

# ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

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## The Battle of First Kernstown

By Phillip S. Greenwalt, Emerging Civil War

### Resources

If you can read only one book

Author	Title. City: Publisher, Year.
Ecelbarger, Gary L.	<i>"We are in for it!": The First Battle of Kernstown, March 23, 1862.</i> Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Publishing, 1997.

### Books and Articles

Author	Title. City: Publisher, Year.   "Title," in <i>Journal</i> ##, no. # (Date): #.
Colt, Margaretta Barton	<i>Defend the Valley: A Shenandoah Valley in the Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
Cozzens, Peter	<i>Shenandoah 1862: Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign.</i> Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.
Dowdey, Clifford	"In the Valley of Virginia," in <i>Civil War History</i> 3: no.4 (December 1957): 401-22.
Gallagher, Gary W., ed.	<i>The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862.</i> Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
Noyalas, Jonathan A.	<i>Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign: War Comes to the Homefront.</i> Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2010.
Robertson, Jr., James I.	"Stonewall in the Shenandoah: The Valley Campaign of 1862," in <i>Civil War Times Illustrated</i> 11, no. 2 (February 1972): 4-49.

Tanner, Robert G.	<i>Stonewall in the Valley: Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign, Spring 1862.</i> Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Doubleday, 1976.
Weber, Lawrence	"Stonewall's Victorious Defeat," in <i>Military Heritage</i> 13, no.4 (Winter 2012): 46-51.

## Organizations

Organization Name	Description, Contact information including address, email
Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District	In 1996, Congress designated eight counties in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia as a National Battlefield Site – the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District – which preserves and interprets the region’s significant Civil War battlefields and related historic sites. It is managed by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation.  Website: <a href="https://www.nps.gov/places/shenandoah-valley-battlefields-national-historic-district.htm">https://www.nps.gov/places/shenandoah-valley-battlefields-national-historic-district.htm</a>
The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation	The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation manages the preservation of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District.  Contact: 9386 S Congress St, New Market, VA 22844   540-740-4545  Their website is: <a href="http://www.shenandoahatwar.org">www.shenandoahatwar.org</a>
The Kernstown Battlefield Association	In 1996, the Kernstown Battlefield Association was formed as a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation whose mission was to acquire, preserve and interpret the Pritchard-Grim Farm as an historic resource.  Contact: Kernstown Battlefield Association PO Box 1327 Winchester, VA 22604

	<p>540 450 7835   <a href="mailto:kba@kernstownbattle.org">kba@kernstownbattle.org</a>                  Pritchard-Grim Farm                  3050 Saratoga Drive Winchester, VA                  22601                  Kernstown Battlefield                  610 Battle Park Drive, Winchester, VA                  22601</p> <p>Their website is:  <a href="http://www.kernstownbattle.org">www.kernstownbattle.org</a></p>
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### Web Resources

URL	Name and description
Museum of the Shenandoah Valley	<p>The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley houses a permanent collection of over 11,000 pieces including objects and artifacts of the Shenandoah Valley accumulated by the museum starting in 1999.</p> <p>Contact:                      901 Amherst Street Winchester, VA 22601                      888-556-5799</p> <p>Their website is:  <a href="http://www.themsv.org">www.themsv.org</a></p>

### Other Sources

#### Scholars

Name	Email
Phillip S. Greenwalt, Emerging Civil War	<a href="mailto:psgreenwalt@gmail.com">psgreenwalt@gmail.com</a>
Professor Jonathan Noyales, Director, McCormick Civil War Institute, Shenandoah University,	<a href="mailto:jnoyalas01@su.edu">jnoyalas01@su.edu</a>
Park Ranger Shannon Moeck, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park,	<a href="mailto:Shannon_moeck@nps.gov">Shannon_moeck@nps.gov</a>

## Topic Précis

Winchester Virginia was the epicenter of trade and transportation for the lower Shenandoah Valley and its road network provided a route for Confederate attack into Maryland or against Washington D.C. In the spring of 1862 General Stonewall Jackson's small Confederate army was charged with keeping much larger union forces under General Nathaniel Banks tied up in the Valley and unavailable for reinforcement of General George B. McClellan's advance on the Confederate capital of Richmond. On March 22, 1862 Banks' forces were gathered near the village of Kernstown and were being harassed by a small force of Confederate cavalry and infantry under Colonel Turner Ashby. Probing by union forces did not penetrate Ashby's screen and union commanders concluded that they faced only cavalry. Fighting continued on Sunday March 23 as Jackson marched his force towards Kernstown, under the assumption that he faced a small Union command that he outnumbered. On reaching Kernstown Jackson reinforced Ashby who was outnumbered by the Federal forces he faced and then began a movement west. Union forces were on high ground to Jackson's front on Pritchard's Hill. Jackson planned to outflank the Federals by taking Sandy Ridge to their west. As the fighting developed the commanders on both sides realized they were dealing with larger forces than they had previously believed. While the Confederates advanced to try to outflank the Union right, a union brigade advanced to outflank the Confederate left. The two forces met at a stone wall running perpendicular to Sandy Ridge, but the Confederates got there first and repelled the Federals. Both sides fed reinforcements into the fighting on Sandy Ridge. As the fighting continued into the early evening the Confederates began to run low on ammunition and General Richard Garnett directing the fighting on Sandy Ridge ordered the Confederates to begin withdrawing. Jackson was overseeing the fighting elsewhere and did not know that his subordinate had ordered a withdrawal. His attempts to stem the tide of retreating Confederates failed and Jackson's force of 3,500 men left the field to the 8,500 federals, a union victory which saw 600 Union casualties and 700 Confederate casualties. After the battle Union forces in the Valley consolidated around Kernstown and only one brigade left the Valley to join McClellan. Though defeated, Jackson earned plaudits from the Confederate Congress for having succeeded in carrying out his strategic objective and at First Kernstown set the table for the most daring and successful campaign of his entire career, The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862.

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