



## NORTHERN VIRGINIA: CROSSROADS OF CONFLICT

### Mosby's Cavalry: Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy

(2 - Day Itinerary)

John Singleton Mosby personified the romantic Southern cavalier and rose to become one of the most legendary and dashing heroes of the Confederate Cause. Along with his band of guerilla cavalry, known as the Partisan Rangers, Mosby became famous for his daring exploits in Northern Virginia, raiding Union outposts and supply lines, gathering intelligence, and eluding Federal pursuers. After a dramatic raid into Federally-held Fairfax Court House and the capture of a Union general and 58 horses there, Mosby's legendary status was assured. Robert E. Lee was heard to exclaim, "Hurrah for Mosby! I wish I had a hundred like him!" President Lincoln, however, lamented: "I can make new brigadier generals but I can't make horses." Mosby would continue to harass Union forces in Northern Virginia throughout the war, eventually disbanding his partisan band after Lee's surrender, unwilling to capitulate. This itinerary takes visitors through the beautiful Virginia countryside and through some of the most historic towns and villages in the state as they follow the trail of the "Gray Ghost."



#### Sites

**Mosby's Cavalry: Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy** is a circuitous route that can be begun at any location. This itinerary offers one sample route.

*Note: All sites along Virginia Civil War Trails are motor coach accessible. Some sites are museums with admission charges, and are noted with a (\$) symbol. However, all Virginia Civil War Trails markers are accessible without paying admission charges.*

#### Day 1

Begin your tour in the historic city of Fairfax at the **Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center**. Exhibits here outline the city's rich history with some emphasis on the Civil War. Visit nearby Fairfax Court House to witness the site of a daring Mosby Raid in March 1863. Not only did Mosby capture 58 horses, but a Union general too.

Proceed on to the **Town of Leesburg**, which offers interpretation at the visitor center featuring a

chronology of Leesburg-area events including stories about the adventures of Mosby and his pursuers.

Stop for lunch in Leesburg.

Travel onward following the trail of the Gray Ghost through areas such as **Mount Zion Church**, **Aldie Mill**, and **Middleburg**, a Mosby base. With its rural charm and clusters of historic buildings, Middleburg reminds visitors of the town's Civil War heritage. Take some time to enjoy this quiet hamlet, with its quaint shops and historic ambiance.

Continue on to **Goose Creek Bridge**, a circa 1810 bridge where on June 21, 1863 J.E.B. Stuart's Confederate cavalry held off Union cavalry and infantry. Next stop is **Upperville**, where Stuart's troopers again fought hard on June 21. The Confederate resistance proved successful, however, as Lee moved his army to Pennsylvania unseen.

Stop for dinner back at the Red Fox Inn, one of Mosby's headquarters, in Middleburg.

## Day 2

Begin your second day at **Sky Meadows State Park (Mount Bleak)**, where beautiful vistas and the historic Mount Bleak, home of the Abner Settle family, are highlights. Next, follow Mosby and his raiders to stops such as **Rectortown** and **Marshall (historic Salem)**, where Mosby's Confederate raiders fought (Oct. 5, 1864) and finally disbanded (April 21, 1865). Continue on to the town of **The Plains** followed by a stop at **Thoroughfare Gap** and **Warrenton**. At the **Old Jail Museum**, good Civil War

displays, with some great Mosby items, are included in the excellent small museum.

Take a break for refreshments and some shopping and sightseeing in Warrenton.

After your break, travel to **Rappahannock Station**, just outside Remington, a strategic point for both armies. Fighting Nov. 7, 1863, put the crossing under Union control for the rest of the war. Continue on to **Catlett's Station**, where J.E.B. Stuart's cavalymen attacked a Union supply depot Aug. 22, 1862, capturing, among other things, Federal commander John Pope's cloak, hat and dispatch book. End your tour at the **Manassas Museum** (\$), and explore the history of Manassas and the Northern Virginia Piedmont.

Have a late lunch in Manassas before heading home. ★

## Sites Visited

- ★ Fairfax Museum
- ★ Fairfax
- ★ Leesburg
- ★ Mt. Zion Church
- ★ Aldie Mill
- ★ Middleburg
- ★ Goose Creek Bridge
- ★ Upperville
- ★ Mount Bleak Farm
- ★ Rectortown
- ★ Salem
- ★ The Plains
- ★ Thoroughfare Gap
- ★ Old Jail Museum
- ★ Warrenton
- ★ Rappahannock Station
- ★ Catlett's Station
- ★ The Manassas Museum



For more information: