



The Stonewall Jackson's Great Train Raid

The 4th Annual Gathering of the Shenandoah Valley Civil War Institute

October 5-6, 2017 – Winchester, Virginia

led by Brandon H. Beck, Roy C. "Chip" Cather and Stephen Lee Ritchie

In the spring of 1861, shortly after the outbreak of the War, the Confederacy desperately needed to increase its supply of railroad rolling stock. In response to this, Colonel **Thomas J. Jackson** contrived and executed a brilliant scheme to "appropriate" a large number of locomotives, railroad cars and other pieces of equipment from the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, then under his control on the northern edge of Virginia. The result was an episode in the War Between the States, the logistics of which amazed officials on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line. **However, some historians have disputed whether this amazing episode ever happened at all** – but evidence continues to reveal that it did. We'll do our best to shed light on this during our October trek.

Jackson's plan was to amass and then trap rolling stock between **Point of Rocks**, Maryland and **Martinsburg**. To accomplish this, he informed B & O president **John Garrett** that the trains passing through **Harpers Ferry** at night were disturbing Jackson's troops, and henceforth would only be allowed to move between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM. The net effect of this curfew was to bottle up trains in yards on both sides of Harpers Ferry. Then Jackson sent troops to sever the rail lines at Point of Rocks and Martinsburg. On May 24, 1861, his men began to seize some 60 locomotives and nearly 400 railroad cars that had accumulated. They painstakingly dragged some of them to **Winchester**, and then to Strasburg. From there, some of the stock was moved by rail and some dragged by land, to **Staunton**, 125 miles from Martinsburg. At Staunton, the equipment was loaded onto the tracks of the **Virginia Central Railroad** and distributed throughout the South.

On our October seminar & tour, we will examine **how the enterprise was executed, the personalities involved, and the obstacles that had to be overcome** to implement the scheme. After dinner and talks on Friday night at our hotel in Winchester, our first stop on Saturday will be **Point of Rocks**, Maryland where the line was cut on the eastern end. Then, we'll go down into the nearby old village of **Harpers Ferry** that figured so prominently in the raid and in other compelling chapters of the Civil War. Here, we'll discuss the curious war-time relationship between Jackson and John Garrett and we will **walk across the Potomac River Railroad Bridge to Sandy Hook**, giving us the best possible view of the ruins of bridges across the Potomac including the piers from the Bollman Truss bridges that used to span the river.

After lunch in Charles Town, we will drive west to **Martinsburg**, where Jackson's troops confiscated or destroyed many engines and cars and much railroad track. We will visit the **Martinsburg B & O Roundhouse**, and the oldest continuously operating railroad station in the U. S., dating from 1847. From there, we'll drive south on the historic Valley Pike, past **Bunker Hill** and **Stephenson Depot** to Winchester, visit the old train station, and discuss how Jackson's men, with the help of local waggoneers, rigged special carriages and dollies to transport the purloined rail stock. In an incredible feat of engineering, they pulled Engine #199, weighing 85

tons, by 40-horse teams, rigged artillery style, through downtown Winchester all the way to the railhead in Staunton.

We'll then bus south past **Kernstown, Stephens City** and **Middletown** to the **Strasburg Museum**, which became a depot for the Southern Railway in 1913. We'll discuss how some of the captured equipment was placed on the rails of the **Manassas Gap Railroad** here and sent south to Staunton. Throughout, we will see Jackson at his finest, and will become familiar with the men who masterminded this daring exploit. In their wildest dreams, the James brothers couldn't hold a candle to the eccentric former VMI professor when it came to "appropriations" of the iron horse.

We hope you'll join us for this exciting autumn weekend program focusing on important but often overlooked Shenandoah Valley Civil War history. We have a attendance limit of 45 (one bus) so please enroll now.

About Our Program Leaders

Brandon H. Beck is retired Professor Emeritus of Shenandoah University & co-director of the Shenandoah Valley Civil War Institute. He is the author of 10 books on the Civil War including *The Three Battles of Winchester: A History and Guided Tour*, *Third Alabama: The Civil War Memoir of Brigadier General Cullen Andrews Battle, CSA*; *The Battle of Okolona: Defending the Mississippi Prairie*; and *Holly Springs, Van Dorn, the CSS Arkansas and the Raid That Saved Vicksburg*

Roy C. "Chip" Cather is an amateur railroad enthusiast who has been studying the B & O Railroad for many years.

Stephen Lee Ritchie is an authority on Stonewall Jackson, and is widely regarded as the leading authority on Turner Ashby. He is the co-director of the Shenandoah Valley Civil War Institute and vice-president of the Robert E. Lee Fellowship.

Friday, October 5

6:00 PM-6:30 PM Cocktails - Cash Bar – Clarion Hotel (formerly Best Western Lee-Jackson hotel, Winchester, Virginia)
6:30 PM-7:30 PM Dinner – Carved Steamship Round of Beef, Fried Chicken, tangy sides & salads, dessert display
7:30 PM-8:00 PM *Ever-Bold: Jackson Decides to Solve a Railroad Problem* - **Brandon H. Beck**
8:00 PM-8:30 PM *Riding the Rails: The Birth of a New State* -**Stephen Lee Ritchie**

Saturday, October 6

7:45 AM Bus Departs from Clarion Hotel in Winchester
12:00 N Lunch at Mountain Café in Charles Town, WV
5:30 PM Arrive Back at Clarion Hotel in Winchester

REGISTRATION FEE: \$150 - Included in your Registrationare:

- the services of expert historians chosen for their knowledge and experience
- bus transportation to sites as described * Friday dinner * Saturday lunch
- refreshments and snacks during the tour * maps and other handouts

We will be based at the **Clarion Hotel** (formerly Best Western Lee-Jackson Inn), 711 Millwood Avenue, Winchester, VA where we have reserved a block of rooms at the special nightly rate of **\$72.00 + tax, Single or Double**. To reserve a room under our block, **call 540-662-4154 prior to September 28, and identify yourself as a registrant for the CWEA tour.**

Enroll **Online soon** at WWW.CWEA.NET, or **Call 800-298-1861**, or Complete and **Mail in** the form below:

Name _____ Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone # (____) _____ E-Mail Address _____

Enclosed is Payment in amount of \$ _____ or Charge to my Credit Balance
 Check Payable to CWEA Charge my MasterCard, VISA, Discover or AMEX

Card # _____ Ex Date _____

Security# (3 digit # on back of VISA, MC or DISC or 4 digit # on front of AMEX) _____

Signature _____

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