Poe Shrine

On your left is the oldest house in Richmond, erected about 1686. On the front wall may be seen the letters “J.R.,” supposed to signify “Jacobus Rex,” James II, who was then King of England. The building is now a part of the Edgar Allan Poe Foundation, which includes also the small buildings on the left and right, in the three of which are housed much Poe material and many articles relating to his residence in Richmond. In the rear is an “enchanted garden” which leads to a classical loggia, built chiefly of material from the former Southern Literary Messenger building. ➤ Turn right on Twentieth to Cary.

Libby Prison

On the southeast corner of Cary stood Libby Prison, where thousands of Federal prisoners were confined during the War Between the States. The old warehouse-prison building was torn down and taken to Chicago to be rebuilt for the World’s Fair of 1893.

You are now in the heart of the tobacco district of Richmond. For blocks may be seen Richmond’s famous “Tobacco Row.” ➤ Turn left on Cary to Twenty-first, left on Twenty-first to Main, left on Main to Eighteenth Street; right on Eighteenth one block to Franklin.
Oldest Masonic Hall
The wooden building on the right is the oldest Masonic hall in continuous use in the United States which was built originally for Masonic purposes. Governor Edmund Randolph was among the many prominent Virginia Masons who participated in the corner-stone laying in 1785. Lafayette was given a reception here in 1824 on his triumphal return visit to the scenes where he had served in the American Revolution. Proceed east on Franklin, halting briefly between Twenty-first and Twenty-second.

At the top of the hill to your left, you can see a typical old galleried home of early Richmond, now incorporated in the buildings of Monte Maria Roman Catholic Convent. Turn right on Franklin at Twenty-third, go to Main, turn right, then proceed to Twenty-first Street, turn right and continue north to Broad, turn right on Broad, continue to Twenty-fourth.

You are now entering Church Hill, Richmond’s oldest residential section. Stop at Twenty-fourth and Broad, location of St. John’s Church.

St. John’s Church (Front Cover)
St. John’s Episcopal Church, built in 1741, the oldest in the city, will forever be famous as the place where Patrick Henry uttered his ringing challenge for “Liberty or Death” to the American colonists. The second Virginia convention met in St. John’s, because it was the largest hall in Richmond, in March, 1775, and even at that, the original was not half the size of the enlarged present-day structure. It is worth your while to get out here and let the sexton show you the church and tell you briefly of its story. On the left, as you face the church, you will see the grave of Elizabeth Arnold Poe, the tiny actress-mother of America’s great imaginative writer. Young Edgar Poe is said to have been found more than once lying sobbing on his mother’s grave. Proceed east on Broad to Twenty-eighth; right on Twenty-eighth two blocks to Franklin.

Soldiers and Sailors Monument
Here, at Libby Hill Park, is the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, erected in 1894 as a memorial to the soldiers and sailors of the Confederacy. The figure on the top is by William L. Sheppard. Return to Broad Street; turn left on Broad, halting between Thirteenth and Twelfth.
Monumental Church

This unusual-looking Episcopal church structure was built in 1812 as a memorial to more than seventy persons, including the Governor of Virginia, who lost their lives in a fire which destroyed a theatre on this site on December 26, 1811. In this theatre Edgar Allan Poe’s mother had acted a few short months before, and in this same theatre the Virginia Convention of 1788 had ratified the Federal Constitution. Proceed west on Broad (Passing Medical College of Virginia Hospital Building) to Twelfth, turn right on Twelfth to Marshall, turn right on Marshall to center of block.

The Egyptian Building
Medical College of Virginia

Medical College of Virginia

You are now in the center of the buildings of the Medical College of Virginia which cover several city blocks. Particularly notable is the concrete building on your right at the end of the block which is stated to be “the most perfect example of Egyptian architecture in America.” Erected in 1845, it is the earliest in the Medical College group. This is one of the oldest medical schools in the South and the only one to remain open during the War Between the States. The buildings now composing the Medical College
group afford not only an imposing sight but with their facilities contribute greatly to the importance of Richmond as one of the leading medical centers of the country. ➠ Circle block to right, returning to Twelfth. Proceed north on Twelfth two blocks to Clay, turn right on Clay.

Confederate Museum
This building, now the Confederate Museum, was the White House of the Confederacy from 1861-65. Here lived President Jefferson Davis. Here came the generals to confer, the couriers bearing news of the various battles. Most fittingly, the women of the South have made this a treasure-house of things Confederate. In the museum you may now see the uniforms, swords, camp chest and multitudinous relics of Generals Robert E. Lee, Thomas J. ("Stonewall") Jackson, Joseph E. Johnston, J. E. B. Stuart and most of the other Confederate heroes. The student of that phase of our history finds here invaluable historical papers and files. ➠ Make a U-turn and proceed west on Clay to Eleventh.

Valentine Museum
This Museum of the Life and History of Richmond, founded by Mann S. Valentine and opened in 1898, now includes four 19th century buildings. The Wickham-Valentine House, designed by Robert Mills in 1812, is a