



## Andrews' Raiders (The Great Locomotive Chase)

Topic Guide for Chronicling America (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>)

### Introduction

On April 12, 1862, Union soldiers executed a raid in Big Shanty, Georgia (now Kennesaw) to steal a locomotive and ride it back north, cutting telegraph wires and disrupting supply transportation. James J. Andrews, a civilian scout and spy, led 22 troops from Ohio regiments into enemy territory, commandeered a Confederate locomotive, *The General*, and drove it back north toward Chattanooga, Tennessee. The raid was unsuccessful, as the Confederates eventually caught up with the raiders. Seven of the raiders were hanged as war criminals, including Andrews; some made their escape; and the rest were eventually exchanged and sent home. As a result of this raid, the first Medals of Honor were awarded to the brave men who attempted this daring incursion. Andrews did not receive the Medal of Honor, as he was a civilian and not eligible.

### Important Dates

- April 12, 1862: Union soldiers steal *The General* and race back toward Chattanooga, Tennessee.
- April 24, 1862: All of the participants of the raid had been captured and were awaiting trial.
- June 7, 1862: James J. Andrews is hanged after being found guilty of being a spy.
- June 18, 1862: Seven other soldiers were hanged in Atlanta after being convicted as spies.
- March 17, 1863: The six remaining prisoners of war (eight prisoners had already made their escape) are exchanged for Confederate prisoners.
- March 25, 1863: Jacob Parrott, a private during the raid, is the first recipient of the Medal of Honor.
- May 30, 1891: A monument is unveiled in the Chattanooga National Cemetery commemorating the raid.

### Suggested Search Strategies

- Try the following terms in combination (as an "all" word search), proximity or as phrases: Big Shanty, locomotive, James Andrews, raid, Chattanooga, railroad.
- Searching for "Kennesaw" will not give you any results until after 1887. To find articles about the raid, search for "Big Shanty".
- Try searching the name of a soldier that participated in the raid.
- Search newspapers in all states, not just Ohio.

### Sample Articles from Chronicling America

- ["Daring Exploit of Lincoln Emissaries in Georgia"](#) *Memphis Daily Appeal* (Memphis, TN), April 25, 1862, Image 1, col. 3-4.
- ["Ohio Prisoners Murdered"](#) *Western Reserve Chronicle* (Warren, OH), November 12, 1862, Image 1, col. 5.
- ["Seven Months in Dixie"](#) *Hancock Jeffersonian* (Findlay, OH), December 19, 1862, Image 1, col. 3-6.
- ["Thrilling Account of a Daring Adventure!"](#) *Hancock Jeffersonian* (Findlay, OH), April 24, 1863, Image 1, col. 3-6.
- ["The first medal..."](#) *Cass County Republican* (Dowagiac, MI), May 7, 1863, Image 2, col. 3.