

News from the Stow Historical Society

A newsletter for all friends of Stow history. Please feel free to pass it along to others who might be interested!

April 8, 2015

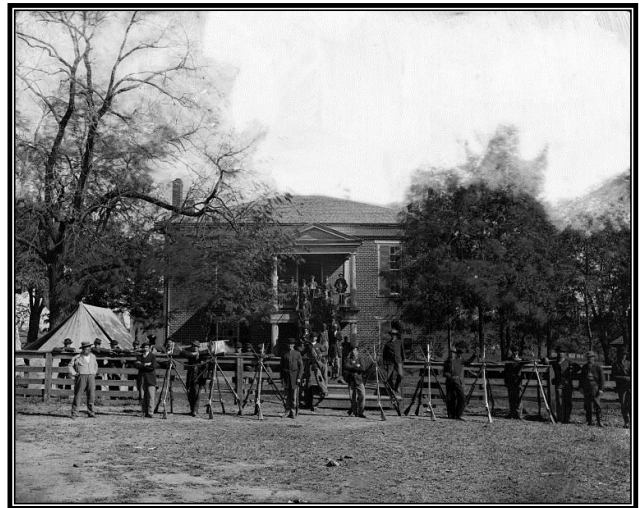
Spring will be a busy season for the Stow Historical Society. Please save the following dates and join us for some exciting events!

Bells Across The Land at First Parish Church, 3:15 pm Thursday, April 9

On April 9, 1865 Union General Ulysses S. Grant met Confederate General Robert E. Lee to set the terms of the surrender of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. The National Park Service will ring bells at Appomattox Court House National Historic Park at 3:00 PM on April 9 as part of the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the ending of the Civil War. The bells will ring for four minutes, each minute symbolic of a year of the war.

More than 750,000 Americans died in the war; thirty three of those were from Stow, a town of 1,537 at the time. According to research done by Marilyn Zavorski, 186 men with connections to Stow served in the Civil War. Their ages ranged from 15 to 52. The National Park Service is inviting churches, temples, schools, city halls, public buildings and historic sites to ring their bells at 3:15 PM on April 9.

Please gather with members of the First Parish Church and the Stow Historical Society at 3:15 PM on April 9 to commemorate the lives of those who died in the war and as the next step in the continuing struggle for civil rights.



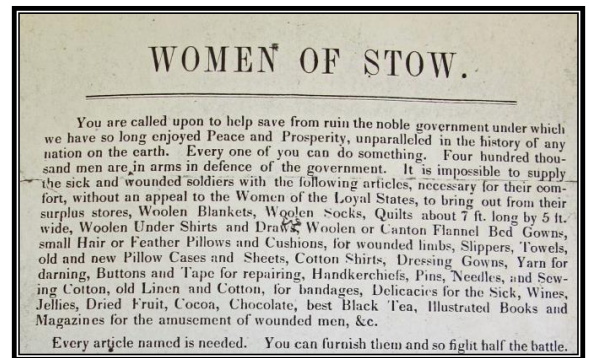
*Union soldiers at Appomattox Court House, April, 1865.
(Library of Congress.)*

See below for a pictorial history of the Civil War Appomattox Campaign.

May 11 -15, 2015

Stow during the Civil War: Its Soldiers and the Home Front

Team teaching with Hale Middle School's 8th grade Social Studies teacher, Kevin Keaveney, the Stow Historical Society will be bringing to the students Stow's response to the Civil War - its soldiers and the home front activities. The 8th grade social studies classroom will be set up as a museum to feature Stow's participation during the Civil War years. The 8th grade students will act as docents when the 6th and 7th grade classes visit. The culminating event of this week will be a concert for the entire school on Friday, May 15th, presented by *The Hardtacks* (<http://civilwarfolkmusic.com/>), and funded by the Stow Cultural Council.



Excerpt -- Oct 23, 1861

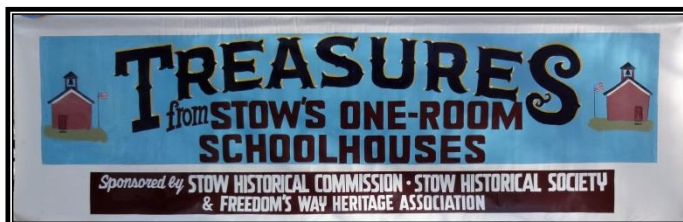
May 16, 2015, 10 AM - 3 PM

Treasures from Stow's One-Room Schoolhouses

Freedom's Way Heritage Area has invited the 45 towns and cities within its bounds to participate in "Hidden Treasures Weekend," an exciting two-day regional celebration. On Saturday, May 16th and Sunday, May 17th, 2015, communities across the 994-square-mile Freedom's Way area, home to over 750,000 people, will offer free, public programs featuring a "hidden treasure" in their town.



Stow's "Hidden Treasure" program is *Treasures from Stow's One-Room Schoolhouses*. All are invited to tour the extensive exhibit during Stow's Springfest on Saturday, May 16, 2015. The Stow exhibit, set up in Center School's upper lobby, will assure easy viewing and interactive activities for all ages from preschoolers to those young-at-heart. A featured document will be original 1829 Scholar Roster from Stow's School District #1 which will be coupled with scholars' stories. These scholars' homes have been located on the Stow 1830 Map. In 1829 Stow had 5 school districts. In which district is your present home located? Take your photo in front of the 4' x 5' photo of West School, Stow's surviving 1825 school house. View photos of Stow's many by-gone school houses. Try your proficiency at 19th century cursive penmanship skills...

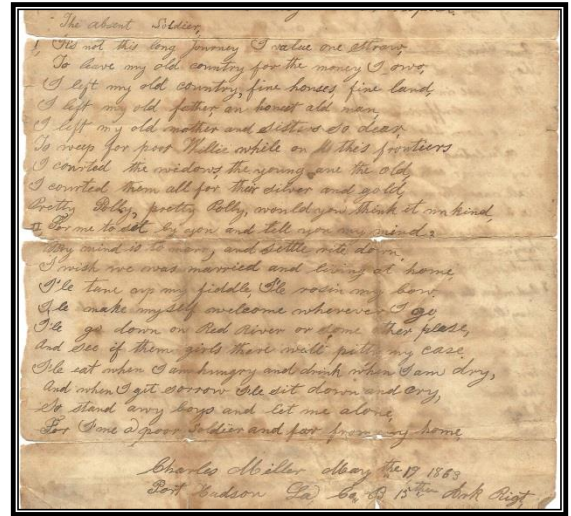


Stow's Hidden Treasure's program is sponsored by the Stow Historical Commission, Stow Historical Society and Freedom's Way Heritage Area in conjunction with Stow's Springfest Committee.

May 17, 2015, 4 PM

Songs of the Civil War - Sounds of Stow Spring Concert

Before and after the *Sounds of Stow* concert, the Stow Historical Society will have on display *Stow During the Civil War* exhibits in First Parish Church's Community Room. One featured document will be a facsimile of the Confederate poem about *The Absent Soldier*, which was found on the battlefield in Port Hudson, LA by Stow's Private Samuel A. Lawrence, 53rd MA Infantry Regiment, Company D.



The *Sounds of Stow* commissioned the multifaceted local composer Dorothy VanAndel Frisch to write a musical score for this poem, *The Absent Soldier*. Sunday, May 17th, this special treasure from Stow's town vault will be premiered in song along with historical selections to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the conclusion of the American Civil War. The Civil War folk musicians, *The Hardtacks*, will be participating with the *Sounds of Stow*.

Sounds of Stow <http://www.soundsofstow.org/season/>

The Hardtacks <http://civilwarfolkmusic.com/>



June 4, 2015, Morning and Afternoon Sessions

Center School's 3rd Graders and Stow History

At Stow Town Hall

The five 3rd grade classes will be walking to Stow's Town Hall to learn more about Stow's history. The multifaceted program features projected photos with discussion, reenactment by students, and several smaller-group, hands-on activities for the students.

Extra hands from the community are very welcome. The SHS sets up numerous tables with "vintage" artifacts, which fascinate 8-9 year-olds. Examples of artifacts which are unfamiliar to these students include a typewriter, a coffee grinder, *old* telephones and cameras, *old* (yet sturdy) toys... Have an item or two you'd like to share? Contact Marilyn Zavorski (978-897-5588). There will be two one- hour programs: morning and after lunch. *Times to be announced.*

April, 1865

In April of 1865 two momentous events took place that shaped the future of our country. General Robert E. Lee surrendered his Army of Northern Virginia, signaling the unescapable defeat of the Confederacy. Just five days later, President Abraham Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth at Ford Theater in Washington. See the next newsletter for more on the second.

On the night of April 2, 1865 Lee led his demoralized, starving and exhausted troops from the trenches that surrounded Petersburg and Richmond, Virginia. General Ulysses S. Grant's Union forces' siege to capture Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, was on the verge of success. Lee's supply lines were cut and his only alternative to capture was flight. The two cities fell to the Union forces the next day. Ten months of siege left the cities in ruins.



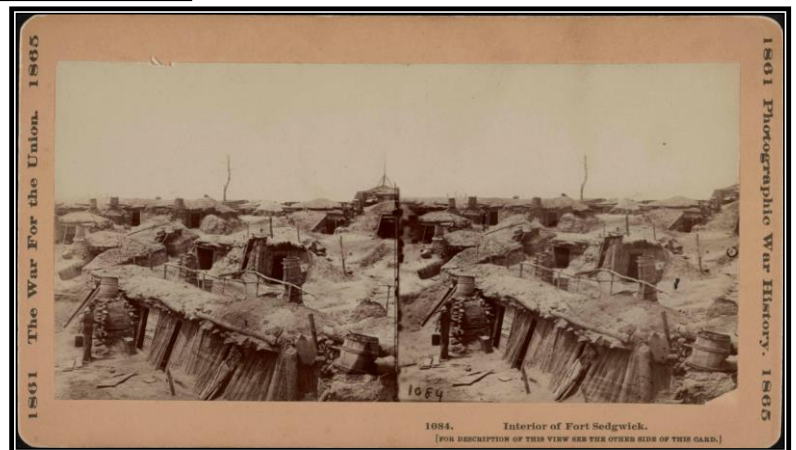
Ruins of Carey Street, Richmond, Virginia; photo April, 1865, (Library of Congress)

Below: Rebel breastworks in front of Petersburg. The small mounds with chimneys are the soldiers' quarters, underground. Photo taken April 3, 1865. Produced later on a stereo card. (Library of Congress.)

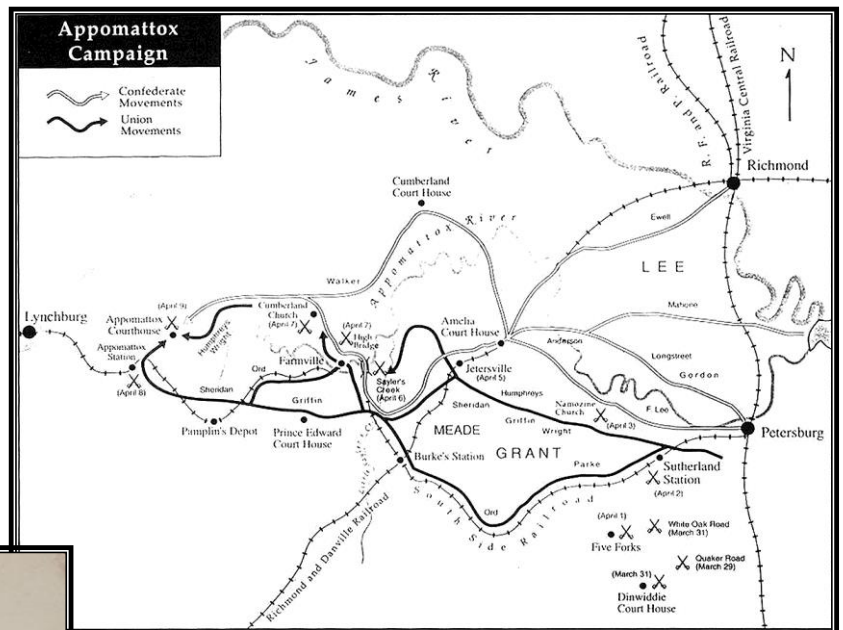


Stereographs were an early form of three-dimensional photography. They were used for education and entertainment purposes and were very popular in the late nineteenth century. These cards had historical information printed on the back.

Right: Stereograph showing a view of the above ground portion of bomb-proof living quarters in Fort Sedgwick, outside Petersburg, Va. A soldier carries water past a primitively constructed chimney. Created by Timothy O'Sullivan, 1865. The back of the card reads: "Fort Sedgwick on the Petersburg line was nicknamed "Fort Hell" because the Rebel shot and shell was rained into it so constantly and fiercely. This glimpse of the bomb-proof quarters of the garrison gives an idea of the unpleasantness of the fort as a place of residence during the early days of 1865 "



Lee moved his troops west, marching to link up with the confederate forces in North Carolina. He was hoping to reach supplies, first at Amelia Station and then at the Railroad Station southwest of the village of Appomattox Court House. Finding no supplies at Amelia Station, Lee delayed a day to send out foragers, which would prove very costly. As they headed on to Appomattox Station, almost a fourth of his troops were captured at Saylor's Creek by General Sheridan's cavalry on

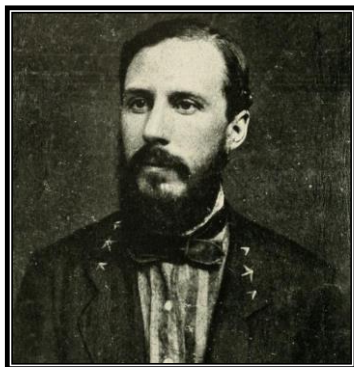


Appomattox Station, April 1865. Photo by Timothy O'Sullivan. (Library of Congress)

April 6. After other minor skirmishes, Lee arrived at the village of Appomattox Court House, late in the afternoon on April 8, only to find that Union Cavalry under Gen. George Armstrong Custer had beaten him there. After a battle with an advance confederate force under Brig. Gen. Lindsay Walker, the Union destroyed three train loads of Confederate supplies.

Robert E. Lee, after his surrender. He wears his uniform without insignia. Taken by Matthew Brady, April 1865. (Library of Congress.)

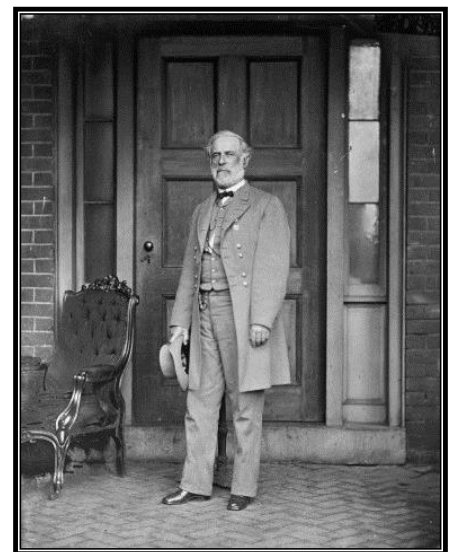
break through to Lynchburg, where more vital supplies awaited him. Believing that there was just Union Cavalry blocking his path, Lee was unaware that Grant had forced marched three corps of infantry to arrive during the night. After a valiant effort, Lee's forces were repelled. With no supplies and almost completely surrounded, Lee felt

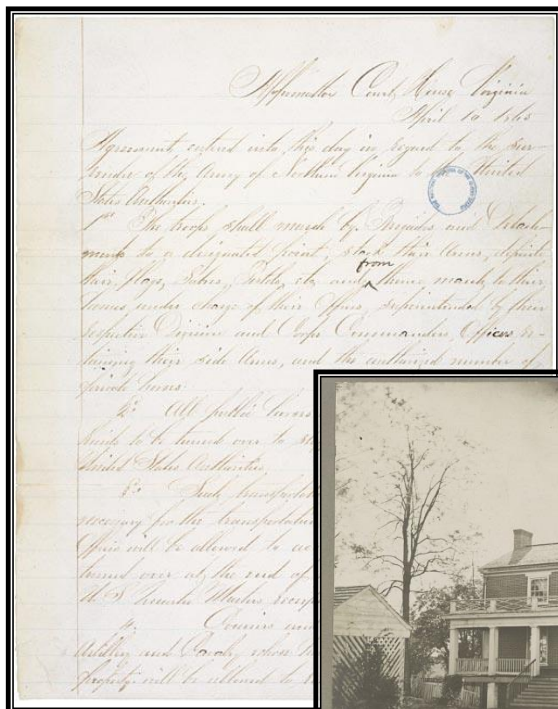


Brig. Gen. Edward Porter Alexander

he had no alternative but to surrender. Lee sent to Gen. Grant asking for terms. Interestingly, only one of his officers argued against surrender, Brig. Gen. Edward Porter Alexander, saying that "every other [Confederate] army will follow suit."

At dawn on April 9, Lee made a final attempt to





Above: Page 1 of Articles of Surrender; Right: McLean mansion, April 1865, photographed by Matthew Brady; (Library of Congress)



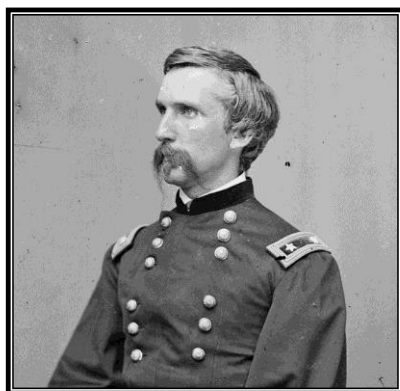
Right: Tom Lovell's painting of Grant and Lee signing the Articles of Surrender. The painting is believed to be the most accurate portrayal of the scene.

Grant's terms of surrender were very generous: each man paroled to his home rather than imprisoned or charged with treason. They allowed officers and cavalymen to take horses that they owned home with them. This last was very important, since it would allow the farm men to do the spring planting. Grant also provided field rations for Lee's starving army.

Grant and Lee met at the McLean mansion in the village of Appomattox Court House to sign the agreement.



On April 12, a formal ceremony of Surrender took place, with 28,000 Confederate soldiers



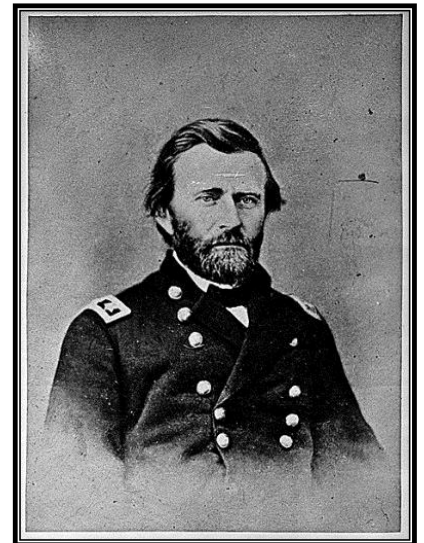
Joshua Chamberlain, March 1865. Photo by Brady. (Library of Congress.)

stacking their arms before the Union army. Union Brig. Gen. Joshua Chamberlain led the ceremony. He later wrote of the event: "Before us in proud humiliation stood the embodiment of manhood: men whom neither toils and sufferings, nor the fact of death, nor disaster, nor hopelessness could bend from their resolve; standing before us now, thin, worn, and famished, but erect, and with eyes looking level into ours, waking memories that bound us together as no other bond;—was not such manhood to be welcomed back into a Union so tested and assured?" (Joshua L. Chamberlain, *Passing of the Armies.*)

There were still 175,000 Confederate soldiers spread across the South. In the next few months, lacking the resolve or capability to continue the fight, the other commands surrendered with the last sizable force of Brig. Gen. Stand Watie surrendering in Oklahoma on June 23, 1865.

Above article based on

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Appomattox_Court_House



Ulysses S. Grant, ca 1860-1865. (Library of Congress)

BOSTON HERALD.
MONDAY MORNING, APRIL 10.
TELEGRAPH TO THE HERALD

**GREAT! GRAND!
GLORIOUS!**

**The Death Blow of
the Rebellion!**

SURRENDER
—OF—
GENERAL LEE
—AND HIS—
ENTIRE ARMY!

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, }
April 9, 1865—9 o'clock P. M. }

To Major General Dix, New York:—

THIS DEPARTMENT HAS RECEIVED THE OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE SURRENDER THIS DAY OF GENERAL LEE AND HIS ARMY TO LIEUT. GENERAL GRANT, ON THE TERMS PROPOSED BY GEN. GRANT. DETAILS WILL BE GIVEN AS SPEEDILY AS POSSIBLE.

EDWIN M. STANTON,

An illustration of a cannon on wheels, with an American flag flying from a pole behind it. A small figure of a person is visible near the cannon's muzzle.

VICTORY!!

DEATH-BLOW TO TREASON.

REBELLION IN VIRGINIA ENDED.

**SURRENDER OF LEE AND HIS
WHOLE ARMY.**

**Our Lieutenant General Dictates his
Own Terms.**

Lee Compelled to Accept Them.

**THE BULWARK OF THE "CONFEDERACY"
RAZED TO THE GROUND.**

**The Southern Chivalry Demoralized
beyond Redemption.**

The Press, Philadelphia, April 10, 1865