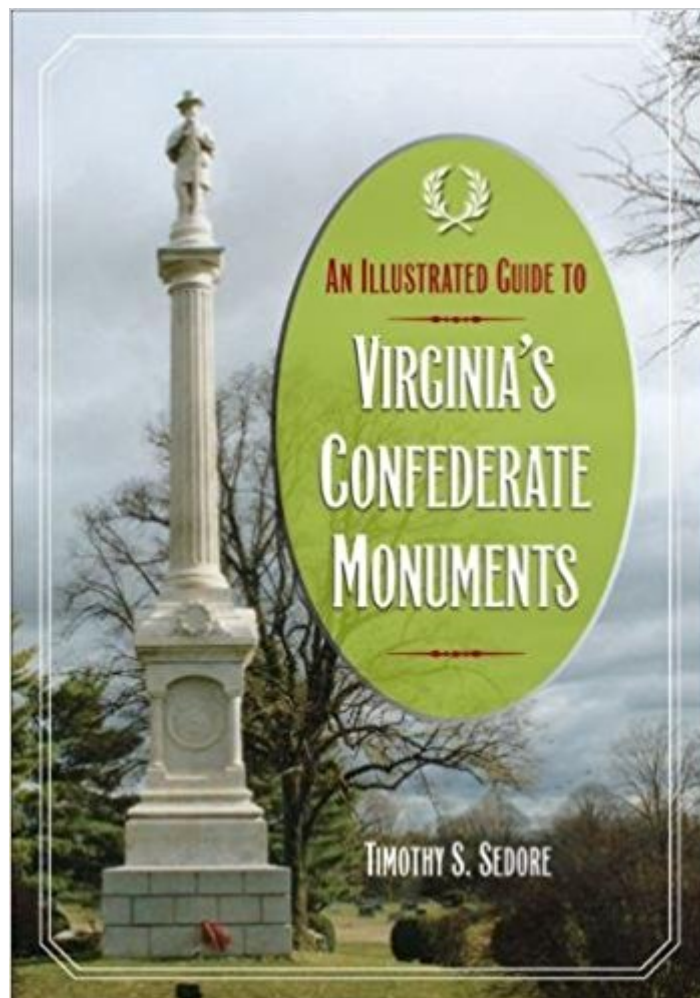




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# An Illustrated Guide To Virginia's Confederate Monuments



## Synopsis

As America was torn apart by the horrors of the Civil War, no state bore the brunt of battle more than Virginia. Home to the Confederate capitol of Richmond and the linchpin of the eastern theater of the war, the state now bears a myriad of testaments to its harrowing past, waiting to be explored. With *An Illustrated Guide to Virginia's Confederate Monuments*, Timothy S. Sedore presents the first volume to enumerate Virginia's southern Civil War memorials marking the bloody battles that took place on Virginia soil. Sedore's illuminating and highly readable guide catalogs 360 of the state's most infamous and obscure commemorations, and provides not only a fascinating compilation of locations but also a compelling vision of the public sense of loss in the post-Civil War South. From notorious sites such as Manassas, Fredericksburg, and Appomattox to the lesser-known locations of Sinking Spring Cemetery and Rude's Hill, Sedore leads readers on a vivid journey through Virginia's Confederate history in all its tarnished glory. Tablets, monoliths, courthouses, cemeteries, town squares, battlefields, and more are cataloged in detail throughout this compendium, accompanied by photographs and meticulous commentary. Each entry also contains descriptions, historical information, and location, providing a complete portrait of each site. Designed for the expert historian and the lay reader alike, the vast scope of these locations—from Clinch Mountain near Tennessee to the Eastern Shore, from the northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C., to the edge of North Carolina—is organized geographically by region for ease of use. Six maps also are provided for the reader's orientation. Much more than a visual tapestry or a tourist's handbook, however, *An Illustrated Guide to Virginia's Confederate Monuments* draws on scholarly and field research to reveal these sites not only as monuments to history but also as public efforts to reconcile mourning with Southern postwar ideologies. Unveiled here are dynamic memorials that are at once intimate and aloof, written on stone, bronze, or marble but forged from the language of suffering. Sedore analyzes in depth the nature of these attempts to publicly explain Virginia's sense of grief after the war, delving deep into the psychology of a traumatized area. Insight into these evocative elegies for lost sons, fathers, spouses, and other loved ones provides yet another dimension to this captivating volume. The first book of its kind, *An Illustrated Guide to Virginia's Confederate Monuments* will appeal to the traveler, historian, and armchair enthusiast alike. Never before has such a comprehensive collection of Virginia's Southern Civil War sites been gathered and examined in one volume. From commemorations of famous generals to memories of unknown soldiers, from the Shenandoah Valley to the Chesapeake Bay, the dead speak from the pages of this sweeping companion to history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This is an excellent book that Civil War buffs travelling through Virginia should have on the front seat of their car."--Tom Elmore, Blue & Gray Magazine "Relying on the monuments as historical artifacts as well as other supporting primary materials, Sedore provides a comprehensive guide, the first such publication of its kind, to the 360 Confederate markers and monuments in Virginia. . . . This volume, which is soundly researched, impeccably organized, and eloquently written, should appeal to a wide range of Civil War readers, especially those interested in Confederate history, Virginia's place in the conflict and Civil War memory."-- Jonathan A. Noylas, *Civil War News* "Timothy S. Sedore presents a volume that enumerates by region Virginia's Civil War memorials. Sedore's guide catalogs 360 of the state's famous and obscure commemorations. It provides both a compilation of their sites and a compelling vision of the public sense of Virginia's loss. . . . Readers may view *An Illustrated Guide to Virginia's Confederate Monuments* as a photographic catalog, a tourist's guidebook, or researcher's compendium. It is all of those. . . . *An Illustrated Guide to Virginia's Confederate Monuments* will appeal to the travelers, historians, and armchair enthusiasts."--Rea Andrew Redd, *Civil War Librarian* "When the Civil War's guns fell silent in the spring of 1865, the states that comprised the former Confederacy began the process of recovering from four years of hard war -- a conflict that killed or debilitated nearly one quarter of the South's white male population between the ages of 16 and 45. Although people did their best to recover and move forward, the survivors of the Confederacy refused to let

the sacrifices of the slain go without proper recognition. While strong sentiment existed to memorialize the Confederate dead across the former Confederacy, perhaps no state trumped the efforts of Virginia, the epicenter of the Confederacy, to appropriately memorialize the legacy of the Old Dominion. Sedore's 17,000 dead through monuments in town squares, in cemeteries and on battlefields. That effort to memorialize Virginia's involvement in the war provides the basis for Timothy Sedore's invaluable guide to the commonwealth's Confederate monuments. Relying on the monuments as historical artifacts as well as other supporting primary materials, Sedore provides a comprehensive guide, the first such publication of its kind, to the 360 Confederate markers and monuments in Virginia. He starts with a cogently crafted and insightful introduction that offers a brief history of memorialization after the Civil War. Then he breaks the book into five regional chapters in which he examines the monuments by county. Sedore employs a superb template to make sense of such a vast array of monuments spread over nearly 40,000 square miles. Each chapter includes a finely detailed map that delineates the location of each monument in its region and an introductory synopsis of the region's experience during the conflict. In Sedore's discussion of each monument, he provides the precise location, a description of the monument and the material used to construct it, and a verbatim copy of the inscription. He also includes excerpts from dedication addresses, which increase this volume's usefulness. Historians interested in the rhetoric of the Lost Cause or the campaign for national reconciliation will find these primary documents most useful. The selected primary materials illustrate how former Confederates made sense of their failed experiment and justified the Confederacy to future generations of Americans. Sedore's book also is a splendid reminder of the importance of language in historical remembrance. Analysis throughout this book informs readers that the Confederate veterans and organizations who erected Confederate monuments in Virginia, as was the case across the entire South, chose their words carefully. These former Confederates knew that although the bronze and marble would stand still for future generations, the words inscribed on them would cut across time to teach forthcoming descendants about the conflict and the importance of human sacrifice for a cause • even a doomed one. This volume, which is soundly researched, impeccably organized, and eloquently written, should appeal to a wide range of Civil War readers, especially those interested in Confederate history, Virginia's place in the conflict and Civil War memory. (Jonathan A. Noyolas Civil War News 2011-10-01)

Excellent. It tells you about all of the Confederate Monuments in the state of Virginia and has

pictures of each monument.

Very comprehensive and descriptive, but lacks a little in organization and in identifying the location.

Guide books are always nice additions to the library of any student of the American Civil War, especially those who like to travel to the historic sites or areas of particular interest. Guide books can be broad in scope, such as Frances H. Kennedy's "The Civil War Battlefield Guide" or narrowly focused, as Timothy S. Sedore's, "An Illustrated Guide to Virginia's Confederate Monuments." They can take you to well known places such as Gettysburg National Military Park and Richmond, Virginia's Monument Avenue, or they can take you to lesser known sites often overlooked and unvisited by others, such as Stones River National Battlefield in Murfreesboro, Tennessee or the Little Fork Rangers monument located at 16461 Oak Shade Road, Rixeyville, Virginia. As the United States was torn apart by the Civil War, the Southern states closest to the territory held or occupied by the Federal forces were destined to see the bulk of the war's hardest fighting. Positioned on the northern border of the Confederacy and containing the Confederate capitol located at Richmond, just one hundred miles from Washington, D. C., Virginia became the most fought over soil in the country. No other state, Union or Confederate bore the brunt of war more than Virginia. It should come as no surprise then that Virginia would have a plethora of monuments dedicated to the war and its legacy, to Virginia's soldier sons and Confederate heroes, as well as the battles and smaller engagements fought on its soil. Timothy S. Sedore has written a guidebook of Virginia's Confederate monuments, appropriately titled, "An Illustrated Guide To Virginia's Confederate Monuments." He has located and photographed all of Virginia's Confederate monuments, transcribed the inscriptions written on them, and where possible provided a brief history of each monument. Dividing Virginia into five parts the chapters in Mr. Sedore's book covers the width and breadth of Virginia from north to south, and moving from west to east, progressing from the Shenandoah Valley and northwest Virginia, through Southwest Virginia; Richmond, Northern Virginia and the Piedmont; The Northern Neck, Middle Peninsula, Eastern shore and Eastern Southside; to Petersburg, the Southside West of Petersburg, and Central Virginia West of Richmond. Locating and photographing Virginia's Confederate Monuments and transcribing the inscriptions on them was a Herculean task, and compiling all of the information in a single volume to be easily pulled off a shelf and taken on the road, was a monumental undertaking of which the author was gloriously successful. Students of the Civil War in Virginia and tourists alike are sure to find Mr. Sedore's book extremely useful. ISBN 978-0809330324, Southern Illinois University Press, 2011, Hardcover, 10 x 7.3 x 1.3

inches, 336 pages, Maps, Photographs, Appendix & Index. \$39.95

The first thing I must say about this Illustrated Guide to Virginia's Confederate Monuments is that it is not mean to be read, as I did, cover to cover, in order. Clearly, author Timothy S. Sedore intended this to be a reference, something found in the dusty archives of a collegiate library. Had he or his editors desired it to be a lovely bit of recreational reading found on the coffee tables of Civil War enthusiasts, it would have glossy color photos within, rather than what I presume are the author's own black and white snapshots of differing qualities, ranging from pretty to blurry with a side of why didn't he say how big this one is. I certainly couldn't find any photo credits that would indicate otherwise, or any specific reference to where the pictures came from. The second thing I have to say about Sedore's work is that it is also lacking in proper foot or end notes, bibliography, or any other form of proper references for the historical information included along with his transcriptions of the monument inscriptions. This severely diminishes the quality and reliability of his hard work in finding this information, that he does not say from whence it came. I once lost a letter grade on a ten page history paper in an undergraduate course, and while the jacket flap of this book tells me the author is an English professor, SIU press has no excuse for this lapse; some historian should have been consulted who would have insisted on not allowing this massive oversight. The entirety of this Illustrated Guide to Virginia's Confederate Monuments is formatted in two columns, aside from the table of contents with one column, and the index with three. As a result, photos of thirty foot monuments are often exactly the same size as those more similar to a personal gravestone. There is a lot of potential for this book, in perhaps a second edition, even with black and white photos, provided somebody actually comes up with some semi-decent layouts to better display the pictures in an attractive fashion. I could come up with three possibilities in five minutes, and I hardly work at a publishing house. There's nothing to be done about boring content, however, as long as this illustrated volume includes redundant descriptions; I defy anyone to not tire of the words obelisk, shaft, and base before reaching the halfway point in this book.

Sedore's book delivers what is promised and much more. It is a thoughtfully compiled guide book and historical resource that gives the reader access to the bravery, grief, and pride of the Confederate South through an examination of its post-Civil War memorials. The book is very well-written and well-organized. The geographical layout and consistent formatting of content will surely be appreciated by travelers seeking to find the monuments that the book called them to explore. My expectation of Virginia's Confederate Monuments was that I would learn about the

construction processes, materials, shapes, locations, etc., of Civil War monuments throughout the South. As an added bonus, the authors' well-researched site commentaries and his appreciation for words combined to create a special effect: the monument inscriptions touched my heart.

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