

The Blue & the Gray In Vermont

*Looking for —
And Finding —
The Civil War in
The Green Mountains*

By HOWARD COFFIN
Photographed by JON GILBERT FOX

The little American flag next to Private Isaiah T. Maxham's memorial stone in North Bridgewater is fading as this autumn's colors touch the Vermont hills. But next Memorial Day, as always, there will be a new flag, placed in the small upland cemetery by the local American Legion chapter, and a fresh bouquet of lilacs. Although you can clearly read in the weathered stone that Maxham died in 1864 at 22 in the infamous Confederate prison at Andersonville, Georgia, the inscriptions on many Civil War markers are not so easily deciphered. Even those carved in tough Vermont granite are beginning to fade like the little flags.

The Civil War, after all, ended more than a century and a quarter ago. Two full lifetimes have passed since Maxham's brief life ended a thousand miles from home. Yet the flags and flowers that appear almost magically every

Right, the Maxham memorial in North Bridgewater. Such monuments are among Vermont's most touching Civil War sites, but there are many others around the state.





Historical items courtesy of the St. Albans Historical Museum

A bank lock, a historic poster, and some of the bills stolen in the Confederate raid on St. Albans lie in Taylor Park, the central green onto which the raiders herded townspeople when they robbed three banks on October 19, 1864.

spring in Vermont's cemeteries declare that the war is far from forgotten here. Indeed, for those inclined to look it remains a vivid presence in this little state, which sent 34,000 men — more than a tenth of its population — into the fighting that ended American slavery and preserved the Union.

Today it is virtually impossible to find an old Vermont graveyard without Civil War stones, many with such inscriptions as "killed at Gettysburg," "killed at Cedar Creek." The graveyards may be Vermont's most touching Civil War places, but they are by no means the only sites that survive from that troubled time. In St. Albans, for instance, a contractor from New Hampshire died in a little building that still stands along the main street, struck down by a Confederate bullet fired in the war's most north-

ern land action, the St. Albans Raid. Some 10,000 young men went off to fight from what is now the high school athletic field in Brattleboro. One of Abraham Lincoln's top hats is displayed in the Manchester home built by his son, a Union soldier present at Lee's surrender. The State House in Montpelier contains the battle flags of the Vermont Brigade and other storied units from the Green Mountain State.

Some Civil War story, remembered or forgotten, is probably associated with any of the thousands of Vermont buildings that date from before the firing on Fort Sumter. In many ways, most of the state is a repository of Civil War history, for Vermont as much as any of the states that went to war retains the look of Civil War America, of small towns and farms. Look up the road leading to any old

Vermont hill farm and it's likely that some lad, looking as brave as he could, walked down it on his way to join the Union army, perhaps never to return. And if he did return, was it to swing a scythe with but one good arm, to follow a plow on but one good leg? Though musket balls and disease did their worst, Vermont soldiers wrote a remarkable war record. They shattered the flank of Pickett's Charge, captured the dread Fredericksburg heights, held a vital Wilderness crossroads while 1,100 of their number were shot, turned sudden defeat into a grand victory along the banks of Cedar Creek. Reputedly, Vermont never lost a flag in battle.

The 1882 book *Anecdotes, Poetry and Incidents of the War* describes the Vermont Brigade this way: "They were strangely proud, not of themselves individually, but of the brigade collectively; for they knew perfectly well they were the best fighters in the known world. They were long of limb, and could outmarch the army. They were individually self-reliant and skillful in the use of arms, and they honestly believed that the Vermont Brigade could not be beaten by all the combined armies of the rebellion."

My favorite Vermont Civil War place is a farmhouse in the Pomfret hills where my great-grandfather, once a private in the Ninth Vermont Regiment, died one snowy night in 1923. The next morning the people of the town came to clear the snow from three miles of road so his body could be taken to the Grange Hall. The Vermont veterans were held in such regard.

What follows is a look at 21 Vermont places that help to tell Vermont's Civil War story.

OLD CONSTITUTION HOUSE, Windsor

One could make the case that Vermont was destined since its earliest days to go to war over the slavery question. There's no better place to contemplate that possibility than along Windsor's broad main street in the white frame structure known as the Old Constitution House.

No state in the nation was ever more firmly opposed to slavery than Vermont, and in that building on a rainy summer day in 1777 settlers of the New Hampshire Grants adopted a constitution for the Republic of Vermont that became the world's first to outlaw slavery. Lest there be any doubt of Vermont's position on slavery, in 1803 a Vermont Supreme Court justice declared that only "a bill of sale from Almighty God" would be adequate proof that one person had a right to own another.

Down the road, south of the Windsor business district, stands a building that once manufactured tools of war that ended slavery once and for all. What is now the American Precision Museum was once a weapons factory that turned out more than 50,000 muskets for the Union army. Some of those weapons and the machines that made them are on display.

ROKEBY, Ferrisburgh

Though many Vermonters opened their homes to runaway slaves, many more Vermont houses than could possibly have served the purpose reputedly were stops on the "Underground Railroad." Unquestionably, slaves took ref-

uge at Rokeby. The old family home of Vermont author Rowland Evans Robinson, Rokeby is wonderfully unchanged and open to the public. Robinson's father, the abolitionist Rowland Thomas Robinson, gave slaves lodging and pay for laboring on his farm. Period letters preserved at Rokeby challenge the notion of the Underground Railroad in Vermont having been a nighttime operation involving secret rooms and tunnels. Apparently the slaves worked the fields around Rokeby quite openly. Certainly, freed slaves lived in the hired helps' quarters, a large homey space above the great kitchen that seems today something of a freedom shrine. Incidentally, the elder Robinson was a Quaker who said he'd rather the Union dissolve than a war begin. His wife, also a Quaker, had a brother who went off to war from East Montpelier and died of wounds sustained at Cold Harbor. His uniform hangs in an upstairs bedroom at Rokeby.

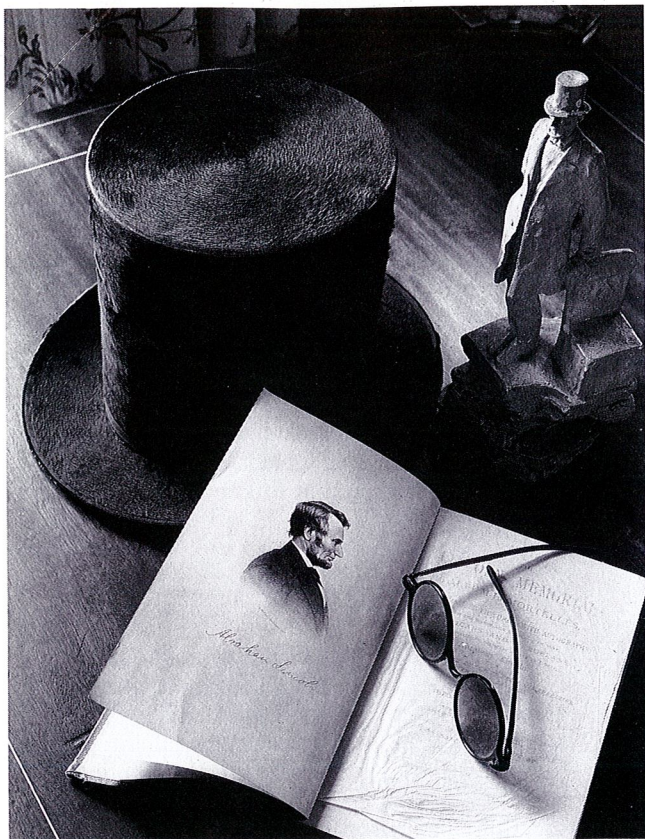
BENNINGTON MUSEUM, Old Bennington

The prominent abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, a friend of the Robinsons, edited a paper in Bennington for a year beginning in 1828. In the first edition of *Journal of the Times* he declared as a prime editorial intent "the gradual emancipation of every slave in the Republic." A bronze plaque on a boulder near Old First Church points out the location of Garrison's office.

Just down the hill, the Bennington Museum houses a fine Civil War collection, including the complete run of *Journal of the Times* and the key to Libby Prison, the dreary lock-up for Union officers in the Confederate capital of Richmond. Edward Hastings Ripley, a Rutlander instrumental in the capture of Richmond, brought the key home. The museum displays his uniform and that of George Stannard, who ordered the Vermonters' attack on Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. And there's a flag of Ripley's Ninth Vermont Regiment still draped with black crepe added the day the soldiers learned Lincoln had been killed.

THE STEVENS HOUSE, Vergennes

On an April night in 1859, with a thin coating of snow down on the Champlain Valley, John Brown's body was brought to the Stevens House in Vergennes to lie overnight on its journey back to Brown's Adirondack farm. The militant abolitionist went forth from his farm at North Elba, New York, to raid Harper's Ferry, Virginia, hoping to start a slave uprising. But he was captured by militia under Robert E. Lee, tried, and hanged. Local legend holds that on his way to Harper's Ferry, Brown stopped in Vergennes to buy some rope, which was later used to hang him. His body, accompanied by his widow and the abolitionist Garrison, came north by train. A sleigh was waiting at the little Vergennes railroad station to bear the sad party to a local hostelry, the Stevens House. Next morning the mournful journey continued by ferry boat across the lake and back to the Browns' mountain home, where John Brown's body lies today. The Stevens House still stands at Vergennes' main intersection, the home of a restaurant and bank.



Abraham Lincoln's stovepipe hat, Robert Todd Lincoln's glasses, and memorabilia from the collection at Hildene.

BRATTLEBORO ENCAMPMENT, *Brattleboro*

Vermonters enlisted by the thousands when the shooting started, and one of the places they went to entrain south for the battlefields was what is now Brattleboro Union High School's athletic fields. A small monument at the entrance states that 10,200 volunteers were mustered into service there, and 4,666 veterans were mustered out. From the list of unit names one knows that many of the tough fighters who stood firm at Cedar Creek and Gettysburg were there. A wonderful bas-relief depicts a soldier, neatly dressed in full uniform, holding a rifle and looking most serious about the business of war ahead. Beside that depiction of a soldier mustering in is one of a Vermonter mustering out, head bandaged, waving his hat, letting out a cheer, glad to be home for good.

OLIVER'S CAVE, *Barnard*

Early in the Civil War a patriotic fever gripped Vermont. Bands played and military companies marched as men hastened to sign up. In fact, of all the men who went off to the war from Vermont, 90 percent were volunteers. But war was not for all.

When the fighting broke out, Oliver Plaisted of East Barnard left his hermit's shack on Broad Brook and headed for the nearby hills. It was Plaisted's intention to avoid the war, and he first found shelter in a small cave he partly walled up. On a wall of his lonely hideout he scratched "this is hell."

Later, using a railroad jack, he built a stone structure

with a huge roof stone known ever after as "Oliver's Cave." Nobody ever tried to forcibly enlist Plaisted, and he lived out the war in his mountain hideaway. A hike of about a mile and a half through the woods up and around the side of Ellis Mountain will bring you to Oliver's Cave, another kind of Civil War monument. Ask people in East Barnard for directions.

SLEEPING SENTINEL MONUMENT, *Groton*

The sad reality of the Civil War began to reach Vermont after the engagement at Lee's Mills, Virginia, in the spring of 1862 produced the first heavy Vermont casualties. One soldier killed in action was William Scott of Groton. By the time he died, Scott was perhaps the most famous private in the Union army. He had been sentenced to death by firing squad after being found asleep at his post the previous winter. After appeals by fellow infantrymen and Vermonters in Washington, President Lincoln had Scott pardoned, and even visited the scene to make sure his orders were carried out. The case of the "Sleeping Sentinel" attracted national attention. Scott died speaking words of praise for Abraham Lincoln, so his fellow soldiers said.

The document that ordered Scott's execution is at the Fairbanks Museum in St. Johnsbury. A granite monument beside Route 302 three miles west of Groton marks the site of the Scott home. The soldier's family is buried in a tiny graveyard in the trees just across the road. All except William. He's buried in a Union cemetery at Yorktown, near Lee's Mills, on ground where Washington fought Cornwallis four-score years before the Union divided.

JULIAN SCOTT HOUSE, *Johnson*

Julian Scott, renowned Civil War artist, was born in a farmhouse that stands along Route 15 on the east edge of Johnson Village. His epic battlefield canvas "The Battle of Cedar Creek" hangs in the State House, and at least three of Scott's war paintings were used in the Public Broadcasting System's recent television series *The Civil War*. But it's less well known that he was Vermont's first Congressional Medal of Honor winner. A drummer boy who enlisted at the age of 15, Scott was decorated for bringing wounded soldiers back across Warwick Creek under enemy fire at Lee's Mills. It isn't known whether Julian Scott knew William Scott, but it's possible the mortally wounded William was one of the soldiers Julian carried. The Scott home sits a half mile from the center of town, on the north side of Route 15, an old white frame house that's been added to at least twice.

CIVIL WAR MONUMENT, *Tunbridge*

Things change slowly in Tunbridge, and surely a Civil War veteran from that town would quickly recognize his community today. The Civil War monument at the cemetery entrance on Route 110 in the middle of the village bears the names of 143 Tunbridge men who served. It's hard to imagine a town that size sending so many to war, but so it went throughout Vermont. The granite soldier

atop the monument looks toward the Tunbridge Fairgrounds, a fair born four years before the war ended. The fair moved from North Tunbridge to its present site in 1875. Walk the fairgrounds at fair time in September and know that many Civil War veterans walked there before you.

Let Tunbridge serve as a typical little Vermont farm town that gave generously of her young men. A mile up the hill by the monument is a little cemetery with the grave of a Tunbridge lad killed at the Battle of Fredericksburg. Some 9,000 Yankees were killed, wounded or captured in a futile two-day attempt to seize an impregnable Confederate position held by Robert E. Lee.

GRAFTON TAVERN, *Grafton*

Ulysses Grant spent a night during his 1867 presidential campaign at the Grafton Tavern. Surely he received a warm welcome when he spoke in nearby Cambridgeport; Grafton alone sent 106 men to war. The Grafton Museum has a fine small Civil War collection and preserves the tavern register in which a clerk recorded Grant's arrival.

Many war veterans helped form the Grafton Coronet Band in 1867, just two years after Appomatox. The band still exists and each Memorial Day participates in an elaborate ceremony that remembers Grafton's sons and daughters who fought in all wars.

Grafton was also the home of Daisy Turner, whose father, Alex, was an escaped slave who fought for the Union and then settled in Vermont. Daisy Turner lived to be 105



At Bennington Museum, the key to Libby Prison in Richmond, Virginia, is displayed before a memorial bas-relief.

and recited Civil War verses from memory for Ken Burns, who made her a prominent part of his PBS series *The Civil War*. Burns called Turner his "Greek chorus to the Battle of Gettysburg."

STEPHEN THOMAS MONUMENT, *Bethel*

Go three and one half miles north of Bethel village on Route 12 and turn left on the Gilead Brook Road. Then just short of two miles turn right and proceed uphill about a mile and a half to the height of land. On the right is a small monument set just above the road. It marks Stephen Thomas's birthplace.

A bronze plaque on the stone says Colonel Thomas commanded the Eighth Vermont Regiment. Above the plaque, a faded carving in the stone says the monument was dedicated on October 19, 1914, the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Cedar Creek. At Cedar Creek Thomas led his little regiment on a suicidal mission, to make a stand against an overwhelming Confederate surprise attack. In the fiercest close-in fighting of the battle, more than half the regiment became casualties, buying time so the Vermont Brigade and others could prepare a stand that eventually stopped the Southerners. Then what was left of the little Eighth joined in an overwhelming attack under General Philip Sheridan that turned defeat into a glorious Union victory, a victory that insured Lincoln's re-election.

Two months earlier, at the Battle of Winchester, Thomas had ordered his regiment into battle with the words: "Boys, if you ever pray, the time to pray has come. Pray now, remember Ethan Allen and old Vermont, and we'll drive 'em to hell. Come on old Vermont!"

THE CONFEDERATE RAID, *St. Albans*

While Vermonters fought at Cedar Creek, 600 miles to the north that same October 19, 1864, Confederate raiders who had infiltrated Franklin County from Canada were robbing three banks in St. Albans. They got away with more than \$200,000, though little ever reached the Confederate treasury.

Much in St. Albans remains as it was then. The Confederates herded townspeople into Taylor Park, still the city's centerpiece, to keep them under guard during the robberies. Many pre-war buildings still stand by the park, including the school from which students were dismissed early that historic day. It's now a museum. The railroad station down Lake Street is where the Confederates arrived in twos and threes over several days to unobtrusively take up residence in city hostleries. One, the St. Albans House, stands across Lake Street from the station, looking about as it did in 1864.

The Confederates fled north along Main Street, after mortally wounding one civilian. He died in the modest brick building that's now the office of Vermont Community College. One can follow the escape of the raiders toward Canada via Route 105. The cement bridge nine miles north in the midst of Sheldon is the site of a covered bridge the Confederates attempted to set afire to slow their pursuers.

The St. Albans Historical Museum, next to Taylor Park, has exhibits on the raid and other local events.



WOODWARD STATUE, *Westford*

At the head of the town green in Westford is a statue of the Rev. John H. Woodward, chaplain of the First Vermont Cavalry Regiment. In uniform, with a hand on the Bible, the reverend stands before the church he served as pastor for a quarter century. Though past 50 when he enlisted, Woodward earned the sobriquet "the fighting chaplain" in the Shenandoah Valley and in one skirmish captured two of Turner Ashby's raiders. Woodward's son, Captain John W. Woodward, also served in the First Cavalry. But soon after Gettysburg he received word that his fiancée, a young lady from nearby Cambridge, had died of illness. Young Woodward then became reckless and was killed in a skirmish near the Potomac River. He was taken home and buried in Cambridge beside the woman he planned to marry. The reverend thereafter lost his taste for war and returned to Vermont. Today, in stone, he looks east toward

the Chin of Mt. Mansfield, the highest point in Vermont, just showing above a near ridge.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM, *Waterbury*

The Civil War took a frightful toll on the nation and perhaps no one knew that better than Dr. Henry Janes of Waterbury. Janes went from his Waterbury home to serve as a doctor in the Union army and become one of the war's prominent surgeons. He supervised hospitals that cared for 50,000 soldiers, including 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers wounded at Gettysburg. Late in the war he was in charge of a large hospital for Civil War sick and wounded in Montpelier, where Vermont College now stands. His home on Waterbury's main street — now the village library and local historical society museum — displays some of his Civil War surgical instruments.

Above, General George Stannard, a commander of Vermont troops at Gettysburg, lost his right arm in battle. His statue is in Burlington's Lakeview Cemetery.

STANNARD HOUSE, *Milton*

A half-mile north of Chimney Corners, on Route 7 just across the road from the "Welcome to Milton" sign, stands a house once owned by one of the true heroes of Gettysburg, General George Stannard. Local people are trying to save the building, which needs paint and repairs, and turn it into a museum. Not long ago a barn behind the house, containing equipment made for a left-handed man, was torn down. It had been Stannard's barn, built for him after he lost his right arm in battle.

At Gettysburg, Stannard ordered some 900 men of his Second Vermont Brigade into the no-man's land in front of Cemetery Ridge just as Pickett's great charge hit the Union line. The Vermonters marched out, wheeled right,

and delivered a devastating flank fire into the Southerners, ending any chance that the attack would succeed. "Glory to God, glory to God, see the Vermonters go at it," shouted General Abner Doubleday as he watched the brave maneuver. Stannard became an instant hero, had a Vermont town named after him, and later became doorkeeper for the U.S. House of Representatives.

LAKEVIEW CEMETERY, *Burlington*

Near the shore in the old part of Burlington's Lakeview Cemetery is a remarkable grouping of Civil War graves. A statue of George Stannard, in a uniform with an empty sleeve, marks his grave.

Back from the lake, perhaps 25 yards from Stannard's grave, is the resting place of another Vermont commander at Gettysburg, William Wells. Wells led the First Vermont Cavalry, and identical statues of the general, sword in hand, stand at the base of Round Top at Gettysburg and in Burlington's Battery Park.

Two stars, a major general's insignia, adorn the small stone at the grave of Oliver Otis Howard, a Union major general who lived the last 15 years of his life in Burlington. A man of accomplishment, Howard after the war accepted Cochise's surrender, headed the Freedmen's Bureau, and founded two colleges for blacks, including Howard University in Washington, D.C. Howard was a major figure in the Civil War, though his Eleventh Corps was overwhelmed by Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville. He selected the Union defensive position on Cemetery Ridge while briefly in command at Gettysburg and served well in Sherman's Atlanta campaign and march to the sea. His two granddaughters still live in a house built by their father, the general's son, at the corner of Burlington's Main and Summit streets. Two doors down Summit Street is the general's home, where he died.

LINCOLN'S HAT, *at Hildene, Manchester*

A stovepipe hat that belonged to Abraham Lincoln is a treasured possession of Hildene, the Manchester home of Robert Todd Lincoln, son of the Civil War president. The hat almost seems to wait for Lincoln and, indeed, had he not been assassinated in the spring of 1865, he probably would have come to Vermont the following summer. His wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, spent several days at Manchester's Equinox House during two wartime summers and had made reservations for herself and her husband for the summer of 1865. But Lincoln was killed that spring. Above the mantel of an upstairs bedroom is a mirror that hung in the entrance hall of the Lincoln White House, a mirror the president might have looked into as he left for Ford's Theater.

Though Lincoln never visited Vermont, he seemed to have a clear affection for the Vermont soldiers. When he went to the Potomac docks to greet soldiers arriving to defend Washington from a Confederate army in the summer of 1864, an officer apologized because no generals were present. "I do not care to see any major generals," Lincoln replied. "I came here to see the Vermont Brigade."

Robert Todd Lincoln graduated from Harvard in 1864, joined Grant's staff, and was present at Lee's surrender.



Carved in granite, a young soldier looks forever southward in the fine Civil War memorial in Chittenden.

MEMORIAL HALL, Hardwick

Many Vermont soldiers who survived the war lived out their days as members of the Grand Army of the Republic. Most communities of any size had local posts of the veterans' organization. Some Hardwick residents treasure old picture postcards showing members of the Hardwick GAR

posed on the steps of Memorial Hall at its dedication in 1911. Built of granite quarried in nearby Woodbury, Memorial Hall calls to mind a sentence about the Chancellorsville campaign from Fletcher Pratt's book *Ordeal by Fire*. "Toward evening (Confederate General Jubal) Early put a brigade into column for one last effort, with the war cry 'Remember Jackson!' but a Vermont regiment as hard as the hills that gave them birth stood up to receive it hand-to-hand, and the retreat of the Union army was secure."

Distinguished, columned Memorial Hall, at the corner of North Main and Church streets, was built to honor Hardwick's soldiers. Their names are on granite plaques. The local GAR once met upstairs in a large, vaulted, maple-floored hall. The GAR was a powerful political force in Vermont until it died out with the veterans. Today the Vermont Hemlocks, Civil War re-enactors, meet in the upstairs hall, often dressed in carefully authenticated uniforms. In the old building's soft light they could be the ghosts of those who once gathered to share memories of long-ago campfires near Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, the Wilderness, and Cold Harbor.

CIVIL WAR MONUMENT, Chittenden

As the century of the Civil War was about to become history, Vermont towns and villages began a flurry of monument erecting to honor those who had served. Most every community of any size boasts a handsome monument topped by a soldier carved in granite or marble. The oldest stands along the main street of Williamstown. My favorite, the work of a highly skilled sculptor, graces the crossroads of little Chittenden village in Rutland County. From his pedestal in that mountain town, the soldier, rifle at rest, faces south, his gaze seemingly fixed on something very far off. I choose to think he is looking toward Fredericksburg or Savage Station or the Wilderness or Fisher's Hill, some distant but not forgotten field where so many comrades fell.

and February. Adults, \$4.50; seniors, students, \$3.50. (802) 447-1571.

The **Grafton Historical Society Museum** is open Saturdays, 2:30-4:30 p.m., late May-early October; Sundays, July-September, 2:30-4:30 p.m. (802) 843-2344.

The **St. Albans Historical Museum** on Church Street next to Taylor Park, the town green, contains much memorabilia from the St. Albans Raid. Open Tuesday-Saturday, July-September, 1-4 p.m. Adults, \$1; 12 and under, free. (802) 527-7933.

The **Waterbury Village Library and Historical Society** are in the former residence of Dr. Henry Janes, 28 No. Main Street, Waterbury. Call for hours. (802) 244-7036.

Hildene, Robert Todd Lincoln's home, is on Route 7A in Manchester. Open daily May 13-October 31, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Adults, \$5; ages 6-14, \$2; under 6, free. (802) 362-1788.

The **State House** is on State Street in Montpelier. Open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:15 p.m. Free guided tours July 1-October 12, Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and Saturdays 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

If You Go . . .

Old Constitution House, where Vermont's constitution and its anti-slavery clause were adopted, is on North Main Street in Windsor. Open late May through mid-October, Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Adults, \$1; under 14, free. (802) 674-6628.

The **American Precision Museum**, where Civil War weapons were manufactured, is at 96 Main Street, Windsor. Open May 20-November, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Adults, \$2; ages 6-12, 75 cents; under 6, free. (802) 674-5781.

Rokey, a stop on the Underground Railroad, is on Route 7 north of Ferrisburgh. Open May-October, Thursday-Sunday, guided tours only, 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2 p.m. Adults, \$2; students and seniors, \$1. (802) 877-3406.

Bennington Museum, which houses Civil War artifacts, including the key to Libby Prison, is on West Main Street (Route 9), Old Bennington. Open daily March 1-December 22, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Open weekends in January



The focal point of Civil War artifacts at the State House is "The Battle of Cedar Creek" by Julian Scott.

THE STATE HOUSE, Montpelier

The State House is in many ways a Civil War shrine. Visitors entering by the main door are confronted by one of the finest of all statues of Abraham Lincoln, the bust by Brattleboro's Larkin Meade. The Cedar Creek Room, now beautifully restored, displays Scott's monumental 10-by-20-foot painting, "The Battle of Cedar Creek." It shows the Vermont Brigade joining the great Union counterattack that turned Cedar Creek from a Confederate victory to a great Union victory, one that assured Lincoln's reelection. Philip Sheridan, who led the counterattack at Cedar Creek, said it accurately depicted the Vermonters as they looked "going in." Sheridan spoke at the State House and said: "When I saw these old flags I thought I ought to say as much as this: I have never commanded troops in whom I had more confidence than I had in the Vermont troops . . ." The old flags he saw are still where he saw them, in the lobby of the House of Representatives.

MAXHAM MEMORIAL, North Bridgewater

Nowhere is the war's terrible toll on Vermont as evident as it is in the state's cemeteries. Going north on Route 12 out of Woodstock, turn left opposite the old stone schoolhouse in Prosper. Three miles uphill on the left is a small country graveyard. Isaiah Maxham's stone stands next to

an identical one for his father, also named Isaiah. The elder Maxham, who died five years after his son at the age of 68, is buried there. His son's remains are in the national cemetery at Andersonville, Georgia, where the graves of thousands upon thousands of Union soldiers are close-set in long rows.

The younger Maxham had been captured in the summer of 1864 at Cold Harbor, Virginia, when Ulysses Grant ordered a hopeless attack against well-prepared Confederate positions. The battle cost the Union army 8,000 men in less than 10 minutes. Maxham expired two months later in Andersonville Prison, one of 30,000 Union soldiers who died in that worst of Civil War places.

Maxham's stone speaks not only to what Vermont lost in the Civil War, but it is also a poignant reminder of what was lost by those who did not come home. Cows grazing in a green field sometimes wander up to the cemetery wall or drink from the little brook that rushes through trees where birds sing. Behind a nearby farmhouse and red barn, hardwoods that color deeply in autumn climb steep hills toward blue sky and white clouds. Isaiah Maxham lost most of a full life in such a landscape. He gave up a life in Vermont.

Howard J. Coffin, a student of the Civil War and Vermont's role in it, is press secretary for U.S. Senator James M. Jeffords, R-Vt. He is planning a book on Civil war sites in Vermont. Anyone with information on the subject should contact Coffin.