



# The Signal Flag



## BRANDYWINE VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Campaign # 21

Skirmish # 2

October 2007

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*From the Rear Ranks:*

*A Fine Example of Commitment to Preservation:*

*"Some child a hundred years from now is going to get interested in the Civil War and want to see these places (battlefields, homes, etc...). He's going to go to these places and be standing in a parking lot. I'm fighting for that kid."*

*Brian Pohanka, speaking about the past development threats to Brandy Station, Virginia.*

*Mike Liddy, President  
Brandywine Valley Civil War Roundtable*

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*~ Officers ~*

**President:** Mike Liddy  
**Vice President:** John Walls  
**Secretary:** Ted Pawlik  
**Treasurer:** Dave Walter

*~ Committee Members ~*

**Preservation:** John Walls, Bob Sprague  
**Nominating / Speakers Committee:**  
Vince Carosella, John Whiteside  
**Speakers:** Roger Arthur, Joe Lehman  
**Monthly Scribe / Trips:** Susan Mahoney  
**Credentials:** Bill Sitman  
**Greeter:** Loretta Thomas  
**Publicity:** Harriett Mueller  
**Historians:** Bill Sitman  
**Our Social:** Flo Williams

*~ Members at Large ~*

David Hoffritz, James Lawler

*~ Official Sutler ~*

Bob Sprague: Books / Periodicals  
610-644-0353

*~ Annual Membership ~*

Individual \$25.00; Family \$40.00; Student \$15.00  
(Full time student up to age 23)

**? Questions ? Contact:**

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Unsolicited articles from our members are welcome.  
Please contact Lynne!

\* Our meetings are handicap accessible \*



**What is the BVCWRT all about???**

We were founded in 1987. According to our by-laws, "the purpose of the Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table shall be to provide a congenial medium through which persons having a common interest in the events of the American Civil War - its causes and effects, engagements, personages, units, armaments and other things pertaining thereto may satisfy their interest and broaden individual knowledge through discussion, lectures, field trips and the exchange of books, paper and other data. The purposed is also to consider the preservation and protection of the battlefields, sites, landmarks, relics and collection of the period."

In plain English, we are an organization of diverse people brought together by our common interest in the American Civil War. This interest can range from the casual to the obsessive. We intend to tailor our activities and presentations to appeal to all our members, novice or expert.

**Welcome New Members & Reenlistments**

The Round Table welcomes our new members since our last meeting. Please welcome them and share your Civil War enthusiasm.

**New Members:**

*Welcome to all returning and new members!!*

*Bruce Grant  
Thomas Gardine*





*Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table*  
*Come to our next meeting*  
*3 October 2007*

**Speaker: Ed Bonekemper**  
**Topic: "McClellan: The Failed General"**  
**Time: 7:00 PM**  
**Place: West Chester Borough Hall, Gay Street**

Our speaker this month is Edward H. Bonekemper, III. I am sure that many of you remember Mr. Bonekemper, he has spoken to our Round Table before. I can remember one talk he gave about "How Grant Helped Lee Lose the War" February 2005. Mr. Bonekemper lives in Willow Street, PA with his wife for over 40 years. I pulled just a small amount of his Bio from our website for those who do not have access to a computer. As you can see it is amazing.

**Education:**

**J.D., Yale Law School, New Haven, CT (1967)**

**M.A., history, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA (1971)** (Master's thesis: "Negroes' Freedom of Contract in Antebellum Virginia, 1620-1860")

**B.A., cum laude, American history, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA (1964)**

**Publications:**

**McClellan and Failure: A Study of Civil War Fear, Incompetence and Worse** (Published by McFarland & Company, Jefferson, North Carolina, April 2007)

**A Victor, Not a Butcher: Ulysses S. Grant's Overlooked Military Genius** (Regnery Publishing, Inc., Washington, D.C., May 2004). Nominated, by request, for the Lincoln Prize of the Civil War Institute. About 5,000 copies sold.

**How Robert E. Lee Lost the Civil War** (Sergeant Kirkland's Press, Fredericksburg, VA, 1998). Nominated for Virginia Book of the Year. Over 7,300 copies sold.

[Have signed contract with Greenwood/Praeger for publication (in 2008?) of fourth book with working title of Grant and Lee: Victorious American and Vanquished Virginian]

"Slavery, Not States' Rights, Inspired Secession," *The Washington Times*, August 23, 2003, p. B3.

"**Lincoln's 1864 Victory Was Closer Than It Looked,**" *The Washington Times*, July 15, 2000, p. B3.

"Any Port in a Storm," [on doctrine of force majeure] *Naval Institute Proceedings*, Sept. 1991.

"Coast Guard Implementation of Title I of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act," *U.S. Coast Guard Port Safety Bulletin*, Spring 1978; *USCG Academy Alumni Bulletin*, July/Aug. 1978; *Proceedings of the USCG Marine Safety Council*, Oct. 1978.

(With Alan I. Roberts) "Inconsistency Rulings and the Trucking Industry," *Trucking Safely Magazine*, Vol. 2-2 (1989); *Compressions*, Newsletter of the Compressed Gas Association, Inc., Aug. 1990.

"Ethical Issues in Military Legal Assistance," *American Bar Association Journal*, Mar. 1978 and *The Army Lawyer*, June 1978.

"Saga of the North End," *USCG Academy Alumni Bulletin*, Sept./Oct. 1975.

"**Virginia Slavery and the Coming of the American Revolution,**" *Journal of Afro-American History*, Dec. 1972.

"**Negro Real Property Ownership in Hampton and Elizabeth City County, Virginia, 1860-1870,**" *Journal of Negro History*, Vol. LV, No. 3 (July 1970), pp. 165-181.

**Academic and Teaching Experience**

o Adjunct Lecturer, Muhlenberg College, U.S. military history (American Military History: The Revolution to Vietnam, Civil War, World War II)(2003-present)

o Included in 2006-07 edition of *Who's Who Among American Teachers & Educators*

Commander, U.S. Coast Guard Reserve (Retired)

## **Meeting Minutes From September 5, 2007 Submitted by Ted Pawlik**

### **The President's Report/Announcements:**

- New members were welcomed. It was requested that everyone furnish updated contact information, including updated e-mail information.
- Ted Pawlik was introduced as the new Secretary. It was announced that Lynn Fulton has agreed to continue with the Newsletter and John Walls will continue with the monthly book raffle.
- A donation of \$100 was received from the Rose Tree School district in recognition of a presentation made by John Walls and Dave Cashin.
- There will be no increase in dues for the current campaign.
- Mike Liddy is investigating obtaining an official banner for the Round Table to be used at meetings and any outside events.
- Bob Sprague has been designated as the official Sutler for the Round Table. All proceeds from sales will go to preservation.
- A donation of books by Judy Bullock in memory of her husband was acknowledged. Proceeds from these books will go to preservation.
- Bob Sprague will be in charge of the BVCWRT Telegram. The purpose of the telegram is to inform members via e-mail of current events and to give updates between meetings that may not be timely for the Newsletter. If anyone has items of interest, please forward it to Bob Sprague for distribution. His e-mail address is novacsa@comcast.net

### **Treasurer' Report:**

Dave Walter reported the following for the campaign ending 8/31/2007:  
Balance as of 9/01/06 was \$2317.00. Total Receipts for the 06/07 campaign was \$5919.00. Total expenses for the campaign were \$4990.18. Balance of \$3245.82 in First National Bank  
Approximately 42 members have paid their dues for the 2007/2008 campaign. Dues may be paid at the October meeting or by mailing directly to Dave Walter. Membership application form is in the Newsletter, which can be found on the BVCWRT Web Site.

### **Report from Roger Arthur on the Speakers for the Upcoming Campaign:**

- Ed Bonekemper will speak at the October meeting on McClellan
- Dave Kohler will speak on "Whatever Happened to Our Favorite Civil War Heroes
- Elizabeth Brown Pryor will speak at the December meeting on her book "Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters". This book is based on letters from Robert E. Lee that were recently discovered.
- The Banquet Speaker will be Jean Edward Smith who will talk on U. S. Grant.

### **Other Announcements and Items of Interest:**

- Roger Arthur reported that Joe Saunders, one of the original members of the Round Table, passed away.
- Leslie Wood will be presenting a program at the Chester County Night School on "Medical Woman of the Civil War"
- Roger Arthur will be presenting a program at the Chester County Night School on the "War of the Rebellion" He will also present a program at Conestoga High School on World War II.
- Mike Kochan advised that the Museum of the Confederacy would be split up into three locations. Two of the sites will be Chancellorsville and Appomattox. The third site is to be determined.
- Mike Kochan will be on the History Channel on September 10, 2007 at 9 PM. The program is about the Hunley.
- The Civil War Museum/Underground Railroad Museum announced plans to move from their present location on Pine Street to the 1<sup>st</sup> Bank Building located in the Independence Hall area.
- Interest was expressed in a trip to Harrisburg to see the Civil War Flags. The last trip for this purpose was cancelled because of inclement weather.

**Speaker for the evening was Dave Cashin who spoke on Ben Butler.**

## George Brinton McClellan (1826-1885)



A brilliant engineer and highly capable organizer, George B. McClellan just wasn't an army commander. In that position he proved the weakness of West Point in its early years; the academy was simply geared to the production of engineers and company officers for a small, pre-Civil War regular army.

George B. McClellan was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on December 3, 1826. He was the third of five children born to Dr. George and Elizabeth (Brinton) McClellan. His family moved within the upper ranks of Philadelphia society. Young George entered school at the age of 5. He attended private, a prep school and the University of Pennsylvania before entering the Military Academy at West Point in 1842. At the age of 15, he was the youngest of the West Point arrivals that year to seek a place as fourth classman. In 1846, he had earned the distinction of graduating second in his class of 59. (He was outranked in his class only by Charles S. Stewart, who later would serve under him as a captain of engineers.) The class of '46 contributed 20 generals to the Union and Confederate armies.

Upon graduation he was appointed 2nd Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. In the Mexican War, he won brevets of 1st Lieutenant and Captain under Winfield Scott for his zeal, gallantry, and ability in constructing roads and bridges over routes for the marching army. He would also become an instructor at West Point for 3 years.

The slow promotions in the regular army prompted him to take a captaincy in the cavalry in the 1855 expansion of the service. He would be asked to surveyor for possible transcontinental railroad routes. As a member of the board of officers he was dispatched to study European armies and filed an extensive report centering on the Crimean War siege operations at Sebastopol. This experience would later influence his decisions on the Virginia Peninsula. During the rest of his year overseas he traveled widely and altered the Prussian and Hungarian cavalry saddles into the "McClellan Saddle" that became standard issue for mounted cavalry and was used until the army abolished its mounted troops. On January 16, 1857, he resigned his commission of Captain in the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry to become Chief Engineer and vice president of the Illinois Central Railroads where he occasionally worked with a lawyer named Abraham Lincoln. Just before the Civil War he became a division president for the Ohio & Mississippi

His heart was captured by a young lady named Ellen Marcy. Ellen had received numerous marriage proposals, but was strongly encouraged by her father to accept McClellan's. On May 22, 1861, they were married in New York. Despite his success in his private life he was happy to reenter the military in 1862.

His assignments included: major general, Ohio Volunteers (April 23, 1861); commanding Ohio Militia (April 23 - May 13, 1861); commanding Army of Occupation, West Virginia, Department of the Ohio and the department (May 13-July 23, 1861); major general, USA (May 14, 1861); commanding Military Division of the Potomac (July 25 - August 15, 1861); commanding Army and Department of the Potomac (August 15, 1861 - November 9, 1862); and commander-in-chief, USA (November 5, 1861 - March 11, 1862).

Initially appointed by Ohio's Governor William Dennison, he was soon made second only to Scott by a former attorney for the Illinois Central-Abraham Lincoln. Letting his rapid rise from retired captain to major general go to his head, he issued comical denials of any desire to become a dictator. By then he had won some minor victories in western Virginia, receiving the Thanks of Congress on July 16, 1861, although much of the credit belonged to his subordinates there and in Kentucky. He was called to take charge at Washington after the disaster at 1st Bull Run, but his behavior toward Scott and the civil authorities was unpardonable. Now called "The Young Napoleon," he actively worked for Scott's retirement and would be named in his place.

George McClellan had proven himself to be an efficient organizer with strong personal magnetism. For this reason, and some successes in West Virginia, President Lincoln approved him Major General in the regular army. He was outranked only by General-in-Chief Winfield

Scott. He reorganized a disjointed and poorly disciplined army, which gained him the respect and approval of his men and was able to create a mighty machine called the Army of the Potomac. But he did not advance and refused to divulge his plans to the civilians over him. He even refused to see the president on one occasion. In December 1861 he was downed by typhoid and this prolonged the delays. By the time he did advance on Manassas, Joseph E. Johnston's army had withdrawn. However, his military operations soon became a frustrating series of lost opportunities. He consistently overestimated his opposing forces, and his carefully devised plans were lacking in execution.

McClellan then planned an advance on Richmond by way of the Peninsula between the James and York Rivers. It was a good plan despite Lincoln's fears for Washington. But McClellan did not have the ability to direct it. The movement started well but-remembering Se-bastopol-he began siege operations at Yorktown which allowed Johnston to move in reinforcements. When Johnston withdrew McClellan followed, fighting at Williamsburg, to within sight of the Confederate capital. He then stopped. He was constantly overestimating the strength of the enemy facing him. It was these constant delays which prompted Lincoln to suspend him from command of all the armies on March 11, 1862, so that he could concentrate on the Army of the Potomac and Richmond.

He survived the Confederate counterattack at Seven Pines, principally through confusion in the Confederate army and the actions of his own subordinates. When Lee attacked him in the Seven Days in late June he failed to take the opportunity to strike at Richmond along the weakly defended south side of the Chickahominy River. Instead he panicked and ordered a dangerous change of base from the York to the James River in the facing of Lee's attacks. Most of the battles fought in the movement were Union successes but the overall outcome of the campaign was negative as a result of McClellan's weaknesses. Safely entrenched at Harrison's Landing he began condemning the War Department, Lincoln, and Stanton, blaming them for the defeat. Finally it was decided in Washington to abandon the campaign and transfer most of McClellan's men to John Pope's army in northern Virginia. There were charges that McClellan-now called by the press "Mac the Unready" and "The Little Corporal of Unsought Fields" was especially slow in cooperating.

With Pope defeated at 2nd Bull Run and his men streaming back to the Washington fortifications, McClellan was restored to active command of his reconstituted army and was welcomed by his men who affectionately called him "Little Mac." In the Maryland Campaign he advanced to confront Lee in the western part of the state and moved uncharacteristically fast when some of his command found a copy of Lee's orders for the movement of his troops. Lee fought several delaying actions along South Mountain in order to re-concentrate his army. His caution returning, McClellan slowed down, and Lee was able to get most of his men in line at Antietam. McClellan attacked piecemeal and his attacks failed to crush Lee who was heavily outnumbered with his back to the Potomac River. Lincoln was extremely upset by the escape of Lee and his army but nonetheless used the "victory" to issue the Emancipation Proclamation.

Continuing his dilatory tactics, McClellan resorted to constant demands for more men and called for massive reequipping and fresh mounts for his cavalry. Then for the second time JEB Stuart's cavalry rode completely around the Army of the Potomac, Under orders from the War Department, McClellan relinquished command on November 9, 1862, and repaired to his Trenton, New Jersey, home to await new directives destined never to arrive. The Democratic candidate for president in 1864, he was hampered by the party's plank calling for an end to the war, which was labeled a failure. He himself denounced the plank and was for the rigorous pursuit of victory. At first it appeared that he would defeat Lincoln, but Union victories in the field diminished the public's war weariness. Winning in only three states, he resigned from the army on election day. Active in state politics, he served as New Jersey's governor in the late 1870's and early 1880's. He died on October 29, 1885, at Orange, New Jersey, and is buried in Riverview Cemetery, Trenton. (McClellan, George Brinton, *McClellan's Own Story*; Hassler, Warren W., Jr., *General George B. McClellan: Shield of the Union*; and Myers, William Starr, *General George Brinton McClellan: A Study in Personality*)

Source: "Who Was Who In The Civil War" by Stewart Sifakis and notebook from the Ranger from NPS

# Why the Confederacy Wasn't Ready for War

*By Arturo Rivera*

The political, economic, and military strength of the Union was much greater than that of the Confederacy. However, the war did last four years. The Confederacy proved itself resilient on many occasions. Throughout the war the tide constantly shifted, and with that so did the political, economic, and military strength of either side. Although each side had its share of military successes, in the end, the superior Northern economy, centralized government and overwhelming manpower would eventually lead to victory. In mid 1863, both the Union and the Confederacy could have won the war although; the Confederacy lacked the industry, or manpower to wage a long war with the Union.

The Union was far more industrialized than the South. The North possessed 80% of total U.S. industry. In addition, most Confederate industry was located in the Upper South-particularly in Virginia. The Confederacy lost a great deal of potential industry and manpower when West Virginia, Kentucky, Delaware, and Maryland joined the Union instead of the Confederacy. The loss of these states to the Union was as much a testament to shrewd northern politics (Maryland) as it was to opposition within the states (West Virginia). Confederate industry, especially with the loss of these states, was unable to compete with the Union.

In addition to the South's lack of industry, most capital was invested in slaves and land-both of these are non-liquid. The South's lack of a large supply of liquid capital made it difficult for Southerners to buy munitions for the war effort. As a result of the South's lack of liquid capital the North enjoyed a decided advantage..

The south also lacked the factories, and other facilities (ironworks, etc.) to create cannons, rifles as well as other weapons. At the beginning of the war, the Confederacy only had one ironworks-located in Richmond. This was in stark comparison to the northern industrial juggernaut. The North had begun to industrialize in the early part of the century, this in relation to a primarily agricultural south. In 1860, 84% of Southerners worked in agriculture compared with only 40% of Northerners. The North also invested three times as much per capita in manufacturing by this same time. In 1860, only 25% of all railroads passed through the South. The South lacked the necessary industrial, and transportation infrastructure to wage an effective war.

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The Confederacy was also unable to raise money for the war effort effectively. In war there are three ways to raise capital: printing currency, issuing bonds, or through taxing. The Confederacy was not in favor of taxing heavily, however most of the taxes they levied were on the lower classes. Under the premise of states' rights they believed it violated these principles. There were few Southern banks so that made issuing bonds difficult, as well as the fact that as the war wore on and it became unlikely the South would win Southerners stopped investing on the belief they would win the war. This left only printing money. The drawback with this was that it led to hyperinflation. The more money the South printed the more inflation there was. In 1865, the annual inflation in the South had reached 9000%. The Confederates unending quest for liquid capital had ended in economic disaster.

The South's lack of liquid capital or inability to raise money was not its biggest economic problem. The South's lack of gold to give an intrinsic value to its currency was probably its biggest problem. Instead of using gold to determine the money's value, the value was gauged on the public's belief of their winning the war. In times of military success the currency would have a greater value than in those of defeat. The lack of a stable currency added to the difficulties faced by the Confederacy when they tried to raise money through bonds, because if the money was valueless than how would interest on near valueless currency help the investor. The South only manage to raise 2% of total capital through bonds or taxes, compared with the North, which raised most of its capital that way.

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The political strength of the South was hampered by its belief in States' rights. "Jefferson Davis never enjoyed the sweeping political power of Lincoln." The South lacked a powerful bureaucracy and much power rested in the hands of local governors. The Southerners refused to give Davis the same political powers as Lincoln out of fear he would misuse it. Davis was never allowed to suspend habeas corpus as frequently or for as long duration as Lincoln. The South however committed to States' rights as it was,

failed to realize that during a war your President must have sweeping powers in order to maintain internal stability.

The Confederacy was also not as unified as is commonly thought. Parts of the Confederacy were extremely loyal while others such as East Tennessee were hotbeds of Unionist activity. These citizens resisted Confederate drafts, and refused to pay Confederate taxes. Many of these Unionists formed groups to resist the Confederate government. Confederate loyalists persecuted unionists in East Tennessee and in other areas. Nevertheless, internal opposition to the Confederacy hurt the stability of a region as well as undermined the war effort.

The military situation for the South was far less bleak. The South had many great generals compared to the North's few. In 1863, "The Army of the Potomac had seen its sixth leader in two years." The South, on the other hand, would have Robert E. Lee in command throughout most of the war. The South was also fighting a mostly defensive war. However, the South was routinely outnumbered two to one on the battlefield. Early in the war, the Confederacy enjoyed the advantage of slave labor. This led to several early Southern victories in 1861. As the war progressed, the North was able to lessen and then finally negate this advantage by abolishing slavery.

The situation of the Union armies of the West was the exact opposite of The Army of the Potomac. The Western armies were under the command of better generals (Grant, and Sherman) and those generals were more offensive minded than the timid generals of the army of the Potomac. Grant and Sherman attacked frequently and used their bigger, better-equipped armies to their advantage. These Western generals such as Grant and Rosecrans would command The Army of the Potomac later in the war, when this would occur the Union would have the one advantage it had lacked early in the war.

Up until Grant took over The Army of the Potomac (after Gettysburg), each of its commanders was able but had one character flaw which prevented him from being a great general. McClellan was too cautious, Hooker lacked self-confidence, and Meade lacked skills as a military tactician. With these poor leaders at the helm The Army of the Potomac was unable to fight as effectively as its numbers would suggest.

Despite all these advantages (political, and economic not military), the Confederacy had a chance to win the war in mid 1863. Since Lee had taken command of The Army of Northern Virginia, in 1862, the Confederacy had won a string of victories with the exception of Antietam. Lee's victories at Chancellorsville, and Fredericksburg led him to launch an invasion of the Union. The Union and Confederate armies would meet at Gettysburg.

Lee chose to invade Pennsylvania to forage and, more importantly, to take some pressure off of Virginia. Lee was forced to take some pressure off of Virginia, because it was one of the main agricultural regions of the South. Lee also had to go on the offensive, because his army was so poorly equipped that they would not have been able to win a long war with the North. His army was often without shoes, and would generally fight in tattered rags instead of uniforms. The Confederates also lacked an adequate supply of horses, which hampered reconnaissance as well as troop movement. Although outnumbered, Lee's army still fought gallantly and effectively.

At Gettysburg the outnumbered rebels were defeated. This coupled with the fall of Vicksburg marked the turning point of the war. From then on Lee was unable to regain the initiative. Except for a brief period of time in 1864, the South was on the defensive for the remainder of the war. After mid 1863 the war was all but decided all that remained, now, was two years of needless slaughter.

As time wore on the industrial might of the Union prevailed. The Confederates had always had problems clothing and feeding their armies, however, as the war wore on the difficulties became more exaggerated. There was also civil unrest in the Confederacy as is evidenced by the Richmond Bread Riots. From the beginning, it was obvious that a long war would favor the Union. Although much of this was due to the North's industrial economy in comparison to the South's agricultural economy, the Union saw an increase in production (mostly in war related goods) while the Southern economy collapsed. This added to better commanders leading The Army of the Potomac would ultimately lead to the South's defeat. The Civil War saw the tensions caused by two competing regions- North and South-come to a head. The South was poorly prepared for war. Its lack of industry, unstable currency, inability to raise capital, and lack of manpower helped lead to its downfall.

Equally as important, I believe, was the lack of cooperation between the state, and federal governments, as well as, the lack of unity in certain areas of the Confederacy-East Tennessee in particular. Although mid 1863 was the turning point, the war would rage on for two more years and claim 620,000 lives.

From [www.americancivilwar.com](http://www.americancivilwar.com)

## Who was General George B. McClellan?

**"I have more confidence in General McClellan than in any man alive."  
(George A. Custer, 1862)**

**"McClellan is naturally a superior man,"  
"I know of no one competent unless it be McClellan..."  
(MG William T. Sherman, 1861)**

**"McClellan was too good a man to command an army in this country."  
(MG Joe Hooker, December 28, 1863)**

**"There is nothing too good that I can say of General McClellan. He was a man and a thorough soldier."  
(MG Winfield S. Hancock, 1885)**

**"I believe he was, both as a military man and as a manager of a country under military occupation, the greatest general this war has produced."  
(Theodore Lyman, Meade's ADC, writing at Cold Harbor, 1864)**

**"...there are strong grounds for believing that he was the best commander the Army of the Potomac ever had."  
(BG Francis W. Palfrey, historian and veteran, 1882)**

**"...they believed in him, and so did I."  
(Nathaniel Hawthorne on the Army and McClellan, 1862)**

**"The one-armed lift the wine to you, McClellan / And great Antietam's cheers renew."  
(Herman Melville, 1862, "The Victor of Antietam")**

**"Bear in mind that you are in the country of friends, not enemies; that you are here to protect, not destroy. Your enemies have violated every moral law - neither God nor man can sustain them. You will pursue a different course. You will be honest, brave and merciful..."  
(McClellan's Orders in Western Virginia, 6/23/61)**

**"At an hour of agonizing peril, McClellan saved Washington and the Union cause."  
(J.G. Randall, *Lincoln the President*)**

**"...McClellan's superb army could have taken Richmond regardless of Lee. Indeed, with an undivided command, McClellan could have forced the evacuation of the city before Lee assumed command."  
(Clifford Dowdey, *The Seven Days*)**

**"Had McClellan's brilliant strategy been fully implemented, it would have ended the Civil War in 1862, as intended."  
(Rowena Reed, *Combined Operations in the Civil War*)**

**"The decimation of McClellan's army which the Committee and Stanton had contrived touched off a storm which wrecked Lincoln's hopes for a coalition government, undefiled by partisan motives, to prosecute the war."  
(T. Harry Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals*)**

**"His removal was a wrong done to the Union Army, which never gave its love to any other leader." (Winston S. Churchill, *A History of the English Speaking Peoples*)**

**From:**

**Site founded spring 1998 URL <http://www.hopewellagency.com/McClellan>. It moved in 1999 to <http://www.civilwarreader.com/McClellan> with the acquisition of that URL from Thomas Publications. The site offers robust McClellan advocacy, unusual archival materials and opinions and interpretations generally in contradiction to the prevailing wisdom. It is an outreach program for the McClellan Society. Contents (c) Dimitri Rotov 1998-2004, except where shown.**

## *Railroads in the Confederacy*

The Civil War is the first war in which railroads were a major factor. The 1850s had seen enormous growth in the railroad industry so that by 1861, 22,000 miles of track had been laid in the Northern states and 9,500 miles in the South. The great rail centers in the South were Chattanooga, Atlanta, and most important, Richmond. Very little track had yet been laid west of the Mississippi.

Wars have always been fought to control supply centers and road junctions, but the Confederate government was slow to recognize the importance of the railroads in the conflict. By September 1863, the Southern railroads were in bad shape. They had begun to deteriorate very soon after the outset of the war, when many of the railroad employees headed north to join the Union war efforts. Few of the 100 railroads that existed in the South prior to 1861 were more than 100 miles in length. The South had always been less enthusiastic about the railroad industry than the North; its citizens preferred an agrarian living and left the mechanical jobs to men from the Northern states. The railroads existed, they believed, solely to get cotton to the ports.

There was fierce competition between railroad owners who did not want their equipment to ever fall into the hands of their rivals. The lines of competing railroads rarely met, even if they ran through the same town. The railroads also lacked a standard gauge, so that trains of different companies ran on tracks anywhere from four feet to six feet wide. Anything that needed to be transferred from one railroad to another had to be hauled across town and loaded onto new freight cars. Then there was the problem of maintenance. Most of the Confederate government's manufacturing efforts concentrated on supplying equipment and ammunition for the military. The railroads were owned by civilians and the Confederate government opposed taking over civilian industries.

Therefore the railroads began to run into difficulties very quickly. They did not have the parts to replace worn out equipment. The Southern railroads, before the war, had imported iron from England. Once the war began, the Union blockade of the Atlantic and Gulf ports was very effective in shutting off that supply. Locomotives and tracks began to wear out. By 1863 a quarter of the South's locomotives needed repairs and the speed of train travel in the South had dropped to only 10 miles an hour (from 25 miles an hour in 1861).

Fuel was a problem, too. Southern locomotives were fueled by wood--a great deal of it. As the Confederate government pulled skilled railroad employees out of their civilian jobs and into the military, the railroad companies became badly understaffed. Replenishing the woodyards at the depots soon became impossible. Train crews eventually took to stopping along their route to chop and load wood as it was needed.

Accidents also wrecked a lot of equipment. Because telegraph communication was sporadic at best, railroad crews were often unaware of broken rails and collapsed bridges. Cattle on the tracks caused accidents, sparks from the locomotives' woodfires burned cars, boilers exploded.

Track, too, became a problem, and crossties, spikes, and track were taken from the less important railroad lines and used on the major lines. Crossties became rotten, and rails broke (the line from Nashville to Chattanooga had 1,200 broken rails in 1862). Union troops, as they moved South, sabotaged the rails by pulling them up, heating them until they could bend, and wrapping them around tree trunks to make what were called Sherman's Neckties. The Union army also burned bridges and destroyed tunnels and captured as much railroad equipment as they could--their greatest catch was in 1863 when General Joseph E. Johnston abandoned Jackson, Mississippi, leaving 90 locomotives and hundreds of railroad cars behind.

**Information obtained from the following website: [info@civilwar.org](mailto:info@civilwar.org)**

## General George B. McClellan to President Abraham Lincoln

Head Quarters, Army of the Potomac Camp  
near Harrison's Landing, Va. July 7th 1862



Mr. President

You have been fully informed, that the Rebel army is in our front, with the purpose of overwhelming us by attacking our positions or reducing us by blocking our river communications. I can not but regard our condition as critical and I earnestly desire, in view of possible contingencies, to lay before your Excellency, for your private consideration, my general views concerning the state of the rebellion; although they do not strictly relate to the situation of this Army or strictly come within the scope of my official duties. These views amount to convictions and are deeply impressed upon my mind and heart.

Our cause must never be abandoned; it is the cause of free institutions and self government. The Constitution and the Union must be preserved, whatever may be the cost in time, treasure and blood. If secession is successful, other dissolutions are clearly to be seen in the future. Let neither military disaster, political faction or foreign war shake your settled purpose to enforce the equal operation of the laws of the United States upon the people of every state.

The time has come when the Government must determine upon a civil and military policy, covering the whole ground of our national trouble. The responsibility of determining, declaring and supporting such civil and military policy and of directing the whole course of national affairs in regard to the rebellion, must now be assumed and exercised by you or our cause will be lost. The Constitution gives you power sufficient even for the present terrible exigency.

This rebellion has assumed the character of a War: as such it should be regarded; and it should be conducted upon the highest principles known to Christian Civilization. It should not be a War looking to the subjugation of the people of any state, in any event. It should not be, at all, a War upon population; but against armed forces and political organizations. Neither confiscation of property, political executions of persons, territorial organization of states or forcible abolition of slavery should be contemplated for a moment. In prosecuting the War, all private property and unarmed persons should be strictly protected; subject only to the necessities of military operations. All private property taken for military use should be paid for or receipted for; pillage and waste should be treated as high crimes; all unnecessary trespass sternly prohibited; and offensive demeanor by the military towards citizens promptly rebuked. Military arrests should not be tolerated, except in places where active hostilities exist; and oaths not required by enactments -- Constitutionally made -- should be neither demanded nor received. Military government should be confined to the preservation of public order and the protection of political rights.

Military power should not be allowed to interfere with the relations of servitude, either by supporting or impairing the authority of the master; except for repressing disorder as in other cases. Slaves contraband under the Act of Congress, seeking military protection, should receive it. The right of the Government to appropriate permanently to its own service claims to slave labor should be asserted and the right of the owner to compensation therefore should be recognized. This principle might be extended upon grounds of

military necessity and security to all the slaves within a particular state; thus working manumission in such [a] state -- and in Missouri, perhaps in Western Virginia also and possibly even in Maryland the expediency of such a military measure is only a question of time. A system of policy thus constitutional and conservative, and pervaded by the influences of Christianity and freedom, would receive the support of almost all truly loyal men, would deeply impress the rebel masses and all foreign nations, and it might be humbly hoped that it would commend itself to the favor of the Almighty. Unless the principles governing the further conduct of our struggle shall be made known and approved, the effort to obtain requisite forces will be almost hopeless. A declaration of radical views, especially upon slavery, will rapidly disintegrate our present Armies.

The policy of the Government must be supported by concentrations of military power. The national forces should not be dispersed in expeditions, posts of occupation and numerous Armies; but should be mainly collected into masses and brought to bear upon the Armies of the Confederate States; those Armies thoroughly defeated, the political structure which they support would soon cease to exist.

In carrying out any system of policy which you may form, you will require a Commander in Chief of the Army; one who possesses your confidence, understands your views and who is competent to execute your orders by directing the military forces of the Nation to the accomplishment of the objects by you proposed. I do not ask that place for myself. I am willing to serve you in such position as you may assign me and I will do so as faithfully as ever subordinate served superior.

I may be on the brink of eternity and as I hope forgiveness from my maker I have written this letter with sincerity towards you and from love of my country.

Very respectfully your obdt svt

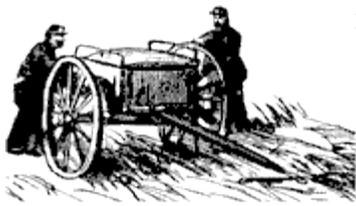
Geo B McClellan  
Maj Genl Comdg

Sources:  
Library of Congress  
*Official Records of the Rebellion, series 1, vol. 2, part 2, pages 73-74.*

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*Remember to bring you membership application and check for your dues and give to Dave Walter, our Treasurer at our next meeting.*

*We will have our new Sutler, Bob Sprague, who will have a selection of books and magazine that might interest you. All monies collected by the Sutler go to our Preservation Fund. Our goal is to reach #2000. again this year.*



## *Scheduled Speakers for 2007 - 2008:*

**Sep 5, 2007:** Dan Cashin - "Ben Butler"

**Oct 3, 2007:** Ed Bonekemper - "McClellan: The Failed General"

**Nov 7, 2007:** Dave Kohler - "Whatever Happened to our Favorite Civil War Heroes?"

**Dec 5, 2007:** Elizabeth Brown Pryor - "Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters", plus our Christmas Social

**Jan 2, 2008:** Dennis Kelly - Topic is to be announced

**Feb 6, 2008:** Chip Crowe - "General George Thomas"

**Mar 5, 2008:** BVCWRT Members - "Show and Tell", plus our Spring Social

**Apr 2, 2008:** Jean Baker - "Mary Todd Lincoln"

**May 7, 2008:** Roger Arthur - "The Importance of John Brown"

**May 13, 2008:** (Annual Banquet): Jean Edward Smith - "U. S. Grant"

### **Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table Membership Application**

Application Type: New  Renewal

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Monthly newsletters are distributed by E-mail only.

Membership Type: Individual (\$25)  Family (\$40):  Student (\$15):

If family membership, please list other names:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Bring the completed form and a check payable to BVCWRT to a meeting or mail it to:  
**Dave Walter, Treasurer, 937 Thorne Drive, West Chester, PA 19382**

**BRANDYWINE VALLEY  
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

c/o Lynne Fulton, Editor  
144 West King Street  
Malvern, PA 19355

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