

# Antebellum South Carolina



*Come see how 19<sup>th</sup> century politics and society impacted two real South Carolina families.*

*Antebellum South Carolina* is a student education program designed for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades and hosted by the historic house museums of Historic Charleston Foundation.

Standards addressed:

For 3<sup>rd</sup> grade: 3-2.5, 3-4.1, 3-4.2, 3-4.3, 3-4.4

For 8<sup>th</sup> grade: 8-1.4, 8-4.1, 8-4.3, 8-4.4, 8-4.6



HISTORIC CHARLESTON  
FOUNDATION

# Program Overview

Dear Educators,

*Antebellum South Carolina* is a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade program designed by educators at Historic Charleston Foundation. Students will visit two properties as a part of this program:

Nathaniel Russell House Museum, c. 1808

Aiken-Rhett House Museum, c. 1820



The purpose of *Antebellum South Carolina* is to immerse students into the past by visiting two authentic properties located in historic Charleston. Program content includes differences between the past and present, social classes, urban slavery, Gullah culture, cash crop production, and the politics of the Civil War. Students will learn what life was like for the different people living in these houses, and how the Civil War affected their lives.



Thank you for considering this program for your students. We are confident that after experiencing *Antebellum South Carolina*, you will agree that this field experience is the perfect method to illustrate and reinforce what is being learned in your classroom.

# Museums and Program Information

Step into the South Carolina's past during the 1800s from the perspective of the Russell family and Aiken family. Students will experience two very different house museums led by educators at both sites.



## **Nathaniel Russell House c. 1808**

Nathaniel Russell and his family lived at 51 Meeting Street and Mr. Russell ran his merchant business right in his home. He met with clients who wanted to export staple South Carolina crops such as indigo, cotton, and rice and import enslaved Africans. He also was involved in the American Revolution, so your students will learn about patriots and loyalists. Inside the house, students will see the original office, dining room, family room, bedroom, and drawing room. Daily life in the 1800s was a lot different than today and your students will be able to understand what life was like for different social classes living in SC. Students will also explore what it would have been like to be a child in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by playing with period toys and games (3<sup>rd</sup> grade) or analyzing antebellum political cartoons to delve more into 19<sup>th</sup> century politics. (8<sup>th</sup>)

## **Aiken-Rhett House c. 1820**

William Aiken Jr. was a rice planter and the governor of South Carolina in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He and his family lived in their mansion at 48 Elizabeth Street. Students will learn how a family would have lived in the past by touring original kitchens, stables, bedrooms, and carriage houses. Students will learn about the Civil War and the role the Aiken family played during this period. The family was divided between unionists and secessionists, so students will hear about the different arguments for and against secession. In addition, students they will see how enslaved Africans would have lived and worked in a large home vs. a plantation and how dependent SC became on slave labor. While on tour in the house, students will be looking for items and listening for answers to questions on a scavenger hunt.



# Information for Your Students

*Here are some helpful content questions to review with your students before visiting:*

- What do you think it was like to live in the past? Was it difficult to be a child in the past?
- Who were loyalists and who were patriots during the American Revolution?
- What were the cash crops that were produced in South Carolina?
- What were economic conditions like for different classes of people in South Carolina?
- How did South Carolina become so dependent on slave labor?
- Who were secessionists and who were unionists and what did each believe?
- What were some of South Carolina's reasons for secession?
- What were some of the reasons for the American Civil War and who fought who?
- How did the Civil War play out in South Carolina? In Charleston specifically?

## House Rules

*Also please make sure you share these tips with your students before their arrival:*



Just like at school, we have a few house rules. These houses are about 200 years old! That means these houses and the furniture inside are fragile. When you come in the house, the students will have lots of questions and be very excited which we love! Explain to the students that no one is allowed to run or touch/sit on the furniture in the house (even the staff) and to stay behind the ropes. To ask a question, simply raise your hand and our staff would love to answer any questions they have about the house, time period, the families, and the items inside. We also ask that the students do not talk loudly when inside and make sure they are quiet going from room to room or when another student is asking a question. But of course if your guide asks you a question, please tell your students to share their answer! At one house students will be working on a scavenger hunt and they will be marking their answers with stickers or stamps. We ask that these stay on their paper and not on anything else. While students are not allowed to touch things in the house, we will have some touch artifacts that the staff will pass around for the students to touch and interact with. Also, younger students will have the opportunity to go outside and play games which is a time to run around and be loud! Encourage your students to have great listening ears and looking eyes so that they can learn all they can from this new and exciting experience. We hope they will have a great time on this field trip that they can remember for a lifetime.

# Scheduling & Logistics

Teachers and representatives should contact the Education Coordinator to request a reservation form and ask any questions. Email [education@historiccharleston.org](mailto:education@historiccharleston.org) or call 843-724-8491.

## **Program Fee**

Antebellum Charleston costs \$8/student which includes both the Nathaniel Russell House and the Aiken-Rhett House. Teachers are free and chaperones are \$6/each. We do have a Title I discount, so if your school falls into this category please let us know and you will receive that rate.

## **Capacity**

Due to the space constraints in the houses, we can only have 50 students in the house at a time. Our capacity for this program is 100 students, so 50 students on one bus would head to the Aiken-Rhett while 50 students would head to the Nathaniel Russell on the other bus. If you have fewer than 50 students, the group would all stay together to go to one house and then the other. We ask that each group of 50 be split into 3 equal groups with chaperones and teachers with each small group. This will allow the students to see and hear everything better and rotate through the house.

## **Snack and Lunch**

Lunch will not be until 12 so if your students are used to eating much earlier you might want to have them eat a snack on the bus while in transit from one house to the other. Good places for lunch after the field trip are the Battery, Washington Square, and Wragg Mall.

## **Schedule**

This field trip lasts 2.5 hours including travel time in between house museums. Typically the program begins at 9:30 and ends with lunch at 12 in a nearby park. We are flexible to fit your scheduling needs and accommodate buses if alternate times are needed. Buses can park near both historic houses. Here is what the schedule typically looks like:

*Bus #1- 50 students split into 3 groups, chaperons and teachers w/ each group*

9:30-10:30 Nathaniel Russell House 51 Meeting St

Bus returns at 10:30 (built in wiggle room if bus is late)

11-12 Aiken-Rhett House 48 Elizabeth St

12-12:30 lunch in park and departure

*Bus #2- 50 students split into 3 groups, chaperons and teachers w/ each group*

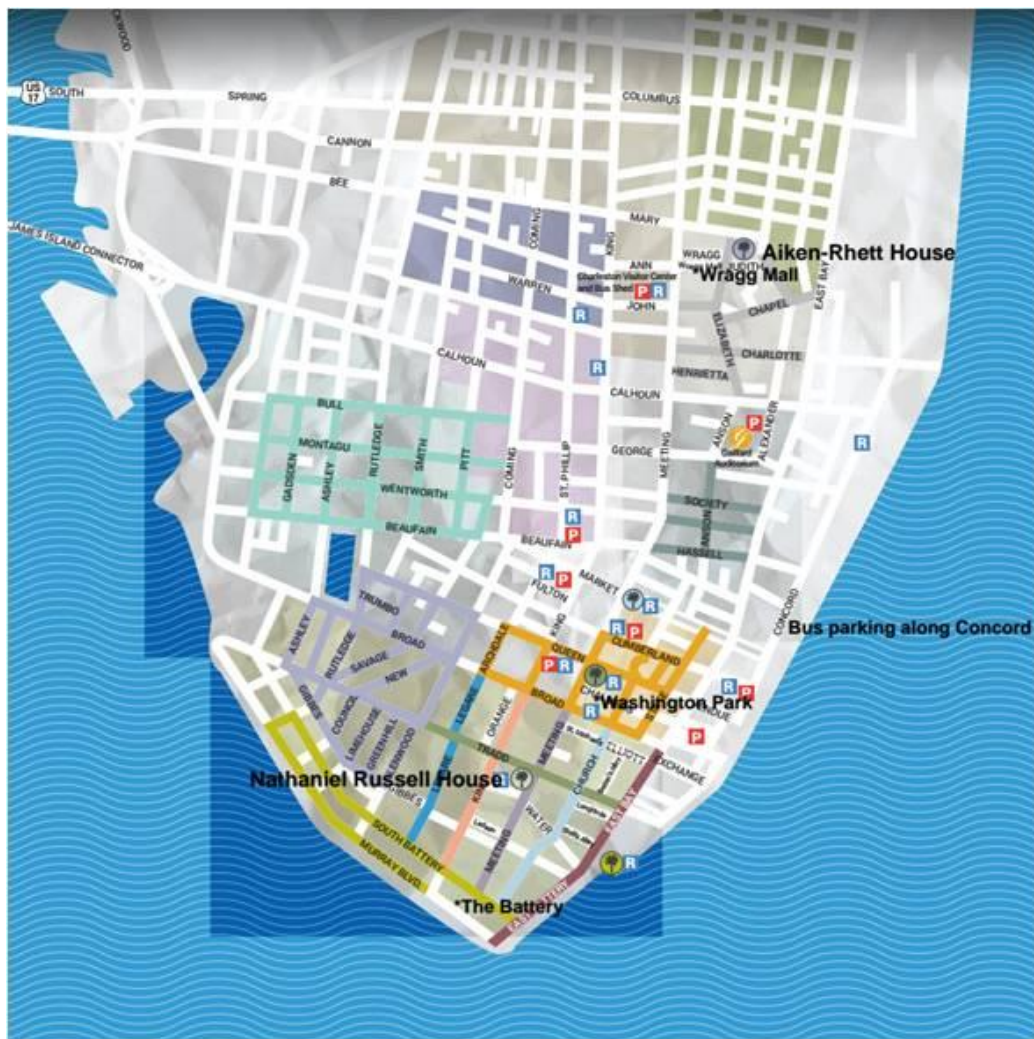
9:30-10:30 Aiken-Rhett House 48 Elizabeth St

Bus returns at 10:30 (built in wiggle room if bus is late)

11-12 Nathaniel Russell House 51 Meeting St

12-12:30 lunch in park and departure

**Use this map for directional help:**



**For more information please visit:**

**[www.historiccharleston.org/education](http://www.historiccharleston.org/education)**