

Irises Among the Battlefields of America

by Clarence Mahan, Virginia

AS CONFEDERATE TROOPS WITHDREW FROM THE GETTYSBURG battlefield on July 3, 1863, the elated Union troops stood and shouted "Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg!" at the defeated southern soldiers. The great Union defeat at Fredericksburg in the preceding December had been the source of great despair throughout the North. The first Battle of Fredericksburg was, however, only one of many battles fought in central and western Virginia.

Bull Run! Aldie! Aquia Creek! Ball's Bluff! Winchester! These are just a few of the names on the land where the North and South fought the Civil War. We will be traveling through and around these great battlefields to visit the tour gardens at the 2003 AIS Convention. You might want to come a few days early, or stay a few extra days, just to visit some of the most significant sites in American history.

The Fairview Park Marriott Hotel in Falls Church, Virginia, was our AIS Convention hotel in 1991. Region 4 will be hosting the 2003 Convention, once again at the Fairview Park Marriott Hotel (Fairview Park Drive, Falls Church, VA 22042). Reservations numbers are 1-800-228-9290 and (703) 849-9400. The room rate for AIS Convention attendees is \$109 a night, with up to 4 persons per room. I suggest you make your reservations early because May is tourist season in the Washington, DC area, and our room rates are a bargain for this area.

If you are coming by plane, it is definitely most convenient to come into Dulles International Airport. Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport is the second best choice, and Baltimore Washington International (BWI) Airport is more than an hour away from the hotel.

We will be having a couple of optional tours at very reasonable cost, at least one of which will tour some of the major monuments in the District of Columbia, including the wonderful FDR Memorial (my favorite). We look forward to seeing you next year in Virginia! 