

# The Knapsack

Raleigh Civil War Round Table

The same rain falls on both friend and foe.

Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Our 250<sup>th</sup> Issue



Volume 21  
Number 12

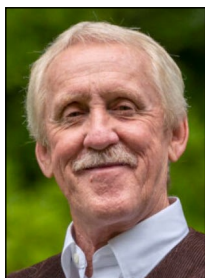
<http://www.raleighcwrt.org>

## No Monthly Meeting in December 2021 as We Are Taking a Holiday Break

There will be no monthly meeting in December 2021 as we are taking a holiday break.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022. We will be meeting in person at the NC Museum of History in Raleigh. **Per guidelines from our Governor, those attending in person are required to wear a mask, even those who are fully vaccinated for the Covid-19 virus.** For those unable to attend in person, a Zoom session will also be recorded live simultaneously.

Raleigh CWRT President, Josie Walker, will email an invitation to you in late December, including instructions and a link for joining online if you can't attend in person.



**If you do not receive this invitation by Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022, please contact Josie at [RaleighCWRT@Yahoo.com](mailto:RaleighCWRT@Yahoo.com).**

January's meeting will feature a presentation by Freddie Kiger, M.A.T., noted UNC Civil War lecturer and tour guide, speaking on the topic ***The Battle of Antietam / Sharpsburg***.

Freddie Kiger

***Antietam's Burnside Bridge, aka Lower Bridge, One of the Most Iconic Images of the Civil War***



**Image by Alex. Gardner, Sept. 1862. Restored, colorized, and copyrighted by [TheCivilWarInLivingColor.wordpress.com](http://TheCivilWarInLivingColor.wordpress.com). who owns the copyright.**

## A Publishing Milestone

Anniversaries mark milestones that recognize the passage of time and related achievements. **If you glance at the masthead, you will see that this month's issue is number 250, a notable achievement!**

Because sixty percent of the English language is based on Latin, the names one uses for anniversaries have Latin origins. An event commemorating 250 years might be described as **quatermillennial**, with "quarter" meaning one-fourth and "millennial," a Latin-derived word meaning 1,000 years. Choosing which numerical prefix or combination of prefixes to place in front of "-ennial," the Latin term for the word category for years between events, has led to other terms for "250 years."

Another accepted term for a 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary, **semiquincentennial**, has no Webster dictionary listing as of December 1, 2021. According to the Phrontistery.info website, most words coined for multi-century events don't appear in dictionaries until people use them regularly. Semiquincentennial means half of 500 years. Pennsylvania cities Pittsburgh and Allentown held semiquincentennial events in 2008 and 2012, respectively. The toolkit offered by the Vermont Historical Society for the 110 Vermont municipalities reaching the 250-year milestone between 2011 and 2014 also used the term semiquincentennial.

The U.S. Department of Interior and the Huffington Post have called 250-year events **sestercentennials**, preferring the Latin prefix for two-and-a-half, **sester**, to create a shorter term than semiquincentennial. Princeton University referred to its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1996 as a **bicenquinquagenary**, although this quagmire of verbiage actually means 200 times 50, or 10,000 years. You'd think that they would have consulted with their Classics department first before coming up with this label!

If the U.S. government follows their Interior Department's lead, in five years, 2026, we will be celebrating our country's sestercentennial. It'll be interesting to see how many U.S. citizens mistakenly believe this to be our country's "sister centennial"!

# Twelve Notable Instances of Rail Transportation During the Civil War

A Twelve-Part Series by Bob Graesser, Editor

## Introduction

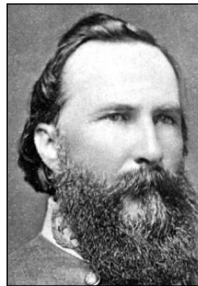
This is part eight of a twelve-part series (listed below) in which I examine in chronological order some of the most notable instances of how rail transportation played a critical role in the Civil War. Part eight examines events occurring in the same location less than a week after the events depicted in part seven. This time it's the Union's turn to reinforce their army by rail from Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> to Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1863, leading to a Union victory at the Battle of Chattanooga on Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, 1863.

## Part 8 Sources

- [\*Eye Of The Storm: A Civil War Odyssey\*](#) by Robert Knox Sneden (auth.), Charles F. Bryan (ed.), Nelson D. Lankford (ed.), Free Press; 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2000) [hardcover], ISBN-10: 0684863650, ISBN-13: 978-0684863658.
- [\*Rescue by Rail: Troop Transfer and the Civil War in the West, 1863\*](#) by Roger Pickenpaugh, University of Nebraska Press, 1<sup>st</sup> Printing ed. (Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1998) [hardcover], ISBN-10: 0803237200, ISBN-13: 978-0803237209.
- [\*Robert Knox Sneden, Diary | Virginia Museum of History & Culture\*](#)
- [\*The Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant \(Vol. I & II\)\*](#) by Ulysses S. Grant, Digireads.com Publishing (June 1, 2018) [paperback], ASIN: B07DT6YTRF.
- [\*Vicksburg and Chattanooga: The Battles That Doomed the Confederacy\*](#) by Jack H. Lepa, McFarland & Co., Illustrated ed. (Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014) [Kindle ed.], ASIN: B00NT9PSV0; McFarland & Co., Illustrated ed. (Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014) [paperback], ISBN-10: 0786494123, ISBN-13: 978-0786494125.

## Prologue

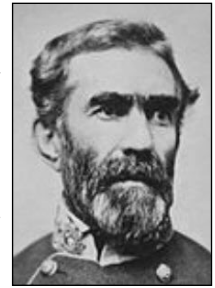
In mid-September 1863, the Confederate railroads, acting as interior lines of communication, transferred two



Lt. Gen.  
James Longstreet

divisions and an artillery battalion of Lieutenant General James Longstreet's I Corps, Army of Northern Virginia, by railroad from Virginia to Georgia to reinforce General Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee. The troops began arriving near the in-progress Battle of Chickamauga, Georgia on September 19<sup>th</sup>, having begun their journey

from Virginia on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Ultimately, only five of Longstreet's ten infantry brigades arrived in time to participate in the Confederate victory at Chickamauga.



General  
Braxton Bragg

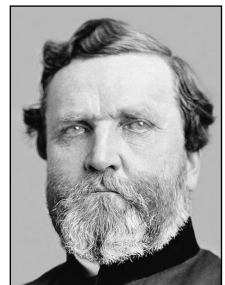


Maj. Gen.  
William Rosecrans

However, it was these same troops that broke through the Union line following a Union miscommunication that led to a gap in the Union defensive line. The Union commander, Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans, panicked and fled the field all the way back to the nearby vital railroad junction of Chattanooga, TN. This left matters up to Union Maj. Gen. George Thomas, who earned himself the *nom de guerre*, *The Rock of Chickamauga*, by

stabilizing the retreat and patching together a tenuous defensive position that allowed the Union Army to extricate itself and withdraw in an orderly fashion to the relative safety of Chattanooga.

Bragg followed the retreating Union army and took up positions on Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, blocking the Union supply lines and laying siege to Chattanooga. He didn't have enough troops to entirely cut the Army of the Cumberland off from resupply. Nonetheless, the meager in-

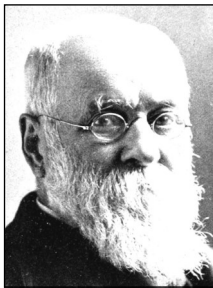


Maj. Gen.  
George Thomas

- Part 1: Lincoln's Whistle-Stop Inaugural Journey from Springfield, IL to Washington City, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 1861
- Part 2: Jefferson Davis's Inaugural Journey from His MS Plantation, Brierfield, to Montgomery, AL, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 1861
- Part 3: Reinforcement Via Rail Enables the Confederates to Win the Battle of Bull Run, July 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 1861
- Part 4: The Great Locomotive Chase, a.k.a. Andrews' Raid, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1862
- Part 5: Greatest Troop Movement by Rail: Rebel Troops from Tupelo, MS to Chattanooga, TN, July 1862
- Part 6: Supplying the Union Troops by Rail During the Gettysburg Campaign, June 11<sup>th</sup>-July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1863
- Part 7: Longstreet's Reinforcement of Bragg by Rail to Win the Battle of Chickamauga, Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 1863
- Part 8: Union XI & XII Army Corps Reinforce and Rescue Rosecrans by Rail in Chattanooga, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>-Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1863**
- Part 9: Supplying Sherman's Atlanta Campaign via Rail, May 1<sup>st</sup>-Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>, 1864
- Part 10: Supplying the Union Troops During the Siege of Petersburg, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1864-April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1865
- Part 11: Supplying the Confederate Troops During the Appomattox Campaign, April 2<sup>nd</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, 1865
- Part 12: Lincoln's Whistle-Stop Funereal Journey from Washington City to Springfield, IL, April 21<sup>st</sup>-May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1865



coming supply quickly began to take its toll on the Union army. Many of their horses and mules began to die from starvation. Soldiers were placed on half rations, i.e., four cakes of hard bread and a quarter pound of pork every three days.

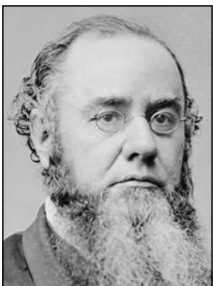


**Asst. Sec. of War  
Charles Dana**

At this point, we must backtrack to pick up another thread to this story. Charles Dana was managing editor of the New York Tribune from 1849 to 1862, when he was asked to resign by the Tribune board of managers due to his disagreement with Horace Greeley, senior editor and publisher of the Tribune, as to the conduct of Union military operations in the early stages of the Civil War. When Dana left the Tribune, Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, made him a special commissioner of the War Department with the title **Assistant Secretary of War**. As the eyes of the administration, as President Lincoln called him, Dana spent much time at the front and sent frequent reports to Stanton concerning the capacity and methods of various generals in the field.



**Publisher  
Horace Greeley**

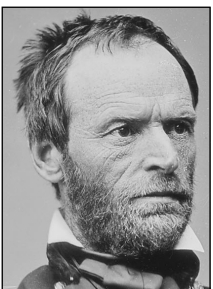


**Sec. of War  
Edwin Stanton**

Thus, it came to pass that Dana was present at the Battle of Chickamauga and the Chattanooga Campaign. Seeing the dire straits in which Rosecrans had placed the bottled-up Union forces at Chattanooga, it was due to Dana's prodding via telegraph that Stanton convened a meeting with President Lincoln, Major General Henry Halleck, Secretary of State William Seward and Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase on the evening of Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1863, to review plans to reinforce the Army of the



**Lincoln      Halleck      Seward      Chase**



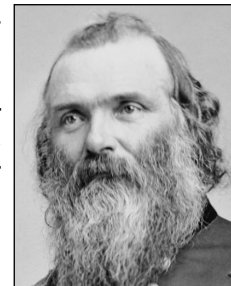
**William Sherman  
The Knapsack**

Cumberland with troops from other Union departments. Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman, with four divisions of the Army of the Tennessee, was already moving east from the vicinity of Vicksburg, Mississippi and expected to arrive in about 10 days.

Stanton proposed that additional reinforcements be sent from the then idle Army of the Potomac. He boldly envi-

sioned moving 30,000 troops in just five days to the vicinity of Bridgeport, Alabama. Lying in the northeast corner of the state, Bridgeport was 36 miles southwest of Chattanooga. Stanton's proposal ignited a vigorous storm of debate. Halleck, in his role as Gen.-in-Chief of the Union Armies, considered that such a movement would require at least 40 days. Even President Lincoln doubted that the proposed timetable was doable.

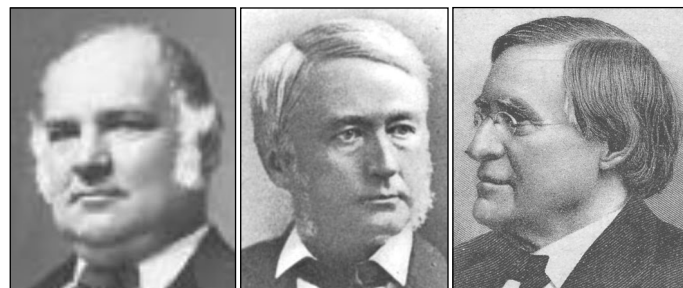
To get an expert's opinion, Col. Daniel McCallum, military director and superintendent of the United States Military Railroad (USMRR), was summoned to the meeting and given a basic outline of the plan. After making some quick calculations, McCallum declared that the proposed operation could be completed within 7 days. Bowing to the expert, Lincoln gave the order to begin the transfer of troops from the Army of the Potomac to the west, starting the largest troop rail movement of the war, North or South. In 12 days the USMRR would move approximately 25,000 men over 1,200 miles overshadowing the Confederacy's earlier movement of 12,000 men over 900 miles, also in 12 days.



**Col.  
Daniel McCallum**

	# of Troops Moved	# of Days	# of Miles	# of Rail Lines
<b>Army</b>				
<b>Union</b>	25,000	12	>1,200	9
<b>Confederate</b>	12,000	12	>900	16

On Sept. 24<sup>th</sup> the men summoned to plan the rail movement arrived in Washington to work out the details. Secretary Stanton had telegraphed them asking for their assistance even before the President approved the plan: John W. Garrett, President of the Baltimore and Ohio RR (B&O); Thomas A. Scott of the Pennsylvania RR (P); Samuel M. Felton Sr., President of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad (PW&B RR); William P. Smith, Master of Transportation for the B&O (no image found); and McCallum.



**John W. Garrett      Thomas A. Scott      Samuel M. Felton Sr.  
B&O RR      P RR      PW&B RR**

The men at the conference worked out the detailed route planning, a task complicated by the different gauges of railroad track in use at the time. The initial movement of troops from Virginia was allocated to the USMRR under McCallum's direction. The table on p. 4 summarizes the distances and elapsed times for each railroad company's segment of the route. Automobile figures for 2021 are included for comparison purposes.

## *The Union's 1863 Route to Reinforce the Besieged Army at Chattanooga, TN: Broken Down into Segments by Rail Line in Terms of Miles Traveled and Hours Elapsed With a Comparison to Travel by Auto in 2021*

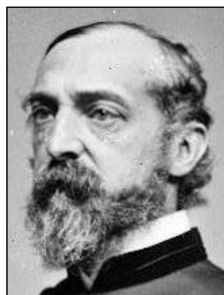
Route Segment	From	To	Rail Line	1863 Miles	1863 Time (hr)	2021 Auto Miles	2021 Auto Time (hr)
1	Bealeton, VA	Washington City	Orange & Alexandria RR	65	11	65	1.60
2	Washington City	Benwood, WV	Baltimore & Ohio RR	412	42	312	5.18
---	Benwood, WV	Bellaire, OH	Across the Ohio River on foot, horse or cart via pontoon bridge	7	1	7	0.25
3	Bellaire, OH	Columbus, OH	Central Ohio RR	163	7	163	2.62
4	Columbus, OH	Xenia, OH	Columbus & Xenia RR	65	10	65	1.13
5	Xenia, OH	Richmond, IN	Little Miami RR	63	9	63	0.12
6	Richmond, IN	Indianapolis, IN	Indiana Central RR	92	13	92	1.75
7	Indianapolis, IN	Jeffersonville, IN	Jeffersonville RR	140	8	140	2.53
---	Jeffersonville, IN	Louisville, KY	Across the Ohio River via ferryboat	3	2	3	0.17
8	Louisville, KY	Nashville, TN	Louisville & Nashville RR	203	34	203	3.62
9	Nashville, TN	Bridgeport, AL	Nashville & Chattanooga RR	113	19	113	2.17
10	Bridgeport, AL	Chattanooga, TN	On foot, cart, or horse via muddy mountain road	36	36	36	0.65
<b>Totals:</b>				<b>1,362</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>1,262</b>	<b>21.79</b>
					<b>(8 days)</b>		<b>(&lt;1 day)</b>

*The above table was researched and compiled by the author based on maps and text by Roger Pickenpaugh in his book [Rescue by Rail: Troop Transfer and the Civil War in the West, 1863](#) and from distances and elapsed times provided by querying Google Maps. The 1863 values for distances are interpolated from 1863 data presented by Roger Pickenpaugh: 1) that the railroad distance from Washington City to Benwood, WV is 412 miles, and 2) that the total distance from Bealeton, VA to Chattanooga, TN is greater than 1,200 miles. Likewise, the 1863 values for elapsed time are also interpolated from 1863 data presented by Roger Pickenpaugh: 1) that it took 42 hours to travel from Washington City to Benwood, WV, 2) that it took 8 hours to travel from Indianapolis, IN to Jeffersonville, IN, and 3) that the total elapsed time for the trip from Bealeton, VA to Chattanooga, TN took 8 days. The 2021 distances and times are accurate for auto highway driving. The 1863 railroad distances are assumed to be in the same ball park as the longest case 2021 highway route between any two given points.*



**Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker**

It was decided that the XI<sup>th</sup> and XII<sup>th</sup> Union Corps would be the units sent west to break the siege of Chattanooga. These were placed under the command of Maj. Gen. Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker. It was Hooker who had been in command of the Army of the Potomac when it suffered a decisive defeat at the Battle of Chancellorsville. When Hooker was denied reinforcements at the beginning of the follow-up Gettysburg Campaign, he resigned his position only three days before the battle, with Maj. Gen. George Meade taking his place. Now, two months after Gettysburg, the assignment for Hooker to reinforce the Union Army at Chattanooga was his chance to redeem himself.



**Maj. Gen. George Meade**

The XI<sup>th</sup> Corps had also been humiliated recently. It was the unlucky Corps that was blindsided and routed in the Battle of Chancellorsville by Stonewall Jackson's brilliant end-around maneuver on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1863.

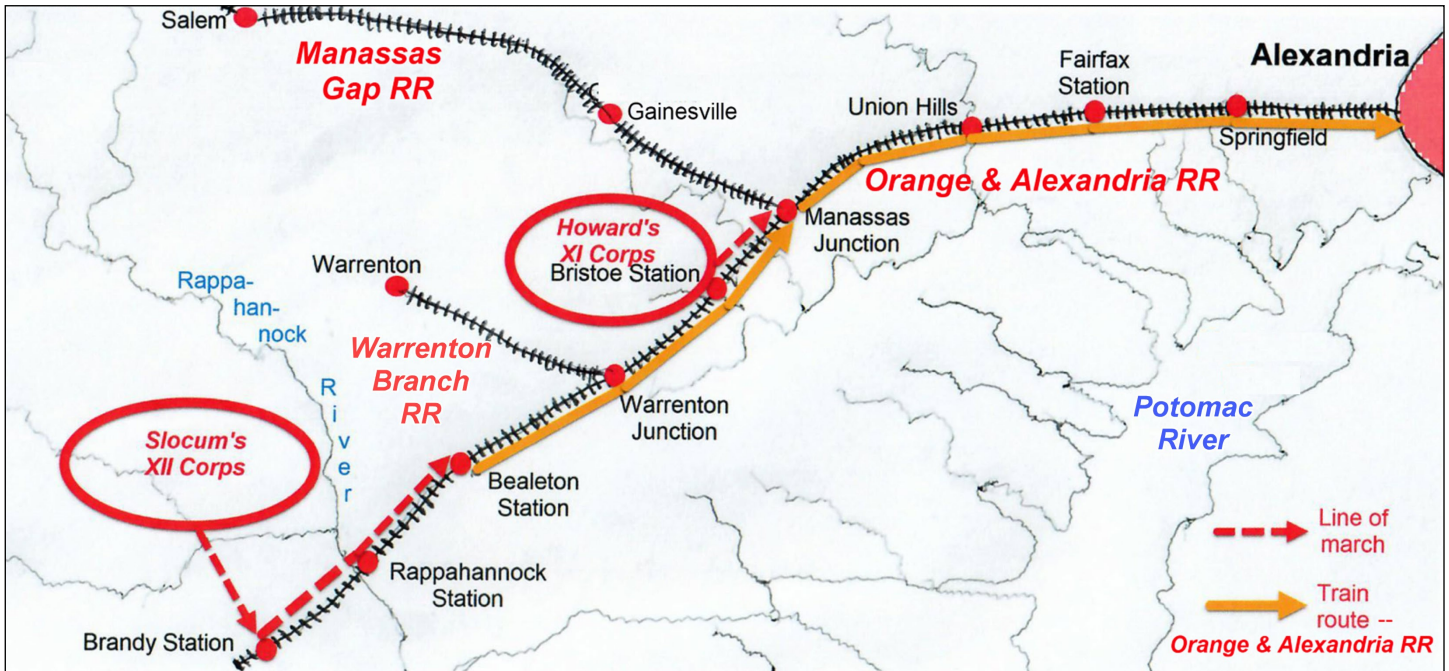
At the Battle of Gettysburg, the XI<sup>th</sup> Corps was deployed north of the town and received a devastating assault from Jubal Early's Division. This caused the troops of the XI<sup>th</sup> Corps to panic. Like a contagion, elements of the I<sup>st</sup> Corps to its right also panicked and the line collapsed. This led the two Corps to retreat through the streets of Gettysburg to the safety of Cemetery Ridge.

The XII<sup>th</sup> Corps also felt the brunt of the fighting at the Battle of Chancellorsville. Unlike the XI<sup>th</sup> Corps, however, the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps maintained its cohesive fighting capability and acquitted itself well. At the Battle of Gettysburg, the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps distinguished itself by its gallant defense of Culps Hill on July 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>, 1863.

The map on p. 5 shows the position of Hooker's XI<sup>th</sup> and XII<sup>th</sup> Corps on Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>, 1863, just prior to the start of their 1,200-mile journey to reinforce the Union troops in Chattanooga, TN.



## Position of Hooker's XI<sup>th</sup> and XII<sup>th</sup> Corps on Sept. 24<sup>th</sup> Prior to the Start of Their 1,200-Mile Journey to Reinforce the Union Troops in Chattanooga, TN



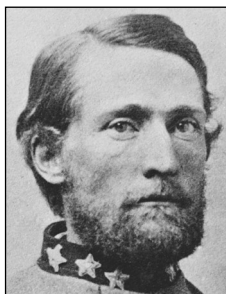
The above map was researched and created by the author based on a portion of a hand-drawn contemporaneous map showing the Potomac River from Fredericksburg to Harper's Ferry and Gettysburg, Pa as sketched by Pvt. Robert Knox Sneden, a Union topographical engineer in the Army of the Potomac. (See sidebar below.) The locations of the Union XI<sup>th</sup> and XII<sup>th</sup> Corps were taken from descriptions by Roger Pickenpaugh in his book [Rescue by Rail: Troop Transfer and the Civil War in the West, 1863](#).

### Robert Knox Sneden



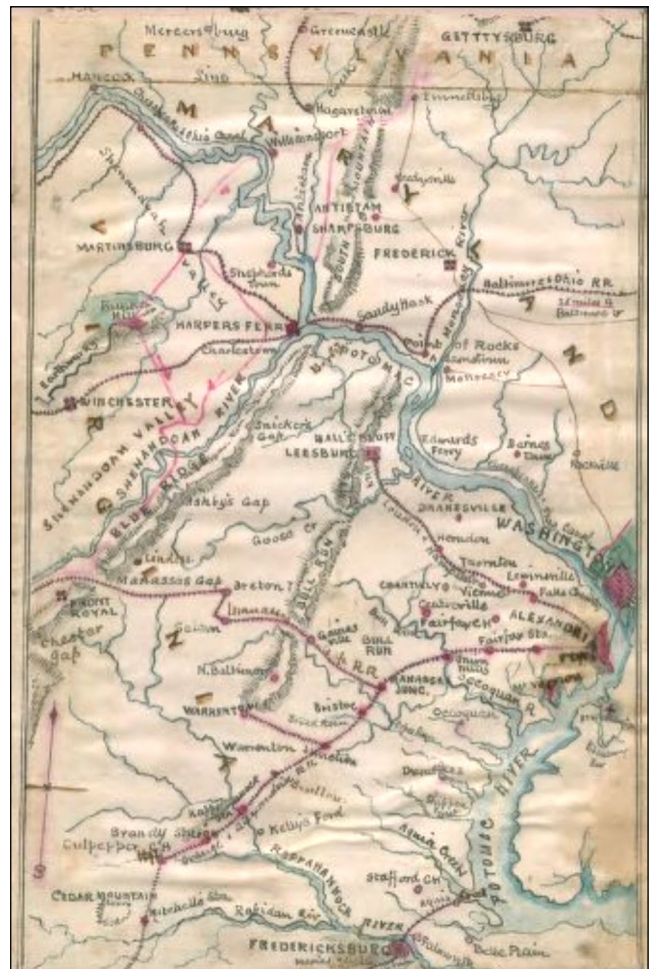
Pvt.  
Robert K. Sneden

After enlisting in the 40<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry Regiment, Pvt. Robert Knox Sneden kept a diary during his Civil War service from the summer of 1861 to the fall of 1863. He was a topographical engineer in the III<sup>d</sup> Corps, Army of the Potomac, in Washington City and Virginia. Sneden was captured by Confederate rangers under Col. John Singleton Mosby in Nov. 1863 and spent the next thirteen months as a prisoner of war in various Confederate prisons including seven months at Andersonville. He was exchanged in Dec. 1864.

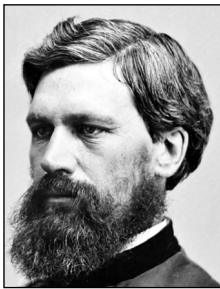


Col.  
John S. Mosby

The source of the above map is Sneden's 17 x 11.5 cm pen-and-ink and watercolor regional map of Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania showing the Potomac River and its tributaries from Fredericksburg to Harper's Ferry and Gettysburg (reproduced to the right). This map is found in vol. 4, p. 109 of his six-volume diary. Volume 4 covers the dates from Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>, 1862 to Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>, 1863. References: [Robert Knox Sneden, Diary | Virginia Museum of History & Culture \(virginiahistory.org\)](#); his book, [Eye Of The Storm: A Civil War Odyssey](#).







As the map on page 5 indicates, the Union XI<sup>th</sup> Corps, under the command of Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard, was positioned to the Union Army's rear near Bristoe Station, VA on Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>, 1863. They were tasked with keeping the line of communications open, i.e., guarding and protecting the Orange & Alexandria (O&A) RR.

**Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard** At the same time, the Union XII<sup>th</sup> Corps, under the command of Maj. Gen. Henry W. Slocum, was conducting picket duty on the front line formed by the Rappahannock River, some five miles from the Bealeton Station on the O&A RR.

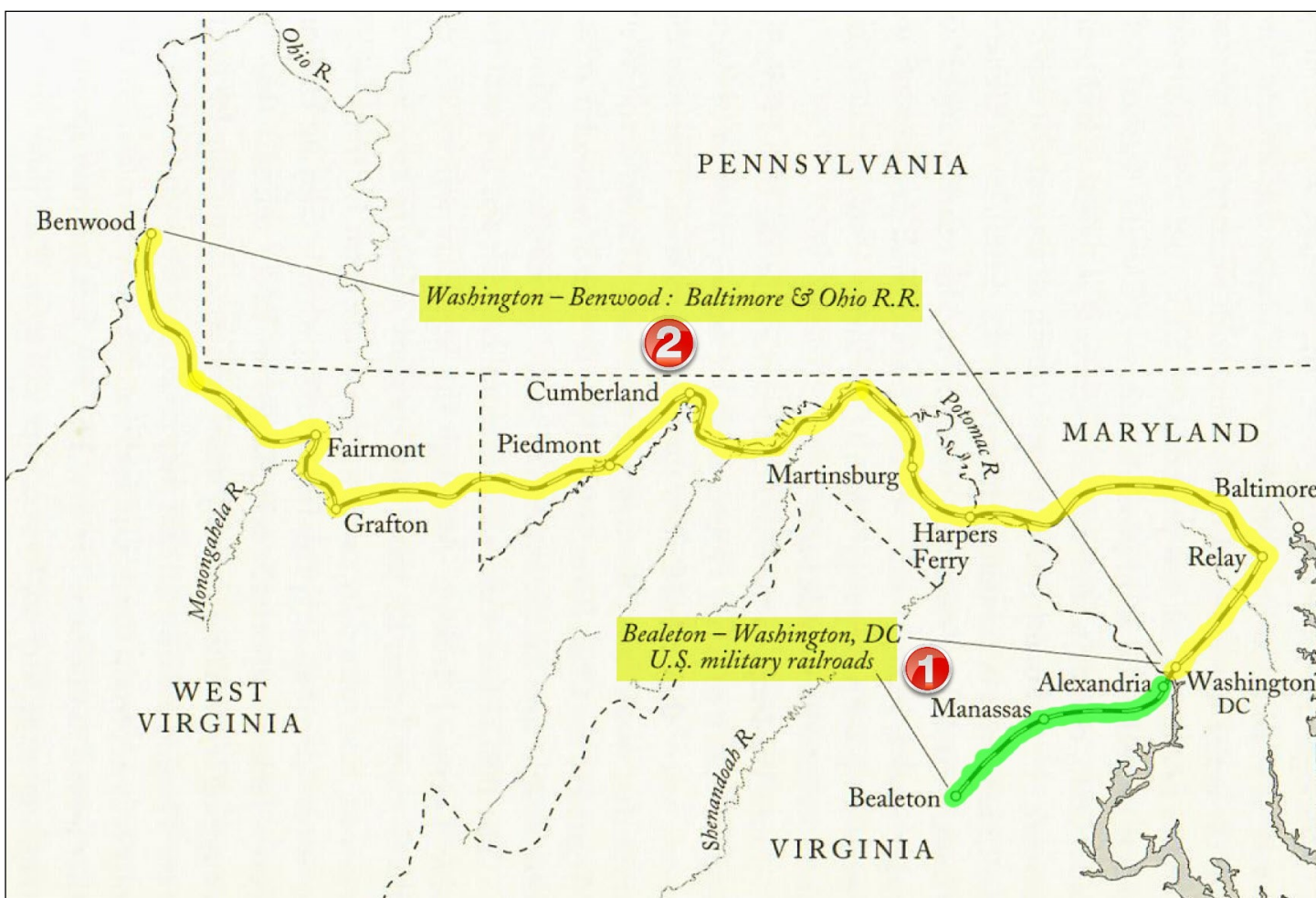
Howard was ordered to march his XI<sup>th</sup> Corps five miles to Manassas Junction in order for his troops to board the outbound reinforcement trains there. Six-thousand of his men embarked on Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> and the remaining 1,700 the next morning. →



**Maj. Gen. Henry W. Slocum**

The men of Slocum's XII<sup>th</sup> Corps had already begun to mass at the nearby Bealeton Station. A significant number, however, had also grouped at Brandy Station. Slocum was informed that, because the Confederates had already become aware of the commotion at Brandy Station, he needed to march these troops (at night) to Bealeton Station, ten miles away. Supposedly, neither Brandy Station nor the closer Rappahannock Station had sufficient rail sidings in their switch yards. According to an anecdote related in Pickenpaugh's book, one soldier was prompted to ask "If the cars can carry us 1,186 miles, why not the other ten?"

The map below depicts the first of four arbitrarily selected segments of the route taken by the XI<sup>th</sup> and XII<sup>th</sup> Corps from Bealeton Station, VA to Chattanooga, TN.



The above map is taken from p. 84 of [Rescue by Rail: Troop Transfer and the Civil War in the West, 1863](#) by Roger Pickenpaugh. The text highlights, color-coded route indicators, and route segment numbers were added by the author.

Route Segment	From	To	Rail Line	1863 Miles	1863 Time (hr)	2021 Auto Miles	2021 Auto Time (hr)
1	Bealeton, VA	Washington City	Orange & Alexandria RR	65	11	65	1.60
2	Washington City	Benwood, WV	Baltimore & Ohio RR	412	42	312	5.18
---	Benwood, WV	Bellaire, OH	Across the Ohio River on foot, horse or cart via pontoon bridge	7	1	7	0.25

It took from the morning of Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> until 1:30 pm on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>, with trains departing every three hours, before USMRR Superintendent Col. McCallum could report to Stanton that all the troops of the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps had safely departed for Washington City. There the troops switched over to locomotives and cars of the Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) RR.

the east bank of the Ohio River after a journey of 412 miles and 42 hours. At this point, the last trains were just leaving Bealeton Station. Note that Benwood was in friendly territory, West Virginia having seceded from Virginia and attained U.S. statehood three months prior. The Ohio River was too low for the operation of ferry-boats, so the troops crossed over on a hastily-constructed pontoon bridge.

The lead train reached Benwood, West Virginia, on →



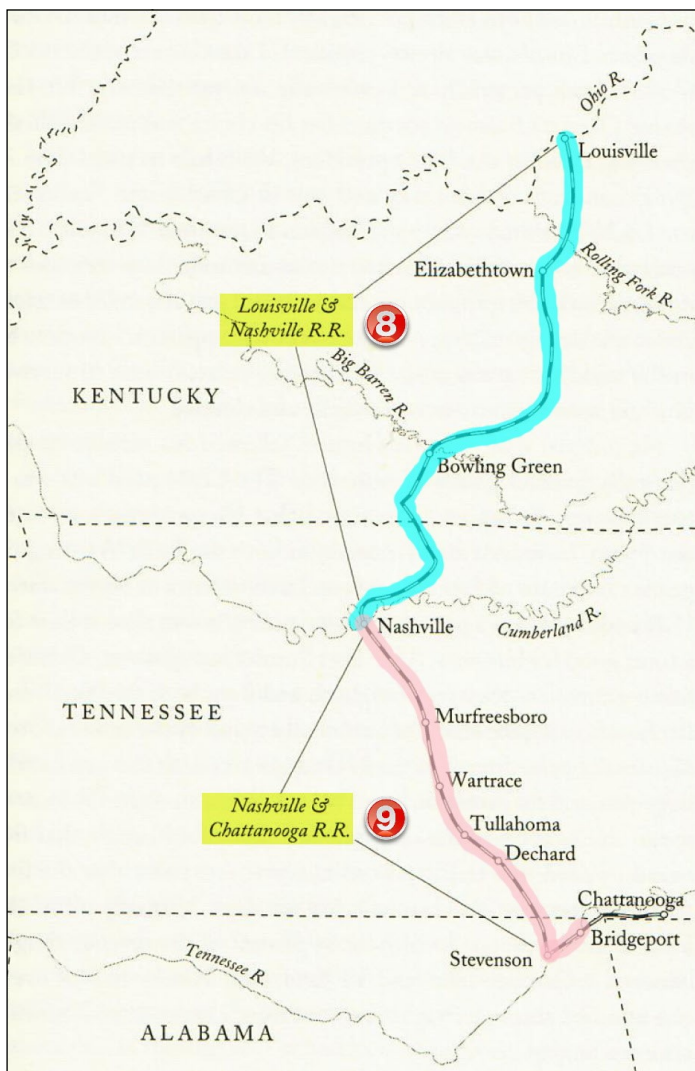
The above map is taken from p. 101 of [Rescue by Rail: Troop Transfer and the Civil War in the West, 1863](#) by Roger Pickenpaugh. The text highlights, color-coded route indicators, and route segment numbers were added by the author.

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5	Xenia, OH	Richmond, IN	Little Miami RR	63	9	63	0.12
6	Richmond, IN	Indianapolis, IN	Indiana Central RR	92	13	92	1.75
7	Indianapolis, IN	Jeffersonville, IN	Jeffersonville RR	140	8	140	2.53
---	Jeffersonville, IN	Louisville, KY	Across the Ohio River via ferryboat	3	2	3	0.17

This next segment was bracketed by the Ohio River on both ends. The troops marched from the Benwood, WV train station to the Bellaire, OH station, a distance of seven miles. Boarding cars provided by the Central Ohio RR, the troops were transported to the capital, Columbus, OH, a distance of 163 miles. Here, they transferred to cars of the Columbus & Xenia RR and were conducted to Xenia, OH, a distance of 65 miles. From there, they

boarded cars of the Little Miami RR, which carried them 63 miles to Richmond, IN. Continuing, they transferred to the Indiana Central RR which took them 92 miles to the capital, Indianapolis, IN. In the final leg of this segment, the Jeffersonville RR delivered them 140 miles to Jeffersonville, IN, on the north bank of the Ohio River. It had taken 48 hours for the lead train to get from Benwood, WV to Jeffersonville, IN. Here they were ferried across





The above map is taken from p. 121 of [Rescue by Rail: Troop Transfer and the Civil War in the West, 1863](#) by Roger Pickenpaugh. The text highlights, color-coded route indicators, and route segment numbers were added by the author.

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8	Louisville, KY	Nashville, TN	Louisville & Nashville RR	203	34	203	3.62
9	Nashville, TN	Bridgeport, AL	Nashville & Chattanooga RR	113	19	113	2.17

the Ohio River and marched to the Louisville, KY station, a total of three miles. The lead train reached the Louisville Depot at 4:00 am on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>. Ninety minutes later, the lead troops were on their way to Nashville, TN on the Louisville & Nashville RR.

At Nashville, the weary troops made one final transfer, taking the Nashville & Chattanooga (N&C) RR to Bridgeport, AL, their final destination by rail. It would take 25 locomotives and 400 cars to get both Corps from Louisville to Bridgeport.

The first four trains pulled into Bridgeport at 10:30 pm on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>, a total of six days! On Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, all of the XI<sup>th</sup> Corps and part of the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps had passed through Louisville. Also, on Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, the last of the troops had reached Jeffersonville, IN. Hooker, himself, arrived at Stevenson, AL on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>. Here he made his headquarters, one stop away from Bridgeport.

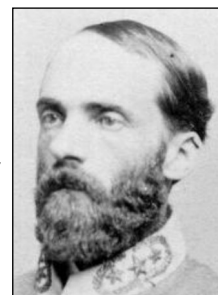
Also on Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>, the entire XI<sup>th</sup> Corps had reached Bridgeport and the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps was passing through Nashville.

When all was said and done, the two Corps had completed their 1,200 mile journey in eight days, with most of the men finishing in seven days! McCallum had kept his promise to Lincoln.

Of course, the horses, mules, wagons, much of the baggage, and the artillery & ammunition remained to be shipped west, a tall order. For the XI<sup>th</sup> Corps, it included 261 six-mule teams, 75 two-horse ambulances, and three spring wagons. Transportation for the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps consisted of 150 four-horse teams, 156 six-mule teams, and 75 two-horse ambulances. This process started on Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>. As soon as the troops had cleared out, McCallum had begun loading the horses of the XI<sup>th</sup> Corps at Alexandria. This took five days because of the shortage of cars brought about by the troop-carrying demands.

The first trains hauling transport out of Alexandria arrived in Washington City at 5:00 pm on Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>. Three hours later, the transport had been transferred over to B&O RR cars. The loading of the XI<sup>th</sup> Corps transport was completed on Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>, while that of the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps was completed on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>. The head of the transport column reached Benwood, WV on the evening of Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>. By Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, despite problems with gauge changes and Confederate raids, the transport had been delivered to Bridgeport and Stanton was informed that "all was well".

But what had been the Confederate response to this Union rescue mission? Had they sat idly by in the face of this reinforcement effort? The answer was provided by that other "Fighting Joe", Confederate Maj. Gen. of Cavalry, Joseph Wheeler. On Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1863, he had initiated a major raid by attacking north across the Tennessee River 30 miles upstream of Chattanooga with three cavalry divisions.



Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler

The next day, he took a detachment of fifteen hundred troopers and headed south toward Jasper, Tennessee, some twenty-five miles due west of Chattanooga on the opposite bank of the Tennessee River. Here they soon overtook and captured a Federal supply train of thirty-two wagons. Moving on, they hit the jackpot: a train of over eight hundred wagons spread out over ten miles leading into Jasper. The wagons were loaded with ordnance, quartermaster's, and commissary stores destined for three divisions of the beleaguered Union XIV<sup>th</sup> Corps penned up in Chattanooga. Taking what mules and wagons they needed, they destroyed the rest and moved on to McMinnville, sixty-five miles further north.

Wheeler's Raid had several repercussions. It tightened the siege of Chattanooga and forced the Union troops there onto meager rations. It changed Rosecrans' plans for Hooker's men. Instead of using them to reopen his tenuous supply line into Chattanooga, he was forced to order Hooker to spread his men out along the route of



the N&C RR to guard against Wheeler disrupting the movement of the remainder of Hooker's two Corps as well as their entire transport. Finally, it contributed to Rosecrans' demise as commander.

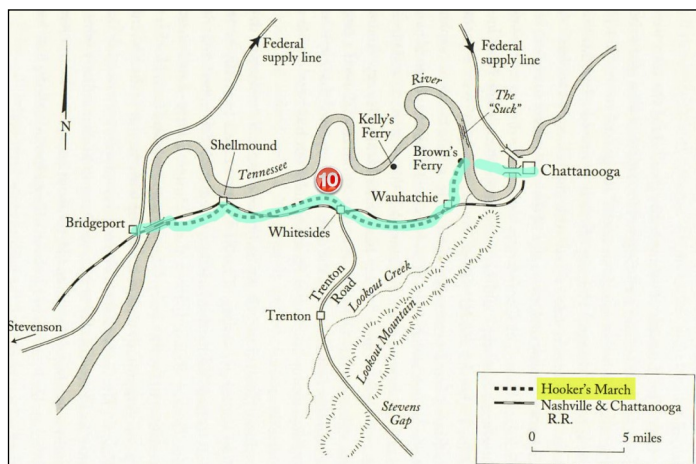
On Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>, Hooker assumed control of the area encompassing the N&C RR's path between Wartrace, TN and Bridgeport, AL. He placed one division of the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps at Wartrace and the other at the next station, Decherd (as shown on the map on p. 8). The elements of the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps that had already made it to Bridgeport were ordered to reboard their trains and head back north to guard the stations at Stevenson and Decherd until the raid threat blew over. Despite the scattered presence of Union troops, Wheeler and his men destroyed some small bridges, and tore up short sections of track and telegraph wires.

The damages were quickly repaired by the XII<sup>th</sup> Corps, with telegraphic communication restored between Nashville and Bridgeport on Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> and the railroad restored on Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>. That same day, Wheeler and his men headed south and retreated to Alabama, recrossing the Tennessee River at Muscle Shoals, some 125 miles southwest of Nashville. That threat was over. Delivery of badly needed supplies and equipment to Bridgeport resumed.

Of course, Chattanooga, not Bridgeport, was the final destination for the reinforcements. Why has no mention been made of the arrival into Chattanooga up to this point? The reason is that, prior to Hooker's arrival, the Confederates had destroyed the railroad bridge over the Tennessee River that connected Bridgeport to Chattanooga. Also, there wasn't enough food in Chattanooga.

crans was about to evacuate Chattanooga due to the spectre of starvation. Grant was able to inform Rosecrans of the situation and stop him just in time.

Suffice it to say that Grant arrived in Chattanooga on Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> and immediately took charge. In only five days, he quickly opening up a route called the "cracker line" to get desperately needed food and other supplies to the besieged troops and citizens of Chattanooga. Hooker was then able to march the XI<sup>th</sup> and XII<sup>th</sup> Corps into Chattanooga on Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>.



The above map is taken from p. 169 of [Rescue by Rail: Troop Transfer and the Civil War in the West, 1863](#) by Roger Pickenpaugh. The text highlights, color-coded route indicators, and route segment numbers were added by the author.

Having been reinforced by the Army of the Potomac's XI<sup>th</sup> and XII<sup>th</sup> Corps as well as by Sherman and his XV<sup>th</sup> Corps of the Army of the Tennessee, a combined additional 40,000 troops, Grant's besieged army now totaled 85,000 troops.

Bragg had not helped the Confederate cause in the interim. He had reduced the size of his own army of 70,000 on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> by sending Longstreet and his two Corps off to capture Knoxville from Union Maj. Gen. Burnside and his troops. This was done per President Davis's request, but reduced Bragg's forces by 25%.

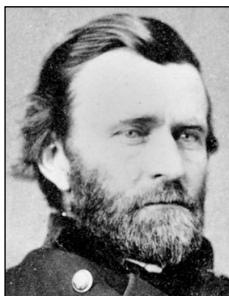
With the arrival of Sherman and his troops on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, Grant was finally ready on Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> to unleash his plan to push the besieging Confederates off Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. This was exactly one month after Grant's arrival in Chattanooga. The plan called for Sherman to attack the northern flank along Missionary Ridge while Joe Hooker captured Lookout Mountain, the southern flank. Thomas would distract Bragg and prevent him from reinforcing his flanks by feigning an attack on the center of the Confederate line. They would then roll up the Confederate line from north to south.

In the actual engagement, it took until late on Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> for Sherman to get into starting position near his target, Tunnel Hill, due to heavy rain. Also on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Thomas attacked the center and was able to easily overwhelm the 600 Confederate defenders at Orchard Knob about a mile from the base of Missionary Ridge with his 14,000 troops. Here, they entrenched and waited.



**Maj. Gen. Carl Schurz**

On Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>, one of the XI<sup>th</sup> Corps Division commanders, Maj. Gen. Carl Schurz, had his men put a pontoon bridge across the Tennessee River at Bridgeport. Actually, they constructed two pontoon bridges, one from Bridgeport to a large island in the middle of the river and the other linking the island to the southern bank. The next day, work began to replace the destroyed N&C RR trestle.



**Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant**

On Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>, like a thunderbolt from the sky, Edwin Stanton, with Lincoln's agreement, had the War Department issue General Orders 337, combining the Departments of the Ohio, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee into the Military Division of the Mississippi. Maj. Gen. U.S. Grant was put in command of the Division. Meeting with Grant in person at Louisville on Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> to make this announcement, Stanton gave Grant the choice of keeping Rosecrans as commander of the Army of the Cumberland or replacing him with Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas, the "Rock of Chickamauga." Grant chose Thomas. Before Grant could notify Rosecrans, a telegram came to Stanton from Assistant Sec. of War Dana that Rose-

Grant and Thomas made Orchard Knob their headquarters for the rest of the battle.

On Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>, Sherman made his assault, only to find that he had clambered up an isolated spur of Missionary Ridge, separated from the main ridge by a deep ravine. To the south, Hooker and his 12,000 troops had no problem handling the 1,200 men defending Lookout Mountain. A heavy fog below the summit screened the Union troops as they climbed the slopes, enabling them to burst upon the unsuspecting Confederates, and giving the battle its name: "The Battle Above the Clouds".

Bragg reinforced Missionary Ridge that night. Because of this, Sherman had to go on the defensive on the 25<sup>th</sup>. His troops would be tied up at Tunnel Hill for the rest of the battle, unable to dislodge the Confederates.

To the south, Hooker had the Confederates in retreat but couldn't engage them after they burned a bridge over Chattanooga Creek. Grant, seeing his plans spiraling out of control, ordered Thomas to attack the center of the Confederate line on Missionary Ridge. He was hoping to distract Bragg from Tunnel Hill so that Sherman could turn the Confederate line.

Thomas's 24,000 troops sprang forward amid bursting shells from 112 Confederate cannon atop the ridge crest. But once they had driven the Confederates out of the rifle pits at the base of ridge, they found they had no cover. So, against all offensive principles, they harnessed their momentum and continued up the ridge. As fate would have it, the Confederates had set up their breastworks on the physical crest of the ridge instead of the military crest, slightly on the forward downslope. Therefore, there were a number of blind spots that screened the oncoming men in blue.

The Confederates panicked and were routed like the Union had been at Chickamauga two months before. The Rebels abandoned a third of their army's artillery and 7,000 muskets as they fled. Grant and Thomas could not believe their eyes. From his headquarters atop Missionary Ridge, neither could Bragg. It had been an unparalleled show of bravery and *élan*.

Bragg had to beat his own hasty retreat all the way back to Dalton, GA, where he was eventually able to reorganize his deflated, demoralized troops.

## Aftermath

- Hooker and his XI<sup>th</sup> and XII<sup>th</sup> Corps, with their successes in guarding the B&O RR route and winning at Lookout Mountain, redeemed themselves.
- Burnside, showing, for him, rare competence of command, staved off Longstreet at Knoxville, securing it and eastern Tennessee for the Union.
- Bragg resigned on Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> and Davis immediately accepted, replacing him with Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, who would face Sherman in 1864's Atlanta Campaign. Finally, Chattanooga would be a critical supply hub for Sherman in that campaign.

## Current Status of the Coronavirus Pandemic

Editor's note: The Johns Hopkins University of Medicine has had a public Coronavirus Resource Center website since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020. In the table below, I have collected that data and summarized its statistics over the past four months.

United States				
Since 1/1/2020	12/13/2021	11/7/2021	10/9/2021	9/8/2021
Total Cases	49,921,405	46,461,714	44,290,052	40,343,255
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+7.4%</b>	+4.9%	+9.8%	<b>+13.5%</b>
Total Deaths	797,346	754,278	712,693	651,448
Pct Change from Previous Month	+5.7%	+5.8%	<b>+9.4%</b>	<b>+5.8%</b>
Total Vaccine Doses Administered	481,829,159	427,664,862	399,175,036	374,724,113
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+12.7%</b>	+7.1%	+6.5%	NA
Past 28 Days				
Total Cases	2,835,286	2,124,146	3,428,197	4,224,866
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+33.5%</b>	<b>-38.0%</b>	<b>-18.9%</b>	NA
Total Deaths	33,358	40,285	52,833	32,190
Pct Change from Previous Month	-8.3%	<b>-23.8%</b>	<b>+8.8%</b>	NA
Total Vaccine Doses Administered	39,524,266	23,774,666	19,205,517	19,033,691
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+16.6%</b>	<b>+23.8%</b>	+0.9%	NA
The World				
Since January 2020		11/7/2021	10/9/2021	9/8/2021
Total Cases	270,162,556	249,538,695	237,227,127	222,273,570
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+9.2%</b>	+5.2%	+6.7%	<b>+10.3%</b>
Total Deaths	5,306,114	5,044,795	4,842,478	4,591,915
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+5.2%</b>	+4.2%	+5.5%	+7.4%
Total Vaccine Doses Administered	8,439,148,141	7,226,136,580	6,424,712,258	5,557,958,436
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+16.8%</b>	<b>+12.5%</b>	<b>+15.6%</b>	NA
Past 28 Days				
Total Cases	16,378,126	11,862,348	13,461,577	17,912,568
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+38.1%</b>	<b>-11.9%</b>	<b>-24.9%</b>	NA
Total Deaths	204,797	194,691	226,443	272,104
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+5.2%</b>	<b>-14.0%</b>	<b>-16.8%</b>	NA
Total Vaccine Doses Administered	894,687,299	711,127,530	760,800,039	978,127,682
Pct Change from Previous Month	<b>+25.8%</b>	-6.5%	<b>-22.2%</b>	NA

Key: a green box indicates a % decrease in the rate of an illness parameter versus the previous month. A box with a red % indicates a % increase in the rate versus the previous month. Double figures are indicated in bold. Opposite rules apply to vaccines, where higher percentages over time are better.

**U.S.:** the total case rate is increasing while the total death rate continues to decrease. **World:** the total case rate showed a huge jump. It appears that variants and a move indoors due to cold weather may be contributing factors.



# News of the RCWRT



## Upcoming 2021-22 RCWRT Meetings

We are once again meeting in person. Those unable to attend in person can join in remotely via Zoom software. **In person attendees should wear masks to comply with the Governor's new guidelines, brought about by the delta variant of the Covid-19 virus.**

Date	Speaker(s)	Topic
Dec. 2021	Holiday Break	<b>No Meeting</b>
Jan. 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Freddie Kiger	Battle of Antietam / Sharpsburg
Feb. 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Gary Dyson	Ambush of the Isaac P. Smith

### Oliver O. Howard: The Freedmen's Bureau and Howard University



Union Maj. Gen Oliver O. Howard, commander of the XI<sup>th</sup> Corps of the Army of the Potomac, and a protagonist in this month's main article, was known as the "Christian General" because he tried to base his policy decisions on his deep, evangelical piety.

After the Civil War ended, Howard was put in charge of the Freedmen's Bureau which had been established on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1865. The Bureau operated briefly as a U.S. government agency from 1865 to 1872 to direct "provisions, clothing, and fuel...for the immediate and temporary shelter and supply of destitute and suffering refugees and freedmen and their wives and children". Additionally, it was charged with integrating the former slaves into Southern society and politics during the second phase of the Reconstruction Era. Howard served as its only commissioner before it went unfunded in 1872.

Howard was also a leader in promoting higher education for freedmen. Most notably, he founded Howard University (HU) in Washington City and later served as its president from 1869 to 1874. In its first five years of operation, Howard University educated over 150,000 freed slaves.



Today, HU is a private federally chartered historically black research university, accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

From its outset, Howard has been nonsectarian and open to people of all sexes and races. It offers undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees in more than 120 programs, more than any other HBCU in the nation.



## The Knapsack

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(November 2021 Circulation: 409)

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**Bob Graesser, Editor**

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**Griff Bartlett**

**Readers are encouraged to submit photos, events, & articles for publication to Bob Graesser, Editor (RaleighCWRT@yahoo.com; 919-244-9041)**

## RCWRT Board of Directors (2020-22)

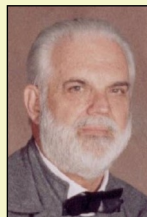
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Pattie Smith	Program Committee
Bob Graesser	Knapsack Editor / Webmaster
Wayne Shore	Member
Lloyd Townsend	Member

**Paying Memberships / Total Members: 127 / 157**

**No New Members Joined the RCWRT in Nov. 2021**

### Did You Know?

There have been only 3 editors of *The Knapsack* newsletter:



**Charles Hawks**  
2003-2010



**Andrew Ballard**  
2010 - July 2018



**Bob Graesser**  
Aug. 2018 - Now

**The Raleigh Civil War Round Table** was formed on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001 and is a 501(c)(3) "tax exempt organization."

We meet on the second Monday of each month (except this Dec.). **We are once again meeting in person at the NC Museum of History, 5 East Edenton Street, Raleigh, NC starting at 6:30 p.m. to allow 30 min. for mingling.**

Annual membership dues are \$30 (individual and family) and \$10 for teachers. Student membership is free. Half-year memberships are available March through May for \$20. Dues should be submitted to Griff Bartlett, Treasurer, 908 Kinsdale Drive, Raleigh, NC 27615-1117 by **Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>** each year.

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