On November 23, 1862, General George Crook ordered the Second (West) Virginia Cavalry to launch a raid against a Confederate camp in the Sinking Creek Valley. Major William H. Powell, who led the attack, was later awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions at Sinking Creek.

CSO: SS.8.22, ELA.8.1

Investigate the Document: (Civil War Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I Vol. 21)

1. What instructions did General Crook give that was intended to save Colonel Lane, commander of the Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Infantry, ten miles of marching? What was the objective of the mission?

2. According to the report given by Colonel Lane, they were seventeen miles from ____________ despite the delay of crossing the Gauley River on November 24. What happened when Lane’s regiment encountered a party of enemy scouts? Was the weather a concern? If so, how?

3. According to the report given by Colonel Paxton, where were the Confederate troops discovered by the Second West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry? Why were the Confederates stationed at this location?

4. Who did Colonel Paxton credit for leading the charge? How many Confederate troops were captured?

Think Critically: How were the Union troops able to successfully complete the raid without a single casualty? Did the weather and terrain play a role in these operations? Who was in control of western Virginia at this point in the war? Union or Confederates?
upon the person of Burke disclosed the fact that a man by the name of Wrench had been, and still is, engaged in purchasing cloth for the Confederate Army. I sent over to-day and arrested him, and searched his premises, but found nothing. He is also held as a prisoner. I caused the town to be partially searched for arms, but nothing was found, except a few boxes of cartridges, which were brought over to this side.

Last night I also sent Lieutenant Taylor, First Maine Cavalry, across the river at Mercerville, 3 miles above here, with a small force of cavalry. They succeeded in capturing a guerrilla by the name of King, a citizen of the District of Columbia, formerly of the Twelfth Virginia Regiment, but whose time expired in July, and since that time he has been acting as a scout for the rebels. These are his own admissions.

Both expeditions were well conducted, and their object fully accomplished without accident, which speaks well for the officers conducting them.

There is general rejoicing by the loyal citizens here. Burke and his party had become a perfect terror to all law-abiding men. Leopold and Hipley both dispute the honor of having killed Cooks, at Dam No. 4, last week. I would respectfully suggest the propriety of sending the prisoners forward immediately.

Enclosed will be found the report of Captain Scott, which will give the details of the expedition.

Enclosed will also be found the statement of A. M. Innow, a corporal, who deserted on the instant, and whom I sent to your headquarters on the 24th instant.

I have information that the rebel cavalry stationed at Smithfield, Bunker Hill, and Leetown were moved away on Saturday last, which I believe to be true.

Your obedient servant,

S. COLGROVE,
Colonel, Commanding Third Brigade.

Major-General MORELL.

P. S.—I also send the parole of 18 prisoners, taken in the hospital (wounded). These men were paroled since the battle of Antietam, but since exchanged. Our party recaptured and paroled them the second time.

NOVEMBER 24-30, 1862.—Expedition from Summersville to Cold Knob Mountain, W. Va., and skirmish (50th) at Lewis's Mill, on Sinking Creek.

REPORTS.

No. 1.—Brig. Gen. George Crook, U. S. Army.
No. 2.—Col. Philander P. Lane, Eleventh Ohio Infantry.
No. 3.—Col. John C. Paxton, Second West Virginia Cavalry.

No. 1.


HEADQUARTERS FIRST KANAWHA DIVISION.

Charleston, December 13, 1862.

MAJOR: I have the honor to report, for the information of the general commanding, that on the 24th ultimo I sent the Eleventh Regiment Ohio

* Not found.
they could not be moved. The snow was from 6 to 8 inches deep; the cold was intense, and the men almost exhausted. Under these discouraging circumstances, a further prosecution of the expedition was abandoned.

I omitted to state that I found it impossible to gain the rear of the enemy's camp from the top of Cold Knob, as all the roads and paths came in above their pickets.

Respectfully submitted.

P. P. Lange,
Colonel, Commanding Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Infantry.
[Brig. Gen. George Crook]

No. 3.
HQRS. SECOND WEST VIRGINIA VOLUNTEER CAVALRY,
Camp Pitts, December 3, 1862.

Sir: In obedience to your order, I marched my command, consisting of Companies G, I, F, A, K, D, E, and H, Second West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry (in all, 475 men, rank and file, in good order), on the morning of November 24, for Summerville, arriving there at 10 p.m. the same day, a distance of 53 miles.

Left Summerville next morning at 7 o'clock, and arrived at the Hinkle farm at 4 p.m., 35 miles, and, being able to obtain some hay there, remained until 4 a.m. the 26th, when we took up the march of line, in a blinding snowstorm, for Greensboro, via Cold Knob Mountain, where we arrived at 10 a.m. the same day; distance 20 miles.

Met Colonel Lane, Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Infantry, who was to assist me in breaking up a camp of the rebels at the foot of the mountain; but, on account of the severity of the weather and hard marching, he wished to return to his camp at Summerville. I asked him to take the advance, until we met the enemy's pickets, which he did, and, in about 1 mile, exchanged shots with 6 of the enemy, wounding 1. Colonel Lane at once opened his ranks, and gave us the road. We pushed rapidly into the enemy's camp, a distance of some 3 miles, effecting a complete surprise, at 12 in., the enemy scattering in all directions.

We killed 2, wounded 2, paroled 1, and captured 2 commissioned officers (1 captain and 1 second lieutenant), 111 non-commissioned officers and privates, 100 horses, and 6 miles; burned and destroyed about 200 Enfield and Mississippi rifles and 50 sabers, with other accouterments, stores, and supplies, and their camp tents, &c. I had 2 horses killed in the enemy's camp, and lost 10 on the march from fatigue and exhaustion.

The enemy was found 3 miles from the foot of Cold Knob Mountain, on Sinking Creek, Greenbrier County, West Virginia, at Lewis' Mill, and consisted of a part of five companies of cavalry, via, Rockbridge Cavalry, Braxton Dragoons, Churchville Cavalry, Valley Cavalry, and Catoctin Rangers. They were men who had been in the service fifteen months, and were located at this point to guard the mountains, and to organize a part of A. G. Jenkins' brigade. Our success was complete. We never lost a drop of blood.

After securing the prisoners and horses and destroying the camp, &c., we marched at 4 p.m. (20th) for Summerville, where we arrived on the 27th at noon, making 150 miles for men and horses, without food or rest,

J. C. Paxton,
Colonel, Comdg. Second West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry.

Capt. R. P. Kennedy,

NOVEMBER 23, 1862—Raid on Poolesville, Md.

REPORTS.

No. 1.—Maj. Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, C. S. Army, commanding Cavalry Division.

No. 2.—Brig. Gen. William E. Jones, C. S. Army, commanding Cavalry Brigade.

No. 3.—Maj. E. V. White, Thirty-fifth Virginia Cavalry Battalion.

No. 1.
HQRS. CAV. DIV., ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
March 3, 1863.

GENERAL: I have the honor to forward reports of scouts and skirmishes which took place in November last in the valley. These reports were very long reaching me, and then got accidentally mislaid until now. I assure the accommodations bestowed by Brigadier General [W. E.] Jones upon Major [E. V.] White, Major [Thomas B.] Massie, and Lieutenant [H. C.] Randolph, Twelfth Virginia Cavalry. The last-named officer, now that a vacancy has occurred, is a meritorious case for promotion, for valor and skill, as major Twelfth Virginia Cavalry, vice Massie, promoted lieutenant-colonel, vice [H. H.] Burks, resigned.

Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. E. B. Stuart,
Major General, Commanding.

Brig. Gen. R. H. Chilton,
Acting Adjutant and Inspector General.

No. 2.

HEADQUARTERS JONES' BRIGADE,
Bartoonsville, Va., December 7, 1862.

GENERAL: Please find enclosed the report of Maj. E. V. White relative to an expedition into Maryland by one of his companies. The daring