

THE COURIER

Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



Date: May 12th, 2009 Meeting # 100

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

Canteen: 6PM Rations: 7PM

Speaker: Bill Meissner

Topic: The Enigma of General George McClellan

Reservations required Please call Steve Abbey

Phone 440 255 8375 e-Mail: abbeysr@yahoo.com

Bill Meissner is a charter member of the NEOCWRT and a lifelong resident of Mentor, Ohio. Bill graduated from Mentor High School Class of 1955 and served 2 years in the U. S. Army where he served as a medic in Germany. He returned home and attended Kent State University and graduated in 1963. Bill and his wife Gwen, also a Mentor graduate, were married in 1961 and bought a house in Mentor on Headlands Road where they still live. Bill and Gwen have three daughters: Kristen, Anne and Susan who all live in northern Ohio. Bill and Gwen were both teachers. Bill taught in the Willoughby Eastlake School system, while Gwen taught in the Mentor Schools. Both Bill and Gwen are retired and enjoy many interests. Gwen loves gardening, quilting and reading. She belongs to several clubs and dotes on their only grandchild, Kristen's Liam. Bill is an avid hunter who also enjoys fishing and collecting firearms. Mr. Meissner loves trap, skeet and target shooting and is a past secretary and president of the Marxman Gun Club, the Weslaco Sportsmen's Club and the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table. This is Bill Meissen's very first presentation to our group but I trust that it will not be his last!

The rain splashed against the dusty earth and sun baked corn stalks where mangled figures lay, clad in faded shades of blue and gray, neatly arranged in rows where they fell. Thousands of faces with frozen expressions of fear and surprise, that life is no more, were piled on the altar of Freedom and sacrificed for the Cause. Mr. Gardner has recorded the images of those lifeless souls with their faces shrouded in the mist and crowded along the Hagerstown Pike, the Dunkers' Church and the sunken road, transparent now on silver plates of black and white.

Generals: George McClellan, Ambrose Burnside and the Harvest of Death

Early on September 2nd, 1862, General George B. McClellan was summoned to the White House by President Lincoln and asked to resume command of the Army of the Potomac after the terrible Union defeat at Second Bull Run. The President and most of the residents of Washington D.C. believed that Robert E. Lee would attack the shattered units of Pope's army that had gathered in the capital. McClellan had lost command of his army when it was removed from Harrison's Landing marking the final chapter of the Peninsula Campaign.



General in Chief Henry Halleck had ordered McClellan to send the troops of the Army of the Potomac to aid General Pope as they arrived by steamer at Alexandria. McClellan judged that he did not have the artillery nor the horses and wagons necessary to supply his units for they were the last to leave the Virginia Peninsula. McClellan's delay in sending the units of the Army of the Potomac was seen as a deliberate attempt to hasten Pope's defeat. General Pope was bitter and charged that the officers and men of the Army of the Potomac resented him and conspired to undermine the morale of the troops under his command. What General McClellan did not know was that he was not President Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton's first choice in generals to save the Army of the Potomac. General Ambrose Burnside was asked first but turned it down out of respect for his old friend George McClellan.

Many of the veterans that had served under McClellan during the Peninsula Campaign were heading home after having completed their one year hitch. They were replaced by raw recruits who had little training and lacked the discipline of the seasoned veterans of the army. General McClellan had to reorganize this army and he had to do it quickly for Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia were moving north with designs on crossing the Potomac River into Maryland.

McClellan had to replace some of his key corps commanders with officers that had no experience in commanding units larger than a division. Ambrose Burnside was assigned to command the Right Wing of the army with Jesse Reno commanding the IX Corps and Joseph Hooker commanding the I Corps. McClellan's Army of the Potomac had a numerical advantage of 85,000 to Lee's 45,000 troops. Many of the Confederate troops were barefoot and wore faded, dirty butternut and gray uniforms. Although McClellan had the good fortune of finding General R. E. Lee's Special Order #191 detailing the disposition of the Army of Northern Virginia during the Maryland Campaign, he realized that he faced an army of battle hardened veterans that were hell bent on destroying the Army of the Potomac. The Rebels believed that "one good Confederate soldier could whip ten Yankee hirelings." Fresh from his strategic victory in stopping McClellan from taking Richmond and his defeat of Pope on the old Manassas battlefield, Lee came to believe that if properly led, his troops could defeat any Federal army.

Lee the consummate gambler defied all military maxims and split his forces sending Stonewall Jackson along with Lafayette McLaws, John Walker and A.P. Hill to capture the Union arsenal and communication center at Harpers Ferry. James Longstreet accompanied by General Lee proceeded to Hagerstown. General Daniel Harvey Hill along with General Stuart were ordered to guard the passes at Turner's Gap, Fox Gap and Crampton's Gap, the main approaches from South Mountain.

On September 13, 1862, General J.E.B. Stuart sent a message to General Lee notifying him that Federal cavalry were spotted near the approaches to South Mountain. General Lee did not expect to see McClellan react so quickly to the movement of the Army of Northern Virginia north of the Potomac River. Lee was concerned because Jackson had not completed the capture of Harper's Ferry and he realized that his men protecting the passes could not hold out long against a larger Federal force.

The Union garrison at Harper's Ferry surrendered to Stonewall Jackson on the morning of September 15, 1862. General Lee dispatched a courier and ordered Generals Jackson, McLaws and Walker to rejoin the army at Sharpsburg as quickly as they can. The Union army was delayed by the relatively small rebel force protecting the passes. Ambrose Burnside had a great deal of difficulty getting his units through Turner's Gap and McClellan was losing the opportunity of a lifetime to catch Robert E. Lee and destroy his army in detail. Burnside's delays and his lack of initiative in getting the Right Wing of the Army through the gaps enabled General Lee to establish a good defensive position along the ridge just east of Sharpsburg.

Longstreet's men were on the right anchored on Antietam Creek while D. H. Hill was to the left and center of the line. John Bell Hood's division was on the left of Hill and Stonewall Jackson arrived just in time to take up position to the left of the Hagerstown Pike and his line extended to the woods beyond the Dunkers' Church. General McClellan wanted to attack General Lee's undermanned force on September 15th, but Burnside was delayed getting into position. McClellan had only 2 divisions available for an attack on September 15th, Richardson's division of Sumner's Corps and Sykes' division of Porter's Corps. Unknown to General McClellan, had he been able to attack on September 15th, Lee had only 19,000 men to defend his line. There was some limited exchange of artillery and small arms fire on the Union right late in the day of September 16 but once again the Federal units were not in position. It took most of the day to set up the artillery batteries and for the supply trains to catch up with the rest of the Federal Army.

McClellan developed a plan for the Union attack that would begin at sunup on September 17th. McClellan reduced the size of Burnside's wing to just the IX Corps under Jacob Cox. Fitz John Porter commanded the Union Center, and Joseph Hooker along with 2 Corps under William Sumner was on the Right. Reducing Burnside's Right Wing to just the IX Corps caused him some anguish for McClellan had "dressed down" his old friend the day before because of Burnside's delays in getting through Turner Gap.

Hooker began the attack on the Union right and the intensity of the fighting was fierce from the outset. At 8:00 a.m. General McClellan dispatched an aide with an order to General Burnside to attack on the left and secure the lower bridge across Antietam Creek and the heights beyond. After approximately 30 minutes had passed, McClellan dispatched another aide to determine if Burnside had begun his attack. The aide returned and stated that General Burnside's men were still in position on the ridge east of the bridge and that they had not moved!



McClellan sent another order to Burnside that he was to take the bridge at all hazards. Burnside did not begin his attack until just before 10:00 a.m. and his troops did not secure the Rohrback bridge until 1:00 p.m. Burnside's men required another 3 hours to secure the heights above the bridge and begin an attack on Lee's right. Just as Burnside's men of the IX Corps were pushing Longstreet's gray-backs and turning his line, A. P. Hill arrived and attacked Burnside's exposed left flank. The men of the Union IX Corps were sent reeling back to the bluffs above the Antietam.

The Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia had battled to a virtual draw despite McClellan's numerical superiority and despite having found Special Order #191. General Lee was able to shift 7 brigades from his right, Longstreet's sector and reinforce the Confederate

Left. Those 7 Confederate brigades exacted a terrible number of casualties on Hooker and Sumner's Corps on the Union right. Had Burnside attacked at or near 8:00 a.m. as ordered, General Lee would not have been able to shift those 7 brigades to the Confederate left. This is all speculation, but had Burnside attacked at or just after 8:00 a.m. and had he reconnoitered the Antietam Creek he might have found a shallow place to ford that stream ¼ mile south of the Rohrback bridge. If Burnside had ordered his attack even one hour earlier he might have turned Longstreet's line and been in good position to see A. P. Hill's men returning from Harper's Ferry before they slammed into the IX Corps's exposed flank.

On November 7, 1862 President Lincoln relieved General George McClellan from command of the Army of the Potomac and replaced him with Major General Ambrose Burnside. Burnside would go on to lead the Army of the Potomac to another terrible defeat at Fredericksburg on December 13, 1862. Why would Burnside ignore McClellan's order to attack at 8:00 a.m.? A decisive Union victory at Antietam might have brought an end to the war instead we were left with a harvest of death!

CIVIL WAR MINUTES by Franco M. Sperrazzo Special Events Coordinator

The NEOCWRT filled 6 round tables strong in support of American History professor and author **Marc Leepson**. Editor **John Sandy** stated **Mr. Leepson** is creditable in his writings and a gifted speaker. This is strongly evident with the enthusiasm he portrays with the presentation of his latest book titled “**Desperate Engagement.**” For a person who never penned a book on the Civil War Era, he truly has an understanding of what occurred outside of Washington D. C. from May-July 1864, the beginning of the Overland Campaign. The major players were generals U.S. Grant, George Meade, Lew Wallace of “**Ben Hur**” fame, and “**Old Baldy**” Jubal Early, the woman hater. **Mr. Leepson** grew up in this area of Virginia. He rarely referred to his outline in his talk. I purchased his book titled “**Flag: An American Biography**”. He answered numerous questions after his talk admirably. Our group enjoyed the time **Marc** spent with us. Thanks to **Jet Tirpak** for coordinating his visit with the **Youngstown Mahoning Valley CWRT**.

Reminder: It may not be too late to join us for our NEOCWRT Spring **One Day Trip** on Saturday May 9th at 10:00 a.m. We will travel to Canton, Ohio to visit the **National First Ladies Museum**. Next will be lunch at The **356 Fighter Group**. Finally the **Maps Air Museum/Akron-Canton Airport**, both in North Canton, Ohio.

Legacy Committee: On Monday May 25th we will observe the 6th anniversary of our memorial dedication at the **Willoughby Cemetery** on Sharpe Ave. Our late founder **Bob Battisti** was a strong believer in this project. In 2008 I had the honor of presenting the wreath at this 10:00 a.m. one-half hour service with **J. Mike Sears**. In previous years our past presidents along with **Ted Karle**, **John Sandy**, **General JET** and **Brent Morgan** been bestowed the honor.

Membership Note: For the first time in our NEOCWRT distinguished 11+ years we have a handful of openings for prospective new members. If you have any good candidates this is an opportunity to bring them to a meeting or two. Thanks to **Terry Reynolds**, **Steve Abbey** and **Mike Sears** for updating our club roster. Any significant changes should be brought to **J. Mike's** attention.

Frank Moore has been gracious enough to take great pictures of last year's **Fall Field Trip** to Richmond, Va. We are glad to have **Veteran Frank** back on the trails with his fellow comrades.

Founder Norton London will speak of more concrete details on our **2009 fall field Trip** the confirmed dates of Thursday Oct. 1st – Sunday Oct. 4th. This time it is back to Richmond, in more of the outlying areas after the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House. **R.E.L. Krick** will be our main field guide. We will be in the competent hands of our on-site coordinator **Brent Morgan** and wife **Sharon** again. We believe brother **Ron Morgan** and wife **Peg** will also be part of the hospitality team.

WRHS Update: **Organizational Membership** cards are in my possession to the **Western Reserve Historical Society**. A list of events and more information will be shared with all at our next meeting. Call **Franco** at 440- 567-2414 or 440- 442-4824 if you wish to us them.

Summer Picnic: The NEOCWRT will celebrate Summer 2009 with our 5th annual picnic at the over 70 acre colonial plantation of **President Arlan Byrne on Sunday July 12, 2009**. A spacious pavilion for shelter somewhat smaller than Blossom Music Center is provided if the weather does not cooperate. We will go on rain or shine. Please RSVP: Arlan or his **First Lady Pat** at 440- 636- 9816! **The 51st Ohio Volunteer Infantry** plans to return. Do we have troopers to fight for the Rebels. Can **R. Bruce Beale** be far away?

The Courier is the Monthly Newsletter of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table **John Sandy Editor**

Staff writers: **Ted Karle** **Franco Sperrazzo** **Joe Tirpak** **Tom Horvath** **Norton London** **Carl Dodaro**
Arlan Byrne **Richmond Correspondent: Brent Morgan**

Please submit all articles by e-mail to: jschez47@yahoo.com

“A Tribute to Courage, Faith and Miracles”

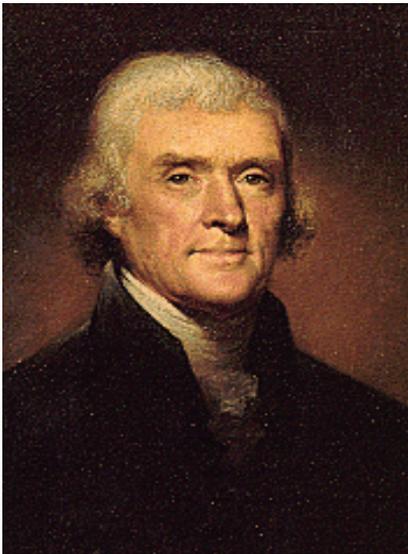
Three Remarkable Stories

by J.E. Tirpak, Founder

My first story is about Thomas Jefferson, a Founding Father and our Third President. There is little or no debate that he was our most brilliant President. And I might add, in my opinion, one of our greatest!

However, some people saw him as an infidel, as a non-believer. Here was someone who served as Governor of Virginia, Member of the Continental Congress, Author of the Declaration of Independence, Ambassador to France, and Secretary of State. In addition, he was also the Founder and Architect of the University of Virginia. He was also a lawyer, astronomer, musician, scientist, philosopher, poet and very gifted writer. John F. Kennedy, our thirty-fifth President, once said to a group of scholars invited to a White House dinner:

“I think this is the most extraordinary collection of talent, of human knowledge, that has ever been gathered at the White House with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone.”



There is a little known but true story about this brilliant man that I would like to share with you. Jefferson had his own version of the Holy Bible. His was a King James Bible just like the ones many of us have. However, he dared to edit his Bible. He removed every miracle, and every hint of the divinity of Jesus. Jefferson’s New Testament had *no loaves and fishes, no walking on water, no turning water into wine?* This begs the question” Why?” Why did Jefferson remove all references to miracles? Well, Jefferson believed that these passages did not truly reflect the life and morals of Jesus of Nazareth. The people said: “*How dare he to edit the Bible!*” We may never fully understand Jefferson’s thinking, or why he chose to do this; nor am I defending his actions. The point is

he did do it! This was his Bible, his to edit, and his to study daily. Was he a bad person? Was he a bad President? Was he an Infidel? I don’t think so! While I can’t speak for Jefferson, I do understand why so many of us want to actually witness a miracle! *Show us a Miracle!* In my own case, I have now witnessed two miracles. Both occurred early this year. I have gone from the “*Show-me*” to the “*Yes*” group and I would like to share this journey with you.

THE FIRST MIRACLE

The first miracle occurred in mid-January of this year. Millions of people around the world witnessed this remarkable event including each of us. It is referred to as: “*The Miracle on the Hudson!*”

Air Force Academy graduate Chesley, “Sully” Sullenberger a long time Chief Pilot for U.S. Airways, issued the following terse instructions for the passengers and crew of Flight 1549: “*Prepare for impact!*”

The airplane had taken off from La Guardia Airport at approximately 3:36 PM and less than a minute later Captain Sullenberger reported a “Double bird strike” and that he needed to return to La Guardia. The Controller told Captain

Sullenberger to divert to an airport nearby in Teterboro, NJ. Sullenberger as pilot, had to make a split second decision with 155 lives at stake. There was no discussion between him and the Tower regarding this decision. No call was recorded on the plane’s transponder.



Moments later the plane splashed down into the Hudson River near Midtown Manhattan. The Plane remained afloat, though slowly sinking. The passengers and crew began to methodically exit the plane. Captain Sullenberger was the last to exit after walking the length of the plane to assure himself that everyone had exited safely. In less than six minutes 4 or 5 boats surrounded the plane and started to rescue passengers.

Each of us in our own way felt so good, so relieved, about what we were witnessing. The people around the world that viewed this amazing miracle on their TV screens all felt much like each of us. In many ways it united us all! This miracle had occurred right before our eyes. The “*Show Me*” group had their miracle and the world was an amazing place at that moment. Paramedics on the scene treated 78 passengers including one crewmember. I will

close this true story, “The Miracle on the Hudson.” witnessed by millions, with a quote from Time Magazine, dated February 2, 2009 that aptly sums it up for all of us.

“In a dark hour on the Hudson, a ray of hope And a reminder of our resilience!”

THE SECOND MIRACLE

In mid-July of 2007, my Sister-in-law, Diana Tirpak was diagnosed with a rare and very aggressive form of Cancer called Acute Myelogenous Leukemia, AML for short. Diana and her family had been looking forward to their annual vacation at Kiawah Island. Instead, Diana was quickly hospitalized with severe pains and spent most of the balance of 2007 at the Ireland Cancer Center of University Hospitals. She was very sick. Her prognosis was not good. 2008 was mostly spent at the Ireland Cancer Center. Her health continued to deteriorate.

As you can appreciate this illness, this cancer, was devastating her body and her family. How could she be healthy one moment, and deathly ill the next? How quickly our lives can change! Why did this happen to Diana? Diana lost all her hair. She lost weight. Her color was not good and the Doctors tried everything to save her and nothing seemed to work. The feeling of helplessness had overcome each of us as we watched her condition deteriorate.

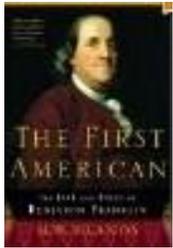
However, late last year, Diana started to feel better. The doctors were unable to medically explain what was happening? What medications, what treatments triggered this remission? The doctors could only speculate. As a result of her improvement, she was able to under-go two stem cell transfusions. These could only be administered if she was in remission. Early this year the Doctors at the Ireland Cancer Center advised Diana and the family that not only was she no longer in remission; she was cured! Again, they could not medically explain what had happened? They said: “We cannot begin to explain it? Truly a miracle.”

From terminal cancer to cure was a long and painful journey for Diana. This Journey continues for my Sister-in-law. The faculty and staff of the Mayfield School System where Diana had worked for many years as a Nurse and subsequently as Head Nurse was wonderful in their support and prayers. The Doctors and Staff at the Ireland Cancer Center was remarkably dedicated. They did everything they could to help her and yet they too were perplexed when she suddenly started to improve. Was it a miracle? They seemed to think so!

In conclusion: Do I believe in miracles? Yes! I do now. I have transitioned from being ambivalent to being a believer! I have now witnessed two miracles. For this I’m grateful! Equally important however is the question:

Do you believe in Miracles? I truly hope so!

***The First American* by H. W. Brands Book Review by Tom Horvath**



This is a good book, but at 750 pages it may take some persistence to get through it. Benjamin Franklin is a very interesting subject, but even his life has some quieter (aka duller) periods. Get through those and you have a very interesting life, and a book to match.

Certainly, Franklin's talents were many. He was an author. His first printed works were the famous Silence Dogood letters, written when he was in his mid-teens. They demonstrated a thoughtfulness and insight most people, before the author was discovered, attributed to a much older person. Those were just the first of many letters written for his newspapers under numerous pseudonyms. Then, of course, there was *Poor Richard's Almanac*. It became so famous that most people don't realize that there were other, more popular almanacs. In fact, one of Franklin's best hoaxes, borrowed from Jonathan Swift, was to predict in his almanac the date and time of the death of the editor of the most popular almanac. That editor, who needless to say did not die, took the bait and responded to Poor Richard's prediction in his next almanac, giving *Poor Richard's Almanac* the recognition Franklin sought. The hoax went on for several years because Franklin published later and was able to respond each year by insisting that the editor had indeed died, though several hours earlier than predicted, but that the new editor was afraid to acknowledge the death of the almanac's guiding force.

Franklin was a scientist and inventor. His kite and key experiment proved that lightning was a form of electricity, a theory held by many but not previously proven. He did additional work with electricity and described the results using terms that are familiar today.

When Franklin went to England as the diplomatic representative of several colonies (before the Revolution), he was already famous because of his work with electricity. He was welcomed and honored and made a number of very good friends there. In fact, Franklin seriously considered moving permanently to England where there were more men whose level of interest and knowledge in the sciences matched his. He found the intellectual climate very appealing, but lost all respect for British politics. Mr. Brands feels that Britain made a serious mistake when Parliament, rather than address the colonies' grievances as presented by Franklin, instead subjected him to a verbally vicious attack. This act reduced Franklin's hope for reconciliation to a faint glimmer and ultimately created in him a strong and famous advocate for independence.

Franklin returned to America and played a key role in the break with England. When war broke out, he was sent to France as the united colonies' representative. His role in France, procuring money, materiel, and assistance for the war, was a key to the colonies' success. France forwarded sorely needed money early on, then set up and supplied a thinly veiled conduit for war materiel. Later, France provided the naval force that the colonies lacked. Until then, Britain ruled the waters off our coast and was able to move their armies at will, while Washington and his army could only guess where they would show up next. It was the combination of the French fleet and Washington's army that bottled up Cornwallis in Virginia and allowed Washington to pound and to starve the British into submission. Without the French fleet, Cornwallis could easily have escaped to sea to fight again. His diplomatic missions kept Franklin in Europe much of the second half of his life, yet he participated in creating the three most important documents of our nation: the Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution.

Franklin is such a talented, interesting, and likable individual, that it must be tempting for an author to put him on a pedestal and gloss over his mistakes and shortcomings. Mr. Brands praises Franklin throughout and never fails to give him credit, but he also pays attention to his mistakes and shortcomings.

Of his failings, the most obvious is in his family life. It is puzzling that a man who cared so much for humanity, who eschewed a fortune in profits from the Franklin stove because he was more concerned with the welfare of his fellow man than his personal fortune, could fall so short as a husband and father. But, even by his own day's standards, he did. He became estranged from his only surviving son, and was more responsible for perpetuating that estrangement than was his son. He spent decades away from his wife, failing to return even when her death was imminent. And, of course, it is generally agreed that Franklin was anything but faithful during those absences.

And yet, Franklin was very likable. Where George Washington was proper and standoffish, Franklin was down to earth, humorous, and very approachable. Where John Adams was prickly, Franklin made and kept friends easily. This is an intriguing story, sprinkled with the humorous writings of a brilliant, likable individual. It is well worth reading. The volume includes an index and a bibliography with the notes section, but has no illustrations or portraits. It is an older book, published in 2000, at which time it retailed in hardcover for \$35.00. It is now available from Amazon in paperback for \$11.56. The Mentor Library has one copy, and the Clevnet System has three.

Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table

FALL FIELD TRIP OCTOBER 1, 2, 3, 4, 2009

National Historic Park Guide: R.E.L. Krick

This year we are touring the second half of Grant's Overland Campaign, May-June 1864. Areas of study will include North Anna, Hanover Junction, Cold Harbor, Haw's Shop, Totopotomoy Creek, Yellow Tavern and Drewry's Bluff.

We are staying at the Virginia Crossings Resort, 1000 Virginia Center Parkway, Glen Allen, VA, 23059. Telephone: 1-888-444-6553 or 808-727-1400. The facility has golf, swimming a work-out area, 2 restaurants and a lounge on premises. A FULL breakfast is included with your room.

The following information is an edited version of the National Park Civil War Series from the Battle of Cold Harbor written by Gordon Rhea.



Virginia Crossings Resort Hotel

Grant missed several opportunities on May 21. His ploy to entice Lee with Hancock had been flawed. Instead of taking Grant's bait, Lee seized Telegraph Road to ensure that he reached the North Anna first. "Had Grant originally started for the North Anna, having the initiative, he might easily have won it," a Confederate observed. "But Hancock's delay, while acting as bait, enables Gen. Lee to seize the advantage, which he was quick to do." Grant also failed to exploit an excellent opportunity afforded by Warren. Major elements of the Fifth Corps lay camped only a mile east of Telegraph Road. All night, Lee's fragile column marched past, oblivious to the danger on its flank. Fortunately for the Confederates, the Federals remained equally oblivious and forfeited a superb chance to attack. "Such opportunities are only presented once in a campaign and should not be lost," a Union staff officer lamented. May 22-23 Lee was awake by 5:00 a.m. on the 22nd and issuing orders to his corps commanders to concentrate below the North Anna. He completed his maneuver during the day without interference from Grant.

Grant conceded that Lee had won the race and decided not to push his exhausted troops.

Federal maps were hopelessly wrong about which crossings had bridges and which had only fords. Grant and Meade rode sullenly along, scarcely speaking. Relations between the two generals had reached a low point, as Meade opposed Grant's plan to move directly on the Confederates, favoring instead a maneuver around Lee's eastern flank. At one juncture, Meade spurred ahead in a huff, leaving Grant in his dust. The generals stopped a few miles short of Telegraph Road and set up headquarters. Meade wrote his wife that day that he wished to retire from his "present false position" but saw no choice but to patiently endure the "humiliation" forced on him by Grant. Lee incorrectly concluded that Grant's thrust along Telegraph Road was a diversion to deceive him while the main body of Federals shifted around his right flank. Lee's miscalculation presented Grant a superb opportunity. The Confederate position on the North Anna was exceedingly vulnerable. It remained to be seen whether the Union commanders understood their good fortune and whether they could move quickly enough to exploit it

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Mike Sears, 5843 Marine Parkway, Mentor, OH, 44060

The Courier is the monthly newsletter of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Roundtable John Sandy editor

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