Civil War Places Walking Tour

*Created by the Vermont Humanities Council, with research by historian Howard Coffin, and support from the National Endowment for the Humanities.*

With a population of 7,700 in 1860, Burlington was Vermont's largest community, and probably its most influential, during the Civil War era. This self-guided walking tour will take you through the Queen City's downtown, Old North End, and South End hill section to view some of the many significant Civil War places preserved.

Burlington's cardinal directions are simple: Lake Champlain is to the west, and the University at the top of the hill is to the east. To walk north, keep the lake on your left and the hill on your right. This tour takes an estimated 2 hours to complete. Begin at the northern top of Church Street, at the street's landmark church.

### 1. Unitarian Church (Church and Pearl Streets)

- The Civil War-era pastor here was Rev. Joshua Young, an ardent abolitionist. Young officiated at the funeral of John Brown, at North Elba, N.Y., and he wrote years later of the Sunday after his return: "How vividly I recall that Sunday, my text, the sermon, my subject, Christ's example of lowly service, washing his disciples' feet, the symbol of willingness to serve for love's sake. I remarked the appearance of the congregation, many new faces seldom or never seen there before; many familiar ones conspicuous by their absence; and, in the atmosphere, a certain unmistakable indication that things were different"... "Next day I learned what had happened. Six of the wealthiest families from my parish had taken an oath and gone over to a neighboring church." Young was soon dismissed from his post at the church.

*Walk west down Pearl Street, towards Battery Park and Lake Champlain. Pass 18 Pearl Street, the home of William Wert Henry, commander of the 10<sup>th</sup> Vermont, from 1869-1890.*

### 2. Battery Park (Pearl, Battery, and Park Streets)

- Before it went south as part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vermont Brigade, John Lonergan's A Company of the 13<sup>th</sup> Vermont drilled here.
- A monument to William Wells was dedicated here on May 30, 1914. The statue is a replica of one erected on the battlefield at Gettysburg, at the base of Round Top, where a portion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Cavalry, led by Wells, began its doomed charge after the defeat of Pickett's Charge.

*Walk north on Park Street until you reach North Street.*

**3. Camp Underwood / Fairgrounds** (North, Pitkin, and Blodgett Street, Manhattan Drive)

- The rectangular area extending north from North Street to Manhattan Drive between Pitkin and Blodgett Street was once the city fairgrounds. During the Civil War, it was named Camp Underwood as used as a training camp for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vermont and 17<sup>th</sup> Vermont Regiments and the 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Cavalry.

*Turn right to walk east up North Street away from the lake.*

**4. Lander House** (161-163 North Street)

- Burlington's last survivor of the war, Peter Lander, lived here from 1880 until his death in 1936. Lander enlisted in the 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Cavalry at 16 and participated in Judson Kilpatrick's raid on Richmond. He served as a personal aide to Major General Wilfield Scott Hancock, commander of the Army of the Potomac's Second Corps, during the Battle of the Wilderness. On October 27, 1864, he was captured at Reams Station, but managed to escape that night.

*Continue walking east on North Street.*

**5. Mrs. George Stannard House** (239 North Street)

- This house was purchased in 1875 by Emily Stannard, the wife of Brevet-Major General George Jerrison Stannard, and the couple lived here for a time. Mrs. Stannard joined her husband in Virginia after he assumed command of the Second Vermont Brigade, and helped care for ailing soldiers in field hospitals.

*Continue east on North Street, until you reach North Union Street. Turn right and walk south on North Union towards downtown.*

**6. Woodbury House** (4 Loomis Street, northern corner of Loomis and N. Union Sts)

- Urban A. Woodbury, the first Vermonter to lose a limb in the Civil War, lived here after the war. Woodbury was elected lieutenant governor in 1888, and elected governor in 1894 after he ran on a ticket with another amputee, under the slogan "one good pair of arms between us."

*Continue south on Union Street until you reach College Street. Turn left and walk up College Street, passing two sites.*

**7. The Peck House** (275 College Street)

- Theodore Peck, born here, enlisted at age 18 in the Vermont Cavalry, and also served in the 9<sup>th</sup> Vermont Regiment. He was awarded a Medal of Honor for bravery at Newport Barracks, and was wounded in the attack on Forts Harrison and Gilmer. Peck was among the first Union officers to enter Richmond and returned to Vermont a war hero. As adjutant general after the war, Peck saw to it that the *Revised Roster of Vermont Volunteers* was compiled and published in 1892. Known as “Peck’s Roster,” it lists every one of the 34,238 Vermonters who served.

### **8. Larner House** (337 College Street)

- George Hagar joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Infantry at age 25, as the first Burlington man to enlist. He fought in the first battle, Big Bethel, and later served in the 12<sup>th</sup> Vermont. He built this house in 1871.

*Continue up College Street and walk east through the University of Vermont green to the Old Mill.*

### **9. Old Mill** (94 University Place)

- Completed in 1829, the building housed troops during the war of 1812, and was a familiar landmark to all UVM students who served in the Civil War. Wilbur Fisk of Sharon, Vermont, wrote this account of a visit to the Old Mill on his return from the war in late June 1865: “I don’t know of anything that could be more delightful to a four-year-old soldier than to stand upon the tip top of an institution like that in his own native State, which he has not seen in its verdure and beauty since the day he first left for war, and look at what he has so long wished to see from a standpoint like that. Quite a respectable portion of the country that a man may be proud to say he was born in, can be seen from there”...“If anybody should tell me that a man could live in that beautiful region and be a copperhead, I should want to tell him he lied.”

*Cross the UVM green again, bearing to the left and walking down Main Street. One block below the green, turn left onto Summit Street.*

### **10. Oliver Otis Howard House** (26 Summit Street)

- Major General Oliver Otis Howard moved to Burlington in 1892 to be close to his eldest son, Colonel Guy Howard, who was overseeing the construction of nearby Fort Ethan Allen (in Burlington’s New North End). Originally from Maine, O. O. Howard commanded the brigade at First Bull Run in which the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vermont served, and lost an arm at Seven Pines. He commanded the Army of the Potomac’s 11<sup>th</sup> Corps, which was smashed by Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville. On the first day at Gettysburg, Howard was briefly

in command of all Union forces and selected the high ground of Cemetery Hill at the army's fallback position. After the war, he was appointed by Abraham Lincoln to supervise the Freedmen's Bureau, after which he founded two historic black colleges: Howard University in Washington, and Lincoln Memorial University in eastern Tennessee. He died in this house in 1909, and is buried in Lakeview Cemetery on North Avenue.

### **11. Joselyn House** (83 Summit Street)

- Stephen Perry Joselyn bought this in 1907 and enlarged it for his retirement. A native of Brownington, Joselyn served in the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment, and in 1864 became an officer of the 115<sup>th</sup> Colored Regiment. He and his regiment battled guerillas in southwestern Kentucky before he became, for a time, military superintendent of the Louisville & Lexington Railroad. Late in the war, Joselyn was posted to the Army of the James and took part in operations around Richmond.

*Walk west down Maple Street (just before Joselyn House) two blocks. Turn left onto South Union Street and walk south.*

### **12. Greenleaf House** (254 South Union Street)

- William Greenleaf built this home in 1887. He enlisted in May 1861 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vermont Regiment and later served in the 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Cavalry, receiving three severe wounds at Hagerstown, Maryland, as the cavalry pursued Lee's retreating army from Gettysburg. Recovered, he rejoined the cavalry and was again badly wounded in Wilson's Raid on June 23, 1864, when he was captured.

*Walk further south on South Union Street. Turn right to go west down Adams Street until you reach Church Street and turn right, going north.*

### **13. Converse Home** (272 Church Street)

- In 1844, the Reverend John K. Converse established the Burlington Female Seminary on this site, with tuition at \$6 per quarter. Reverend Converse was pastor of Burlington's First Congregational Church and long active in the Vermont Colonization Society, which he served as secretary. The Colonization Society had chapters all over Vermont, but often conflicted with the Vermont Anti-Slavery Society over their differing goals. While Anti-Slavery society members wished for emancipation, the Colonization Society sought to remove current and former slaves to a colony in Liberia. Converse traveled throughout New England giving lectures on the topic in the 1830s, advocating that African-Americans

go to Liberia as “missionaries,” and thus avoid what he felt would be certain chaos brought by emancipation and integration in America.

*Walk north on Church Street, towards downtown.*

**14. Thayer House** (241 Church Street)

- Dr. Samuel Thayer was dean of the UVM College of Medicine when the Civil War began. Appointed Vermont’s surgeon general, he supervised the care of Vermont’s casualties in the three Vermont military hospitals and in hospitals around Washington. He also served as superintendent of Burlington’s Baxter Hospital, where more than 2,000 soldiers were treated. Some 60% returned to duty. After the Battle of the Wilderness, Thayer helped care for Vermont wounded at Fredericksburg. His wife, Sarah Thayer, was a prominent member of the Christian Sanitary Commission, and their home was a point of distribution for goods being sent on to soldiers.

*Continue north on Church Street until you reach College Street.*

**15. Burlington Free Press Building** (College St, between Church St and Winooski Ave)

- The *Free Press* was published here during the Civil War, spreading wartime news to eager readers on the home front. It was owned by the Benedict family. George Grenville Benedict was a Medal of Honor winner who edited the *Free Press* for forty years, and was also the author of the 1888 two-volume classic Vermont in the Civil War. Benedict’s family home is at 31 South Prospect Street on the University of Vermont campus.

*Walk west on College Street to City Hall Park.*

**16. City Hall Park** (St. Paul and College Streets)

- Wartime City Hall park stood on the site of Burlington’s modern city hall, at the southeast corner of the park, and was the scene of many commemorative events. According to George Grenville Benedict, it was here that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Vermont Regiment arrived home on July 14, 1865. “They were received with a salute of cannon, were escorted to the city hall by a mounted escort of citizens” ...”and entertained at a dinner in the city hall, served by the ladies of Burlington.” This honor was also accorded to the returning 8th, 9th, and 10th Regiments returning in the summer of 1865.
- On June 26, 1900, the *Burlington Free Press* reminisced about one such homecoming: “June 22, 1865, at about six o’clock in the afternoon, there arrived in Burlington the first detachment of the Vermont troops, to return home at the close of the war. Six hundred

and sixty-one boys in blue and three commissioned officers, from the 'Old Brigade,' dusty, tired and hungry, were given a 'welcome home' by the good people of Burlington, that has never been surpassed. We were met at the"...depot by several of the citizens and a band and a drum corps from Winooski."

- In 1891, the body of Brigadier General George Stannard came home from Washington. As reported in the *Free Press*, "hundreds were gathering in City Park and on all sides of the square, awaiting the time when the funeral cortege should take up the line of march. The scene was one of deep interest, -- the great multitude awaiting in hushed expectation, flags drooping from their staffs at half mast, public and private buildings draped in black, stores and places of business all around closed."
- On Memorial Day in 1907, the Stannard Women's Relief Corps dedicated the monument at the park's northwest corner. Urban Woodbury, former governor and the first Vermonter to lose a limb in the war, presided over the ceremony. The 17 foot Barre granite stone puts the number of Burlington men who served at 779, of which 47 died of disease, 101 were discharged for disability, 68 deserted, 68 were missing in action, and 38 were killed or mortally wounded.

This walking tour was researched by historian Howard Coffin, and designed by Julia Lewandoski, Civil War Program Assistant at the Vermont Humanities Council. If you know of a Civil War place of interest, please contact Howard Coffin at [hjcoffin@comcast.net](mailto:hjcoffin@comcast.net).

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