

A SESQUICENTENNIAL ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ MOMENT

NOV. 17-23, 1861

Keenly aware of the political and strategic significance of western Virginia during the early days of the Civil War, Confederate Gen. Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson thought it vitally important that the Confederacy gain control of Romney during the winter of 1861.

On Nov. 20, he sent a dispatch to Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin, urging him to send reinforcements to help Jackson’s men retake Romney.

“Postpone the occupation of that section until spring and we may expect to find the enemy prepared for us and the resources to which I have referred greatly exhausted,” Jackson wrote to Benjamin.

Although the South originally hoped to defend northwestern Virginia, the Confederacy failed to hold any cities for any length of time.

That failure gave delegates in Wheeling the ability to recreate a loyal government of Virginia and develop the new state of West Virginia

with little fear of being attacked.

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



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