

BGES Presents: Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign, April 10-14, 2012

1862 dawned dark for the Confederates in Richmond—Federal inroads along the Atlantic Coast threatened lines of communications and industrial sites attempting to build a Confederate navy. In the west, George H. Thomas defeated Confederates at Mill Spring, Kentucky; Confederate hopes in Missouri had been dashed at Elkhorn Tavern. Most glaringly, a quiet but determined Union brigadier general named U.S. Grant sliced the state of Tennessee wide open with victories at Forts Henry and Donelson leading to the fall of Nashville. A Union flotilla filled to the gunwales with blue coated soldiers lurked in the Gulf of Mexico and would soon move against the south's largest city, New Orleans, occupying it by May 1. In Virginia, the main southern army had unexpectedly abandoned its position in Northern Virginia and fallen back beyond the Rappahannock River while spies reported the movement of the federal army towards boats destined for the Virginia peninsula.

In the Shenandoah Valley, a quiet Virginia Military Institute professor who had gained fame at Manassas in July 1861 commanded a Confederate force that was seemingly too small to accomplish anything noteworthy. That professor, Thomas J. Jackson, was an enigma whose strict sense of military propriety had caused him to offer his resignation when politicians interfered with his decision to push soldiers into the field during the harsh winter near Romney. Jackson stationed his force in the northern reaches of the Shenandoah Valley and would soon find himself embroiled in conflict with Brigadier General Richard Garnett on the heels of Stonewall's only defeat at the battle of Kernstown.

In less than three months, Jackson would become the most famous officer in the world—the hero of the entire south, accused in the White House and admired across the world. His campaign effectively altered the course of the war in Virginia in the spring of 1862, forcing U.S. war planners to dedicate forces originally allocated to McClellan's campaign against Richmond to remain in Northern Virginia to keep a wary eye on the wily Stonewall. Jackson's campaign was largely the brainchild of the oft-criticized and seldom praised Confederate President Jefferson Davis. With defeat seemingly drowning the Confederacy in the early months of 1862, Davis needed a significant military diversion to keep Richmond in Southern hands. Davis consulted with General Robert E. Lee, and the wheels were set in motion for Jackson's legendary campaign in the Shenandoah Valley. Now it is your chance to see what it was all about—as Patton once said “By God it was beautiful!” (It doesn't relate to this program but I've always wanted to use the quote!)

It has been a while; but, the Blue and Gray Education Society is back in the Valley and we are going to create the premier sesquicentennial study of this most important military operation 150 years after it was waged. Based out of New Market in the middle of Virginia's Valley, this tour will be conducted by Gary Ecelbarger and Scott Patchan, two of the nation's leading Valley experts—they have recently written some of the finest scholarship on the Valley and they now lead more tours of the Valley than any other set

of historians. They are animated, well known, vetted and prepared to deliver a program worthy of the anniversary commemoration.

Tuesday, April 10, 2012

5 PM: Register at the Quality Inn, New Market, Virginia. At 6 PM, we will begin with an overview explaining how Scott and Gary's interpretation of the Valley has changed over the past 15 years. A number of conclusions have proven that traditional interpretations are more myth than fact. We will also discuss the political realities facing both President Abraham Lincoln and his southern counterpart Jefferson Davis. From there, we launch a four-day, chronological and comprehensive tour of this campaign, covering sites rarely seen by organized groups and never seen by individuals on self-guided trips. We will have dinner as a group in the hotel after the lecture.

Wednesday, April 11, 2012

8 AM: We will depart the hotel in vans set to go where few ever go and in doing so will ignite the sparks of the fire that illuminates this military masterpiece. We begin appropriately at Kernstown for an hours-long exploration of the battlefield that was the scene of Stonewall Jackson's first and only defeat at the hands of the Federal commanders. History little remembers that Colonel Nathan Kimball beat Jackson on March 23, 1862. During the visit we will be walking much of the 600 acres composing the field, visiting Samuel Pritchard's vintage farm and house where the conflict began and then move over to the Glass property where the main battle occurred. There we will walk in the footsteps of Kimball's blue coats as they bravely attacked Jackson's Virginians. You will stand behind the very wall that the Confederates held tenaciously until the Union surge finally overran their position late that cold afternoon. After lunch we follow in the footsteps of Jackson's retreat and Union General Nathaniel Banks' pursuit "up" (meaning southward in Valley parlance) the Valley Turnpike, passing through the same towns and landscapes viewed by the soldiers of yesteryear. Highlights of the afternoon will be Narrow Passage where we will discuss why Jackson hired Jedediah Hotchkiss as his cartographer (a question rarely explored in the history of Valley tours) and how opposing war departments in Washington and Richmond viewed and were influenced by this campaign. We also will commemorate the afternoon of April 11, 1862 for our tour group at an exact point on the sesquicentennial. The tour day will end in Conrad's Store (Elkton) at the Argabright (Miller-Kite) House, the most important preserved dwelling of the campaign and its implications on subsequent events in the Valley. Lunch is provided but dinner is on your own.

Thursday, April 12, 2012

At 8 AM we will depart for Day 2 of our tour which will highlight the advent of the forces of Union General John C. Fremont and the ensuing Battle of McDowell. We will follow Jackson's reaction to the appearance of General Robert H. Milroy's U. S.

forces out of the mountains of West Virginia and Stonewall's junction with the forces of Confederate General Edward "Allegheny" Johnson. We will hike Sitlington's Hill by following the footsteps of Jackson's men along the bed of the original Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike to explore one of the most pristine—and remote—battlefields in Virginia. After lunch we will focus on the condition of the opposing armies at this point of the campaign (the first 2 weeks of May 1862), and the impact of the Confederate victory at the little battle of McDowell upon the Virginia theater of operations. We also will stand at the crossroads at Mt. Solon to discuss the changing mission of the campaign at the exact spot where Stonewall Jackson and Dick Ewell met to decide how to carry out the new mission. We will end our second day with a unique change of pace on our way back to the hotel by stopping at the grave of Abraham Lincoln's great-grandfather and viewing the cabin site where Lincoln's namesake grandfather lived and where his father, Thomas Lincoln, was born during the Revolution. Lunch is provided but dinner is on your own.

Friday, April 13, 2012

Why Break up a winning combo—again we are out at 8 AM for our Friday the 13th tour which coincidentally covers the greatest period of bad luck and gloom for the Federal soldiers in the Valley. We will follow in the footsteps of Stonewall Jackson and his army through New Market Gap and head northward through the Luray (or Page Valley) to go after the forces of Banks in the Northern Valley. We will take you to the seldom seen sites of combat in the Valley from May 22-June 1, 1862. This will include stops at Buckton Station (a place that time has seemingly left behind), Front Royal, Cedarville, Middletown, Newtown, Bartonsville and Winchester. More than any other portion of the campaign, this tour day is most influenced by new research discoveries which answers key questions, re-establishes timelines, and illustrates how now-refuted traditional interpretations have clouded our understanding of what really happened in this segment of the campaign. Unique features of this tour day include how isolated and seemingly insignificant, mid-afternoon artillery blasts between Cedarville and Middletown influenced one of Abraham Lincoln's most suspect decisions as Commander in Chief, as well as an exploration of an 1862 Valley battlefield not known to have ever been covered by an organized group within a tour of this campaign. After we have lunch, we will also plan to have our banquet dinner this evening.

Saturday, April 14, 2012

As before depart at 8 AM. Our fourth and final day of this tour explores early June 1862 and the final, thrilling days of the Valley campaign when Stonewall Jackson withdrew up the Valley as two Union armies attempted to cut him off in the Northern reaches of the Shenandoah. With Fremont threatening from the mountains of West Virginia and forces of General Irvin McDowell's corps approaching from the Virginia Piedmont to the east, Jackson narrowly avoided disaster. Instead he lured elements of both armies into open fields in the Upper Shenandoah Valley where he scored twin victories at Cross

Keys and Port Republic on June 8-9, 1862. Again, we will enter the Luray Valley and explore southward over the original Civil War roadbeds, river crossing, and homes rarely visited by organized tour groups. Our key sites of action this day will include the town of Port Republic, the battlefields of Cross Keys and Port Republic, and Chestnut Ridge—where Jackson lost the services of that noted Virginia cavalier Turner Ashby. All of these actions, including the sites we will visit leading up to them, will be explained using primary source material missing from every book about this campaign. This tour will end with our tour guides confident that the participants will understand and appreciate the “whats,” “hows,” and “whys” of the 1862 Shenandoah Valley Campaign more than any other group who has ever toured the Valley.

About the Faculty:

Gary Ecelbarger is one of the country's foremost authorities of the 1862 Valley Campaign as well as the most prolific scholar of modern campaign literature. He has written four books about the campaign, two additional monographs, as well as at least a dozen articles and feature length contributions in the nation's top Civil War magazines. His most acclaimed works are *We Are In For It!: The First Battle of Kernstown* and *Three Days in the Shenandoah: Stonewall Jackson at Front Royal and Winchester*.

Scott Patchan is a leading scholar and battlefield guide on the Shenandoah Valley during the Civil War. He has written four books on the region and dozens of articles in publications such as *Blue and Gray*, *North and South* and *Civil War Times*. He also serves as a member of the Kernstown Battlefield Board of Directors and on the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation's Resource Protection committee. His most recent publications include *The Last Battle of Winchester: Sheridan, Early and The Shenandoah Valley Campaign, August 7 to September 19, 1864*; *Second Manassas: Longstreet's Attack and The Struggle for Chinn Ridge*; *The Battle of Piedmont and Hunter's Raid on Staunton*; *Shenandoah Summer: The 1864 Valley Campaign*.

Meeting Site and Hotel: This program will be headquartered at the Quality Inn Shenandoah Valley, 162 W. Old Cross Rd., New Market, VA 22844 (1-540-740-3141) This is just off I-81 exit 350. We have a block of rooms at the special rate of \$48 per night plus tax, you may reserve against the block in the **Blue and Gray Education's** name until April 6th. You will need to guarantee your room with a credit card.

Airport and Transportation Arrangements: The servicing airports are Staunton (SHD)) about 60 miles south of New Market, Charlottesville (CHO) or Washington Dulles (IAD) about two hours distant. There is no public transportation to New Market, Virginia and all three airports will compel you to get a rental car to come on to the program. I recommend bidding low with Priceline.com. I have gotten as much as 40% off the normal airport rates. Enterprise is also an option.

Key Publications and Recommended Reading (includes shipping and handling)

_____ Peter Cozzens, **Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign,**

\$40

_____ Robert Tanner , **Stonewall in the Valley** **Out of print on Amazon from \$3.30**
used

_____ James I. Robertson, **Stonewall Jackson, Out of print on Amazon from \$8**
used

_____ Donald Pfanz, **Richard S. Ewell, A Soldier's Life** \$35

_____ Gary Ecelbarger, **Three Days in the Shenandoah, Stonewall Jackson at Front**
Royal and Winchester \$35

_____ Gary Ecelbarger, **“We are in for it”; The First Battle of Kernstown** \$20

2012 BGES Registration Form
Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign,
April 10-14, 2012

Name (s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

_____ Registration \$795 _____ Additional Family Member \$655

_____ Deposit only—per person \$300 Net Due on or before April 10th, 2012

_____ BGES member \$725 _____ Additional Family Member \$575

_____ Full time Teacher or student, confirmation may be required, \$675

_____ I am not a member of the BGES send me membership information

_____ Send me the books I've indicated. I've enclosed \$ _____.

Total Enclosed: \$ _____ Make checks payable to BGES and mail to PO Box
1176, Chatham, VA 24531-1176 or call 434-250-9921 fax 434-432-0596
You may also register and make payments on line using PayPal..

Charge my Discover Mastercard VISA American Express \$ _____

_____ Exp: _____

Vin Code: _____ Signature: _____