THE LOST ORDERS

Case Study in Contingency and the Nature of History

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“No other campaign and battle in the war had such momentous, multiple consequences as Antietam.”

James McPherson
THE PROMISE OF THE PENINSULA CAMPAIGN
AT THE GATES OF RICHMOND
ROBERT E. LEE AND THE SEVEN DAYS
McClellan’s Retreat to Harrison’s Landing
LINCOLN’S DECISION ON EMANCIPATION
Seward’s recommendation to delay issuing the Emancipation Proclamation until a victory was accepted by Lincoln and the cabinet. As Seward is reported to have said: “such a proclamation ought to be borne on the bayonets of an advancing army, not dragged in the dust behind a retreating one.”
JOHN POPE AND SECOND BULL RUN

THE SECOND BATTLE OF BULL RUN, Fought Aug 29th, 1862.

Between the Army of Virginia under Maj. Gen. John Pope, and the combined forces of the Rebel Army under Gen. Jackson and others. This second battle was fought on the second battle-field of Bull Run and ended with great loss to both sides, and also with great gain to those who fought the battle with success, and the Rebels were routed or captured on the field.
LINCOLN’S REACTION TO THE SECOND BATTLE OF BULL RUN

"I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go.” A. Lincoln
LEE INVADES MARYLAND
When this sad war is over we will all return to our homes, and feel that we can ask no higher honor than the proud consciousness that we belonged to the Army of the Potomac.

(George B. McClellan)
According to Salmon Chase, Lincoln told him that "I made a solemn vow before God, that if General Lee was driven back from Maryland I would crown the result by the declaration of freedom to the slaves."
ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND THE FUTURE OF CONFEDERATE RECOGNITION

Lord Palmerston, British Prime Minister
BATTLE OF ANTIETAM
17 SEPTEMBER 1862
JOSEPH HOOKER
THE SUNKEN ROAD, GENERAL EDWIN SUMNER, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE CENTER
BURNSIDE’S BRIDGE
McClellan’s victory dashed the best chance that the Confederacy had to win foreign recognition. Only two days before news of Antietam reached London, the Confederacy’s diplomats had been told that “the event you so strongly desire … is very close at hand.”
The Significance of Antietam, Part Two

It helped slow the growth of the Peace Democrats in the North who otherwise might have gained control of Congress in the November elections.
It allowed Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. Over 186,000 blacks would eventually serve in the Union armies.
"The dogmas of the quiet past, are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise -- with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew. We must disenthral ourselves, and then we shall save our country."

December 1, 1862
Lincoln’s Crisis of Confidence in 1862

“The people are impatient; Chase has no money…; the General of the Army has typhoid fever. The bottom is out of the tub. What shall I do?”

Abraham Lincoln to General Montgomery Miegs, January 10, 1862
FINDING THE LOST ORDERS
MCCLELLAN’S FAILURE TO DESTROY LEE
“The will of God prevails…. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party .... I am almost ready to say that this is probably true -- that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet. By his mere great power, on the minds of the now contestants, He could have either saved or destroyed the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And, having begun He could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds.”
“Sir, my concern is not whether God is on my side; my greatest concern is to be on God’s side, for God is always right.”

- Abraham Lincoln