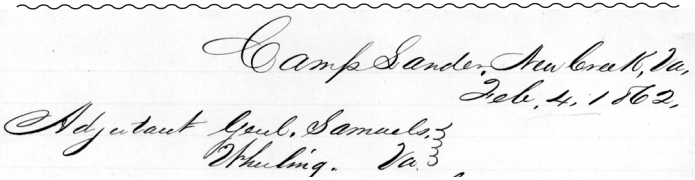
A Sesquicentennial Moment

February 2 – 8, 1862


Camp Sander, New Creek, Va.,
Feb. 4, 1862.
Adjutant Genl. Samuels,
Wheeling, Va.

The battle for control of parts of western Virginia during the Civil War kept some cities in nearly constant turmoil.

The city of Romney was one of those communities. Like many others, Romney bounced between being under Union control to being under Confederate control numerous times during the war.

After Confederate Secretary of War J. P. Benjamin ordered the evacuation of Romney during the first week of February 1862, Union forces seized control of the Hampshire County seat within days.

The Cincinnati Gazette said Union Gen. Frederick Lander's forces occupied Romney without a fight.

The Wheeling Intelligencer speculated that rebel forces had withdrawn on Feb. 3, 1862, because they "either feared an attack from our forces, or contemplate making one in another direction."

After Confederate Gen. William Loring and his men left Romney and headed east toward Winchester, Col. Edward H. McDonald burned the South Branch Bridge on the Northwestern turnpike.

This sesquicentennial moment is brought to you by the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Archives and History Section.

For more information, visit www.wvculture.org