

# THE COURIER

## Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



**Date:** December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Meeting # 95 Special Ladies Night

**Place:** Dino's Restaurant I90 & Rte. 306 exit Mentor, Ohio

**Canteen:** 6PM                      **Rations:** 7PM

**Speaker:** Dale Fellows

**Topic:** The Founding Fathers and the Constitution

**Was the Civil War Inevitable?**

**Reservations required**                      **Please call Steve Abbey**

**Phone 440 255 8375**                      **e-Mail: [abbeysr@yahoo.com](mailto:abbeysr@yahoo.com)**

**Dale Fellows** was a frequent guest on National Public Radio and Television during the recent Presidential campaign and although the McCain-Palin ticket came in second it was not because of a lack of effort on his part! When he is not supervising the operations at **Morgan Litho Inc** and **Eagle Advertising**, (he is the co-founder), Dale Fellows is a member of both the Lake County and the State of Ohio Republican Party Executive Committees. Dale is also a member of the Lake County Board of Elections and he served as County Commissioner in 1997 and 1998. Mr. Fellows is a 1979 graduate of Kent State University and is currently working on a post graduate degree at Cleveland State University. Among his many accomplishments we can list that he taught at **Lakeland Community College**, tutored Economics for the students at Myers College and in his early years managed the Chagrin Valley Mobil station.

We should also note that Dale Fellows is a regular on **WELW 1330** radio where he presents his conservative views on current events. Dale Fellows and his wife **Nancy** reside in Willoughby Hills where she is a member of the city council, and he is Chairman of the Charter Review Commission. Nancy and Dale have 2 sons, Aaron and Eric. Aaron passed away in May 2008, he was 28 years old. Dale Fellows is a charter member of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table and we are honored to have him as our speaker for this special ladies night meeting.

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## **CIVIL WAR MINUTES: Franco M. Sperrazzo, Special Events Coordinator**

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**Norton London** and **Joseph Tirpak** transitioned 33 members and guest from a presidential election mindset to a pre-holiday one. When I first learned of an open round table discussion for our November 11, Veterans Day gathering my reaction was favorable since we are all about that and plan to do at least one every year. What can we still learn about **Ulysses S. Grant** and **Robert E. Lee**? The two heroes and American icons were compared, contrasted in their personal lives, military feats and even some thought provoking revelations. As expected, **Norty** and **JET** were well prepared and challenging. This set the stage for an engaging question and answer open forum.

One of our own will be the featured speaker at our 95<sup>th</sup> and special meeting of the **NEOCWRT**. **Dale Fellows** will have the privilege of proclaiming our December 9<sup>th</sup> gathering an annual holiday/ladies night! Remember if you do not have a female companion you are still encouraged to bring a male friend. Of course **Dino's** does a wonderful job preparing for us but December's cuisine will even be more enhanced.

If you do some winter cleaning of closets, bookshelves attics and basements the next few months please keep us in mind for your **charitable donations**. Any books, audios, videos, or military artifacts contributed to our non-profit organization helps defer our costs for outside our area speakers, group outings, annual picnic, fall and spring field trips and any special events.

**Please note that** after 11 years we are raising the **NEOCWRT annual dues** to a modest **\$55.00** per year to be paid by March 1<sup>st</sup> 2009. Thank you for your understanding, loyalty and continued support. Treasurer **Bill Wilson** will address any concerns you may have.

Unless you go south or west for the winter, you will stay in the freezer but have your spirits warmed by member **George Grim** in January 2009, "Retreat of the Confederate Government April-May 1865". Also another successful year comes to a close under the guiding hand of the **President William Meissner** administration. All superlatives and not a negative event occurred under **Big Bill's** watch. We will be ushering in our 12<sup>th</sup> **President Elect Arlan Byrne**. **Arlan** has been a generous friend and loyal member of the **NEOCWRT** and he will be an outstanding chief executive!

**Wednesday, January 7th 2009 at 7:00pm - The Green Barets and Their Victories** - Clevelander Joseph Patric Meissner, the official historian of the Green Berets in Vietnam in 1968 and 1969, introduces his book with lessons for today in Iraq. Free with museum admission. (\$5.00 after 5:00 on Wednesdays)  
Western Reserve Historical Society  
10825 East Boulevard  
Cleveland OH 44106  
Contact: Art for questions (216) 721-5722 ext. 320

Have a happy, safe and healthy holiday season to you and yours!

See you all on December 9<sup>th</sup>,

**Francis Michael Sperrazzo**

## “Kearny le Magnifique” The Life and Times of Major General Philip Kearny

by John Sandy

**Philip Kearny** was born on June 2, 1816 into one of the wealthiest families in New York City. Philip’s father owned his own brokerage firm and was one of the founders of the New York Stock Exchange. The young Philip was raised by his grandfather Robert Watts after the untimely death of his mother Susan Watts Kearny. Philip was a shy and sensitive child that spent many hours alone in his room playing with toy soldiers and drawing battle scenes from the American Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. He loved everything about the military. His uncle **Major General Stephen Watts Kearny**, a distinguished career army officer was his idol. The general told the lad of his exploits at Yellowstone and army life on the Plains. Philip’s father wanted him to study law while his grandfather wanted him to become a minister.

Philip developed a fondness for horses and learned to be a fearless rider. He loved to race at breakneck speed despite the protests of his father. Later, Philip attended Columbia College and graduated with a law degree. He worked for three months as a legal clerk in a New York law office until the death of his grandfather. His grandfather left him a fortune. In fact, he became one of the richest men in the United States. So he quit his job in 1837 and joined the U. S. Army and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Dragoons at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. Philip’s uncle Stephen had been the very first post commander at Jefferson Barracks.



Philip Kearny was a young cavalry officer filled with the passion of living his life- long dream. He drilled his troopers for hours on end for he wanted them to be the very best cavalry unit in the army. His men grew to respect him and admired his ability. Kearny’s command efforts did not go unrewarded for he was selected, (with a little help from his uncle Stephen,) by the Secretary of War, Joel Poinsett to attend the Cavalry School at Saumur, France. Kearny thoroughly enjoyed his time in France and made many lasting friendships. He was later assigned to the famous **Chasseurs d’Afrique** in Algiers where he received his first baptism under fire. Kearny rode into battle with a sword in his right hand, a pistol in his left and the reins of his horse gripped firmly between his teeth. His bravery earned him the title: “**Kearny le Magnifique.**”

Kearny returned to the United States in the fall of 1840. Later that year he was assigned to be the aide-de-camp for General Alexander Macomb. In 1841 he became the aid-de-camp for General Winfield Scott. He later met and married Diana Moore Bullitt, a young and attractive “Kentucky Belle.” Their marriage was passionate for they had 4 children but it was also filled with much discord. Diana did not savor the army life and longed for the quiet beauty of her Kentucky home. Kearny resigned his commission and left the army but his retirement did not last long. The United States declared war on Mexico on May 13, 1846 and Kearny returned to the **1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Dragoons** and purchased 120 dapple gray horses for his company F troopers. He paid for the horses with his own money.

Philip Kearny achieved much acclaim during the Mexican War. He led a dangerous cavalry charge at the San Antonio gate to Mexico City. Kearny, in the spirit of the Chasseurs, refused to stop despite the bugle call for retreat. His left arm was shattered by a grapeshot blast and required amputation. General Winfield Scott remarked that Kearny was “a perfect soldier and the bravest man I ever knew.” General Scott promoted Kearny to brevet major.

After the Mexican War, Kearny was assigned to the army recruiting offices in New York City. His wife Diana left him took their 4 children and returned to Kentucky. It is only fair to note that Philip Kearny had a quick and stormy temper that contributed to his marital problems. Kearny was later reassigned to the Pacific Northwest with the 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Dragoons. In December 1851 he again resigned from the army and embarked on a world tour. While visiting Paris in the spring of 1853 he met and fell in love with Agnes Maxwell, the young daughter of the customs collector of New York City. The couple returned to the United States but their affair sent shock waves throughout the sensitive New York society. Diana Kearny, Philip's wife would not give him a divorce and the extra-marital affair caused Philip and Agnes to be shunned by his family and friends.

In 1859 Philip Kearny was urged by his old comrades in the Chasseurs de Afrique to enlist in the Imperial Cavalry of France and join them in the **Franco-Austrian War** in Italy. Austrian forces under Franz Josef were attempting to prevent the unification of the Italian states. Kearny served under the Emperor Napoleon III and saw action at Montebello, Magenta and Solferino. **Solferino** was the decisive battle of the Italian campaign but the carnage of this battle shocked the world. More than 270,000 troops fought for more than 9 hours before the Austrians retreated leaving more than 40,000 casualties on both sides.



(Above the Kearny Medal of Honor)

On February 17, 1860, Philip Kearny's bravery during the Italian campaign was recognized by Napoleon III when the Emperor awarded him the **Cross of the Legion of Honor**, France's highest military honor. Kearny was the first American to be so honored.

The advent of the American Civil War brought Philip Kearny and Agnes back to New York City where he offered his services to command the new regiments that were being formed. However, his reputation as an officer had been tarnished by his affair with Agnes. His services were declined by the state of New York but the state of New Jersey was willing to overlook Kearny's shortcomings and accepted him to command its 1<sup>st</sup> brigade. Philip Kearny soon developed the reputation of a strict commander that drilled his men endlessly on the manual of arms. Nevertheless, his men respected him for he always made sure his troops were properly fed and clothed.

He purchased whatever items could not be supplied by the Quartermaster from his own funds to insure that his men had what they needed. The officers and men of the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey brigade became devoted to their commander and they would do whatever he asked of them. “My men would follow me to Hell, “he once stated!

In the spring of 1862, the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Brigade commanded by Philip Kearny was part of the Army of the Potomac and General George McClellan’s Peninsula Campaign. General Oliver Howard lost his right arm at the Battle of Fair Oaks. General Kearny saw Howard after the amputation of his arm and told him **“We’ll buy our gloves together hereafter.”** McClellan promoted Kearny to division command but Kearny was very critical of his army commander. Kearny grew more and more impatient with McClellan’s siege tactics and wanted to go on the offensive and take Richmond. McClellan’s army was forced to retreat to Malvern Hill where it inflicted a devastating defeat on Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia. McClellan ordered his army to fall back to Harrison’s Landing and Kearny was incensed. A number of McClellan’s officers wanted to go on the offensive after Malvern Hill and Kearny was no exception. Kearny bellowed to his staff that **“such an order can only be prompted by cowardice or treason.”**

President Lincoln ordered the units of the Army of the Potomac to redeploy and join General John Pope’s Army of Virginia on the plains near the old Bull Run battlefield. Kearny’s division was also reassigned to join Pope. On August 30, 1862 Robert E. Lee defeated John Pope’s army after a two day battle. Stonewall Jackson’s Corps was dug in behind an abandoned railroad cut and lured Pope into attacking him. Pope believed that he had isolated Jackson and launched a tremendous assault at Stonewall’s Corps. Pope was wrong, for Longstreet’s Corps arrived just in time to slam into Pope’s flank. Longstreet’s assault was like a hammer and Stonewall was the anvil. Pope was stunned by the defeat and ordered his forces back to Washington.

On September 1<sup>st</sup> 1862 heavy rains hampered the operations of Kearny’s third division near Chantilly, Virginia. Pope had been ordered by General Halleck, the Army Chief of Staff to resume the offensive and attack Lee. Kearny ordered his division forward but he mistakenly rode into the Confederate lines. He was ordered to surrender, but Kearny recalled the motto of the Chasseurs “never retreat and never surrender” turned his horse around and attempted to ride away. Kearny was shot in his lower spine and killed instantly.

The officers and enlisted men of the First Division, Third Corps, and Army of the Potomac established a medal to honor the memory of their fallen commander. The medal was called the Kearny Medal of Honor and was presented to all the officers that honorably served in battle with Major General Philip Kearny. On the bronze medal were inscribed the words: **“Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.”** This is a quotation from the poet Horace that had been Kearny’s motto. The English translation is: **“It is sweet and fitting to die for one’s country.”**

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References for “Kearny le Magnifique”

*Letters from the Peninsula: The Civil War Letters of General Philip Kearny* by William B. Styple, Belle Grove Publishing Company, New Jersey, 1988

*To the Gates of Richmond: The Peninsula Campaign* by Stephen Sears, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, 1992

*Kearny the Magnificent: The Story of Philip Kearny, 1815 -1862* by Irving Werstein, the John Day Company, NY.1962

*The Sword of Lincoln: The Army of the Potomac* by Jeffrey D. Wert. Simon and Schuster, New York 2005

**Stealing the General by Russell S. Bonds      Book Review by Tom Horvath**

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Andrews Raid made headlines in its day, and interest in the raid did not wane for decades. Participants wrote books, gave lectures, and attended reunions into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1926, Buster Keaton starred in a movie called *The General* based loosely on the raid. In 1956, Disney produced *The Great Locomotive Chase* that more closely kept to the actual events.

The interest is not surprising. The raid was the stuff of Hollywood movies. Twenty Union men travelled more than 100 miles behind Confederate lines and stole a train. The ensuing chase involved two state-of-the-art locomotives travelling at extremely dangerous speeds, risking head-on collisions with other locomotives, avoiding breaks in the track, burning box cars, and obstacles on the track. Beneath the surface story are the stories of the men on their way south, the mishaps, the unbelievable incidents, and the stubborn pursuit of two men that began with them chasing a locomotive on foot. It all makes for good reading, and Mr. Bonds' style makes for easy reading.

And that is only part of the story. What happened to the raiders after the Great Locomotive Chase is a fascinating story in its own right, and consumes almost half this volume. There are escapes and near-escapes. One raider escaped from Confederate captors three different times. Others travelled more than 200 miles to reach Union lines. Still others joined the Confederate army.

As participants tried to impress and thrill audiences with tales of the raid, some fantastic stories became lore. One such story had the *Texas* jumping a missing rail. Mr. Bonds addresses this and other stories of questionable merit with research and logic.

The other important aspect of the raid, also addressed in the book, was Union General Ormsby Mitchel's successful advance into Alabama in coordination with Andrews Raid. The ultimate objective was capturing Chattanooga, which could have split the Confederacy and ended the war much earlier.

Russell Bonds lives in Georgia and has a native's interest in the towns, cities, and countryside. At times, he interrupts the story to provide some history of the area involved. Initially, I found this somewhat distracting, and perhaps he could have omitted or reduced some of it to keep the story moving. But understanding the environment lends important texture to the story.

All in all, the book is an interesting, informative, and easy read. It is well researched and documented, and is now probably the definitive source of information on the raid. The author did extensive research on his own and had access to the greatest living expert on the raid, Colonel James Bogle. (Many of the ample photos, sketches, and engravings in the book come from Colonel Bogle's private collection.) The 440 page book is not footnoted, but includes a "Notes" section that lists references page by page. There is also an index.

Retail price is \$29.95, but can be purchased new on Amazon for \$12.98. Mentor Library has no copies. The Clevnet system has 24 copies, with 4 more on order.

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**The Courier is the monthly Newsletter of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table**

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