



BIVOUAC

KENT CIVIL WAR SOCIETY * P.O. Box 3671 KENT, OH 44240
<https://www.kentcivilwar.org/>
Meeting Hotline (330) 474-9362

"1862 SHENANDOAH VALLEY CAMPAIGN"
A TALK BY AARON SIEVER
SHELTER HOUSE, FRED FULLER PARK, KENT
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026, AT 7:30 P.M.

By the spring of 1862 things were not going well for the Confederacy. Forts Henry and Donelson had been captured, George McClellan's Union Army of the Potomac was on the peninsula in Virginia, a mere 75 miles away from Richmond, Federal forces had established a bridgehead in North Carolina and the principal rebel army in Virginia had abandoned Manassas Junction leaving behind more food than the army would ever see again. Things looked grim. The Confederacy needed a diversion and some success.

General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson was the answer. In the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia Jackson's campaign to mystify, mislead, and surprise the enemy was exactly what the Confederacy needed. Jackson would embark on an epic campaign tying up valuable Federal resources and men. His campaign would also wreak a bit of havoc on the Federal government itself. In 48 days Jackson's men, given the sobriquet of "Jackson's Foot Cavalry," would march nearly 650 miles, fight countless skirmishes and defeat three Federal armies in 5 major battles. The success of this campaign emboldened the Confederates and stunned the Union forces. The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862 was exactly the shot in the arm that the Confederacy needed.

Aaron Siever grew up in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Since he was a child he has been interested in the American Civil War. After graduating from high school in 2003, Aaron went into a law enforcement career that spanned 15 years. During his time in law enforcement, Aaron worked lots of criminal cases but also gave presentations to the community about potential crimes such as frauds and scams. As a general instructor, Aaron was able to teach others not only about law enforcement but community service as well.

In 2004, Aaron started documenting the various Civil War sites he had visited and called this Aaron's Civil War Travels. As he traveled around, Aaron started making short videos of his travels in 2016. Aaron created his YouTube channel that same year (Aaron's Civil War Travels) and by 2024 Aaron has done over 100 videos at Civil War related sites from Virginia to California. In 2020, Aaron graduated from Liberty University with bachelor's degrees in History and Criminal Justice. Aaron also received a certificate in the American Civil War and Reconstruction from Columbia University online (Columbia X). In 2021, Aaron joined the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation where he was responsible for maintaining the Valley's Civil War battlefields, overseeing projects and conducting tours and talks as a Park Ranger. In 2024, Aaron left the foundation and started Aaron's Civil War Travels LLC.

Our optional pre-meeting dinner will be at Eddy's Deli & Restaurant, 4581 Kent Road in Stow, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

And P.S. – don't forget your dues!

Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson

Excerpted from <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/biographies/thomas-j-stonewall-jackson> at the American Battlefield Trust

Thomas Jonathan “Stonewall” Jackson was born January 21, 1824, in Clarksburg, Virginia. He graduated from West Point in 1846 and began his career in the artillery as a brevet second lieutenant. Jackson fought in the Mexican American War from 1846-1848 and received brevets to the rank of major for his actions.

In 1852, Jackson resigned his military commission and accepted a teaching position at Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia. His style as a professor was controversial, but nonetheless invaluable, as VMI continues to use many of his philosophies today.

At the beginning of the Civil War, Jackson accepted orders as a Colonel of Virginia militia and commanded a Confederate garrison at Harpers Ferry. Promoted to Brigadier General, Jackson led a brigade at the Battle of First Manassas where he earned the sobriquet “Stonewall.” In November 1861, Jackson was promoted to Major General and dispatched to the Shenandoah Valley.

The following spring, Jackson conducted a campaign in the Valley that ultimately defeated three different Union forces and brought him international fame. He then transferred his command to Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at Richmond. Jackson fought in the Seven Days' Battles, which secured the Confederate capital from an advancing Union army under Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan. During the Second Manassas Campaign, Lee utilized Jackson's regiments in a flanking movement that helped bring the defeat of Maj. Gen. John Pope's Army of Virginia. Jackson fought in the Maryland Campaign and in the fall of 1862 was promoted to Lieutenant General.

Jackson fought at Fredericksburg in December and on May 2, 1863, he executed a devastating flank march and assault at the Battle of Chancellorsville. That evening, while returning from a reconnaissance, Jackson was mistakenly fired on by his own men and wounded. He died on May 10 at the plantation of Thomas Chandler at Guinea Station of pneumonia and is buried in Lexington, Virginia.

