

My Fellow Roundtable Members: Our next meeting is on Wednesday, February 14, 2018 at 7 pm at La Navona, 154 North Hamilton Road, Gahanna, Ohio 43230. I apologize for the awkwardness of having a meeting on Valentine's Day! Our meeting will follow, rather than the motif of flying cherubs and romantic love, the Chicago-style version of St. Valentine's Day as our own Mark Laubacher talks to us about **Weapons of Mass Destruction during the Civil War**. Please see the website and Tim Maurice's email for further information.

I have attached Tom Ayres' Report of the debate we had at the January meeting.

Here is our Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer's Report for January 2018

Beginning checking account balance 1/1/2018 = \$2570.93

January receipts = \$665.00 (\$555.00 from dues; \$102.00 from book raffle; \$8.00 from Ed Chapdelaine aluminum can sales)

January expenses = \$0

Ending checking account balance 1/31/2018 = \$3235.93

January started a new fiscal year for the Roundtable, so dues are once again due. Our dues are:

- *Single* \$25.00
- *Family* \$35.00
- *Student* \$15.00

We have not raised our dues for many years, and I have no plans to do so in 2018. Please continue to support our book raffle. Once again, I will match raffle sales up to \$50 if everyone at the meeting buys at least one ticket. Please make a point of getting your dues in to Dave DeLisio or me as soon as possible; don't make me channel my debt collection attorney doppelganger!

Battlefield Tour Report: Please save the dates of April 12 2018 through April 15, 2018 for a trip to Chickamauga. I am in a pickle regarding this trip because our Trip Coordinator has run into some personal problems and has been incommunicado. I know I will eventually get the information from him, but in the meantime I would like to ask someone to step forward and agree to be responsible for some of the administrative duties in connection with this trip. I would do it myself but I am committed to be at the bachelor party for one of our members that weekend and will be unable to attend. All the reservations have been made and the work has been completed; I simply need someone to act as trip coordinator for those members attending.

Finally, I am passing along the following information regarding the Columbus Barracks Civil War Roundtable:

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Columbus Barracks Civil War Round Table:

*Our round table meeting for next month will be held on **Thursday, February 8, 2018** and the topic will be **"A Surgeon's Life Aboard the USS Monitor"** by Mark Laubacher.*

*Our meeting will run from **7:00 P.M. until 8:45 P.M.** in **Meeting Room B** in the **Upper Arlington Public Main Library**, which is located at **2800 Tremont Road** in **Upper Arlington, Ohio** (at the northeast corner of Northam Road and Tremont Road). After you come in the main entrance, turn right at the first hallway past the Circulation Desk and follow it to the end to Meeting Room A and then turn right at the first opportunity and take either the steps or the elevator down to the lower level to **Meeting Room B**.*

Mark is going to be a busy man in February!!

James G. Ryan

President COCWRT

Lee and Longstreet at odds at Gettysburg

While Robert E. Lee achieved his greatest (by most accounts) victory at Chancellorsville, in northern Virginia, against "Fighting Joe" Hooker from April 30-May 6, 1863, General James Longstreet, in his first independent command, was farther south in Suffolk, seeking unsuccessfully to dislodge Union General John Peck from his fortress on the Nansemond River. Longstreet commanded divisions led by George Pickett and John Bell Hood.

Despite Lee's victory, casualties between the two combatants were quite similar in number of killed and wounded. Union forces suffered far more missing and captured, about 5,900 to 2,000. Longstreet emerged from these battles convinced that the Confederacy could ill afford any more such "victories." If it did, its future would be short. Its only hope was to defend itself, not to attack superior Union forces.

Longstreet wanted to command divisions dispatched to Kentucky and to aid rebel forces under siege at Vicksburg. And so advised and urged Lee to do so.

Lee, on the other hand, itched to take the war to the north, going so far as Philadelphia. Given these conflicting positions, Lee and his principal, and always reliable, subordinate Longstreet — given the death of Stonewall Jackson — were to clash at Gettysburg on July 1-3, 1863.

In the greatest battle of the Civil War, was Longstreet insubordinate, and did he fail to fulfill his duty to carry out Lee's orders on July 2 and July 3? This was the question posed by Jamie Ryan, president of the Roundtable, for discussion at its January meeting. Ryan also previewed the battle and discussed the movements of Longstreet's troops on July 2-3.

While no vote was taken, sentiment among Roundtable members was overwhelmingly in Longstreet's favor. After the war Longstreet, a Georgian, had the temerity to criticize Lee and was

thus castigated by the Virginia cabal of Lost Cause apologists who were engaged in the deification of Lee.

Longstreet commanded the First Corps, with three divisions, led by Lafayette McLaws and the aforementioned Pickett and Hood. Longstreet's counterparts were Second Corps commander Richard Ewell, who succeeded Stonewall Jackson, with divisions led by Jubal Early, Edward "Allegheny" Johnson and Robert Rodes. A.P. Hill commanded the Third Corps with divisions led by Richard Anderson, Henry Heth and William Dorsey Pender. Longstreet's corps was the last one to arrive on the field. Hood just arrived on the morning of July 2, and Pickett did not participate at all on July 2. Longstreet argued strongly that Lee's army should swing south and flank the Union army's left flank, cutting Union commanding general George G. Meade's line of communications and supplies. Lee rejected this advice, wishing to retain the initiative and capitalize on the partial success of July 1. Lee wanted to attack early on July 2 and roll up the enemy's left flank. But he had faulty intelligence and knew little about Union troop positions on Cemetery Ridge.

How did Longstreet's corps perform on July 2, despite Longstreet's extreme reluctance and distaste for Lee's strategy? Pretty well, in light of the tardiness of his troops making ready for battle and their convoluted march to line of battle. McLaws' division, starting at Herr Ridge to the west of Seminary Ridge, marched to the east of Black Horse Tavern. But fearing detection, they turned around and counter marched to their starting point, where they undertook a laborious, exhausting march to a point east of Pitzer's Schoolhouse.

Longstreet, of course, was aided by the pompous Union Third Corps commander Dan Sickles, who was better suited to the smoky backrooms of Tammany Hall than the battlefield. Smarting from his belief that his forces had been poorly deployed at Chancellorsville, moved off high ground at Hazel Grove only to have rebels use it as a deadly artillery platform, Sickles moved his men off the southern end of Cemetery Ridge onto open ground near the Emmitsburg Road. This expanse, though elevated, was far too long to be defended by Sickles' two divisions, and Longstreet's men punished Sickles at the Wheatfield, Peach Orchard and Devil's Den, forcing Meade to rush reinforcements to bolster Sickles.

As a result, Third Corps divisions under David Birney and Andrew Humphreys were effectively ruined as fighting units, suffering 27 casualties to commanding officers alone. Sickles himself, puffing of a cigar, was carried off the battlefield with a severe leg wound (later amputated), inflicted by a rebel shell.

Certainly Longstreet performed as well as Ewell, who failed utterly at Culp's Hill, repulsed on July 2 and 3.

And A.P. Hill fared little better on the Confederate left flank on July 2, with the repulse of Richard Anderson's attack on the Union line on Cemetery Ridge.

With the failure of Lee's assaults on the Union flanks on July 2, Lee thought he could prevail with a direct attack on the center of the Union line on July 3.

For this Longstreet had no stomach whatsoever. On the morning of July 3 Lee and Longstreet, who was given command of fresh Virginia division and six brigades of Hill, some 12,500, argued. Longstreet knew the Union had dug in overnight and that such a rebel attack would require 30,000. Lee insisted. Longstreet could scarcely give the command to charge. Rebels did

make it to the copse of trees but were driven off by brutal hand-to-hand combat. The left of the Confederate attack, under Hill, was crushed.

The following morning, in driving rain, Lee began the retreat of his ragged army, back across the Potomac to Virginia.

