

1862 – JACKSON'S CAMPAIGN

During the spring of 1862, Confederate Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson conducted one of the most famous military campaigns in our nation's history — a campaign of deception, rapid movement, and successful attacks on a disjointed enemy. Jackson's Valley Campaign has since become a mix of fact and legend.

The campaign opened on a sour note for Jackson, when he evacuated Winchester on March 11, 1862. Two weeks later, Jackson's small, 3,500-man force returned to engage the Federals at Kernstown, Jackson's only defeat. The Confederates again withdrew south, up the Valley to Rude's Hill, then later to Conrad's Store (present-day Elkton), just west of Swift Run Gap. There, Jackson drilled and reorganized his army with reinforcements from Richmond that swelled its size to 17,000. He also reduced the number of supply wagons to improve the army's mobility.

Front Royal and the Manassas Gap Railroad, with the Blue Ridge Mountains in the distance — the Federal army is seen entering the town.

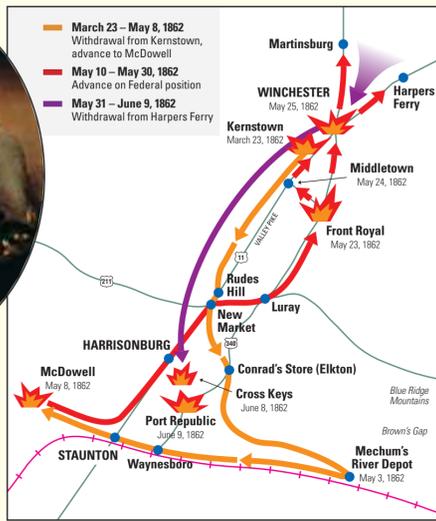
Jackson first moved to secure his western flank by driving the Federals, camped near Staunton, across the Alleghenies. At the Battle of McDowell on May 8, Jackson defeated the commands of Gens. Robert H. Milroy and Robert C. Schenck. Jackson then turned his attention to Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks's command fortified at Strasburg. At New Market, Jackson turned east, crossed Massanutten Mountain to the Page Valley, and then marched north down the Valley to Front Royal. There, on May 23, the Confederates overwhelmed the 1,000-man Federal garrison, rendering Banks's position untenable. During the night, Banks began withdrawing north to Winchester. He made a stand two days later on the hills south of the city, but Jackson drove his men off with a flank attack, the Federals retreated north, and the road to the Potomac River was open to the Confederates.

Before the end of May, Jackson learned that two Federal armies were marching toward Strasburg to cut the Confederates off from the rest of the Valley. Gen. John C. Frémont's force was moving from the west, and Gen. James Shields's division was coming from the east. Jackson escaped the trap with a 42-mile-long forced march from Winchester on May 21 and June 1. Now he was south of both Union armies.

Shields pursued Jackson up the Page Valley, while Frémont marched up the Valley Turnpike, with Massanutten Mountain separating the two forces. Jackson ordered part of his cavalry into the Page Valley to burn the Shenandoah River Bridge, slowing Shields's progress. During an engagement with Frémont's advance elements near Harrisonburg, Jackson's famous cavalry commander, Gen. Turner Ashby, was killed. Two days later, on June 8, the Federals caught Jackson napping, but he nonetheless defeated Frémont at Cross Keys,



Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson



Map depicting the major movements of Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Confederate forces during the spring campaign of 1862.

then did the same to Shields the next day at Port Republic. After the two battles, Jackson's men got a much-needed rest before departing for Richmond on June 18.

Jackson's soldiers were nicknamed "Foot Cavalry" for their rapid marches, covering 679 miles in 48 marching days. They fought five major battles, numerous skirmishes and engagements, and defeated three separate Union armies. Jackson had done his job well. The Valley Campaign drew 60,000 Federal soldiers away from Gen. George B. McClellan's army near Richmond and helped the Confederates defend their capital.

WHY THE VALLEY

The location and geography of the Shenandoah Valley made it strategically important to both sides during the Civil War. Its southwest-to-northeast direction gave the Confederates an ideal "Avenue of Invasion" to the North, including proximity to Washington, D.C. Federal armies marching south through the Valley were angled away from the Confederate capital at Richmond but provided a "back door" to Piedmont and eastern Virginia. Little wonder that Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson said, "If this Valley is lost, Virginia is lost."

The Blue Ridge Mountains confine the Valley on the east and the Alleghenies on the west. Between Harrisonburg and Strasburg, Massanutten Mountain creates two narrow valleys, the Page Valley on the east and the main Valley on the west. The Valley Turnpike, then one of America's longest all-weather roads, was a macadamized (hard-surface) highway built in the 1840s and ideal for the rapid movement of large armies up and down the latter valley.

Early in the war, Jackson threatened Washington and the operations of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad from the Valley. A Federal force under Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks then secured the area until Jackson, using the Valley's terrain features to advantage, defeated him during the famous 1862 campaign.

The Valley figured prominently in three Confederate invasions of the North — Gen. Robert E. Lee's incursions of 1862 and 1863 into Maryland and Pennsylvania, and Gen.

Jubal A. Early's Maryland and Washington raid of 1864 — all of which ended in defeat. The Valley provided the Confederates with both a route of unimpeded withdrawal and an area in which to rest and recuperate.

By 1864, the Federal high command realized that control of the Valley was imperative. After Early's raid on Maryland and Washington, Grant appointed Gen. Philip H. Sheridan to secure the Valley as the "back door" to Richmond and the "Breadbasket of the Confederacy."



Postwar view of the Valley Pike north of Middletown, Virginia, where Early's Confederates faced Sheridan's regrouping Federals on October 19, 1864, at the Battle of Cedar Creek.

Sheridan eventually succeeded, defeating Early and laying waste to a substantial part of the Valley. Before the year ended, Washington was no longer threatened, the Confederate lines of communication and supply between the Valley and eastern Virginia were severed, and the Federals could concentrate their forces against Lee at Petersburg and Richmond.

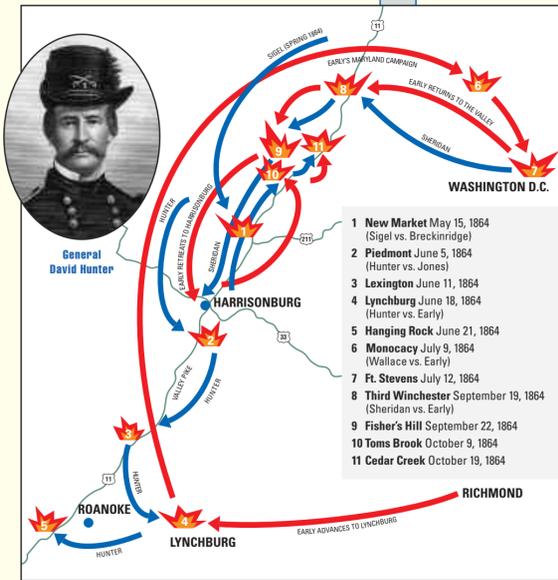
SPRING AND SUMMER 1864

In March 1864, President Abraham Lincoln appointed Gen. Ulysses S. Grant general-in-chief of the Union armies. Together the two men created a plan to force the Confederates to defend several fronts, including the Shenandoah Valley, simultaneously and constantly. While Federal armies advanced elsewhere, Gen. Franz Sigel marched south up the Valley from Martinsburg, W.Va., on April 29 with almost 9,000 men to destroy railroad and supply facilities at Staunton. Confederate Gen. John D. Imboden, commander of the Valley District, summoned Gen. John C. Breckinridge with about 5,300 soldiers including 247 Virginia Military Institute cadets. On May 15, the armies met at New Market, where Breckinridge forced the action and compelled Sigel to retreat.

Grant, furious over Sigel's embarrassing defeat, replaced him with Gen. David Hunter. With his ranks increased to 12,000, Hunter marched south from Cedar Creek on May 26. Confederate Gen. William E. "Grumble" Jones established a defensive position at Piedmont, a village east of the Valley Turnpike between Harrisonburg and Staunton. There, on June 5, Hunter ordered a ferocious attack that killed Jones and easily overwhelmed the Confederates. Hunter then occupied Staunton, destroying the railroad facilities and military supplies stored there. Facing only token resistance, he reached Lexington on June 11. Hunter shelled the town for several hours, then burned the Virginia Military Institute and the home of former Virginia Gov. John Letcher. He next turned east to Lynchburg.

Gen. Robert E. Lee, who was fighting Grant at Cold Harbor near Richmond, detached a third of his army under Gen. Jubal A. Early to counter Hunter. Joining Breckinridge in Lynchburg, Early commanded a combined force of 14,000. Hunter sparred with the Confederates on June 17-18, but feared he was badly outnumbered and withdrew west all the way to the Kanawha Valley in West Virginia. His retreat gave the Confederates one last great opportunity to threaten Washington, D.C.

Early led his army north through Lexington to Winchester, and then crossed the Potomac River into Maryland at Shepherdstown, West Virginia. After passing through Frederick, Early defeated a Union force under Gen. Lew Wallace at Monocacy Creek on July 9. Two days later, the Confederates reached the defenses of Washington, causing panic and requiring President Abraham Lincoln to call on Grant for military reinforcements. Early probed the lines, then ordered a withdrawal to the Valley, pursued slowly by Federal forces. Washington was safe.



Ruins of Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, after June 1864 burning



Map showing advances and withdrawals of the various Federal and Confederate commands from the beginning of the Federal advance during May 1864, through Early's crushing defeat at Cedar Creek.

FALL 1864 – EARLY VS. SHERIDAN

In August 1864, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant appointed Gen. Philip H. Sheridan to command a vastly augmented Federal army in the Valley. Outnumbering Confederate Gen. Jubal A. Early's army 40,000 to 14,000, Sheridan prepared to execute Grant's orders to "eat out Virginia clear and clean ... so that crows flying over it for the balance of the season will have to carry their provender with them." The armies skirmished and sparred until September 19, when Sheridan advanced from Berryville to Winchester. After a severe all-day struggle, the Federals worked their way around the Confederate left flank. Early's men were sent "whirling through Winchester" south to Fisher's Hill, the "Gibraltar of the Valley," with Sheridan in pursuit. Two days of skirmishing there ended when Sheridan rolled up the Confederate left flank, and again Early withdrew his army up the Valley.

The Confederate retreat stopped at Brown's Gap, southeast of Harrisonburg, where Sheridan paused in his pursuit to send his cavalry as far south as Staunton to destroy barns, mills, and crops. On October 6, Sheridan began a strategic withdrawal north to Cedar Creek, burning down buildings and driving off domestic animals his troops plundered from farms along the route of march. Early, much to Sheridan's surprise, followed with his cavalry under Gen. Thomas L. Rosser. Sheridan's cavalrymen paused at Toms Brook on October 9 to smash Rosser's troopers in an all-cavalry battle later nicknamed "The Woodstock Races."

Sheridan's army encamped along the banks of Cedar Creek. There, in the early morning fog on October 19, after moving silently into position during the night, Early's reinforced army made a surprise attack that routed two-thirds of the Federals. Sheridan reached the field from Winchester near midday to find his army driven from their camps. He immediately ordered a late-afternoon counterattack. Early's weary men were no match for the reinvigorated Federals, who swept them from the field. Early retreated to Waynesboro, dispatching most of his infantry to reinforce Lee at Petersburg. When Sheridan attacked Waynesboro on March 3, 1865, Early barely escaped capture, and the remnants of his army dispersed. This crushing Union victory eliminated the last significant Confederate force in the Valley.



Cedar Creek Battlefield



General Jubal A. Early

General Philip H. Sheridan

ROAD TO GETTYSBURG

Late in the spring of 1863, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee decided to carry the war to the North for the second time. His first attempt had ended at Antietam in September 1862, and Lee's army had retreated from Maryland into the Shenandoah Valley. Now Lee planned to rid the Valley of Federal troops to maintain his lines of supply, communication, and withdrawal. Union Gen. Robert H. Milroy's 9,600 men occupied the Winchester area to protect the transportation and communication lines to the North against Confederate threats.

On June 12, 1863, Confederate Gen. Richard S. Ewell led Lee's Second Corps into the Valley at Chester Gap southeast of Front Royal. Unaware of how badly he was outnumbered, Milroy decided to defend Winchester. The next day, Ewell's men pushed the Federals into the city's defenses. On June 14, in a bold assault, the Confederates captured a key fort west of Winchester, forcing Milroy to evacuate his army. Anticipating this move, Ewell sent Gen. Edward "Allegheny" Johnson to intercept the Federals at Stephenson's Depot, where half the Union force surrendered. Ewell's troops also captured 23 cannons, many of which served Lee at Gettysburg. After Lee's defeat there, his army retreated to Virginia through the Valley.



Federal General Robert Milroy

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SHENANDOAH VALLEY AVENUE OF INVASION



Bedford, Cedar Bluff, Chilhowie, Front Royal, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Luray, Lynchburg, Marion, Radford, Roanoke, Saltville, Staunton, Waynesboro, Winchester, Wytheville and the counties of Frederick, Augusta, Highland, Page, Roanoke, Rockingham, Shenandoah and Warren.

For more information on other Virginia Civil War Trails, call toll free: 1-888-CIVIL WAR

VIRGINIA CIVIL WAR TRAILS SHENANDOAH VALLEY AVENUE OF INVASION

How to use this Map-Guide

This guide highlights more than 100 Civil War sites throughout the Shenandoah Valley and Southwest Virginia. Each site allows you to discover the epic and heartfelt stories of civilians and soldiers who experienced triumph and tragedy during the war.

The suggested driving route will lead you along many of Virginia's most scenic and historic roads. Enjoy one of the numerous walking tours available in many communities. Solicit the services of an outfitter for a once-in-a-lifetime adventure through the countryside. Shop at an antique or specialty shop, dine in a 19th century tavern or inn, or simply walk amid the serenity of a preserved battlefield, and let the stories you've discovered ignite your imagination as you envision how now peaceful landscapes were once the scenes of the deadliest battles known to man.

For more detailed travel information, stop by any Virginia Welcome Center or local/regional visitor center or contact any of the attractions or visitor bureaus listed in this guide. For additional Civil War Trails information, visit www.CivilWarTrails.org. For more Virginia travel information, see www.Virginia.org.



Follow these signs for more than 1,000 Civil War sites.

THE CIVIL WAR REVISITED

The following further explore and expand upon the story of the Civil War:

Shenandoah Valley Travel Association
277 West Old Cross Road
New Market, Va. 22844
1-800-VisitSV
www.VisitShenandoah.org

Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation
1-540-740-4545
www.ShenandoahWar.org

Abingdon CVB
1-800-435-3440
www.Abingdon.com

Bedford
1-877-Hi-Peaks
www.VisitBedford.com

Front Royal-Warren Co. Visitor Center
1-800-338-2576
www.DiscoverFrontRoyal.com

Harrisonburg Tourism
1-540-432-8935
www.HarrisonburgTourism.com

Lee Co. Tourism
1-276-346-7766
www.LeeCountyVa.com

Lexington & Rockbridge Area Tourism
1-877-453-9822
www.LexingtonVirginia.com

Lynchburg C. of C.
1-434-845-5966
www.LynchburgChamber.org

Historic Sandusky Foundation, Lynchburg
1-434-832-0162
www.HuntersRaid.org

Roanoke Valley CVB
1-800-635-5535
www.VisitRoanokeva.com

Saltville
1-276-496-5342 ext. 33
www.saltville.org

Shenandoah Co. Tourism
1-888-367-3965
www.ShenandoahTravel.org

Staunton CVB
1-800-342-7992
www.Staunton.va.us

Waynesboro
1-866-253-1957
www.Waynesboro.va.us

Winchester-Frederick Co. CVB
1-877-871-1326
www.VisitWinchesterVa.com

Wise Co. C. of C.
1-276-679-9691
www.WiseCountyChamber.org

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www.VisitWytheville.com

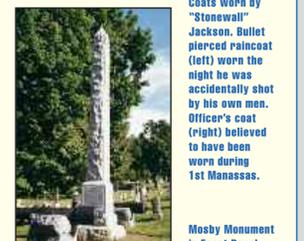


Hall of Valor, Civil War Museum, New Market Battlefield State Park

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District was created by Congress to protect and interpret the Valley's Civil War story. The National Historic District is managed by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation. www.shenandoahwar.org



Coats worn by "Stonewall" Jackson. Bullet-pierced raincoat (left) worn the night he was accidentally shot by his own men. Officer's coat (right) believed to have been worn during 1st Manassas.



Mosby Monument in Front Royal

MAKE ME A MAP

From childhood, Jedediah Hotchkiss had been a keen observer of his surroundings, recording his findings in great detail. In his first assignment for the Valley Confederate army as a teamster, the amateur cartographer used his long hours in the wagons to take meticulous notes of natural features, elevations, mileages, and road conditions.

In March 1862, Confederate Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson told Hotchkiss, "I want you to make me a map of the Valley, from Harpers Ferry to Lexington, showing all the points of offense and defense in those places. Mr. Lt. Alexander S. "Sandy" Pendleton will give you orders for whatever outfit you want. Good morning, Sir." Hotchkiss departed with the monumental task of mapping a valley that is 140 miles long and from 12 to 24 miles wide. Although he did not complete the nine-foot-long map until after Jackson's death, Hotchkiss gave the Confederates an accurate, detailed plan of the terrain that the Federals lacked. Hotchkiss continued to serve as a topographical engineer and staff officer until the end of the war.



Jed Hotchkiss