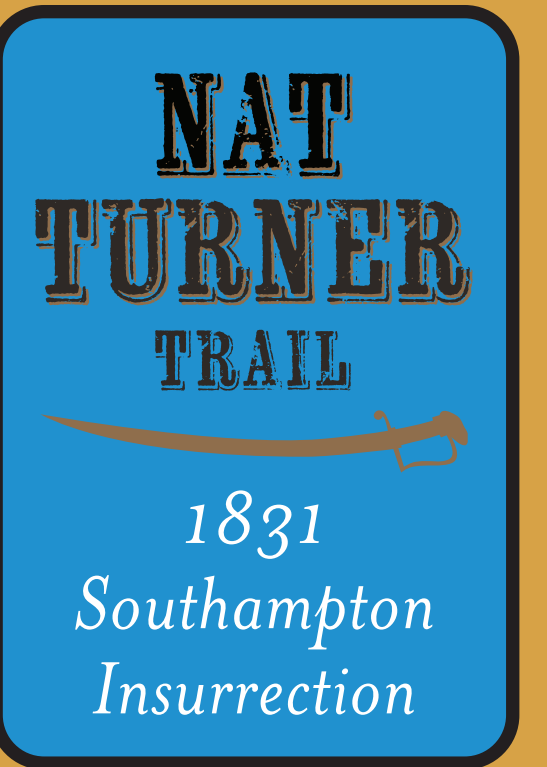


# Cypress Bridge

## A CROSSING OF THE NOTTOWAY



**A**fter the clash with members of the Southampton Militia a few miles away at Parker's Field, Nat Turner was determined to continue to Jerusalem (today's Courtland), directing 20 or so of his men to follow lesser used roads. Turner believed that he could cross the Nottoway River downstream from the county seat where Cypress Bridge stood.

### "General" Nat's Army

Turner's command numbered approximately 60 men before the skirmish at Parker's Field. Many ran away or were injured during that engagement. With his command now down to 20 men, Turner believed he would recruit more followers en route

to Jerusalem. He planned to take the town from the east, terrorizing and killing its inhabitants. He also needed more arms and ammunition, and he thought he would find these supplies in abundance in town. Although he overtook some of

his followers who rejoined his command, Turner soon realized that Cypress Bridge was defended by too many militiamen for the insurgents to cross.

Turner then retreated to Major Ridley's Quarter. En route, the insurrectionists passed "Thomaston," the home of the Thomas family. Thirteen-year-old George Henry Thomas bravely orchestrated

Speech and Photographs Relating to Nat Turner's Insurrection, Accession # 10673, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va.



*Cypress Bridge over the Nottoway River.*

Speech and Photographs Relating to Nat Turner's Insurrection, Accession # 10673, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va.

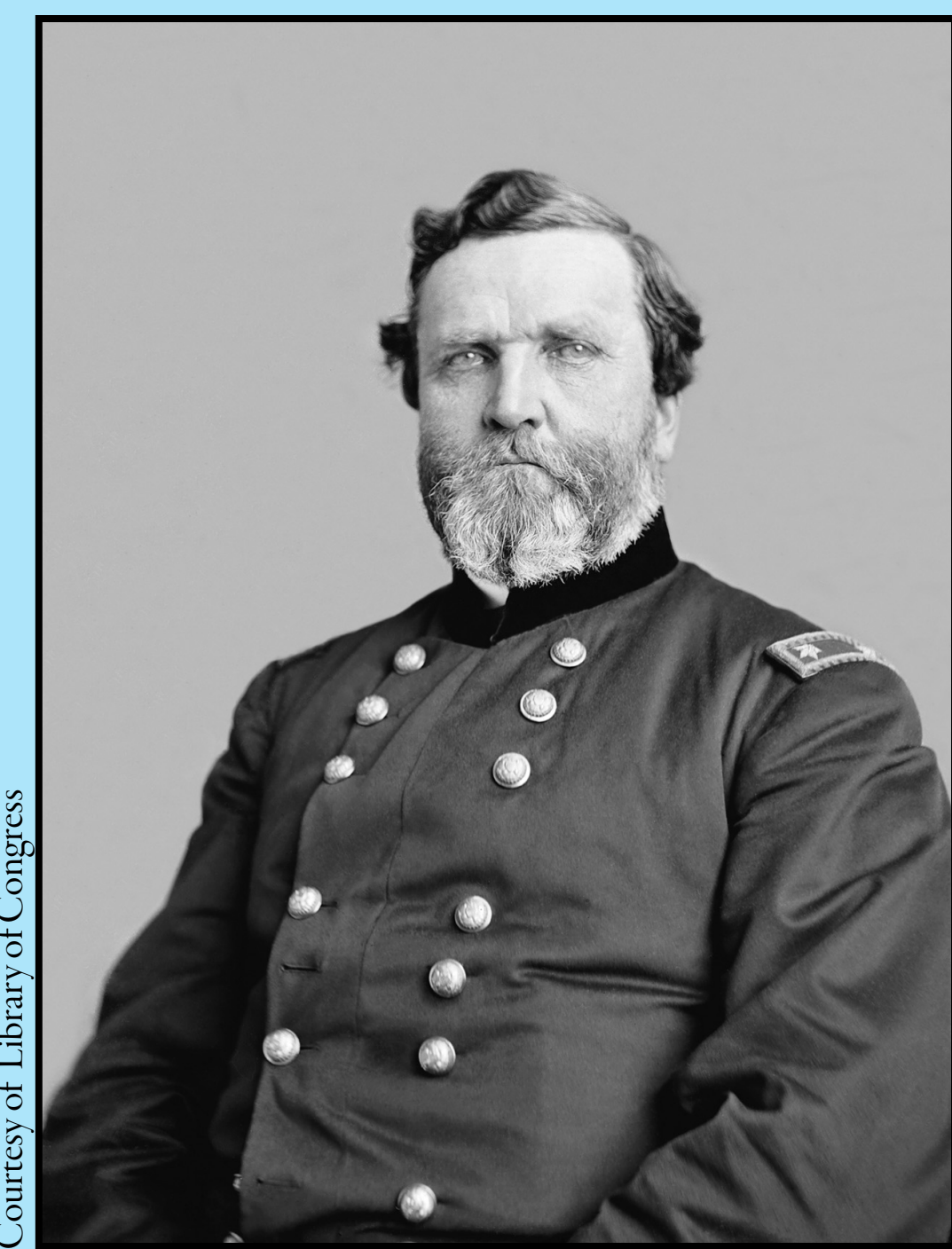


*Cross Keys (showing old storehouse in which some of insurgents were imprisoned).*

his family's escape. Later, he would attend the United States Military Academy and serve as a leading Union general during the Civil War.

After striving in vain to collect more recruits and suffering his defeat at the Blunt house, Turner decided to return to the Cross Keys section of the county the next morning. He was confident he could muster more men there and then decide whether to begin his raid anew or retreat into the Dismal Swamp.

Design: naturegraphicsdisplays.com



Courtesy of Library of Congress

*General George Henry Thomas, USA, ca. 1855-1865. Mathew Brady, photographer.*