

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

APRIL 27 - MAY 3, 1862

General Fremont's Headquarters at Franklin.

Guerrilla Warfare in the Mountains.

The town of Princeton was destroyed by fire on May 1, 1862, after a Union regiment commanded by future President Rutherford B. Hayes and including another future president, William McKinley, fought a 13-hour battle through Mercer County. That battle, along with a subsequent attack on Lewisburg, was designed to help disrupt the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad that Confederate troops used to transport men and supplies. Even though most of Princeton's residents sympathized with the South, Confederate Col. W.H. Jenifer ordered troops to set fire to the town to prevent Confederate supplies from falling into the hands of Union forces. Nearly all of Princeton's

buildings were destroyed by the blaze, including the Mercer County Courthouse. Only 10 private homes and the jail survived. Despite those battle successes, though, Union troops never got the chance to disrupt the railroad. The federal forces at Princeton retreated to Flat Top Mountain and the troops at Lewisburg withdrew after President Abraham Lincoln recalled most of the army from western Virginia to join the ongoing battle to capture the Confederate capital in Richmond.

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.

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