

Volume 10

Number 030

Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign

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Lead: His name evoked witchery and profound admiration, but Thomas J. "Stonewall," Jackson largely remains an enigma to students of his brilliant Valley Campaign of 1862.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: Stonewall Jackson has been called everything from a military genius to a blue-eyed assassin. His students at the Virginia Military Academy called him Tom Fool behind his back, but later came

to regard him with near worship after his talent for strategy and leadership in desperate circumstances, help turn the tide for the South in the early months of the Civil War. He was an orphan who grew up in near poverty, passed from one set of relatives to the other. A chance opportunity landed him ill-prepared in the ranks of the United States Military Academy at West Point, but through sheer academic sweat he elevated his graduating class standing to number 17.

Jackson was not conspicuously pious as a young man but in the years following service in the Mexican War settled on extreme Presbyterianism where his intensity produced a level

of theological rigidity and moral confidence that made him an effective deacon, but to those less sympathetic, he appeared priggish and overbearing. He was a devoted husband and from all accounts would have been an excellent father had the war not intervened.

While not expected to be an especially effective battle leader, Jackson proved himself at Manassas in June 1861 where he earned his nickname and was given charge of the Shenandoah Valley. There he was to hold its rich farms for the Confederacy and tie up as many Federals as possible to take the pressure off eastern Virginia. His hopelessly out-gunned and out-

numbered troops were defeated at Kernstown in March, 1862, but sent panic through the Union leadership and tied up thousands of troops in Valley that might have been thrown against Richmond. Next time: Stonewall's foot cavalry.

At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

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