

# A SESQUICENTENNIAL ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ MOMENT

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**JUNE 3, 1861**

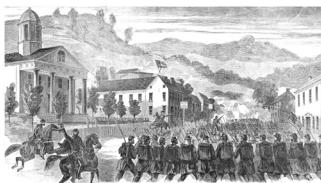
“The attack was made after a march during the entire night in a drenching rain. The surprise was complete. Fifteen rebels killed. The gallant Colonel Kelley, of the First Virginia Volunteers, I fear, is mortally wounded. No other important casualties on our side.”

Union Gen. George McClellan sent that information to his superior after winning the Battle of Philippi, the first land battle of the Civil War in which two Union divisions launched a surprise attack on a sleeping Confederate force.

Historians generally view the June 3 fight as more of a skirmish than a battle, primarily because no one was killed in the action.

The federal victory nonetheless bolstered support for the Union in northwestern Virginia.

It also encouraged delegates at the Second Wheeling Convention to make bold decisions, including creating the Reorganized (Union) Government of Virginia and electing Francis H. Pierpont as governor.



*Photo Courtesy of State Archives*

*This sesquicentennial moment is brought to you by the Archives & History Section of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.*

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