



Virginia Center for Digital History and The American Civil War Center Partner to Launch Educational Web Companion

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Contact: Anedra Bourne

abourne@tredegar.org

(804) 780-1865, ext. 16

RICHMOND, Va. – The American Civil War Center *at Historic Tredegar* and the Virginia Center for Digital History (VCDH), administered through the University of Virginia, are pleased to announce the launch of **the American Civil War Center (ACWC) *at Historic Tredegar*: Educational Web Companion (Web Companion)**. Funded by a \$198,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education, this 18-month project began before the Center opened its doors to visitors in October 2006. The Web Companion serves as an interactive teaching tool that complements the student and teacher experience at The American Civil War Center and creates an online history lab where educators may analyze the Civil War with assistance from leading historians and scholars. Visit the Center’s homepage, www.civilwarcenter.com for a link to the new site.

Nationally renowned historians Edward L. Ayers, James M. McPherson, and Gary W. Gallagher are among those featured in video clips on the site. These digital tools are used to reach educators and students nationwide and aid in the discussion of the war’s causes, course, and legacies.

The site was designed by Dr. Will Davis, director of project management at the VCDH and coordinated by Andy Mink, director of outreach at the VCDH. “Part of our mission at the Virginia Center for Digital History is to design and develop innovative applications of technology to help transform how history is taught, learned, and accessed in the digital age,” said Mink. “With their national approach through the exhibit, *In the Cause of Liberty*, the American Civil War Center can continue, through this tool and

technology, to reach larger groups of educators and students beyond the confines of the physical museum in Richmond.”

Founded in 1998 by Edward Ayers and William G. Thomas, III, the VCDH was charged with creating new forms of historical scholarship and performing public service and outreach. Since that time, the VCDH has partnered with various institutions to develop more than a dozen digital history websites. The inaugural site, *The Valley of the Shadow*, won the first annual Lincoln Prize for best digital work on the era of the American Civil War in 2000.

Educators can use the Web Companion as both a pre- and post-visit tool to further the students’ understanding of both the Civil War and the American Civil War Center. Each section contains rich video information concerning the Civil War and questions that may serve as discussion or writing prompts. Exhibits within the Companion include *Union to Disunion*, *Emancipation*, *The War*, *Behind the Lines* and *Legacies*. Media components include: *Audio*, *Videos*, *Readings*, and *Perspectives* which introduce users to the thoughts and viewpoints of those who witnessed the Civil War first hand and provide lectures and discussions from noted scholars. Additional components such as *Insights* and *Archives* incorporate documents, diaries, letters and other historical resources which assist with research. The war’s legacies are also explored in *Civil Rights TV*, a streaming video format.

For more information on the American Civil War Center (ACWC) at *Historic Tredegar*: Educational Web Companion, or for a demonstration, please contact Mark Howell, director of education at (804) 780-1865, ext. 18 or mhowell@tredegar.org.

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Attached: Image of Educational Web Companion homepage

The mission of the American Civil War Center is to tell the whole story of the conflict that still shapes our nation. The Center is located at the Tredegar Iron Works, an 8.3 acre National Historic Landmark site by the James River in Richmond. The 1861 Gun Foundry is home to the 10,000-square-foot flagship exhibit, *In the Cause of Liberty*, the nation’s first exhibit to explore the war’s causes, course, and legacies from Union, Confederate and African American perspectives. The Center offers history labs and digital history programming for students K-12, while the Tredegar Institute provides ongoing adult educational opportunities through community dialogues and symposia.