

## The Lebanon Races May 5 1862

Its early in the morning in Lebanon, Tennessee and the town had a visitor last night. Confederate Colonel John Hunt Morgan along with 800 Cavalry rode into town late in the afternoon yesterday.

Col Morgan and his men had been on a raid near Huntsville Alabama, They made their way through Pulaski and Shelbyville to Murfreesboro where they destroyed railroad tracks and the station house. He proceeded to Lebanon to give his men a night's rest.

It was raining last night and promised to be a miserable night but most of the 1500 people living here in Lebanon greeted Morgan as a hero and provided food and hospitality for his men. Stationing his men around town he posted guards on all the roads leading into Town. Morgan himself retired to the home of the Mayor.

Feeling secure for the night, he planned to move across the Cumberland River and strike the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in the morning. He is unaware that the Union Brigadier General Ebenezer Dumont, having learned of Morgan's location, is making his way from Murfreesboro toward Lebanon, with 600 Cavalry, in a driving rain storm. After midnight Dumont and his men reach about 4 miles south of town. His men rest for a short time, sleeping with their hands, and at 4am began to move closer to Lebanon. It has been raining hard and steadily for hours, the pickets are suffering from the weather, and while inside old farmhouses and barns seeking shelter and warmth, the pickets of Col. Morgan allow Gen. Dumont's Cavalry to pass almost unnoticed.

One loyal Picket, Pleasant Whitlow, realizes the terrible mistake, mounts his horse, covers himself to conceal his identity and rides with the enemy until he can sound the alarm at the very edge of town. He is killed immediately but the alarm gives a few moments notice to Morgan and his men.

After approximately 1400 men fight on the streets of Lebanon for more than two hours, Morgan mounts his fine horse and gallops out the Rome the Old Rome Pike with Dumont in hot pursuit. Morgan is able to escape by crossing the Cumberland but has to leave his horse behind.