



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume LIV, Battlefield Tour Edition

Chicago, Illinois

May 4-8, 1994

44th Annual Battlefield Tour: Shenandoah Valley May 4 - 8, 1994

By Marvin Sanderman

The lush, green, fertile Shenandoah Valley of Virginia—breadbasket of the Confederacy—is the site of the 44th Annual Battlefield Tour of The Civil War Round Table. From Wednesday night, May 4, through mid-afternoon, Sunday, May 8, 1994, the tour will retrace the steps of Jackson's "foot cavalry," charge up the same hill at New Market where the VMI cadets pierced Sigel's lines, and follow Sheridan's famous ride to Cedar Creek. We will visit the sites of all the major battles and other Civil War-related points of interest in the historic Shenandoah Valley. Included, too, will be The Round Table's first visit to the battle site at Cool Spring Farm, located just east of Berryville. We will also spend a morning in historic Lexington, visiting the VMI Museum, General Lee's Tomb at Washington and Lee University, General Jackson's gravesite, and the Stonewall Jackson House. The complete itinerary appears on page 3.

Our bivouac during the entire tour will be the Quality Inn, centrally located in New Market, Virginia. The Inn has an outdoor pool and excellent dining facilities. Ground transportation will be by air-conditioned motor coaches. Edwin C. Bearss, chief historian of the National Park Service, who has been our main guide since 1961, will again lead us. Bearss is the author of numerous book and articles and is the recipient of many honors, including the Distinguished Service Award of the United States Department of the Interior and the 1980 Nevins-Freeman Award of The Civil War Round Table. Guiding us, along with Bearss, will be Dennis Frye, historian at Harpers Ferry National Historic Park, and Michael Andrus, historian at Richmond National Battlefield Park.

Jackson's Valley Campaign - 1862

General T.J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Valley Campaign was one of the most brilliant operations in military history. The campaign was a strategic diversion to keep federal reinforcements away from General McClellan's Army, which was then threatening the Confederate capital of Richmond.

When Jackson learned that Shields's division of General Banks's forces marching up the valley from Strasburg were about to leave, he ordered his army of 10,000 to make a forced march. They attacked Shields at Kernstown on March 23. The Union gained a tactical victory as General Richard Garnett ordered an unauthorized withdrawal of the Stonewall Brigade when his soldiers ran out of ammu-

nition. The Confederate left gave way and Jackson's troops were driven from the field.

Jackson, however, gained an important strategic victory at Kernstown, as Banks overestimated Jackson's strength and the nervous Union high command reversed their decision to reinforce McClellan with Banks's men and General Irvin McDowell's army of 40,000 stationed near Fredericksburg, in order to better protect Washington.

Banks retreated to Strasburg where he fortified his position. To protect his left flank, he sent Colonel John Kenly and 1,000 men to Front Royal, twelve miles east. Jackson screened with Ashby's cavalry to make Banks believe he was moving directly on Strasburg. But, with his fast moving "foot cavalry," Jackson suddenly turned east, crossed the Massanutten through the New Market Gap, and reunited with Ewell at Luray. Jackson attacked Kenly

COST OF TOUR

\$375 per person, double occupancy;
\$495, single occupancy.

Please note that non-members must add \$25 to prices listed. Please indicate the person with whom you wish to share a room.

Shuttle bus transportation from Baltimore Airport on Wednesday, May 4, and to the Baltimore Airport on Sunday, May 8, will be provided and is included in the tour cost.

Includes: Accommodations at the Quality Inn, New Market, Virginia (703-740-3141—phone and fax), from Wednesday night to Sunday afternoon; lunches and dinners on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and brunch on Sunday; daily bus transportation; refreshments on buses; experienced guides; all admission fees; tour kits; badges; group service tips; evening programs.

Breakfasts are "on your own." Cash bar at command posts.

For variations: Portions of tour, joining enroute, or individual meetings, call Carole LeClaire, tour registrar:
Home: 708-698-3228

Work: 708-724-6990 Ext. 14, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Local CWRT groups and others joining in lunches or dinners, please make reservations through our registrar so that the caterers can be notified of how many meals will be needed.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

357 West Chicago Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60610

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A special thank you goes to Honorary Life Member Paul I. Klinger for all his help in driving up and down the Valley, helping select the restaurants, battlefield sites, motel, etc.

Special thanks also to Lt. Col. Keith Gibson for his help in arranging our tour and lunch at V.M.I., and to Brother James Sommers and the monks of Holy Cross Abbey for allowing us to tour the Battle of Cool Spring Farm located on their property.

at Front Royal, crushing the Federals.

Realizing Jackson was on his flank, Banks fled northward down the Valley Pike toward Winchester. Jackson missed a great opportunity to intercept the Federal retreat near Middletown, but caught Banks at Winchester and attacked him on the morning of May 25. At first the Federals held, but a flanking attack by General Richard Taylor's Louisiana Brigade broke the Federal right. The rest of the Confederate army charged and Banks's line

disintegrated, stampeded, then retreated northward all the way across the Potomac River.

The Federal high command then conceived a three-pronged plan to trap and destroy Jackson's army at Strasburg. McDowell, with 20,000, was to march from the east; Fremont with 15,000, from the west; and the reinforced Banks with 20,000, from the north. Once again, however, Jackson's "foot cavalry" continued to build upon its reputation. Aided by the excellent condition of the macadamized Valley Pike, and the Union generals' lack of aggressiveness, the Southern rear guard cleared Strasburg on June 1, ahead of the two Union pincers closing from the east and west.

Fremont, with Banks far to his rear, pursued Jackson up the Pike. McDowell, with Shields's division, pursued on a parallel course up the Luray Valley on the east side of the Massanutten Mountains. When Jackson reached Harrisonburg on June 5, he turned his columns eastward and located near the base of the Massanutten. He stationed Ewell's division at Cross Keys, a few miles west of Port Republic. On June 6, Confederate Turner Ashby was killed in a heated cavalry rear-guard action near Harrisonburg. Early on the morning of June 8, Union scouts from Shields approached Port Republic and almost captured Jackson.

About the same time, Fremont attacked Ewell at Cross Keys. Jackson faced the danger of being forced to fight on two fronts. But there was no coordination between Fremont and Shields since Jackson had ordered the destruction of the bridges across the South Fork of the Shenandoah River below Port Republic. After a cannonade, Fremont sent Blenker's division forward in an attempt to turn Ewell's right, but they were driven back. Ewell ordered Trimble's brigade to counter-attack and they pursued Blenker about a mile.

Jackson now turned his attention to Generals Erastus Tyler's and Samuel Carroll's brigades of Shields's division who were approaching Port Republic. Leaving Trimble's reinforced brigade at Cross Keys to watch Fremont, the balance of Ewell's division quickly marched to Port Republic. The Stonewall Brigade began the battle with an attack against a strong Union defensive position and was repulsed. The situation became critical as a major traffic jam slowed Confederate units from reaching the front. The tide turned and the battle was won when General Richard Taylor's brigade flanked the Union guns posted on the high ground on the Union left. Taylor's men charged three times; additional Confederate units charged all along the line. The Union soldiers fought back savagely, but were finally overwhelmed and driven from the field. The Confederates pursued only a short distance.

Winchester, June 14 - 15, 1863

A Union garrison of 6,900, under the command of General Robert Milroy, was stationed in Winchester. Warned to retreat, Milroy unwisely decided to stay. Ewell's men descended on Winchester from three directions, and later sent General Edward Johnson's division ahead to Stephenson's Depot to block any attempt by Milroy to break out in a northeasterly direction.

Ewell worked his troops around to the west of Main Fort and Star Fort, the two most important Union defensive positions, and attacked about 6 p.m. The Confederates took

Star Fort and caused Milroy to withdraw into Main Fort. About 1 a.m., Milroy began to withdraw along the route Ewell had anticipated. At Stephenson's Depot, Milroy got into a fire fight with Johnson. The Federals tried to escape, but over 3,300 were captured.

New Market, May 15, 1864

The Battle of New Market commenced south of town, near Shirley's Hill, at about 11 a.m. The main part of the battle took place after the Union forces had withdrawn to the commanding ridge approximately 500 yards north of the Bushong House. The main Confederate line was in and along the Bushong farmyard, immediately north of the house and along the fence. The VMI cadets, following a four-day march from Lexington, took up positions in the Confederate line. In the final advance of the Confederate line, the cadets participated in the charge. About 4 p.m., Sigel ordered a general retreat and fell back to Strasburg.

Piedmont, June 5, 1864

Shortly after the Union defeat at New Market, General David Hunter replaced Sigel as commander. Hunter's force totaled 11,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry. Opposing him was General William E. ("Grumble") Jones with 3,500 infantry and 5,000 cavalry. Jones was primarily responsible for the security of Staunton, Virginia, with its warehouses and track of the vital Virginia Central Railroad.

Hunter advanced up the Valley and Jones met him at Piedmont, about eleven miles to the northeast of Staunton. Union artillery began the battle at 9 a.m. and at 10 a.m. the brigades of Colonels Augustus Moor and Joseph Thoburn attacked and gained some high ground, silencing the Confederate artillery. At 1 p.m. Moor attacked a second time, but was repulsed. A Confederate counter-attack was beaten back. Moor attacked a third time while Colonel John Synkoop's cavalry brigade hit the Confederate right. The Confederate cavalry, posted to the right of the Confederate infantry line, did not move. A rout ensued, and Jones was killed while trying to rally his troops.

Cool Spring Farm, July 18, 1864

General Jubal Early's Army, after making its raid on Washington, was returning to the Shenandoah Valley pursued by Union troops under the overall command of General Horatio G. Wright. Marching west on the main Leesburg-Winchester Road, Early's men crossed the Shenandoah River at Castleman's Ferry.

Wright's forces consisted basically of his own VI Corps of the Army of the Potomac, three divisions of the XIX Corps from the Army of West Virginia, under the command of General George Crook, plus a few miscellaneous units. Wright ordered Crook to send a task force downstream (north) to cross the river and establish a bridgehead to outflank Castleman's Ferry. Crook designated Colonel Joseph Thoburn's augmented division for this task.

Thoburn's three brigades crossed the river at Island Ford, and posted them in line behind a bluff some 75 yards from the river. The adjacent ridge on which Cool Spring Farm was located soon bristled with fire-power as General Robert Rodes's full division attacked Thoburn's badly out-

Tour Schedule

Variations will be announced on the tour.
All times are approximate.

Wednesday, May 4, 1994

Evening: Assemble at Quality Inn in New Market
(Headquarters for the entire tour).

Thursday, May 5, 1994

8:00 a.m. Board buses. Tour Kernstown and Winchester battlefields.
12:00 p.m. *Lunch.* Lee Jackson Restaurant, Winchester.
1:00 p.m. Battles of Winchester and Cool Spring Farm.
5:30 p.m. Return to Quality Inn.
6:30 p.m. Command Post. Cash Bar.
7:30 p.m. *Dinner.* Speaker: Dennis Frye.

Friday, May 6, 1994

8:00 a.m. Board buses. Drive to Lexington, tour VMI Museum, Lee's Tomb at Washington & Lee University, Jackson's Gravesite and Home.
12:30 p.m. *Lunch* at VMI.
1:30 p.m. Tour battlefields of Piedmont, Cross Keys, Port Republic, Harrisonburg (site of General Turner Ashby's death).
6:00 p.m. Return to Quality Inn.
7:00 p.m. Command Post. Cash Bar.
7:30 p.m. *Dinner.* Speaker: Edwin C. Bearss.

Saturday, May 7, 1994

8:00 a.m. Board buses. Tour New Market Gap, Luray Valley, battles of Front Royal and Cedar Creek.
12:30 p.m. *Lunch* at Wayside Inn, Middletown.
1:30 p.m. Tour battles of Fisher's Hill and Tom's Brook.
5:30 p.m. Return to Quality Inn.
6:30 p.m. Command Post. Cash Bar.
7:30 p.m. *Dinner.* "Fun Night." Speaker: Marshall Krolick. Entertainer: Eddie Wheeler.

Sunday, May 8, 1994

9:00 a.m. Board buses. Tour VMI "Hall of Valor" Museum and New Market Battlefield.
11:45 a.m. Return to Quality Inn.
12:00 Noon Buffet lunch at Quality Inn.
1:00 p.m. First bus leaves for Baltimore Airport. Arrives 4:15 p.m.
3:30 p.m. Second bus leaves for Baltimore Airport. Arrives 6:45 p.m.

numbered force. Confederate participants remembered a desperate slaughter as the defenders were routed and many drowned while attempting to re-cross the river. Darkness allowed Thoburn to extricate his battered force across the Shenandoah to safety. A bitter conflict arose over why the VI Corps did not support the crossing. In the 2½ hours the battle lasted, the Federals suffered over 400 casualties; the Confederates lost nearly the same number due to their succession of attacks to drive Thoburn's forces into the river.

Second Kernstown, July 24, 1864

After smashing the Federal bridgehead at Cool Spring Farm, Early continued his march into the Shenandoah, stopping at Strasburg. Wright's VI Corps was returned to

Orders and Ammunition

by Marshall D. Krolick



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ON THE TOUR: Please be prompt in boarding the buses at the appropriate time each morning to allow maximum time for touring. A bus marshal will be on each bus to help you. If you plan a side excursion, or for any other reason will not be on the bus, you must notify your bus marshal so that buses are not detained waiting for you.

the Army of the Potomac, leaving Crook with 7,000 infantry and 1,500 horseman to watch Early.

Early turned and marched down the Valley and clashed with the Federal pickets. Crook soon had most of his three infantry divisions deployed on the north side of Hogg Run. While General Gordon's division occupied Crook's front, General Breckinridge's division swung wide to the right and attacked on the Federal's exposed left flank. Gordon's men also attacked. The Federals fought bravely until their left flank crumbled forcing a retreat that turned into a rout as Southern cavalry charged Crook's wagon train.

1864 Campaigns of Early and Sheridan

After several weeks of inconclusive maneuvering, the two armies finally met on September 19 in the Third Battle of Winchester (Opequon). The initial Union assaults were repulsed; a Confederate counterattack was partially successful until Crook's advance drove Early's troops back into their lines in front of the city. These lines soon fell and Early was forced to retreat up the Valley past Strasburg.

The Confederates took up a strong position at Fisher's Hill. Due to Early's faulty troop disposition, and weakened by battle losses and the detachment of troops needed elsewhere, they were not able to maintain this when Sheridan attacked on September 22.

On October 9, Sheridan's cavalry, under General Alfred T.A. Torbert, turned on the Confederate cavalry divisions of Generals Thomas Rosser and Lunsford L. Lomax at Tom's Brook. After a spirited two-hour fight, the Confederates were routed and were pursued over twenty miles, an action the Federals referred to as the "Woodstock Races."

Undaunted, Early continued watching the Federals for an opportunity to strike. He found the chance when he discovered the Federals camped along Cedar Creek on October 19, awaiting Sheridan's return from a Washington conference. Confident of victory, Early attacked and forced the blue-clad soldiers down the Valley for two miles in a near rout. However, Sheridan, at Winchester, heard the sounds of battle and began his fabled ride south, rallying his retreating soldiers as he galloped. With his line stabilized and the Confederates engaged in looting the Union camps instead of pressing their advantage, Sheridan counter-attacked, driving Early in defeat all the way back to Fisher's Hill.