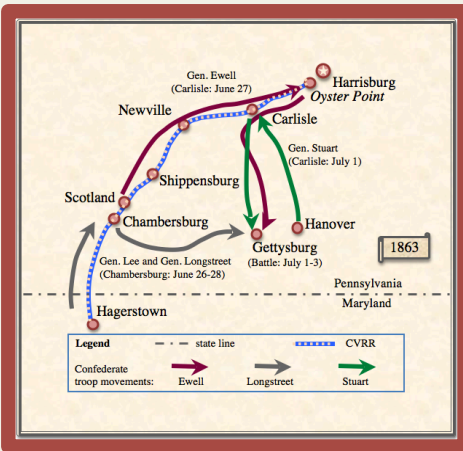




# CUMBERLAND VALLEY RAIL TRAIL



## Confederate Invasion of the Cumberland Valley



**Workhorse for the Union:** The Cumberland Valley Railroad (CVRR) transported Union supplies and soldiers to and from battlefields south of Pennsylvania throughout the Civil War. However, while residents of the valley saw a great deal of railroad and Union troop activity in the early years of the war, it was not until June of 1863 that Confederate forces made their way into the Cumberland Valley.

**Ewell pushes north:** Confederate General Ewell's infantry troops pushed as far north as Oyster Point (present-day 31st Street, Camp Hill) where they skirmished with state militia. Although Ewell's forces were in good position to assault the state capital at Harrisburg, General Robert E. Lee ordered them back to support the rest of the Army of Northern Virginia as a battle developed around Gettysburg.

**Ewell occupies Carlisle:** Ewell's troops briefly occupied Carlisle on June 27-28, but the county seat experienced no significant violence until July 1, when Confederate cavalry forces under the command of General J.E.B. Stuart shelled the town and then set fire to the gas works and the Carlisle Barracks before they too headed south to rejoin the main Confederate army at Gettysburg.

**CVRR damage:** Confederate troops moving southwest tore up sections of the CVRR track, damaged railroad maintenance shops and equipment at Chambersburg, and destroyed the bridge at Scotland. However, within a week crews had repaired the line, and it remained in operation for the rest of the war as a key logistics route for Union forces.



"The Rebels Shelling the New York Militia in the Main Street of Carlisle, Pennsylvania." *Harper's Weekly Magazine* (July 25, 1863).

Image credit: Archives and Special Collections, Dickinson College



A Confederate cannon ball struck the second (from the left) of the four main columns of the Carlisle Courthouse. The damage where the ball struck is still visible today.

Image credit: Andrew Connell



Richard Stoddert Ewell, who was one of Lee's top subordinates and corps commanders at Gettysburg, had been stationed at the Carlisle Barracks prior to the Civil War. During the June 1863 invasion, Ewell's forces traveled along the CVRR into Carlisle, returning not only Ewell but also several other Confederate officers to the town where they had trained in the U.S. Army prior to the secession crisis.

Image credit: House Divided Project

