

## **Civil War & The Old Mill House**

The winter of 1863-64 saw both armies camped along either side of the Rapidan River. The soldiers spent much of the winter in camps. The men were almost frozen. No fires were allowed on the skirmish lines.

On February 6, 1864, the heavy fighting commenced all along the Rapidan. A large Union force of about 4,000 crossed the river hoping to find the Confederate defenders unprepared for attack.

In late winter, 1864, General Custer charged through this area (Wolftown to Stanardsville) with approximately 1,000 men burning all the churches and mills along the way.

Somehow, the Graves Mill Gristmill survived and remains standing today on the property of The Old Mill House Bed & Breakfast. Being one of the few remaining gristmills, it played an important role during and after the war.

Next to the property is a Civil War Memorial honoring the 40 brave men from Graves Mill who served in the Civil War. Their ages were 15 to 55.

As part of the Virginia 2007 Community Program, the memorial was a project to commemorate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Virginia. Not far from this location, Major General Robert Banks was laid to rest in 1878. He was a wealthy landowner and gave the coronation address at the Centennial Celebration held in Graves Mill in 1876. Today, his portrait hangs in the Madison County Courthouse.