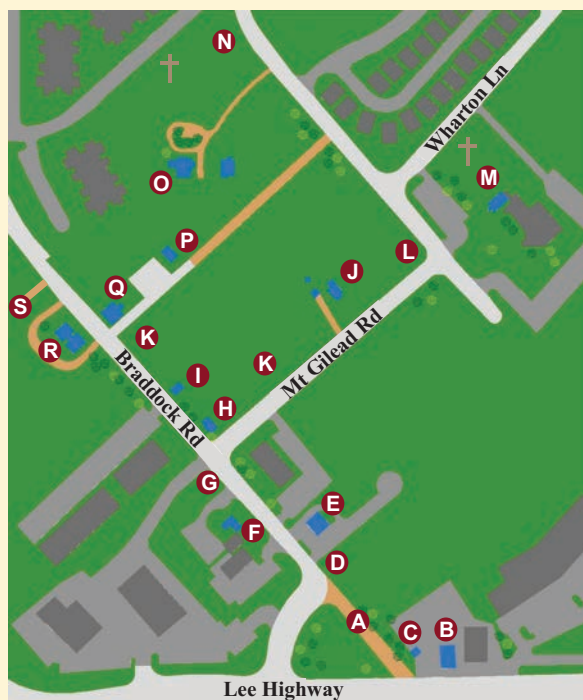




Deserted Village, Centreville, 1862, National Archives

Walk through 200 years of history ... known as Newgate in the late 18th century, Centreville developed as commercial crossroads town. The colonial village was named after a busy tavern. Situated on high ground along one of the main roads to Alexandria, Centreville was strategic in the battles of First and Second Manassas, the Bristoe Campaign, and the defense of Washington. Tens of thousands of soldiers marched through or encamped in and near the town.

Tour Map



Historic Centreville

Walking Tour





Centreville Street Scene, ca. 1904, National Archives

A. Braddock Road, Centreville's Main Street, follows the original 18th-century trade route of the Mountain Road. Travelers, some on stage coaches, stopped at local taverns for food and rest.

B. Payne's Store, built ca. 1930, was a general merchandise store that sold groceries, chicken feed, soap, beer, and automotive needs. James and Bernice Payne lived in the apartment on the second floor.

C. Centreville Restaurant, which originally stood on the east side of Payne's Store, was a truck stop that served travelers along Lee Highway.

D. Royal Oaks, a frame house that once stood behind this 1930s stone wall, was home to some of Centreville's wealthier residents. Enslaved African Americans worked the 801 acre farm and maintained the house in the early 19th century for the Roberdeau family. Robert Whaley, who owned Royal Oaks just before the Civil War, and Alexander Grigsby were partners in the slave trade.

E. Enos M Utterback's house was built the same year he died in the 1918 influenza epidemic. Enos ran a general store that stood near where the Church of Christ stands today. Merchants were at risk for the flu due to exposure to ill patrons.

F. Robert V. Utterback's house was built in 1890. Robert Utterback was Enos Utterback's uncle.

G. Newgate Tavern, built by William Carr Lane ca. 1765, was presumably named after an infamous London prison, a sly reference to Lane's trade in convict labor imported from England. The surrounding village also became known as Newgate. The tavern, now demolished, was a busy place. George Washington recorded five visits in his diaries.

H. Harrison House was the home of Thomas D. Harrison, a blacksmith and farmer. He served as the elected Centreville District constable following the Civil War. Constructed ca. 1859 by William Beckwith, it was later improved by Harrison.

I. Harrison's Blacksmith Shop is a small wooden outbuilding. One lower-level room has a dirt floor that may have protected the building from sparks from a forge.

J. Spindle Sears House is an assembled Brentwood Model house kit that Robert and Wilma Spindle ordered from their Sears catalog. The house is virtually unchanged from when it was built in 1934, including fixtures and hardware, all ordered from Sears Roebuck. Spindle obtained funds for the house through a loan made possible by the Emergency Farm Mortgage Act, a Depression-era New Deal program.

K. Tanyards operated in the early 1800s at two locations in town. Animal hides were tanned to make them flexible so they could be made into shoes, saddles, and other leather goods.



*Whaley House, ca 1935
Courtesy Susan Mosier*

L. Whaley House was a small log cabin where Walter Whaley, his mother, wife, and children lived after the Civil War. Walter, the eldest son of Robert Whaley inherited Royal Oaks, but the war radically altered the family's

fortunes and they were forced to sell Royal Oaks to pay their debts.

M. St. John's Episcopal Church, originally built ca. 1850, was reputedly used as a Civil War hospital, but it burned down during the war. The church was rebuilt in 1867 during Reconstruction.

N. Earthworks were constructed around Centreville to provide protection to occupying armies during the Civil War. In mid-October 1861, Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston made Centreville his headquarters and the site of the winter encampment of the Army of Northern Virginia.

O. Mount Gilead, built as a tavern ca. 1785, was a direct competitor of the well-established Newgate tavern. Known as "The Ordinary at the Sign of the Black Horse," owner Joel Beach advertised that he did not permit card playing at his establishment. The tavern soon closed and became the home of Francis Adams, a developer of several town businesses.



Mount Gilead, ca. 1935, Library of Congress

P. The Stone Filling Station was built ca. 1930. The lease to Shell Eastern Petroleum allowed Shell to paint the building in Shell colors. The building was moved from its original location on Lee Highway in 1986.

Q. Havener House, built ca. 1796, was leased as a store and dwelling to Charles Tyler in 1803 and as a tavern to John Hening in 1820. Store and tavern buildings often had two front doors during this period. The house also served as a post office and a military hospital. The Haveners bought the house in 1921 and repaired the building in the 1930s.

R. Old Stone Church, built in 1854, was used by the Union Army as a hospital. Wounded soldiers were brought to the stone Methodist church for surgery. The Church was damaged during the war and rebuilt in 1870.

S. Warrenton Turnpike, originally the Fauquier and Alexandria Turnpike built in 1830, passed through Centreville before turning west at the Old Stone Church. This turn caused a bottleneck of Union soldiers racing away in panic from the Manassas battlefield on July 21, 1861.



Centreville Earthworks and Fort, 1862, National Archives