



June 2022

Railroad Bridge Burning

License Plate Follows the Path of Morgan's Raiders



This battlefield supporter visited the railroad site which is located on Memorial Blvd. in Springfield, Robertson County. On November 2, 1862, Colonel John Hunt Morgan stopped in this region.

During the Civil War, Robertson County was occupied territory and no major battles were fought within its borders. However, both armies moved men and materials through, and Confederate cavalryman John Hunt Morgan and his raiders destroyed parts of the Edgefield and Kentucky Railroads which ran through the county. These railroads were vital links in the Union supply line.

Returning from the Kentucky Campaign of September-October 1862, Morgan's command now consisting of the 2nd, 7th and 9th Kentucky Cavalry, stopped briefly in this region, while a detachment under Lt. Col. Hutchinson destroyed railroad trestles near Springfield, and two long trestles in the direction of Clarksville. The *Nashville Daily Union* reported "*Lieut. Col. Hutchinson reports that he burned three tressels on the Clarksville and Springfield Railroad, on the 27th, and also the tressel work at the Ridge. He says all the bridges between this and Clarksville are destroyed.*" On November 2, 1862, *The Vidette*, a local Springfield newspaper, printed a letter to Lieut. Col R A Alston (Chief of Staff to Morgan) from Lt. Col. Hutchinson stating, "*we burned the trestle works between Nashville and Clarksville, being a distance of near sixty miles, (the most important by far on the E. and R. Rail Road.)*"



In 1862, John Hunt Morgan set out on a thousand-mile ride through Kentucky – destroying railroad and telegraph lines, seizing supplies, taking prisoners and generally wreaking havoc in the Union rear.

Morgan led equally successful endeavors in October and December, which eventually forced some 20,000 Union troops to be detached from the front to guard communication and supply lines.

During his raids, Morgan often avoided direct combat through tactical plans which involved ruse and deception, including intercepting telegraph messages and sending out false ones to Union commands. During 1862 Morgan's command grew from 325 to a division of 3,000 and he was promoted to brigadier general on December 11, 1862.

John Hunt Morgan was known as the "Thunderbolt of the Confederacy" and his raids often made national headlines and helped cement the fearsome reputation of the Southern cavalryman.

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