LIBERTY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

# The Importance of the Shenandoah Valley during the Civil War

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Doctor of Philosophy

by

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## Contents

## Abstract

The purpose of this research and writing is to examine the military history which transpired in the Shenandoah Valley during the American Civil War. There is a general motivation to discover more about the people who made the decisions that impacted the Valley. Two research questions will be considered. First, why did the Union and Confederate leadership conduct operations in the Shenandoah Valley as they did in the Civil War? Second, how did the conduct of operations in the Shenandoah Valley change during the war for both the North and the South?

Readers will encounter what happened in the Shenandoah Valley during the Civil War from the perspective of some of the participants who lived through it. This encounter will be presented from the analysis of both primary and secondary sources. Such sources as collected papers of people including Robert E. Lee and Robert Milroy along with recorded history from units like the 118th Pennsylvania will be included.

The Shenandoah Valley campaigns of the Civil War tell the story of two wars. In the beginning, there was the dramatic success of the Confederate army in the Valley in the first half of the war. Subsequently, there was the ultimate, final success of the Union army in the last half of the war. Unfortunately for the Confederacy, the Union success came at the right time and marked the end of the war for the South. This duality of emphasis on the Valley can be seen in two observations. First, the Federal leadership did not understand the importance of the Shenandoah Valley until they did. Second, the Confederate leadership always understood the importance of the Valley. Their problem was they were able to adequately defend it until they could no longer defend it. In the end, the explanation for the ability to access the Valley boiled down to the ability of both the Union and the Confederacy leadership to hold on to it.

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

In the fall of 1861, Confederate duty in the lower Shenandoah Valley was very pleasant. In their 2002 book entitled *A Scythe of Fire: A Civil War Story of the Eighth Georgia Infantry Regiment*, authors Warren Wilkinson and Steven E. Woodworth explain that at this juncture of the war in the Valley, the war had yet to heat up. Specifically, for units like the Eighth Georgia Infantry Regiment, their time spent in Winchester, Virginia were days of peacefulness and happiness as they were welcomed by the townspeople with parties and meals. In contrast, the Union armies were maladroit in their efforts to organize and strategize how to attack the Confederate forces in both northwestern and eastern Virginia. Such were the conditions facing both the North and the South in the eastern theater of the war.[1]

The aesthetically pleasing Shenandoah Valley in northern Virginia served as a source of beauty and sustenance for Virginians during the antebellum period. As the Civil War began, the Shenandoah Valley continued to function in this manner for Virginians. The gently rolling fields and small towns provided a contrast to the Blue Ridge Mountains to the east, the Appalachian Mountains to the west, and the Massanutten Mountain which ran down a long distance in the center of the Valley. It was this reality which created the need for northern armies to intercede for the purpose of denying the sustenance of the Valley to Virginians. Not only did the Shenandoah Valley provide sustenance to Virginians, but it also provided an avenue for Confederate armies to gain access to northern communities and lands during the war. Throughout the war, the southern leaders understood the value of the Valley in the economic and military sense. In contrast, such did not seem to be the case for the northern leaders until later in the war. Instead, many demonstrated an almost paralyzing fear of making a wrong decision,

[1] Warren Wilkinson and Steven E. Woodworth, *A Scythe of Fire: A Civil War Story of the Eighth Georgia Infantry Regiment* (New York: W. Morrow, 2002), 4.

tendencies toward ambitious jealousies, and near incompetence. It is in this context that historians encounter the interesting story of the change in Union emphasis in 1864-1865.

There are three reasons for this idea that Gen. Grant turned out to be in the right place at the right time for the Union in the war. First, he demonstrated the capacity to view things in their true relations and relative importance. He had honed this ability through his successful endeavors in the western theater of the war. Second, Grant was unique for the North in that his tendency in battle was to put constant pressure on enemy forces which brought an aggressiveness to the East that had been lacking in previous Army of the Potomac commanders. In many respects, this made Grant's approach very similar to that of Lee in the war. To encounter such an opponent was unique for Lee. Third, Grant demonstrated the qualities needed for effective action. He understood what needed to be done, and he possessed the ability to convey this information to his subordinates. This was especially true for Gen. Philip Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley.

Many may question the need for further research and writing about the Shenandoah Valley campaigns of the Civil War. The purpose of this research and writing is to examine the military history which transpired in the Shenandoah Valley. Reasons include a desire to know more about what happened militarily during the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley. There is a fascination for the Civil War in general and the motivation of the people who made the decisions that impacted the Valley. Readers will encounter what happened in the Shenandoah Valley during the Civil War from the perspective of some of the participants who lived through it.

This research is intended to help readers reach an understanding that control of the Shenandoah Valley was essential to success for both the United States and Confederate States based upon the economic and military value of the area. Additionally, it is important to

understand that decisions and actions taken by the people directly involved in the Valley had significant implications for the people of the Shenandoah Valley, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and ultimately both nations involved in the war. There are a couple of critical questions which this research will seek to answer. First, why did the Union and Confederate leadership conduct operations in the Shenandoah Valley as they did in the Civil War? Second, how did the conduct of operations in the Shenandoah Valley change during the war for both the North and the South? It is the desire to answer these questions that makes this inquiry unique. The answer to these questions is the thesis for this research. Beginning in 1864, the Yankee leadership had developed the unique perspective, disposition, and resources necessary to control the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia militarily, economically, and politically in the Civil War on behalf of the Union and thereby deny it to the Confederacy as the war entered the climactic fourth year.

Prior to launching into the exploration which is this research, it is helpful to examine several of the pertinent historiographical accounts relative to the Shenandoah Valley in the Civil War. To begin, early in the twentieth century, Douglas Southall Freeman analyzed the final efforts by the Confederate leadership focused primarily on Gen. Robert E. Lee. In the fourth volume of a four-volume series completed in 1935 entitled *R. E. Lee, A Biography, Volume IV,* Dr. Freeman discussed Lee's desperate plan to break out of the Army of the Potomac's encirclement of the Army of Northern Virginia with the intention of uniting it with Gen. Johnston's army in North Carolina. It was a long shot to begin. However, when Gen. Early's small force was utterly defeated and captured by Gen. Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley at the Battle of Waynesboro on March 2, 1865, any chance for success of Lee's desperate plan was

ended. Any access to the Valley by the Confederates and any possibility of diminishing Union control of the region was eliminated.[2]

Peter Cozzens wrote in his 2008 book entitled *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* that the 1862 Shenandoah Valley campaign has been written about in the past primarily from the Confederate point of view. In contrast, Cozzens presents the story of the 1862 Valley campaign in a balanced manner examining both the Confederate and the Union story. As such, he uniquely presents a detailed appraisal of Union leadership in the Shenandoah Valley campaign.[3]

Charles R. Knight wrote in his 2010 book entitled *Valley Thunder: The Battle of New Market and the Opening of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, May 1864* about a detailed examination of the complex prelude leading up to the day of battle. Knight explained that one of the keys to success in the Eastern Theater was control of the Shenandoah Valley. He identified the Valley as a strategically important and agriculturally abundant region that helped feed Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Furthermore, Knight analyzed Grant's tasking of Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel, a German immigrant with a mixed fighting record, to command a motley collection of units numbering some 10,000 men to clear the Valley and threaten Lee's left flank. His research identified John C. Breckinridge, a former vice president and now Confederate major general, as being assigned to assemble a scratch command to repulse the invading Federals commanded by Sigel. In the book, Knight explained in detail the fascinating story of how

[2] Douglas Southall Freeman,. *R. E. Lee, A Biography, Volume IV* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935): 7.

[3] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008): 219.

included within the ranks of Breckenridge's command of 4,500 soldiers were the cadets from the Virginia Military Institute.[4]

Mark Grimsley wrote in his 2002 book entitled *And Keep Moving On: The Virginia Campaign, May-June 1864* from the perspective of Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee. According to Grimsley, the Virginia campaign of spring 1864 was a single, massive operation stretching for hundreds of miles in eastern and western Virginia. He clarified that the military history examined the interconnections among the major battles, subsidiary offensives, and raids in the Valley. Grimsley defined the political history as an examination of the political context of the significance of the 1864 presidential election on what was to transpire in Virginia. As such, Grimsley is in essence questioning the conventional interpretations of what transpired in the Valley campaign.[5]

In his 2014 essay entitled "Virginia 1861" in the book entitled *A Companion to the U. S. Civil War*, author Clayton R. Newell explained that eastern Virginia was accepted by historians as the most significant location of action in the eastern theater. This area of Virginia located between the Union capital of Washington, D.C. and the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia was followed with the utmost attention by both the Union and Confederate leadership and journalists. In 1861 and 1862, the Confederate military forces were extremely successful in Virginia. Gen. Robert E. Lee rose to the top of the Confederate leadership with his successful leadership skills and superior strategic and tactical abilities. He earned the reputation of being

[4] Charles R. Knight, *Valley Thunder: The Battle of New Market and the Opening of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, May 1864* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2010): 5.

[5] Mark Grimsley, *And Keep Moving On: The Virginia Campaign, May-June 1864* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002): 4.

almost invincible on the battlefield. Morale in the South was at its zenith. On the other hand, Pres. Lincoln and the Union civilians and civilian leadership were distressed to say the least.[6]

In 1863, however, the tide began to turn in favor of the Union. In his 1984 book entitled *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command,* author Edwin B. Coddington elucidated that the Battle of Gettysburg demonstrated that Gen. Lee was still a human being. He could be defeated. He was not invincible. Combined with the loss of Vicksburg, Mississippi and control of the Mississippi River, Lee's defeat at Gettysburg loomed gloomy for the Confederacy. For the Union, those two battles offered a new glimmer of hope for the war.[7]

1864 and 1865 saw Gen. Ulysses Grant moved to command all Union military forces with his headquarters located in Virginia with Gen. George Meade and the Army of the Potomac. In the 2019 book entitled *Introduction to Global Military History: 1775 to the Present Day,* Jeremy Black interpreted that Grant led the Union armies in the east into an offensive mode which put relentless pressure on the Confederacy in general and particularly Gen. Lee. The effect of this on the Union people was to instill within them a confidence that the North would win the war. For the Confederacy, it seemed to indicate impending doom was to be their lot. This pressure ultimately led to Gen. Lee's surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox and the effective end of the Confederacy.[8]

The value of the Shenandoah Valley was explained succinctly by Raymond K. Bluhm, Jr. in his 2014 book entitled *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign, March-November 1864.* Essentially, Pres. Lincoln's emphasis on keeping watch over Confederate movement in the

[6] Clayton R. Newell, "Virginia 1861" in *A Companion to the U. S. Civil War,* ed. Aaron Sheehan-Dean (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 12.

[7] Edwin B. Coddington, preface to *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984), vii.

[8] Jeremy Black, "Moulding States, 1830-1880," in *Introduction to Global Military History: 1775 to the Present Day* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), 61–62.

Valley illustrates the fact that the region was critical for the protection of the Union supply routes from the Midwest to the East. Since the Union upper echelons knew the value of the area, the lack of Union military success in the Valley can only be explained by the failure of the Union military command in the area. Bluhm highlighted the fact that the Confederate success at invading the Union twice in successive years through the Shenandoah Valley accentuated the ineptitude of the northern military leadership to curtail Confederate activity in the Valley.[9]

Brooks D. Simpson wrote in his 2011 book entitled *The Civil War in the East: Struggle, Stalemate, and Victory* about the Eastern Theater of the Civil War from the perspective of military strategy as opposed to operations. He incorporated an investigation into the geography, logistics, politics, public opinion, battlefront, home front, conduct of military operations, and conduct of civil-military relations. Simpson discussed the role of public perception in shaping military operations.[10]

The research aims and objectives for this writing include an exploration of the Shenandoah Valley campaigns in the Civil War with a focus on the military, economic, and political history. These methodologies are the best fit for the research aim and will provide fascinating insights into these essential campaigns. This qualitative research focuses on collecting and analyzing written and spoken words as well as textual data. In addition, there will be some examination of visual elements related to the Valley campaigns. This information will be used to understand the perceptions of people about what happened in the Shenandoah Valley campaigns as well as others who were involved. This research will be conducted without any

[9] Raymond K. Bluhm, Jr., *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign, March-November 1864* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 2014): 8-9.

[10] Brooks D. Simpson, *The Civil War in the East: Struggle, Stalemate, and Victory* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2011): xiii.

preconceived idea of why the leadership in the Union army made the decisions which guided their approach to the Valley.

A discussion of the relevant military history will involve the disclosure of the social and cultural foundations, logistics, leadership, and strategy of the Shenandoah Valley campaigns. The relevant social foundations to be examined will include the cooperative and interdependent relationships upon which both the Confederacy and Union were supported. The cultural foundations to be considered will include the shared attitudes, values, and goals of both the Confederacy and Union. An audit of the logistics of the Shenandoah Valley campaigns will include delving into the procurement, maintenance, and transportation of military material, facilities, and personnel for the purpose of understanding how the campaigns were conducted. An investigation of the respective strategies of the Confederacy and the Union military command will ponder how each intended to meet the enemy in combat under advantageous conditions. Throughout all of this, it will be necessary to study the perspective and disposition of the Confederate and Union leadership to discover how they contributed to the overall effort of their respective organizations.

An analysis of the economic history of the Shenandoah Valley will involve inquiry into the changes which occurred and the perception of those contending for control. At the beginning of the war, the Valley provided a large amount of the sustenance for Virginia. In fact, the Shenandoah Valley was referred to as the "breadbasket of the Confederacy." In addition, there was some production of munitions in the region. The perception of the residents of the Shenandoah Valley and Virginia was that the experience of the bounty of the Valley created a reasoning that this bounty would need to continue. There was an expectation in Virginia that provisions from the Shenandoah Valley would continue even though the threat of interference

did exist. Each year there was some loss in supply and production due to the destruction caused by the war, but largely the bounty from the Valley was maintained. In late 1864, however, the Shenandoah Valley was lost to the Confederacy as a source of provision due to loss of control of it to the Union army.

Consideration of the political history of the Shenandoah Valley will entail an investigation into the significance of politics in both the Confederacy and Union relative to the region. There was foundational reasoning included in the decisions made in the Confederacy about how to protect the Valley. How those decisions were made in the Union as to the importance of the Valley to the Union war effort is a critical component to this research. The authority to determine what would take place in the Shenandoah Valley for the both the northern and southern leadership would be extremely important.

The destiny of the people in the Shenandoah Valley was in large part determined by the interpolation of the Union army. There are two questions which will need to be answered in this research. First, why did the Union leadership not close the Shenandoah Valley sooner to the Confederate army? Second, why did the Union leadership see the need to close the Valley when others did not? An overview of the intended chapters of this research will help to identify a plan to answer these questions.

Chapter 2 will identify the Battle of Kernstown as a training ground for Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. Gen. Jackson experienced an important learning curve at the beginning of the Shenandoah Valley campaign. Jackson's teachers were Union Col. Nathan Kimball and Confederate Col. Turner Ashby who provided faulty intelligence information to Jackson. The Battle of Kernstown ended as a technical victory for the Union according to the conventions of the day because Jackson left the battlefield first. In his report submitted in *The War of the*

*Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Major General McClellan confirmed this battle by mentioning the action at Kernstown as having occurred in the "vicinity of Winchester" on March 23, 1862.[11] In the end, the battle served as a strategic win for Jackson because it tied up critical Union troops which could have helped McClellan at Richmond. More importantly, this battle taught Jackson the need for accurate battlefield reconnaissance which honed his already established set of impressive skills as a tactician.

At Kernstown, the significance of Jackson's faulty intelligence information cannot be understated. Gen. Jackson confirmed this significance in his official report after the battle. There are three points of instruction concerning the need for appropriate intelligence in any military action. First, and for Jackson, foremost, a military leader needs to know the size of the force they are facing. In Jackson's case, he was facing a Union army twice as large as his and three times the size of the reported strength delivered by his intelligence assets.[12] Second, a military leader needs to know the location of his enemy. At Kernstown, Jackson thought the majority of the Union forces arrayed against him were several miles further north. Third, a military leader needs to know the composition of the units against which he is facing. For example, it is important to know the number of infantry, artillery, and cavalry units the enemy has on the field of battle. For Jackson at Kernstown, he knew that all three types of units were present for the Union. He did not know how many of each were there. Gen. Jackson put forth extraordinary effort in the future to make certain that the intelligence failure he experienced at Kernstown would never be repeated. This served him well for the duration of the war.

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[11] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1881*. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XXIV – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland ... Part I - Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862, 379.

[12] Ibid., 379-380.

Chapter 3 will analyze the rise of Jackson's presence in the Shenandoah Valley as his stellar success on the battlefield began. Once again, the Union leadership did not see the need to take definitive action in the Valley. The difference between Stonewall Jackson's perspective on the Valley as compared to that of the Union can be seen in *McClellan's Own Story: The War for the Union, the Soldiers Who Fought It, the Civilians Who Directed It and His Relations to It and to Them / by George B. McClellan* written in 1887. While Major General George B. McClellan was serving as the commander of the Union Army of the Potomac, his writing supported the reports of Jackson's prowess by explaining that a huge Confederate force overwhelmed one regiment and two additional companies of Union soldiers at Front Royal on May 23, 1862.[13] One thing is for certain, nothing solidifies leadership more than success. As such, Jackson galvanized his leadership role as a Confederate general when he effectively closed the door to Union access into the Valley from the Alleghanies in the west and the Blue Ridge in the east. Union Gen. Robert H. Milroy explained in a letter to his wife after the Battle of McDowell that these actions served as the impetus to push the Union armies north toward the lower Shenandoah Valley.[14]

The excitement generated by Stonewall Jackson's success in protecting the Shenandoah Valley from Union encroachment served to solidify his leadership role as a Confederate general. In his letter to his wife after the Battle of McDowell, Gen. Milroy affirmed that he would not be comfortable moving east of McDowell unless he was significantly reinforced. The victory of Jackson's army at McDowell in early May effectively secured the western Valley from any

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[13] George B. McClellan, *McClellan's Own Story: The War for the Union, the Soldiers Who Fought It, the Civilians Who Directed It and His Relations to It and to Them / by George B. McClellan* (New York: C. L. Webster & Company, 1887): 366.

[14] General Robert H. Milroy, *To Mary Milroy From RH Milroy May 13 1862*. RHM_1862-300_1a – RHM_1862-300_2b, 4. Rensselaer: Jasper County Public Library. https://indianamemory.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/Milroy/id/560/rec/346.

major Union incursion.[15] Later in the month, the action at Front Royal effectively secured the eastern portion of the Shenandoah Valley from Union incursion across the Blue Ridge Mountains. The security created for the civilians of Virginia and the supply lines of the Confederate armies in Virginia created a new hope for the Confederacy in the war.

Chapter 4 will consider the impact Jackson's victory at Winchester, Virginia had on the Confederate and Union efforts in the Shenandoah Valley. This battle highlighted the many ways the Union leadership could find to put themselves into a position to lose once again to Jackson. Based on this, it could have been easy to predict the outcome of the battle at Winchester, Virginia. The Union army fully experienced the idea of being expelled from a key theater of war by an overpowering Confederate force. In his report to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, Major General Nathaniel P. Banks confirmed the significant defeat he experienced by the attacking Stonewall Jackson at Winchester, Virginia. The result was Banks moving his army in an organized retreat to Martinsburg located well to the north of Winchester.[16] Jackson established himself as the dominant strongest military leader in the Valley. Still, why did the Union leadership not close the Shenandoah Valley sooner to the Confederate army?

As the established strongest military leader in the Shenandoah Valley, Gen. Jackson gave the Confederacy undisputed control of the region for the time being thereby restricting Union access to it. Benjamin Cooling clarified that this control provided the Confederacy with three essential advantages. First, the Army of Northern Virginia maintained access to the provisions generated by the Valley. Second, Gen. Lee continued to enjoy the ability to easily transfer significant forces east and west through the gaps of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia to

[15] Ibid., 6.

[16] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1885*. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XII – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland, Part I - Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862, 528.

meet Union advances wherever they may come. Third, Gen. Lee retained relatively undisputed access to the protected avenues of approach into the locations of key Union cities and regions to include Washington, D.C. This would prove to be essential in the months ahead.[17]

Chapter 5 will argue that Confederate momentum carried the Union from the Valley. Gen. Jackson's approach in western Virginia can be compared to Gen. Lee's approach in the eastern Virginia theater. The approach of both Lee and Jackson to strategy can be compared to any of the Union generals active in either the Shenandoah Valley or eastern Virginia to that date. At this point, there was no real possibility of Union forces returning in any significant way to the Shenandoah Valley in 1862. Major General Frémont confirmed his thrashing at the hands of Stonewall Jackson's command at Cross Keys on June 8, 1862 with heavy losses. Even so, Frémont's command was almost successful in combining with the command of Gen. Milroy to compose a new threat to Jackson's command.[18] The next day, Brig. Gen. Erastus Tyler's command was defeated with heavy losses by Jackson's command in the Battle of Port Republic located just across the North Fork of the Shenandoah River in Rockbridge County, Virginia. With the withdrawal of both Shields and Tyler, Stonewall Jackson was left in complete control of the upper and middle Shenandoah Valley allowing him to reinforce Gen. Lee in the Seven Days Battle further east in Virginia.[19] Yet, even so, the Union leadership did not see any reason to commit to closing the region to the Confederate army.

Gen. Lee received considerable reinforcements from the west in the presence of Stonewall Jackson's forces which traveled through the gaps of the Blue Ridge Mountains. An

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[17] Benjamin Franklin Cooling, *Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007): 10.

[18] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1885*. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XII – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland, Part I - Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862, 21.

[19] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867): 149.

officer in Jackson's command, William Allan, wrote in his 1892 book entitled *The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862* about Jackson's movements after Cross Keys and Port Republic. After Jackson's army finished the actions in the Shenandoah Valley, he rejoined the rest of the Army of Northern Virginia to assist with the Seven Days' Battle. This series of battles ended the offensive toward Richmond being conducted by Gen. McClellan effectively pushing the Army of the Potomac back into their fortifications constructed at the James River. Soon, Jackson would return to the Valley. This time, however, he would travel through the region with Gen. Lee and the rest of the Army of Northern Virginia.[20]

Chapter 6 will provide reflection on the significance of the action at Harper's Ferry as being the opening of a strategic door through the Shenandoah Valley for Jackson to join Lee at Antietam located in Maryland. Likewise, this chapter will converse on the consequence of the action at Winchester, Virginia which opened the door for the Army of Northern Virginia to move through Maryland and into Pennsylvania. Gen. Robert E. Lee's invasion of Maryland served as a problem for the Union command including Pres. Abraham Lincoln. It is possible to distinguish between how the Confederate military leadership and the Union military leadership perceived the importance of the Maryland campaign of Gen. Lee at the time it occurred. In this action, Gen. Lee's army moved through the Valley to invade the North. In the 2007 book entitled *Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam*, Benjamin Franklin Cooling shared that, at Harper's Ferry, the Union commander Colonel Dixon Miles failed to adequately defend the high ground around the town. In so doing, he doomed the town and its over 12,000-man garrison to either being killed or captured by Jackson's army.[21] Although the Confederate Army of Northern

[20] William Allan, *The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1892): 70.

[21] Benjamin Franklin Cooling, *Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007): 208.

Virginia returned to Virginia through the Shenandoah Valley after Antietam, the significance of the Valley as a gateway into the North for the southern military could not be missed. The subsequent action at Shepherdstown served as a rear-guard action effectively closing the back door to Virginia to the Union army after Antietam. Thomas McGrath explained in the 2007 book entitled *Shepherdstown: Last Clash of the Antietam Campaign, September 19–20, 1862* that Shepherdstown ensured the safe escape of the Army of Northern Virginia back into Virginia.[22] Antietam was the first time the Shenandoah Valley was used as an access point for the Confederate army to invade the North. Why did this then not serve as a reason for the Union leadership to close the Shenandoah Valley to the Confederate army?

With the safe return of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia into Virginia through the Shenandoah Valley after Antietam, the time would have seemed to be right for both armies to take stock of their situation relative to the Valley. Thomas McGrath affirmed the conclusion that, for the Confederacy, the status quo would work just fine. Not so for the Army of the Potomac. The status quo amounted to a Confederate army which could move as it pleased through the Shenandoah Valley whenever and wherever it wished to go. One would think that after Antietam the Union high command would review its strategy in the Valley. Although there was some minor activity there, it was not until June 1863 that any further significant action occurred there.[23]

In addition, the consequence of the action at Winchester, Virginia which opened the door for the Army of Northern Virginia to move through Maryland and into Pennsylvania will be examined. In the 2013 book entitled *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion*, Allen C. Guelzo clarified that the Confederate victory at Winchester led to the culminating, climactic battle in

[22] Thomas A. McGrath, *Shepherdstown: Last Clash of the Antietam Campaign, September 19–20, 1862* (Lynchburg: Schroeder Publications, 2007): 198.

[23] Ibid., 19.

Pennsylvania at Gettysburg in July 1863.[24] This was the second time the Shenandoah Valley was used by Lee to invade the North. Something was different this time, however, as the Confederate army could not close the back door a second time into Virginia. After Gettysburg, the northern military leadership made the decision to attempt once again to take control of the Shenandoah Valley. The new commanding general of all Union forces in the war was Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. His approach to the Valley was different than any of his predecessors in that position. Again, Charles R. Knight analyzed in *Valley Thunder* that, although the Union failure at the Battle of New Market seemed a repeat of the last two years in Virginia, it did demonstrate this new emphasis of Grant.[25] There was evidence that the doorway through the Valley could swing both north and south. Although the Union leadership had chosen not to close the Shenandoah Valley sooner to the Confederate army, it seemed that Gen. Grant was leading them to do it now. There had to be an explanation as to why Grant made the strategic changes he did at this juncture in the war. There were some key differences between him and his predecessors in northern Virginia. His choice of Gen. Franz Sigel to lead the invasion of the Valley for the Union turned out to be an extremely disappointing one. Nevertheless, the decision to send significant Union troops into the Shenandoah Valley signaled a new approach by the northern leadership.

Charles Knight analyzed this new approach as one following the impetus of Gen. Grant to adjust the strategic emphasis of the Union military in the war.[26] Essentially, this new approach was one of putting constant pressure on Gen. Lee as well as all Confederate field armies. To accomplish this new goal, Grant ordered a coordinated attack at key points in the Confederacy.

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[24] Allen C. Guelzo, *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013): 47.

[25] Charles R. Knight, *Valley Thunder: The Battle of New Market and the Opening of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, May 1864* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2010): 5.

[26] Ibid., 1-2.

Grant would join with the Army of the Potomac and Gen. Meade along with Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler on the Peninsula to fight against Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia at Richmond. Simultaneously, Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel would attack the Shenandoah Valley to destroy Lee's supply lines. Maj. Gen. Sherman would attack Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee, invade Georgia and capture Atlanta. Last, Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks was assigned to capture Mobile, Alabama.

Chapter 7 will review Gen. Hunter's capturing of Staunton, Virginia and the sacking of Lexington, Virginia. Along with this, a discussion of the last two victories of the Confederacy relative to the Shenandoah Valley at Monocacy and Kernstown will progress. To begin, Grant's selection of Gen. David Hunter precipitated actions at Lexington, especially concerning the destruction of VMI, which were not completely appreciated by his own subordinates. Furthermore, his behavior in Virginia would be judged inappropriate by at least some of his own superiors. Brig. Gen. J. D. Imboden who commanded some of the Confederate forces at the Battle of Piedmont on June 5-6, 1864 wrote in his article published in the *Confederate Veteran* magazine published in January 1923 that the significantly outnumbered southern army was defeated after severe fighting, the army commander Brig. Gen. William E. "Grumble" Jones was killed, and the Confederates were routed.[27] This brought a large Union army to the doorstep of Lynchburg, Virginia and the rear of Lee's army at Petersburg. It took the corps commanded by Confederate Gen. Early to relieve the threat posed to Lynchburg and Lee's army. In the 2006 article on the History of War website, J. Rickard recounted in the article entitled "Battle of Lynchburg, 17-18 June 1864" how Gen. Jubal Early was able to repulse Gen. David Hunter's

[27] Gen. J. D. Imboden, "Augusta County: 'The Battle of Piedmont, Part I'," *Confederate Veteran* 31, no. 1 (January 1923): 461.

army attempting to sever the supply lines of the Army of Northern Virginia to the south of Lee's army at Lynchburg.[28] However, the Union army was clearly in the Shenandoah Valley to stay.

Gen. Hunter's actions at Lexington seemed to confirm the scorched earth policy which was intended to end the Confederate ability to continue the war. Gen. Grant made no effort to stop such behavior. Instead, it appeared that this policy of attrition was part of Grant's new strategy as Sherman instituted it in his theater of the war as well. However, Hunter's turn of his army to the east posed a huge threat to the Army of Northern Virginia as the war of attrition came to Lynchburg and possibly Richmond proper. In his article, J. Rickard points out that Gen. Hunter was repulsed from the Lynchburg area and subsequently expelled from the Shenandoah Valley by Gen. Jubal Early's corps. Hunter's retreat back into West Virginia once again provided an opportunity for Confederate troops to attack into Union territory through the Valley. Early did just that as he moved his corps through the Shenandoah Valley toward Washington, D.C. causing quite a stir in the Union capitol.[29]

The last two victories of the Confederacy in the Shenandoah Valley at Monocacy and Kernstown did not make much of an impression on the situation in the Valley on the Union efforts. However, Gen. Jubal Early's conduct of both operations for the Confederacy resulted in the success of the Confederate endeavors momentarily in the Valley which enhanced his reputation with the political leaders, civilian population, and military leaders of the South. Gen. Lee was the most prominent.[30] Since Gen. Grant did see the need to close the Shenandoah

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[28] J. Rickard, "Battle of Lynchburg, 17-18 June 1864," *History of War Website*. (August 15, 2006). http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/battles_lynchburg.html.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Early, Jubal Anderson, 1846-1889, Jubal Anderson Early papers, Digital Collections, Duke University Archives, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University, https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4q81bs62.

Valley to the Confederate army when others did not, the glimmer of hope these two actions brought to the Valley were not enough to stem the tide of the Union army.

Chapter 8 will contend that the beginning of the end for the Confederacy was at hand in the Shenandoah Valley. To conclude, an analysis will be made of the effective end of Confederate control of and military presence in the Shenandoah Valley. The Confederate army in the Valley could not stem the tide of the Union juggernaut in 1864 when they had been able to do so as recently as the early part of the same year. An evaluation would need to take place to determine how the Confederates might be able to reestablish dominance in the Valley. However, it still remained that the Federals did see the need to close the Shenandoah Valley to the Confederate army. The action at Winchester, Opequon, and Fisher's Hill were the final attempts of the Confederacy to stop the Union advance into the Shenandoah Valley. In his published diary, Maj. Gen. Rutherford B. Hayes disclosed that the sixth division which he commanded of Gen. Sheridan's army in the Shenandoah Valley performed well at both the Third Battle of Winchester and the Battle of Fisher's Hill. However, these actions demonstrated the gaining of the upper hand by the Union army in the Shenandoah Valley.[31] People in both the North and the South could see the handwriting on the wall.

The conclusion of this dissertation will analyze the effective end of Confederate control of and significant military presence in the Shenandoah Valley. The benefit of the fruit of that region and strategic advantage for the Confederacy was lost to them for the duration of the war. The reality of this condition profoundly impacted the political, military, and economy of the South. William J. Miller disclosed in his 2016 book entitled *Decision at Tom's Brook: George Custer, Thomas Rosser, and the Joy of the Fight* that undisputed control of the Shenandoah

[31] Rutherford B. Hayes, *In the Shenandoah Valley* in Charles Richard Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Rutherford B. Hayes*, vol. 2 (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society, 1922), 511.

Valley had been secured by the Union forces through the efforts of the U.S. cavalry commanded by Gen. George A. Custer.[32] That control was never relinquished and contributed to the actions which ultimately ended the war in 1865. In his report of the engagement at Waynesboro, Virginia on March 2, 1865, Union Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan explained the surrender of Confederate Jubal A. Early's command. In this limited action, Gen. Early attempted one final, last-ditch effort at Waynesboro, Virginia to pry open the closed door of the Union army in the Shenandoah Valley. That effort was to no avail.[33]

The Shenandoah Valley campaigns of the Civil War tell the story of two wars. In the beginning, there was the dramatic success of the Confederate army in the Valley in the first half of the war. This creates doubt as to whether the Union high command appreciated the importance of the Shenandoah Valley early in the war. If the northern leadership did appreciate the importance of the Valley, then it becomes difficult to comprehend the Confederate success and Union failure there. If the Union leadership did not appreciate the importance of the Valley, this lack of strategic wisdom becomes quite profound. For the Confederacy, there was more of an understanding of the significance of the Valley. Perhaps it was because the Shenandoah Valley was simply part of the Confederate nation. More likely, the Confederate high command understood the Valley to be strategically valuable in two ways. First, it provided much needed sustenance to Confederate armies in the field. Second, it provided a relatively secure access point for Confederate forces into Union territory. Subsequently, there was the ultimate, final

[32] William J. Miller, *Decision at Tom's Brook: George Custer, Thomas Rosser, and the Joy of the Fight* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2016): 127.

[33] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XLVI. 1894-1895*. (Vol. 46, Chap. 58). Chapter XLVI – Operations in Northern and Southeastern Virginia, North Carolina (January 1-31), West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. January 1-June 30, 1865, 476.

success of the Union army in the last half of the war. Unfortunately for the Confederacy, the Union success came at the right time and marked the end of the war for the South.

## Chapter 2 - Jackson Taken to School at First Battle of Kernstown

Early in March 1862, Maj. Gen. Jackson had taken up a position with his Valley District division in the town of Winchester, Virginia. Jackson had received orders from Gen. Johnston to keep Union Gen. Banks occupied in the Shenandoah Valley. On the 11th of March, Jackson reasoned that a move of the division out of Winchester down the Valley Pike to Mt. Jackson could be a way to draw Banks further into the Valley.[1] When Jackson received word on March 21st that Banks was splitting his force, the Confederate general decided that he needed to engage Banks at Winchester before the Union commander could release a large portion of his army to move east. Once Jackson caught up with Gen. Banks, the Confederate general took the initiative to engage the Union army at Kernstown, Virginia located just south of Winchester. Having bitten off more than he could chew given the strength of the Union army Jackson encountered, Stonewall Jackson experienced defeat when his lines broke under the pressure of the Union counterattack. However, all was not lost for the Confederates when consideration was given to the strategic result of the battle. Although the battle was a tactical disappointment for Jackson, the strategic value of the action for the Confederate army could not be ignored. Jackson's inattention to detail regarding battlefield reconnaissance led to his inordinate exposure to danger at the hands of the Union army that day. All said, the Battle of Kernstown taught Jackson the need for accurate battlefield reconnaissance to match his already established set of impressive skills as a tactician.

### Jackson Moves Toward Engagement

In February 1862, Gen. Jackson received orders from Gen. Joseph E. Johnston who was the commander of the Confederate military forces in northern Virginia. Those orders were for

[1] William Allan, *History of the Campaign of Gen. T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, from November 4, 1861, to June 17, 1862* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1880), 38.

Jackson to keep the Union commander in the Shenandoah Valley. This would require Jackson to occupy Gen. Nathaniel Banks' V Corps with consistent military activity for the foreseeable future. At the same time, the Union commander Gen. George McClellan had given orders to Gen. Banks to attack up the Shenandoah Valley to remove any Confederate presence there. These conflicting set of orders for each leader established circumstances sure to lead to a fight sometime in the month of March.[2]

Early in March, Gen. Banks signaled his intention to complete his assignment when he sent out a scouting force from his front line at Charlestown toward Martinsburg to the northwest past Harpers Ferry. Known as an ardent supporter of learning both personally and politically, Banks developed a reputation as a strong orator. Coming from a humble family in Waltham, Massachusetts, Banks was regarded as somewhat of an idealistic chameleon politically. His persuasive personality served him well when he convinced his long-time sweetheart Mary Theodosia Palmer to marry him. It also served him well when he obtained an appointment by Pres. Abraham Lincoln as one of the first political generals for the Union in the Civil War. His ability to convince his military subordinates that he knew what he was doing on the battlefield lasted only until the truth was revealed. However, on the third of March, the force sent out by Gen. Banks was able to occupy Martinsburg after a brief skirmish with a small Confederate force.[3]

A few days later, the Union commander launched three probes to the southwest, south, and southeast of his position at Martinsburg. On March 5th, two regiments from Gen. Alpheus Williams' 1st Division skirmished with a Confederate force consisting of a small picket of

[2] Fred Harvey Harrington, *Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948), 66.

[3] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 154.

cavalry and a few infantry companies at Bunker Hill, Virginia. The 1st Maryland and 3rd New York Cavalry regiments encountered unexpectedly these Confederates as the Federals were conducting their reconnaissance to find out where the enemy might be on Williams' right flank. On the 6th of March, elements of Gen. Williams' division encountered Confederates at Berryville, Virginia on the left flank. Finally, on March 7th elements of the 1st Division were involved in an incident at Winchester, Virginia. A Confederate cavalry force commanded by Lt. Col. Turner Ashby skirmished briefly with Union troops commanded by Williams near Winchester. "Encounters" and "incidents" can be understood to involve one of two occurrences. First, units from the opposing armies may spot one another but for some reason choose to avoid contact. Perhaps the reason could be distance from one another, size of the opposing units, or pressing concerns about the current mission one or each opposing force was engaged at the time. Second, the encounter or incident could involve military units and civilians. Either way, the Confederate presence relative to Banks' 1st Division was nominal.[4]

Opposed to Gen. Banks was the crafty Confederate Maj. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. Having received an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, Jackson graduated in the class of 1846. He served with distinction in the U.S. Army during the Mexican American War of 1846–1848. From 1851 to 1861, Gen. Jackson taught at the Virginia Military Institute and was married twice. His first wife died in childbirth, and his second wife survived him in death. Jackson was an extremely religious Presbyterian layman. He held strong beliefs of faith which impacted his military leadership. In 1861, he accepted an appointment in the Confederate army.[5] In July 1861 at the First Battle of Bull Run (Manassas), Gen. Jackson led

[4] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 131.

[5] Robert L. Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lt. Gen. T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1866), 62.

his brigade of Virginians in stopping a significant Union attack on the Confederate forces. This is where he earned the nickname which stuck with him – Stonewall Jackson. The next year, Jackson found himself fielding a force of about 5,000 men against Banks' 10,000 Union soldiers in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. For the Confederacy, far to the south Jackson knew of Brig. Gen. Edward Johnson's 2,800-man brigade in the vicinity of Staunton, Virginia. However, he was tied up with the 12,500 men off to the west in Virginia commanded by Maj. Gen. John Frémont. As a result, Stonewall Jackson would have to go it alone with Banks.

The strategic overview of the Confederate armies in northern Virginia began to take place under the command of Gen. Joseph Johnston. In the east, Johnston began to evacuate his lines along the Manassas-Centreville corridor. His intention was to strengthen his position and deployment in fulfilling his responsibility to protect the Confederate capital at Richmond, Virginia. To do so, Johnston repositioned his army to the south toward Richmond. His objective was to establish a stronger line along a general line from Bristoe Station, Virginia to Dumfries, Virginia.[6]

Stonewall Jackson's Army of the Valley remained in the Shenandoah Valley at Winchester assuming an almost screening position for Gen. Johnston in the east. As such, Jackson assumed a relative position in the Valley to Johnston's position. Located between Gen. Johnston and Gen. Jackson was Brig. Gen. D. H. Hill with a brigade positioned at Leesburg, Virginia.[7] His purpose was to guard the crossroads and railroad terminus located there. The resulting Confederate line in northern Virginia stretched from Stonewall Jackson's command

[6] Edwin C. Fishel, *The Secret War for the Union: The Untold Story of Military Intelligence in the Civil War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 1996), 131.

[7] John H. Eicher and David J. Eicher, *Civil War High Commands* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 296.

located at Winchester, Virginia through Hill's small command located at Leesburg, Virginia to Johnston's main command located at Bristoe Station, Virginia.

Union Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks and his command moved east to put additional pressure on Johnston's army from the west. In so doing, Banks arrived on March 8, 1862 in front of Leesburg, Virginia with the purpose of occupying Leesburg. Being located about two miles south of the Potomac River, Confederate Brig. Gen. Hill's brigade was assigned the task of guarding the town. However, Hill's brigade was simply too small and weak to resist Banks' two divisions. Hill's small Confederate garrison was forced to abandon Leesburg. In so doing, they headed south to rejoin the Confederate army south of the Rappahannock River.[8]

Gen. Joseph Johnston made the decision to pull his army back from Manassas in mid-March for four reasons. First, the Army of Northern Virginia was operating near a condition of chaos due to confusion created by the administration in Richmond relative to counter orders from Richmond against Gen. Johnston. Second, the system of furloughing regiments to encourage reenlistment brought about the reassigning of the mission of each unit effectively reducing the number of infantry regiments available to Johnston. Third, the reassigning of division commanders was leaving Johnston with a shortage of higher-ranking generals. Fourth, the Army of Northern Virginia was in a compromised position at Manassas putting it in danger relative to the Union army. On March 9th, Gen. George McClellan ordered Gen. Banks to advance south from his base of operations at Harper's Ferry towards Winchester in the Shenandoah Valley.[9] This action would effectively serve to parallel the planned Union advance toward Manassas.

[8] Douglas S. Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, 3 Vols.* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 170.

[9] Fred Harvey Harrington, *Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948), 66.

These developments carried with them important implications for the Shenandoah Valley and Stonewall Jackson's division operating there. The most important development was Jackson's decision to prepare for action against Banks' corps. The V Corps was clearly on the move south from Harper's Ferry. It was in this and Jackson's response that the Kernstown campaign began. The first action was a skirmish at Stephenson's Depot along the rail line from Winchester to Harper's Ferry intended to interdict the supply lines of the Union army.[10]

Stonewall Jackson had communicated to Gen. Johnston that he wished to always attempt to defeat the Union army as they advanced. However, in the case that he could not defeat them, it was his desire to inflict as much damage to them as possible as he withdrew. This became known as Jackson's offensive-defensive strategy. Therefore, as the Union army of Banks approached Winchester from Harper's Ferry, Jackson evacuated the town and retreated toward Mount Jackson on the Valley Turnpike. As Jackson's force left Winchester, he commanded that they take with them all equipment and supplies assigned to them. As Gen. Banks moved toward Winchester, he found the progress slowed by confusion on the part of his subordinates. Jackson intended to turn on Banks and deliver a night attack on him. Unfortunately for Jackson's command, a critical mistake was made in troop movement during the attack. An important turn was missed causing the entire operation to be cancelled. Stonewall Jackson was furious because an excellent opportunity was missed to damage the Union army under Banks' command. Instead, Jackson's division continued their way up the Valley on the Valley pike. Jackson's retreat away from Banks' superior numbers continued for ten days through Kernstown and Strasburg and then past the Massanutten Mountain.[11]

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[10] George K. Johnson, *The Battle of Kernstown, March 23, 1862: A Paper Prepared and Read before the Michigan Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* (Detroit: Winn & Hammond, December 4, 1890), 3.

[11] "Battle of Kernstown," *National Tribune,* September 9, 1882, Vol. II, No. 4, 1.

March 12th began with incidents at Stephenson's Depot and Winchester as Banks drew closer to the town. The paramount event of the day was the Union occupation of Winchester after its evacuation by Stonewall Jackson. During the Union occupation, Gen. Banks can be characterized as charitable as he attempted to comfort and reassure through concessions the population of Winchester. As the war progressed, however, this demeanor was not followed by subsequent Union military authority. Banks garrisoned the town with his 1st Division of 7,000 men under Brig. Gen. Alpheus Williams. Strategically, Gen. Banks assigned the 9,000 men of the 2nd Division under the command of Brig. Gen. James Shields to continue up the Valley along the Valley Road to Strasburg in pursuit of Jackson's Confederates. Last, Banks designated the 3rd Division under Brig. Gen. John Sedgwick to remain detached with the purpose of holding Harper's Ferry with 7,000 men.[12]

Jackson withdrew his Confederate army to Strasburg with the intention of continuing south along the Valley Pike for a further forty-two miles to his series of camps located at Mount Jackson. Jackson's withdrawal was precipitated by the approach of overwhelming numbers of Union troops. The Confederate numbers included 3,600 infantry, 600 cavalry, and twenty-seven guns. Another contributing factor to Gen. Jackson's withdrawal from Winchester was the fact that Gen. Johnston's withdrawal from Centreville had left Jackson isolated. Given the fact that a primary responsibility of Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley was to draw as many Federals as possible up the Valley, it remained that so doing would weaken McClellan's efforts in eastern Virginia. By the end of the day on March 12th, Banks leading components had occupied Strasburg. This pressure was a strong motivating force for Jackson to complete his movement to Mount Jackson. Throughout the entire Confederate retrograde operation, Lt. Col. Ashby's

[12] Douglas S. Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, 3 Vols* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 311.

cavalry provided a strong screening force for Jackson's main body of troops which effectively hampered the Union effort to catch them. Both Jackson's and Johnston's withdrawals created the impression with Banks and the Federal army that Jackson's force was too weak to fight. Having reached this conclusion, any threat to Washington appeared to be removed freeing up the majority of Banks' V Corps to leave the Shenandoah Valley and return east.[13]

As of March 13, 1862, the Union V Corps was operating under the command of Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks. It comprised the divisions of Brig. Gen. John Sedgwick located in Harpers Ferry, Brig. Gen. Alpheus Williams located in Winchester, and Brig. Gen. James Shields now relocated to Strasburg. Opposed to them was Jackson's Division of the Valley District, Department of Northern Virginia under the command of Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson. It comprised three infantry brigades and one cavalry brigade. Both commands operated semi-autonomously in the Shenandoah Valley.[14]

The Union V Corps was held in the Shenandoah Valley. Its task was to provide ample forces to defend Washington, DC. In the meantime, the bulk of the Army of the Potomac shifted its operations to the Yorktown Peninsula. Simultaneously, Jackson's Valley division attempted to keep as many Union brigades occupied in the Shenandoah Valley as possible. The purpose of this activity was to weaken the Army of the Potomac in the east. The bulk of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia under the command of Gen. Joseph Johnston was tasked with defending the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia in the Peninsula campaign.[15]

On March 17, 1862, Maj. Gen. George McClellan ordered Gen. Banks to leave a covering force of one division in the Shenandoah Valley. That covering force turned out to be

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[13] A. Kearsey, *A Study of the Strategy and Tactics of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign,1861–1862*. (London: Gale & Polden, Ltd., 1953), 22.

[14] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Vol. 2* (New York: The Century Co., 1887), 299-301.

[15] Frank Leslie, *The Soldier in Our Civil War* (New York: Stanley Bradley Publishing Company, 1893), 89.

the 2nd Division of the V Corps commanded by Brig. Gen. James Shields. The remaining two divisions of the V Corps were to be sent eastwards. This drawing down of the Union V Corps would play into the hand of Gen. Jackson in the Valley. It would be much easier for him to devise a strategy to defeat in detail one Union division instead of the three he had been facing to this point in time. As Williams' 1st Division and Sedgwick's 3rd Division prepared to leave for Alexandria, it became increasingly apparent that the Shenandoah Valley was to be deprived of two-thirds of its Union occupiers. McClellan's stopgap solution to solve the severely diminished Union presence in the Valley was the brigade of Brig. Gen. Benjamin Kelley who was part of the Mountain Department and stationed to the northwest at Romney, West Virginia. Kelley's brigade could possibly support Shields in the Valley, but he was too distant to provide immediate support. After all, Kelley's main duty was to ensure the security of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad to the north of the Potomac River connecting the Union East to the Midwest.[16]

There was a skirmish at Middletown north of Strasburg on March 18, 1862. This unintended action occurred due to the reconnaissance efforts of Ashby to determine the extent of the Union lines in the vicinity of Strasburg. The next day, there was a skirmish at Elk Mountain east of Waynesboro, Virginia. This action confirmed to Jackson the presence of some kind of Union forces to his right flank. This information helped to shape Jackson's strategic planning for action down the Valley against Shields in the future.[17]

Since the Union division of Brig. Gen. Alpheus Williams at Winchester had orders to leave the Shenandoah Valley, Shields' chose on March 19, 1862 to move his unsupported garrison at Strasburg from its advanced position towards Winchester. Gen. Shields stated that he

[16] David G. Martin, *Jackson's Valley Campaign: November 1861 – June 1862* (Philadelphia: Combined Books, 1994), 39.

[17] James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997), 336.

needed to attempt to draw Jackson from his strong position at Mt. Jackson. His strategy was to fall back to Winchester giving the appearance of a retreat. Regardless of Shields' stated strategy, on March 21st, Confederate Lt. Col. Ashby reported to Gen. Jackson the receding movement of Shields from Strasburg to Winchester. In addition, Ashby reported Williams' movement from Winchester to the east.[18]

Given this information, it was no surprise that Gen. Jackson advanced his Confederate force against Shields' division. Jackson's first move was from Mount Jackson to Woodstock. From there, he moved toward Strasburg. All told on the 21st Jackson's command completed a grueling twenty-six-mile forced march to Strasburg. It was Gen. Jackson's plan to complete this forced march down the Shenandoah Valley from Mount Jackson to deter the enemy from sending reinforcements to Richmond.[19]

Next day on the 22nd of March 1862, Confederate Lt. Col. Turner Ashby's cavalry consisting of one company of troopers skirmished with elements of Gen. Shields' Union command at Winchester. Ashby's scouts reported that Winchester was occupied by a Union rearguard. His report continued by indicating that Union Brig. Gen. James Shields' 1st Division had left the Shenandoah Valley along with the rest of Gen. Banks' V Corps. Truth was that Shields' division had been stationed at Strasburg with orders to move north to garrison Winchester after Williams' departure and was still present.[20]

In the skirmish with Ashby's cavalry on the 22nd, Gen. Shields received a broken arm from an artillery shell fragment. Despite his injury, Shields began to deploy his division in

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[18] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 119.

[19] Thomas C. Fowler, "Criticizing Capehart: The Troops That Captured the Stone Wall At Kernstown," *National Tribune*, May 16, 1889, Vol. VIII, No. 41, 3.

[20] The War of the Rebellion: a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies, Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1880-1901, Vol. 12, Ch. 24, 339.

preparation for any action which Stonewall Jackson might want to initiate. Shields sent the 1st and 2nd Brigades of his division south of Winchester. Additionally, he ordered the 3rd Brigade to march to the north seemingly abandoning the area. In fact, their orders were to halt nearby to remain in reserve. Shields then turned over tactical command of his division to Col. Nathan Kimball who ordered the Second Brigade and some of his own troops along the Valley Turnpike. Even with Col. Kimball being in tactical command, Gen. Shields still sent numerous messages and orders to guide Kimball.[21]

As Gen. Shields had surveyed the terrain around Winchester, he quickly noticed that the town had three principal roads which led into it. Any of these could be a thoroughfare for Jackson to gain quick access to Winchester. From the west, the Cedar Creek road was the approach. In the center, the Valley turnpike road approached from the direction of Strasburg. From the east, the road from Front Royal was the approach. Kernstown was located on the Valley road about three and a half miles south of Winchester. On March 22nd, Gen. Shields gave Col. Kimball the task of preparing defenses for all three approaches.[22]

The Federal Gen. Shields was fortunate to have had a great deal of time to reconnoiter the surroundings of Winchester. On the other hand, Jackson had not. He had to rely on scouting information provided by Ashby's cavalry plus any informants they may have had in the region. Confederate loyalists in Winchester mistakenly informed Ashby that Shields had left only four regiments and a few guns which numbered about 3,000 men at Winchester. Ashby's informants explained that these remaining troops had orders to march for Harpers Ferry in the morning. Ashby was accepted by Stonewall Jackson as a reliable cavalry scout. Unfortunately for

[21] Henry Capehart, "Shenandoah Valley: Operations in Virginia during the Year 1862: Battle of Kernstown," *National Tribune,* March 14, 1889, Vol. VIII, No. 32, 1.

[22] The War of the Rebellion: a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies, Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1880-1901, Vol. 12, Ch. 24, 339.

Jackson, Ashby did not verify the civilian reports and passed them on to the general exactly the way he had received them. Acting on the mistaken reports that only Kimball's brigade of 3,000 men held Kernstown on the road to Winchester, Jackson ordered his division of 3,600 men to conduct a march north from Strasburg for fifteen miles to Kernstown. From here he planned to attack the Union troops at Kernstown. The truth was that Jackson would find a Union force of 8,500 to 9,000 men waiting for him at Kernstown. Shields' entire division was in his path.[23]

**Late Morning to Mid-Afternoon: Initial Development of Engagement**

Confederate Maj. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson ordered the march by his men of the fifteen miles to Kernstown, Virginia on the morning of March 23, 1862. Upon arrival, Gen. Jackson established his plan. As was his *modus operandi*, Jackson's plan was to attack aggressively. Although the devoutly religious Jackson preferred to avoid battles on Sunday, throughout his Civil War career Jackson did not hesitate to do so when a military advantage could be gained. Possessing the keen ability to take measure of any battlefield, Jackson devised a plan which put his army into motion before 11:00am with the purpose to overwhelm what he had been informed incorrectly was a much inferior enemy. Much to his chagrin, Jackson failed to perform personal reconnaissance before ordering the attack.[24]

The Confederate deployment consisted of battle lines posted for two miles from the Cedar Creek Road on the west end of the battlefield to a little ravine near the Front Royal Road on the east end. Jackson's plan of attack was to conduct a feint attack to his right. The main

[23] Henry Kyd Douglas and Fletcher Melvin Green, *I Rode with Stonewall, being chiefly the war experiences of the youngest member of Jackson's staff from the John Brown raid to the hanging of Mrs. Surratt* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 36.

[24] W. G. Bean and Sandie Pendleton, "The Valley Campaign of 1862 as Revealed in Letters of Sandie Pendleton," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 78, no. 3 (Jul. 1970): 341.

attack would be to his left with the objective to capture the Union artillery located on Pritchard Hill.[25]

As mid-morning approached and further developments began to unfold, Gen. Shields sent another officer to reconnoiter the battlefield to see if any Confederate force besides Ashby could be found. By about 9:00am, Col. John Mason of the 4th Ohio could find no indication of any further Confederate presence. Maj. Gen. Banks was present when the colonel presented his findings to Shields, so the two generals concluded that Jackson was not there with any force other than Ashby. With that, Gen. Banks left the area to report to Centreville, Virginia in the east. As his aides were to follow him in the afternoon of the 23rd, it was extremely fortuitous to Shields that they were present when Jackson's attack began.[26]

Gen. Jackson began the battle when he sent Colonel Turner Ashby on a feint attack with his cavalry along with Colonel Jesse Burks' brigade against Kimball's main position on the Union left flank consisting of Col. Kimball's 1st Brigade and Colonel Jeremiah Sullivan's 2nd Brigade across the Valley Turnpike. Intended to draw those two Union brigades away from the main target of Pritchard Hill, this feint attack was limited in its success.[27]

By noon, Gen. Shields received a message from Col. Kimball that a battery of Confederate artillery had begun firing on their positions from a position on the enemy's right. In addition, he had indications of a large force of Confederate infantry present in the woods. At first, there was an exchange of ineffective artillery fire. The guns were too far from their targets to cause any damage. Realizing that he had indeed engaged Stonewall Jackson, Gen. Shields

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[25] William Allan, *History of the Campaign of Gen. T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, from November 4, 1861, to June 17, 1862* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1880), 49.

[26] S. C. Gwynne, *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Scribner, 2014), 213.

[27] Major Michael Sullivan Lynch, *Cavalry In The Shenandoah Valley Campaign Of 1862: Effective, But Inefficient* (Auckland: Pickle Partners Publishing, 2014), 82.

interpreted Jackson's actions as an attempt to turn his left flank with artillery and small arms along the entire front. Initially, Shields believed Jackson's action on the Union left as the main attack. In response, the Federals countered the Confederate attack with Col. Carroll's 8th Ohio and elements of the 67th Ohio. They were supported by Battery A of the West Virginia Light Artillery commanded by Cpt. John Jenks and the 2nd Brigade commanded by Col. Jeremiah Sullivan. With this, the Confederate attack on the Union left was repulsed.[28]

With the undoing of the Confederate feint attack on the Union left, the actual Confederate main effort shifted to the Union right flank. Jackson's attacking force consisted of the brigades of Colonel Samuel V. Fulkerson and Brig. Gen. Richard Brooke Garnett. Their efforts were directed toward the Union artillery position on Pritchard Hill. The covering force for the sixteen guns of artillery located on Pritchard Hill consisted of Kimball's own brigade. Jackson's two attacking brigades had been deployed skillfully behind a large stand of trees and high ground which hid the Confederates from Shields' forces on the hill. Protected by artillery and skirmishers, the true deployment of Jackson's division in preparation for the attack was not known by Shields' brigades. The only forces the Union army could see were Ashby's cavalry.[29]

As Fulkerson launched his attack, the Union batteries of Lt. Col. Philip Daum were unsuccessful at even slowing down the attacking Confederates. However, Kimball's First Brigade was successful at rejecting Fulkerson's attack on Pritchard Hill. Given this development, Jackson decided to disengage Fulkerson and move the main force further around the Union right flank. To the west, Sandy Ridge appeared to be unoccupied. Gen. Jackson reasoned that a successful march would allow his men to advance along the spine of Sandy

[28] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 159.

[29] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 170.

Ridge into the Union rear effectively blocking the Federals' escape route to Winchester. To accomplish this, Jackson aligned Fulkerson's brigade on the left and Garnett's Stonewall Brigade on the right. He then put the revised plan into motion.[30]

By mid-afternoon when Kimball realized what the Confederates were doing, he countered their move by moving Col. Erastus B. Tyler's brigade to the west. In what essentially became a foot race, Fulkerson's men were able to reach a stone wall facing a clearing on Sandy Ridge ahead of the Union men. Once the Confederate units had established their positions on Sandy Ridge, Jackson's aide Lt. Alexander Pendleton was able to obtain a clear view from the ridge of the Union forces arrayed against them. He estimated that there were 10,000 Union troops present thereby greatly outnumbering Jackson's forces. When Pendleton reported this to Jackson, it was said the general replied, "Say nothing about it. We are in for it." As things stood, the battle had entered into a phase of stalemate.[31]

An interesting perspective is that Jackson's own words may perhaps betray a realization of something quite profound for the general. How did Stonewall Jackson process the fact that he failed at Kernstown to adequately acquire intelligence about the enemy? The answer should not be oversimplified. Perhaps he was overconfident in his ability to conduct battle operations. This would not be in line with his character. However, if the query relates to the possibility that Jackson could have been overconfident in the abilities of his subordinates, perhaps this was the source of his failing. Perhaps he was prone to sloppiness as a leader. An argument can be made for this when one considers Jackson's performance at the Seven Days Battle. However, the true nature of his failure in this case can be related to another characteristic of the man. He was

[30] Robert L. Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lt. Gen. T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1866), 316.

[31] W. G. Bean and Sandie Pendleton, "The Valley Campaign of 1862 as Revealed in Letters of Sandie Pendleton," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 78, no. 3 (Jul. 1970): 342.

always pushing himself to perform at a high level without full regard to the limitations of a mere mortal. Jackson's shortcomings at Seven Pines were more a factor of mental and physical fatigue than of incapability. Perhaps the real failure at Kernstown for Jackson was his belief that battle decisions needed to be made quickly so decisive action could be taken. Perhaps Jackson took an unreasonable risk by shortcutting the process of reconnaissance. Simply accepting Lt. Col. Ashby's intelligence report at face value without verification was a bad case of flawed judgment on the part of Gen. Jackson. Whatever the case related to these three possible explanations of Jackson's intelligence failure, clearly there was an opportunity for Stonewall Jackson to gain valuable experience in leading an army into battle which would serve him well in the future.

**Mid-Afternoon to Evening: Disengagement**

The two advancing Confederate brigades began moving along the spine of Sandy Ridge until they encountered a strong Union line. Fulkerson's men fell back to a stone wall facing a clearing on the ridge and were soon joined by the Stonewall Brigade. Together, the two Confederate brigades established a formidable line behind that wall.[32]

Union Col. Kimball countered the maneuver toward the Union left by the Confederate brigades of Garnett and Fulkerson by moving his brigade under Col. Erastus B. Tyler to the west. Around 4:00pm, Col. Tyler's 3rd Brigade attacked Fulkerson and Garnett. Tyler used an unorthodox approach. Known as a "close column of divisions," he formed the brigade front into two companies totaling twenty-four lines. As the Federals approached the Confederate lines, the

[32] A. Kearsey, *A Study of the Strategy and Tactics of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign,1861–1862*. (London: Gale & Polden, Ltd., 1953), 24.

Union brigade presented a front about seventy-five yards wide and about 400 yards long. This formation was difficult to control and lacked firepower at the front.[33]

The Confederates were temporarily able to counter this attack with their inferior numbers by firing fierce volleys from behind the stone wall. However, the Union counterattack began impacting the Confederate positions. As Jackson realized the strength of the force opposing him, Jackson ordered Col. Jesse Burks's brigade which had been held in reserve to reinforce the wavering brigades at the wall. By the time Burks arrived around 6:00pm, Garnett's Stonewall Brigade had run out of ammunition.[34]

The Union counterattack had effectively broken the Confederate lines. Faced with the relentless pressure of Col. Tyler's Union 3rd Brigade, Garnett ordered the Stonewall Brigade to be pulled back from the stone wall. This action left Fulkerson's right flank exposed. Realizing the danger of their exposed position, panic set in among the Confederates. Just then Burks's brigade arrived and was caught in the fleeing mob and swept up in the general retreat.[35]

Jackson tried in vain to rally his troops. In one instance, he called out to a soldier, "*Where are you going, man?*" The soldier replied that he was out of ammunition. "Then go back and give them the bayonet!" Jackson shouted. However, the soldier ignored him and kept running. As such, the Confederate army abandoned the battlefield. The Union Col. Kimball organized no effective pursuit, so Jackson was successful at reestablishing control over his fleeing command about four and a half miles south of Kernstown at the little village of

[33] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Vol. 2* (New York: The Century Co., 1887), 306.

[34] The War of the Rebellion: a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies, Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1880-1901, Vol. 12, Ch. 24, 382.

[35] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 134.

Newtown. Ashby's cavalry deterred the cautious Union pursuit by offering stiff resistance about one and a half miles south of Kernstown.[36]

Given the chaotic situation Gen. Jackson and his army found themselves, one must wonder why Gen. Shields did not order a more intense pursuit of the Confederates. Had the Union army been able to engage Jackson's damaged force, it is possible they could have been decimated. While it is true that darkness had ended the action on March 23rd, Jackson's army was camped near enough for the Federals to see their campfires in the vicinity of Newton. Shields could have organized a general attack on the morning of March 24th as Ashby's cavalry could only harass the Union army and inform Jackson of their movement. Shields instead chose to give Stonewall Jackson all the room he needed to escape and rejuvenate his army back into a strong fighting force. Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks continued the pursuit of the Confederates after the victory at Kernstown. His army occupied Strasburg, Virginia. However, the Confederate division of Stonewall Jackson continued to withdraw southwards to the safety of Mount Jackson. Perhaps there was an innate timidity guiding Col. Kimball and Brig. Gen. Shields which was revealed in their actions. Perhaps they misinterpreted Stonewall Jackson's audacity in attacking an army almost three times their size as an indication of Jackson's army being much larger than it was. Whatever the situation, Shields missed the opportunity to end Jackson's activity in the Shenandoah Valley in March 1862.

## Aftermath of the Engagement

There were four implications of the First Battle of Kernstown as related to developments in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia specifically and the war in general. First, Stonewall Jackson's action led to diminished Union forces at Richmond, Virginia. Second, even Jackson's

[36] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 162.

loss at Kernstown provided a strategic victory for Confederate forces in Virginia. Third, Jackson developed the reputation for the deployment of what became known as "Foot Cavalry." Fourth, Confederate politics related to military action realigned Jackson's division in the Valley.

To begin, Stonewall Jackson's action at Kernstown led to a diminished Union presence in the theater surrounding Richmond, Virginia. At Kernstown, the Union casualties totaled 590. Of that number, 118 were killed, 450 wounded, and twenty-two captured or missing. Confederate casualties were 718. Eighty were killed, 375 wounded, and 263 captured or missing. The result of the battle was a Union victory. It can be argued that the Union victory in the fight was only a TKO (technical knockout) because Jackson's forces chose to leave the battlefield on their own volition. However, President Abraham Lincoln was disturbed by what occurred at Kernstown for two reasons. First, Jackson displayed his sheer audacity in attacking an enemy nearly three times his army's size. Lincoln deduced that such an attack could only be made by a large Confederate force. The product of this deduction was that Lincoln overestimated the enemy's numbers. Second, despite being defeated at Kernstown, the Confederate attack had achieved unexpected success by causing panic in the Union. Gen. Jackson posed a potential yet very real threat to the Union capital at Washington, D.C.[37]

Pres. Lincoln reached the conclusion that he needed to take into his own hands the responsibility for enhancing the protection of two key strategic points. In the Shenandoah Valley, Lincoln sent Gen. Banks back along with Alpheus Williams's 1st Division to reinforce the Union presence. Pres. Lincoln also became concerned that Jackson might move into western Virginia against Maj. Gen. John C. Frémont. The consequence was that Lincoln ordered the

[37] Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 309.

division of Brig. Gen. Louis Blenker to be detached from McClellan's Army of the Potomac and sent to reinforce Frémont.[38]

The next implication of the events at Kernstown was that even Jackson's loss provided a strategic victory for Confederate forces in Virginia. The battle caused Pres. Lincoln to take the opportunity to reexamine the plans of two responsibilities assigned to Maj. Gen. George McClellan in command of the Army of the Potomac. First, Lincoln examined McClellan's plans for the defense of Washington, D.C. Second, Lincoln examined McClellan's plans for the Peninsula Campaign already underway to capture the rebel capital at Richmond, Virginia. Pres. Lincoln reached the conclusion that Gen. McClellan had insufficiently allocated his forces to do the job. Lincoln made the decision to order the corps of Maj. Gen. Irvin McDowell which was moving south against Richmond in support of McClellan to remain in the vicinity of the capital. McClellan claimed that the loss of these forces prevented him from taking Richmond during his campaign.[39]

Over the long haul, the First Battle of Kernstown was one of only a few battles which Jackson lost in his military career. What separates strong leaders from the weak ones is what is learned from their failures. Stonewall Jackson took to heart the two lessons learned from his loss at Kernstown. First, never again did he fail to adequately reconnoiter any battlefield on which he was engaged. In fact, recon is what Jackson was doing at Chancellorsville when he received his mortal wounds from friendly fire.[40] Second, his tactical abilities were confirmed when he

[38] Josiah Gilbert Holland, *Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield: G. Bill, 1866), 363.

[39] George B. McClellan, *George B. McClellan's Own Story: The War for the Union, the Soldiers Who Fought It, the Civilians Who Directed It and His Relations to It and to Them* (New York: C. L. Webster & Company, 1887), 12.

[40] Christopher Mackowski and Kristopher White, *That Furious Struggle: Chancellorsville and the High Tide of the Confederacy, May 1-4, 1863* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie LLC, 2014), 2.

realized that his natural aggressiveness on the battlefield is what essentially kept options for withdrawal open to him and his command at Kernstown.

In addition to the strategic victory Jackson secured at Kernstown, he also established his reputation for deploying what became known as "Jackson's Foot Cavalry." The strategic realignment of Union forces was caused by Jackson's actions at Kernstown. After this battle, the remainder of Jackson's Valley Campaign consisted of lightning movements. The identification of potential targets, forced marches, and aggressive engagement characterized the five victories against superior forces organized into three Union armies Jackson accomplished during the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862. These impressive actions elevated Jackson into the position of the most famous general in the Confederacy at the time until this reputation was later supplanted by his superior Gen. Robert E. Lee.[41]

The final implication of the First Battle of Kernstown for the Valley Campaign and the eastern theater was the change made on Confederate politics. Those changes fostered significant military realignment on Jackson's division in the Valley. Jackson refused to accept any responsibility for the defeat at Kernstown. This development subsequently led to the arrest of the commander of Jackson's old Stonewall Brigade. Brig. Gen. Richard B. Garnett was accused of retreating from the battlefield before permission was received thereby leaving Col. Fulkerson's brigade in a dangerous position. The fact that Garnett's command had received the bulk of the casualties in the action and were out of ammunition made no difference to Jackson. Gen. Jackson replaced Garnett with Brig. Gen. Charles S. Winder. Garnett requested a court-martial so he could speak in his own defense, but the situation on the battlefield delayed this action. Later during the invasion of Maryland in September 1862, Robert E. Lee ordered the

[41] James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997), xiii.

charges against Garnett dropped. However, Garnett continued to suffer from the humiliation of his court-martial for over a year until he was killed at Gettysburg during Pickett's Charge.[42]

The First Battle of Kernstown was indeed a tactical disappointment for Jackson. The strategic value of the action for the Confederate army could not be ignored. Jackson had demonstrated inattention to detail regarding battlefield reconnaissance. The product of this inattention was the inordinate exposure to danger of Jackson's command to the power of the Union army. The Battle of Kernstown was an important lesson for Jackson of the need for accurate battlefield reconnaissance. Adding this lesson to Jackson's already established set of impressive skills as a tactician increased his value to the Confederacy.

Gen. Jackson was better prepared for what lie ahead for his Confederate fighting force operating in the Shenandoah Valley. Indeed, in May 1862 Stonewall Jackson was headed toward an engagement of two different Union armies in the Valley. The result of those two actions would send an important message to both the Confederacy and the Union. It would be interesting to examine the rise of Jackson's prominent presence in the Shenandoah Valley as his stellar success on the battlefield began.

[42] David G. Martin, *Jackson's Valley Campaign: November 1861 – June 1862* (Philadelphia: Combined Books, 1994), 32.

## Chapter 3 – The Stellar Rise of Stonewall Jackson

The key strategic goal of Stonewall Jackson at the Battle of Kernstown was to draw back into the Shenandoah Valley Union brigades which had been released by Gen. Banks to assist Gen. McClellan in his assault on the Confederate capital at Richmond. For Jackson, this turned out to be one of those situations when one needs to be careful about what one wishes. The Confederate general now found himself facing a significantly increasing number of Federal troops. Jackson was struggling to incorporate new recruits while he rebuilt his division both numerically and in military training. He worked diligently toward this goal at his base located at the south end of Massanutten Mountain and called Mt. Jackson.

From this starting point, Jackson began to put into action the most meager of strategies to isolate portions of Gen. Banks' units in the Valley. His hope was to destroy Banks' army in detail. In so doing, Jackson displayed the ability to move his division rapidly and strategically in superiority to the Union troops in the Valley. At the Battle of McDowell, Jackson was able to accomplish a tactical draw while accomplishing yet another strategic victory. The Union army in the west withdrew west of the Alleghany Mountains. In another critical action, the Battle of Front Royal placed Jackson in a position to move directly on Winchester, Virginia. This placed Jackson's army in the rear of the Union army thereby allowing his disproportional victory over the small Union force at Front Royal. This forced the main Union Army at Strasburg under Banks into a sudden retreat. The actions at Front Royal and McDowell allowed Stonewall Jackson to achieve in two key areas of the Shenandoah Valley. First, he secured the western Valley from further Union incursion in the southwest. Second, the backward momentum of the Union troops under Gen. Banks' commands quickly abandoned Strasburg, Virginia to move to Winchester, Virginia in the lower Shenandoah Valley. Jackson's success at the battles of

McDowell and Front Royal solidified his role as the pivotal leader of Confederate forces in the Shenandoah Valley due to the protection provided to the Valley against Union incursion from west of the Alleghanies and east of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

## Jackson's Superior Ability to Move

Jackson displayed the ability to move his division rapidly and strategically in superiority to the Union troops in the Valley. In the Shenandoah Valley, there were four instances when Jackson displayed this ability. The first was when he ordered his troops to march from Mt. Jackson, Virginia to near Strasburg, Virginia on March 22, 1862. Then on March 23, 1862, Jackson ordered his men to march from Strasburg, Virginia to Kernstown, Virginia. All told, the Confederates covered forty miles in two days.

Jackson's orders from his commander Gen. Johnston were to prevent Banks's force from leaving the Valley. However as discussed in the last chapter, on March 21st Jackson received word that Banks was splitting his force by sending two divisions to the east to assist McClellan in his effort to attack Richmond. Upon receiving this intelligence, Jackson reached the conclusion that the only way to keep Banks' command from splitting was to engage them. To accomplish this, Jackson decided to engage Banks and Shields somewhere in the vicinity of Winchester.[1]

The Confederate effort on March 22nd encompassed Jackson turning his men around and, in one of the more grueling forced marches of the war, moved them northeast twenty-five miles from Mt. Jackson, Virginia to Strasburg, Virginia. Jackson marched his men to the point of exhaustion to position them for the greatest opportunity to achieve success against Banks and Shields. Initially, Jackson's army was located at his primary base at Mt. Jackson which he had

[1] William Allan, *History of the Campaign of Gen. T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, from November 4, 1861, to June 17, 1862* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1880), 38.

established prior to his retreat from Winchester. From Mt. Jackson, Jackson route marched his men to Strasburg to find an opportunity to attack Banks and Shields.[2]

Jackson's cavalry under Col. Turner Ashby skirmished with the Federals on March 22nd. Meanwhile, Jackson was marching aggressively north with the main body of his 3,000-man division. Jackson's command was reduced from its peak because of straggling. Essentially, the cavalry commanded by Col. Turner Ashby opened the operations against the Federal army the day before the arrival of Jackson's division. As such, Jackson continued his rapid march north from Strasburg toward Winchester. Having begun with over 4,000 soldiers, Jackson arrived to the vicinity of Winchester having experienced a twenty-five percent reduction of fighting strength due to the straggling caused by the forty mile march.[3] Jackson moved his men another fifteen miles from Strasburg to Kernstown on the morning of March 23.[4]

The second instance when Jackson displayed the ability to move his division rapidly and strategically in superiority to the Union troops in the Valley occurred during the march of his command from Port Republic, Virginia on a circuitous route to Staunton, Virginia encompassing thirty-six miles. The point of this effort was to keep Gen. Banks in the Shenandoah Valley from joining forces with Gen. Frémont in the Mountain District to the west.

From his headquarters located at Conrad's Store, Virginia, Jackson contemplated three courses of action against Union forces in the upper Shenandoah Valley. His first option was to go to Johnson's relief and assail Frémont's van which was under Brig. Gen. Robert Milroy. His second option was to go northward down the Luray Valley. There he would attack the Federals

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[2] Thomas C. Fowler, "Criticizing Capehart: The Troops That Captured the Stone Wall At Kernstown," *National Tribune*, May 16, 1889, Vol. VIII, No. 41, 3.

[3] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 157.

[4] Henry Kyd Douglas and Fletcher Melvin Green, *I Rode with Stonewall, being chiefly the war experiences of the youngest member of Jackson's staff from the John Brown raid to the hanging of Mrs. Surratt* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 36.

and, if he beat them, he would then start across the Massanuttens toward New Market thereby forcing Banks to retreat. His third option was to sweep down the Luray Valley, pass Thorton's Gap, move to Sperryville, and threaten the Federals' long line of communications thereby causing Banks to retire most likely. Of these three options, Jackson ended up deciding to attack Gen. Frémont's forces west of Staunton.[5]

To secure the best circumstances in which to achieve victory against Gen. Milroy, Jackson would need to keep Banks to the north in the Valley. To accomplish this, Jackson decided to try to confuse Gen. Banks. In essence, Jackson wanted to convince Banks into thinking that Jackson was taking his army to reinforce the Confederates around Richmond. Jackson decided to employ an elaborate ruse of marching the Confederate Valley Army east of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Jackson believed that following a route from Port Republic, Virginia through Brown's Gap to White Hall, Virginia would accomplish this ruse.[6]

The next phase of Jackson's plan was to march his division south from White Hall. From White Hall, he conducted what was known as route marching his troops to the Mechum River Train Station. Route marching was the type of foot travel which Stonewall Jackson allowed his troopers to engage which would enable them to move quickly over long distances. It entailed soldiers "marching" out of step with one another. The only stipulation maintained that the troopers were expected to keep up with the rest of the formation. Mechum River Train Station was a depot for the Virginia Central Railroad. The plan encompassed the Confederates taking a train.[7]

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[5] Douglas S. Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, 3 Vols.* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 342.

[6] Richard L. Armstrong, *Jackson's Valley Campaign: The Battle of McDowell, March 11 – May 18, 1862.* (Lynchburg: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1990), 32.

[7] Ibid., 32.

Part of Jackson's plan involved moving his division by train. Departing from the Mechum River Station, the Confederates would take the Virginia Central train across Rockfish Gap in the Blue Ridge. The destination was the key Confederate supply base at Staunton, Virginia. All told, this journey encompassed thirty-six miles over the course of four days.[8]

The third instance when Jackson displayed the ability to move his division rapidly and strategically in superiority to the Union troops in the Valley was his move from Staunton, Virginia to link up with Gen. Alleghany Johnson at the foot of the Shenandoah Mountain to engage the Federal army commanded by Gen. Milroy along the way toward McDowell, Virginia. These thirty-four miles was covered over most of two days.

Jackson had been assigned Gen. Ewell's division as support for his activities in the Shenandoah Valley. To accomplish this, Jackson gave some orders to Ewell which frustrated Ewell. He was ordered to Jackson's recently abandoned camp at Swift Run Gap to keep an eye on Gen. Banks and to keep Banks away from Staunton and McDowell, Virginia. The purpose of Ewell's assignment was to allow Jackson to deal with Milroy at McDowell. However, all Ewell was told encompassed waiting essentially for Jackson to communicate with Ewell.[9]

With Ewell in place, Jackson moved to link up with Gen. Ed Johnson. Jackson departed Staunton moving to the west toward Johnson. They linked up at the foot of the first mountain west of Staunton. That mountain was Shenandoah Mountain.[10]

Located between the Confederate army and McDowell were pickets of the Union army under Gen. Milroy. Gen. Johnson pushed through those pickets like a hot knife through butter

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[8] John H. Worsham, *One of Jackson's Foot Cavalry; his experience and what he saw during the war 1861-1865, including a history of "F company," Richmond, Va., 21st regiment Virginia infantry, Second, brigade, Jackson's division, Second corps, A.N. Va.* (New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1912), 77.

[9] Peter Cozzens, ed., *Battles & Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 5* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 175.

[10] Clement Anselm Evans, ed., *Confederate Military History: A Library of Confederate States History, Volume 3* (Atlanta: Confederate Pub. Co., 1899), 226-227.

almost overrunning them in the process. Cresting Shenandoah Mountain, Gen. Johnson's vanguard pushed the Union cavalry pickets back to McDowell.[11]

These initial engagements enabled Johnson and Jackson to arrive at McDowell, Virginia. Once there, Jackson prepared for engaging the Federal army in the area. These preparations included deployment of his forces beginning with positioning of Johnson's regiments on Sitlington Hill.[12]

The fourth instance when Jackson displayed the ability to move his division rapidly and strategically in superiority to the Union troops in the Valley was his move from Lacey Springs, Virginia just south of New Market, Virginia to Front Royal in the northeastern portion of the Shenandoah Valley. This forced march was completed in four segments of movement. These forty-nine miles were covered in two days.

To begin, Jackson moved his army northeast to Luray, Virginia. Leaving from Lacey Springs, Virginia just south of New Market, Virginia, he led his group toward Strasburg on the Valley Turnpike. However, he turned them east at the New Market Gap. This gap was the only way to cross Massanutten Mountain to the eastern Valley south of Strasburg and north of Harrisonburg.[13]

After crossing Massanutten Mountain, Jackson turned north toward Front Royal, Virginia. At this point, the Confederate army was on the Luray-Front Royal Road. They

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[11] Richard L. Armstrong, *The Civil War in Highland County, Virginia* (Buena Vista: Whaler Books, 2022), 56.

[12] *The War of the Rebellion: a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies, Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1880-1901,* Vol. 12, Ch. 24, 471.

[13] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 260.

marched on this road to Asbury Chapel. This movement placed the Confederates to a location within ten miles of Front Royal.[14]

From Asbury Chapel, Jackson turned the Confederate Valley army east on an obscure crossroad to avoid Union pickets located on the Luray-Front Royal Road. The purpose for this action was to avoid an early warning to the Union forces occupying Front Royal. The obscure road taken by Jackson's forces was known to locals as Gooney Manor Road. Jackson used this road to approach Front Royal from the south.[15]

Jackson's Confederate army arrived at Front Royal, Virginia on May 23, 1862. Once there, he gave the orders for his forces to prepare for the conflict. Having the element of surprise in his favor, Stonewall Jackson deployed his forces to enter the town.[16]

The previous four movements of troops ordered by Stonewall Jackson served to demonstrate his keen leadership abilities relative to his Union counterparts. There were four key results of Jackson's superiority in movement. First, those movements allowed Jackson to select the assets carefully and methodically he wanted to use in any action. Second, Jackson's rapid movements inevitably gave him the element of surprise in any action. Even in his defeat at Kernstown, Jackson surprised Gen. Shields and Gen. Banks by attacking a larger force. Third, Jackson through unpredictability was able to keep his adversaries confused as to his strategy. Fourth, an important advantage Jackson would derive from the first three results was an advantage in position on any field of action. Often, Jackson would get to choose the prime topography for placing his assets during deployment at the beginning of each action.

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[14] Robert S. Rush, "Actions and Reactions: The Spring 1862 Shenandoah Valley Campaign Revisited," *Army History* PB-20-99-2, no. 47 (Spring-Summer 1999): 10.

[15] Burke Davis, *They Called Him Stonewall: A Life of Lieutenant General T. J. Jackson, CSA* (New York: Open Road Integrated Media, 2016), 25.

[16] William W. Goldsborough, *The Maryland Line in the Confederate States Army* (Baltimore: Kelly, Piet, & Company, 1869), 19.

## Battle of McDowell

Such an example can be seen at the Battle of McDowell on May 8, 1862. The Battle of McDowell was a tactical draw but another strategic victory for Jackson as the Union army in the west withdrew west of the Alleghany Mountains. It was here that Jackson was able to establish his dominance in deployment in such a way as to command the battlefield. The Union commander at McDowell was Gen. Robert Milroy. Milroy deployed the 12th Ohio in support of artillery on Hull's Hill on the north central part of the battlefield. Additionally, he assigned the 5th West Virginia, 55th Ohio, and 1st Ohio in support of artillery located in the village of McDowell, Virginia on the northwestern part of the battlefield. Last, Milroy placed the 75th Ohio, 82nd Ohio, 32nd Ohio, 25th Ohio, 3rd West Virginia, and 73rd Ohio along the Bull Pasture River on the western part of the battlefield.[17]

Stonewall Jackson's deployment of the Confederate forces consisted of placing the 31st Virginia and 7th Virginia along the Parkersburg-Staunton Turnpike on the central part of the battlefield. Next, he positioned the main body of his army under the commanded Brig. Gen. Ed "Allegheny" Johnson which included the 25th Virginia, 37th Virginia, 23rd Virginia, 44th Virginia, and 12th Georgia. These regiments were deployed along the military crest of Sitlington's Hill in the central part of the battlefield. One interesting and, perhaps, unfortunate development was the fact that the commander of the 12th Georgia insisted on remaining deployed in an advanced, exposed portion of Sitlington's Hill on the extreme left flank of the Confederate position. It is interesting because it illustrated how subordinates in the Civil War were given discretion to carry out their orders. This would have some adverse consequences for that unit during the battle.

[17] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 258.

Last, Jackson deployed the 58th Virginia, 52nd Virginia, and 10th Virginia in reserve on the south-central portion of the battlefield.[18]

As the Confederates approached McDowell on the main road, the Union commanders were expecting an attack. Gen. Milroy sent out small forces to serve as skirmishers to the foot of Shenandoah Mountain. Those skirmishers were from the 32nd Ohio Infantry, 73rd Ohio Infantry, and 3rd West Virginia Infantry. Very shortly after deployment, the Union skirmishers made contact with the approaching Confederate forces. On May 7th, Johnson's brigade overran the camp of the 32nd Ohio almost capturing the entire regiment. It was only after the Federals had abandoned their camp that the Union regiments escaped. Unfortunately for the Federals, those regiments left behind valuable supplies which the Confederates took as spoils of war.[19]

The morning of May 8th, Union Gen. Schenck arrived at McDowell effectively linking up with Gen. Milroy. As Gen. Johnson deployed his regiments on Sitlington's Hill, Schenck decided to deploy a regiment in support of an artillery detachment on Hull's Hill which was the next best high ground on the battlefield. The 82nd Ohio Infantry joined a section of Capt. Henry F. Hyman's 12th Ohio Battery on the eastern slope of Cedar Knob where it commanded the turnpike approach to McDowell. This position was one that provided somewhat of a flanking fire although the distance was considerable. That battery began to lob shells at the wooded heights across the turnpike at a rate of one every five minutes even though the artillerymen could not see the Confederate troops.[20]

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[18] Burke Davis, *They Called Him Stonewall: A Life of Lieutenant General T. J. Jackson, CSA* (New York: Open Road Integrated Media, 2016), 178-179.

[19] Peter Cozzens, ed., *Battles & Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 5* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 174.

[20] General Robert H. Milroy. *To Mary Milroy From RH Milroy May 13 1862*. RHM_1862-300_1a – RHM_1862-300_2b, 2. Rensselaer: Jasper County Public Library. https://indianamemory.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/Milroy/id/560/rec/346.

Having decided that Sitlington's Hill was the most advantageous position overlooking McDowell, Jackson only needed to remove the minimal Union presence there. This action began the initial developments of the engagement. Jackson then sent troops to take the lightly defended crest of Sitlington's Hill. The troops assigned the responsibility to take the lightly defended crest of Sitlington's Hill were those of the 52nd Virginia Regiment. As the Virginians shooed away the Federal skirmishers, Gen. Milroy attempted to support them by sending a flanking party up Sitlington's Hill through the woods on his right. Gen. Johnson proceeded to reinforce the Confederate forces on the hill with the rest of his command. This action forced the Federals to retire and gave Jackson command of the high ground once again.[21]

Jackson, Johnson, and Jackson's cartographer Jedediah Hotchkiss moved to the top of the hill to conduct reconnaissance of the Federal positions at McDowell. The intention of the Confederate generals was to find a path suitable for a flanking attack which they expected to execute the next day. It was also Jackson's intention to determine the feasibility of placing artillery on Sitlington's Hill.[22]

The rough terrain on Sitlington's Hill had led Jackson to decide against supporting his line with artillery there. The result of Jackson's reconnaissance revealed that there would be no escape in case of disaster for the Confederate artillery. As such, the lack of artillery on Sitlington's Hill left the Confederate infantry unsupported. Subsequently, the Confederate artillery played an extremely nominal role at McDowell.[23]

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[21] Clement Anselm Evans, ed., *Confederate Military History: A Library of Confederate States History, Volume 2* (Atlanta: Confederate Pub. Co., 1899), 57.

[22] Markinfield Addey. *"Stonewall Jackson": The Life and Military Career of Thomas Jonathan Jackson* (New York: Charles T. Evans, 1863): 65.

[23] John H. Worsham, *One of Jackson's Foot Cavalry; his experience and what he saw during the war 1861-1865, including a history of "F company," Richmond, Va., 21st regiment Virginia infantry, Second, brigade, Jackson's division, Second corps, A.N. Va.* (New York: The Neale Publishing Company, 1912), 79.

Gen. Milroy ordered his Union troops to attack the Confederate position on Sitlington's Hill. Due to the misinterpretation of the Confederate movements on Sitlington's Hill, Union Captain Latham who was the commander of the 2nd West Virginia regiment erroneously reported the Confederates as placing artillery on Sitlington's Hill. Consequently, Gen. Milroy accepted this erroneous report and determined an attack the only way to protect his command. Gen. Schenck made the decision to follow the recommendations of Milroy because of Milroy's established familiarity with the area. This Union action completely caught Gen. Jackson and Gen. Johnson by surprise. Jackson had already determined the next day to be the day of battle. As such, Gen. Milroy had taken the initiative for the Federals.[24]

Events began unfolding slowly at first. The Union forces had to negotiate the steep incline that was Sitlington's Hill. The terrain provided protection for the climbing Union troops until they were within 100 feet of the Confederate positions. Milroy and Schenck decided to send five regiments against the Confederate line. Union 75th Ohio crossed the Bull Pasture River and moved to its right to attack the Confederate left flank held by the Confederate 12th Georgia. The Union 3rd West Virginia crossed the Bull Pasture River and moved to its left to attack the Confederate right flank held by the Confederate 31st Virginia. The Union 82nd Ohio, 32nd Ohio, and 25th Ohio crossed the Bull Pasture River and attacked the center of the Confederate lines on Sitlington's Hill held by the Confederate 25th Virginia, 37th Virginia, 23rd Virginia, and 44th Virginia.[25]

Ironically at McDowell, the fact that the Confederates held the high ground would prove to be a disadvantage for them. As dusk approached, the sun was setting behind the Confederate

[24] Robert S. Rush, "Actions and Reactions: The Spring 1862 Shenandoah Valley Campaign Revisited," *Army History* PB-20-99-2, no. 47 (Spring-Summer 1999): 7.

[25] Clement Anselm Evans, ed., *Confederate Military History: A Library of Confederate States History, Volume 3* (Atlanta: Confederate Pub. Co., 1899), 229-230.

line which served to silhouette the southern soldiers against the sky. As the southerners would lift up their heads to fire at the advancing Federals, their heads would provide inviting targets. Additionally, the hill cast shadows on the Federal troops that helped conceal them from the Confederate soldiers. Furthermore, as was the tendency for both sides in the Civil War, the Confederates firing downhill at the Union soldiers would fire high often missing their target. The lion's share of the Confederate losses occurred during this part of the battle.[26]

Further down the line, two Ohio regiments hit the main Confederate line which had been reinforced by two regiments of Col. Zephaniah Conner's brigade. Conner's 12th Georgia Regiment had positioned themselves on the left flank of the Confederate line in a more advanced location further forward of any other units. Additionally, his 25th Virginia Regiment was positioned on the right flank in support of the main line. The two Ohio regiments were able to advance to within 100 feet of the main Confederate line because of the meandering low ground which was hidden by hills. With the Union regiments appearing so close the Confederate front, the southern response established this fighting as one of the fiercest of the war.[27]

The fighting became very heavy resulting in several instances of close quarter combat. When the Union regiments crested Sitlington's Hill, Jackson identified the battle as becoming general in nature. Five Union regiments engaged seven Confederate regiments simultaneously. The soldiers in both armies were battle-hardened veterans capable of inflicting heavy casualties on one another. It was reported that Confederate soldiers used the bodies of their fallen comrades to erect temporary breastworks during the battle.[28]

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[26] Peter Cozzens. *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008): 267.

[27] John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel. *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances* (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1863): 46.

[28] Henry Kyd Douglas and Fletcher Melvin Green, *I Rode with Stonewall, being chiefly the war experiences of the youngest member of Jackson's staff from the John Brown raid to the hanging of Mrs. Surratt* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 57.

Late in the afternoon, the Union launched an assault to their left along the Parkersburg-Staunton Turnpike which was repulsed by the Confederate right. Jackson had positioned the 31st Virginia Regiment on and along both sides of the road in strong positions. As it happened, the Union 3rd West Virginia Regiment was moving to attack the Confederate main body right center regiments. When they inadvertently engaged the 31st Virginia on the road, the 3rd West Virginia ended up conducting a glancing assault against the 31st Virginia. The rejection of the Union regiment effectively deflected their effort to engage the forces on Sitlington's Hill.[29]

After receiving reinforcements, the Confederate left repulsed the Union attack to the right. The arrival of the 52nd Virginia, 58th Virginia, and 10th Virginia on the Confederate left flank effectively shored up that sector against the Union attack. Toward the end of the day, the 12th Georgia fought a skillful withdrawal movement to essentially link up with the 52nd, 58th, and 10th. The Union losses against the 12th Georgia combined with the arrival of the other three regiments effectively ended the Union attack against the Confederate left.[30]

Finally, the Union attack on the Confederate center was repulsed. In the Confederate center, the Confederate 25th Virginia withdrew after an engagement with the 82nd Ohio. The 23rd Virginia pulled back slightly after being pounded by the 82nd Ohio and 32nd Ohio. However, this wavering did not lead to the breaking of the Confederate lines. The result was that Gen. Milroy began disengaging his forces from Sitlington's Hill.[31]

The Union forces conducted a general rear guard withdrawal after 9:00pm across the Bull Pasture River into McDowell. The Union withdrawal across the river was conducted with the

[29] Robert L. Dabney. *Life and Campaigns of Lt. General T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1866): 345-346.

[30] S.C. Gwynne. *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Scribner, 2014): 260.

[31] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds. *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. Vol. 2* (New York: The Century Co., 1884–87): 298.

utmost professionalism as the unit movement was characterized by facing the enemy in case of immediate counterattack. Milroy and Schenck concluded that McDowell was indefensible and abandoning it was the best course of action. Leaving behind a scant force to keep the campfires burning, the Union army left McDowell shortly after midnight retreating toward Monterey, Virginia.[32]

After the battle, time was taken to evaluate the consequences of the action at McDowell. To begin, Confederate losses were 500 killed, wounded, and missing while the Union losses were 256. The Battle of McDowell was a costly one for both sides. The heavier cost paid by the Confederate forces resulted in a victory for the South. The benefit gained by the Confederacy was an extension of their control over the Shenandoah Valley for another three years.[33]

Another consequence for the Union forces was the damage to morale and loss of military hardware. Milroy and Schenck ordered a general retreat overnight after the battle. The Union army burned supplies they were unable to take on the retreat. They disposed of extra ammunition by dumping it into the Bull Pasture River. Gen. Milroy bought his army time to escape from McDowell by deceiving the Confederates into thinking they were still there by keeping fires burning all night long. However, the resulting demoralization of the Federal troops on their retreat to West Virginia would impact their performance for some time to come.[34]

Jackson began a pursuit of the Union column on the morning of May 9th. The Union troops reached Franklin, West Virginia on May 11th. Jackson's pursuit reached as far as the

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[32] A. Kearsey. *A Study of the Strategy and Tactics of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, 1861–1862*. (London: Gale & Polden, Ltd., 1953): 55.

[33] Frank Leslie. *The Soldier in Our Civil War* (New York: Stanley Bradley Publishing Company, 1893): 321.

[34] David G. Martin. *Jackson's Valley Campaign: November 1861 – June 1862* (Philadelphia: Combined Books, 1994): 67.

vicinity of Franklin, but orders from Gen. Johnston recalled Jackson back to the Shenandoah Valley. The Confederates broke off their pursuit and fell back to McDowell on May 13th.[35]

The defeat of the Union force under the auspices of Milroy and Schenck's withdrawal from the Shenandoah Valley provided the Confederates with a strategic victory. Milroy's withdrawal back into West Virginia to link up with Gen. Frémont eliminated the unification of Frémont's forces with Gen. Banks in the Shenandoah Valley. The result of the Battle of McDowell effectively ended the threat to the Valley from the area of the Appalachians and the west.[36]

**Battle of Front Royal**

With Gen. Frémont's army effectively eliminated as a threat to the west, Gen. Jackson was free to turn his attention to Gen. Banks' significantly reduced force in the Valley. Jackson marched his force from McDowell through Staunton and north down the Valley Turnpike toward Banks. Jackson was headed for Harrisonburg, Virginia with the intention of linking up with Gen. Richard Ewell's division. On May 17th Jackson's forces reached Harrisonburg. Jackson continued north from Harrisonburg to a temporary camp just south of New Market, Virginia on the turnpike. With a screening action by Colonel Turner Ashby's cavalry, on May 21st Jackson's army crossed over the Massanutten Mountain into the Luray Valley placing the bulk of the Confederate army east of the Massanutten and south of Front Royal. On May 22nd Jackson established his headquarters at Cedar Point, Virginia and advanced his army of 16,500 after linking up with Gen. Ewell's command. The group was about ten miles from Front Royal.

[35] James I. Robertson. *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997): 376.

[36] Robert G. Tanner. *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976): 197-198.

The Battle of Front Royal placed Jackson in the position to move directly on Winchester, Virginia. This effectively placed the Confederate army in the rear of the Union army thereby setting up Jackson for a flanking movement over the small Union force at Front Royal. Jackson's hope was to force the main Union Army at Strasburg under Banks into a retreat toward Winchester at worst. At best, the Confederate leader hoped to cut Banks off from his base at Winchester and possibly capture his entire Union army.

The deployment of the opposing forces at Front Royal consisted of four movements. To begin, Jackson ordered his command to follow Gooney Manor Road thereby putting the Confederates on the road approaching Front Royal from the south. The Confederates bypassed the Federal pickets stationed near the river on the Luray Road one mile south of the courthouse. Jackson decided to have the Confederate 1st Maryland regiment lead the Confederate attack on Front Royal after learning that the Union 1st Maryland were the key defenders of the town. Jackson assigned Wheat's Battalion from Louisiana to join the 1st Maryland.[37]

Jackson's leading brigade, under the leadership of Brig. Gen. Richard Taylor, deployed on Prospect Hill and along the ridge to the east of Front Royal. Taylor's brigade of Louisianans was one of Gen. Ewell's and the most forward of Ewell's units. Combined with the Confederate 1st Maryland, they were prepared to remove any Federal skirmishers which presented themselves at the outset of the battle.[38]

Colonel John Kenly was the Federal commander at Front Royal. He made the decision to withdraw his force to Camp (Richards') Hill which was supported by a section of artillery

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[37] Gary Schreckengost. "America's Civil War: Front Royal Was the Key to the Shenandoah Valley. "HistoryNet Staff, 8. https://www.historynet.com/americas-civil-war-front-royal-was-the-key-to-the-shenandoah-valley/.

[38] Nathaniel P. Banks. "The Engagement at Front Royal.; Official Report of Gen. Banks." *New York Times*, June 15, 1862, https://www.nytimes.com/1862/06/15/archives/ the-engagement-at-front-royal-official-report-of-gen banks.html.

consisting of two ten-pound Parrott guns. All told, the Union force at Richards' Hill numbered about 800. Although exposed, this ground did provide a high point a height at the South Fork of the Shenandoah River in Front Royal where Kenly's command could resist the Confederate assault.[39]

The Union line extended in an arc from the South Fork to Happy Creek theoretically providing practical defense for the South Fork bridge.[40] Col. Kenly's detachment stood in a diminished capacity in the face of an overwhelming force of the Confederate army. As Gen. Banks mentioned in his report of the battle after the fact, Kenly's command was never intended to actively resist an attack by Stonewall Jackson's entire command.[41]

The initial developments of the engagement at Front Royal began with the Federal troops coming to a stark realization. They grasped the concept that they were under attack by an overpowering force. This idea was driven home to them when their pickets were driven in by Jackson's division. It became apparent that there were multiple infantry regiments assaulting them instead of just guerilla attacks as they had been led to believe.[42]

Kenly's artillery opened fire with a very effective series of volleys. The result was a definitive slowing of the Confederate advance toward Richards' Hill. In front of Kenly's new position was a wide, open grassy area which would have to be crossed by the Confederates to conduct a frontal assault. Coupled with the effective artillery assault, Kenly had a solid infantry

[39] Fred Harvey Harrington. *Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948): 71.

[40] Gary Schreckengost. "America's Civil War: Front Royal Was the Key to the Shenandoah Valley. "HistoryNet Staff, 9. https://www.historynet.com/americas-civil-war-front-royal-was-the-key-to-the-shenandoah-valley/.

[41] *The War of the Rebellion: a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies, Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1880-1901,* Vol. 12, Ch. 24, 536.

[42] Samuel Hill Merrill. The Campaigns of the First Maine and First District of Columbia Cavalry (Portland: Bailey & Noyes, 1866): 29.

presence to provide support. The Union forces were able to provide adequate resistance for most of an hour before Kenly's line began to give way.[43]

The Confederate infantry advanced through town. As they deployed into line of battle, they came under the accurate artillery fire of the Union battery. As he so often did, Gen. Jackson ordered a Confederate flanking column to move to the east across Happy Creek. The intention was to attempt to force a Union withdrawal without a frontal assault.[44]

Those two Union guns served to create difficulty for the Confederate advance, so Jackson called for artillery to eliminate them. After a long delay because of the muddy roads and an attempt to deploy guns which did not have the range to reach the Union guns, a battery of rifled artillery was deployed on Prospect Hill to counter the Union guns on Richards' Hill. In the meantime, simultaneously elements of Col. Ashby's cavalry and Lt. Col. Thomas Flournoy's 6th Virginia Cavalry crossed the South Fork at McCoy's Ford. They moved via Bell's Mill and Waterlick Station to reach the Union outpost at Buckton Depot. With heavy casualties, the Confederate cavalry managed to sever communications between Front Royal and Banks at Strasburg. Another inadvertent benefit to this action was the eastward movement of the cavalry to assist the Confederate regiments battling with Kenly's forces in Front Royal.[45]

The critical juncture of the battle came when Ashby made a mounted assault at Buckton Depot. This attack cost Col. Ashby several of his best officers before the Union defenders surrendered there. Next, Ashby cut the telegraph lines thereby completely severing

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[43] Nathaniel P. Banks. "The Engagement at Front Royal.; Official Report of Gen. Banks." *New York Times*, June 15, 1862, https://www.nytimes.com/1862/06/15/archives/ the-engagement-at-front-royal-official-report-of-gen banks.html.

[44] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 186.

[45] Douglas S. Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, 3 Vols.* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 380.

communication between the main Union army at Strasburg and the detached force at Front Royal.[46]

Col. Ashby then divided the cavalry sending Flournoy's regiment east toward Riverton. The benefit of this action was to threaten Kenly's rear. Col. Ashby remained at Buckton Depot astride the railroad. The purpose of this action was to prevent reinforcements from being sent to Front Royal from Banks at Strasburg.[47]

The Union commander in Front Royal Col. Kenly spotted the approaching Confederate cavalry coming from the west. This development led Col. Kenly to make the decision to abandon his position on Richard's Hill. Kenly ordered his regiments to retreat across the South and North Fork bridges. To keep the Confederates from further pressuring his beleaguered troops, Kenly ordered his soldiers to deny the southerners use of the two bridges with an attempt to burn them.[48]

Kenly redeployed what was left of his command at Guard Hill to the north of the town. In the meantime, the Confederates ran forward to attempt to put out the flames on the bridges. Their efforts were successful, and the bridges were preserved for the Confederates to continue rapid movement north. The Confederate infantry worked rapidly to fix both bridges with the North Fork bridge having partially collapsed. However, that bridge was still able to allow single file horse and foot traffic to cross. Simultaneously, Flournoy's cavalry arrived at Riverton and forded the North Fork River there. This put Flournoy is the perfect position to continue pressing

[46] John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel. *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances* (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1863): 51.

[47] Peter Cozzens. *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008): 291.

[48] Robert L. Dabney. *Life and Campaigns of Lt. General T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1866): 365.

Kenly's forces closely. The action of the cavalry pleased Gen. Jackson immensely leading him to cross the North Fork bridge and join the troopers in the attack.[49]

The ensuing action eliminated any possibility for the Federals to disengage from the battle. The Confederate infantry crossed rapidly using both the North Fork and South Fork bridges. Forcefully, the Union position was substantially flanked by the Confederate column moving along the river. Given this, Kenly chose to continue his withdrawal north along the Front Royal-Winchester Road. His outmatched cavalry made an effort to conduct rear-guard action against Flournoy's 6th Virginia Cavalry. However, Kenly's cavalry was almost completely ineffective.[50]

Col. Kenly withdrew his 700 infantrymen north along the Winchester turnpike beyond Cedarville, Virginia. Lt. Col. Flournoy's cavalry continued in close pursuit of Kenly's command harassing them along the way. Jackson continued to ride ahead with the cavalry. Moving with alacrity, the Confederate infantry finished crossing the two rivers. The final stage of the battle was now set into motion.[51]

Kenly continued the withdrawal of his regiments moving them one mile north of Cedarville, Virginia to the Thomas McKay House. Here Col. Kenly turned to make a stand against the onslaught of two infantry regiments and a cavalry regiment. The Union commander deployed his two regiments on the heights on both sides of the Winchester turnpike. Very soon,

[49] S.C. Gwynne. *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Scribner, 2014): 160.

[50] Fred Harvey Harrington. *Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948): 71.

[51] A. Kearsey. *A Study of the Strategy and Tactics of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, 1861–1862*. (London: Gale & Polden, Ltd., 1953): 48-49.

Flournoy's cavalry swept around the Union flank. That flanking movement caused massive panic in the Union lines.[52]

As pandemonium ensued around him, Kenly fell wounded to a saber blow to the head. At first, he was reported killed by those who escaped the Confederates. The result was the completed collapse of the Union defense. Just under 700 Union soldiers threw down their weapons and surrendered. Gen. Banks' entire Front Royal detachment was destroyed.[53]

## Aftermath of McDowell and Front Royal

When the smoke had settled, the outcome of the battle could be assessed. The result of the battle was lopsided. Union casualties were 773 of which 691 were captured. The Confederate losses were thirty-six killed and wounded. Jackson's Confederate division in the Shenandoah Valley had liberated the Virginia town of Front Royal.[54]

Jackson's victory over the small Union force at Front Royal sent desperate ripples through Gen. Banks' command in the Valley. Stonewall Jackson had forced the main Union Army at Strasburg under Banks into abrupt retreat. Jackson had deceived Banks with his rapid movements and initiative. Substantially, Jackson had duped Banks into believing that the Confederate army was in the main Valley near Harrisonburg facing off against Banks' main body at Strasburg. Instead, Jackson had marched swiftly north to New Market and crossed Massanutten Mountain via the New Market Gap to Luray and the eastern Luray Valley.[55]

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[52] Frank Leslie. *The Soldier in Our Civil War* (New York: Stanley Bradley Publishing Company, 1893): 321.

[53] David G. Martin. *Jackson's Valley Campaign: November 1861 – June 1862* (Philadelphia: Combined Books, 1994): 86.

[54] James I. Robertson. *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997): 398.

[55] Robert G. Tanner. *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976): 268.

Stonewall Jackson's advance to and capture of Front Royal placed the Confederates in position to move directly on Winchester, Virginia. This action placed the Confederate army in the rear and flank of the Union army threatening to intervene between Gen. Banks and his supply base at Winchester. On May 24, Banks rapidly retreated down the Valley Pike to Winchester. His division was harassed every step of the way by the Confederate cavalry and artillery in action at both Middletown and Newtown. This activity set the stage for the First Battle of Winchester the following day.[56]

There were two outcomes of the Battle of Front Royal which contributed materially to the defeat of Banks' army at First Winchester on May 25. First, there was confusion engendered by Jackson's surprise appearance at Front Royal which caught the Federals off guard. Second, there was the hasty Union retreat from Strasburg to Winchester which caused a weak deployment at Winchester. Jackson used his cavalry to good advantage at Front Royal. First, his cavalry completely severed Union communications to Washington, D.C. in the east and Strasburg in the west. Second, Jackson's cavalry was able to deal the final blow to the Union Front Royal detachment at Cedarville.[57]

Ultimately at a minimal cost, Stonewall Jackson forced the withdrawal of a large Union army in the Shenandoah Valley by striking at its flank and threatening its rear. There were three strategic advantages brought on by Jackson's victory in these two battles. First, the Shenandoah Valley was preserved for the Confederacy and brought solace to the Virginian population. Second, and on a much broader scale, this caused President Abraham Lincoln to react sharply and quickly. Pres. Lincoln recalled General Irvin McDowell's forces that were intended for

[56] The War of the Rebellion: a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies, Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1880-1901, Vol. 12, Ch. 24, 589.

[57] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 262.

General George B. McClellan. The third result was that this recall of McDowell's forces put on hold McClellan's advance on Richmond.[58]

Given his two victories in May 1862 in the Shenandoah Valley, he was becoming recognized as an increasingly effective asset to the Confederate military by the Confederate government. In addition, Jackson was becoming more of a hero to the Confederate civilians living in the Valley and Virginia generally. In the end, Stonewall Jackson was increasingly becoming a pain in the neck for Gen. Banks, Gen. McClellan, and President Lincoln.

In the moment, Gen. Banks' immediate concern was how to protect his supplies and his army's backside from Stonewall Jackson. The destruction of Banks' detachment at Front Royal brought the realization to him that Jackson's army was able to destroy Banks' command. Furthermore, that very thing was imminently facing Banks at Winchester.

[58] Henry Kyd Douglas and Fletcher Melvin Green, *I Rode with Stonewall, being chiefly the war experiences of the youngest member of Jackson's staff from the John Brown raid to the hanging of Mrs. Surratt* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 71.

## Chapter 4 - Jackson Emerges as the Strongest Military Leader in the Valley

A maxim in life is to never underestimate an opponent. To do so places one at a marked disadvantage in that contest. This was especially true for Stonewall Jackson's enemies during the Shenandoah Valley campaign in 1862. Jackson did not expect his adversaries to underestimate his abilities strategically and tactically, but if they wished to do so Jackson would take advantage of the opportunities presented to him on the battlefield. Given his two victories in May 1862 in the Shenandoah Valley, he was becoming recognized as an increasingly effective asset to the Confederate military by the Confederate government. In addition, Jackson was becoming more of a hero to the Confederate civilians living in the Valley and in Virginia generally. In the end, Stonewall Jackson was increasingly becoming a pain in the neck for Gen. Banks, Gen. McClellan, and President Lincoln.

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Fortunately for Gen. Banks, Stonewall Jackson could not position his forces at the First Battle of Winchester in such a way as to block the Union escape or to devastate them in their desperate efforts to get away. Even so, Jackson was able to successfully send Banks running north out of the Valley. Afterward, Jackson demonstrated against Harper's Ferry to effectively continue encouraging Banks to move north to the Potomac River crossing at Williamsport, Maryland to make sure the Federals kept heading away from the Valley. Prior to this move toward Harper's Ferry, the Confederate forces marched through Winchester simultaneously receiving accolades from the civilians in the town and making a demonstrative statement about

his control of the Valley. With everything seeming to be going Stonewall Jackson's way, newly promoted Brig. Gen. Turner Ashby guided Confederate cavalry and infantry in a skirmish with Union forces near Harrisonburg, Virginia on June 6, 1862. Although the Confederate efforts were successful that day, it was not without great cost to the Confederate effort. Ashby was killed in action demonstrating that Jackson and the Confederates were still human and subject to the same human limitations which had afflicted the Union forces in the Valley. Even so, Jackson's follow up success at the First Battle of Winchester after his destruction of Col. Kenly's Union detachment at Front Royal solidified his role as a force to reckoned with in the Shenandoah Valley.

## First Battle of Winchester

The transition from Front Royal to Winchester for both armies consisted of five key aspects of deployment and initial developments in the battle at Winchester. First, there were skirmishes at Middletown and Newtown as Jackson tried to keep Banks from reaching Winchester. Second, the Union army under Gen. Banks deployed at Winchester prior to Jackson's arrival on the battlefield. Third, the Confederates completed their convergence at Winchester. Fourth, Gen. Ewell launched an attack on the Union left along the Front Royal Pike. Fifth, Gen. Jackson attacked the Union right along the Valley Turnpike.

Interestingly, Colonel Kenly's devastation at the battle of Front Royal at first did not seem to bother General Banks. Banks believed that the attack on Kenly was a cavalry demonstration. It wasn't until the next day that Banks' subordinates were able to convince him that the attack was carried out by a large force of Confederates under the command of Stonewall Jackson. Once Banks accepted this reality, he waffled as to what course of action he should take next. General Banks had four options to choose from at his vantage point in Strasburg as to how

to respond to what transpired at Front Royal. Author Gary Schreckengost explained in his article published in the *America's Civil War* magazine entitled "Stonewall's Triumphant Return to Winchester" that those four options included 1) Banks could defend the fortified town of Strasburg, 2) he could head east through Front Royal and out of the valley toward Manassas, 3) he could move westward to join Major General John Charles Frémont, or 4) Banks could retreat north to Winchester. Gen. Banks chose the fourth option because that option provided the shortest route to a safer position as well as the opportunity to salvage the huge number of supplies being stored in Winchester.[1]

In his book entitled *Beleaguered Winchester: A Virginia Community at War, 1861-1865,* author Richard R. Duncan explained that Banks had settled on Winchester as the new destination for his army ensconced at Strasburg. Banks ordered his command to enter what amounted to a footrace between his and Jackson's forces. Fortunately for the Federals, the Confederates granted the Union army a head start in the race due to irregular activities by Turner Ashby's 7th Virginia Cavalry on the Valley Turnpike. Stonewall Jackson had ordered the advanced units of his division to march from Front Royal to the west to head off the Union movement from Strasburg to Winchester. Those Confederate elements consisted of a Louisiana infantry regiment, an artillery battery, and portions of Ashby's cavalry. Ashby caught up with a large contingent of Federal supply wagons heading toward Winchester on the Valley Turnpike. The ensuing skirmish at Middletown some five miles north of Strasburg on the Valley Pike led to a skirmish which devastated a large portion of Banks' supply trains. Unfortunately for General

[1] Gary Schreckengost, "Stonewall's Triumphant Return to Winchester," *America's Civil War* 13, no. 3 (Jul 2000): 28.

Jackson, Ashby's cavalry began a looting spree which lasted long enough to allow the rest of the federal wagon train to escape toward Newtown, Virginia further north on the Turnpike.[2]

Duncan continued by disclosing that the rear echelon elements of General Banks' army consisting of two regiments of infantry and two regiments of cavalry returned to Strasburg after the action at Middletown. Those units marched north toward Winchester on the Cedar Creek Grade which ran parallel to the Valley Turnpike to the west. The Federal units which were not destroyed at Middletown continued north on the Valley Turnpike toward Newtown. Jackson's brigades which were pursuing the Union forces on the Turnpike continued their march even though they were extremely fatigued over the course of the late night and early morning hours of May 24th and May 25th, 1862. Banks ordered his retreating forces to destroy any supply wagons which were in danger of being captured by the Confederates. In addition, Banks ordered his troops to establish ambush points for the pursuing Confederates on the Valley Turnpike. Jackson was put into the position of having to order General Winders' Stonewall brigade to overcome several of those ambush points over the course of the night. This delayed the Confederate pursuit so much that when they did overtake Union supply wagons, those wagons were found burning by the hand of the Union forces. Having finally arrived near the outskirts of Winchester, General Jackson allowed his exhausted troops one hour of sleep prior to initializing the attack on the Union brigades.[3]

Schreckengost clarified that the Union deployment at Winchester which awaited Jackson's approach on the morning of May 25th consisted of two infantry brigades, one cavalry brigade, and four light artillery batteries. Using the Valley Turnpike and the Front Royal Plank Road as a dividing line between his two infantry brigades, General Banks assigned his first

[2] Richard R. Duncan, *Beleaguered Winchester: A Virginia Community at War, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2007), 93.

[3] Ibid., 93-94.

brigade commanded by Colonel Dudley Donnelly the position on the Federal left flank anchored on Camp Hill. Banks then assigned his third brigade commanded by Colonel George Henry Gordon the Federal right flank anchored on the prominent Bowers Hill. Two batteries of light artillery were assigned to both brigades.[4]

In his edited compilation of Gen. Ewell's letters, author Donald C. Pfantz wrote that the Confederate convergence at Winchester occurred during the night with Maj. Gen. Richard Ewell's division moving toward Winchester from the southeast using the Front Royal Pike. Jackson halted within striking distance of Winchester along the Valley Turnpike at about one in the morning. Jackson's couriers attempted to locate Ewell's column. Given a short time to sleep, Jackson's division was awakened after an hour or so to continue north on the Valley Pike through Kernstown towards Winchester. Jackson had determined that it was crucial for the Confederates to take the critical heights southwest of Winchester before Banks could fortify them. At dawn, the Confederate skirmish line advanced in force and pushed the Union pickets back to their main line of battle on Bowers Hill. Jackson moved three of Ewell's brigades to the left to participate in the advance on the Valley Pike. This left Ewell with just Trimble's brigade and Bradley Johnson's Maryland regiment to conduct operations on the Confederate left. Ewell deployed his brigades under Trimble astride the Front Royal Pike.[5]

In his article in *America's Civil War* magazine entitled "Stonewall's Shenandoah Showdown", author Chris Howland analyzed the initial developments of the battle which included Gen. Ewell attacking on the Union left along the Front Royal Pike. Moving generally northeast, Ewell's one brigade plus an additional regiment engaged Union Gen. Donnelly's

[4] Gary Schreckengost, "Stonewall's Triumphant Return to Winchester," *America's Civil War* 13, no. 3 (Jul 2000): 31.

[5] Donald C. Pfanz, ed., *The Letters of General Richard S. Ewell: Stonewall's Successor* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012), 214.

brigade. The Federal brigade was positioned behind a series of stone fences. This deployment significantly strengthened their defense against the attacking southerners.[6]

In his book entitled *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862*, author Robert G. Tanner analyzed Gen. Jackson's movement against the Union right along the Valley Turnpike while simultaneously Gen. Ewell attacked the Union left. Jackson understood there were important areas of high ground located in and near Winchester. Once Jackson was able to reconnoiter the battlefield at Winchester, he was able to identify exactly what topography would give him the best advantage in the battle. He also realized that Gen. Banks' army occupied that ground. Jackson determined early on that the high ground on Bower's Hill which was anchored by the Union right flank needed to be captured for the Confederates to be victorious at Winchester.[7]

The initial deployments and developments of the First Battle of Winchester witnessed Banks' division being in solid locations. However, the reality of the situation was that the Confederate divisions significantly outnumbered the Union forces. Despite the lopsided numerical advantage for Stonewall Jackson's army, the Federal commander determined that he was going to remain in Winchester. Not only that, but it was his intention to give the Confederates a good fight. On the other hand, Jackson determined that his brigades would capture the high ground with the goal of removing the Union forces from Winchester.

The initial actions of both armies at Winchester set the stage for some climactic changes which resulted in a significant turning in the battle to the advantage of the Confederate Army of the Shenandoah. To begin, Ewell's leading regiments came under heavy fire from Union troops deployed behind stone fences. The result was the repulse of that initial attack. Next, the

[6] Chris Howland, "Stonewall's Shenandoah Showdown," *America's Civil War* 27, no. 1 (March 2014): 57.
[7] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 284.

commander of the Federal forces on the Union left withdrew his brigade to a position closer to town with his right flank anchored on Camp Hill. Soon thereafter, the Confederate commander of the Confederate brigade facing the Union left attempted a flanking movement to his right beyond Millwood Road. This flanking movement threatened the Union left and rear on Camp Hill. In response to this Confederate move, orders came from Banks for Donnelly to withdraw through the town. Coincidingly, Jackson brought up the rest of his artillery which resulted in an artillery duel between his guns and the Union guns on Bower's Hill. Ultimately, with it now seeming that the Union forces were intending to turn the Confederate left, Jackson sent forward the brigades of Fulkerson, Campbell and Elzey to support Winder's Stonewall Brigade.

In his book entitled *Plagued by War: Winchester, Virginia During the Civil War*, author Jonathan A. Noyalas defined Gen. Ewell's beginning attack as using the 21st North Carolina Infantry which came under heavy fire from Union troops deployed behind stone fences. This initial attack was repulsed with heavy casualties. As the Tar Heels began their movement, they were exposed almost immediately to heavy artillery fire. At the same time, they received fire from a Union regiment located on their flank. Although they had significant cover, the boys of the 21st were just too exposed to enemy fire and had to pull back.[8]

After Ewell's initial attack, Union Col. Dudley Donnelly realized the weakness of his position and withdrew his Union First Brigade to a position closer to town. His right flank was anchored on Camp Hill. In his book entitled *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson*, author S. C. Gwynne described the approach to battle which Jackson imparted into his subordinate commanders. Always seeking to gain control of the best topography on any battlefield, Jackson sought to aggressively obtain those advantageous

[8] Jonathan A. Noyalas, *Plagued by War: Winchester, Virginia During the Civil War* (Leesburg: Gauley Mountain Press, 2003), 52.

positions. Once positioned, it was Jackson's intention to outflank his opponent. Stonewall Jackson was convinced that the application of constant pressure to his opponent would win the day. Including Ewell, Jackson's subordinate commanders bought into this approach.[9]

Confederate Brig. Gen. Isaac Ridgeway Trimble's Confederate brigade under the command of Gen. Ewell had regrouped after its initial failure to turn the Union left flank. The brigade was located on the Confederate right flank. In his book entitled *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign*, Peter Cozzens pointed out that Trimble once again attempted a flanking movement to his right beyond Millwood Road. This flanking movement threatened the Union left and rear on Camp Hill.[10]

In response to this Confederate move, orders came from Gen. Banks for Col. Donnelly to withdraw his brigade through the town. In his official report published in 1885, Brig. Gen. Alpheus S. Williams commanding the Union 1st Division of the Department of the Shenandoah revealed that this was Col. Donnelly's second retrograde movement of the battle. His brigade's initial withdrawal was conducted with a respectable amount of order.[11]

Gary W. Gallagher included in his edited work entitled *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862* that in conjunction with Brig. Gen. Trimble's flanking movement Jackson brought up the rest of his artillery along the Valley Turnpike. With that action, a duel ensued between the Union guns on Bower's Hill and the Confederate left flank. The Union brigade

[9] S. C. Gwynne, *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Scribner, 2014), 294.

[10] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 330.

[11] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1885. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XXIV – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland ... Part I – Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862*, 597.

commander Col. Gordon used his infantry to support the Union artillery. For a while, it seemed the Union right would not only hold, but it seemed they might turn the Confederate left flank.[12]

The British military historian G. F. R. Henderson published a book first in 1898 which was released by Project Gutenberg in 1995 about the Shenandoah Campaign. In it, Henderson talked about how Stonewall Jackson offered a conclusive response to the Union threat from Bower's Hill. Brig. Gen. Charles S. Winder's Stonewall Brigade was maintaining the primary Confederate position facing Bower's Hill. To support him, Jackson ordered up the brigades of Col. Samuel V. Fulkerson, Col. J. A. Campbell and Brig. Gen. Arnold Elzey.[13]

The significance of these developments by both General Jackson and General Banks was twofold. First, the Confederates successfully applied pressure to both Union flanks. Additionally, the Confederate artillery eventually outgunned the Union artillery on Bower's Hill. Second, the Federals began to realize that they were being overrun by Jackson's army. The result of these developments would soon be seen as the end of the battle approached.

The combined pressure of Ewell's attack on Camp Hill and Jackson's attack on Bower's Hill eventually proved to be too much for Banks' forces. Disengagement for the Federals became the most important thing. Ewell's movement in conjunction with Confederate maneuvers on the left beyond the Valley Pike put effective pressure on Banks' Union lines. This action caused the Union line to collapse on their left. Jackson deployed Brig. Gen. Richard Taylor's Louisiana brigade led by the Louisiana Tiger battalion in an attack on the Union right. Taylor was reinforced by two regiments of Brig. Gen. William Booth Taliaferro's brigade supported by Scott's brigade to the left along Abrams Creek. Taylor marched under fire to a position overlapping the Union right and attacked Bower's Hill.

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[12] Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 153.

[13] G. F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (New York: Smithmark, 1995), 196.

In his book entitled *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers*, author James B. Avirett elucidated upon the movements of Ewell on the Confederate right flank. Gen. Jackson and Gen. Ewell acted cooperatively as Jackson's division maneuvered against the Union army on the left beyond the Valley Pike. Avirett described the pressure being put on Banks' Union lines. This pressure became irresistible for the Federals.[14]

From the perspective of Banks' command, things began to unravel. Union soldier David Hunter Strother was a Union loyalist from Winchester, Virginia. He was also an officer in Gen. Banks' division at First Winchester. In his diary entitled *A Virginia Yankee in the Civil War: The Diaries of David Hunter Strother*, editor Cecil D. Eby, Jr. unraveled the decision which led to the Union evacuation of Winchester. Ewell's attack caused the Union line to collapse on the Federal left.[15]

The Confederate left flank was located on the Valley Turnpike facing Bower's Hill. Jackson deployed Brig. Gen. Richard Taylor's Louisiana brigade led by the Louisiana Tiger battalion. A soldier in Brig. Gen. Winder's Stonewall Brigade by the name of John O. Casler wrote about this in his book entitled *Four Years in the Stonewall Brigade*. Casler broke down what transpired as he described the Louisianans formation and march forward as being marvelous. They marched to the attack as if in a parade formation in the face of heavy fire from the Union artillery and infantry on Bower's Hill.[16]

Brig. Gen. Taylor was reinforced by two regiments of Brig. Gen. William Booth Taliaferro's brigade. In his book entitled *Life of Turner Ashby*, author Thomas A. Ashby made it plain that Taylor was also supported by Scott's brigade to the left along Abrams Creek. Several

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[14] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 200.

[15] David Hunter Strother, *A Virginia Yankee in the Civil War: The Diaries of David Hunter Strother*, Edited by Cecil D. Eby, Jr. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 42.

[16] John O. Casler, *Four Years in the Stonewall Brigade* (Girard: Appeal Publishing Company, 1906), 76.

of Taylor's officers had been wounded in the movement toward Bower's Hill. Regardless, Jackson's forces preparing to advance on the prominence were in good order. They were thoroughly ready for the attack.[17]

As Brig. Gen. Taylor's Louisianans moved toward their target, they marched under a withering fire from the Union troops on Bower's Hill. In his book entitled *Stonewall Jackson as Military Commander*, historian John Selby went into detail about the Confederate choice of action. Despite the conditions, the Confederates nevertheless continued to their assigned position. In so doing, Taylor's forces located themselves where they were overlapping the Union right flank. From there, the Louisianans attacked Bower's Hill.[18]

This stage of the battle began to produce more and more Union troops leaving the front lines and moving through Winchester. This increasing exodus was welcomed by the populace of the town. In fact, several residents of Winchester helped encourage the Federals to expedite their retreat. This combined with the continued pursuit of Jackson's troops created some important consequences for the Banks' northerners.

In the period immediately following the ruinous defeat of Gen. Banks' Federals at the First Battle of Winchester, some strategic consequences resulted for both the Union and Confederates. First, the Confederate assault swept irresistibly forward over the crest in the face of determined resistance and overran a battery taking two rifled guns. Second, with Banks' 7,000 Union troops being attacked on three sides by 16,000 Confederates, collapse was inevitable. Third, the Union right flank under Gordon's command gave way just as the left flank was being pressured by Ewell. Fourth, Union soldiers began streaming back into town. Fifth, the northerners were soon stampeding north through Winchester in a panicked retreat.

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[17] Thomas A. Ashby, *Life of Turner Ashby* (New York: Neale Pub. Co., 1914), 179.
[18] John Selby, *Stonewall Jackson as Military Commander* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1999), 81.

John Selby continued by conveying that the Confederate assault by Brig. Gen. Taylor's Louisianans swept irresistibly forward. They successfully moved over the crest of Bower's Hill. The Union brigade put up a determined resistance. However, it was too little too late. The Confederates overran a battery taking the previously mentioned rifled guns.[19]

Gen. Banks' 7,000 Union troops were being attacked on three sides by 16,000 Confederates. In his book entitled *General Turner Ashby, the Centaur of the South*, Clarence Thomas made it plain that Banks' collapse was inevitable. This was very similar to the experience of Stonewall Jackson at Kernstown back in March 1862. Jackson attempted to attack a force over twice his command's size. Here at Winchester the only difference was that Banks was attempting to resist the assault of a force over twice his command's size.[20]

The Union right flank under Gordon's command gave way. Simultaneously, the Union left flank gave way under the pressure of Ewell. In his book entitled *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac: A Critical History of Operations in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania from the Commencement to the Close of the War, 1861-1865*, author William Swinton explained that the Union collapse was complete. At first, the Union regiments withdrew from their positions in a somewhat organized and controlled manner. With increased Confederate artillery and infantry pressure once the withdrawal began, the organized withdrawal transformed into a rout.[21]

Union soldiers began streaming back into town. In their edited work began in 1884 and completed in 1887 entitled *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 2*, historians Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel analyzed the Union withdrawal. The Union

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[19] Ibid., 82.

[20] Clarence Thomas, *General Turner Ashby, the Centaur of the South* (Winchester: Eddy Press Corporation, 1907), 115.

[21] William Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac: A Critical History of Operations in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania from the Commencement to the Close of the War, 1861-1865* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882), 125.

regiments became hopelessly intertwined as they attempted to find escape through Winchester. The resulting panic put many of the Union soldiers in what amounted to a turkey shoot in the streets of the town. The Confederate citizens of Winchester cheered and jeered at the panicked Federal soldiers running through the streets looking over their shoulders.[22]

Soon, the soldiers of Banks' command were stampeding north through and out of Winchester. In his book entitled *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Volume I – Manassas to Malvern Hill,* Douglas Southall Freeman clarified that Stonewall Jackson could not muster his cavalry to pursue the Union division. Had he been able to muster a significant part of his cavalry, Jackson may have been able to capture or destroy the division commanded by General Banks. Instead, Jackson had to pursue Banks with his artillery and infantry. The result was that the Federal division was able to successfully escape.[23]

Stonewall Jackson had been able to successfully attack an extremely weakened Nathaniel Banks at Winchester in late May 1862. Jackson's victory in detail over the Union division sent Banks running north out of the Valley. The Confederate general had made a profound statement in his treatment of the Federal division at Winchester. The Union military leaders in the field were no match for Jackson at either Front Royal or Winchester. Furthermore, Jackson continued to emphasize his point in the action which would immediately follow his victory at Winchester.

**Jackson's Demonstration Against Harper's Ferry and Williamsport**

With the command of General Banks fleeing in confusion out of Winchester, it would have been possible and maybe even likely that the Federal division would have been destroyed as it retired chaotically north. Unfortunately, Stonewall Jackson did not have access

[22] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume* 2 (New York: The Century Co., 1884–87), 289.

[23] Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Volume I – Manassas to Malvern Hill* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 402-403.

immediately to his cavalry. However, that did not mean that Jackson could not harass and further damage Banks' command. In fact, that is exactly what Jackson attempted to do. Jackson's intention was to demonstrate against Harper's Ferry and Williamsport which he did on May 29-30, 1862. Jackson in effect chased Banks north to make sure he kept heading away from the Valley. Jackson's desire was to once and for all clear his beloved Shenandoah Valley of Union troops.

The movement of both the Union and Confederate forces followed a clear pattern. The arrangement of Confederate and Union military assets for their use after the battle of Winchester followed the general direction of a move north. For the Union command of Nathaniel Banks, the intention was to move as quickly as possible out of harm's way to the north. For the Confederate command of Stonewall Jackson, the intention was to move north to capture or destroy Banks' command. The initial developments consisted of five actions. To begin, Banks withdrew north first to Martinsburg. Following a brief rest in Martinsburg, Banks' command continued north to the Potomac River. Next, the Federals retreated to the Potomac River at Williamsport, Maryland. Nearby in Harper's Ferry, Brig. Gen. Rufus Saxton took command to put in place a sufficient defense of the vital crossing of the Potomac River. Finally, the Confederate pursuit was lethargic as the troops were exhausted from the non-stop marching of the previous week under Jackson's command.

General Banks withdrew his command north first to Martinsburg. Shortly after the war, Stonewall Jackson's chief of staff Robert L. Dabney explained in his book entitled *Life and Campaigns of Lt. General T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson* that Banks organized his escaping division into two general columns. Those columns coincided roughly with the two brigades of his division. Those two columns were separated generally by the Valley Turnpike heading north out

of Winchester. Once the Federal columns were well north of Winchester, they were able to successfully reestablish their cohesion including the deployment of a rear-guard element.[24]

After resting in Martinsburg, Banks' command continued north to the Potomac River. Robert Tanner described that the general knew his command was extremely vulnerable. Because of this, Banks did not want to expose them to another attack by Stonewall Jackson. Even so, General Banks did consider establishing defensive positions at Martinsburg. Eventually, the Union general decided against this and continued north.[25]

From Martinsburg, the Federals soon retreated to the Potomac River at Williamsport, Maryland. Richard R. Duncan expounded that General Banks considered the reconstitution of his command at Williamsport across the Potomac to be a significant victory for his troops. The fact remained that the Federal movements of Banks' division were a retreat. He had been thoroughly defeated at Winchester. He had been chased in a lackluster manner but effectively by the Confederates across West Virginia to Maryland.[26]

At Harper's Ferry, Brig. Gen. Rufus Saxton was placed in command. His assignment was to put in place a sufficient defense of the vital crossing of the Potomac River at that juncture. In his book entitled *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era,* author James M. McPherson illustrated how Stonewall Jackson dispatched the Stonewall Brigade to demonstrate near Harper's Ferry. Saxton knew his command at Harper's Ferry was not large enough to resist a concentrated attack of a sizable Confederate force. However, his command was large enough to discourage an attack by a single Confederate brigade. After making a nominal threatening

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[24] Robert L. Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lt. General T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1866), 383.

[25] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 233.

[26] Richard R. Duncan, *Beleaguered Winchester: A Virginia Community at War, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2007), 102.

gesture at Harper's Ferry, Brig. Gen. Charles Winder who commanded the Stonewall Brigade ordered their withdrawal back up the Valley.[27]

Donald C. Pfanz pointed out that the Confederate pursuit of the defeated Union division of Gen. Banks was ineffective. Perhaps the same exertions were responsible for the lack of cohesiveness seen regarding the Confederate cavalry after First Winchester. Regardless, a prime opportunity for Stonewall Jackson to deal a devastating blow to the Union cause in the Valley was missed as Banks escaped.[28]

Overall, the mad dash Gen. Banks made to the Potomac River after the debacle at Winchester served to showcase the lack of ability of the Union leadership to defeat Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley. Gen. Jackson's demonstration north of Winchester after the battle demonstrated his understanding of the strategic need to press the Federals into leaving the Valley altogether. Both perspectives point to the hinge pin events immediately proceeding from the battle at Winchester.

The point at which the significant change occurred in Jackson's demonstration toward Harper's Ferry and Williamsport, Maryland can clearly be found in the developments during this action. First, many Union prisoners did fall into Confederate hands. Second, Brig. Gen. Turner Ashby's cavalry was disorganized from the actions of the preceding days. Third, Ashby himself could not be located to bring his cavalry to bear. Fourth, Ashby's troopers did not pursue until Banks had already reached the Potomac River. Fifth, efforts to mount weary infantrymen on artillery horses failed.

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[27] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 458.

[28] Donald C. Pfanz, ed., *The Letters of General Richard S. Ewell: Stonewall's Successor* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012), 214.

The Confederates conducted operations to show pursuit of Banks' command after Winchester. John O. Casler who had served in the Stonewall Brigade of Jackson's division revealed that these operations did result in many Union prisoners falling into Confederate hands. Confederate cavalry scooped up whole squads at a time along the route to Williamsport. The transference of these Union soldiers to prisoner camps limited the scope of these operations. In the end, thousands of Federal soldiers were captured.[29]

Brig. Gen. Turner Ashby's cavalry which had been drawn primarily from men of the Shenandoah Valley became disorganized and exhausted from the actions of the preceding days. Jonathan A. Noyalas spelled out how Stonewall Jackson was dismayed at the lack of availability of his cavalry during the Harper's Ferry and Williamsport pursuit. Every effort was made to catch up to the Union troops, but they were highly motivated to escape. Jackson did dispatch one of his aides to acquire the efforts of Gen. Ewell's cavalry, but that commander refused to comply until he received orders from Ewell. The resulting delay allowed for the Union army to add additional distance between themselves and their pursuers.[30]

In addition to the complete failure of the cavalry attached to Gen. Ewell's command, Ashby himself could not be located to bring his cavalry to bear. Historian Gary W. Gallagher elucidated Ashby's explanation when he was confronted about his lack of availability when Gen. Jackson needed him most. Ashby's explanation basically stated that he was leading his cavalry on the Confederate left flank to keep them from being outflanked by the enemy. However, Gallagher continued, Jackson had previously identified one of Ashby's drawbacks as a

[29] John O. Casler, *Four Years in the Stonewall Brigade* (Girard: Appeal Publishing Company, 1906), 76.
[30] Jonathan A. Noyalas, *Plagued by War: Winchester, Virginia During the Civil War* (Leesburg: Gauley Mountain Press, 2003), 56.

commander who consistently failed to instill discipline in his command. The result was the lack of a key asset being available for Jackson at a time when he really could have used it.[31]

By the time Ashby's troopers joined in the pursuit of the Union division, Banks had already reached the Potomac River. S. C. Gwynne broke down the three implications of this for Jackson's command. To begin, supply trains which could have been captured for the Confederacy were preserved for the Union. Next, Banks's command was safely located across the Potomac River and available for future use. Last, Union troops were still present in the Shenandoah Valley.[32]

There was one last display of futility in Stonewall Jackson's efforts to pursue Banks' retreating division. In one entry of the official record about the Battle of Winchester provided by Gen. Jackson's aide A. S. Pendleton, it was recorded that efforts were made to mount weary infantrymen on artillery horses with the intention of pursuing the Union forces. This effort failed.[33]

The developments during Jackson's demonstration toward Harper's Ferry and Williamsport, Maryland after his victory at Winchester began to define his role in the Shenandoah Valley. Union Gen. Banks' withdrawal from the difficult position he found himself in confirmed the Confederate upper hand in the Valley. With the departure of Banks' troops from Winchester, the Union general had to contend with Jackson's troops even as his own forces moved rapidly away toward the Potomac River.

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[31] Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 126.

[32] S. C. Gwynne, *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Scribner, 2014), 296.

[33] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1885. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XXIV – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland ... Part I – Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862*, 709.

Watching Banks' division move farther away from his own army generated strong feelings within Gen. Jackson. At first, he was desperate to engage Banks with his cavalry. Soon he hoped that the second-best option of utilizing his artillery to damage Banks' division would suffice. Very quickly Jackson realized that his artillery only increased the speed of the Union withdrawal. In the end, the Confederate general had to resign himself to the fact that Banks' division was indeed escaping from Jackson. However, Stonewall Jackson could still harass Banks' troops even as the Union general rapidly moved his division to the river. Banks' disengagement transpired in five actions. First, Jackson did indeed resign himself to two days of necessary rest and recuperation at Winchester which allowed Banks the time to escape towards Williamsport. Second, Jackson learned from Ashby that his cavalry's absence was due to Ashby's having headed for Berryville to prevent a possible Union escape from Winchester towards Snicker's Gap to the east. Third, the Union commander ordered his troops to cross the Potomac River at Williamsport into Maryland. Fourth, Jackson allowed his troops a rest about five miles north of Winchester. Fifth, once everyone was rested, Jackson's command resumed the pursuit of Banks to the Potomac River.

Having accepted the inevitability of Banks' escape, Jackson permitted his command to two days of necessary rest and recuperation at Winchester. The general retired to the Taylor Hotel in Winchester where he declined food that was offered to him. He went straight to his room, flopped down on his bed, and slept until the next day. Jackson was so fatigued that he slept with his uniform and boots on.[34]

The next day on May 26, 1862, Jackson learned from Ashby that his cavalry's absence was due to Ashby's having headed for Berryville to prevent a possible Union escape from

[34]Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 330.

Winchester towards Snicker's Gap to the east. Such an action was not uncommon for cavalry, but Jackson was confused as to why Ashby did not check in with him in the heat of the battle. Not all historians have been gracious to Turner Ashby for his actions at Winchester referring to those actions as an "independent enterprise." Giving Ashby the benefit of the doubt could make his explanation plausible. Either way, the cavalry was not available to Gen. Jackson when Gen. Banks was retreating.[35]

Banks' Federal division had successfully escaped the clutches of Stonewall Jackson's forces after being soundly defeated at Winchester. He guided his beleaguered troops as they retreated from Winchester across the Potomac River at Williamsport into Maryland. Their march was a long one completed in a time frame which most likely impressed Stonewall Jackson. Fear of a prisoner of war camp or death can motivate tired soldiers to continue moving quickly. Banks lost many good soldiers and a great deal of supplies to the Confederates as a result of Winchester, but the general interestingly interpreted the retreat to Maryland as a victory.[36]

Realizing the uselessness of pursuit without cavalry, Stonewall Jackson halted the pursuit of Banks' Union division with his exhausted infantry and artillery about five miles north of Winchester. Before Jackson retired to the Taylor Hotel, he allowed his troops to bivouac and rest at that location. The Confederates had experienced very little rest for over forty-eight hours with almost continuous marching and fighting.[37]

Once rested, Jackson's command resumed the pursuit of Banks to the Potomac River. The Confederate leader accepted the reality that Gen. Banks was out of reach for the moment.

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[35]G. F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (New York: Smithmark, 1995), 197.

[36]Gary Schreckengost, "Stonewall's Triumphant Return to Winchester," *America's Civil War* 13, no. 3 (Jul 2000): 32.

[37] Thomas A. Ashby, *Life of Turner Ashby* (New York: Neale Pub. Co., 1914), 183.

However, Jackson also realized that he might yet negatively impact the Union effort in the Valley in two ways. First, he could put a true scare in the Union leadership by feinting a move across the Potomac River toward Washington, D.C. Second, Jackson's command could position themselves in such a way as to take advantage of any weakness in the Union position at Harper's Ferry. If a successful attack could be carried out there, all Union troops in the Valley could be pushed out completely.[38]

General Jackson had reluctantly accepted that Banks' division was escaping. Even so, Stonewall Jackson continued to harass Banks' troops even as the Union general rapidly moved his division to the Potomac River. The fruit of Jackson's victory at Winchester was profound. There were the physical benefits obtained in captured supplies and reduction of the Union division under Banks' command. There were also some significant strategic benefits acquired by the Confederates.

The advantages gained for the Confederacy by Jackson's victory at Winchester were important. Furthermore, additional damage was inflicted on the Union army retreating to the Potomac. With this came additional benefit for the South. To begin, there were serious losses inflicted on the Federal forces with light losses to Jackson's army. Next, adding these losses to Banks' losses at Front Royal, the wisdom in Banks' action to remove his force from the Shenandoah Valley was reinforced. Not lost on the situation was the importance for the Confederacy of Banks' exit from the region. Additionally, Jackson demonstrated his ability to achieve force concentration early in the fighting at Winchester which allowed him to secure a more decisive victory than he had in previous battles of the Valley campaign. Subsequently, the First Battle of Winchester was a major victory in Jackson's Valley Campaign both tactically and

[38] Clarence Thomas, *General Turner Ashby, the Centaur of the South* (Winchester: Eddy Press Corporation, 1907), 115.

strategically. Ultimately, Union plans for the Peninsula Campaign, an offensive against Richmond, were disrupted by Jackson's audacity. Strategically, thousands of Union reinforcements were diverted to the Valley and the defense of Washington, D.C. and made unavailable to Union Gen. McClellan at Richmond.

Union losses were reported as 2,019 at Winchester and the subsequent withdrawal through West Virginia to Maryland. Confederate losses were listed as 400 with sixty-eight killed, 329 wounded, and three missing. In the compilation of the official record of the battle, both Gen. Banks and Gen. Jackson listed their respective casualty reports. The numbers alone are indicative of the immense cost of the battle for the northern cause.[39]

In addition to the actual casualties, the official report of General Banks indicated that between May 23rd and May 25th Banks lost between 2,769 and 3,030 prisoners from his original 8,500 men. Of these, 1,603 were lost at Front Royal. The conservative aggregate loss for the Federals between Front Royal and Winchester amounted to fifty-six percent of their total forces prior to the action. If the number was higher for the Union, their aggregate loss could have been almost two-thirds of their original force. Those losses are staggering considering what was accomplished by Banks' force in the Valley.[40]

Robert G. Tanner interpreted that prior to Front Royal and Winchester, Jackson was stymied by developments which denied him a decisive victory against the Federal forces in the Valley. One of those details was Jackson's lack of success in achieving force concentration early in the fighting. He achieved a more decisive victory because he was able to secure force

[39] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1885. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XXIV – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland ... Part I – Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862*, 553-554.

[40] Ibid., 553-554.

concentration at Front Royal and Winchester. Associate Jackson's unification of his forces with those of Gen. Ewell, and the power imposed on Banks' Union command was irresistible.[41]

Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel pointed out that the First Battle of Winchester was a major victory in Jackson's Valley Campaign both tactically and strategically. At Winchester, Stonewall Jackson was able to effectively implement the tactical flanking strategy which would serve him well in future battles in eastern Virginia with Gen. Lee. A classic military maneuver, Jackson's flanking of Banks' right turned the Union army. This development collapsed Banks' left flank. This development sent the entire Union force reeling through the streets of Winchester.[42]

Strategically, Union plans for the Peninsula Campaign were disrupted by Jackson's audacity. The Peninsula Campaign was an offensive planned against Richmond, Virginia by Gen. McClellan. Because of Stonewall Jackson's success in the Shenandoah Valley, thousands of Union reinforcements were diverted to the Valley. In addition, crucial troops for McClellan were also diverted to the defense of Washington, D.C. This served to even the odds for subsequent Confederate action to remove the threat to their capital.[43]

The advantages gained for the Confederacy by Jackson's victory at Winchester and Front Royal were important. He had dealt a heavy blow to the strength of a powerful enemy force arrayed against him in the Shenandoah Valley. He had secured a large cache of supplies for his army and the Confederate storehouse in Staunton, Virginia. Jackson had at least temporarily

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[41] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 284.

[42] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume* 2 (New York: The Century Co., 1884–87), 297.

[43] Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, *The Shenandoah Campaigns of 1862 and 1864 and the Appomattox Campaign, 1865* (Boston: Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, 1907), 14-15.

removed any Union presence from his beloved Shenandoah Valley. Soon, Stonewall Jackson would make a demonstrative statement about his control of the Valley.

### Jackson's Army Marched through Winchester

Soon after his dramatic victory at the First Battle of Winchester, Stonewall Jackson marched at least part of his Confederate army into the streets of the town. Jackson had multiple reasons for this behavior. In his 2000 book entitled *Reality Therapy for the 21st Century*, author and psychologist Robert E. Wubbolding described all behavior as being purposeful. Everyone has a reason for doing everything they do. The reason for this purposeful behavior is to accomplish some important goal.[44] For Stonewall Jackson, his purposeful plans for marching his troops into Winchester was thoughtfully planned out for a purpose. His behavior included planning his entry into Winchester, the conduct of the march by his soldiers, how he would posture himself after entering the town, and the strategic significance this action would play in the overall scheme of things in the Valley. Stonewall Jackson's formal entry into Winchester was intended to accomplish his overall purpose of sending a demonstrative statement about his control of the Valley to both Washington, D.C. and Richmond, Virginia.

In considering Stonewall Jackson's planning for his entry into the town of Winchester, it is important to examine cursorily his thought process at the beginning. The general knew there were both loyalists and rebels living in Winchester. Jackson wanted to send a message to those residents of the town who supported the Confederate cause. He wanted to celebrate the military victory with them, but he also knew there were those in town who supported the North. His entry into town would send a message to them as well. For some people, it would be a

[44] Robert E. Wubbolding, *Reality Therapy for the 21st Century* (Philadelphia: Brunner-Routledge, 2000), 21.

celebration. For others, it would be a somber time. For those whom it would be a celebration, they were sure to be very demonstrative about their rejoicing.

People on both sides of the issue recorded their thoughts and perceptions of what took place in their diaries. The American Civil War was the first time in history when a war and the home front were recorded so prolifically for posterity. This fact has also made it so much easier for historians to reflect on what took place in the United States at this time.

The Confederate return to Winchester during the 1862 Valley Campaign marked a military success for sure. However, more outcomes came from that moment than a military celebration. In *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances* published in 1863 and authored by John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel, Cooke and Daniel revealed that Jackson intended to send a message to supporters and enemies of the Confederacy who lived in the border town of Winchester, Virginia. In a town which changed hands during the war seventy-seven times, Jackson wanted to reassure the Confederate citizens of Winchester that he had their best interests at heart. To those in Winchester who considered themselves enemies of the Confederacy, one can be sure that Jackson would not mind them realizing that they were welcome to leave at their convenience.[45]

To be sure, more than roads and troops converged on Winchester that day. Ideas clashed too. In his article entitled "Dueling Diarists in Winchester" published in the *Civil War Times*, Jerry W. Holsworth spelled out how the residents of Winchester reacted to Stonewall Jackson's entry into their fair town. For some, it was genuinely a time of celebration and rejoicing. They had been repatriated to their beloved nation once again. For others, it was a sad time of reoccupation by the dreaded enemy. One thing is for certain, it can be difficult for modernity to

[45] John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel, *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances* (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1863), 57.

completely comprehend the stark emotions people would have felt at this time regardless of their perspective.[46]

It cannot be denied that Southern sympathizing civilians in Winchester met the Confederate army with frenzied excitement. Richard R. Duncan told of how they greeted the soldiers with cheers and handshakes. The women greeted the grungy soldiers with hugs and kisses. They gave them pies and food. What is profound is how they recorded it in their diaries. One example of this was the entry into her diary of Laura Lee who wrote "Thanks be to the Lord, we are free!!!" She followed those words with eighteen exclamation marks. One important dichotomy Duncan pointed out was how people who supported a government which made slavery legal could make such a fuss over being free.[47]

Stonewall Jackson had a purpose for his entry into Winchester. In examining his reasoning, we understand that Jackson knew there were both loyalists and rebels living in Winchester. The general intended to reassure and encourage the Confederates who had been living under Union control since early March 1862. Gen. Jackson was a very reserved man, but he could get caught up in a celebratory moment as well as the next guy. As such, Jackson needed to give civilians and soldiers alike the freedom and opportunity to rejoice.

Before the civilians in Winchester who were likely to celebrate the capture of the town by Stonewall Jackson's army could do so, all Federal soldiers needed to be neutralized. To prematurely celebrate the defeat of the Union forces had been promised the punishment of being fired upon by the Federal soldiers. Neutralization occurred in three ways. First, Union soldiers who successfully ran away from the attacking Confederates were no longer in the vicinity by their own volition. Second, many Union soldiers were taken prisoner either because they were

[46] Jerry W. Holsworth, "Dueling Diarists in Winchester," *Civil War Times* 45, No. 4 (June 2006), 16.

[47] Richard R. Duncan, *Beleaguered Winchester: A Virginia Community at War, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2007), 101.

wounded or overwhelmed by Jackson's men. Third, many Union soldiers were killed. Several actions took place as Gen. Banks' men retreated and Jackson's men pursued them.

To begin, Jackson and his shouting rebel soldiers entered Winchester from the south as the retreating Federals were moving north. One of Stonewall Jackson's subordinate commanders at the First Battle of Winchester was Richard Taylor who commanded the infantry which became known as the "Louisiana Tigers." In his article published in *The North American Review* and entitled "Stonewall Jackson and the Valley Campaign," Taylor elucidated about the general demeanor of his commander. As the Union lines broke and the northern soldiers began to run, Stonewall Jackson gave his men the permission to shout. Shout, they did. The shouting of the Confederate soldiers made it clear to the Union soldiers that they had better run – and fast.[48]

Pockets of Union resistance were quickly overwhelmed. James Avirett who compiled memoirs about Turner Ashby's actions in the Shenandoah Valley rendered a story about the commander of the 29th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment. Col. John K. Murphy was a very large man who could not move quickly as a leader on the battlefield. When the Confederates overran Winchester, Murphy's unit found themselves cornered in the town. He exhorted his men that every man was for himself. Murphy encouraged his men to run for their lives. He, however, was taken prisoner by Jackson's men.[49]

The Confederate officers and soldiers charged or marched through the streets of Winchester. Richard Taylor pointed out that the Union soldiers who had been hunting for Stonewall Jackson's command were now themselves the ones being hunted by Jackson's men. One can only surmise why some of the Confederate soldiers were charging while others were

[48] Richard Taylor, "Stonewall Jackson and the Valley Campaign," *The North American Review* 126, No. 261 (Mar. - Apr. 1878), 247.

[49] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 201.

marching through the town streets. Those who moved quickly were rewarded with prisoners and bounty. Those who marched through town were greeted as conquering heroes. Either way, it was a good day for Jackson's army.[50]

From the northern perspective, what they had to endure at the hands of the southerners was perceived as disastrous. Winchester native and northern military officer David Hunter identified many of the Union accounts of the day as describing both Confederate civilian and military personnel as almost blood lusting. The Winchester natives who supported the Confederacy believed the Federals to be oppressors and just plain mean. Some of the local civilians brought their pistols to the windows and took potshots at their hated Yankee "oppressors."[51]

When Stonewall Jackson was defeated by Gen. Banks at the First Battle of Kernstown in March 1862, he had to reluctantly retreat south along the Valley Turnpike. Author Douglas Southall Freeman brought out the concept that the civilians in Winchester felt abandoned by Jackson to the occupation of the northern army under Gen. Banks. As the Confederate army returned to Winchester at the end of the First Battle of Winchester, those same folks were happy to see the return of Jackson. They came out to their doorsteps to welcome back the general and army that had "abandoned" them the previous March.[52]

The return of Stonewall Jackson's army to Winchester after he defeated Gen. Banks was significant as Gen. Banks' men retreated, and Jackson's men pursued them. Loyal Union supporters in Winchester were dismayed at Jackson's return. Confederate supporters in the town

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[50] Richard Taylor, "Stonewall Jackson and the Valley Campaign," *The North American Review* 126, No. 261 (Mar. - Apr. 1878), 247.

[51] David Hunter Strother, *A Virginia Yankee in the Civil War: The Diaries of David Hunter Strother*, Edited by Cecil D. Eby, Jr. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 42.

[52] Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Volume I – Manassas to Malvern Hill* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 403.

were elated at his return. The Confederate soldiers were satisfied with an exhausting job well done at Winchester. The northern soldiers retreated northward with the realization that they had been thoroughly whipped by Jackson. Needing to find some good in their efforts of that last few days, the Union soldiers were provided a congratulatory perspective by Gen. Banks for conducting a good retreat. After Jackson's entry into Winchester, there were still more perspectives to be found.

It just makes sense that the victors at Winchester would see the battle there as having gone well. Likewise, the defeated would perceive the battle as having gone poorly. The reality is that there were mixed feelings by people on both sides. There were those Union sympathizers in Winchester who were beginning to despair of Union prospects in the war. Even the redoubtable Stonewall Jackson was not completely satisfied with the outcome of the battle.

Winchester resident Julia Chase lamented the sorry state of affairs for the Union in her journals. According to the editor of the book containing her diary entitled *Winchester Divided: The Civil War Diaries of Julia Chase & Laura Lee* edited by Michael G. Mahon, Chase wrote, "Oh, what an awful day tis has been. God grant I may never see the like again. The Confederate Army are in full possession of Winchester again. Gen. Banks has retreated in great disorder — why did he not act differently. Me thinks the women could have managed affairs better…." Clearly Ms. Chase has become disillusioned with the ability of the Union leaders to successfully prosecute the war. She sardonically suggests that a woman, perhaps she was thinking of herself, could do better than Gen. Banks. Regardless, there was clearly disgruntlement with the Union in Winchester.[53]

[53] Laura Lee and Julia Chase, *Winchester Divided: The Civil War Diaries of Julia Chase & Laura Lee*, ed. Michael G. Mahon (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 2002), 38.

For the Confederates, early in 1862 the Confederate officers and soldiers in the ranks disdainfully regarded Stonewall Jackson unworthy or inferior as a general. They gave him the derisive nickname "Old Tom Fool" clearly questioning his abilities. Historian Robert G. Tanner made it plain that the First Battle of Winchester began to change all that. Differing opinions were developing about Jackson as he began to transform from "Old Tom Fool" to "Mighty Stonewall" in the minds of his men. Similarly, the same perception was occurring in the minds of the Confederate government and populace. It seemed that almost overnight Stonewall Jackson was becoming a hero to the Confederate people.[54]

Given the modifications taking place in the minds of the people of the North and South, it is interesting that Stonewall Jackson himself felt conflicted about the success of the day at First Winchester. Annalist John Selby threw light upon Jackson's desperation to put his cavalry into action to gain a decisive defeat of Gen. Banks as that general tried to get his men safely away from the Confederates. The only problem was that Jackson's cavalry was unavailable to him at the most crucial of times. Eventually, Jackson became resigned to the fact that he had to abandon his idea of pursuing and possibly destroying a major Union military force operating in the Shenandoah Valley. This is indeed striking in a battle where the Confederates clearly won a decisive victory.[55]

Additionally, Robert Dabney made it plain that it is meaningful to understand that Jackson was thrilled to free his civilian friends from Union occupation. In the same vein, it was wonderful to Jackson that he had achieved a decisive military victory over the Federals. Not insignificant was the capture of needed supplies from the Union army. In truth, Gen. Banks was given the nickname by the Confederate soldiers of "Commissary Banks." The reason for this is

[54] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 48.

[55] John Selby, Stonewall Jackson as Military Commander (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1999), 84.

that he provided so many supplies through captured supply wagons to the South in his many defeats at their hands.[56]

Despite his overwhelming success at Winchester, Jackson was still disappointed that he could not effectively follow up his attack with a decisive pursuit. In his 1957 article published in *Civil War History* and entitled "In the Valley of Virginia," writer Clifford Dowdey put across that Stonewall Jackson expressed his disappointment to his wife in a letter sent to her after First Winchester. As he had many times before, Jackson tried to develop a more disciplined approach within his cavalry in the Valley. In the end, Jackson had to accept that his army had missed a prime opportunity to capture or destroy a significant Union military force after Winchester.[57]

There were mixed feelings by people on both sides at the culmination of the First Battle of Winchester. The Confederates at Winchester had the impression that the battle at Winchester was a success. On the other hand, the loyalists in Winchester formed the opinion that the battle at Winchester was a miserable failure. The situation following First Winchester projected the Confederates into the stronger position for upcoming actions in the Valley. This placed Stonewall Jackson into the position to be able to potentially design a powerful plan to strike decisively at the Union military in the Valley.

The Confederates were in a powerful position in the Valley relative to that of their Union counterparts. Even so, this advantageous situation came at a cost to three different groups of people. First, there were uprooted lives as enslaved people in Winchester felt compelled to leave after the Confederate victory due to the renewed threat to their freedom. Second, the heretofore dominant Union citizens in Winchester were once again relegated to an occupied people. Third,

[56] Robert L. Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lt. General T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1866), 383.

[57] Clifford Dowdey, "In the Valley of Virginia," *Civil War History* 3, No. 4 (December 1957), 419.

many Confederate residents of Winchester experienced the death of their loved ones within a short distance of their homes in the battle.

The Confederates in Winchester, Virginia celebrated as they felt liberated by Stonewall Jackson's Confederate forces. They were free to move around and conduct business without the stifling oversight of Union military leadership. However, author James M. McPherson clarified that there were two groups who did not feel free or liberated by the Confederate control of Winchester. Slaves and Union loyalists living in or near Winchester were most decidedly oppressed.[58]

Originally from Winchester, Virginia, David Hunter Strother was a Virginia loyalist who served with General Bank's army. Along with the other Union soldiers, he left Winchester with a profound disappointment at the results of the battle.[59] Strother described the scene of enslaved men, women, and children making the choice to leave bondage and their homes. These people faced a terrifying and uncertain future.[60]

The triumphant day for the Confederate civilians in and near Winchester also held its tragedies. As in any war, mothers and wives received the devastating news of the loss of their loved ones. In his edited work, historian Gary W. Gallagher discussed that soldiers enlisted from their own community were carried home dead or wounded.[61] In some cases, according to Jonathan Noyalas, dead sons perished nearly at their home doorsteps.[62]

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[58] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 244.

[59] David Hunter Strother, *A Virginia Yankee in the Civil War: The Diaries of David Hunter Strother*, Edited by Cecil D. Eby, Jr. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 43.

[60] Ibid., 43.

[61] Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 91.

[62] Jonathan A. Noyalas, *Plagued by War: Winchester, Virginia During the Civil War* (Leesburg: Gauley Mountain Press, 2003), 57-58.

In the end, the Confederates were the strongest military leaders in the Valley thanks to the superior leadership of Stonewall Jackson. Even so, this advantage came at a high cost to everyone involved. Despite the outstanding victory for Jackson at Winchester, the Civil War continued raging on. Jackson's success attracted the attention of powerful people in Washington, D.C. This attention effectively put a target on Jackson. Subsequent events in the Shenandoah Valley reminded everyone involved that Jackson and the Confederates were still human and subject to the same human limitations as everyone else.

## Brig. Gen. Turner Ashby Killed in Action

The reality of the Confederates having established themselves as the strongest military leaders in the Shenandoah Valley because of Stonewall Jackson did not mean that the southerners had no challenges in their conduct of the campaign. After the battle at Winchester, President Lincoln assigned three different generals to capture or destroy Jackson's Valley army. Jackson assigned various segments of his command to keep the way clear for him to move the army up the Valley. North of Winchester, Gen. Winder moved the Stonewall Brigade to slow the Union advance from the east. South of Winchester, Gen. Ashby's cavalry moved to slow the advance of the Union forces coming from the west. In a seemingly minor skirmish near Harrisonburg, a costly loss occurred for Jackson with Brig. Gen. Turner Ashby being killed in action. Ashby's life prior to his military service under Stonewall Jackson's command contained indicators of both his value and frustrations for Gen. Jackson. Even so, Ashby became an integral part of Jackson's Valley campaign. Despite Ashby's characteristics, which in many ways mirrored those of Stonewall Jackson, the fact of the cavalryman's mortality could not be denied. With Ashby's death, the Confederates in the Shenandoah Valley were denied an asset to conduct the campaign. Regardless, the final phase of Jackson's Valley campaign demonstrated

that no person was indispensable. The Union commanders errantly had begun to develop the belief that Jackson was unbeatable. The key thing to take away from this incident, however, is that Ashby's death demonstrated that Jackson and the Confederates were still human and subject to the same human limitations which perplexed their northern counterparts.

An examination of Turner Ashby's life and death serves as an illustration of some essential principles of not only war but also life in general. Prior to being assigned to Gen. Jackson's Valley army, Ashby had developed some practices and beliefs as a Virginia militia commander of cavalry. These habits were indicators of both his value and future frustrations for Jackson. His upbringing contained examples of how Turner Ashby became comfortable with ignoring the complaints of those around him who might not agree with things Ashby was doing. As a youth, Ashby preferred wandering the countryside rather than attending classes in school. He was an excellent equestrian who demonstrated a marked ability to handle horses in a rather unorthodox manner. Turner Ashby enjoyed some success at both business and farming, but his real calling proved to be commanding cavalry in the military. The death of his brother Richard at the hands of the Yankees in northern Virginia led to a strong hatred of all Northerners.

To gain an understanding of who Turner Ashby was, it is important to consider the uniqueness of his life from the beginning as presented by James B. Avirett. Turner Ashby Jr. was born at Rose Bank Plantation near Markham in Fauquier County, Virginia. His parents were Turner Ashby Sr. and Dorothea Green Ashby. As a child, the lad often played in the waters of nearby Goose Creek. He made a pet of a wolf Turner named "Lupus." His neighbors demanded that he get rid of the wolf. Even as a boy, Turner Ashby demonstrated a willingness to ignore the demands of those around him.[63]

[63] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 17.

At a young age, Turner Ashby's father died. Thomas A. Ashby described the efforts of Turner Ashby's mother to find a man who could tutor both Turner and his brother in acquiring an education and learn what it meant to be a man. To do so, Mrs. Ashby hired a Mr. Underwood. After a time, Ashby's mother chose to send him to an actual school nearby ran by a Major Ambler. Even with all these efforts by Turner Ashby's mother to provide an adequate education to her son, Ashby demonstrated a strong desire to wander the countryside rather than attend classes.[64]

Chronicler Thomas A. Ashby disclosed that Turner Ashby became an accomplished horseman at an early age. Turner often participated in equestrian tournaments winning many along the way. Thomas Ashby recounted a story from Turner Ashby's youth in which he dressed as an Indian chief and rode in a tournament with neither bridle nor saddle. As a young adult, he bought a residence near his childhood home and named it Wolfe's Crag.[65]

Clarence Thomas expounded on Ashby's modest success at both business and farming. Turner Ashby joined with a Mr. Sommerville as a partner in a milling business on the property of Turner's father. It went well enough to be later sold by Turner's mother to a neighbor named Edward Carrington Marshall. Marshall obtained the business for the Manassas Gap Railroad in northern Virginia.[66]

In an 1862 article entitled "General Turner Ashby" published in *The Southern Illustrated News*, writers Ayers and Wade explained that after John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry, Turner Ashby's recruited company of cavalrymen from northern Virginia joined with some Marylanders to form Company G of the Seventh Virginia Cavalry. Serving under the command originally of

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[64] Thomas A. Ashby, *Life of Turner Ashby* (New York: Neale Pub. Co., 1914), 31.
[65] Ibid., 36-37.
[66] Clarence Thomas, *General Turner Ashby, the Centaur of the South* (Winchester: Eddy Press Corporation, 1907), 11.

Col. Angus McDonald, Ashby took over command when McDonald was transferred to another assignment. It was during this time that a cornerstone event took place that directed Turner Ashby's life as a soldier. Ashby's brother Richard was killed skirmishing with a Union patrol along the Potomac in June 1861. Hearing rumors that his brother had been bayoneted while trying to surrender, Ashby examined the corpse and confirmed the rumors. Henceforth, Turner Ashby came to hate Northerners and became obsessed with revenge.[67]

It is true that Turner Ashby was extremely valuable to Gen. Jackson and the Confederacy as a cavalry officer during the Shenandoah Valley campaign. It is equally true that he was a source of frustration for Jackson. This was so because Ashby was set on performing his duties in his own way. It certainly makes sense that Ashby would perform his duties in his own way. Although obedience to the commands of his superior officer would be essential to military operations, those actions could only be conducted in the manner which Turner Ashby was capable. Overall, he demonstrated that he was an excellent cavalry commander.

Part of Stonewall Jackson's frustration with Turner Ashby was Ashby's disdain for discipline in his command. Col. Ashby was able to maintain his regiment and motivate them to conduct difficult military operations as militiamen because he earned their loyalty primarily through being considered by his men as one of them. When the 7th was incorporated into Gen. Jackson's command in early 1862, the regiment's performance under Ashby's leadership became well known. Ashby became well known in both the North and the South.

In the spring of 1862, the 7th Virginia Cavalry Regiment took part in Jackson's Valley Campaign. S. C. Gwynne clarified that part of the 7th Virginia was the first Confederate horse artillery organized in Virginia by Ashby known as Chew's Battery. This fast-moving artillery

[67] Ayers and Wade, "General Turner Ashby," *The Southern Illustrated News*, October 18, 1862, Vol. 1, No. 6, page 2.

battery was able to keep up with the rest of Ashby's mounted cavalry. Together they moved around the Valley providing effective support for Jackson's division. Ashby's regiment grew rapidly in 1862 to a great extent because of the way his exploits captured the imagination of the young men of Virginia in their desire to serve their nation and gain prestige as cavalrymen.[68]

The exploits of the 7th Virginia and its commander, Turner Ashby, became famous on both sides of the war. Peter Cozzens described the fame bestowed upon Ashby and his cavalrymen as spreading not only in North America but also in Europe. Both Gen. Jackson and Turner Ashby along with their respective commands to a great extent kept the Confederacy in consideration for European recognition early in the Civil War. Journalists both North and South offered regular accounts of the accomplishments of both men in the Shenandoah Valley throughout 1862.[69]

As Jackson's cavalry commander, Ashby provided daring and capable cavalry leadership for the general at the battles of Kernstown, McDowell, Front Royal, and Winchester. John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel in 1863 pointed out that at least in part due to the effective work of Turner Ashby officials in the Union became concerned enough about the Confederate abilities to assign multiple armies to capture or destroy Stonewall Jackson's forces in the Shenandoah Valley. From the west, Pres. Lincoln ordered Gen. Frémont to move from Franklin, West Virginia to block Jackson's ability to move up the Valley by positioning Frémont's army at Strasburg, Virginia on the Valley Turnpike. Lincoln ordered Gen. McDowell to move his army west from eastern Virginia to the Front Royal area for the purpose of blocking Jackson's escape

[68] S. C. Gwynne, *Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson* (New York: Scribner, 2014), 211.

[69] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 151.

east. From the north, Pres. Lincoln ordered Gen. Banks to move back up the Valley once again to pressure Jackson into moving into the trap being set for him by Frémont and McDowell.[70]

As the Federals began to spring their trap on the Confederates, Jackson ordered his army to withdraw from the pressure of Maj. Gen. John C. Frémont's superior forces moving from Harrisonburg toward Port Republic. The Military Historical Society of Massachusetts recorded the Union perspective of the Confederate movement in early June 1862. Not desiring to wait for the northerners to corner his men, Jackson ordered Gen. Ewell to pivot between Winchester and Front Royal toward the Valley Turnpike. For his part, Jackson ordered his division to likewise pivot west of the Turnpike placing both divisions south of the intended Union ambush.[71]

For Jackson's division, Ashby commanded the rear guard. Gen. Jackson's report in the official record (OR) of the activities in the area in early June revealed that Ashby's cavalry effectively shielded Jackson's division from Gen. Frémont's forces. Apparently, Gen. Frémont positioned his division north of Strasburg where he intended to wait for Jackson's attack. This allowed Jackson to move his division safely past Strasburg to a position south of that town at a place called Cross Key.[72]

As an integral part of Jackson's command, Turner Ashby allowed Stonewall Jackson the luxury of moving freely around the Valley without the Union army knowing exactly what was going on with the Confederates. This service Ashby provided at great risk to himself and his cavalrymen. Part of Ashby's notoriety rested on his ability to repeatedly expose himself to danger without being killed or captured. It was like some sort of life and death gamble. Playing

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[70] John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel, *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances* (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1863), 65.

[71] Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, *The Shenandoah Campaigns of 1862 and 1864 and the Appomattox Campaign, 1865* (Boston: Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, 1907), 20.

[72] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1885. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XXIV – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland ... Part I – Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862*, 653.

the game of "Gamble with Your Life" can carry with it some costly consequences if you roll "snake eyes."

As was normal, newly appointed Brig. Gen. Turner Ashby was being as audacious as ever. He put his cavalry to work aggressively screening Jackson's infantry south of Strasburg. One thing gambler's need to consider is when to continue with their gambit and when to end it. Unfortunately for Stonewall Jackson, Turner Ashby was one to always push the window. Likewise, he was not a good judge of when to end the gambit. This would prove costly to Turner Ashby, Stonewall Jackson, and the Confederacy.

On June 6, 1862, near Harrisonburg, Virginia, the 1st New Jersey Cavalry attacked Ashby's position at Good's Farm. According to Gen. Jackson's account in the official record, the attack was intended to be the springing of an ambush designed to destroy Ashby's cavalry. However, as usual, the Confederate general was well prepared to receive the attack. To be sure, Gen. Ashby's actions were not bravado. His actions were typical for him. Ashby's approach had served him well to this point in the war.[73]

Author Clarence Thomas told of the result of the Federal cavalry attack. He annotated how the result was predictable. Ashby defeated the Union cavalry attack. The northerners followed up the cavalry action with an infantry attack. The following infantry engagement resulted in Turner Ashby's horse being shot out from under him.[74]

G. F. R. Henderson elucidated Gen. Ashby's next few moments of life. First, Ashby had to extricate himself from under his dying horse. After regaining his senses, Ashby led his men in a charge ahead on foot. Gen. Ashby believed that the best vantage point for a commander to lead his men into battle was from the front. This approach explains why Ashby could expect his men

[73] Ibid., 652.

[74] Clarence Thomas, *General Turner Ashby, the Centaur of the South* (Winchester: Eddy Press Corporation, 1907), 156.

to follow even the most harrowing commands given to them. In this instance, things did not turn out the way Turner Ashby intended.[75]

Henderson rendered the account of Brig. Gen. Turner Ashby's last words which were, "Charge, men! For God's sake. Charge!" The general was waving his sword as he led his men forward. After only a few steps, Turner Ashby was shot through the heart and died instantly. At the death of Ashby, the Confederate assault was thrown into confusion. Some nearby southern soldiers carried Ashby's lifeless body to the rear. Southern officers still on the field guided the remaining forces into resuming the attack and defeating the Federals.[76]

James Avirett attempted to break down the origin of the fatal shot. However, the details remain unclear. Several soldiers of the 13th Pennsylvania Reserve Infantry known as the "Bucktails" claimed credit for killing Gen. Ashby. For the Union soldiers, Ashby's death was a boost for their morale and a boon for their cause. For the Confederate soldiers, especially the 7th Virginia Cavalry, Turner Ashby's death was a profoundly demoralizing loss to their cause in the Shenandoah Valley.[77]

The period immediately following Turner Ashby's death was of great importance to both the Union and the Confederacy. The conveyed meaning of Ashby's loss is difficult to understand. However, the 7th Virginia Cavalry Regiment would undergo some important changes for the duration of the war. In the immediate, Col. Richard H. Dulany would take over command of the regiment in the wake of Ashby's death. The regiment would undergo an extensive reorganization. Eventually, the 7th Virginia would become part of the Laurel Brigade which would go on to earn accolades of its own.

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[75] G. F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (New York: Smithmark, 1995), 210.
[76] Ibid., 210.
[77] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 223.

Gen. Jackson began to consider replacements for Turner Ashby as commander of the 7th Virginia. In his 1923 article in the *Confederate Veteran Magazine* entitled "Hampton's Cattle Raid," W. N. McDonald brought out that Jackson settled on a professionally trained soldier in the person of Col. Richard H. Dulany. Taking command of Ashby's Cavalry would prove to be a monumental undertaking for Dulany. To begin, the regiment had swelled to twenty-nine companies of cavalry, infantry, and artillery. This was much larger than any other regiment in the Confederate army.[78]

At least partly because of the unwieldy size of the 7th Virginia, the regiment was reorganized at the end of the Shenandoah Valley campaign. In an article entitled "The Valley Campaign of 1862 as Revealed in Letters of Sandie Pendleton" published in *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, writers W. G. Bean and Sandie Pendleton went into detail of how none of the subsequent cavalry commanders in the Valley achieved the success which Ashby had. To be sure, the 7th Virginia performed adequately, but none of its subsequent commanders were Turner Ashby.[79]

In his book entitled *A History of the Laurel Brigade* and edited by Bushrod C. Washington, author Cpt. William N. McDonald conveyed that the original ten companies of the 7th Virginia remained a part of that newly reconstituted regiment.[80] He explained that the excess nineteen companies formed the 12th Regiment and 17th Battalion of Virginia Cavalry.[81]

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[78] W.N. McDonald, "Hampton's Cattle Raid," *Confederate Veteran Magazine*, January 1923, 94.

[79] W. G. Bean and Sandie Pendleton, "The Valley Campaign of 1862 as Revealed in Letters of Sandie Pendleton," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 78, no. 3 (Jul. 1970): 364.

[80] Captain William N. McDonald, *A History of the Laurel Brigade*, ed. Bushrod C. Washington (Baltimore: Sun job printing office, 1907), 75.

[81] Ibid., 75.

Together the 7th Virginia Regiment, 12th Virginia Regiment, and the 17th Battalion became what was known as the Laurel Brigade of the Confederate Army of the Valley.[82]

The significance of the Shenandoah Valley to both the Union and Confederate effort cannot be denied. During the Valley campaign of 1862, a great deal of energy was exerted to control the region. The Confederate victory at Winchester reduced the Union presence while confirming the strength of Gen. Jackson and the Confederates under his command. Following orders, Jackson appeared to make a move on Harper's Ferry and Williamsport. He did so even though he did yet have the strength to actually invade the northern territories. By the end of Jackson's 1862 campaign in the Valley, it was becoming apparent to military and civilians alike that the war was one of attrition which would take a long time to end. The cost of the war was also becoming painfully apparent to both the Union and Confederacy. This was confirmed through the loss of such a personality as Turner Ashby. This loss to the Confederacy could be construed as a foreshadowing of what still lie ahead for both sides. It had not become apparent to either side in the war about the Confederacy's ability to replace lost talent.

[82] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 261.

## Chapter 5 – Union Forces Expelled from the Valley

With Stonewall Jackson's escape from the Union "trap" designed for him by Pres. Lincoln involving the two Union generals of Shields and Frémont, the final component of Jackson's Valley Campaign began to take shape. In essence, Gen. Jackson's army continued to move south up the Shenandoah Valley at a pace allowing him to stay engaged with both Union generals while selecting a location of his own choosing to do battle with both Union armies. In so doing, Jackson practiced a strategy which was very similar to that which Gen. Robert E. Lee would soon conduct in eastern Virginia. The goal for both leaders was to gain control of their respective areas of operations. This approach stood in stark contrast to that of their protagonists in the Union army. The Union leadership was guided by Pres. Lincoln to devise a strong strategy to deal with Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley. Gen. Frémont was to converge on the Confederate Army of the Valley from the west. Gen. Shields was to converge on them from the east. Both Shields and Frémont were as far from the Valley in their respective directions as Jackson was after chasing Union Gen. Banks to Harper's Ferry. In conducting their operations Jackson was enabled to escape their trap. The result was the creation of a situation that left no real possibility of Union forces maintaining any significant presence in the Shenandoah Valley in the last half of 1862 and through 1863.

### Union Establishes a Strategy to Stop Stonewall Jackson

Jackson's sound defeat of Gen. Banks at Front Royal and Winchester along with his threatening movement toward Maryland in pursuit of Banks led Pres. Lincoln to react. Stonewall Jackson had become a perceived threat to the North and a general pain in the neck to Lincoln. Therefore, it became apparent that something had to be done about Jackson. Although Lincoln would never have usurped the operational control of his generals in the field, he did take

it upon himself to devise a plan to rid the Shenandoah Valley of Stonewall Jackson once and for all. Seeing the opportunity to trap Jackson between the forces of Frémont and Shields due to Jackson's movement in the lower Valley, such was the direction of the Union Commander-in-Chief.

Unfortunately for the Federals, Frémont and Shields conducted their operations in such a manner as to place themselves right where Stonewall Jackson wanted them. Jackson's liberal use of fire to destroy bridges crossing the North River, South River, and Shenandoah River effectively kept Frémont and Shields separated which would not allow them to destroy Jackson. The combination of Jackson understanding his opponents' abilities to command along with the smaller size of the separated Union elements set up a scenario which favored the Confederate army.

Things came to a head over two days in early June 1862. On June 8, 1862, Gen. Ewell's division soundly defeated Gen. Frémont at the Battle of Cross Keys. The next day, Gen. Jackson defeated elements of Gen. Shields force at the Battle of Port Republic. These actions effectively ended Stonewall Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign. It also freed Jackson to join Gen. Robert E. Lee who was the newly appointed commander of the Army of Northern Virginia at Richmond.

Initially, the grand strategy to stop Stonewall Jackson intended for generals Irvin McDowell, Frémont, and Nathaniel Banks to corner their prey in the Shenandoah Valley. Frémont and Shields ended up at Port Republic facing Jackson and Ewell through developments in operations as the Union campaign unfolded in late May and early June 1862. Gen. McDowell assigned his subordinate Gen. Shields of Kernstown fame to move west from eastern Virginia. Gen. Banks began to move south in pursuit of Jackson in such a lethargic manner that he was

still north of Winchester as Shields and Frémont approached the southern end of the Massanutten Mountain. Apparently, Banks already had his fill of dealing with Stonewall Jackson. The result was that Banks rendered himself irrelevant in Jackson's pursuit to the upper Valley.

The day after Turner Ashby's death led to the preliminary developments in the coming action between Jackson and Ewell for the Confederates and Shields and Frémont for the Federals. Late in the day on June 7, 1862, Union Gen. Frémont sent his advanced guard toward the Confederates located at a small pub known as Cross Keys Tavern. A slight skirmish followed after which Union cavalry fell back to Frémont's approaching main body. Darkness prevented further developments.

Given the circumstances shaping up the way they were for everyone gathering at the southern end of the Massanutten, it is helpful to examine the goals of the key leaders on both sides. To begin, according to William Allan in his book entitled *The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862*, it was understood by the Confederates that Pres. Abraham Lincoln established the overarching goal of these armies to be the capture or destruction of Stonewall Jackson's army in the Shenandoah Valley. To accomplish this, the president ordered Gen. Frémont to move east from West Virginia. Lincoln ordered Gen. McDowell to move west from eastern Virginia. The president ordered Gen. Banks to move south from Maryland.[1]

Next, in his book entitled *Decoying the Yanks: Jackson's Valley Campaign*, author Champ Clark explained the goals of Union Gen. McDowell. It was McDowell's decision to send Gen. Shields into the Shenandoah Valley after Jackson. His first assignment was to recapture Front Royal. Upon completion, Shields was to move south in the Luray Valley to capture Luray

[1] William Allan, *The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1892), 127.

located between the Massanutten and the Blue Ridge. From Luray, he was to attack Jackson returning to eastern Virginia as soon as possible after Jackson's demise.[2]

Additionally, according to historian Peter Cozzens in his book entitled *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* Gen. Frémont's goal was to move slowly eastward from his position west of the Alleghany Mountains. His reasoning was twofold. First, Frémont wanted to preserve his worn-out army while still moving toward Strasburg, Virginia. Second, he wanted to attempt to maintain his dangerously stretched supply located in Franklin, West Virginia. It was Frémont's intention to accomplish these two purposes while still following the letter of Lincoln's command if not the spirit of it.[3]

Furthermore, David J. Eicher wrote in his 2001 book entitled *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* that Gen. Banks' had two primary goals in mind which were part of the same overall goal which amounted to avoiding fighting another battle with Stonewall Jackson. First, Banks wanted to put off leaving the safety of his base in Maryland as long as possible. Second, Banks wanted to attempt to time his movement to reach Jackson after Frémont and Shields had already attacked the Confederates. In this behavior, Banks wanted to show some effort at following Pres. Lincoln's orders to move against Jackson in the Valley.[4]

Last, James B. Avirett discussed the goals of Stonewall Jackson in his 1867 primary source publication entitled *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers*. According to Avirett, Jackson had four goals in mind. First, the general wanted to make a demonstration against Harper's Ferry south of the Potomac River. The intention was to throw a

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[2] Champ Clark, *Decoying the Yanks: Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Alexandria: Time Life Books, 1984), 147.

[3] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 4.

[4] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 263.

panic into the northern public and leadership which would delay the unification of the Union forces commanded by Gen. McDowell and Gen. McClellan at Richmond. Second, Jackson wanted to move his army to safety south of the Federal army locations along the line from Strasburg, Virginia to Front Royal. Third, it was Jackson's intention to deal a decisive blow to the Union armies arrayed against him in the Shenandoah Valley. Fourth, Jackson wanted to be available to join the expected call to reinforce Lee's army at Richmond.[5]

Predisposed as Frémont, Shields, and Jackson were as they approached the Port Republic environs late in the day on June 7, 1862, Gen. Frémont's advance guard had an encounter with Ewell's pickets near a small community gathering place called Cross Keys Tavern. One of Gen. Jackson's staff members was credited in a 1968 book entitled *I Rode with Stonewall, being chiefly the war experiences of the youngest member of Jackson's staff from the John Brown raid to the hanging of Mrs. Surratt* and edited by Fletcher Melvin Green with clarifying that the morning of the 7th Gen. Frémont ordered his subordinate Gen. Robert Milroy to collect the Union dead and wounded from the fight with Ashby the day before. Having completed this assignment, Milroy was then ordered to conduct a reconnaissance down the Port Republic road as far as was practicable. This duty set up the situation that led to the action for the day.[6]

Gen. Milroy led his brigade as they struggled along the Port Republic road toward a little village located northwest of Port Republic. This little village had taken its name from the Cross Keys Tavern which name was fashioned after any typical pub found in England based on the coat of arms of the family that established the enterprise. The Union general determined the road to be "very bad" although it was better than most roads used in the area at that time. Regardless,

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[5] James B. Avirett, *The Memoirs of General Turner Ashby and His Compeers* (Baltimore: Selby & Dulany, 1867), 208-209.

[6] Henry Kyd Douglas and Fletcher Melvin Green, *I Rode with Stonewall, being chiefly the war experiences of the youngest member of Jackson's staff from the John Brown raid to the hanging of Mrs. Surratt* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 91.

the Federals continued along the road on their reconnaissance until they arrived within a half mile of Cross Keys.[7]

As was the military tactical custom of the Civil War, Gen. Milroy assigned an advanced guard to serve as skirmishers in the brigade's move to the southeast along the Port Republic road. Eventually, that advance guard ran into Confederate skirmishers assigned to Gen. Ewell. The southerners were posted in a strand of woods northwest of the Union Church located in Cross Keys. Union Church was the most prominent feature of Cross Keys, so it was clear where the skirmish was taking place. The action was brief but sharp. The Confederates retired from the field to rejoin their main body.[8]

Gen. Milroy's responsibility was to perform reconnaissance of the Confederate forces which Gen. Frémont's division would be facing. This Milroy did. However, the value of the information provided from any recon is only as high as the quality of the recon performed. The information provided to Gen. Frémont was that he was facing an enemy numbering at least 20,000.[9] The reality was that the Confederate command of Gen. Ewell's division numbered only 6,620 men.[10]

At this point in the day, the opposing forces knew each other was there. According to Stonewall Jackson's trusted topographer Jedediah Hotchkiss, Gen. Ewell had been given time to leniently place the units from his division because of the advanced warning provided to him by his advanced force from Union Church. For Union Gen. Frémont, his plan was to continue his

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[7] Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Volume I – Manassas to Malvern Hill* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 437.

[8] Gary W. Gallagher, ed., *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 66.

[9] G. F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (New York: Smithmark, 1995), 216.

[10] Robert K. Krick, *Conquering the Valley: Stonewall Jackson at Port Republic* (New York: Morrow, 1996), 34.

approach to what would become the next day the battlefield of Cross Keys. However, now both generals needed more information about one another.[11]

Gen. Frémont made the first move with a decision to conduct further reconnaissance of the Confederates he was facing. To do this, Frémont assigned elements of his cavalry for the job. He gave them the charge to recon toward Cross Keys. This action would set up another sharp action for the day.[12]

In his book entitled *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, historian James M. McPherson shared the analysis that once again Frémont confirmed the presence of the Confederates in his front. A few shots were exchanged between Frémont's cavalry and Ewell's skirmishers.[13] This time according to author James I. Robertson in his book entitled *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* Gen. Frémont's cavalry fell back.[14] With Gen. Frémont having confirmed the presence of Gen. Ewell's command at Cross Keys, both Frémont and Ewell began to assemble their respective divisions in anticipation of further action.[15]

At this point in the action, time was beginning to slip away. Darkness was creating a necessary situation for both Ewell and Frémont to decide. It was time to fish or cut bait. Historian Robert G. Tanner in his book which was finally published with the title *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* that

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[11] Jedediah Hotchkiss, *Make Me a Map of the Valley: The Civil War Journal of Stonewall Jackson's Topographer*, ed. Archie P. McDonald (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1973), 52.

[12] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, ed., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (New York: The Century Co., 1885), 291.

[13] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 458.

[14] James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997), 430.

[15] David G. Martin, *Jackson's Valley Campaign: November 1861 – June 1862* (Philadelphia: Combined Books, 1994), 143.

defined the question as one of whether the two generals would attack or avoid battle for that day.[16]

As it turned out, conditions made the decision for both generals. Darkness fell. According to Gen. Ewell's official report, there would be no combat for that night.[17]

The reality of the situation was defined in two ways. One was Gen. Frémont's persuasion. Because of his timidity, Frémont dawdled on June 7th with incessant reconnaissance until he frittered away his chance of conducting an attack. The other according to one of Ewell's brigade commanders was Gen. Ewell's purpose. In his book entitled *Destruction and Reconstruction: Personal Experiences of the Late War*, Richard Taylor described Ewell's mission to be one of holding Gen. Frémont back away from Jackson's main force in Port Republic until Jackson was finished dealing with Union Gen. Shields. The fact that Gen. Ewell's division was outnumbered nearly two to one by Frémont also contributed to his hesitation to attack.[18]

No further action was taken by either general on June 7th with one exception. Gen. Ewell had to fend off repeated requests by one of his brigade commanders for a night attack against the Federals. Confederate Gen. Trimble recognized an opportunity because of a perceived weakness in the Union forces for a night attack being successful. Ewell weighed the strength of his

[16] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 386.

[17] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1885. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XXIV – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland ... Part I – Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862*, 781.

[18] Richard Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction: Personal Experiences of the Late War* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1879), 37.

defenses against the poor odds of conducting a successful night attack.[19] In the end, developments around Cross Keys waited for daylight on June 8, 1862.[20]

## Battle of Cross Keys

The morning of Sunday, June 8, 1862 turned out to be one of the most comfortable and beautiful days which ever broke for a battle during the Civil War. For the most part, the Confederates believed that this Lord's Day would be very peaceful and relaxing. As matters progressed, however, reality soon changed it all.[21] The Battle of Cross Keys emerging to the northwest of Port Republic consisted of four components. First, there was the movement to and deployment of both forces at Cross Keys. Second, there was the initial action in the battle. Third, there occurred the capstone action in the battle resulting in the turning point. Fourth, there was disengagement and the result of the battle for both armies.

The opposition of the forces commanded by Gen. Ewell for the Confederates and Gen. Frémont for the Union came about as the result of the Union commander's movement and deployment at Cross Keys. Gen. Ewell had already deployed his division at Cross Keys in strong positions and awaited Frémont's approach. As Gen. Frémont was approaching Port Republic from the northwest, Stonewall Jackson found himself between the proverbial rock and a hard place. He was effectively facing enemies on two fronts.[22]

Coincidingly, action began to unfold due east of Cross Keys on the western end of the village of Port Republic. The Union 4th Brigade of Gen. Shields' division commanded by Colonel Samuel Sprigg Carroll launched a very unexpected raid. Carroll was supported by a

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[19] Clifford Dowdey, "In the Valley of Virginia," *Civil War History* 3, no. 4 (December 1957): 421.

[20] John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel, *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances* (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1863), 66.

[21] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 446-447.

[22] William J. Miller, *Mapping for Stonewall: The Civil War Service of Jed Hotchkiss* (Washington, D.C.: Elliott & Clark Pub., 1993), 75.

cavalry regiment and an artillery battery. The brigade approached the town of Port Republic at about 9:00am. According to Markinfield Addey who served in Stonewall's command, Carroll's brigade scattered the Confederate pickets. Fording the South River, the Federals rushed into the town. They surprised Jackson's command including his staff.[23]

The apogee of Carroll's raid transpired at the point when Gen. Jackson coordinated the counterattack of those of his forces which moved from the eastern skirts of town into Port Republic itself. Those of Jackson's headquarters staff that managed to escape Col. Carroll's raid raced down the main street of Port Republic and across the covered bridge located at the edge of town. Unfortunately, three members of Jackson's staff were captured. Those staff members were Colonel Stapleton Crutchfield, Lieutenant Edward Willis, and Dr Hunter McGuire. The Union 4th Brigade deployed two guns. One gun was aimed at the bridge. The other was brought up with the intention of firing on any Confederate troops which may have shown themselves on the main street of Port Republic. At this stage in the action, Gen. Jackson provided much needed direction for the Confederate defense. He ordered Captain William Poague's battery to unlimber on the north bank.[24]

Matters in Carroll's raid began to resolve as Confederate forces increasingly converged on the town. Captain James Carrington who commanded the newly formed Charlottesville Battery brought up a gun from the vicinity of Madison Hall to rake the Main Street. Simultaneously, Colonel Samuel V. Fulkerson led his brigade in a charge across the bridge against Carroll's brigade. The Federals used the gun they had placed at the opposite end of town to fire on Fulkerson's men with canister shot. However, the Confederates were successful in

[23] Markinfield Addey, *"Stonewall Jackson": The Life and Military Career of Thomas Jonathan Jackson* (New York: Charles T. Evans, 1863), 88-89.

[24] Champ Clark, *Decoying the Yanks: Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Alexandria: Time Life Books, 1984), 160.

driving the Union cavalry out of the town. Carroll retreated in confusion. Before it was over, he ended up losing his two guns before his infantry could come within range.[25]

The end of the raid came as the Federals attempted to retreat out of range of the Confederate guns. Henry Kyd Douglas who served on Stonewall Jackson's staff described how three Confederate batteries unlimbered on the bluffs east of Port Republic on the north bank of the South Fork River. They began to rain down withering fire on the desperate Federals. Carroll retired several miles north on the Luray Road. His command would play a key role in the action of the following day. However, for now Jackson stationed Brig. Gen. William Taliaferro's brigade in Port Republic. In addition, Jackson positioned the Stonewall Brigade near Bogota with artillery to prevent any further surprises.[26]

In the area of Cross Keys, both Ewell and Frémont could hear the noise from the action in Port Republic. Jackson had assigned Maj. Gen. Ewell's division with 6,500 men the mission to block Frémont at Cross Keys. Simultaneously, Jackson and the rest of his command would attack Shields at Port Republic. The initial action at Cross Keys was beginning to take shape even as the guns involved in Carroll's raid were quieting.[27]

Gen. Frémont and Gen. Shields had the mind to coordinate their attack against Gen. Jackson's Confederates at Port Republic. However, the Union commanders could not coordinate because the bridges over the South Fork Shenandoah north of Port Republic had been destroyed on Jackson's orders. In his 2001 book entitled *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War,* David J. Eicher disclosed that Union Colonel Gustave P Cluseret's brigade was Frémont's

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[25] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 448-449.

[26] Henry Kyd Douglas and Fletcher Melvin Green, *I Rode with Stonewall, being chiefly the war experiences of the youngest member of Jackson's staff from the John Brown raid to the hanging of Mrs. Surratt* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 93.

[27] William Allan, *The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1892), 60.

vanguard. Gen. Frémont was slowly renewing his advance toward Gen. Ewell's division from the vicinity of Harrisonburg. Frémont's division began the action at Cross Keys by driving away the Confederate skirmishers. Col. Cluseret reached and deployed his right flank along the Keezletown Road near Union Church.[28]

Col. Albert Tracy was a member of Gen. Frémont's staff who expounded on the developments at Cross Keys. He continued by pointing out that one by one the Union brigades came into line joining Cluseret's brigade which anchored the center of the Federal line. Brig. Gen. Robert C. Schenck's brigade was positioned on Cluseret's right. Brig. Gen. Robert Milroy's brigade came online on Cluseret's left. Brig. Gen. Julius Stahel's First Brigade was posted to the left of Milroy on the Federal far left. Stahel's left flank was near Congers Creek. Brig. Gen. Henry Bohlen's Third Brigade and Colonel John A. Koltes' Second Brigade were held in reserve near the center of the Union line. A regiment of Union cavalry moved south on the road to secure the right flank. Frémont's batteries were brought to the front.[29]

For the Confederates, Ewell deployed his division behind Mill Creek. Brig. Gen. Isaac Trimble's Seventh Brigade established themselves on the right across the Port Republic Road. Brig. Gen. Arnold Elzey's Fourth Brigade occupied the center of Ewell's line along the high bluffs. Ewell concentrated his four batteries at the center of the line. The Union troops began deploying along the Keezletown Road. Trimble advanced his brigade a quarter of a mile to Victory Hill. He placed Cpt A. R. Courtney's battery on a hill to the left. Gen. Trimble assigned support for the artillery to the 21st North Carolina Infantry.[30]

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[28] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 266.

[29] Francis F. Wayland and Albert Tracy, "Fremont's Pursuit of Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley: The Journal of Colonel Albert Tracy, March-July 1862," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 70, no. 2 (April 1962): 193.

[30] Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Volume I – Manassas to Malvern Hill* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 444.

As mentioned earlier, Ewell's advanced guard skirmishers was the 15th Alabama Infantry located near the Union Church. They had been skirmishing near Union Church when their commander decided to end the action and rejoin the brigade. The Alabamians held the attention of Gen. Frémont's Union division long enough for Trimble to deploy his troops in a substantial manner intended to devastate any attacking Federal force. Trimble held his regiments out of sight behind the crest of the hill.[31]

Trimble's trap was set to spring on the unsuspecting Federals. G. F. R. Henderson who was a member of Jackson's command revealed that Stahel appeared oblivious to Trimble's advanced position. Stahel's battle line passed down into the valley, crossed the run, and began climbing Victory Hill. It was at this point at a distance of sixty paces that Trimble's infantry stood up and delivered a devastating volley. Stahel's brigade recoiled in confusion with heavy casualties. It was the lot of the unfortunate members of the 8th New York Infantry Regiment led by Col. Francis Wutschel to bear the brunt of the devastation.[32]

In the face of such a loss experienced by Stahel's First Brigade, Frémont determined to advance his battle line. Apparently it was Gen. Frémont's intention to envelope the Confederate position assumed to be behind Mill Creek. To conduct this envelopment, the Federals would have to conduct a movement known as a right wheel. Such an elaborate movement by an entire division would require time and the units on the far left of the Union position to travel the longest distance. Unfortunately, the far-left unit had just been involved in an action which resulted in their devastation at the hands of Ewell's division. Stahel's brigade on the far left had the farthest distance to cover and would have to advance first.[33]

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[31] Frank Everson Vandiver, *Mighty Stonewall* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974), 277.

[32] G. F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (New York: Smithmark, 1995), 216.

[33] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, ed., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (New York: The Century Co., 1885), 291-292.

In his book entitled *Conquering the Valley: Stonewall Jackson at Port Republic*, historian Robert K. Krick spelled out the critical point of the action at Cross Keys as coming when the Union division attempted to outflank the Confederate position. Gen. Milroy moved forward on Stahel's right and rear. Union batteries were advanced with infantry lines south of Keezletown Road. Here they engaged the Confederate batteries. The Union brigade of Stahel regrouped on the height opposite Victory Hill. However, the First Brigade made no effort to renew their assault as they had experienced quite enough.[34]

Although Gen. Stahel did not renew his attack, he did bring up Cpt. Frank Buell's Battery C, West Virginia Light Artillery to support his position. In response, the Confederate Gen. Trimble moved the 15th Alabama Infantry by the right flank and up a ravine to get on the Federal battery's left. In the meantime, Gen. Ewell sent the 13th Virginia Infantry Regiment and the 25th Virginia Infantry Regiment along the ridge to Trimble's right. This last action attracted a severe fire from the Union battery.[35]

With a shout, the 15th Alabama emerged from their ravine. They began to climb the hill toward the battery. As the Alabamians approached the top of the hill, hand to hand combat was precipitated. Gen. Trimble's 16th Mississippi Infantry on the left and 21st Georgia Infantry on the right were the last two regiments he could throw into the battle. Both regiments were located on Victory Hill. Their strength was enough to force back the Union line. The Union battery of Cpt. Buell limbered hastily and withdrew. Had they not taken this action with haste, most likely the guns of Battery C would have been captured by Trimble's infantry.[36]

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[34] Robert K. Krick, *Conquering the Valley: Stonewall Jackson at Port Republic* (New York: Morrow, 1996), 181.

[35] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 458.

[36] David G. Martin, *Jackson's Valley Campaign: November 1861 – June 1862* (Philadelphia: Combined Books, 1994), 151.

A Union regiment counterattacked briefly striking the left flank of the 16th Mississippi. The resulting desperate fighting ended when the Federals were forced back. Frémont's units were retreating in every sector of the battlefield. Gen. Trimble continued advancing up the ravine on the Confederate right outflanking successive Union positions as he went along. In the meantime, Gen. Milroy advanced on Stahel's right supported by artillery. Milroy's line came within rifle-musket range of the Confederate center behind Mill Creek. When they opened fire, the damage to the Confederate units was minimal. Union batteries continued to engage Confederate batteries in an artillery duel.[37]

In his book entitled *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862*, author Robert Tanner spelled out the crux of the battle rested on Gen. Ewell continuing the Confederate momentum and Gen. Frémont's ability to stop it. Gen. Bohlen advanced on the far Union left to stiffen Stahel's crumbling defense. Because of Gen. Stahel's retreat, Gen. Milroy's left flank was clearly endangered. Realizing this, Gen. Frémont ordered Milroy to withdraw. Jackson sent forward Brig. Gen. Richard Taylor's Louisiana brigade to support Ewell if needed. Upon arrival, Taylor was held in reserve by Gen. Ewell on the Port Republic Road near the Dunker Church. Gen. Frémont seemed incapable of action because of the decimation of Stahel's brigade on the Union left. The consequence for Frémont was that he was unable to mount a coordinated attack.[38]

The Union commander attempted a last-ditch effort to turn the tide in the favor of the Federals. He ordered Schenck's brigade forward to find the Confederate left flank south of Union Church. In response, Ewell reinforced his left with elements of Gen. Elzey's Fourth

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[37] James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997), 435-436.

[38] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 387.

Brigade. For a time, severe firing erupted along the line but quickly died down. The official papers of Stonewall Jackson reported that Confederate brigade commanders Elzey and Brig. Gen. George Steuart were wounded in this exchange.[39]

This final course of action led to Frémont withdrawing his force to Keezletown Road where he placed his artillery on the heights to his rear on Oak Ridge. The artillery on both sides continued firing. At dusk, Gen. Trimble pushed his battle line forward to within a quarter mile of the Union position. Trimble was anticipating a night assault. Confederate accounts describe the Union soldiers going into camp, lighting fires, and making coffee. However, Ewell ordered Trimble to withdraw without making the attack.[40]

For all practical purposes, the Battle of Cross Keys was over. Both sides had to figure out how to disengage their units from the combat. The commanders both North and South had to count noses, care for their wounded, and retrieve their dead from the battlefield. When it was all said and done, Union losses were reported at 664 with fourteen killed, 443 wounded, and 127 missing from about 12,000 engaged. The Confederate losses were counted at 287 with forty-one killed, 232 wounded, and fifteen missing from about 6,500 engaged. It was a resounding victory for the Confederates.[41]

## Battle of Port Republic

The payoff effort for Stonewall Jackson was to come on Monday, June 9, 1862 at Port Republic, Virginia. Gen. Jackson's army positioned at Port Republic was well deployed to meet the Union armies commanded by Gen. Shields to the northeast and Gen. Frémont to the

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[39] John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel, *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances* (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1863), 68.

[40] Markinfield Addey, *"Stonewall Jackson": The Life and Military Career of Thomas Jonathan Jackson* (New York: Charles T. Evans, 1863), 87.

[41] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1885. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XXIV – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland ... Part I – Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862*, 664-665, 717-718.

northwest. Those two generals were set on destroying Jackson's command. Jackson, for his part, had the aim to accomplish two objectives. First, he would attack and defeat Gen. Shields. Second, he would turn, attack, and defeat Gen. Frémont. It would be a tremendous undertaking, but if anyone could do it, Jackson could.[42]

During the night after the battle at Cross Keys, Confederate Brig. Gen. Charles Winder's Stonewall Brigade was withdrawn from its forward position near Bogota which was the name of a large house owned by Gabriel Jones. Winder's brigade rejoined the division at Port Republic. Confederate pioneers built a bridge of wagons across the South Fork of the Shenandoah River at Port Republic. All of this was done in an attempt to consolidate the Confederate forces at Port Republic.[43]

Winder's brigade was assigned the task of spearheading the assault against Union forces east of the Shenandoah River. Confederate Brig. Gen. Isaac Trimble's Seventh Brigade along with the 42nd Virginia Infantry and 1st Battalion Virginia Infantry from Colonel John Patton's Second Brigade were left to delay Union General Frémont's forces at Cross Keys. The rest of General Ewell's division marched to Port Republic to be in a position to support Winder's attack.[44]

In his book entitled *Mighty Stonewall,* author Frank Everson Vandiver told of Union Brig. Gen. Erastus Tyler's Third Brigade joining with Colonel Samuel Carroll's Fourth Brigade north of Lewiston on the Luray Road. The rest of Gen. Shields's division was spread out along the muddy roads leading north to Luray. Gen. Tyler took command on the field while Shields brought forward the rest of the division from Conrad's Store. Fortunately for the Confederate

[42] Richard Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction: Personal Experiences of the Late War* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1879), 37.

[43] Ibid., 37.

[44] Clifford Dowdey, "In the Valley of Virginia," *Civil War History* 3, no. 4 (December 1957): 422.

army the rest of Shields' command never made it to Port Republic. At dawn, Tyler advanced his brigade and Carroll's brigade to the vicinity of Lewiston.[45]

Early Civil War historians who wrote from the Confederate perspective tended to write hagiographically about the Confederate leadership at Port Republic. Conversely, those same historians wrote pejoratively about the Union leadership there. The fact is that Union Gen. Tyler developed a significantly strong line of defense at Port Republic against Stonewall Jackson's division. Tyler anchored the left of his line on a six-gun battery positioned on the clearing called Lewiston Coaling which sat upon a fairly high promontory on the battlefield. The Coaling was a foundry of sorts which processed coal for heating on the Lewis Plantation. Using this site as his anchor, Tyler then extended his infantry west along Lewiston Lane to the South Fork near the site of Lewis' Mill. The right and center of the Union lines on The Coaling were supported by a strong artillery position with sixteen guns in all.[46]

Early on Monday morning, events began to accelerate. Gen. Winder's Confederate brigade crossed the South River by 5:00am. Once across the makeshift bridge, Winder deployed his brigade to attack eastwards across the bottomland. Because of Brig. Gen. Steuart's wound at Cross Keys, Colonel W. C. Scott commanded the Second Brigade in its attack to the left of Winder. Gen. Winder sent the 2nd Virginia Infantry Regiment and the 4th Virginia Infantry Regiment into the woods to outflank the Union line on the right and assault the battery in the Coaling. The effectiveness of these two regiments was limited as they found a place to hide in the woods until much later in the battle.[47]

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[45] Frank Everson Vandiver, *Mighty Stonewall* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974), 274.

[46] William Allan, *History of the campaign of Gen. T.J. (Stonewall) Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia: From November 4, 1861, to June 17, 1862.* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1880), 158.

[47] Champ Clark, *Decoying the Yanks: Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Alexandria: Time Life Books, 1984), 168.

As it all too often occurred, the Confederates persisted in their effort to launch a frontal attack against a well-positioned enemy at Port Republic. The main Confederate battle line advanced in excellent array into the teeth of the Union artillery on the Coaling. Soon the Stonewall Brigade came under heavy fire from the Union artillery. Quickly the Confederates were pinned down and could not move while being subjected to a pounding barrage of artillery fire from the Federals.[48]

Confederate batteries were brought forward onto the plain. Those batteries were outgunned and could not effectively engage the Union batteries on the Coaling. Devastating fire from the Union batteries soon forced the Confederate guns to seek safer positions. Ewell's brigades were hurried forward to cross the river. Sadly, the deplorable condition of the bridge forced Ewell's troops to cross in single file. The delay almost spelled disaster for the Stonewall Brigade on the plain in front of the Coaling.[49]

Gen. Jackson could see the strength of the Union artillery at the Coaling. He could see how they were ripping the Stonewall Brigade to shreds. To try to help the situation, Jackson sent Brig. Gen. Richard Taylor's Louisiana brigade to the right into the woods. The hope was for the Louisianans to support the flanking column moving against the Union artillery at the Coaling. Both flanking columns were struggling to advance through the laurel thickets and dense underbrush on the hillside to the right of the Coaling.[50]

Gen. Winder ordered the Stonewall Brigade to renew its assault on the plain. Although the attack was gallantly conducted, it was carried out by a weakened force. The Confederates

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[48] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 485.

[49] Henry Kyd Douglas and Fletcher Melvin Green, *I Rode with Stonewall, being chiefly the war experiences of the youngest member of Jackson's staff from the John Brown raid to the hanging of Mrs. Surratt* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 96.

[50] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 266.

moved against the Union right and center. The result was predictable as the Stonewall Brigade suffered heavy casualties.[51]

The pinnacle action at Port Republic began with the Union commander Gen. Tyler moving two of his infantry regiments from the Coaling. He posted them to his right on the other side of the artillery batteries which were inflicting the heavy damage on Winder's Confederates. Tyler ordered those two regiments to launch a counterattack against the weak Confederate attack across the plain. The outcome was that the Federal counterattack drove Winder's Confederate forces back for nearly half a mile. Gen. Jackson clearly found the Union resistance to be fiercer than anticipated. Jackson ordered the last of Ewell's forces still north of Port Republic to cross the rivers. Once they were across, Ewell's brigades were to burn the North Fork Bridge.[52]

Since Gen. Ewell was on the battlefield at the Coaling, he began to look for ways to distribute his regiments in a manner which would help Gen. Winder. Ewell sent a Louisiana regiment directly to Winder. It soon was severely damaged like all the other regiments which were on the plain attacking the Union artillery. However, Ewell arrived with Col. W. C. Scott's 44th Virginia Infantry Regiment and Col. Samuel H. Letcher's 58th Virginia Infantry Regiment to turn the tide. Seeing an opportunity to attack the flank of the Union regiments which had just counterattacked Gen. Winder's brigade, Gen. Ewell sought to relieve some of the pressure from the Stonewall Brigade. Gen. Ewell accompanied the two regiments in the attack. Had there been more strength in Ewell's attack, the battle might have ended right there. However, the Federal units turned their attention on the Confederate flank attack quickly sending the

[51] Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Volume I – Manassas to Malvern Hill* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 455-456.

[52] G. F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (New York: Smithmark, 1995), 221-222.

southerners into a nearby stand of woods. This action did succeed in giving the Stonewall Brigade and others time to regroup to prepare for further fighting.[53]

The remainder of Gen. Ewell's units arrived on the battlefield as reinforcements for Gen. Winder's battered units. They strengthened Winder's line and stopped the Union counterattack. At the same time, Gen. Taylors's brigade finally reached a concealed position in the woods across from the Coaling. Shouting out a Rebel yell, Taylor's Confederates launched a fierce attack of their own against the Union artillery located on the hill of the Coaling. Almost immediately, the southerners found themselves amidst the Union cannons. Altogether, the Louisianans captured five Federal guns. Caught completely by surprise, Union Gen. Tyler promptly responded with a counterattack of his own using the last of his reserves.[54]

These Federal regiments retook the position as Taylor's units could not maintain their position in the open around the guns.[55] However, Taylor shifted a regiment to the far right to outflank the Union battle line. With this, the Confederates who had just been on the guns returned in fierce but brief hand-to-hand fighting. Most of the Union artillerists died on their guns. As one Confederate stood in front of one of the Federal guns, he demanded that the Union soldier surrender the gun because it now belonged to the southerners. Pulling the lanyard, the Union artillerist gave the Confederate soldier the gun, shell first, causing the southerner to disappear from the face of the earth. That same Union artillerist died an instant later at the end of a Confederate bayonet.[56]

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[53] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, ed., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* Vol. II (New York: The Century Co., 1885), 295.

[54] Robert K. Krick, *Conquering the Valley: Stonewall Jackson at Port Republic* (New York: Morrow, 1996), 416-417.

[55] Ibid., 412.

[56] David G. Martin, *Jackson's Valley Campaign: November 1861 – June 1862* (Philadelphia: Combined Books, 1994), 157.

Having captured the Federal guns on the Coaling, the Confederates turned the seized artillery on the rest of the Union infantry regiments on the Federal line. With the loss of the Coaling, the Union position along Lewiston Lane became untenable. It became imperative that Union Gen. Tyler find a way to detach his units from the grip of the Confederate attack. Tyler ordered a withdrawal at about 10:30 am.[57]

Perceiving a change in the favor of the Confederate army, Stonewall Jackson ordered a general advance of all his forces. Confederate Brig. Gen. William Taliaferro's fresh Confederate Second Brigade arrived from Port Republic just as the Union line was breaking. Taliaferro pressed the retreating Union troops for several miles north along the Luray Road. He led his men in taking several hundred prisoners, capturing valuable stores, and the seizing of many and varied weapons. All of this aided the Confederate cause immensely. Ultimately, the Confederate Army of the Valley was left in possession of the field.[58]

The final action at Port Republic transpired between Gen. Frémont's late arriving army with Gen. Jackson's forces. Frémont began his action after lingering in his camp until the action was almost over between Gen. Jackson's army and Gen. Tyler's forces at Port Republic. As Gen. Frémont's army approached Port Republic, they clearly saw a column of smoke rising up in the vicinity of the town. Soon the northerners saw the only bridge across the swollen river burn and collapse into the water. There would be no crossing of the river by Frémont's forces that day. Shortly after noon, Frémont's Union army began to deploy on the west bank of the South Fork River. It was clearly too late for Frémont's army to aid Tyler's defeated command. The Federals watched helplessly from across the rain-swollen river. Perhaps Gen. Frémont was

[57] James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997), 444.

[58] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 407.

relieved to not have to fight Jackson again. Perhaps he was genuinely frustrated that he did not get to attack Jackson. Either way, Frémont deployed his artillery on the high bluffs to harass the Confederate forces firing mostly on ambulances and a field hospital. Gen. Jackson gradually withdrew along a narrow road through the woods well out of Frémont's range. Eventually, Jackson concentrated his army in the vicinity of Mount Vernon Furnace.[59]

The commander of the Confederate Louisiana brigade Gen. Richard Taylor wrote after the war that Jackson expected Frémont to cross the river and attack him on the following day. However, the impact of Jackson's victories caused Frémont during the night to withdraw toward Harrisonburg. Shields also withdrew heading for Luray. After their dual defeats at Cross Keys and Port Republic, the Union armies retreated into the lower Shenandoah Valley. This clearly left Jackson in control of the upper and middle Shenandoah Valley.[60]

The Union retreat freed Jackson's army to move to the defense of Richmond. Jackson put his trains and troops on the road to Browns Gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains. A few days later before leaving to join Gen. Lee, Stonewall Jackson returned to the Shenandoah Valley near Port Republic at a place called Weyer's Cave. Here Jackson's army enjoyed a well-deserved rest and retooling. In the end, Union losses were reported as 1,002. 558 of these Federal losses were prisoners who were mostly taken during the pursuit along the Luray Road. Confederate casualties were listed as 816.[61]

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[59] John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel, *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances* (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1863), 72.

[60] Richard Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction: Personal Experiences of the Late War* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1879), 39-40.

[61] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XII. 1885. (Vol. 12, Chap. 24). Chapter XXIV – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland ... Part I – Reports, Mar 17 - Jun 25, 1862*, 664-665, 690, 717-718.

## Jackson Becomes Available for Gen. Lee

Gen. Jackson's prodigious conduct of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign in 1862 had a profound effect on the United States and the Confederate States. It can be argued that Jackson's efforts there prolonged the war. For the next year and a half, the Confederacy had the fruit of the Shenandoah Valley to feed their nation east and west. In addition, the Valley continued to provide an avenue for southern armies to move freely into northern lands. Jackson's actions in the Shenandoah Valley highlighted the relative abilities of the Confederate leadership as compared to the Federal leadership. Clearly, the Union military leadership from Pres. Lincoln on down had a clear sense of the inferiority of their generals in the field as of 1862. Two questions rise from this realization. First, how could the leadership in the United States address this problem of inferior field military leadership? Second, what was it going to take for the leadership of the United States to understand the importance of the Shenandoah Valley for both nations?

How about in the Confederate States of America? The result of Stonewall Jackson's foray against any and all Federal forces in the Shenandoah Valley provided two positive outcomes for the southern people. First, their morale was boosted as they had a true hero in Stonewall Jackson. Second, some of the angst of the southern military leadership was relieved by the departure of many of the significant Union forces from their beloved Shenandoah Valley. The second point is best illustrated by the conclusion of Confederate General Robert E. Lee that the risk of a Union offensive from northern Virginia had subsided. Some key changes were going to take place in the near future especially since Gen. Lee had taken over command of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia subsequent to Gen. Johnston's injury at Seven Pines.

As had been mentioned earlier, immediately after the Battle of Cross Keys and Battle of Port Republic Stonewall Jackson had concentrated his force at Brown's Gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains. This venue provided relative safety for Jackson's trains and troops while they waited to see what the Union commanders were going to do in the Valley. Additionally, Brown's Gap provided Jackson an easy road to travel either back into the Shenandoah Valley or into eastern Virginia. This would depend upon what actions the Union army would take next.[62]

In an act reminiscent of his behavior prior to the Battle of McDowell, Gen. Jackson moved his command on across to the eastern foothills of the Blue Ridge.[63] Gen. Lee had determined that any northern threat from the Valley was diminished.[64] The general was already hatching a scheme which would need to utilize Gen. Jackson's Valley army. Gen. Lee had worked with Jackson in northern virginia early in the war, and Lee had fresh in his mind what Jackson had done in the Shenandoah Valley Campaign. Gen. Lee was very enthusiastic about having Stonewall Jackson as part of his command.[65] The stakes at hand were very high. Lee and Jackson's collaboration was to accomplish nothing less than the preservation of the Confederate capital at Richmond.[66]

Stonewall Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign was over. Union General John Frémont did not remain in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Instead, he continued his retreat towards Mount Jackson.[67] With Union Gen. Shields removal of his forces to Luray, Virginia,[68] Stonewall

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[62] Clifford Dowdey, "In the Valley of Virginia," *Civil War History* 3, no. 4 (December 1957): 422.

[63] Frank Everson Vandiver, *Mighty Stonewall* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974), 283.

[64] William Allan, *History of the campaign of Gen. T.J. (Stonewall) Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia: From November 4, 1861, to June 17, 1862.* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1880), 165.

[65] Ibid., 168.

[66] Henry Steele Commager, *The Blue and the Gray: The Story of the Civil War as Told by Participants, Vol. I.* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1973), 149.

[67] Champ Clark, *Decoying the Yanks: Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Alexandria: Time Life Books, 1984), 170.

[68] Peter Cozzens, *Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 504.

Jackson decided to return his Army of the Valley into the Valley. Specifically, Jackson's army camped at Weyer's Cave near the Blue Ridge.[69]

The soldiers in the Confederate Army of the Valley were exhausted in every way. They were exhausted physically and mentally. This included their leader Stonewall Jackson. As a result of the Confederate actions in the Shenandoah Valley in 1862, Gen. Jackson was left in control of the upper and middle Shenandoah Valley. This gave Jackson's forces breathing room to recuperate.[70] Even more significant, the time at Weyer's Cave in the Valley gave Jackson's army time to prepare themselves for what lie ahead. Strategically, Jackson's Army of the Valley was made available to reinforce Robert E. Lee. In what would soon become known as the Seven Days Battles, the toll of the Valley Campaign on Gen. Jackson would be seen.[71]

The significance of the time Stonewall Jackson spent in the Valley after Port Republic was twofold. First, the general and his soldiers needed time to prepare themselves for what was coming. Second, Gen. Robert E. Lee needed time to prepare Jackson for his transition into the Richmond campaign. To do that, Gen. Lee appointed another rising star in the Confederacy to conduct reconnaissance for the Army of the Valley. That rising star was Lee's cavalry commander Brig. Gen. James Ewell Brown Stuart.

JEB Stuart, as the people of the Confederate States had begun to call him, was called upon by Gen. Lee to recon the right flank of the Union army at Richmond commanded by Maj. Gen. George McClellan. The right flank of the Army of the Potomac would be the closest component of the enemy to Stonewall Jackson's approach in late June 1862. The crux of

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[69] Ibid., 504.

[70] Henry Kyd Douglas and Fletcher Melvin Green, *I Rode with Stonewall, being chiefly the war experiences of the youngest member of Jackson's staff from the John Brown raid to the hanging of Mrs. Surratt* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 102.

[71] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 280.

Stuart's mission was to scout the best routes of approach for Gen. Jackson's foot cavalry as they arrived from the Shenandoah Valley.[72]

Gen. Lee's strategic concept of operations entailed using the Valley Army to attack McClellan's right flank. According to historian Douglas Southall Freeman, Lee determined Jackson's target to be the Union Fifth Corps located north of the Chickahominy River. Because of Jackson's direction of approach, the Valley Army would essentially be attacking McClellan's right flank from the side and rear. This in conjunction with the coordinated attacks of the rest of the Army of Northern Virginia against the Federals would turn the flank of the Union army and cause a retreat of the Army of the Potomac from the vicinity of Richmond.[73]

At 2:00 am on June 12, 1862, JEB Stuart ordered about 1,000 to 1,200 hand-picked cavalrymen to leave Hanover Court House to launch their reconnaissance for Stonewall Jackson's troops.[74] By the end of the day, Stuart found his planned route of return to headquarters blocked by the alerted enemy.[75] The consequence of this development was Stuart's decision to press onwards in his reconnaissance. Of course, doing so meant that JEB Stuart was exceeding his orders from Gen. Lee. Stuart's decision began an odyssey of the cavalry that lasted three days.[76] That raid resulted in Stuart's command riding entirely around the Union army.[77]

The reconnaissance of JEB Stuart around the Union Army of the Potomac was completed. The information gained by the cavalry necessarily meant major changes for the experience of Stonewall Jackson's Army of the Valley. For the loss of one man, Stuart had

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[72] Ibid., 280.

[73] Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, Volume I – Manassas to Malvern Hill* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 471.

[74] Ibid., 281.

[75] Ibid., 284.

[76] G. F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (New York: Smithmark, 1995), 259-260.

[77] Ibid., 260.

captured 170 prisoners. In addition, he had captured a plentiful supply of stores and munitions from the Federals. In a ride of 150 miles, Stuart had managed to humiliate his pursuers by avoiding them at every turn.[78]

Besides the bounty which Gen. Stuart had managed to acquire on his raid, the main purpose of his reconnaissance was accomplished. Stuart reported that the Union right flank remained open to being outflanked by Jackson. This information prompted Gen. Lee to attempt an audacious outflanking maneuver using Gen. Jackson's troops. The most serious drawback to J.E.B. Stuart's activity was that his flair for the spectacular alerted Gen. George McClellan to the vulnerability of his Union army's open northern flank.[79]

The primary indicator of McClellan's knowledge of his open northern flank was his order of a reconnaissance towards the James River. The purpose of this recon was to prepare for a change of base from White House on the Pamunkey to one of the landings on the James River for the Army of the Potomac. Simultaneously, Gen. Robert E. Lee continued to concentrate all available Confederate forces for the defense of Richmond. All of this was to prepare the way for a counterattack against the Union right or northern flank. Part of the force concentration for Lee was to call to Richmond for the remainder of Confederate Maj. Gen. Theophilus Hunter Holmes' division from North Carolina consisting of 6,500 men. A brigade from Georgia was transferred from that state to the Shenandoah Valley to enhance the Valley cavalry who were left there to counter any Union activity in the Valley. This action solidified the ability of Stonewall Jackson to leave the Shenandoah Valley for the Richmond environs.[80]

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[78] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, ed., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* Vol. II (New York: The Century Co., 1885), 271.

[79] James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997), 464.

[80] Ibid., 468-469.

The information brought back by Gen. J.E.B. Stuart's ride around the Army of the Potomac gave Gen. Lee the go ahead to act swiftly on his plan for an aggressive defense of Richmond utilizing Stonewall Jackson's division. Gen. Lee sent orders for Gen. Jackson to do four things in fulfilling Jackson's part of Lee's plan for eastern Virginia. First, the Valley Army was to leave the Shenandoah Valley by crossing the Blue Ridge Mountains. Second, Jackson's army was to board trains bound for Richmond at Mechum River Station. Third, Jackson's foot cavalry were to disembark the trains before reaching the Chickahominy River so they would be able to march between the Chickahominy River and Totopotomoy Creek. Fourth, Jackson's army was to strike the Union right flank as identified by Stuart.[81]

Gen. Jackson's purpose for remaining in the Shenandoah Valley was to separate Union Gen. McClellan from a significant part of his army needed in the east. The southern general did so by leading Gen. Frémont and Gen. Shields on a merry chase in the southern Valley. At the end of the chase, Gen. Jackson engaged both generals in two battles on the same day. The Confederate general inflicted heavy losses on both forces. Prior to his departure from the Shenandoah Valley, Stonewall Jackson was to do two things. First, he was to instruct his cavalry to stay behind to keep an eye on the Federals remaining in the Valley. Second, Jackson was to instruct his cavalry to screen and disguise his departure from the Valley. Finally, Gen. Lee made it clear to Gen. Jackson that his orders specified that the Valley Army was to assist in repelling the attack on Richmond at the earliest opportunity.[82]

[81] Robert G. Tanner, *Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign Spring 1862* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 418.

[82] Ibid., 437.

## Chapter 6 – The Pendulum Swings: Shifting Fortunes in the Shenandoah Valley

With the close of Stonewall Jackson's Shenandoah Valley campaign in June 1862, a new era was ushered in with his army being recalled and utilized in conjunction with Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia in the vicinity of Richmond, Virginia. Gen. Lee envisioned Jackson being a like-minded addition to the army joining such notables as Gen. James Longstreet, Gen. D. H. Hill, Gen. A. P. Hill, and Gen. J.E.B. Stuart. For a time, the Shenandoah Valley became somewhat sidelined in the war. For the residents of the Valley, this was a welcome time of relative peace. However, in a few months this would all change once again. Gen. Lee would make a fateful decision to use the Shenandoah Valley as his gateway into the Union through the border state of Maryland.

In their 1863 book entitled *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances*, John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel described Gen. Jackson's transition from the Shenandoah Valley to Richmond. To begin, Jackson as well as his entire command were extremely fatigued physically and mentally after their whirlwind campaign in the Valley. This fact adversely impacted their move to eastern Virginia. Additionally, Gen. Lee's plan for utilizing Jackson's forces in conducting a flank attack on McClellan's Army of the Potomac called for relatively quick action. Both factors resulted in a less than ideal Confederate outcome in the six day long Seven Days' Battle.[1]

Subsequently, Union Gen. McClellan's dilly-dallying on the peninsula within attacking distance of the Confederate capital at Richmond resulted in a shifting of emphasis in Virginia by Pres. Lincoln and the Union high command. McClellan's command was recalled from the peninsula to the Union staging area of Aquia Creek near Washington, D.C. The Army of the

[1] John Esten Cooke and John Moncure Daniel, *The Life of Stonewall Jackson: From Official Papers, Contemporary Narratives, and Personal Acquaintances* (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1863), 114-115.

Potomac was being given to Gen. John Pope to simultaneously protect Washington, D.C. while also conducting operations toward Richmond in an overland campaign. In his wonderful road tour guide for the Antietam campaign, author Ethan Rafuse explained succinctly that Gen. McClellan's Peninsula Campaign had come to an abrupt and unceremonious end.[2]

Gen. McClellan's return to Washington, D.C. provided an unexpected and indirect consequence for the Shenandoah Valley. McClellan was assigned the command of the forces manning the defenses of the Union capital. One of the general's actions to improve the protection of Washington, D.C. was to reassign the Union forces operating in western Virginia to his command. This action was almost immediately recognized by Gen. Lee. It emanated in Gen. Lee sending Gen. William Loring to reoccupy western Virginia for the Confederacy.[3]

A short time later, Gen. Pope completed the consolidation of his command of the Army of the Potomac. Having done so, Pope made preparations to move the army south to cross the Rappahannock River. His intention was to threaten Richmond, Virginia once again. In so doing, Gen. Pope left his rear flank exposed with a distinct weakness in the units protecting it. Recognizing this, Gen. Lee decided to attack Gen. Pope's weak rear flank. Stonewall Jackson was given the assignment to conduct this attack. He moved into position causing Gen. Pope to adjust his forces. Without realizing it, Pope had weakened his main line with the Confederate Gen. Longstreet poised to punish it straight away. The combined effort of both Gen. Jackson and Gen. Longstreet handed Gen. Pope at the Battle of Second Manassas a humiliating defeat. It also led Gen. Pope to withdraw toward Washington, D.C. leaving northcentral Virginia and the

[2] Ethan S. Rafuse, *Antietam, South Mountain, and Harpers Ferry: A Battlefield Guide* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 3.

[3] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 2* (New York: The Century Co., 1884-87), 281.

Shenandoah Valley open to the Confederates. According to authors Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, this development also gave Robert E. Lee an idea.[4]

In his 1868 book entitled *Pictorial History of the Civil War in the United States of America, Vol. II,* Benson J. Lossing explained that Gen. Lee believed an invasion of the North into Maryland would bring about positive results for the Confederacy. This in Lee's opinion would be in both the political as well as military sense. Politically, it would galvanize the morale of the Confederate people. At the same time, it could very well demoralize the Union populace to the point where the coalition for peace in the United States would gain enough clout to oblige Pres. Lincoln's administration to consider giving the Confederacy its independence. Last, it very well could motivate foreign governments like Great Britain and France to formally recognize the Confederate States. Relative to the military situation, two things could possibly happen. First, a Confederate invasion of the North could shock the Union military leadership into making rash and unwise movement decisions. Such actions could lead to the destruction of the Union Army of the Potomac. Second, the destruction of the Union army in the east would lead to the capture of Washington, D.C. Both occurrences would inevitably lead to peace on Confederate terms.[5]

Gen. Lee made the decision to move north. In preparation, he implemented a plan of reorganization of the Army of Northern Virginia prior to Antietam. He decided to divide his command into two corps thereby moving away from the wing configuration instituted by Gen. Joseph Johnston. In their 1894 book entitled *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War, Vol. I,*

[4] Ibid., 516.

[5] Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial History of the Civil War in the United States of America, Vol. II* (Hartford: T. Belknap, Publisher, 1868), 465.

authors Alfred H. Guernsey and Henry Mills Alden clarified that it was Gen. Lee's intention to strengthen his leadership in laying the groundwork for the invasion of Maryland.[6]

## Siege of Harper's Ferry

Gen. Pope had left the road wide open for the Confederate army to move unmolested northwest through Virginia. Gen. Lee gained the blessing of Confederate Pres. Jefferson Davis to launch an attack into Union territory for the reasons mentioned earlier. There were three goals Robert E. Lee set for the Army of Northern Virginia in this invasion of Maryland. First, it was his intention to move through Maryland to the border of Pennsylvania as a liberator of the people of that Maryland from the perceived unwanted domination of that people by their Union overlords. Second, it was Lee's aim to move east through Pennsylvania to capture cities like Philadelphia, New York, and maybe even Washington, D.C. Third, Lee wanted to take advantage of the vast stores of food, clothing, and military hardware available in the North while giving the people of the Shenandoah Valley respite from the deprivations they had been compelled to endure throughout 1862.

There were five characteristics of the siege of Harper's Ferry. To begin, the military leadership for the Union at Harper's Ferry were extremely subpar. On the other hand, the Confederate leadership at Harper's Ferry were methodical and thorough if not somewhat sluggish. After Lee had launched his invasion into Maryland, Gen. Pope's lackadaisical response led to his replacement by McClellan as the commander of the Union forces in the area. Throughout the campaign, Gen. Lee demonstrated a distinct lack of respect for Gen. McClellan's leadership. This lack of respect led Lee to feel comfortable with making the dangerous gamble

[6] Alfred H. Guernsey and Henry Mills Alden, *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War, Vol. I* (Chicago: Puritan Press Co., 1894), 394.

of splitting his command. Finally, the progress of the campaign was drastically impacted by McClellan's finding of Lee's lost order #191.

Located at the extreme northern border of the Shenandoah Valley on the Potomac River, Harper's Ferry was a crossroad village occupied by Federal troops who used it as a base to protect the Baltimore & Ohio railroad linking the eastern part of the United States with the western part. It was Gen. Lee's hope that Harper's Ferry, Martinsburg, and Winchester would be either abandoned or surrendered by the Federals when threatened by his army. The reason for this hope was Gen. Lee wanted his communication and supply line to be located west of the Blue Ridge Mountains for security. To have Union troops located at any of those three locations would be unacceptable for that purpose.

In their 1911 book entitled *The Photographic History of the Civil War, Volume II*, editors Francis Trevelyan Miller and Robert S. Lanier analyzed Confederate General Robert E. Lee's issuance of Special War Order No. 191. It was Lee's plan to divide the Army of Northern Virginia for its operations in Maryland. The wording of the order assigned Gen. Stonewall Jackson to capture Martinsburg, Virginia then help with the capture of Harper's Ferry. Gen. Lafayette McLaws and Gen. John Walker were ordered to capture Harpers Ferry. Gen. James Longstreet was to move his command northward to Boonsboro. Gen. D. H. Hill's division was to act as rear guard on the march from Frederick, Maryland.[7]

There were specific military considerations for combatants to keep in mind when fighting for Harper's Ferry. John Laird Wilson in his 1900 book entitled *Story of the War: Pictorial History of the Great Civil War* clarified those considerations. To begin, the town was indefensible because it was dominated on all sides by higher ground. The location of Harper's

[7] Francis Trevelyan Miller and Robert S. Lanier, eds., *The Photographic History of the Civil War, Volume II* (New York: The Review of Reviews Co., 1911), 325.

Ferry was compared to sitting at the bottom of a bowl. Located west of town was a plateau 668 feet high called Bolivar Heights. South of Harper's Ferry across the Shenandoah River was Loudoun Heights which stood at 1,180 feet. Finally, located northeast of town and across the Potomac River was the southernmost extremity of Elk Ridge which formed the 1,476-foot-high crest of Maryland Heights. Without control of these three prominences, holding Harper's Ferry was impossible.[8]

As previously discussed, Gen. Lee determined that to achieve his strategic objective he needed to eliminate the Union garrisons in his rear at Winchester, Virginia, Martinsburg, Virginia, and Harper's Ferry because they would have blocked his supply and communication lines from the Shenandoah Valley.[9] Also discussed was Lee's choice of the risky strategy of dividing his army in his invasion of Maryland.[10]

Winchester was abandoned by Gen. Julius White who led his command of 3,000 into Harper's Ferry. At that point, his command was absorbed into the army at Harper's Ferry. It was for this reason that Stonewall Jackson did not find any Union troops at Winchester. Jackson felt the Federals were indeed abandoning the Valley just as Gen. Lee had predicted. Gen. White was reassigned to the command of the Martinsburg, Virginia force consisting of 3,500 men on September 4, 1862. On September 12, 1862, Gen. White learned of the approach of overwhelming Confederate forces commanded by Confederate Gen. Jackson. White moved his force from Martinsburg into Harper's Ferry. When Jackson reached Martinsburg, he again found

[8] John Laird Wilson, *Story of the War: Pictorial History of the Great Civil War* (Philadelphia: Publisher Unknown, 1900), 313.

[9] Henry William Elson, Mathew B. Brady, and S. Griswold Morley, *The Civil War through the Camera: Hundreds of Vivid Photographs Actually Taken in Civil War Times, Together with Elson's New History* (Springfield: Patriot Publishing Co., 1912), 196.

[10] *Southern Historical Society Papers, Volume 12* (Richmond: Rev. J. William Jones, D. D. Secretary Southern Historical Society, 1884), 520.

no Federal soldiers. Jackson then proceeded on to his part of the Harper's Ferry siege.[11] In total, the three Confederate divisions added up to 22,900 soldiers. The Union garrison of Harper's Ferry consisted of 14,000 men.[12] The total forces engaged were about 36,900.[13]

The Union deployment at Harper's Ferry focused on keeping their units in the town. The Federal commander of the post was Col. Dixon Miles. In his 2012 book entitled *To Antietam Creek: The Maryland Campaign of September 1862*, author D. Scott Hartwig clarified that Miles received an order from his commander Gen. John Wool to hold Harper's Ferry to the last. Col. Miles believed that he was interpreting the command of his immediate superior officer literally when he chose to deployed most of his command inside the town of Harper's Ferry. The only exceptions to this were a nominal force on Maryland Heights and an even smaller one on Bolivar Heights.[14]

Colonel Dixon Miles made the choice to inadequately defend the high ground around the town. Doing so was a poor military decision on his part. Unfortunately for his command at Harper's Ferry, Col. Miles failed to live up to the reputation of an officer who was at one time believed to be a rising star in the military of the United States. In the Mexican War, Dixon Miles was decorated for meritorious service on the battlefield. He severely tarnished this reputation, however, when he was accused of being drunk on the battlefield at the Battle of First Bull Run in the Civil War. Instead of cashiering him, the Federal military high command chose to reassign him to the backwater post at Harper's Ferry. In the hearings after the surrender of Harper's Ferry, it was stated that many of Col. Miles' command believed he was drunk. Historian

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[11] *Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, Volume 3* (Boston: Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, 1903), 39.

[12] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 345.

[13] David Silkenat, Raising the White Flag: How Surrender Defined the American Civil War (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 57-58.

[14] D. Scott Hartwig, *To Antietam Creek: The Maryland Campaign of September 1862* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 212.

Benjamin Cooling in his 2007 book entitled *Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam* additionally pointed out that throughout the action at Harper's Ferry, Miles was a recalcitrant toward his subordinates. He refused to send reinforcements where they were needed. He consistently ignored the suggestions of his subordinate leaders to place troops on the strategic high points surrounding the town.[15] Author Paul R. Teetor demonstrated an interesting approach to the examination of Col. Miles' actions at Harper's Ferry by using the approach of a prosecuting attorney. Presenting the primary sources as arguments in a trial against Miles in his 1982 book entitled *A Matter of Hours: Treason at Harper's Ferry*, Dr. Teetor reached the conclusion that Col. Dixon Miles was guilty during the siege. Teetor reached the conclusion that Col. Dixon Miles doomed the town and its sizable garrison to either being killed or captured by the Confederate army.[16]

In contrast, the Confederate deployment at Harper's Ferry, Virginia focused on the unoccupied high ground around the town. James V. Murfin acknowledged in his 1965 book entitled *The Gleam of Bayonets: The Battle of Antietam and Robert E. Lee's Maryland Campaign, September 1862* that the Confederate leadership were amazed that Col. Miles left the high points surrounding Harper's Ferry near devoid of his troops. They were pleased to accept the gift of the high ground surrounding the town. It made their job that much easier. The southerners were happy to use Loudoun Heights, Bolivar Heights, and Maryland Heights against the Federals in Harper's Ferry. There did come a point during the siege when some of the Confederates felt pangs of guilt that what they were doing to the Union troops in the town was

[15] Benjamin Franklin Cooling, *Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 202.

[16] Paul R. Teetor, *A Matter of Hours: Treason at Harper's Ferry* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982), 194.

the equivalent of murder. After being chastised by their leaders, these guilt feelings did not stop the southerners from completing their deadly work.[17]

When he arrived at Harper's Ferry from Martinsburg, Brig. Gen. Julius White outranked Col. Dixon Miles. However, military protocol of the day maintained that a commander during an active engagement should retain command even if he is outranked by an officer who arrives on the scene. Gen. White followed that protocol when he subordinated himself to Miles' leadership. White later justified that decision by explaining that Col. Miles knew the area better and was familiar with all the dispositions of the Union forces at Harper's Ferry. Even though he was lower in rank than Brig. Gen. Julius White, Union Colonel Dixon S. Miles retained command of the garrison.[18]

Yet, Col. Miles insisted on keeping most of his troops near the town. Historian John Cannan wrote in his book entitled *The Antietam Campaign: August-September 1862* that Miles remained steadfast on keeping his troops in town. Col. Miles had sent Col. Thomas H. Ford forward to position Union troops on Maryland Heights as things began to unfold. Confederate Gen. McLaws' division approached Ford's position on the crest of Maryland Heights. Urgently, Col. Ford requested reinforcements when he realized the Confederates were within earshot of his command. Still, Col. Miles refused.[19]

In his book entitled *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam*, writer Stephen W. Sears expounded on the recalcitrance of Dixon Miles. Gen. White early on had recommended to Col. Miles that he send troops to occupy all the high ground surrounding Harper's Ferry. Miles chose to keep the troops in the town. After Col. Ford abandoned Maryland Heights in the face of

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[17] James V. Murfin, *The Gleam of Bayonets: The Battle of Antietam and Robert E. Lee's Maryland Campaign, September 1862* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 135.

[18] Bradley M. Gottfried, *The Maps of Antietam: An Atlas of the Antietam (Sharpsburg) Campaign, Including the Battle of South Mountain, September 2–20, 1862* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2012), 10.

[19] John Cannan, *The Antietam Campaign: August-September 1862* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1997), 87.

the Confederate attack there, Gen. White strongly recommended to Miles that they retake the Heights immediately. Again, the colonel refused.[20]

The truth is that Col. Dixon Miles had reasons for his recalcitrance. It is impossible for us to know for sure the motivations guiding Miles because he did not survive long enough to stand up for himself at the Board of Inquiry. However, we can surmise a few ideas. Perhaps Col. Miles was afraid to disobey a perceived direct order given his history. Perhaps Miles was not interested in the advice of his subordinates. Perhaps he had no earthly idea of what to do in this emergency. Regardless, James I. Robertson in his book entitled *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* told that Colonel Dixon S. Miles demonstrated why it is important to use initiative when following orders rather than elevating one's own agenda.[21]

The machinations of the Federal army at Harper's Ferry amounted to nothing in the face of reality. Ezra Ayers Carman elucidated by editor Joseph Pierro in the publication entitled *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862* that Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson's divisions completed the encirclement of the town. Jackson himself approached from Bolivar Heights. McLaws had captured Maryland Heights and was tightening the noose on Harper's Ferry from his vantage point. Gen. Walker was moving in from Loudoun Heights. All three commands were preparing to pound Harper's Ferry with their artillery as the hapless Federals awaited their unpleasant fate.[22]

On September 12, 1862, one of Confederate Gen. McLaws' brigades commanded by Brig. Gen. Joseph Kershaw were the troops Union Col. Ford heard on top of Maryland Heights.

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[20] Stephen W. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983), 135.

[21] James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997), 598-599.

[22] Ezra Ayers Carman, *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862*, ed. Joseph Pierro (New York: Routledge, 2008), 112.

According to the Official Records submitted by Gen. Kershaw, the two forces exchanged rifle volleys with one another on Maryland Heights. Col. Ford's command of about 1,200 cavalry and infantry were positioned behind an abatis. When Kershaw's regiments encountered this obstacle, their advance was stopped. Before he could launch an attack to dislodge these Yankees, night fell, and action stopped until the next morning.[23]

In his 1882 book entitled *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac: A Critical History of Operations in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania from the Commencement to the Close of the War, 1861*-1865, Union officer William Swinton revealed that Col. Miles' forces on Maryland Heights commanded by Col. Ford were engaged in a renewed attacked by Kershaw's brigade. The action reached a sort of stalemate with both forces facing one another within about 100 yards with heavy casualties on both sides. To circumvent Ford's units, Gen. Kershaw sent Gen. William Barksdale to the Confederate left down the side of Maryland Heights to attack the Union right at the top. Before Barksdale could launch his attack, a regiment on the far right of the Confederate position on Maryland Heights attacked and dispersed a unit of Federal sharpshooters. Seeing this, the Union troops panicked and abandoned the high ground at Maryland Heights.[24]

Gen. McClellan acknowledged in his 1887 accounting entitled *McClellan's Own Story: The War for the Union, the Soldiers Who Fought It, the Civilians Who Directed It and His Relations to It and to Them* that Stonewall Jackson's forces had completed the encirclement of Harper's Ferry. To the incredulity of his subordinate officers, Col. Miles dismissed the danger

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[23] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XIX. 1887. (Vol. 19, Chap. 31).* Chapter XXXI – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, Sep 3-Nov 14, 1862., 862.

[24] William Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac: A Critical History of Operations in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania from the Commencement to the Close of the War, 1861-1865* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882), 206.

posed to his command by the Confederates. Gen. Jackson was facing Harper's Ferry from Bolivar Heights with combined arms. Likewise, Gen. Walker was facing the town from Loudoun Heights. Only Gen. McLaws was not completely in position since his brigades had only just captured Maryland Heights. Soon McLaws would remedy this situation.[25]

Author Henry W. Elson went into some detail in his 1912 publication entitled *The Civil War through the Camera: Hundreds of Vivid Photographs Actually Taken in Civil War Times* that on September 14, 1862, Gen. McLaws began positioning his artillery. It took a great deal of effort for McLaws' engineers to cut an old log road and manhandle four guns to the Heights. In the meantime, McLaws' Confederates had to provide protection for their own rear flank from a Federal threat at Crampton's Gap in the South Mountains. Nevertheless, the Confederate deployment of artillery facing Harper's Ferry from Maryland Heights was soon completed.[26]

One of Stonewall Jackson's staff officers wrote in an 1892 publication entitled *The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862* that Col. Miles sent out nine cavalry troopers to inform Gen. McClellan of two things. Late on the night of September 13, 1862, Miles sent Capt. Charles Russell of the 1st Maryland Cavalry with nine troopers to slip through the enemy lines. His mission was to take a message to McClellan, or any other general he could find. The first part of the message was that Harper's Ferry could hold out for only forty-eight hours. The second part of the message was that Miles' command drastically needed help.[27]

A Federal soldier named Frank Leslie submitted in 1893 a book entitled *The*

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[25] George B. McClellan, *McClellan's Own Story: The War for the Union, the Soldiers Who Fought It, the Civilians Who Directed It and His Relations to It and to Them* (New York: C.L. Webster & Company, 1887), 560.

[26] Henry W. Elson, *The Civil War through the Camera: Hundreds of Vivid Photographs Actually Taken in Civil War Times* (Springfield: Patriot Publishing Co., 1912), 198.

[27] William Allan, *The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1892), 344.

*Soldier in Our Civil War: A Pictorial History of the Conflict, 1861*-1865 in which he discussed the situation at Harper's Ferry on September 15, 1862. He indicated the morning broke with Confederate Gen. Jackson's cohort having placed nearly fifty guns on Maryland Heights and at the base of Loudoun Heights. There was no escape as Jackson's own division had Bolivar Heights blocked. In addition, Jackson was preparing to move in that sector as well.[28]

Jackson forced what amounted to a final stand for the Union forces atop Bolivar Heights. To begin, author Ronald H. Bailey in his book entitled *The Bloodiest Day: The Battle of Antietam* made it plain that Jackson's artillery pummeled the heights from the three directions of Maryland Heights, Loudoun Heights, and School House Ridge. He then sent Gen. A.P. Hill around the southern flank of the heights. This action removed the Yankee presence from Bolivar Heights. Jackson was now in position to enfilade the rear of the Union line from Bolivar Heights.[29]

The next Confederate action was directed at the Federal garrison in Harper's Ferry proper. A northern cavalryman by the name of William H. Nichols who was at Harper's Ferry wrote a book after the war in 1889 entitled *The Siege and Capture of Harper's Ferry by the Confederates, September, 1862* in which he described the Federal deployment. The Union forces consisted of seven batteries and nine regiments of infantry. Nichols continued by describing the Confederate action. Jackson began a fierce artillery barrage from all sides. He then ordered an infantry assault for 8:00am.[30]

Paul Teetor clarified that Col. Miles realized his artillery ammunition was in short supply. Apparently, Miles ordered his artillerymen to engage in a duel with the Confederate

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[28] Frank Leslie, *The Soldier in Our Civil War: A Pictorial History of the Conflict, 1861-1865,* ed. Paul F. Mottelay and T. Campbell-Copeland (New York: Stanley Bradley Publishing Company, 1893), 393.

[29] Ronald H. Bailey, *The Bloodiest Day: The Battle of Antietam* (Alexandria: Time-Life Books, 1984), 43.

[30] William H. Nichols, *The Siege and Capture of Harper's Ferry by the Confederates, September, 1862* (Providence: Published by the Society, 1889), 31-32.

guns. This was so even though the Union guns could not reach the southern ones. Regardless, the Yankees now found themselves short of rounds to fight off an attack by the Confederate infantry. This same Confederate infantry was clearly preparing to launch an attack against the town.[31]

In his book entitled *Raising the White Flag: How Surrender Defined the American Civil War*, author David Silkenat emphasized what was about to take place at Harper's Ferry. Union Colonel Dixon S. Miles came to the realization that the situation for his command was hopeless. They had no hope of resisting the coming onslaught from the army of Stonewall Jackson. Furthermore, Miles had no expectation that relief would arrive from Gen. McClellan. Clearly, the handwriting was on the wall.[32]

There had to be some kind of end game for both sides in the action at Harper's Ferry. Stonewall Jackson was already days behind schedule from what Gen. Lee had set up in Order 191. Col. Dixon Miles command was experiencing casualties regularly with no mercy in sight from the Confederates attacking him. Having given up on recapturing Maryland Heights so he could reposition his men there, Miles was left with precious few options.

On the 15th, Col. Miles conducted a council of war with his brigade commanders. In the end, Benjamin Cooling made it plain that Miles agreed to offer to surrender to Gen. Jackson. The Siege of Harper's Ferry was soon going to come to an end. Miles' subordinates across the battlefield attempted to use anything available to form white flags with which to surrender to the

[31] Paul R. Teetor, *A Matter of Hours: Treason at Harper's Ferry* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982), 194.

[32] David Silkenat, *Raising the White Flag: How Surrender Defined the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 58.

Confederates. However, the chaos created by the heavy southern bombardment on the town made it difficult at first for them to communicate with Jackson's troops.[33]

As it turned out, Col. Dixon S. Miles would deprive those in the North who wanted to scapegoat him in person for what happened at Harper's Ferry. Historian James V. Murfin wrote that Miles was mortally wounded by a Confederate shell soon after the surrender. He died the next day. Some historians have put forth the idea that Col. Miles may have been killed by men of his own command. Such a discussion is better suited for another writing. Regardless, it fell upon the unfortunate Gen. Julius White to conduct the surrender.[34]

According to author D. Scott Hartwig, it was the largest surrender of Union forces during the war. Even the surrender of Vicksburg, Mississippi in 1863 did not match Harper's Ferry. In fact, it was the largest surrender of any United States force until World War II.[35] By midmorning, Gen. Lee had received a communique from Stonewall Jackson which read in part, "Through God's blessing, Harper's Ferry and its garrison are to be surrendered."[36]

In the early afternoon, Jackson received an urgent message from General Robert E. Lee to move to Sharpsburg as quickly as possible. Ezra Carman explained that things were transpiring rapidly for Gen. Lee's command now located at Sharpsburg, Maryland. Given the information provided by the captured Order 191, Union Gen. McClellan was positioning his army in such a way as to threaten Lee's strung-out command. Gen. Lee was issuing a

[33] Benjamin Franklin Cooling, *Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 220.

[34] James V. Murfin, *The Gleam of Bayonets: The Battle of Antietam and Robert E. Lee's Maryland Campaign, September 1862* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 201-202.

[35] D. Scott Hartwig, *To Antietam Creek: The Maryland Campaign of September 1862* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 552.

[36] Ibid., 562.

widespread call for his scattered divisions to gather with him along a small estuary known as Antietam Creek.[37]

Carman continued with a description of Jackson's leaving Gen. Ambrose Powell Hill at Harper's Ferry to manage the parole of the Union prisoners. In the meantime, Gen. Jackson began the march to rejoin the Army of Northern Virginia with his other five divisions. Jackson's divisions were extremely fatigued after the operations at Harper's Ferry. The seventeen miles to be traveled from Harper's Ferry to Sharpsburg would take part of two days.[38]

When the siege of Harper's Ferry began on September 12th, the total forces engaged were 36,900. The Confederate troops of Gen. Stonewall Jackson's command numbered 22,900. The Union troops under the command of Col. Dixon Miles numbered 14,000.[39] The estimated total casualties for Jackson's divisions amounted to 286 killed and wounded. This equaled only one percent of his command.[40] According to John Cannan, most of the Confederate casualties were from the fighting on Maryland Heights between Gen. McLaws' division and Col. Ford's command.[41] The Union Army sustained 217 casualties with forty-four killed and 173 wounded. By far, according to Cannan, the overwhelming cost of the battle for the Union garrison was the surrendering of 12,520 men, 200 wagons, and seventy-three artillery pieces.[42]

The resolution of the siege of Harper's Ferry was fourfold. First, it was a resounding Confederate victory. Unfortunately for the South, what would transpire next at Sharpsburg, Maryland would overshadow this southern victory. Second, the resulting humiliation of the

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[37] Ezra Ayers Carman, *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862*, ed. Joseph Pierro (New York: Routledge, 2008), 115.

[38] Ibid., 127.

[39] David Silkenat, *Raising the White Flag: How Surrender Defined the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 57-58.

[40] Bradley M. Gottfried, *The Maps of Antietam: An Atlas of the Antietam (Sharpsburg) Campaign, Including the Battle of South Mountain, September 2–20, 1862* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2012), 108.

[41] John Cannan, *The Antietam Campaign: August-September 1862* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1997), 105.

[42] Ibid., 104-105.

northern armed forces would continue to be remembered well after the siege. Third, Stonewall Jackson was able to reunite with Gen. Robert E. Lee at Sharpsburg. Fourth, the loss of the garrison at Harper's Ferry deprived Gen. McClellan of an entire division of troops that would have significantly assisted his efforts at the upcoming Battle of Antietam.[43]

The aftermath of Harper's Ferry contributed to the idea that the Shenandoah Valley would remain an open door and avenue of access for the Confederate military into the North for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately for Pres. Lincoln and the United States, the comparison of the abilities of the likes of Col. Dixon Miles to Stonewall Jackson and Gen. Lee did not cast a very encouraging light on the military prospects for the future of the Union. In addition, such a comparison only added to the aura of invincibility attributed to Gen. Lee and Gen. Jackson. The result at Harper's Ferry achieved a strategic goal for Gen. Lee. His supply lines and lines of communication through the Shenandoah Valley were protected for the duration of the Maryland invasion. As such for the time being, Lee's invasion of Maryland from the Shenandoah Valley was continued. Finally, the surrender of Harper's Ferry served as an indication that a significant event was shaping up to take place at Antietam Creek.

## Significance of the Shenandoah Valley on the Battle of Antietam

The action in the Shenandoah Valley prior to the Battle of Antietam both assisted and hampered Confederate Gen. Lee's planned invasion of Maryland. The primary action in the Valley leading up to Antietam occurred at Harper's Ferry. This siege assisted Gen. Lee's invasion of Maryland by securing his line of communication and supply from his bases in Virginia. Harper's Ferry hindered Lee's invasion of Maryland in two ways. First, it slowed the

[43] Stephen W. Sears, *Landscape Turned Red: The Battle of Antietam* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983), 173.

consolidation of the Confederate army at Sharpsburg, Maryland. Second, Harper's Ferry gave Gen. McClellan's Army of the Potomac time to catch up with Lee at Sharpsburg thereby forcing the Confederate general to either fight along Antietam Creek or retreat back into Virginia.

There were simultaneous operations taking place leading up to the action at Antietam. To begin, Stephen Sears indicated that the Confederate siege of Harper's Ferry was happening in which the Confederates subsequently captured that town. Concurrently, Crampton's Gap in the southern South Mountains, Fox's Gap in the central South Mountains, and Turner's Gap in the northern South Mountains were all abandoned by Gen. Lee as Union Gen. McClellan's army was pushing the Confederates out. Ultimately, the Army of the Potomac succeeded in capturing those passes through the South Mountains as Lee moved his army back to Sharpsburg on Antietam Creek.[44]

Union Gen. George McClellan kept the Army of the Potomac static after his capture of the passes at South Mountain. Historian James I. Robertson advanced the idea that Gen. Lee worked diligently at reuniting his dangerously scattered divisions to Sharpsburg. As his divisions came online in the village, he put them to working at preparing their defensive positions in preparation for what he could see coming on along Antietam Creek. The forward elements of McClellan's army were beginning to arrive along the bank of Antietam Creek east of Sharpsburg across from the Confederate positions.[45]

On September 16, 1862, Gen. Lee completed the consolidation and deployment of his army at Sharpsburg. Robertson indicated that in so doing, the Confederate general had selected both the ground he wanted to fight on and the methodical manner in which he would deploy his troops. At Sharpsburg, Gen. Lee allowed his Union counterpart to have the initiative. Gen.

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[44] Ibid., 159-160.

[45] James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson: the man, the soldier, the legend* (New York: Macmillan Pub., 1997), 608.

McClellan was on the offensive and Gen. Lee the defensive. Gen. McClellan launched a small probing attack against the Confederate left flank. With this action, McClellan communicated the Union intentions in the battle to Lee. The next day McClellan decided to launch further attacks along the same part of the Confederate line. In effect, the Union general was telegraphing his strategy to his opponent.[46]

Dr. Cooling analyzed what took place along Antietam Creek on September 17, 1862. On the northern end of the battlefield at Sharpsburg, Union Gen. Hooker attacked Stonewall Jackson. It ended as a stalemate after severe loss on both sides. On the central part of the battlefield, Union Gen. Sumner attacked Confederate Gen. James Longstreet's left flank. Again, the battle ended as a stalemate as Gen. McClellan refused to commit his reserves to the attack. On the southern part of the battlefield, Union Gen. Burnside attacked Gen. Longstreet's weak right flank. Burnside's main objective was the bridge in the sector crossing Antietam Creek which later became known as Burnside's Bridge. It took three hours to capture the bridge plus two hours to reorganize for an attack beyond the bridge. In the meantime, Confederate Gen. A.P. Hill arrived from Harper's Ferry and turned the left flank of Burnside's force. This forced Burnside to retire to Burnside's Bridge to form his lines. By the end of the day, the Battle of Antietam was fought to an inconclusive, grinding stalemate. The Union advantage in numbers led to claims by the Union leadership of a Union victory.[47]

After the battle along the Antietam, Benjamin Cooling spelled out that on September 18, 1862, Confederate General Robert E. Lee held his positions around Sharpsburg throughout the day. Lee skirmished with McClellan's army effectively buying time for his command to remove the Confederate wounded to the south side of the Potomac River. In essence, Lee had banked on

[46] Ibid., 611.

[47] Benjamin Franklin Cooling, *Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 258.

Union Gen. George McClellan's passivity for one more day. Despite facing great odds, Gen. Lee stood his ground. At nightfall, Lee started the retreat to Virginia across Boteler's Ford at Shepherdstown, Virginia. This action for all practical purposes ended Gen. Lee's invasion of Maryland. Leaving the battlefield first made Antietam a de facto Union victory according to the norms of the mid-nineteenth century. However, McClellan did not renew the assaults at Sharpsburg claiming that he had prepared orders to renew the attack on 19 September. This decision would cost McClellan dearly soon.[48]

After it was all over at the Battle of Antietam, Lee's entire invasion of Maryland came to an end after lasting just over two weeks. Physically and mentally, both armies were severely depleted because of the Battle of Antietam. The significance of this was a lengthy period of respite and rebuilding for both armies. In the end, Gen. Lee's lofty ambition to carry the war to the North ended at Sharpsburg. It was an important truth, but it was extremely limited in its scope. In essence, Antietam marked the first time Lee had been significantly stymied in his efforts to defeat the Army of the Potomac.

**Battle of Shepherdstown**

After Antietam, Lee had led his army in a successful crossing of the Potomac River into Virginia. Gen. Lee had every intention of seeing his retreating Army of Northern Virginia escape unscathed from the northern army. However, a portion of the Union army decided to pursue and punish them. Unfortunately, the aftermath of Lee's invasion of Maryland was not quite over yet.

What was the new goal of Robert E. Lee after Antietam? Historian James V. Murfin has spoken to this subject. The southern army's immediate situation found the Army of Northern

[48] Ibid., 258.

Virginia now located across the south bank of the Potomac River. They had begun their retrograde movement on the night of September 18-19, 1862. Robert E. Lee was aiming for Martinsburg, Virginia in the interim. Lee's purpose was to get his army to the relative safety of the Shenandoah Valley. There he had the objective to refurbish both men and equipment.[49]

Matters with the Confederate rear guard began to shape up quite precariously from the beginning. Dr. Murfin analyzed the Confederate general's actions at Shepherdstown, Virginia. Lee had taken every precaution appropriate during the retreat. He left a rear guard consisting of both forty-four pieces of artillery and supporting infantry. Their commander was Gen. Lee's chief of artillery Brig. Gen. William Nelson Pendleton. Gen. Pendleton was an ordained minister, so Gen. Lee believed him to be a trustworthy officer. Unfortunately for Gen. Lee, Gen. Pendleton was not the strongest leader in the Confederate cadre. Additionally, Pendleton had no experience in commanding infantry. This sad fact became apparent when Gen. Pendleton failed to count the number of infantry in his artillery support. The fact that he had only 300 foot soldiers to protect his artillery was almost inexcusable.[50]

Pendleton's job was to hold Boteler's Ford over the Potomac and keep any Yankee units from crossing. The reason for this was so the Army of Northern Virginia could continue to safely retreat. Author Ethan S. Rafuse clarified that Pendleton positioned his forty-four guns quite well along the southern bank of the Potomac River. Those forty-four guns amounted to the entire artillery reserves of the Army of Northern Virginia.[51]

Given that Gen. Pendleton's infantry support was very weak, Dr. Rafuse defined things as becoming very dicey for the Confederates at the river when, at about 8:00am, elements of

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[49] James V. Murfin, *The Gleam of Bayonets: The Battle of Antietam and Robert E. Lee's Maryland Campaign, September 1862* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), 304.

[50] Ibid., 304.

[51] Ethan S. Rafuse, *Antietam, South Mountain, and Harpers Ferry: A Battlefield Guide* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 167.

Union Gen. Fitz-John Porter's V Corps appeared on the opposite side of the Potomac.[52] Fitz-John Porter's plan was to cross Boteler's Ford and attack the rear of the retreating Confederate army. In his 1943 book entitled *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Cedar Mountain to Chancellorsville, Volume 2*, Douglas Southall Freeman described that the Federals unlimbered their seventy guns immediately. Once ready, Fitz-John Porter ordered them into action.[53]

In addition to Gen. Porter's seventy pieces of artillery, the Union deployment was joined by sharpshooters. Freeman explained that the sharpshooters advanced to the banks of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal which ran parallel with the Potomac River. This position served as a natural set of protective trenches for the Yankee sharpshooters.[54] Considering the Federal configuration arrayed against Pendleton's command at the river, the most advanced of the Confederate guns became increasingly difficult to serve. In his 2007 book entitled *Shepherdstown: Last Clash of the Antietam Campaign*, author Thomas A. McGrath disclosed that the reason was because the fire from the Union guns intensified dramatically. Furthermore, Fitz-John Porter's sharpshooters began to take a heavy toll on the Confederate gunners.[55]

Something had to be done about the Union sharpshooters before the Federals deployed their infantry on the Confederate side of the river. McGrath continued by expounding on Gen. Pendleton's decision to commit his few infantry against the sharpshooters. They were successfully able to repel the sharpshooters. Having accomplished this, some of Pendleton's gunners were enabled to return to their guns. For a while, many of the Confederate guns had sat idle due to the fire from the Union guns and marksmen.[56]

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[52] Ibid., 167.

[53] Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Cedar Mountain to Chancellorsville, Volume 2* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 229.

[54] Ibid., 230.

[55] Thomas A. McGrath, *Shepherdstown: Last Clash of the Antietam Campaign* (Lynchburg, Schroeder Publications, 2007), 71.

[56] Ibid., 65.

Discussed by William Allan, the next phase of the action at the river occurred during the afternoon. The Union force under Gen. Fitz-John Porter resumed its attack trying to force the withdrawal of the Confederate rear guard.[57] The ensuing action led to Union casualties beginning to add up seriously. Even so, the Federals began to see a change in the Confederate response to the attack. By sunset, the Confederates had become hard-pressed.[58]

Dr. Ronald Bailey pointed out that the declining fortunes of the Confederate rear guard led to changes from both commanders at the river. First, Pendleton gave permission for any guns that could withdraw unseen to do so. Second, he ordered the remaining infantry to provide cover for the gunners as they removed their pieces. Third, the next Union action proceeded shortly before dusk and encompassed the goal of Fitz-John Porter to establish a Union presence on the Virginia side of the Potomac River before dark.[59]

In his 1866 book entitled *Life and Campaigns of Lt. General T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson,* one of Gen. Jackson's staff officer Robert L. Dabney spelled out how Gen. Fitz-John Porter planned to establish that Yankee presence on the other side of the Potomac River. To begin, Porter sent Union Brig. Gen. Charles Griffin with 2,000 infantrymen across Boteler's Ford. Next, the infantry was soon followed by a detachment of sharpshooters as a support element. Griffin's force was able to easily break through the thin line of Confederate infantrymen opposing them.[60]

Matters were getting out of control for Gen. Pendleton. Union Colonel James Barnes' brigade crossed the Potomac next. Their mission was to serve as an additional reserve for

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[57] William Allan, *The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1892), 446.

[58] Ibid., 446.

[59] Ronald H. Bailey, *The Bloodiest Day: The Battle of Antietam* (Alexandria: Time-Life Books, 1984), 153.

[60] Robert L. Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Lt. General T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson* (New York: Blelock & Co., 1866), 577.

Griffin's advance.[61] Gen. Pendleton struggled to get his artillery batteries on the road toward Shepherdstown and away from the Yankee juggernaut coming for them. To buy them time to escape, Pendleton assigned his weak infantry as rear guard once again between the river and the town. Unfortunately for the Confederate general, his rear guard was quickly overrun. In the process, Barnes' brigade captured four of the Confederate artillery pieces.[62]

All sense of order had collapsed for the rear guard of the Army of Northern Virginia. Soon thereafter, the Union forces were recalled because of the darkness. Ezra Carman divulged that there was a desperate scramble by the Confederate rear guard to return to their main lines. In this scramble, Gen. Pendleton lost track of all his artillery. After finally locating Gen. Lee, Pendleton reported to him in a panic two things. First, Pendleton believed that the Union brigades had captured all forty-four of his artillery. Second, strong Union forces were now on the Virginia side of the river in the Shenandoah Valley.[63]

The next day on the 20th of September, the action resumed at a more decisive pace. Carman noted that early in the day, Union Gen. Fitz-John Porter pushed forward portions of two divisions from his Fifth Corps across Boteler's Ford. His purpose was to reestablish a stronger bridgehead on the southern bank of the Potomac River. The initial bridgehead had been established after the successful surprise attack by the Federals on the previous night.[64]

Bradley Gottfried elucidated the Confederate response to this renewed incursion by the Union army as being, to say the least, definitive. Gen. Robert E. Lee assigned Gen. Jackson to deal with the Federal problem because Jackson's division was closest to the Union army. Gen.

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[61] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 2* (New York: The Century Co., 1884-87), 673.

[62] Ibid., 673.

[63] Ezra Ayers Carman, *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862*, ed. Joseph Pierro (New York: Routledge, 2008), 368.

[64] Ibid., 371.

Stonewall Jackson ordered Gen. A.P. Hill to return to Boteler's Ford. Hill's purpose was to conclusively deal with the problem of Fitz-John Porter's harassment of the Army of Northern Virginia. Gen. Ambrose Powell Hill's division countermarched five miles back towards Shepherdstown and the Potomac River.[65] His mission was to block Porter's further advance from the ford. Hill's six brigades counterattacked despite coming under heavy fire.[66]

In the meantime, Gen. Fitz-John Porter's seventy Union guns enjoyed being posted across the river on the Maryland hills. Benson Lossing recounted how those guns were pounding Hill's brigades. Things were looking pretty good for Fitz-John Porter's brigades and artillery. Soon, however, Gen. Porter received reports that his infantry on the Virginia side was badly outnumbered.[67] Gen. Fitz-John Porter's official record of the battle made plain that because of this report, Porter ordered a withdrawal.[68]

Most of Gen. Fitz-John Porter's units heeded the order to withdraw. According to Fitz-John Porter's official record of the battle, this was true with one exception.[69] The turning point in the battle occurred when Colonel Charles Prevost of the inexperienced 118th Pennsylvania Infantry refused to retire. Ezra Carman clarified that the reason for his refusal was the orders, in his opinion, had not been received through the proper chain of command. In other words, Col. Prevost did not approve of the person who delivered the orders to him. The consequence for this

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[65] Bradley M. Gottfried, *The Maps of Antietam: An Atlas of the Antietam (Sharpsburg) Campaign, Including the Battle of South Mountain, September 2–20, 1862* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2012), 242.

[66] Ibid., 242.

[67] Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial History of the Civil War in the United States of America, Vol. II* (Hartford: T. Belknap, Publisher, 1868), 483.

[68] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XIX. 1887. (Vol. 19, Chap. 31).* Chapter XXXI – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, Sep 3-Nov 14, 1862, 348-349.

[69] Ibid., 348-349.

audacity was the 118th Pennsylvania was left isolated on the southern bank. Meanwhile, the Confederates quickly approached the Pennsylvanians.[70]

The official history for the 118th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment continued by describing the pandemonium which resulted. The Pennsylvanian regiment panicked.[71] The men scrambled down the steep cliffs with some of them being unable to stop at the edge. Several soldiers fell to their deaths at the bottom of the steep precipice. Some who were shot at the top of the cliff fell into the trees located along the river. Those unfortunate ones simply hung there in front of everyone until the battle was over. Many of the regiment attempted to negotiate a nearby dam across the river. In so doing, they provided inviting targets for the Confederates on the cliff. Several simply became casualties. Several of the later escapees learned from the mistakes of those using the dam. They chose to attempt a crossing of the ford in the deeper waters. This approach provided only their heads as a target. Most of the 118th Pennsylvania who used this method to escape successfully did so.[72]

The Union disengagement from the Battle of Shepherdstown resulted in casualties of the 118th Pennsylvania which included several men who drowned in their attempt to reach safety. Their commander Col. Prevost was included on the casualty list.[73] The regiment reported 277 casualties out of its 737 men for a total percentage of loss right at 37.5%. These losses accounted for over seventy-six percent of the entire Union losses for the day.[74] The Union lost

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[70] Ezra Ayers Carman, *The Maryland Campaign of September 1862*, ed. Joseph Pierro (New York: Routledge, 2008), 373.

[71] Pennsylvania Infantry. 118th Regiment, 1862-1865; John L. Smith, comp., *History of the 118th Pennsylvania Volunteers Corn exchange regiment, from their first engagement at Antietam to Appomattox. To which is added a record of its organization and a complete roster. Fully illustrated with maps, portraits, and over one hundred illustrations, with addenda* (Philadelphia: J.L. Smith, 1905), 67.

[72] Ibid., 68-69.

[73] James I. Robertson, *General A.P. Hill: The Story of a Confederate Warrior* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 150.

[74] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies,*

seventy-one killed, 161 wounded and 131 missing for a total of 363. The Confederate casualties were 291 men.[75]

The withdrawal of the Union forces in the Fifth Corps resulted in the rearguard action at Shepherdstown discouraging any further significant Union pursuit of the retreating Confederate army.[76] Thomas McGrath explained in the 2007 book entitled *Shepherdstown: Last Clash of the Antietam Campaign, September 19–20, 1862* that the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had successfully returned to Virginia into the Shenandoah Valley after Antietam. In the meantime, they demonstrated to the Union military leadership the folly of an overenthusiastic, haphazard attempt to attack a still potent enemy who is trying to retire from a battle in which they have been severely damaged.[77]

The impact of the Battle of Shepherdstown was momentous in several ways. Because of Shepherdstown, the significance of the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia was emphasized and could not be missed. Benjamin Cooling threw light upon the fact that the Valley was a gateway into the North for the southern military. The action at Shepherdstown served as a rear-guard action which effectively closed the back door into Virginia for the Union army after Antietam.[78]

Antietam was the first time the Shenandoah Valley was used as an access point for the Confederate army to invade the North. It would not be the last. There was a salient question which presented itself to both the Union and Confederate leadership after the Maryland invasion.

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*Volume XIX. 1887. (Vol. 19, Chap. 31).* Chapter XXXI – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, Sep 3-Nov 14, 1862, 349.

[75] James I. Robertson, *General A.P. Hill: The Story of a Confederate Warrior* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 150.

[76] Ibid., 150.

[77] Thomas A. McGrath, *Shepherdstown: Last Clash of the Antietam Campaign* (Lynchburg, Schroeder Publications, 2007), 198.

[78] Benjamin Franklin Cooling, *Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 261.

Why did the invasion of the North by Gen. Robert E. Lee not serve as an argument for the Union leadership to close the Shenandoah Valley to the Confederate army?

The Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had safely returned into Virginia through the Shenandoah Valley after Antietam. The time would have seemed appropriate for both armies to take stock of their situation relative to the Valley. Thomas McGrath affirmed the conclusion that, for the Confederacy, the status quo would work just fine.[79]

The status quo was not so fine for the Army of the Potomac. The status quo amounted to a Confederate army which could move as it pleased through the Shenandoah Valley. As demonstrated by Gen. Lee, the Army of Northern Virginia could move whenever and wherever it wished to go. One would think that after Antietam the Union high command would review its strategy in the Valley. Although there was some minor activity there, it was not until June 1863 that any further significant action would occur there. Then, once again, it would be initiated by Gen. Robert E. Lee.

## Second Battle of Winchester

With one exception, the Shenandoah Valley was relatively quiet in late 1862 and early 1863. To be sure, there were some developments which indirectly impacted the Valley. For example, after the Battle of Antietam Gen. McClellan was relieved by Gen. Ambrose Burnside on November 5, 1862. The reason for this essentially was McClellan's failure to actively pursue Robert E. Lee. On January 1, 1863, Pres. Abraham Lincoln started the new year with a bang. The Emancipation Proclamation enacted into law added the end of slavery in the United States to the reasons the Union was fighting the Civil War. It also diminished to almost

[79] Thomas A. McGrath, *Shepherdstown: Last Clash of the Antietam Campaign* (Lynchburg, Schroeder Publications, 2007), 198.

nothing the chances of foreign powers supporting the Confederacy because doing so would have been an endorsement of slavery. On January 25, 1863, Gen. Burnside was replaced with Gen. Joseph Hooker. From May 1st to May 4th, 1863, the Battle of Chancellorsville impacted the Valley significantly as Stonewall Jackson was killed. The hero of the Valley was gone. The one exception to the relative quiet in the Shenandoah Valley was the occupation of Winchester, Virginia by Gen. Robert Milroy on December 13, 1862.

After the Battle of Chancellorsville, Gen. Lee assigned Gen. A.P. Hill to hold his position at Fredericksburg while the rest of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia moved to the northwest toward the Shenandoah Valley. The order of the Confederate movement was Gen. Ewell's corps moving first followed by Gen. Longstreet's corps then then Gen. A.P. Hill's corps last. Upon entering the Shenandoah Valley, Gen. Ewell moved his corps toward Winchester, Virginia where the hated Union Gen. Robert Milroy was positioned in occupation. Just as in the Maryland campaign of 1862, Gen. Lee wanted the Shenandoah Valley cleared of all Union presence so that his line of communication and supplies could be kept clear.[80]

The forces engaged at the Second Battle of Winchester would consist of 12,500 Confederates under the command of Gen. Richard Ewell and 7,000 Union soldiers under the command of Gen. Robert Milroy. On June 12, 1863, as Confederate forces approached the Shenandoah Valley, authors Eric J. Wittenberg and Scott L. Mingus who explained in their book entitled *Second Battle of Winchester: The Confederate Victory that Opened the Door to Gettysburg* that the Union garrisons from the Eighth Corps also known as the Middle

[80] Allen C. Guelzo, *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013), 59.

Department under the command of Maj. Gen. Robert Schenck were widely dispersed in the Valley. Schenck was Milroy's direct line superior officer.[81]

Gen. Schenck's corps in the Shenandoah Valley consisted of Brig. Gen. Benjamin Kelley's First Division of 10,000 men located at Harper's Ferry. At Martinsburg, Virginia, Col. Benjamin Smith had a brigade of 1,200 men detached. Col. Andrew McReynolds had a brigade of 1,800 men located at Berryville, Virginia. Last, Brig. Gen. Robert Milroy had his recently reinforced First Division of 9,000 men located at Winchester. Dr. Guelzo conveyed that Gen. Milroy had received orders from Schenck to join Kelley at Harper's Ferry. However, Milroy believed that he could hold Winchester against the enemy and decided not to retreat. Gen. Milroy made this decision without the knowledge that the Confederate Second Corps under Lt. Gen. Richard Ewell had entered the Shenandoah Valley through Chester Gap. Within a short amount of time, Gen. Ewell divided his forces at Front Royal.[82]

The battle lines in the Valley were beginning to take shape as Gen. Ewell launched his plan to oust the Federals. Wittenberg and Mingus explained that the Confederate cavalry brigade of Brig. Gen. Albert Jenkins arrived from southwestern Virginia and preceded the march of the Second Corps. Jenkins cavalry clashed with Union outposts at Middletown, Strasburg, Cedarville, and on the Front Royal road. Behind Jenkins' cavalry, Maj. Gen. Robert Rodes' division moved north via Millwood. Rodes' responsibility was to make an attempt to capture Union Colonel Andrew McReynolds' Third Brigade at Berryville before moving on to Martinsburg. Rodes' infantry followed an unfrequented road from Cedarville towards Millwood. Jenkins' attached cavalry mainly traveled via Nineveh Church and White Post. Arriving in the vicinity of Millwood, a detachment of Rodes' infantry occupied the village. The two

[81] Eric J. Wittenberg and Scott L. Mingus, Sr. *Second Battle of Winchester: The Confederate Victory that Opened the Door to Gettysburg* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie LLC, 2016), 70.

[82] Allen C. Guelzo, *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013), 61.

Confederate divisions of Maj. Gen. Edward "Allegheny" Johnson and Maj. Gen. Jubal Early were provided a screen on their journey into the Valley by a detachment of Jenkins' brigade. The 16th Virginia Cavalry Battalion was commanded by Major James Nounnan. The ultimate destination for everyone was Winchester, Virginia.[83]

By the end of June 12th, the Confederates were positioned well to attack Milroy's garrison at Winchester the next day. In *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 3,* Robert Johnson and Clarence Buel began an analysis of the Confederates' deployment by describing that they drove back outposts from Milroy's division towards Winchester. With this development, Milroy's force now consisted of three infantry brigades. Two of those brigades were located at Winchester under Brig. Gen. Washington Elliott and Colonel William Ely. The third brigade under Colonel Andrew McReynolds was still at Berryville. In addition, two small outposts were located northwest of Winchester under Colonel Joseph Keifer. Gen. Ewell's divisions included, by the end of the day, Rodes' division which was five miles north of Front Royal and encamped at Stone Bridge. Ed Johnson's division was camped at Cedarville. Early's division was encamped near the Shenandoah River. The Confederates were enthusiastically prepared to give Milroy's Federals a thorough whipping on the morrow.[84]

On June 13, 1863 at Berryville, Virginia, the Confederate cavalry under Albert Jenkins' failed to screen the roads from Millwood. Writer Benson Lossing clarified that Union cavalry detected the approach of General Rodes' division. They alerted Colonel McReynolds' Third Brigade at Berryville to the threat. From Berryville, the Union garrison had been patrolling the crossings of the Shenandoah River. There they were able to observe Confederate raiding parties

[83] Eric J. Wittenberg and Scott L. Mingus, Sr. *Second Battle of Winchester: The Confederate Victory that Opened the Door to Gettysburg* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie LLC, 2016), 53.

[84] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 3* (New York: The Century Co., 1884-87), 263.

passing through Snicker's Gap and Ashby's Gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains since March 1863. McReynolds' Third Brigade comprised the elements of the 6th Maryland Infantry Regiment, 67th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment, 1st New York Cavalry, and an artillery battery.[85]

Gen. Milroy ordered McReynolds to evacuate Berryville and to march to Winchester only if he heard the prearranged signal of the firing of one of Milroy's heavy artillery guns. In the meantime, Rodes' infantry divided to both sides of Berryville to surround the Union forces there. Jenkins' cavalry was sent to the left to cut the road between Berryville and Winchester. Milroy's main force in Winchester alerted McReynolds to the Confederate movement by firing the signal guns. McReynolds skillfully extracted his command and the bulk of his supplies before Rodes and Jenkins completed their envelopment.[86]

David Eicher described the path which Col. McReynolds took to escape Berryville included a company of infantry and one of cavalry escorting the supply train to Bunker Hill. The rest of the force went south by a long detour via Summit Point to Winchester arriving at about 9:00pm. McReynolds' brigade occupied the Star Fort at Winchester. At this point, the colonel believed that Winchester was untenable. McReynolds suggested to Gen. Milroy that the entire garrison should withdraw from Winchester to Harper's Ferry while they still could. Milroy ignored his opinion and chose to stand his ground at Winchester. The Confederates did not cooperate effectively and were too disorganized to pursue and capture the anticipated haul of prisoners at Berryville.[87]

The Confederate cavalryman Jenkins captured part of the Union supply train from Berryville at Bunker Hill along with seventy-five prisoners. He scattered Col. McReynolds' two

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[85] Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial History of the Civil War in the United States of America, Vol. II* (Hartford: T. Belknap, Publisher, 1868), 51.

[86] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 493.

[87] Ibid., 493.

escorting companies towards Martinsburg. After the battle, Federal officers who were there defined the activities at Opequon Creek which failed to block the Union retreat to Winchester. Confederate forces cut the telegram line into Winchester which severed Gen. Milroy's line of communication. By sundown, Rodes' Division had reached Martinsburg capturing the town and Union Col. Benjamin Smith's brigade of 1,200 men, the remnants of McReynolds' command from Berryville, and five guns.[88]

Overnight a storm arose, and heavy rain drenched Winchester and the lower Valley. The Union losses to Gen. Rodes' division were around 300 men throughout these operations while the Confederate loss was negligible. Union General Milroy stationed pickets around Winchester. The continual harassment of Milroy's patrols forced them to be positioned very close to Winchester. Because of that situation, Milroy had no idea of what exactly was going on around him in the surrounding country to Winchester.[89]

Gen. Milroy's caution was intensified by the severe losses he had incurred in trying to suppress repeated Confederate cavalry raids in his district. The Confederates under General Ewell met with little resistance as they concentrated on Winchester. Milroy's southernmost outposts were located near Parkins Mill at the Opequon Creek crossing. This was only four miles south of Winchester. This did not leave much wiggle room for the Yankees in the town. Other outposts to the west of Winchester were not encountered by Confederate forces as those Union troops were removed from the direct Confederate approach.[90]

In the afternoon, Ewell's command completed driving the Union outposts into Winchester through extensive skirmishing. In addition, it was Gen. Ewell's intention to cut off

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[88] *Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, Volume 3* (Boston: Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, 1903), 388.

[89] Ibid., 389.

[90] Allen C. Guelzo, *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013), 61.

Winchester from reinforcement or escape which he was able to do. Allen Guelzo expounded on the Union defenses of Winchester as being a series of heavily fortified forts and lunettes around the town. There were Federal fortifications along the outlying turnpike routes entering the town. Within Winchester, Gen. Milroy constructed or improved ten defensive fortifications known inelegantly as Batteries No 1 through 10. Since December 1862, Milroy had his command working at repairing the defenses left by previous occupants. The fortifications were linked with roads and trenches making the defenses very strong.[91]

Milroy manned three major fortifications. Historian Douglas Southall Freeman pointed out how these fortifications were laid out. Battery No 2 or Fort Milroy was the "Main Fort" and held fourteen guns including heavy artillery in extensive works. Battery No 3 or the Star Fort was equipped with eight guns. Battery No 5 or West Fort was a four-gun lunette located due west of Fort Milroy. The Main Fort and the Star Fort were on either side of Pughtown Road. The two smaller and unfinished outpost earthworks were about a mile to the northwest. These smaller outposts were held by Colonel J. Warren Keifer with the 110th Ohio Infantry Regiment and part of the 116th Ohio Infantry Regiment.[92]

In his 2022 article in *America's Civil War* entitled "BRANDED: Until His Death, Union General Robert H. Milroy Never Stopped Trying to Redeem His Reputation, Badly Scarred in Defeat at Second Winchester," historian Jonathan A. Noyalas pointed out the eight lesser fortifications that were initially used by Gen. Milroy but later abandoned during the course of the battle. Those fortifications included Battery No 1 along Bower's Hill south of Fort Milroy. Battery No 4 contained six guns and was located due north of Star Fort along the same ridge line. Battery No 6 with two guns on a hill peak was located between West Fort and Battery 7 which

[91] Ibid., 61.

[92] Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Gettysburg to Appomattox, Volume 3* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 22.

had eight guns on Apple Pie Ridge west of Apple Pie Ridge Road. Battery No 8 was downhill and west of Star Fort. Battery No 9 and Battery No 10 were located on the east side of the Martinsburg turnpike at the north end of Winchester. A small fortification called Parkins Mill Battery was four miles south of Winchester at the Opequon River crossing on the Front Royal turnpike. By retreating into the defensive works and relying on his long-range heavy artillery, Milroy reported that he could hold out for weeks against any opponent.[93]

Confederate General Richard Ewell's Second Corps' infantry and some artillery moved by a concealed route to the west of Winchester. "Allegheny" Johnson's division moved northwest on the Front Royal Pike. His division drove back Union pickets known as the Parkins Mill Battery at the Opequon River crossing at around 8:30am. Johnson's cavalry engaged in skirmishing at Hoge Run around 9:30am. Allegheny Johnson's advance stalled under fire from Fort Milroy's heavy guns shortly before noon. Skirmishing and artillery exchanges began after this against Union artillery located on the hill near Hollinsworth Mill.[94]

At that point in the action, Gen. Johnson held his position. His intention was to mesh his division with that of General Jubal Early. Early's division crossed west via Nineveh to Newtown and moved north on the Valley Pike. Early and Johnson arrived at the outskirts of Kernstown around noon. Light infantry and artillery fire broke out between Milroy's division and those of Early and Johnson. Late in the afternoon, Early pushed back Union skirmishers at the Valley Pike tollgate. After some minor encounters, the Union forces retreated north of Abrams Creek.[95]

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[93] Jonathan A. Noyalas, "BRANDED: Until His Death, Union General Robert H. Milroy Never Stopped Trying to Redeem His Reputation, Badly Scarred in Defeat at Second Winchester," *America's Civil War* 34, no. 6 (2022): 33.

[94] Ibid., 33.

[95] Eric J. Wittenberg and Scott L. Mingus, Sr. *Second Battle of Winchester: The Confederate Victory that Opened the Door to Gettysburg* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie LLC, 2016), 61.

Despite the escalating action around Winchester, Milroy was still unaware that he was facing the entire Confederate Second Corps. One cannot be sure if it was Gen. Milroy's arrogance or delusional thinking, but he clearly ignored the evidence looking him straight in the face. As mentioned earlier, Milroy had concentrated all his forces in the three main forts defending the town. Meanwhile, Union Maj. Gen. Henry Halleck's greatest fears seemed to be coming to fruition. He had already sent instructions through Milroy's direct commander General Robert Schenck to order Milroy to fall back from Winchester to Harper's Ferry if threatened. Although Schenck had discussed evacuation with Milroy, he did not give explicit orders to Milroy to evacuate. Milroy had convinced Schenck that the defensive positions at Winchester were strong. Milroy believed that his garrison could withstand any assault or a siege.[96]

In his 2018 book entitled *At the Forefront of Lee's Invasion: Retribution, Plunder, and Clashing Cultures on Richard S. Ewell's Road to Gettysburg*, author Robert J. Wynstra noted that Confederate Brig. Gen. John Gordon's brigade demonstrated to the east and south of the town along with the 16th Virginia Cavalry battalion. The remainder of Early's division swept forward to capture Bower's Hill with little resistance. Johnson extended his line to the right against very light opposition. There was intermittent skirmishing in the streets of Winchester. Early and Ewell conferred on Bower's Hill and decided on a flanking strategy.[97]

Gordon's brigade and two batteries were left on Bower's Hill to attract Union attention. Early led his three other brigades back to the Cedar Creek Grade. Early moved west beyond Apple Pie Ridge where it was out of view of the Union fortifications. He then moved north over Cloverdale Plantation to Walnut Grove. The flanking column was accompanied by twenty guns. While Early made this flanking march, Johnson advanced a line of skirmishers on the right to

[96] Ibid., 181.

[97] Robert J. Wynstra. *At the Forefront of Lee's Invasion: Retribution, Plunder, and Clashing Cultures on Richard S. Ewell's Road to Gettysburg* (Ashland: The Kent State University Press, 2018), 35.

distract Union attention. Early's brigades provided diversionary skirmishing all day from 10:00am until about 4:00pm. The Confederate batteries on Bower's Hill opened fire, touching off a duel with the Union guns in Fort Milroy.[98]

By mid-afternoon, Early's force had gained a position opposite West Fort on Apple Pie Ridge. Eight guns were positioned on the Brierly Farm northwest of the fort, while twelve more guns were placed in an orchard southwest of the fort. By this time the skirmishing had grown quiet. Within the forts, Milroy believed that the quiet interlude indicated that the Confederates had been repulsed from Winchester.[99]

Gen. Milroy was unaware that his command was now almost surrounded, with an entire division (Rodes') dominating his escape route to the north. At about 6:00pm, Early opened fire with his twenty guns, hammering the southernmost Union outpost. Union artillery replied but was silenced after a forty-five-minute exchange of fire. Meanwhile, Confederate Brig. Gen. Harry Hays' brigade of Early's division stealthily advanced through the corn and wheat fields at the base of Apple Pie Ridge.[100]

Author David Eicher recorded what happened next. Hays' brigade rushed forward across 300 yards of open fields. They swept upward into the West Fort and held it against feeble counterattacks. The defenders abandoned the works and retreated to Fort Milroy. The captured Union artillery was turned around and used against them from Fort Milroy. Gen. Hays was supported in the attack by Brig. Gen. William "Extra Billy" Smith's Brigade and Colonel Isaac

[98] Ibid., 36.

[99] Douglas Southall Freeman. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Gettysburg to Appomattox, Volume 3* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 22-23.

[100] Ibid., 23.

Avery's Brigade. Early consolidated his line on West Fort on Flint Ridge, but darkness prevented further gains. Most of the Union defenders drifted towards the Main Fort.[101]

During the evening, Gen. Ewell located his Corps headquarters at the Bowers' House. Gen. Early's Division shelled Milroy's main fort in an artillery duel well into the night. Ewell was concerned that Milroy might escape being surrounded sometime overnight. Gen. Ewell sent two brigades from Johnson's division commanded by Brig. Gen. George Steuart and Colonel Jesse Williams to block any escape to the north. This possible escape route for the Yankees could possibly bypass the position of Gen. Rodes. Gen. Ed Johnson set out with the two brigades and eight guns on a night march north to Stephenson's Depot. Stephenson's Depot was a train stop on the Winchester and Potomac Railroad near the intersection of the Martinsburg Pike and the Charles Town Road.[102]

William Swinton wrote in 1882 that about midnight, Brig. Gen. James Walker's brigade disengaged and joined the rear of Johnson's column. Doing so left a single brigade of Johnson's commanded by Brig. Gen. John Jones on the Berryville Pike east of town. At 9:00pm, Gen. Milroy and his officer held a formal council of war. They discussed the decision to try to break out from Winchester to Harpers Ferry on the old Charles Town Road. At that moment, Gen. Johnson and his Confederate division were already marching to block the old Charles Town Road. At 1:00am, Milroy's Union division destroyed his wagons and artillery, abandoned his entrenchments after dark, and set out in an attempt to reach Charles Town. They left their works

[101] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 493.

[102] Ibid., 494.

so quietly that Early's troops did not know they were gone until they heard the action at Shepherd's Depot later that morning.[103]

In 2006, Jonathan Noyalas described Gen. Milroy's attempt to escape. The Union column gathered in the low ground between Star Fort and Fort Milroy. They then moved down along the railroad line and the Valley Pike toward the Charles Town crossroad. Milroy's Eighth Division arrived at the south end of Stephenson's Depot. Simultaneously, that same day at Martinsburg, the Union garrison commanded by Colonel Benjamin Smith were anticipating their own action very soon. The Martinsburg garrison consisted of the 126th Ohio Infantry Regiment, 106th New York Infantry Regiment, the Potomac Home Brigade, the 1st New York Cavalry, 13th Pennsylvania Cavalry, and Maulsby's West Virginia Battery. Union Brig. Gen. Daniel Tyler had been sent to take command and after the fighting had already begun there. As he was unaware of the deployments and geography of the area, he acted only as an adviser to Col. Smith. Confederate pickets engaged the Union outposts on the Winchester Road at about 8:00am.[104]

In his 1899 publication entitled *Confederate Military History: A Library of Confederate States History, Volume 3*, author Clement Anselm Evans wrote that by 11:00am Gen. Tyler realized the Confederates had cut the road to Winchester at Bunker Hill. The escape route for the Winchester garrison of General Milroy was now most likely blocked. Gen. Tyler now had to pay attention to the safety of the Federal garrison at Martinsburg. To do so, Tyler ordered his baggage train to be evacuated to Williamsport, Maryland. He assigned a rear guard element to fight a delaying action to protect their escape north. At about noon, Tyler rejected an appeal for

[103] William Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac: A Critical History of Operations in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania from the Commencement to the Close of the War, 1861-1865* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882), 317.

[104] Jonathan A. Noyalas. *"My Will Is Absolute Law": A Biography of Union General Robert H. Milroy* (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2006), 111.

surrender from Confederate cavalryman Albert Jenkins. During the afternoon, the Confederates increased their pressure to the north against Gen. Tyler's escaping command. Additionally, Jenkins worked his troops around for an attack from the west.[105]

Union Gen. Schenck's Shenandoah Valley elements of the Eighth Corps began to crumble under the pressure of Confederate Gen. Ewell's relentless attacks. The Federal garrison from Martinsburg realized the need for escape. Jedediah Hotchkiss unfolded the Union efforts to escape. At sunset, the 106th New York which had been supporting Maulsby's artillery broke under a sudden Confederate artillery bombardment. As he tried to rally the 106th, Colonel Smith withdrew Maulsby's guns. The 126th Ohio followed the 106th's retrograde movement. The two infantry regiments headed for the Potomac overnight by a different route from that of Maulsby's artillery. The Confederate pursuit was disorganized and failed to prevent their escape to Williamsport, Maryland.[106]

In 2018, Robert Wynstra broke down Longstreet's progression and the action at Shepherd's Depot. As the Martinsburg garrison managed to escape Ewell into Maryland, Confederate Longstreet moved his corps into the Shenandoah Valley. The Union losses for the escaping Martinsburg garrison were reported as 200 men while the Confederates reported three casualties. On June 15th, Confederate Lt. Gen. James Longstreet began to move his First Army Corps from Culpeper along the eastern side of the Blue Ridge. Longstreet was trying to confuse Union scouts before he turned his corps northwest through Ashby's Gap and Snicker's Gap into the Shenandoah Valley. At the same time, Confederate Ed Johnson was beginning the dismantling of Union Gen. Milroy's division at Shepherd's Depot. Johnson had conducted a

[105] Clement Anselm Evans. *Confederate Military History: A Library of Confederate States History, Volume 3* (Atlanta: Confederate Pub. Co., 1899), 397.

[106] Jedediah Hotchkiss. *Make Me a Map of the Valley: The Civil War Journal of Stonewall Jackson's Topographer*, ed. Archie P. McDonald (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1973), 151.

night outflanking march to cut off Milroy's retreat four miles north of Winchester at Stephenson's Depot. Action began at 3:30am when Milroy's First Brigade under Brig. Gen. Elliott engaged the Confederates.[107]

One can almost imagine the prelude to Gen. Milroy and Gen. Johnson squaring off at Shepherd's Depot. Milroy was beginning to think he had avoided the Confederates making him home free to escape to Harper's Ferry. Meanwhile, Johnson could hear the Union soldiers tramping on the road toward the Depot. Near dawn, Johnson's skirmishers encountered the head of Milroy's retreating column near the intersection of the Valley Pike and old Charles Town road. Realizing that he had been caught, Milroy faced his column to the right on the pike and prepared to fight his way out of the trap. He actually thought that he might be able to envelop Johnson's Confederates. Johnson deployed his regiments along Milburn Road as they came up and advanced to the railroad. He placed two guns on either side of the Charles Town Road railroad bridge and prepared to hammer Milroy's division.[108]

Douglas Southall Freeman brought up the idea that the result of the battle at Shepherd's Depot was predictable. In essence, Milroy's division ceased to exist. Those Union soldiers not killed outright were scattered in every direction never to be reconstituted again. The rest of the Johnson's artillery were deployed on the heights east of Milburn Road. As it grew light, Union forces made several desperate but uncoordinated attacks against the bridge and railroad embankment. It was to no avail. The Confederates were being steadily reinforced which led to their repulsion of each attempt of Milroy's division to attack. Colonel Jesse Williams' Brigade crushed the final Union attack. General Walker's brigade had been a mile away at the beginning of the action at Shepherd's Depot because he had received faulty orders which sent him on a

[107] Robert J. Wynstra. *At the Forefront of Lee's Invasion: Retribution, Plunder, and Clashing Cultures on Richard S. Ewell's Road to Gettysburg* (Ashland: The Kent State University Press, 2018), 41.

[108] Ibid., 41.

wild goose chase. Finally, however, he was able to arrive on the right of the Confederate line just as the Union troops attempted to achieve an envelopment. This was too much for Milroy's command.[109]

A large portion of Milroy's command surrendered right there at Shepherd's Depot while a small portion of it escaped to various locations following various paths. Confederate Gen. Walker advanced to cut the Valley Pike. At this point, some remaining Union regiments hoisted the white flag. When Milroy's horse was shot out from under him, the uncaptured portion of his division scattered. Some small groups escaped covertly to the southeast through Manassas Gap. Milroy and his staff, his cavalry, and other sundry units totaling about 1,200 men escaped to Harpers Ferry.[110]

The Second Battle of Winchester proved to be successful for Confederate Gen. Ewell while an incredibly ruinous event for the Union and Gen. Milroy. What happened to Gen. Robert Milroy after the debacle at Winchester? In his focused article entitled "BRANDED: Until His Death, Union General Robert H. Milroy Never Stopped Trying to Redeem His Reputation, Badly Scarred in Defeat at Second Winchester," Jonathan Noyalas interestingly went into some detail about the days following the battle in which 700 more men from Milroy's command turned up at Bloody Run, Pennsylvania. Milroy's command had ceased to exist, but the scattered remnants were assimilated back into Gen. Schenck's command. Milroy himself was placed under arrest.[111]

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[109] Douglas Southall Freeman. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Gettysburg to Appomattox, Volume 3* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 25.

[110] Ibid., 26.

[111] Jonathan A. Noyalas, "BRANDED: Until His Death, Union General Robert H. Milroy Never Stopped Trying to Redeem His Reputation, Badly Scarred in Defeat at Second Winchester," *America's Civil War* 34, no. 6 (2022): 33-34.

The official Union record made it plain that Col. Smith's garrison from Martinsburg did arrive safely at Harper's Ferry through Shepherdstown early in the morning of the 15th. The main body of the Union garrison of Martinsburg, which had escaped encirclement, reached Shepherdstown at 1:00am having abandoned one disabled gun and brought one gun to safety. They crossed the Potomac River and reached Harper's Ferry at about 7:00am.[112]

For their part, the Confederates acquired a great deal of supplies from their successful capture of Winchester, Virginia. Historian Allen Guelzo analyzed the Confederate hope to resupply and forage, but also their capture of enough artillery and horses to equip a battalion of artillery and cavalry. Gen. Ewell's southerners captured twenty-three guns at Winchester, five guns at Martinsburg, and 300 horses between both places. Additionally, the Confederates captured a great quantity of food, clothing, small arms ammunition, and medical stores in Winchester.[113]

In his 1984 book entitled *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command*, Edwin B. Coddington clarified that Maryland and Pennsylvania prepared for the coming Confederate invasion of their respective states. The reaction of the United States to Ewell's victory in the Shenandoah Valley was dramatic. The defeat of Gen. Milroy's division at Winchester stunned the North. There were two primary reactions. First, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton called for additional militia to be mobilized for Federal service. Second, Governor Andrew Curtin of Pennsylvania called for 50,000 volunteers to protect the Keystone state.[114]

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[112] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XXVII. 1887. (Vol. 27, Chap. 39)*. Chapter XXVII – Operations in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, June 3-August 3, 1863, 43.

[113] Allen C. Guelzo. *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013), 62.

[114] Edwin B. Coddington. *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984), 134.

Dr. Noyalas said it well when he referred to the result of the Winchester campaign as being lopsided in favor of Gen. Robert E. Lee and the Confederates. About 700 sick and 3,358 fit Union troops surrendered to Gen. Ewell's Confederate division. In addition, 443 Federal men were killed and wounded. Confederate casualties were estimated at between 266 to 269 men for the campaign.[115]

There was significance of the consequence of the action at Winchester, Virginia. Gen. Ewell removed the Union obstacles to Gen. Lee's army moving further north into Pennsylvania. This effectively opened the door once again for the Army of Northern Virginia to take the war to the land of the United States. In his 2013 book entitled *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion*, Allen C. Guelzo clarified that the Confederate victory at Winchester led to the culminating, climactic battle in Pennsylvania at Gettysburg in July 1863. This was the second time the Shenandoah Valley was used by Lee to invade the North.[116]

**Significance of the Shenandoah Valley on the Battle of Gettysburg**

With the clearance of Winchester and the rest of the lower Valley of any significant Federal presence, the Shenandoah Valley effectively became the avenue of ingress and regress to and from Gettysburg for the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. The situational report for Joseph Hooker could simply have stated: "Gen. Lee is loose in the United States wreaking havoc and there is little you seem to be able to do about it." Then on June 27, 1863, just four days before the beginning of the Battle of Gettysburg, Gen. Hooker was replace by Gen. George Meade as the commander of the Union Army of the Potomac. Part of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia had advanced from the Shenandoah Valley past Gettysburg toward Harrisburg,

[115] Jonathan A. Noyalas. *Plagued by War: Winchester, Virginia During the Civil War* (Leesburg: Gauley Mountain Press, 2003), 105.

[116] Allen C. Guelzo, *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013): 47.

Pennsylvania. The other part of his army was moving east from locations west of Gettysburg. Intending to concentrate his army along the extremely strong defenses of Pipe Creek in Maryland, Union Gen. Meade waited while his corps moved in that direction in the vicinity of Gettysburg. Without intending to, both armies found one another at Gettysburg.[117]

On July 1, 1863, about one-third of both armies engaged one another at Gettysburg with the Confederate army gaining the upper hand. At first, Confederate Gen. A.P. Hill encountered Union Gen. John Buford's cavalry west of the town. As more brigades entered the area, Federal Gen. John Reynolds and corps commander was killed at McPherson's Woods. The northern corps of Gen. O. O. Howard moved through Gettysburg to north of the town where he was attacked furiously by Confederate Gen. Early. In the end, the south won the first day's battle at Gettysburg. Both sides settled into their defensive positions to await battle on the next day.[118]

On July 2, 1863, Gen. Lee ordered an attack by the Confederate army on both the Union left and right flanks which nearly broke the Federal line but in the end was repulsed. There were some ineffectual and perhaps even misguided movements by leaders on both sides. However, Confederate Gen. Longstreet attacked Union Gen. Sickles' severely exposed corps along Emmitsburg Road and defeated them pushing them back to Cemetery Ridge. At the end of the day, neither army had made any appreciable gains.[119]

Robert E. Lee had attacked both flanks of the Union army at Gettysburg with no real gain for the Confederates. Lee came to the conclusion that the weak spot in the Federal must be the center of their line. On July 3, 1863, Gen. Lee's ordered attack on the Union center was repulsed with heavy casualties ending the battle with a Union victory at Gettysburg. After the most

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[117] Ibid., 131.

[118] Douglas Southall Freeman. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Gettysburg to Appomattox, Volume 3* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 102.

[119] Edwin B. Coddington. *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984), 439-440.

demonstrative artillery barrage, Confederate Gen. George Pickett, Gen. James Pettigrew, and Gen. Isaac Trimble launched their famous attack against the Federal center. The attack was repulsed by the Union infantry and artillery with devastating losses that very nearly destroyed the Confederate divisions of Pickett's Charge.[120]

Crossing back into the Shenandoah Valley through Williamsport, Maryland, Gen. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was very nearly caught because of heavy rains which blocked their crossing of the Potomac River due to the high river. However, the Confederate retreat from their defeat in Pennsylvania continued as General Robert Edward Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia headed southwards along the Shenandoah Valley. By July 14, 1863, the southern army had entered Martinsburg once again in their return from Gettysburg. Something was different this time, however, as the Confederate army could not close the back door a second time to the Union Army of the Potomac into Virginia.[121]

**Battle of New Market**

On March 10, 1864, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant was commissioned as the General-in-Chief of the armed forces of the United States. With this, there was a significant transition in the Union leadership's strategic position. After Gettysburg, the northern military leadership made the decision to attempt once again to take control of the Shenandoah Valley. The new commanding general of all Union forces in the war was Gen. Grant. His approach to the Valley was different than any of his predecessors in that position. Again, Charles R. Knight analyzed in *Valley*

[120] Alfred H. Guernsey and Henry Mills Alden. *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War* (Chicago: Puritan Press Co., 1894), 513.

[121] *Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, Volume 3* (Boston: Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, 1903), 447.

*Thunder* that, although the Union failure at the Battle of New Market seemed a repeat of the last two years in Virginia, it did demonstrate this new emphasis of Grant.[122]

There was evidence that the doorway through the Valley could swing both north and south. Although the Union leadership had chosen not to close the Shenandoah Valley sooner to the Confederate army, it seemed that Gen. Grant did see the need to do it now. There had to be an explanation as to why Grant made the strategic changes he did at this juncture in the war. The explanation could be found in the fact that there were some key differences between him and his predecessors in northern Virginia.

Gen. Grant's choice of Gen. Franz Sigel to lead the invasion of the Valley for the Union turned out to be an extremely disappointing one. Nevertheless, the decision to send significant Union troops into the Shenandoah Valley signaled a new approach by the northern leadership. Charles Knight analyzed this new approach as one following the impetus of Gen. Grant to adjust the strategic emphasis of the Union military in the war.[123]

Essentially, Gen. Grant's approach was one of putting constant pressure on Gen. Lee as well as all Confederate field armies. Such an approach would be new for Robert E. Lee. To this point in the war, only Gen. Lee had conducted operations in this manner. What would it be like for him to encounter a Union general who offered the same approach? To accomplish this new goal, Grant ordered a coordinated attack at key points in the Confederacy. Grant would join with the Army of the Potomac and Gen. Meade in crossing the Rapidan River in a move on Richmond. Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler on the Peninsula would threaten Richmond from the east. Both actions were intended to draw Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia at Richmond into a definitive fight.

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[122] Charles R. Knight, *Valley Thunder: The Battle of New Market and the Opening of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, May 1864* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2010): 5.

[123] Ibid., 5.

Simultaneously, Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel would attack the Shenandoah Valley to destroy Lee's supply lines. Maj. Gen. Sherman would attack Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee, invade Georgia, and capture Atlanta. Last, Maj. Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks was assigned to capture Mobile, Alabama. For this research, the focus will be upon Gen. Sigel's operations in the Shenandoah Valley.

What was the mission for the Federal troops in the Shenandoah Valley as assigned to them by Gen. Grant? In his book entitled *And Keep Moving On: The Virginia Campaign, May-June* 1864, historian Mark Grimsley defined that mission. As of April 30, 1864, Union Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel began his diversionary operations in the Shenandoah Valley in effect giving support to the broader Virginia campaign of General Grant. With this emphasis, on the 30th a Union army under Gen. Sigel advanced south from Martinsburg. Sigel had two bodies of troops.[124]

According to Charles Knight, things became more defined for the Federals in the Valley as Gen. Sigel's two forces were identified. The first was a force of 6,000 men under his direct command. They would march southwards up the Shenandoah Valley from Winchester to Staunton. The other section of his command was operating in West Virginia and led by Brig. Gen. George Crook.[125]

If all went well, the operations in the Valley would wreak havoc on Gen. Lee's supply lines. In the book entitled *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume* 4, it was explained that Sigel intended to assemble his and Crook's forces at Staunton, Virginia. This would mean the

[124] Mark Grimsley, *And Keep Moving On: The Virginia Campaign, May-June 1864* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 103.

[125] Charles R. Knight, *Valley Thunder: The Battle of New Market and the Opening of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, May 1864* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2010), 28.

capture of the major Confederate supply base in the Upper Valley. From there, Gen. Sigel's next move would be a strike southeast for the Virginia Central Railroad.[126]

The planning of the 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign was completed. On May 1, 1864, Gen. Sigel occupied once again the town of Winchester, Virginia. Soon, Sigel continued his march up the Valley. On May 11, 1864, Gen. Sigel's army encamped at Cedar Creek just south of Middletown.[127]

In his 1983 book entitled *The Battle of New Market*, author William C. Davis explained, all things considered, Gen. Sigel was moving toward Staunton with a division numbering 6,275 soldiers. Scouts informed the Union general that a Confederate force was preparing to leave Staunton moving north on the Valley Turnpike. It was commanded by Confederate Gen. John Breckinridge and numbered about 4,000 men.[128]

The problem for the northern forces in the Shenandoah Valley was twofold. First, the strategy and tactics followed by Gen. Franz Sigel was ineffective. Because of this, the second problem for Sigel was the constant and effective harassment from the Confederate cavalry in the Valley. Gen. Sigel ordered his troops to begin their march from Winchester two days before Gen. Crook. The reason for this was to attempt to draw the Confederates away from Crook's route. This would afford both Crook and Sigel the opportunity to guard the Shenandoah Valley.[129]

According to writer Benson Lossing, Gen. Sigel's movement began to affect and complicate matters for the Confederates in the Shenandoah Valley. At about the same time Sigel

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[126] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 4* (New York: The Century Co., 1884-87), 487.

[127] Ibid., 488.

[128] William C. Davis. *The Battle of New Market* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), 195-197.

[129] Ibid., 42.

left Winchester, Confederate Lt. Col. John Mosby's cavalry raiders captured a Union wagon train near Bunker Hill. This was an effort to distract or perhaps even stop Gen. Sigel's southward progress. As of the first week in May 1864, most of the Confederate forces in southwestern Virginia were being drawn away east to board trains for Staunton. From there, they could march north to defend the Shenandoah Valley against the southward advance of Franz Sigel.[130]

These cavalry raids continued to escalate until they began to adversely impact Gen. Sigel's advance. Charles Knight indicated that on May 10th, Lt. Col. Mosby attacked a Union cavalry outpost near Front Royal capturing sixteen men and seventy-five horses without loss. Additionally, Confederate guerrillas skirmished with Federals at Winchester.[131]

Not only did these raids impact supply depots of the Union military in the Valley, but it also impacted the Federal forces directly. Union official records show that on May 11th at Front Royal, Confederate cavalryman Gen. John Imboden surprised and defeated Union cavalry regiments.[132] These Union cavalry regiments were part of the force of Gen. Sigel who was gathering around Strasburg in preparation for his continued march toward Staunton.[133]

On May 12th, there was skirmishing on the heels of Gen. Sigel's troops at Strasburg involving John Mosby's cavalry raiders.[134] General John Breckinridge was at Staunton with all the available forces he could collect from southwestern Virginia. Breckinridge left Gen. Albert

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[130] Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial History of the Civil War in the United States of America, Vol. II* (Hartford: T. Belknap, Publisher, 1868), 314.

[131] Charles R. Knight, *Valley Thunder: The Battle of New Market and the Opening of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, May 1864* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2010), 82.

[132] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XXVII. 1887. (Vol. 27, Chap. 39)*. Chapter XXVII – Operations in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, June 3-August 3, 1863, 71.

[133] William C. Davis. *The Battle of New Market* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), 47.

[134] Ibid., 61.

Jenkins and Gen. John Hunt Morgan to defend southwestern Virginia with their improvised forces. They would be plenty busy dealing with Union Gen. Crook.[135]

Gen. Breckinridge had 2,500 men in two veteran infantry brigades combined to make his reduced size division. He would use these troops to oppose the advance of Gen. Franz Sigel and his 6,000 men. The Confederate leader set off along the Valley Turnpike to join Gen. Imboden and his 1,500 men. Imboden was skirmishing with Sigel's vanguard forty miles to the north near New Market.[136]

Clement Anselm Evans expounded on the efforts of Gen. Breckinridge at Staunton. On the way to encounter Sigel, Breckinridge drew in every available man. This included about 750 militiamen and 247 young cadets from the Virginia Military Institute at Lexington. These troops brought the total number of Confederate forces marching toward Gen. Sigel's men to over 4,000.[137] By May 13th, Confederate Gen. Imboden's incessant skirmishing with the Federals at New Market was becoming quite burdensome for Sigel.[138]

Conditions were beginning to take shape for the upcoming battle which appeared to most likely be taking place at New Market, Virginia. On May 14th, there were sharp skirmishes at the village of New Market and a prominence called Rude's Hill just north.[139] According to Charles Knight, New Market dominated the road through Massanutten Mountain. This mountain was a nearly impassable feature that would protect his Gen. Sigel's left flank all the way south to Staunton. The main body of the Federal column was located at Mount Jackson which was

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[135] Mark Grimsley, *And Keep Moving On: The Virginia Campaign, May-June 1864* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 103.

[136] Ibid., 103.

[137] Clement Anselm Evans. *Confederate Military History: A Library of Confederate States History, Volume 3* (Atlanta: Confederate Pub. Co., 1899), 1125.

[138] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XXVII. 1887. (Vol. 27, Chap. 39)*. Chapter XXVII – Operations in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, June 3-August 3, 1863, 73.

[139] Ibid., 74.

located at the terminus of the Manassas Gap Railroad. This terminal was located just seven miles from the key objective of New Market.[140]

In Sigel's official record of the Battle of New Market, it was at this point that he sent his cavalry two miles ahead to secure the crossing of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River so his main body could move unimpeded to New Market. They came under harassing fire from a Confederate battery. This artillery was located on a hill a mile beyond the river crossing. This began an extended artillery duel.[141]

Robert Johnson and Clarence Buel explained that Sigel told his artillery to disengage. He wanted to await the arrival of his infantry in the morning to force the crossing of the North Fork.[142] Confederate General Breckinridge was at that time located near Lacy Springs which was twelve miles further to the south. With him, Breckinridge had two infantry brigades, some militia, and the cadets from the Virginia Military Institute (VMI). Alongside them was the cavalry of General John Imboden.[143]

The two armies drew closer to one another as operations were leading toward a battle. Historian David Eicher pointed out how the Confederate operations progressed. On the evening of the 14th, there was a delaying action conducted by the Confederate cavalry under Imboden's command. Breckinridge ordered Imboden to take his cavalry immediately to the crossing of the

[140] Charles R. Knight, *Valley Thunder: The Battle of New Market and the Opening of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, May 1864* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2010), 101.

[141] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XVII. 1887. (Vol. 27, Chap. 39)*. Chapter XXVII – Operations in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, June 3-August 3, 1863, 74.

[142] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 4* (New York: The Century Co., 1884-87), 481.

[143] Ibid., 482.

North Fork. He was to hold it until nightfall. Once it was dark, Imboden was to fall back south of New Market where Breckinridge would join him at daybreak.[144]

In his 1912 compilation entitled *The New Market Campaign, May, 1864*, professor Edward Raymond Turner spelled out how the Union division approached New Market. Imboden's cavalry succeeded in delaying the Union crossing that evening. However, Gen. Sigel's Union division did eventually cross the North Fork of the Shenandoah River approaching New Market. On the morning of May 15th, the Federals under Franz Sigel's command crossed the river with 6,000 men divided into one infantry division commanded by Brig. Gen. Jeremiah Sullivan and one cavalry division commanded by Maj. Gen. Julius Stahel. These two divisions were supported by twenty-eight guns. The Federals were deployed south of the river across the turnpike leading to New Market.[145]

Turner continued by talking about Breckinridge's resolution to attack Sigel at New Market because the Confederate saw a clear opportunity to do so. Withdrawing to New Market, Imboden was reinforced at dawn at New Market by General Breckinridge. Breckinridge had two infantry brigades commanded by Brig. Gen. John Echols and Brig. Gen. Gabriel Wharton. After a reconnaissance of the area, Breckinridge viewed Sigel's position as vulnerable to attack. Gen. Breckinridge resolved to attack the Yankees with his makeshift army.[146]

Historian Douglas Southall Freeman went into detail about Gen. Breckinridge's advance. The Confederate general began with a long-range artillery duel lasting for an hour. Next, Breckinridge advanced with 4,090 men and fourteen guns. Included in that number were 247 cadets from the Virginia Military Institute. Those very young men had already marched eighty-

[144] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 692.

[145] Edward Raymond Turner. *The New Market Campaign, May, 1864* (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1912), 24.

[146] Ibid., 25.

one miles in four days from Lexington, Virginia to New Market. They were commanded by Lt. Col. Scott Shipp who was replaced by Captain Henry A Wise after being wounded in the battle.[147] Dr. Mark Grimsley described the two-pronged Confederate attack which then followed. Gen. Imboden's cavalry made a horseback charge through woods from the right flank of Breckinridge's line. In the meantime, the Confederate infantry pushed through the town.[148]

The involvement of the cadets from the Virginia Military Institute is what makes this entire story so dramatic and engaging. After the initial encounter between the two small armies, there was a brief consolidation of the Union lines. Sigel's skirmishers fell back skillfully for about half a mile. They occupied a strong position to the left and right of a hill on which was the Bushong Farm. A Union six-gun battery was in action to hold this lynchpin of the position.[149]

The Confederate attack continued to advance. According to the Confederate official record, the southerners closed to within rifle range of the main Union line on this ridge near to the Bushong farm. The front rank of the Confederate line paused at a split rail fence. This fence separated Jacob Bushong's orchard and a wheat field.[150]

Dr. Davis explained the repulse of the Confederate attack. Breckinridge's attack received heavy fire from Union rifles and artillery. The right flank of the 51st Virginia Infantry and 30th Virginia Infantry along with the left flank of the 62nd Virginia Mounted Infantry fell back. Gen.

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[147] Douglas Southall Freeman. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Gettysburg to Appomattox, Volume 3* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), 515.

[148] Mark Grimsley, *And Keep Moving On: The Virginia Campaign, May-June 1864* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 105.

[149] Ibid., 107.

[150] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XXVII. 1887. (Vol. 27, Chap. 39)*. Chapter XXVII – Operations in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, June 3-August 3, 1863, 91.

Sigel noted the confusion in the Confederate line. He immediately ordered a general counterattack.[151]

Mark Grimsley discussed Breckinridge's decision to send in the VMI boys. Breckenridge knew he must quickly fill the void in the center of his line. Unless he did so quickly, the Confederates would have to abandon the field. Reluctantly, Breckinridge sent in the boy cadets to save the situation.[152]

Lt. Col. Scott Shipp's official record explained the stellar performance of the cadets in the battle. Shipp and his 257 VMI cadets blocked the gap along the fence just as the 34th Massachusetts Infantry started its attack. The cadets met the Union charge and turned it back. Finally, they overran the Union battery.[153]

Gen. Sigel's brigades began to waver. Sigel attempted to send a West Virginia regiment to retake some lost guns, but the regiment refused to advance. When another Union battery was withdrawn from the line to replenish its ammunition, Breckinridge was quick to exploit the weakness. In his 1923 book entitled *The Battle of Newmarket, Virginia, May 15, 1864*, author Henry DuPont discussed the Union army at New Market beginning a general retreat under Gen. Sigel's order. He ordered his entire force forward and Sigel's stubborn defense collapsed. The Federals fell back to a knoll four miles from New Market. This is where Confederate guns had disputed Sigel's crossing of the river the previous day. The Yankees were threatened by the

[151] William C. Davis. *The Battle of New Market* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), 121.

[152] Mark Grimsley, *And Keep Moving On: The Virginia Campaign, May-June 1864* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 107.

[153] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XXVII. 1887. (Vol. 27, Chap. 39)*. Chapter XXVII – Operations in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, June 3-August 3, 1863, 91.

Confederate cavalry on his left flank and rear. Sigel ordered a general withdrawal across the river at 4 pm ordering the burning of the North Fork Bridge behind him.[154]

Historian David Eicher explained that the Federals retreated rapidly northward along the Valley Turnpike. Sigel retreated down the Valley towards Mount Jackson. The northerners reached Mount Jackson at about 7:00pm. The Union force held a good position here for two hours before deciding to make a further retreat.[155]

Charles Knight described the casualties in the Battle of New Market and rapid retreat of the Yankee force from Mount Jackson to Strasburg. Union casualties were reported as 831 to 840 men. Confederate casualties were listed as 577 men including eight of the VMI cadets killed and forty-six wounded. The combined estimated casualties at the Confederate victory in the Battle of New Market were listed as 1,380. On May 16, 1864, Gen. Sigel's army conducted an overnight march of twenty miles from Mount Jackson. The Union force completed its retreat to Strasburg during the afternoon.[156]

On May 17, 1864, Sigel's force abandoned Strasburg and crossed to the north bank of Cedar Creek in the morning. On May 19, 1864, Union Maj. Gen. David Hunter relieved Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel in the Shenandoah Valley. Apparently, both Pres. Lincoln and Gen. Grant had seen enough of Gen. Sigel's performance. Sigel had abandoned his orders to capture Staunton and Charlottesville after his ignominious defeat at New Market. Gen. Hunter was given orders by Gen. Grant to resume the advance to Staunton and Charlottesville.[157]

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[154] Henry DuPont. *The Battle of Newmarket, Virginia, May 15, 1864* (Washington, D.C.: H. A. DuPont, 1923), 19-20.

[155] David J. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 692.

[156] Charles R. Knight, *Valley Thunder: The Battle of New Market and the Opening of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, May 1864* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2010), 216.

[157] Alfred H. Guernsey and Henry Mills Alden. *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War* (Chicago: Puritan Press Co., 1894), 631.

The operations in the Shenandoah Valley in 1862 and 1863 can be separated into two distinct eras. First, there was the superiority of the Confederacy in the Valley in 1862. Second, there was a transition that was perceived in the balance of power in the Valley beginning in 1863 and continuing into 1864.

The superiority of the Confederacy in the Valley was seen in two ways. First, the Shenandoah Valley served as an open door into the North for the southern armies. Second, the Union leadership failed to adequately review their performance. On the other hand, the Confederates realized that they did not need to fix what they were doing because it was not broken.

The perceived transition in the balance of power in the Valley can be seen also in three ways. First, after Gettysburg, there was a change perceived by both sides in the status quo. Second, although there was somewhat of a learning curve for the new leadership emphasis in the North, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant brought a new perspective. Third, the new Union leadership presented a very familiar approach to the war.

To begin, the Shenandoah Valley was an open door into the North for the southern armies. The significance of the action at Harper's Ferry was the opening of a strategic door through the Shenandoah Valley for Jackson to join Lee at Antietam located in Maryland in 1862. Likewise, the consequence of the action at Winchester, Virginia was an opened door for the Army of Northern Virginia to move through Maryland and into Pennsylvania in 1863. Gen. Robert E. Lee's invasion of Maryland served as a problem for the Union command including Pres. Abraham Lincoln both politically and militarily. Overall, however, there was a difference between how the Confederate military leadership and the Union military leadership perceived the

importance of the two southern campaigns of Gen. Lee. The Confederates viewed the Valley as critical for victory. The Union leadership viewed the Valley as peripheral.

This difference in the view of the importance of the Shenandoah Valley led to the assigning of leaders by the Federals who were much less capable than their Confederate counterparts. We can see a prime example of this when Gen. Lee's army moved through the Valley to invade the North. At Harper's Ferry, the Union commander Colonel Dixon Miles failed to adequately defend the high ground around the town. In so doing, he doomed the town and its over 12,000-man garrison to either being killed or captured by Jackson's army. The return of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia into Virginia through the Shenandoah Valley after Antietam clearly demonstrated the significance of the Valley as a gateway into the North for the southern military. The value of this for both sides could not be missed. The subsequent action at Shepherdstown served as a rear-guard action which effectively closed the back door to Virginia to the Union army.

The Union leadership failed to correct their performance while the Confederates realized they did not need to fix what they were doing because it was not broken. Antietam was the first time the Shenandoah Valley was used as an access point for the Confederate army to invade the North. Why did this then not serve as a reason for the Union leadership to close the Shenandoah Valley to the Confederate army? With the safe return of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia into Virginia through the Shenandoah Valley after Antietam, the time would have seemed right for both armies to take stock of their situation relative to the Valley. For the Confederacy, the status quo would work just fine. Not so for the Army of the Potomac. The status quo amounted to a Confederate army which could move as it pleased through the Shenandoah Valley whenever and wherever it wished to go.

After Gettysburg, there was a change perceived by both sides in the status quo. Gettysburg was the second time the Shenandoah Valley was used by Lee to invade the North. Something was different this time, however, as the Confederate army could not close the back door a second time into Virginia.

Subsequently, there was somewhat of a learning curve for the new leadership emphasis in the North brought by Gen. Ulysses S. Grant with a new perspective. After Gettysburg, the northern military leadership made the decision to attempt once again to take control of the Shenandoah Valley. This time they did so with a new commanding general of all Union forces in the war in the person of Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. His approach to the Valley was different than any of his predecessors in that position. The Union failure at the Battle of New Market seemed a repeat of the last two years in Virginia. However, it did demonstrate this new emphasis of Grant. The New Market episode can be interpreted as a training opportunity for Grant like Jackson received at Kernstown.

The new Union leadership presented a very familiar approach to the war. There was evidence that the doorway through the Valley could swing both north and south. Although the Union leadership had chosen not to close the Shenandoah Valley sooner to the Confederate army, it seemed that Gen. Grant did see the need to do it now. There had to be an explanation as to why Grant made the strategic changes he did at this juncture in the war. This explanation can only be understood in the key differences between Gen. Grant and his predecessors in northern Virginia. His choice of Gen. Franz Sigel to lead the invasion of the Valley for the Union turned out to be an extremely disappointing one. Nevertheless, the decision to send significant Union troops into the Shenandoah Valley signaled a new approach by the northern leadership. This new approach was one following the impetus of Gen. Grant to adjust the strategic emphasis of

the Union military in the war. Essentially, this new approach was one of putting constant pressure on Gen. Lee as well as all Confederate field armies. This was the first time Gen. Lee faced an opponent who conducted military operations like himself.

## Chapter 7 – The Union Offensive Begins to Work

If there was ever an ash heap for Union officers who failed during the Civil War, that place could have been Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Those who established themselves as washouts for various reasons would be assigned by Washington, D.C. to command the base at Harper's Ferry which housed those intended to protect the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. The idea was to give them a command in which they theoretically could not mess up. Unfortunately, some people have the knack to make a dozen roses smell like fertilizer. To such notable washouts like Col. Dixon Miles, Col. Thomas Ford, and Maj. Gen. Robert Milroy, the debacle at New Market added Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel to the motley crew.

Union Gen. David Hunter's campaign in western Virginia represented a significant attempt without the ability of sustainment to fulfill Lt. Gen. Grant's strategy in the Shenandoah Valley of imposing consistent pressure on the Confederacy in general and Gen. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia in particular. Hunter's effort can be seen in four episodes in the Valley in 1864. First, at the Battle of Piedmont, Gen. Hunter removed the last Confederate obstacle to the capture of Staunton, Virginia. He did this while also opening a route to threaten Gen. Lee's rear echelon at Lynchburg, Virginia. Second, the Battle of Lynchburg represented the zenith of Gen. Hunter's effort to capture Lynchburg, Virginia. This threat toward the rear flank of the Army of Northern Virginia required an immediate and important response from Gen. Lee. The Confederate response to Hunter's incursion left open the Shenandoah Valley as an avenue of approach once again into the North for an invading Confederate army. Third, in the Battle of Monocacy, Confederate Gen. Early removed the last Union obstacle for his approach to Washington, D. C. Unfortunately for Early, the delay lasted long enough to eliminate any chance of a southern capture of the Union capital city. Fourth, the Second Battle of Kernstown

represented the last Confederate victory in the Shenandoah Valley. It also closed off the last opportunity for southern military units to attack into northern territory in the war.

## Battle of Piedmont

Since the war had started over three years before, the strategically valuable railroad intersection, supply depot, and communication center located at Staunton, Virginia had been a target of attack for the Federals and a target of defense for the Confederates. In 1862, Gen. Milroy tried to capture Staunton from the west, Gen. Frémont attempted to take it from the north, and Gen. Shields wanted to capture it from the east. None of these Union military leaders had been successful. All three of them had been stymied by Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson in his splendid Valley Campaign of that year. In 1864, Gen. Grant assigned the mission of taking Staunton to Gen. Sigel. He was stopped by Gen. Breckinridge in May. A Union officer originally from Winchester, Virginia, David Strother referred to the Shenandoah Valley as "the Valley of Humiliation" for northern commanders. In late May 1864, yet another Union commander would attempt to seize Staunton.

Union Gen. David Hunter's campaign in western Virginia represented a significant effort to fulfill Lt. Gen. Grant's strategy in the Shenandoah Valley of imposing consistent pressure on the Confederacy in general and Gen. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia in particular. Although Hunter was unable to sustain this pressure, he was the first Union general to impose it. In every engagement, there are three basic segments of activity. First, there is the understanding of the beginning strategic situation and the movement of both contenders to the point of conflict. Second, there are the beginning, defining, and disengaging tactical operations conducted by both commanders on the field. Third, there are the results of the engagement both operationally and strategically.

Leading up to the engagement at Piedmont, Virginia, Gen. Hunter's presence was significantly stronger than the Confederates allowing the Federals to move with very little opposition from Cedar Creek to Port Republic. "Grumble" Jones was assigned the job to protect Staunton. On May 16, 1864, Gen. Sigel returned from the debacle at New Market to Cedar Creek, Virginia just north of Strasburg, Virginia. Within three days, Sigel was relieved of command on May 19, 1864 and posted to Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. By the 21st of May, 1864, Maj. Gen. David Hunter had taken command of the Union Valley Corps at Cedar Creek. As commander of the Army of the Shenandoah, Hunter's command numbered between 8,000 and 9,000 soldiers.

David Hunter was born July 21, 1802 in Troy, New York, and from 1828 to 1831 he was stationed on the northwest frontier at Fort Dearborn in present-day Chicago. There Hunter met and married Maria Kinzie who was a daughter of John Kinzie considered the city's first permanent white resident. During his career, Gen. Hunter demonstrated a willingness to disregard rules in defiance of policies with which he disagreed. Regardless, Hunter displayed himself to be a very capable strategist and tactician in battle. He demonstrated these capabilities particularly in his 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign. Here, Hunter served as the most challenging and successful Union general in the Valley during the war up to that time. Even so, Gen. Hunter achieved notability for his unauthorized action in 1862. Specifically, he issued an abolitionist order emancipating slaves in three Southern states. This action was immediately rescinded by Pres. Lincoln. Eventually, David Hunter would serve as the president of the military commission given the responsibility to bring to trial the conspirators involved with the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Gen. Hunter believed that he was on God's side in the battle against slavery demonstrated by his response to the words of a Confederate who

claimed to be fighting for southern liberty. Said Hunter, "You say you are fighting for liberty. This is the kind of liberty–the liberty to do wrong–which Satan, Chief of the fallen Angels, was contending for when he was cast into Hell."[1]

After only five days of consolidating his command, on May 26, 1864 Hunter advanced southward once again against light opposition from the Confederates. He ordered his troops to live off the bountiful farms of the Shenandoah Valley. Hunter headed from Strasburg and Cedar Creek toward his two strategic goals of Staunton and Lynchburg. Following New Market, the majority of the Confederate forces in the Valley joined the Army of Northern Virginia under the command of Gen. Robert E. Lee. This left only Brig. Gen. John D. Imboden's brigade and the Valley Reserves commanded by Col. Kenton Harper to confront Hunter.[2]

Union Gen. David Hunter successfully moved his corps up the Valley as far as Harrisonburg and Port Republic just south of the Massanutten Mountain. Colonel Kenton Harper was in command of the Confederate Reserve Infantry Brigade of the Confederate Army of the Valley District numbering about 700. Kenton Harper was born in 1801 in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. In the early 1820s, he moved to Staunton, Virginia. Harper had married Ellen Calhoun, and together they had four children including two son's named Samuel and George and two daughters named Nancy and Mary. Kenton Harper worked as a newspaper editor, banker, and politician in Staunton. He was at the First Battle of Manassas in 1861 with Stonewall Jackson and served until his wife began actively dying. He resigned his commission to be with his wife. In 1864, the Union army began attacking in earnest his home in the Shenandoah

[1] Edward A. Miller. *Lincoln's Abolitionist General: The Biography of David Hunter* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), 5,9.

[2] Raymond K. Bluhm, Jr. *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign, March-November 1864* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 2014), 22.

Valley. Harper accepted a commission once again to serve with Gen. Early to protect his home.[3] By June 2, 1864, Hunter's army had reached Harrisonburg, VA. At that point, Gen. Imboden's troopers were the only obstacle to Gen. Hunter's advance.

Brig. Gen. John D. Imboden was the cavalry brigade commander for the Confederate Army of the Valley District. John Imboden was born February 16, 1823 near Staunton, Virginia. He received a private education locally at the Staunton Academy, and in 1841–1842 he attended Washington College. He took a job teaching at the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind in Staunton. Imboden also read law, was admitted to the Virginia bar, and entered into partnership with William Frazier to create a law firm. The man believed in the institution of marriage. In fact, during his life, Imboden was married five times. Five out of his nine children were alive at the time of his death in 1895. On June 16, 1845, Imboden married Eliza "Dice" Allen McCue who was a daughter of Colonel Franklin McCue. The Imbodens built a house in Staunton which they called the "Ingleside Cottage". They had four children with one dying before reaching three years. On December 23, 1857, his wife of twelve years died. On May 12, 1859, Imboden married Mary Wilson McPhail who gave birth to three children. Later, he married Edna Porter, then Anna Lockett, and finally Florence Crockett.[4]

In the Shenandoah Valley, Federal troops under Hunter fought at Covington, VA against Imboden's cavalry. Hunter's new effort was becoming understood to be the Lynchburg Campaign. By June 4, 1864, Hunter's Federals advanced further up the Shenandoah Valley. With that, there was fighting at Port Republic and Harrisonburg.[5]

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[3] Bruce A. Allardice. *More Generals in Gray* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 117.

[4] Spencer Tucker. *Brigadier General John D. Imboden: Confederate Commander in the Shenandoah* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2003), 6.

[5] Clement Anselm Evans, ed. *Confederate Military History: A Library of Confederate States History, Vol. 3* (Atlanta: Confederate Pub. Co., 1899), 471.

Confederate Gen. “Grumble” Jones was dispatched by Gen. Lee to protect Staunton, Virginia from Union capture while Federal Gen. Hunter moved into the vicinity of Piedmont, Virginia. Until this time, the Confederate military leadership had been able to protect their vital supply and communication base at Staunton, Virginia from all threats. Hunter’s Union army represented the most serious threat to date against Staunton. To counter this threat, Gen. Lee dispatched Gen. W. E. “Grumble” Jones to protect Staunton from Hunter’s intended deprivations. To do so, Gen. Jones prepared to stop Hunter at Piedmont, Virginia.[6]

Brig. Gen. William E. “Grumble” Jones was assigned the role of commander of the Confederate Army of the Valley District in June 1864. Jones was born in Washington County near Glade Spring, Virginia on May 9, 1824. He graduated from Emory and Henry College in 1844 and the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York in 1848. In 1852, he married Eliza Margaret Dunn. She was tragically killed when she was washed from his arms and drowned in a shipwreck shortly after their marriage while in route to Texas. His nickname "Grumble" reflected his irritable disposition. “Grumble” Jones developed a reputation for being a strict disciplinarian to his soldiers and quarrelsome toward superiors. Overall, he was recognized by his superiors and his men to be a good commander. In facing Union Gen. Hunter at Piedmont, Gen. Jones commanded Breckinridge’s old division in the Shenandoah Valley. On June 5, 1864, 8,500 Federal soldiers commanded by Union Gen. David Hunter and 5,500 Confederate soldiers commanded by Gen. William “Grumble” Jones approached one another at Piedmont, Virginia.[7]

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[6] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds. *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 4* (New York: The Century Co., 1884-87), 485.

[7] Samuel W. Mitcham, Jr. *The Encyclopedia of Confederate Generals: The Definitive Guide to the 426 Leaders of the South’s War Effort* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery History, 2022), 520-521.

As the two recalcitrant armies faced one another near Piedmont, a key truth had become abundantly clear. Union Gen. David Hunter's campaign in western Virginia represented a significant effort to fulfill Lt. Gen. Grant's strategy in the Shenandoah Valley of imposing consistent pressure on the Confederacy in general and Gen. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia in particular. Although Hunter was unable to sustain this pressure, he was the first Union general to impose it. Things had changed significantly in the Shenandoah Valley. To begin, a numerically superior Union army was poised to engage the last Confederate obstacle to the capture of Staunton, Virginia. Last, an increasingly desperate Confederate leadership fielded yet another outnumbered army to repulse one more Union general from the Shenandoah Valley.

Both the Union and the Confederate core leadership accepted the protocol of their day in how to distribute authority in their ranks. That protocol has not changed that much in the American military even to this day. The protocol was and still is that the highest ranking person takes command on any given battlefield. In the event there are two people with the same rank, the person with the most experience at that rank takes precedence and becomes the commander on the battlefield. Such was the case for the Confederates at Piedmont. Grumble Jones was the leader of the southern army at the Battle of Piedmont for two reasons. First, he had specifically received orders from Gen. Robert E. Lee to assume that role. Second, he outranked Gen. Imboden.

Deciding to defend the advantageous high and wooded ground north of the village of Piedmont, Virginia and between two bends of the Middle Shenandoah River, Gen. Grumble Jones made his preparations to face the Union forces of Gen. Hunter. There were five developments of this initial phase of the battle which would heavily impact the outcome. First, Gen. Jones had made an excellent selection of the setting for the battle as it was a strong one for

the outnumbered Confederates. Second, the Union troops outnumbered the Confederates by nearly two to one so there was no room for error in the actions and subsequent decisions of the southerners in the battle. Third, after a disagreement with Imboden about where to deploy, Confederate Gen. Jones made his decisions about the deployment of his troops even as he knew of Hunter's impending approach to his army. Fourth, Imboden's and Stahel's cavalry conducted the opening operations with the core of the Confederate troopers barely escaping disaster. Fifth, Gen. Jones made an error in the deployment of his troops leaving a gap in the right center of his line while he was putting the finishing touches on his deployment as Gen. Hunter prepared for his main attack.

Given that Grumble Jones was to decide where to position his defending army as he awaited the approach of Gen. Hunter, the Confederate general needed to consider the options which were presented to him. The setting for the battle was a strong one for the outnumbered Confederates. Piedmont, Virginia is located about seven miles southwest of Port Republic.[8] The main part of the battlefield was located between two bends in the Middle River fork of the Shenandoah River. The prominent features of the battlefield were two wooded hills located north and south of one another with Walker Road running east and west between them. The East Road from Port Republic, Virginia leading into Piedmont, Virginia ran north and south along the eastern edge of the battlefield.[9]

The Union troops outnumbered the Confederates by nearly two to one. The Union Army of the Shenandoah order of battle commanded by Maj. Gen. David Hunter consisted of an infantry division commanded by Brig. Gen. Jeremiah C. Sullivan, a cavalry division commanded by Maj. Gen. Julius Stahel, and an artillery division commanded by Cpt. Henry A. DuPont. Gen.

[8] Ulysses S. Grant. *Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 2* (New York: C. L. Webster & Co., 1885), 303.

[9] James M. McPherson. *The Atlas of the Civil War* (New York: MacMillan, 1994), 168.

Sullivan's infantry division consisted of two brigades. First Brigade was commanded by Col. Augustus Moor and Second Brigade was commanded by Col. Joseph Thoburn. Gen. Stahel's cavalry division consisted of two brigades and one horse artillery battery. First Brigade was commanded by Col. Andrew McReynolds and Second Brigade was commanded by Col. John Wynkoop. The horse artillery battery was commanded by Lt. Samuel J. Shearer. Cpt. DuPont's artillery division consisted of four batteries. The four batteries were Battery B, 1st Maryland Light Artillery commanded by Cpt. Alonzo Snow, 30th New York Independent Battery commanded by Cpt. Alfred Von Kleiser, Battery D, 1st West Virginia Light Artillery Cpt. John Carlin, and Battery B, 5th United States Artillery commanded by Lt. Charles Holman. For the Confederate States Army of the Valley District, it was commanded by Brig. Gen. William "Grumble" Jones and consisted of three infantry brigades, a cavalry brigade, reserves, and three artillery batteries all of which were controlled directly by Gen. Jones. The three infantry brigades were B.H. Jones Brigade commanded by Col. Beuhring H. Jones, Browne's Brigade commanded by Col. William H. Browne, and Vaughn's Brigade commanded by Brig. Gen. John C. Vaughn. The cavalry consisted of Imboden's Brigade commanded by Brig. Gen. John D. Imboden. The Valley Reserves consisted of one small infantry brigade commanded by Col. Kenton Harper. The three artillery batteries were the Lewisburg Battery commanded by Cpt. Thomas Bryan, the Staunton Horse Artillery commanded by Cpt. John McClanahan, and the Augusta Reserve Battery commanded by Cpt. James C. Marquis.[10]

Gen. Imboden expected to join forces with General Jones at Mowry's Hill. However, he was surprised to find Jones at Piedmont. The two commanders debated the situation with Jones making the decision to stand and fight at the village. Having made that decision crystal clear,

[10] Jack H. Lepa. *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864* (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2003): 54-55.

Jones made his choices regarding the deployment of his troops even as he knew of Hunter's impending approach. The Confederate deployment consisted of B.H. Jones' brigade being positioned on the right center of the line and Browne's brigade on the left center. Two of Imboden's cavalry regiments were located on the left flank. The Home Guard were at Piedmont which amounted to the Confederate reserves. Vaughn's cavalry brigade was located to the right flank of the infantry line with one artillery battery. The other battery was positioned with the Home Guard in Piedmont. The rest of Imboden's cavalry was located to the east and south of Vaughn's dismounted troopers.[11]

On the morning of June 5, 1864, the Union deployment by Gen. Hunter consisted of Moor's First Brigade positioned north of Walker Road along the wooded hill. Thoburn's Second Brigade was located northeast of Moor's brigade on a wooded hilltop in line with the Shaver property to the rear of Moor's left flank. Stahel's seven cavalry regiments were posted with two on Hunter's right flank, two at Hunter's center as a reserve, and three on Hunter's left flank with Gen. Stahel. The four Union batteries were positioned on high ground with Von Kleiser on the right flank, Snow and Carlin on the left flank, and Cpt. DuPont commanding with a battery near the Shaver property.[12]

Imboden's and Stahel's cavalry conducted the opening operations with the core of the Confederate troopers barely escaping disaster. Maj. Gen. Julius Stahel's cavalry led the advance which pushed back Gen. Imboden's picket line. When Stahel's advanced regiment reached Mount Meridian, Imboden successfully counterattacked with the 18th Virginia Cavalry. Stahel continued adding reinforcements into the fight which quickly overwhelmed the Virginians. Imboden barely escaped capture because of the counterattack by the balance of his brigade.

[11] Thomas A. Lewis. *The Shenandoah in Flames: The Valley Campaign of 1864* (Alexandria: Time-Life Books, 1987), 46-47.

[12] George E. Pond. *The Shenandoah Valley in 1864* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1883), 26-27.

This counterattack included local reserves from the upper Shenandoah Valley. Their combined effort saved the 18th Virginia cavalry from disaster. The Confederates proceeded to fall back slowly toward the village of Piedmont.[13]

Gen. Jones made an error in the deployment of his troops while he was putting the finishing touches on his deployment as Gen. Hunter prepared for his main attack. The southern general moved forward to Piedmont the Home Guard numbering about 700 soldiers. They were part of the contingent which had just been recruited to protect their homes from the advancing Federals. The Home Guard was supporting a section of horse artillery. Stahel's advance was stopped by this Confederate artillery and musket fire. On Imboden's immediate left, Brig. Gen. John C. Vaughn's brigade of dismounted Tennessee and Georgia horsemen went into position. Unfortunately for the Confederates and Gen. Jones, there was a gap of some 600 yards in the right center of his line between the right flank of the infantry and the left flank of the cavalry.[14]

Confederate Gen. Grumble Jones had made a solid decision as to where to make his stand against Union Gen. Hunter. In addition, he finalized his preparations to face the Union forces of Gen. Hunter. The Confederate commanding general had been given a brief amount of time to decide the ground he wanted to defend. Because of that advanced preparation by Gen. Jones, the Union commanding general was put into the position of conducting his offensive operations on terrain his adversary had selected. This put Confederate Gen. Grumble Jones at an advantage. The fact that the Confederates were severely outnumbered as usual going into the battle put Union Gen. Hunter at an advantage. Since the Confederate leadership were used to fighting with fewer numbers, this advantage was reduced enough to create an effective balance of power. Therefore, something else would have to determine the winner of this battle. In essence, some

[13] Spencer Tucker. *Brigadier General John D. Imboden: Confederate Commander in the Shenandoah* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2003), 234.

[14] Ibid., 236-237.

sort of tactical error would have to be made by either Gen. Jones or Gen. Hunter during the action. Gen. Jones' unintended creation of a gap in his lines, once discovered by Gen. Hunter, would prove to be insurmountable.

Brig. Gen. John C. Vaughn served Gen. Jones as a brigade commander in the infantry division of the Confederate Army of the Valley District. Born February 24, 1824 in Monroe County, Tennessee, John C. Vaughn married Nancy Ann Boyd in the 1840s. After she died in 1868, he remarried Florence Jones Vaughn. Vaughn had no formal military training although he did attend the Bolivar Academy in Madisonville, Tennessee. He fought in the Mexican War in the late 1840s, then went gold prospecting during the Gold Rush in California in 1850. Vaughn fought with Gen. Early in the Shenandoah Valley and at Washington, D. C. He was one of the last Confederate generals to surrender when they caught up with him and Jefferson Davis on May 10, 1865 at Irwinville, Georgia.[15]

The Confederate misjudgment during deployment and subsequent repositioning led to the catastrophic end of the Battle of Piedmont. The end for the Confederates came in three actions. To begin, the Confederate infantry got the better of the Union infantry while the Union artillery silenced the Confederate artillery. Next, Gen. Grumble Jones attempted to adjust the positioning of his infantry for an attack of his own only to completely uncover the gap at the center of his lines. Finally, the Confederate repositioning revealed the gap in their lines to Gen. Hunter who ordered a flanking attack which broke the Confederate lines and led to the death of Gen. Grumble Jones.

The Confederate infantry got the better of the Union infantry while the Union artillery silenced the Confederate artillery. The infantry of Gen. Jones had sized up the efforts of Gen.

[15] Ezra J. Warner. *Generals in Gray: Lives of the Confederate Commanders* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), 316.

Hunter's infantry quickly in the battle. Gen. Vaughn's left flank was still resting six hundred or so yards from the rear of Jones's right wing. This was still leaving the gap in the center of the Confederate line. In the meantime, Union General Stahel's cavalry kept Vaughn and Imboden from moving by being positioned to their front. Col. Augustus Moor's brigade drove in Jones' advance line on the west side of the Staunton Road. Moor was compelled to halt along the edge of some woods across an open field where Jones' Confederates were sitting behind some entrenchments in woods of their own. On the east side of the East (Staunton) Road, Col. Joseph Thoburn's brigade was advancing through a wooded ravine. Gen. Hunter at this point did not realize that a gap existed in the Confederate lines. Therefore, Thoburn's soldiers were moving toward Gen. Imboden's position. Thoburn's group advanced under heavy artillery fire from the Confederates. Upon seeing Moor's repulse and subsequent halt, Thoburn decided to withdraw to support the Union artillery at the Shaver farm.[16]

Maj. Gen. Julius Stahel's cavalry was providing a protective screen for Cpt. DuPont's artillery located at the Shaver farm. Julius Stahel served Gen. Hunter as the commander of the cavalry division in the Union Army of the Shenandoah. Stahel was born November 5, 1825 in Szeged, Hungary. He fought for Hungarian independence from Austria in the Revolution of 1848. When the Habsburgs put down the rebellion, Stahel escaped through Prussia and England to the United States in 1859. At the Battle of Piedmont, Stahel distinguished himself under fire resulting in his being hit in the shoulder. This action led to Gen. Stahel's receiving the Medal of Honor on November 4, 1893 for leading his division until seriously wounded. Gen. Stahel was a lifelong bachelor who died alone in 1912 at the age of eighty-seven.[17]

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[16] Richard R. Duncan. *R. Lee's Endangered Left: The Civil War in Western Virginia Spring of 1864* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 178-179.

[17] Ezra J. Warner. *Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 469.

At noon, Gen. Hunter ordered yet another attack against Gen. Jones' main force across Walker Road by his infantry under the command of Brig. Gen. Jeremiah C. Sullivan. Jeremiah Sullivan was Hunter's commander of the infantry division in the Union Army of the Shenandoah which had already attempted two attacks against the Confederate positions. Sullivan was born October 1, 1830 at Madison, Indiana. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1848. Gen. Sullivan was one of the few graduates of the Naval Academy who went on to serve as an army commander during the Civil War. Sullivan was a principled man not inclined to be antisemitic. He demonstrated this by refusing to put into practice General Order #11 given by Gen. Grant which required the expulsion of all Jews from his military district. Said Sullivan, "I thought I was an officer of the army and not of a church." Although being strong of character, Sullivan displayed an unfortunate lack of initiative at the Battle of Piedmont and the Battle of Lynchburg under Gen. David Hunter's command. The result of this poor performance was, regrettably, the general being relieved of command.[18] At Piedmont, Gen. Sullivan ordered his infantry division to array in battle formation and advance against the entrenched Confederates to his front. The rebel infantry were barricaded behind nearly impregnable rail fences and trenches. The consequence was another repulse of Sullivan's troops. Simultaneously, the actions of the Union artillery were wreaking havoc on the infantry of Grumble Jones. The Union artillery commander was Cpt. Henry A. DuPont of the famous Delaware Duponts. Using a coordinated concentration of artillery power, Cpt. DuPont was able to systematically silence most of the Confederate guns. Only a few of Jones' guns placed with Imboden on the extreme Confederate right remained active.[19]

[18] Ibid., 487-488.

[19] Richard Wende. *Campaign of Light Battery "B," 5th U. S. Artillery, Commanded by Captain and By Col H. A. Du Pont* (Phillipsburg: E. B. Galligan, 1895), 15.

Gen. Grumble Jones attempted to adjust the positioning of his infantry for an attack of his own only to completely uncover the gap at the center of his lines. In a report by Union Gen. David Hunter, it was at this point that Jones decided to reposition his left brigade so that it was aligned with Beuhring Jones, Vaughn, and Imboden. Developments soon belayed that decision. Union Gen. Sullivan had sent two regiments to shore up Col. Moor's badly treated brigade. Having completed this action, Sullivan ordered another attack against the Confederate's stronghold. Just like in the other instances, this advance was also worsted. After this Union failure, the Confederates conducted their own counterattack. The 28th Ohio and some dismounted horsemen armed with Spencer repeating carbines made a determined stand. Once again, they were supported by a section of DuPont's artillery. It was now the Southerners' turn to fall back. Regardless, Grumble Jones believed that he had identified a weakness in the Union lines. To take advantage of this believed weakness, Gen. Jones rearranged his forces with the intention to launch a concerted attack against Col. Moor's battered brigade. Jones ordered Vaughn to advance the greater part of his brigade to the left wing. Vaughn's brigade had been the only protection for the Confederate forces against the gap in the center. Gen. Vaughn moved the majority of his brigade from its position in the edge of the woods covering the large gap. The Virginians ended up in a second line of battle behind the main Confederate line. This movement left the gap completely undefended. The ramifications of this would soon come into play thereby changing the nature of the battle.[20]

The Confederate movement caught Gen. Hunter's eye and revealed the gap in the Confederate lines to him. Quickly, Hunter ordered a flanking attack which broke the Confederate lines and led to the death of Gen. Grumble Jones. Col. Thoburn quickly advanced to within a few yards of the Confederate left before his men were spotted. The resulting volleys

[20] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XXXVII. 1891. (Vol. 37, Chap. 49). Part I – Reports, Union and Confederate Correspondence, etc. Chapter XXXVII – Operations in Northern West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, May 1-August 3, 1864,* 95.

of musket fire shattered the flank of the southern army. At the same time, Moor's brigade joined the assault against the Confederate front. Jones attempted to retrieve the situation by bringing up the Valley Reserves. All they managed to do was slow Thoburn's advance, but the Reserves were unable to throw back the Union attack. At this point, Grumble Jones dashed up to a small group of rallying Confederates. He attempted to lead them in a charge toward the oncoming Union infantry. Almost immediately, a Union bullet struck him in the center of his forehead. The Confederate commanding general was dead before he hit the ground. Seeing the fall of their commanding general, the Confederates panicked and began to run away from the battle toward the bluffs of the Middle River. The Union forces continued their drive effectively splitting the Confederate force in two. It was then that the brigades of Thoburn and Moor united along with portions of Stahel's cavalry. The consequence was the capture of about 1,000 Confederates. Cpt. John McClanahan's Virginia horse artillery had been posted near the Valley Reserves near the village of Piedmont. They made a stand there which managed to slow the Union drive southward. This provided time for the remaining Confederates to flee from the battlefield.[21]

The Confederate misjudgment during deployment and subsequent repositioning led to the catastrophic end of the Battle of Piedmont. The bottom line to the way the battle ended was twofold. First, the Confederate Army of the Valley District was devastated. Gen. Vaughn was reminded that he was the highest ranking officer for the Confederate Shenandoah army. Vaughn made every effort to reorganize his demolished command. In the immediate future there was little the southern Valley command could do to resist Gen. Hunter's actions. Second, the Confederacy was deprived of yet another strong military leader with the death of Gen. Grumble Jones.

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[21] Douglas Southall Freeman. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Gettysburg to Appomattox, Volume 3* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), 516.

For the first time in the Civil War, Federal troopers marched into Staunton, Virginia. Gen. Hunter moved his army into Staunton capturing the Shenandoah Valley's important Confederate operational center. Additionally, he continued his raids on civilian property confiscating what his army could use and burning what they did not want. These raids made Hunter's name loathed by the people of the Valley. In the Battle of Piedmont, 14,000 soldiers both Union and Confederate were engaged. The Federals lost around 875 men and the Confederates about 1,500. Of those 1,500 Confederate soldiers lost, around 1,000 southerners were captured. Finally, one of the collateral components of Gen. Grant's overall planned offensive operations was beginning to go in the Union's favor. The battle was a resounding Union victory. For the time being, the Shenandoah Valley was completely controlled by the northern armies.[22]

## Battle of Lynchburg

Union Gen. Hunter had achieved the first of his two strategic goals in the Valley of Virginia. He was sitting in Staunton, Virginia working on the concentration of his forces while planning for his next strategic goal. That second goal was the capture of Lynchburg, Virginia. Gen. Hunter's efforts were much more successful than his predecessor. Gen. Franz Sigel had moved as far up the Valley as New Market where he was soundly thrashed by Confederate Gen. Breckinridge. Gen. Hunter soundly defeated Confederate Gen. Jones at Piedmont and captured Staunton the next day. The question at that time reverberated, "How successful would Gen. Hunter be at capturing Lynchburg?"

The reality was Gen. David Hunter functioned as the most capable military leader for the United States in the Shenandoah Valley while still being too conservative to accomplish Gen.

[22] "HUNTER: Victory at the Head of the Shenandoah Valley Staunton." *New York Herald (1840-1865)*, ProQuest Civil War Era, June 9, 1864, pg. 1.

Grant's purposes in that theater of action. The Union campaign to capture Lynchburg demonstrates this in several ways. To begin, with no resistance to speak of from the Confederates after Piedmont, Gen. Hunter was able to move toward his target of Lynchburg, Virginia consistently at his own convenience and pace. In the meantime, Gen. Robert E. Lee realized the threat posed to the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia by Gen. Hunter's Federals approaching Lynchburg, so Lee detached Gen. Jubal Early's Second Corps to join Gen. John Breckinridge's division at Lynchburg which was accomplished without the Union army's knowledge due to the lack of effective northern reconnaissance. Subsequently, Gen. Early enjoyed an element of surprise with his powerfully reinforced forces at Lynchburg until Gen. Hunter's incessant probing of the Confederate line began to reveal more southern strength than first realized. Ultimately gaining the realization of the strength of the Confederates, Gen. Hunter came reluctantly to the conclusion that he would not be able to take Lynchburg, so he began retreating northward. In the end, the result of the Battle of Lynchburg was a Confederate victory which consigned Gen. Hunter's Federals to a retrograde action with southerners on his tail every step of the way until the Union army left the Shenandoah Valley for the relative safety of the Kanawha Valley in West Virginia.

With no resistance to speak of from the Confederates after Piedmont, Gen. Hunter was able to move toward his target of Lynchburg, Virginia consistently at his own convenience and pace. There were three conditions which determined the beginning strategic situation in the Valley and the movement of both the Federals and Confederates to the action at Lynchburg. To begin, the strategic situation relative to the Shenandoah Valley consisted of Gen. Hunter's army having no real opposition provided by the Confederates from Staunton to Lynchburg. Moreover, although there was no significant opposition to Gen. Hunter's progress, there were several

difficulties which he did encounter along the way. Last, as the Union forces continued putting pressure on the Confederates, the southerners tactically withdrew slowly toward Lynchburg.

The strategic situation relative to the Shenandoah Valley consisted of Gen. Hunter's army having no real opposition provided by the Confederates from Staunton to Lynchburg. On the 8th of June, 1864, troops of Gen. George Crook and Gen. William W. Averell reinforced Hunter's Union force which had its target to be Lynchburg. This brought Gen. Hunter's army to 18,000 men. By June 10th, the strategic value during the Civil War of the city of Lynchburg had grown significantly. Lynchburg had become a supply and hospital center for the Confederacy. It was also a junction in the railway system that supplied the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia at Richmond, Virginia. For this reason, Gen. Hunter reached the conclusion that it would be important to capture the city. Because of his familiarity with the area between Staunton and Lynchburg, Brig. Gen. Averell devised a plan which called for the infantry divisions of Generals Crook and Jeremiah C. Sullivan to proceed south from Staunton on June 10th. They would be screened by Averell's cavalry division. Gen. Hunter and his main body of the Union army would move toward Lexington and Lynchburg in the Shenandoah Valley. To counter Hunter's moves, Confederates commanded by Gen. Breckinridge gathered to oppose the Federals with action at Middlebrook, Brownsburg, and Waynesboro.[23]

Although there was no significant opposition to Gen. Hunter's progress, there were several difficulties which he did encounter along the way. By June 11, 1864, Hunter had two major problems. First, he was supposed to receive help from Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan. The problem for Gen. Hunter was that Sheridan never showed up because he had suffered a major setback at the Battle of Trevilian Station. Subsequently, Gen. Sheridan was forced to retreat to

[23] Henry Steele Commager, ed. *The Blue and the Gray: The Story of the Civil War as Told by Participants, Vol. II* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1973), 430.

the area around Richmond and Petersburg. Second, Hunter's supply lines were being harassed by Confederate cavalry commanded by Lt. Col. John S. Mosby. From the last half of May, 1864 until the battle for Lynchburg, only one supply wagon had managed to reach Gen. Hunter's army. Regardless of these difficulties, Gen. Hunter was able to overcome the efforts of Confederate cavalry leader John McCausland who withdrew to Buchanan, Virginia in Botetourt County, Virginia. This led to the sacking of Lexington, VA. This plundering of Lexington included the burning of the Virginia Military Institute and the home of former Virginia governor John Letcher. Following these actions, the Union commanding general ordered a raid on Arrington's Depot and the ordering of Col. Alfred N. Duffié to join him in preparation for the movement on Lynchburg. As of June 13th, Gen. Robert E. Lee was influenced by the threat in the Shenandoah Valley represented by the Union army moving toward Lynchburg. In response, Lee ordered Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early's Second Corps to the Valley to stop Hunter's Federals. There was action near Buchanan, and Union scouting occurred from Lexington in the direction of Lynchburg. Duffié linked up with Gen. Hunter that same day. Hunter assigned Gen. Averell to drive the Confederate Gen. McCausland out of the town of Buchanan and capture the bridge there across the James River. The southerners burned the bridge and fled the town.[24]

The Union forces continued putting pressure on the Confederates which caused the southerners to tactically withdraw slowly toward Lynchburg. Gen. Hunter joined Gen. Averell in Buchanan whereby a skirmish took place at New Glasgow. Next day, the Federal army advanced along the road between the Peaks of Otter. Their cavalry occupied Liberty, Virginia now known as Bedford. June 16th Gen. Hunter's army covered entirely Lynchburg and the Confederates protecting the city commanded by Gen. Breckinridge. Unbeknownst to Hunter,

[24] Gary W. Gallagher, ed. *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 231.

Gen. Early's corps was approaching rapidly. West of Lynchburg, skirmishes took place nearby on Otter Creek near Liberty and at New London, VA. Coincidingly, Breckinridge sent Gen. John D. Imboden and his cavalry to reinforce Gen. McCausland. Maj. Gen. Daniel Harvey Hill and Brig. Gen. Harry T. Hays constructed a defensive line in the hills just southwest of Lynchburg. That afternoon, McCausland fell back to New London and skirmished with Union Gen. Averell's cavalry who was incessantly pursuing him. The Union forces launched another attack on McCausland and Imboden that evening. The Confederates retreated from New London toward Lynchburg. All of this action resulted in hiding the approach of Early's corps while setting up the battle which would begin the next day.[25]

The action began to develop in the Lynchburg area with Union Gen. David Hunter being confused about the strength of the enemy he was facing due to the lack of adequate Federal intelligence. The Confederate cavalry was dug in four miles from Lynchburg with Gen. Breckinridge's forces defending the city which effectively kept the Union army far enough away to not see what was happening around the southern defenses. With the Confederate primary defenses established two miles from Lynchburg, the southern ruse intended to confuse Gen. Hunter's Federals as to the number of troops under Breckinridge's command was developing into a successful operation. Gen. Early's Second Corps successfully reinforced Gen. Breckinridge's forces in the defense of Lynchburg without being noticed by Gen. Hunter. Given this tactical scenario, the Battle of Lynchburg developed along three lines.

To begin, the Confederate cavalry was dug in four miles from Lynchburg with Gen. Breckinridge's forces defending the city which effectively kept the Union army far enough away to not see what was happening around the southern defenses. Gen. Hunter's army consisted of

[25] Military Historical Society of Massachusetts. *The Shenandoah Campaigns of 1862 and 1864 and the Appomattox Campaign, 1865* (Boston: Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, 1907), 79-80.

16,643 while Gen. Early's Confederate corps numbered 14,000 engaged. Early arrived in Lynchburg at one in the afternoon on June 17th to take stock of the tactical situation into which his corps would be entering. Later that afternoon, Union Gen. Averell attacked the dismounted cavalry of Confederate generals McCausland and Imboden at the Quaker Meeting House. This location where the southerners were dug in stood four miles from Lynchburg. The Confederates were pushed into a retrograde motion after the brigade commanded by Col. Carr B. White's moved in to support Averell.[26]

Next, with the Confederate primary defenses established two miles from Lynchburg, the southern ruse intended to confuse Gen. Hunter's Federals as to the number of troops under Breckinridge's command was developing into a successful operation. There were two brigades of Maj. Gen. Stephen Dodson Ramseur's division which occupied the area around a stronghold in the primary defenses two miles from the city that impeded the Union advance. In preparation for the action at Lynchburg, Gen. Hunter chose Sandusky as his headquarters in the area. There Hunter began planning the attack on Gen. Early's defenses. Gen. Early gave the order for the Lynchburg trains to run up and down the railroad tracks so they could be heard that night by the Union army. Various musical instruments such as bugles and drums were heard by Hunter's men playing throughout the night. The people of Lynchburg made noise by having bands play and the citizens screaming all night.[27]

Finally, Gen. Early's Second Corps successfully reinforced Gen. Breckinridge's forces in the defense of Lynchburg without being noticed by Gen. Hunter. Their goal during the activities on the night of the seventeenth was to make the Confederate army seem larger than it really was.

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[26] Moss, Captain Terry R. "Jubal Anderson Early: Glory to Ignominy His Shenandoah Valley Campaign." (Master of Arts thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1981), 14.

[27] T. Harry Williams. *Hayes of the Twenty-Third: The Civil War Volunteer Officer* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 196.

Early's Second Corps began arriving in Lynchburg to join Breckinridge's forces in the defense of the city. To begin the activity, a skirmish was conducted at nearby Diamond Hill.[28]

The conclusive action at Lynchburg came as the result of Confederate tactical decisions which supported the erroneous tactical conclusions reached by Union Gen. Hunter leading to the actions that shaped the end of the battle. This transpired in three phases. First, Confederate Gen. Breckinridge's location and actions effectively hid the arrival of Gen. Early's Second Corps into the Lynchburg defenses. Second, Union Gen. Hunter made his tactical decisions based on erroneous conclusions he had drawn related to Confederate reinforcements. Third, Gen. Hunter's northern intelligence led the Federal commander to believe that his army was losing the opportunity to take Lynchburg.

To begin, Gen. Breckinridge's location and actions effectively hid the arrival of Gen. Early's Second Corps into the Lynchburg defenses. Confederate Gen. Jubal Early's Second Corps leadership assumed command of Breckinridge's infantry and Imboden's command of the mounted cavalry at Lynchburg. Gen. Early had managed to obtain an element of surprise as Gen. Breckinridge's division served as a screen against the Federals while being reinforced by Early's men. Early made the decision to remain defensive and wait for the rest of the Second Corps to arrive.[29]

Next, Gen. Hunter made his tactical decisions based on erroneous conclusions he had drawn related to Confederate reinforcements. The city's inner defenses were occupied by the Confederate Home Guard and the VMI cadets from Lexington, Virginia. Based on the reports he

[28] Scott C. Patchan. *Shenandoah Summer: The 1864 Valley Campaign* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 6-7.

[29] William Swinton. *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac: A Critical History of Operations in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania from the Commencement to the Close of the War, 1861-1865* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882), 469.

had received and what he could see, Hunter was still not convinced that Lee had sent reinforcements to Lynchburg. Therefore, Hunter proceeded to make light attacks against Early.[30]

Finally, Gen. Hunter's Union intelligence led the Federal commander to believe that his army was losing the opportunity to take Lynchburg. The Federals reconnoitered the line in an effort to find a weak spot through which to push their infantry. However, Hunter ruled out a direct attack on the Confederate redoubts because they appeared to be too strong. Instead, he allowed his artillery commander Henry A. du Pont to deploy his thirty-two cannons. The southerners returned the artillery fire in what amounted to an artillery exchange. Although spectacular, this artillery exchange accomplished little. As ammunition ran short, both Gen. Hunter and Gen. Duffié became convinced that they were outnumbered.[31]

The Battle of Lynchburg culminated in a Confederate victory and Union defeat which once again cleared the Shenandoah Valley of any Federal presence while opening the Valley to Gen. Early's southern army to move north as far as Washington, D.C. if possible. After Gen. Hunter had struggled with no success for some time, he reached the conclusion that he was not going to prevail against the Confederates and needed to craft a plan to withdraw. Union Gen. David Hunter's ignominious defeat by the Confederates at Lynchburg produced a retreat of great hardship on the men under his command the likes of which the northern soldiers would compare all future hardships endured during the war.

After Gen. Hunter had struggled with no success for some time, he reached the conclusion that he was not going to prevail against the Confederates and needed to craft a plan to withdraw. Crook was sent to flank the Confederate left. After marching a few miles, Gen.

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[30] Spencer Tucker. *Brigadier General John D. Imboden: Confederate Commander in the Shenandoah* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2003), 258-259.

[31] Raymond K. Bluhm, Jr. *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign, March-November 1864* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 2014), 29.

Crook found the flanking movement to be impracticable. Gen. Crook began countermarching back to his original position with Gen. Sullivan and the artillery. In the meantime, the Confederates attacked Gen. Sullivan's infantry and du Pont's artillery. Sullivan and du Pont managed to hold the Confederate attack at bay until Gen. Crook returned. The Confederates fell back after a half-hour of fighting. The southerners spent the next hour and twenty minutes attempting to break through the gap between Sullivan and Duffié. In the end, the Confederates ended up withdrawing to their breastworks. A regiment of Col. Rutherford B. Hayes' brigade pursued them to their works but was beaten back. Early was preparing an attack of his own. However, Hunter began retreating at nightfall. By the end of the day on June 18, 1864, Gen. Hunter had begun to withdraw northward knowing he could not take Lynchburg in the face of the reinforced Confederates.[32]

Union Gen. David Hunter's ignominious defeat by the Confederates at Lynchburg produced a retreat of great hardship on the men under his command the likes of which the northern soldiers compared all future hardships endured during the war. The next day on June 19th, Gen. Hunter's Federals continued their withdrawal with Gen. Early's Confederates in close pursuit. Hunter made the choice to head for the Kanawha Valley in West Virginia instead of heading into the Shenandoah Valley leaving the Shenandoah open to the Confederates. David Hunter felt that he could not retire through the Shenandoah Valley. There were two reasons he reached this conclusion. First, Hunter realized that his actions in ascending the Shenandoah Valley had left a gauntlet of angry southerners in his wake. The resistance he was sure to encounter could be compared to an angry wasps nest after just being struck by a stick and would make the guerillas he had dealt with on his way up the Valley seem like child's play. Second,

[32] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XXXVII. 1891. (Vol. 37, Chap. 49). Part I – Reports, Union and Confederate Correspondence, etc. Chapter XXXVII – Operations in Northern West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, May 1-August 3, 1864*, 7.

the Federal supply lines were in West Virginia which explained why Hunter's army found it necessary to forage in the Valley. As the northern army retired from Lynchburg, they encountered Confederates during a skirmish at Liberty, Virginia about twenty-five miles west of Lynchburg. By the twentieth, Hunter's retreating Federals had to fight at Buford's Gap. The next day the pursuing Confederates and retreating Federals from the Valley of Virginia engaged between Salem, Virginia and at Catawba Mountain near a little place called Hanging Rock. Confederate cavalry commander Gen. McCausland caught up with the rear of Hunter's column because of the narrow path through the mountains at Hanging Rock. His troopers inflicted significant damage on the Union group moving through the pass in single file. They captured nearly 100 prisoners and eight cannons while causing the Federals to spike two additional guns to keep them from being captured. June 23, 1864, Jubal Early's command was advancing from Lynchburg toward the Shenandoah as Hunter's Federals were withdrawing toward West Virginia. The last fights with Gen. Hunter's army occurred at New Castle, Virginia, Sweet Sulphur Springs, Virginia, and Cove Gap, West Virginia.[33]

The strategic situation in the Shenandoah Valley had changed once again. Union Gen. David Hunter's command had wreaked a great deal of havoc on the southerners in the Valley since the end of May. In so doing, Hunter had managed to do something none of his predecessors could. That is, the Federal general had managed to destroy large quantities of Confederate industry and supplies while terrorizing the civilian populace thus fulfilling the goals of Gen. Grant. Throughout his visit, Hunter had encountered only one southern army that gave him any difficulty. This all ended at Lynchburg. There the Union general encountered a force which could and did stand toe to toe with him. Faced with this proposition, there was only one

[33] Richard R. Duncan. *Lee's Endangered Left: The Civil War in Western Virginia Spring of 1864* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 300.

thing Gen. Hunter could think to do – run. In what appeared to be a fair fight, Hunter's men had trouble understanding why they were leaving the battle. Several northern leaning authors over the years have explained Gen. Hunter's decision to retreat as being due to lack of ammunition. Whatever the reason, the Federal army left the Lynchburg environs in the middle of the night moving quickly and surreptitiously to escape the southern army commanded by Gen. Jubal Early. The salvation of Lynchburg, Virginia from Gen. Hunter was both beneficial and costly to Gen. Robert E. Lee and the Confederacy. Facing Grant at Petersburg and Richmond, Gen. Lee made the decision to detach over one-fourth of his army to save Lynchburg. Once Hunter was sent packing from Lynchburg, Gen. Early was not about to let him escape unscathed. Early saw to it that the Federal forces were attacked and damaged repeatedly during their retreat. However, Gen. Hunter was pushing his forces quite hard to get away from the southerners. Instead of retreating the way they had come, the northern army veered off from the Shenandoah Valley west into the Kanawha Valley and the safety of West Virginia. It was an inauspicious finish to what began quite promising as the possible capture of Staunton, Lynchburg, and Charlottesville in Virginia. After, Gen. Grant was looking forward to adding Hunter's army to his own at Richmond. Alternatively, the Federals were about to face something quite different.

## Battle of Monocacy

Confederate Gen. Jubal Early had just completed chasing Gen. Hunter out of the Shenandoah Valley and Virginia like a barking and biting dog chasing a trespasser. Consequently, Union Gen. David Hunter had rendered his army irrelevant by running away to the other side of the Appalachians. With this, Gen. Early was sitting in the catbird seat in the Shenandoah Valley with no enemy forces of any consequence facing him. Gen. Robert E. Lee had already suggested to Gen. Early that a move on the Federal capital city could serve to reduce

considerably the pressure on the Army of Northern Virginia now caught in Petersburg. Early had already set his mind on just such a movement north.

Reminiscent of Stonewall Jackson's campaign of 1862, Gen. Hunter stepped aside from the Shenandoah Valley west of the Appalachians to lick his wounds while Gen. Early moved rapidly up the Valley to invade Maryland in an effort to threaten Washington, D.C. thereby engaging Gen. Lew Wallace's forlorn soldiers at Monocacy Junction. The Battle of Monocacy developed along four vignettes. To begin, both Gen. Wallace and Gen. Early moved their respective commands steadily toward their encounter at Monocacy. Next, the predictable result in the Battle of Monocacy came to pass as Union Gen. Wallace's severely outnumbered and hastily organized forces were routed by Confederate Gen. Early's war-hardened veteran army. Additionally, the time purchased for Washington, D.C. by Gen. Wallace's desolate bunch to consolidate the reinforcements assigned to protect them was successful in deterring Gen. Early's attack at Fort Stevens in the outskirts of the Federal capital. In the end, the spectacular action of Early's Confederates ended with a fizzle as they departed the Washington, D.C. area headed for Leesburg, Virginia and an end to a nominally productive foray to relieve the Army of Northern Virginia at Petersburg.

Gen. Wallace and Gen. Early moved their respective commands steadily toward their encounter at Monocacy. Early began his march soon after he finished with Gen. Hunter. The week ending June and opening July in 1864 was a busy one for the Confederates in the Valley. Early reached Staunton, Virginia with about 14,000 men after a hard march. After a couple of days' rest, Early and his Confederates left Staunton marching north through the Shenandoah Valley. Highly suspect northerners immediately became concerned about this development. This was true especially in Washington, D.C. By the last day of June, Gen. Early and his

advancing Confederates in the Shenandoah arrived at New Market. Two days later, ninety-eight years to the day of the birth of this writer, Early's Army of the Valley reached Winchester, Virginia with little opposition as they headed north toward the Potomac River and United States' territory. North of Winchester at Bolivar Heights, West Virginia just outside Harper's Ferry, Gen. Early's pickets were active in driving in the Federals to the town.[34]

General Early's Confederates began their operations near Harper's Ferry in preparation for crossing the Potomac. Once again, the Confederates were conducting the planning and execution of their mission into the Harper's Ferry area. While marching northward from Winchester, Early's men drove Gen. Franz Sigel's Federals into Martinsburg. Sigel's small Union force managed to escape across the river into Maryland at Shepherdstown. The citizens of Maryland and Pennsylvania were increasingly disturbed over the Confederate activities near Harper's Ferry. The leadership of the United States located in Washington, D.C. were viewing the future with fear. They were trying to determine if this was a limited operation by Gen. Early or an actual invasion. By Independence Day, Gen. Early's troops were putting their finishing touches to their crossing of the Potomac River.[35]

The following day, Gen. Early ordered his army to begin crossing the Potomac into Maryland at Shepherdstown. The forward units of the Confederate army quickly began expanding their riverhead into Maryland. They met and engaged Federal troops at Keedysville, Maryland and Point of Rocks. Meanwhile, there was a call extended for 24,000 militia by the governments of New York and Pennsylvania to help defend Maryland and the North. The

[34] Douglas Southall Freeman. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Gettysburg to Appomattox, Volume 3* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), 559.

[35] James H. Bruns. *Crosshairs on the Capital: Jubal Early's Raid on Washington, D.C., July 1864 – Reasons, Reactions, and Results* (Havertown: Casemate Publishers (Ignition), 2021), 33.

United States was seriously alarmed now that the Confederate army had crossed the Potomac River into northern territory.[36]

The expansion of Gen. Early's Confederates north of the Potomac led to the capture of Hagerstown and Sharpsburg. In an effort to protect their rear flank, Jubal Early sent portions of his cavalry to engage northern units at Sir John's Run and Big Cacapon Bridge. Still on the minds of these battle hardened southerners were the plundering behaviors of Gen. Hunter's soldiers in the Shenandoah Valley. In retribution for Hunter's behavior, Confederate cavalry Gen. McCausland at Hagerstown imposed an assessment of $20,000 on the population. McCausland made it clear to the Marylanders that this was done specifically to punish northerners for Hunter's behavior. Apparently, the United States was not particularly interested in this sort of reckoning because in Washington the Federal authorities conducted conferences on how to reinforce the defenses of the capital city.[37]

By the end of the first week in July 1864, Federal troops and militia were hurried toward Washington, D.C. and Maryland to protect them from Early's invading army. Already one division of the Federal Sixth Corps had reached Baltimore from Gen. Grant's army at Petersburg. That division was even then planning on how to move against Early's invading Confederates. Gen. Early was tightening the noose of his army around the Federalists at Frederick, Maryland as fighting occurred near Middletown and Catoctin Mountain, Maryland. The southern army engaged Union soldiers in the vicinity of Frederick itself. As this all developed, miscellaneous

[36] Dr. Millard K. Bushong. *Old Jube: A Biography of General Jubal A. Early* (San Francisco: Papamoa Press, 2017), 219.

[37] Ryan Quint. *Determined to Stand and Fight: The Battle of Monocacy, July 9, 1864* (Havertown: Savas Beatie, 2017), 122.

Federal units were gathering under Lew Wallace near Frederick in an effort to halt what looked like Gen. Early's move on Washington, D.C.[38]

On July 9, 1864, the 5,800 man army of Union Gen. Lew Wallace and Gen. Jubal Early's 14,000 man Confederate army initialized the Battle of Monocacy. The motley Federal army gathered from various sources by Gen. Wallace stood directly in the way of Jubal Early's Confederate advance upon Washington, D.C. from Frederick, Maryland. At the beginning, Early's 10,000 infantry moved forward to the Monocacy River southeast of the city. Most of the Federals were inexperienced, untrained, and one-hundred day men.[39]

The turning point occurred when the Confederate cavalry could not break the Union flank on its own. Gen. Early then sent Maj. Gen. John B. Gordon's infantry division across the ford to assist the cavalry in the attack. Union Gen. Rickett's right flank was pushed back by this combined attack. This movement of the Union right flank allowed the Confederates to devastate the Union line with their small arms fire. Simultaneous pressure from Gen. Ramseur's attack on the Union center along with Confederate artillery fire from across the river kept Wallace from reinforcing Ricketts's men. After a stubborn fight, Lew Wallace's impromptu force could not withstand this onslaught and was routed.[40]

Disengagement at Monocacy came when Gen. Wallace realized that his army would no longer be able to hold the line. He ordered a retreat of his army toward Baltimore. Gen. Rodes' Confederate troops made one final push to capture the stone bridge across the river at about 6pm. Their rush across the bridge ended when they realized that most of the Union troops were already

[38] David J. Eicher. *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 715.

[39] B. Franklin Cooling. *Monocacy: The Battle that Saved Washington* (Shippensburg: White Mane Publishing Company, Inc., 1997), 107.

[40] John Brown Gordon, Stephen D. Lee, and Frances Gordon Smith. *Reminiscences of the Civil War* (Place of Publication Not Identified: Pickel Partners Publishing, 2014), 289.

headed toward Baltimore. At the end of the day, the outnumbered Union forces had withstood five attacks before they were forced to retreat.[41]

The withdrawal at Monocacy resulted in a clear Confederate victory. The Confederates suffered around 700 casualties which they could not afford to lose. The Federals suffered nearly 2,000 casualties. 1,200 of them were reported as missing. The Battle of Monocacy was the northernmost Confederate victory in the war.[42]

The implications of this battle began with the fact that it did delay the progress toward Washington, D.C. by at least one day for the Confederate army. This delay provided a little more time for defensive measures by the Union armies in the northern cities. Meanwhile, back at Frederick, the Confederates imposed another levy of $200,000 on city officials. The fee came with the contingency that, if not paid, the city would be burned. With his army of about 18,000, Gen. Early moved on toward the capital of the United States. The oppressive heat during the campaign in the Shenandoah Valley and Maryland was having an unpleasant impact upon the armies and civilians in the eastern theater. The combined factors of the fighting, the imposed civilian penalties, and the extreme climate conditions were exacerbating the stress of the summer.[43]

The day after Monocacy, Early's Confederates moved on thirty-one miles to Rockville, Maryland located very near the Federal capital. At Rockville, there was a skirmish after which Gen. Early's army moved within the suburbs of Washington, D.C. Confederate reprisals came because of Union actions in the Valley when at Silver Spring, Maryland, Jubal Early's men burned the Falkland house belonging to the Blair family. In preparation for the coming action on

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[41] Alfred S. Roe. *Recollections of Monocacy* (Providence: Published by the Society, 1885), 21-22.

[42] James H. Bruns. *Crosshairs on the Capital: Jubal Early's Raid on Washington, D.C., July 1864—Reasons, Reactions, and Results* (Havertown: Casemate Publishers (Ignition), 2021), 62.

[43] George G. Kundahl, ed. *The Bravest of the Brave: Correspondence of Stephen Dodson Ramseur* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 239.

Washington, D.C., a reconnaissance was ordered by Gen. Early for an assault the next morning. There was additional skirmishing at Frederick and Fort Stevens near Washington, D.C. To finish the day, Confederates captured Federal trains near Magnolia, Maryland.[44]

With the Confederate threat growing hourly, drastic measures were taken to protect the capital. The militia of the District of Columbia was called up, invalids organized, and office personnel were put under arms. Both divisions of the Sixth Corps had arrived in Washington, D.C. by lunchtime on July 12th. Therefore Gen. Early could now see Federal troops moving into the fortifications of the capital, so the Confederate general gave up his plans for an assault. Instead, he settled for extensive skirmishing in the northern outskirts at Fort Stevens. That night, Gen. Early gave the order for his army to head for the Potomac River crossing at Leesburg. All said, the raid had failed to be anything but a period of excitement. Early's efforts did not relieve Federal pressure on Petersburg or drastically change the Confederate military picture.[45]

After Gen. Early's invasion toward Washington, D.C., there was a new strategic situation in the Shenandoah Valley. Subsequent to the failure of Early's attempt to capture Washington, D.C., the Confederates returned rapidly back to Virginia via the Leesburg crossing of the Potomac. Union Gen. Hunter was replaced by Gen. Grant with Gen. Sheridan. Confederate Gen. Early's new mission in the Shenandoah Valley was to protect it from Union encroachment. On the other hand, Union Gen. Sheridan's new mission was going to be the neutralization of the Shenandoah Valley by removing the Confederate force of Gen. Early.

[44] Dr. Millard K. Bushong. *Old Jube: A Biography of General Jubal A. Early* (San Francisco: Papamoa Press, 2017), 228.

[45] B. Franklin Cooling. *Monocacy: The Battle that Saved Washington* (Shippensburg: White Mane Publishing Company, Inc., 1997), 200-201.

## Second Battle of Kernstown

A veteran from a war in southeast Asia far in the future from the Civil War once said, "I love hitting my head against a wall. It feels so good when I stop."[46] It could be argued that Gen. Sheridan may have at least thought as much when faced with the situation in the Shenandoah Valley and Confederate Gen. Early. It must have seemed that those pesky southerners would not go away or give up. It was ironic that Confederate victory surreptitiously led to the conditions which would bring an end to the difficulties in the war for the Union in the Shenandoah Valley. Even Gen. Grant underestimated what it would take to subdue the Shenandoah Valley when he made the decision to leave only Gen. Hunter to do the job once again. Gen. Jubal Early would secure the Valley for the final time by defeating Gen. Crook at Kernstown, Virginia. The result of Second Kernstown would lead the Federals to accept once and for all the challenge of the Shenandoah Valley.

The beginning strategic situation in the Valley prior to the Second Battle of Kernstown can be understood through three emphases. First, the Federals were acting like they were convinced Gen. Early was leaving the Valley perhaps to reinforce Gen. Robert E. Lee at Petersburg. Second, with the threat to Washington, D.C. seemingly over, Union Gen. Wright withdrew the VI Corps and XIX Corps from the Shenandoah Valley to return to the aid of Ulysses S. Grant's siege of Petersburg, Virginia leaving only three divisions of the Army of West Virginia under the command of Gen. David Hunter. Third, in order to continue to be of service to Lee in the Valley, Early realized he had to attack the diminished force in front of him to ensure that Grant's force at Petersburg would not be reinforced by them.

[46] Personal friend Donald Coleman, conversation with author, Roanoke, VA, September 25, 2022.

Beginning July 13, 1864, the Union and Confederate commanders in the Shenandoah Valley began moving toward their showdown at Kernstown, Virginia near Winchester. This would be the second time in the war a battle would be fought there. Having just completed an abortive attack on the capital of the United States at Washington, D.C., Jubal Early's frustrated Confederate veterans hurried toward the Potomac River at Leesburg. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant ordered Major General Horatio Wright and the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps to pursue. By evening, about 15,000 Federals were on the way. To identify the beginning of the Federal pursuit of Gen. Early's Confederates, a small action took place at Rockville, Maryland.[47]

Next day, the Confederates of Jubal Early crossed the Potomac at White's Ford and were safely in Virginia at Leesburg. Gen. Early's Confederates and Union Gen. Horatio Wright's army glared at one another across the Potomac River at Leesburg. By July 17th, Gen. Early left Leesburg headed back toward the Shenandoah Valley. The southern army traveled unblocked except for rear guard action. Gen. Early halted his command's movements at Berryville, Virginia located in the Valley. At this point, Early engaged an old nemesis in none other than Gen. David Hunter at Snicker's Ferry. Gen. Hunter and Gen. Crook had moved in from their hideout in West Virginia. Federal manpower from West Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley were joining together to engage Gen. Early's Confederates.[48]

Northern troops seeking Early located him near Berryville and engaged in a series of skirmishes. The engagement at Berry's Ford on the Shenandoah was particularly sharp. Early

[47] Gary W. Gallagher, ed. *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 101.

[48] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds. Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 4 (New York: The Century C0., 1884-87), 499.

threw a major portion of his force against the advancing Federals. At night, Early retreated from Berryville toward Winchester in the Shenandoah.[49]

The Federals pressed harder against Early's Confederate force in the Shenandoah. The two forces skirmished at Newtown, near Berryville, and fought a heavy engagement at Stephenson's Depot just north of Winchester. Known as the Battle of Rutherford's Farm, Federal infantry and Averell's cavalry defeated a Confederate division under Gen. Stephen D. Ramseur in a fight around the red brick depot. With the breaking of a Confederate brigade, over 250 Confederates were captured. The main body of Early's troops continued to withdraw unabated southward toward Strasburg from Winchester.[50]

Union troops reoccupied Winchester, Virginia. The Federal pursuers and Early's men skirmished at Newtown and near Berryville. It was becoming clear that Federal forces were building up at Winchester. Early had fallen back with his main force to the Strasburg area while still covering the Winchester roads. Gen. Sheridan was trying to craft a plan on how to deal with Early. In the meantime, Gen. Wright and the Federal Sixth Corps were ordered to return to Washington, D.C. leaving the defense of the Valley to Hunter. Gen. Early had turned and from Strasburg was marching north on the Valley Turnpike toward Kernstown just south of Winchester. Gen. Crook's Federals deployed to meet the Confederates, and the scene was set for a general engagement.[51]

On July 24, 1864, the Confederate and Union armies began drawing toward one another on portions of the old battlefield of Kernstown fought over in 1862 during Stonewall Jackson's

[49] Thomas A. Lewis. *The Shenandoah in Flames: The Valley Campaign of 1864* (Alexandria: Time-Life Books, 1987), 89.

[50] Scott C. Patchan. *Shenandoah Summer: The 1864 Valley Campaign* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 137.

[51] George E. Pond. *The Shenandoah Valley in 1864* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1883), 88.

Valley campaign. The forces engaged at what would become known as the Second Battle of Kernstown totaled 23,000 with the Union army numbering 10,000 and the Confederates 13,000. Gen. Jubal Early's entire army headed toward Kernstown south of Winchester marching north on the Valley Turnpike. Further north, George Crook's Federal force was in position on the same ground Gen. Jackson had struck in 1862 at the First Battle of Kernstown. Gen. Early began his deployment with concealing his infantry in a wooded area. He sent out his cavalry and sharpshooters in an attempt to lure the Federals into battle for which they may not have been prepared. It seems that Crook still had the misconception that the Confederate infantry had left the Valley.[52]

Gen. Ramseur's Confederates went to the left or west to get around the Union right. Union Gen. Crook dispatched cavalry under Gen. Averell to ride around the Confederate right flank and get in its rear. As the two army's skirmishers encountered one another, the battle got under way. It soon became apparent to the Federal divisional commanders that they were facing a superior Confederate force. They were understandably hesitant to attack and relayed the information to Gen. Crook.[53]

Confederate Gen. Breckenridge on Gen. Early's right hit the Federal left throwing it into considerable confusion. With further pressure from the Confederate center and left, the Federal line broke. The Union center was held in place like a boxer holding out his left hand to conceal his sweeping right hand coming with an uppercut for the knockout. The Confederate knockout punch came from Gen. Gordon when he attacked the gap between Union Gen. Crook's right

[52] T. Harry Williams. *Hayes of the Twenty-Third: The Civil War Volunteer Officer* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 218.

[53] *Second Battle of Kernstown, Jubal Early's Maryland Raid, 1864*. National Park Service, Cedar Creek & Belle Grove National Historical Park. https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/second-battle-of-kernstown.htm.

center between Col. Mulligan and future president of the United States Col. Rutherford B. Hayes.[54]

Col. Mulligan found himself located between two Confederate divisions. Mulligan immediately ordered a withdrawal. He was mortally wounded as he tried to rally his troops and prevent a full rout during the retreat. The pike filled with troops, trains, and equipment and back through Winchester they went. The Confederate infantry pressed the fleeing Federals all the way back through Winchester and the cavalry kept at their heels well into West Virginia. By evening, the Yankees reached Bunker Hill, West Virginia on the way toward Harper's Ferry. Early's men followed northward. The total Federal loss was heavy while the Confederate casualties were light. The estimated casualties were 1,200 for the Union and 600 for the Confederates. The end result of the battle was the last Confederate victory in the Valley.[55]

The period immediately following the Federal debacle at Kernstown resulted in Gen. Early's Confederates in the northern Shenandoah Valley following Gen. Crook's retreating Federals in a heavy rain to Bunker Hill north of Winchester. From Bunker Hill to Williamsport, Maryland, the Confederate cavalry harassed the Union army until it crossed the Potomac River back into northern territory. There is where the Federals encamped on the northern side of the Potomac. Once again Gen. Early's pursuing Confederates nipped at the heels of the Union army as they chased them out of the Shenandoah Valley. In addition, Early began breaking up the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad near Martinsburg. Gen. Early carried out various transportation and industrial wrecking operations in the northern Shenandoah while preparing once more to cross the Potomac. With the Shenandoah Valley clear of Union forces, Jubal Early prepared to

[54] Raymond K. Bluhm, Jr. *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign, March-November 1864* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 2014), 38-39.

[55] Dr. Millard K. Bushong. *Old Jube: A Biography of General Jubal A. Early* (San Francisco: Papamoa Press, 2017), 238.

launch further raids into northern territory. These raids would be the last made by a substantial Confederate force during the war.[56]

Cavalry of Jubal Early under John McCausland crossed the Potomac west of Williamsport and entered Maryland and Pennsylvania. Once more, panic erupted among northerners in the east. Early in the morning on the 29th of July, Confederates commanded by Gen. McCausland entered Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. He threatened to burn the town unless $500,000 in currency or $100,000 in gold be paid to him in reparation for Hunter's depredations in the Shenandoah. The people could not or would not raise such a sum of money. The result was the destruction of the town by fire. With Chambersburg in flames, McCausland moved west to McConnellsburg, Maryland. Gen. Averell's Federals pursued the Confederates. Gen. McCausland's cavalry, because of burning Chambersburg, were now being chased doggedly by Gen. Averell's Federal cavalry. At Hancock, Maryland on the Potomac River, Gen. Averell caught up with and attacked Gen. McCausland's southerners nearly destroying them. Those who survived or were not captured pulled out to the northwest at Cumberland, Maryland. Because of these Confederate raids and the destruction of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Gen. Grant ordered the VI and XIX Corps to return to the Shenandoah Valley. In addition, he appointed Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan as commander of Union forces there. Things had just transitioned into a much more complicated situation for Gen. Jubal Early in particular and the Shenandoah Valley in general.[57]

Union Gen. David Hunter's campaign in western Virginia represented a significant attempt to fulfill Lt. Gen. Grant's strategy in the Shenandoah Valley of imposing consistent

[56] Douglas Southall Freeman. Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command Gettysburg to Appomattox, Volume 3), 571.

[57] Ulysses S. Grant. *Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant, Volume 2* (New York: C. L. Webster & Co., 1885), 316-317.

pressure on the Confederacy in general and Gen. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia in particular. He succeeded in fulfilling Grant's desire in the Valley – to a point. Hunter was successful at the Battle of Piedmont which resulted in the capture of Staunton, Virginia for the first time by the Federals. At Lynchburg, Virginia, Gen. Hunter appeared to be completing the second major goal Grant had established for the Shenandoah Valley Union army. Unfortunately for Hunter, this is where the whole plan came unraveled. Gen. Robert E. Lee dispatched Gen. Early's Second Corps to Lynchburg to deal with Hunter. Hunter was defeated there and began a grueling march to safety in West Virginia. This development opened the way for Gen. Early to move through the Shenandoah Valley into Maryland to attack Washington, D.C. At the Battle of Monocacy, Union Gen. Lew Wallace slowed Gen. Early down enough to allow time for the Federal capital to be reinforced. After some limited action at Washington, D.C., Gen. Early realized his need to move his army rapidly to safety to keep it from being surrounded by Union forces moving persistently toward him. Hunter became involved once again with Gen. Early as he reported to Union Gen. George Crook to participate in the action at Kernstown, Virginia. The Second Battle of Kernstown was the final Confederate victory in the Valley for the duration of the war.

The actions of Jubal Early at Washington, D.C. and in the Valley had somewhat of the opposite effect one might think on the military leadership of the military of the United States going into late 1864. Gen. Grant did see the need to close the Shenandoah Valley to the Confederate army although many did not. The situation in the Valley had changed drastically. The glimmer of hope provided by the threatening of Washington, D.C. and the Second Battle of Kernstown brought to residents of the Shenandoah Valley were not enough to stem the tide of the Union army. Strategically, Gen. Grant appointed Gen. Philip Sheridan as the new

commander of an immense army being concentrated at Harper's Ferry. Richmond, Gen. Lee, and Jubal Early all knew the target of this army.

## Chapter 8 – The Pendulum Swings and Rests with the United States

How things had changed for the Confederates in the Shenandoah Valley since Stonewall Jackson's campaign just two years prior. Gone were the days of Union generals like Banks, Milroy, Shields, and Frémont under the command of Gen. McClellan. These were the unhappy days of Gen. Grant with generals like Sigel, Hunter, and now Sheridan. What would happen to the Confederates in the Valley for the remainder of 1864?

The beginning of the end for the Confederacy was at hand in the Shenandoah Valley. The end came through three developments in the military situation in the Valley. First, the Confederate army in the Valley could not stem the tide of the Union juggernaut in 1864 beginning with the Third Battle of Winchester. This was so despite the fact that the southerners had been able to do so as recently as the early part of 1864. Second, late 1864 was the final attempt of the Confederacy to stop the Union advance into the Shenandoah Valley at which the southerners were unsuccessful. Third, by the end of 1864, the Federals had demonstrated that they had indeed gained the upper hand in the Shenandoah Valley with the destruction of any significant Confederate force remaining there.

### Third Battle of Winchester

In May 1864, Confederate Gen. John C. Breckinridge had thwarted the efforts of Gen. Grant's appointed General Franz Sigel for control of the lower Shenandoah Valley. One month later, Confederate Gen. Jubal Early chased Union Gen. David Hunter out of the Valley into West Virginia leaving Early free reign to move down the Shenandoah Valley into Maryland to eventually threaten the Federal capital at Washington, D. C. Both Sigel and Hunter had now been replaced with Union Gen. Philip Sheridan. The effect of Gen. Sheridan in the Valley would be the predicament for the South of the Confederate army in the Valley not being capable to

withstand the Union attacks for the rest of 1864. Beginning with Third Winchester, the new normal would be a stymied Confederate army when in the past they had been able to defeat the Federals as recently as the early part of the year. In the meantime, an evaluation would need to take place to determine how the Confederates might be able to reestablish dominance in the Valley.

During the first week of August 1864, the strategic situation appeared to be unchanged for both the North and the South in the Shenandoah. Centered in the Shenandoah Valley, Gen. Early's Confederate army was still a significant threat to the Federals. The southerners faced a new enemy leader as Gen. Ulysses S. Grant selected Philip Sheridan to be the commander of the Federal Army of the Shenandoah. His primary task was the eradication from the Valley of Jubal Early and all Confederates. While considering this, the Confederate States' cavalry commanded by Gen. McCausland was able to leave Maryland and move into West Virginia to preserve his command for Gen. Early's purposes. Gen. Sheridan reached Harper's Ferry, West Virginia and formally assumed command of the Federal Army of the Shenandoah.[1]

Gen. Early was functioning as a nuisance for the Federal command. Newly appointed Philip Sheridan was in the unenviable position of needing to confront an enemy who was extremely successful in the Shenandoah Valley theater of operations. When Gen. Sheridan arrived, Jubal Early's command was located in Bunker Hill, West Virginia. He made the decision to reposition his Confederate troops to the south in the Shenandoah Valley to near Winchester, Virginia. Gen. Sheridan had his forces marching south toward Early's southerners from the Harper's Ferry area at Halltown, West Virginia. Gen. Early's command was occupying ground directly in the path of Sheridan's advancing Federals. With Sheridan's approach, Jubal

[1] Scott C. Patchan. *The Last Battle of Winchester: Phil Sheridan, Jubal Early, and the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, August 7-September 19 1864* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2013), 66.

Early withdrew his army out of Winchester. He marched them south up the Shenandoah toward Cedar Creek.[2]

At the beginning of the third week of August 1864, Sheridan continued to move toward Early in the Shenandoah Valley. The Confederates were busily entrenching along Cedar Creek south of Winchester. Simultaneously, Gen. Early's army was being reinforced by Gen. Kershaw's infantry division and Gen. Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry division. Gen. Sheridan began pulling back from Cedar Creek toward Winchester because he was convinced that the Federal army could not hold the line against the Confederates. Additionally, Sheridan was convinced that he would not be able to properly supply his army. Gen. Sheridan had successfully retrograded back to West Virginia with Gen. Early having little knowledge of his movement.[3]

Once learning of Sheridan's retrograde movement toward West Virginia, Jubal Early's Confederates pushed northward from Cedar Creek and began chasing Sheridan's withdrawing army. Having arrived in the Berryville, Virginia area, Sheridan had left a rearguard of cavalry in Winchester. This rearguard held up well in an acute fight effectively protecting the Yankee main column. Gen. Sheridan's next move was to withdraw from Berryville and head toward Charles Town, West Virginia. Through reconnaissance, Gen. Early ordered his army toward Bunker Hill north of Winchester. Gen. Early and Gen. R. H. Anderson, who had joined Early from Gen. Robert E. Lee's command at Petersburg, made their plans to attack Sheridan. Their chosen target to accomplish this attack was Charles Town, West Virginia. The plan was for Early and Anderson to attack Sheridan from different directions. Unfortunately for the southerners, this attack failed because the two Confederate generals did not adequately integrate their respective plans. Late on the night of August 21, 1864, Sheridan pulled back from Charles Town to

[2] Henry Eugene Davies. *General Sheridan* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1895), 148.

[3] Philip Henry Sheridan. *Personal Memoirs of P. H. Sheridan, General, United States Army* (New York: Charles L. Webster & Company, 1888), 484.

Halltown near Harper's Ferry. Located on the Potomac River, the Union general had positioned his command in a unassailable position. With the northern army's retreat, the Shenandoah Valley was for the most part clear of Federals.[4]

Sheridan occupied an unassailable position at Halltown, West Virginia near Harper's Ferry on the Potomac River. Even so, Gen. Early made the precarious decision to divide his force into three parts to move against the Yankees. Early's distribution of his forces entailed one infantry division staying at Halltown, one infantry division moving to Williamsport, Maryland, and Early moving with one infantry division to Sheperdstown, West Virginia. This movement threatened the United States with yet another new invasion of Maryland and Pennsylvania. Although fighting did occur, the fords of the Potomac were well guarded by Federals, and nothing came of the whole move. At Halltown, West Virginia, the Confederates found it impossible to attack Sheridan and decided to move back to Bunker Hill and Stephenson's Depot.[5]

By the end of August and beginning of September in 1864, Sheridan had advanced back to Charles Town, West Virginia. In his move from the Harper's Ferry area to Charles Town, the northern general had encountered no opposition in the Shenandoah Valley. Gen. Sheridan continued moving forward with a victory in an engagement at a crossing of Opequon Creek. The Federals shifted more troops toward Berryville, Virginia. The aim was to threaten Winchester, Virginia once again. It was becoming apparent to Gen. Early that Gen. Sheridan was planning an offensive into the Shenandoah Valley. At the same time, Lee began pressing Early to return

[4] Roy Morris, Jr. *Sheridan: The Life and Wars of General Phil Sheridan* (New York: Crown, 1992), 189.
[5] John McElroy. *Gen. Philip Henry Sheridan* (Washington, D. C.: National Tribune, 1896), 18.

troops sent temporarily to him from the Army of Northern Virginia. Lee was feeling their absence in the siege at Petersburg.[6]

Gen. Sheridan continued from his position near Opequon Creek to move his army toward Berryville, Virginia and Early's Confederates. Gen. Lee's call for R. H. Anderson's corps resulted in that force leaving Winchester for Richmond. Anderson's men were badly needed by Gen. Lee to help against Grant's siege lines. The return of Gen. Anderson to Gen. Lee seriously depleted Early's force opposing Sheridan. Grant had ordered Sheridan's defensive measures but there was great pressure on the Federal Army to break Early's hold on the Shenandoah Valley.[7]

The Federal forces of Gen. Sheridan and the Confederate forces of Gen. Early began to size one another up in preparation for their forthcoming action against one another. On September 16, 1864, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant met with Gen. Sheridan at Charles Town, West Virginia. Grant came to the meeting with a set of plans he wanted to present to Sheridan. However, Sheridan had his own proposal to cut Early's supply line and line of retreat south of Winchester. Impressed with Sheridan's confidence and thought process, Grant approved the general's plans. The Confederate commander Gen. Early underestimated the capabilities of his adversary choosing to not place his smaller army in a better position. Instead, Early chose to advance against the Federals. Early's target was Martinsburg, West Virginia located some twenty-two miles north of Winchester. At this time, Early had about 12,000 men to Sheridan's total field force of more than 40,000 troops. Early had positioned his four small divisions in a manner which perilously spread them apart. Sheridan, through intelligence reports, found out about the precarious situation of the Confederate army and made adaptations to his plans. The

[6] Richard O'Connor. *Sheridan, the Inevitable* (New York: Konecky & Konecky, 1993), 199.
[7] Douglas S. Freeman. *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command, 3 Vols* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 576.

Union general ordered his army to move directly upon Winchester with the hope of hitting Early's divisions in detail.[8]

Early in the morning on September 19, 1864, the Federal cavalry began moving toward the Valley Turnpike north of Winchester. The Third Battle of Winchester also known as the Battle of Opequon was beginning. The Union army commanded by Gen. Philip Sheridan was over twice the size of the Confederate army commanded by Gen. Jubal Early. The predominance of the battle took place north and east of Winchester. The Federal cavalry crossed the Opequon north of the city. They continued heading west toward the Martinsburg Pike and Stephenson's Depot. The initial action consisted of the main Union force of infantry coming in along the Berryville Pike. Gen. Sheridan put them heading west to strike the highway running north out of Winchester. Because of this movement, Confederate Maj. Gen. S. D. Ramseur's division was forced to retire along the Berryville Pike. Early issued a call for his three northern divisions to move to intercept the Yankees.[9]

At this point in the action, a significant crisis developed for Gen. Sheridan's northerners. A gap developed in the center of their line where only the equivalent of a Union skirmish line was covering the ground. This weakness was quickly identified by Gen. Early, and the Confederates hit the gap with a powerful attack. Unfortunately for Early, Gen. Robert E. Rodes was mortally wounded during the advance. The Yankee fortunes hung in the balance for the better part of an hour when reinforcements bolstered the threatened portion of the northern lines. The Federals held and slowly began to push the Confederates back from the bulge they had created in the Yankee lines. After effectively closing the gap in their center, Gen. Sheridan's

[8] John L. Heatwole. *The Burning: Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley* (Charlottesville: Rockbridge Pub., 1998), 16.

[9] Edward J. Stackpole. *Sheridan in the Shenandoah: Jubal Early's Nemesis* (Harrisburg: Stackpole Books, 1992), 198-199.

forces began action which threatened the Confederate flanks. This development impelled Gen. Early to disengage from Sheridan's relentless progression against the Confederate lines. The threat of envelopment was very real. Gen. John C. Breckinridge's division withdrew from north of town with a challenge on his flank from northern cavalry. Breckinridge's new line was formed on the left east and still north of Winchester. Late in the afternoon, the Federals advanced again. This time Early was forced to order a general retreat up the Valley Pike.[10]

The Third Battle of Winchester ended with a definitive Union victory. The losses for both sides were heavy. Federal losses were 697 killed, 2,983 wounded, and 338 missing for a total of 4,018. Confederate losses were estimated at 276 killed, 1,827 wounded, and 1,118 missing or captured for a total of 3,921. A traffic jam in the Berryville Canyon on the Berryville Pike to the east of Opequon Creek most likely cost Sheridan an even more successful battle. In the end, Early was badly beaten. The next day Sheridan's men followed rapidly Early's retiring Confederates with fighting taking place at Strasburg in the Shenandoah Valley. By evening on September 20th, the Federals were fortifying the high ground north of Strasburg. The Confederates were south of Strasburg on Fisher's Hill. In all reality, Early had escaped disaster which he later indicated should have happened to him at Winchester.[11]

**Battle of Fisher's Hill**

The actions at Fisher's Hill and Tom's Brook nicknamed by the Union soldiers who participated as the Woodstock Races were the final attempts of the Confederacy to stop the Union advance into the Shenandoah Valley. However, it still remained that Gen. Sheridan

[10] Frank M. Flinn. *Campaigning with Banks in Louisiana, '63 and '64, and with Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley in '64 and '65* (Lynn: Press of T. P. Nichols, 1887), 181.

[11] Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, eds. *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. Volume 4* (New York: The Century Co., 1884–87), 507.

would continue the movement of his army up the Valley as he still did see the need to close the Shenandoah Valley to the Confederate army.

After Jubal Early's defeat at Winchester, he ordered his forces to prepare for what he knew would be the next attack by the Union army on his position at Fisher's Hill. This high ground south of Strasburg was a strong natural defensive position. The earthworks which Gen. Early ordered prepared would make it even stronger. For Philip Sheridan, he was assigned to permanently command the Middle Military District of the United States Army which included the Shenandoah Valley. That was fine for Sheridan, but he was too busy finalizing his plans to attack Early at Fisher's Hill. Once completed, Gen. Sheridan quickly put those plans into action. At Strasburg, he positioned his large army in anticipation of an attack on the Confederates at Fisher's Hill. As things progressed, there was fighting around Strasburg near Fisher's Hill. At Front Royal, the Confederates attempted to prevent Federal cavalry from occupying the Luray Valley.[12]

Three days after the Confederate drubbing at Winchester, Gen. Early's 8,500 Confederates faced off against Gen. Sheridan's 29,000 Union soldiers at Fisher's Hill. Sheridan skillfully used his large force in the battle. To begin, he held the heights at Strasburg. In the initial action of the battle, Sheridan began threatening Early's Confederates posted on Fisher's Hill and along Tumbling Run. Additionally, Gen. George Crook moved with one of Sheridan's three corps during the night of September 21st and the morning of the 22nd. He shifted his command to the Union right beyond the Confederate left. With Gen. Early's line so thin across

[12] Jonathan A. Noyalas. *The Battle of Fisher's Hill: Breaking the Shenandoah Valley's Gibraltar* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing Inc., 2013), 18.

the front of Fisher's Hill, any Federal flanking movement stood a good chance of breaking the Confederate front.[13]

The critical point at the Battle of Fisher's Hill came when Crook's corps advanced late in the afternoon with a wild shout and seized the Confederate entrenchments in their rear and flank. As Crook advanced, the other two Federal corps made a distractive attack against the Confederate front into the Tumbling Run ravine and up Fisher's Hill. This attack claimed the Confederate "Sandie" Pendleton who had served notably under Stonewall Jackson. Pendleton was mortally wounded trying to stem the Union advance up Fisher's Hill. The southerners disengaged at Fisher's Hill and began running south up the Valley Turnpike. For four miles the pursuit continued before Early could rally his army at Woodstock, Virginia.[14]

The consequence of the Battle of Fisher's Hill was a Union loss of 528 casualties. Early put his losses both captured and casualties at 1,235 including almost 1,000 men missing plus twelve guns and numerous small arms. In the end, the battle was a resounding Union victory. The day after the battle, Early's battered forces were moving back to New Market and beyond in the Shenandoah. Gen. Sheridan did not push his pursuit. It would seem that his victories at Winchester and Fisher's Hill were enough. In the course of the Confederate retreat from Fisher's Hill, Gen. Sheridan captured some of Mosby's Rangers. The Union cavalry executed the six Confederates.[15]

All told, the defeated forces of Early needed reorganization, rest, and reinforcements. His army was retiring further up the Valley. Simultaneously, Gen. Sheridan began implementing

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[13] Raymond K. Bluhm, Jr. *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign, March-November 1864* (Washington, D. C.: Center of Military History, 2014), 46.

[14] L. Edward Purcell. *Encyclopedia of Battles in North America, 1517 to 1916* (New York: Facts on File, 2000), 92.

[15] Benjamin Franklin Cooling, III. *Jubal Early: Robert E. Lee's Bad Old Man* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 108-109.

what he understood to be the desire of his commander Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. Considering this, Gen. Sheridan's infantry and cavalry began what became known to the civilians in Virginia as "The Burning" in which there was a systematic burning of barns, crops, and other property in the Shenandoah Valley. It was Grant's purpose to render the Valley to cease being a granary and sanctuary for the South. Three days after the Confederate defeat at Fisher's Hill, Gen. Sheridan's large Federal army moved forward. Slowly the northern army moved toward Staunton and Waynesborough, Virginia destroying railroads and other property. Eventually, Sheridan forced Early back to the next best point of defense for the Confederate army in the Valley at Brown's Pass in the Blue Ridge.[16]

**Battle of Tom's Wood**

Gen. Early realized that his Shenandoah army was severely outnumbered by Gen. Sheridan's Union forces. Early made the decision to hold his position while looking for ways to attack segments of the Federal army. Gen. Sheridan intended to push Gen. Early's weakened forces up the Valley until the opportunity presented itself for him to launch an attack which would destroy the Confederates once and for all. Sheridan was regrouping his army at Harrisonburg, Virginia until he decided to consolidate it at Cedar Creek, Virginia. In the meantime, Confederate cavalry under Thomas L. Rosser harassed Union commands in the Valley. This included that of Gen. George Custer. This action showed that the southerners were still active in the Shenandoah Valley. In the first week of October 1864, Gen. Sheridan's systematic destruction of the Valley was still in full effect along the Pike. The planned destruction of the Valley could also be used for collateral purposes by the Union commander.

[16] Jubal Anderson Early. *Lieutenant General Jubal Anderson Early, C.S.A.: Autobiographical Sketch and Narrative of the War Between the States* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1912), 433.

For example, it was during this time that Sheridan's protégé and topographer Lt. John R. Meigs was accosted by Confederate scouts near Dayton, Virginia. In the encounter, Lt. Meigs was killed. In his response, Gen. Sheridan ordered the burning of the entire village of Dayton and all the surrounding homes as retaliation. For some reason, the next day Sheridan rescinded that order.[17]

This persistent harassment of Sheridan's rear guard cavalry by the Confederate cavalryman Thomas Rosser quickly became a frustration for the Union commander. He ordered his cavalry commander in the area to stop the Confederate attacks. On October 9, 1864, Gen. Sheridan ordered Gen. A.T.A. Torbert's 6,300 cavalrymen to stop, turn around, and attack Gen. Rosser's 3,500 Confederates at Tom's Brook. Gen. Early had been reinforced once again by Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw's infantry division, so Early was prepared to support Rosser. The Federal cavalry divisions of Gen. George A. Custer and Gen. Wesley Merritt attacked the Confederate cavalry under Gen. Rosser and Gen. L.L. Lomax. The culmination of the battle came when Rosser's Confederate cavalrymen were repulsed by Custer in a flanking maneuver along the base of Spiker's Hill off of Back Road. This flank attack resulted in the Confederates being heavily damaged and pursued relentlessly for many miles down the Shenandoah Valley. The Union cavalry experienced fifty-seven casualties while the southerners lost 350. 300 of those losses were prisoners. Again, the outcome of this battle was yet another Union victory. Because of the speed and confusion of the Confederate retreat, the Battle of Tom's Brook was nicknamed by the northern troopers as "The Woodstock Races" in order to deride the southern participants. Clearly, the Confederates were no longer viewed as superior in the Shenandoah Valley. With this victory, the dominance of the Union cavalry was identified in the Valley. In

[17] Charles C. Osborne. *Jubal: The Life and Times of General Jubal A. Early, C.S.A., Defender of the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1992), 355.

addition to the diminished capacity of the Confederate military in the Valley, Gen. Sheridan's destruction in the Valley was completed after nearly two weeks.[18]

## Skirmish of Hupp's Hill

The actions at Hupp's Hill and Cedar Creek demonstrated the gaining of the upper hand by the Union army in the Shenandoah Valley. Gen. Sheridan focused on regrouping his army down the Valley Pike once again in preparation for further definitive action against Gen. Early's Confederates. Cautiously, Early followed the Union army north. He considered how he could successfully attack a Federal force that clearly outnumbered his small army. In order to gain adequate intelligence about the Yankee movement, Gen. Early guided his army to the reverse military crest of Hupp's Hill from Sheridan's forces on the morning of October 13, 1864. This high ground was located about one mile north of Strasburg. Early took his staff to the crest of Hupp's Hill. From there, the Confederates could observe the Federal position on the other side of Cedar Creek.[19]

The total forces engaged on Hupp's Hill amounted to 1,900 Federals and 6,500 Confederates. Early launched the action with the display of a small body of cavalry as he reconnoitered the Federal position across Cedar Creek. The southern general focused his efforts on Colonel Joseph Thoburn's 1st Division of General George Crook's 8th Corps. Seeing the Federal's displacement, Gen. Early surprised Crook with a battery of artillery opening on Thoburn's division. In the process, the Union soldiers were scattered in confusion. The Federals underestimated the enemy's numbers, but it was Early's entire army.[20]

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[18] William J. Miller. *Decision at Tom's Brook: George Custer, Tom Rosser and the Joy of the Fight* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2016), 154-155.

[19] Clement Anselm Evans, ed. *Confederate Military History: A Library of Confederate States History, Vol. 3* (Atlanta: Confederate Pub. Co., 1899), 503.

[20] Ibid., 503-504.

The defining moment on Hupp's Hill came when, after crossing Cedar Creek, Col. Thoburn's First Brigade commanded by Colonel George Wells' and the Union Third Brigade commanded by Colonel Thomas Harris formed a battle line. This line was located at the base of the eastern side of Hupp's Hill. Once formed, the two brigades moved forward. Due to a wooded ridge in the center of the eastern side of Hupp's Hill, the two brigades had to separate as they advanced to move around this obstacle which would allow them to maintain their cohesion. Therefore, Col. Harris led his men around the right of the wooded ridge marching up the northeastern slope of Hupp's Hill. Simultaneously, Col. Wells veered off to the left advancing up the southeastern slope of the hill. During Thoburn's advance, Gen. Early called upon Gen. John B. Gordon to oppose Col. Harris' brigade while Gen. Joseph Kershaw would face Col. Wells. As Kershaw and Wells engaged, Wells' Federal line began to give way. Col. Wells' soldiers began disengaging which eventually forced his entire line to collapse. This collapse led to Wells' brigade retiring down the hill. The culmination of this action was Col. Thoburn's division retiring back across Cedar Creek after 220 Union casualties and 150 Confederate casualties. The tactical result of the skirmish on Hupp's Hill was inconclusive. Essentially, the situation ended exactly the way it began except both sides had suffered casualties. All things considered, Gen. Early's decision to bring on the engagement was probably a bad decision. The action on Hupp's Hill indicated the likelihood that Gen. Early intended to resume the offensive. In anticipation of this, Gen. Sheridan ordered the Sixth Corps to return from its march to Petersburg.[21]

21 *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Volume XLIII. 1893*. (Vol. 43, Chap. 55). Chapter LV – Operations in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania ... Part I – Reports, Union and Confederate Correspondence, etc., August 4 - December 31, 1864, 579.

## Battle of Cedar Creek

Since the United States was now in complete control of the lower Shenandoah Valley, the strategy for Gen. Sheridan was to strengthen the Union positions at Cedar Creek and wait for the Confederates to attack. On the other hand, the strategy of Gen. Early was for the Confederates to maneuver around Massanutten Mountain which was overlooking the Federal positions at Cedar Creek. Early's plan was to launch an attack on Sheridan's position with his small army. The southerners were able to work their way carefully around the base of Three-Top Mountain using a concealed pathway. In addition, they were hidden by an early morning fog.[22]

In the morning of October 19, 1864, over 14,000 Confederates attacked an unsuspecting force of 32,000 Federals at their positions on Cedar Creek. The three main forces of Gen. Jubal Early deployed to strike at the Federal encampment. In the initial action, the northern positions crumpled as many of them were still sleeping. As the sun rose and the fog lifted, the Confederates of Joseph B. Kershaw and John Brown Gordon had full possession of the camps and earthworks of the Eighth and Nineteenth Corps of Sheridan's army. Gen. Early's army took many prisoners, considerable artillery, camp equipment, and trains. Early's next move was to attack the Federal Sixth Corps commanded by Gen. Horatio Wright.[23]

The turning point came when the Confederates attempted to attack Gen. Wright. The Sixth Corps commander Gen. Horatio Wright had been put in charge of the entire army by Gen. Sheridan due to Sheridan's absence at a meeting in Washington, D. C. Sheridan had been in Washington until late on October 17th and hurried back toward the Valley by special train that same night. The next day, Sheridan travelled from Martinsburg, West Virginia to Winchester

[22] John Laird Wilson, *Story of the War: Pictorial History of the Great Civil War* (Philadelphia: Publisher Unknown, 1900), 799.

[23] Benjamin William Crowninshield. *The Battle of Cedar Creek, October 19, 1864: A Paper Read Before the Massachusetts Military Historical Society* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1879), 15.

arriving in the Virginia town by midafternoon. About 10:30 in the morning, Sheridan arrived from Winchester at the battle site at Cedar Creek. Upon arrival, Gen. Sheridan helped inspire the Federals and strengthen their lines. At the same time, Gen. Early made the decision to stop the Confederate attack due to the need to reconstitute his army due primarily to the looting being conducted by the southerners on the Union camps. Around 4:00 pm, the Union commander ordered a counterattack against the Confederate army. Sheridan's attack pushed Early's army back to Fishers Hill with heavy Confederate losses in men and materiel.[24]

The outcome of the Battle of Cedar Creek was a loss for the Federals of 5,665 and the Confederates of 2,910. However, the Union victory in this battle marked a watershed event. The Confederates were badly beaten, but they had made a gallant showing. A significant loss for the Confederate army was the death of Maj. Gen. Stephen D. Ramseur who was mortally wounded trying to rally his men to thwart the afternoon Union counterattack. Cedar Creek marked the last major battle of the war in the Shenandoah Valley. People in both the North and the South could see the handwriting on the wall. Although Early's remnant continued to be a nuisance to the Federals in the Valley, the United States army controlled it until the end of the war.[25]

[24] George E. Pond. *The Shenandoah Valley in 1864* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1883), 238-239.

[25] Rutherford B. Hayes, *In the Shenandoah Valley* in Charles Richard Williams, ed., *Diary and Letters of Rutherford B. Hayes*, vol. 2 (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society, 1922), 528-529.

## Chapter 9 - Afterword

The significance of this research is that it identifies the need for the Confederacy and the Union to control the Shenandoah Valley for military, economic, and political reasons. In 1862, the Confederacy demonstrated superior military leadership prowess over their Union counterpart. This grew out of a passionate desire to control the Valley for economic, political, and military reasons. The economic reasons consisted of the Confederate need to feed their people. The political reasons were contained in the delight of the southern people when the Confederacy and the Confederate military controlled the Valley. On the other hand, the Confederate people were critical of the Confederate government when the Union controlled it. There were three military reasons for the Confederacy to control the Shenandoah Valley. First, the Valley served as a strategic avenue through the region into northern territory. Once the southern army crossed the Potomac River which served as the geographic dividing line between the North and the South, the Union states of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia were spread out as an easy target. Once there, it was an easy three day march for Confederate armies to gain access to northern cities like Baltimore or Washington, D. C. Second, the Valley provided access to additional manpower to increase the ranks of the Confederate army.

In 1862, General Stonewall Jackson was very successful at retaining supervision of the entire Shenandoah Valley. This included the removal of most Federal troops from the Valley. In late 1862 at Antietam and mid 1863 at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, General Lee used the Shenandoah Valley as his path to gain easy access for his invasions of the United States. This demonstrated that in 1862 the Union military leadership was ill-prepared to defeat the Confederate military for two reasons. First, tactically the Union generals were inept compared to

the southern generals. Second, the Confederate leadership was very strong in pursuing their strategic goals compared to the efforts of the northern leaders.

The situation began to change for two reasons in the North after the Confederate invasions. First, the Federal leadership realized with Lee's presence in Maryland and Pennsylvania that the Shenandoah Valley needed to be controlled by the United States. Second, the Confederacy and General Lee came very close to gaining independence for the Confederate States had he been victorious at Antietam, Gettysburg, or both. This could have led to some significant movement politically in the United States to sue for peace. In this case, it would have seemed more desirable to allow the Confederacy to simply leave the Union.

In 1864, the year started off with the Confederate leadership demonstrating that they still held the upper hand compared to the Union leadership in the Valley. However, by the end of the year the Federal leadership changed significantly for the better. Steadily improving with the initial performance of Union Gen. Franz Sigel through the efforts of Gen. David Hunter and ending with the work of Gen. Philip Sheridan, the military leadership of the United States in the Shenandoah Valley and the eastern theater around Richmond, Virginia was beginning to surpass the capabilities of the military leadership of the Confederate States. In addition, attrition within the ranks of the Confederate leadership was reducing the capacity of the southern armed forces to win the war. The South simply could not replace the continual loss of their stronger general officers.

For the North, General Grant was having an enormous impact with his transfer from the western theater by President Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln's choice to give control of all the military activities of the United States to Grant transitioned the northern strategy into one consistently applying pressure on the Confederacy in every theater of war. Eventually, this

emphasis created the situation where attrition within the Confederate leadership, military forces, and economy ended the war. By the end of 1864, the Battle of Cedar Creek removed any southern strength in the Shenandoah Valley for good.

The war continued on into 1865, but Confederate General Early was ultimately humiliated and removed from southern leadership after the Battle of Waynesborough. Early's forces were so paltry and ineffective in their performance that his command was destroyed with only himself and a few of his command being able to make their way back to General Lee. By the end of March 1865, Gen. Early faced the humiliation of being relieved of his command for military reasons. His military record reflected the reasons for this action as being a lack of performance with the resulting loss of the confidence of his superiors. A month later, Gen. Lee surrendered his 20,000 man army to Gen. Grant at Appomattox Court House.

What transpired in the eastern theater of Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley were essentially parallel. The experience of the United States and Confederate States in both theaters of war were reverse. In the beginning, the Confederate leadership was superior to that of the Federals with the resulting southern victories. Midway through the war, this began to transition when the southern leadership proved themselves to be fallible. At the end of the war, the Confederate leadership had declined to the point where the northern leaders were superior. Oppositely, at the beginning of the war the military leadership of the United States was inferior to that of the Confederacy with the resulting northern losses. Midway through the war, this began to transition as the northern leadership began to realize that the Confederate leaders were indeed human and could make mistakes making them fallible. By the end of the war, the military leaders of the United States were superior to those of the South. From there it was a matter of timing. For the South, the war lasted too long. Had the southerners been able to

precipitate a series of disasters for the northern military, they would most likely have been able to achieve their independence. However, the long war of attrition worked in the best interest of the United States.

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