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HENRY HALLECK: THE UNION'S UNDERRATED MULTITASKER

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HENRY HALLECK: THE UNION’S UNDERRATED MULTITASKER

A Master Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of

American Public University

by

Pamela Yvonne DiVanna

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Arts

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Charles Town, WV
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the two people in this world that make life worth living; my dear husband Michael DiVanna, and my late mother, Dr. Ethel N. Reilly. I thank you both for your loving support and for endless faith in me …no matter what. I love you both.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Charles Grear, for his support and guidance in this endeavor. Dr. Grear was unendingly patient with my questions and encouraged my ideas through sound advice and constructive criticism. I thank him for taking the time to meticulously comb through my paper, ensuring that my thesis was complete and accurate.

I would also like to acknowledge the aid I received while researching this project from the librarians at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the staff at the A.K. Smiley Heritage Room in Redlands, California, as well as our librarians at the American Public University.
ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

HALLECK: THE UNION’S UNDERATED MULTITASKER

by

Pamela Yvonne DiVanna

American Public University System, May 28, 2017

Professor Charles Grear, Thesis Professor

During the Civil War, General Henry W. Halleck served as the commander of
the army in the West, General in Chief of all Union armies, and Chief of Staff to
President Lincoln; yet his name and contributions to the war are virtually unknown
outside of academia. After graduating near the top of his West Point class in 1839,
Halleck enjoyed fame as an author and lecturer with expertise in military history and the
international laws of war, earning him the moniker ‘Old Brains’. During the Mexican
American War, Halleck travelled with a small contingent of marines to California, and
briefly fought in a series of skirmishes in Mazatlán. He later served as the military
Secretary of State in California, helping to draft the state’s constitution. In 1854, he
resigned from the army and eventually established the most successful law firm in San Francisco at the time. When the war began, Halleck answered the call of his country, leaving his life as a prosperous attorney and executive, and reported to Washington. This paper argues that interventions by the General strengthened the Union’s war effort at each of his command posts. For the duration of the Civil War, General Halleck advised, provided strategy, clarified policies, and managed the massive logistical needs of the army. Era newspapers, correspondence, telegrams, and contemporary literature provide the evidence to validate this argument, and demonstrate the General’s ability to translate his vast knowledge into military activity. General Halleck deserves greater recognition for his patriotic services and influence over the war than history has allocated.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication .............................................................................................................................................. iii

CHAPTER I ........................................................................................................................................- 1 -
    Introduction.....................................................................................................................................- 1 -

CHAPTER II .......................................................................................................................................- 5 -
    Literature Review...........................................................................................................................- 5 -

CHAPTER III ................................................................................................................................... - 14 -
    Trouble in Missouri .......................................................................................................................... - 14 -

CHAPTER IV ................................................................................................................................... - 36 -
    Corinth To Washington ..................................................................................................................... - 36 -

CHAPTER V .................................................................................................................................... - 56 -
    Antietam, Perryville, Iuka, Corinth .................................................................................................. - 56 -

CHAPTER VI ................................................................................................................................... - 76 -
    Out with the Old/In with the New .................................................................................................... - 76 -

CHAPTER VII .................................................................................................................................. - 98 -
    Harder War/Cooperative Management/End of Conflict ................................................................. - 98 -

Summary ......................................................................................................................................... - 128 -

Bibliography ................................................................................................................................... - 138 -
CHAPTER I

Introduction

During the Civil War, General Henry W. Halleck served as the commander of the Department of the Mississippi, General in Chief of all Union armies, and Chief of Staff to Abraham Lincoln; yet his name and contributions to the war are virtually unknown outside of academia. He excelled as a scholar: after graduating from Union College in upstate New York, Halleck gained admittance to the United States Military Academy at West Point. Professor Dennis Hart Mahan, who taught civil and military engineering, (as well as the Art of War), deeply influenced Halleck. Six months prior to his commencement, Halleck served as an associate professor of chemistry, graduating third in his class of 1839. After graduating, he remained under the tutelage of Mahan as the assistant instructor of engineering.¹

Halleck left West Point in 1840 and travelled to Washington, where he served on the National Engineers Board. During his time in Washington, he came under the jurisdiction of General Winfield Scott, where he gained exposure to U.S. government military operations; experience that proved beneficial in his subsequent career. His next assignment took him to New York City, where he was to evaluate and improve fortifications of the harbor with future Confederate leader General Robert E. Lee. While in New York, Halleck began writing and publishing. Among his works were reviews of Congressional reports, (which appeared in the New York Review), and a book on the various types and military uses of asphalt, entitled

Bitumen. His reputation grew, and in 1843, he received an honorary M.A. degree from his alma mater, Union College. He also wrote “Report on the Means of National Defense,” which was published by Congress. That same year, Halleck took an authorized leave of absence to France in order to gain a better understanding of their fortifications and military. Upon returning to New York in May 1844, he received an invitation from the Lowell Institute of Boston to give a series of twelve lectures on the ‘Military Art’. D. Appleton and Company of New York published his well-received lectures and published them under the title: Elements of Military Art and Science. Soon after publication, Halleck received orders to move out to California, where he traveled with fellow West Point alums William T. Sherman and Edward Ord.²

During the Mexican American War, Halleck experienced combat through a series of skirmishes in Mazatlán during a deployment with a small contingent of marines in California. At the war’s conclusion, he served as the military Secretary of State in California, and helped draft the state’s constitution. In 1854, he resigned from the army and established the most successful law firm in San Francisco; Halleck, Peachy, and Billings. Through the secession crisis in 1860, Halleck served as the Commander of the Second Division of the California State Militia, where he was instrumental in reorganizing and preparing the state for the impending conflict. When the Civil War began, Halleck answered the call of his country, leaving his life as a prosperous attorney and executive behind and reported to Washington.³

To date, there are only three full-scale works written by historians exclusively about Halleck. The first, Halleck: Lincoln’s Chief of Staff, by Stephen Ambrose in 1962, focuses on

² Curt Anders, Henry Halleck’s War: A Fresh Look at Lincoln’s Controversial General in Chief (Indiana: Guild Press, 1999), 7,9-10, 25; Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 38.

³ Ibid.,10, 57-59; Anders, Henry Halleck’s War, 18-22.
Halleck’s influence over army development, military professionalism, and the modern command system. Ambrose claims Halleck brought a much needed system of organization to his Western command, stating that some subordinates found it difficult to operate without Halleck’s support. The second, *Henry Halleck’s War: A Fresh Look at Lincoln’s Controversial General-in-Chief*, by Curt Anders, dives deep into the *Records of the Rebellion*, (largely written by Halleck), to take a “fresh look” at his character and war contributions.⁴ Lastly, John F. Marszalek wrote *Commander of all Lincoln’s Armies: A Life of General Henry W. Halleck*, published 2004, presents a reckoning of Halleck’s life, accomplishments and failures by taking a closer look at the General’s personality traits and health problems. It is Marszalek’s belief that these factors affected Halleck’s performance both negatively and positively, depending on the stage in his life and the phase of the war.⁵

This paper explains how Halleck used his expertise in the international laws of war, the military arts and sciences, and personal experiences to strengthen the Union’s war effort. General Halleck served as the advocator, catalyst and facilitator for creation of the Lieber Code, which served as a model of regulated warfare, also serving as the precursor of the Geneva Convention. Through defining and disseminating information involving prisoner exchange, permissive retaliation measures, civil and military law, and historical military precedents, Halleck enabled the transference of his knowledge into military action. This work provides examples of era

⁴ Ibid., viii.

⁵ Ambrose, *Halleck*, 63; Marszalek, *Commander of all Lincoln’s Armies*, 3.
newspapers, correspondence, telegrams, and contemporary literature that provide evidence validating this argument.\textsuperscript{6}

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CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

General Halleck, a prolific writer, never wrote his memoirs or autobiography. This was intentional, for even as he endured profound criticism during the war, he was certain that the official records of the conflict would vindicate his character and actions. Thankfully, surviving correspondence and friendly letters reveal Halleck’s softer side. As a commander, Halleck demanded complete obedience, adherence to policy, professionalism, and expected commanders to operate using sound judgment, free of micromanagement on his part.

The following literature review on the General reveals much about Halleck’s character. Many who knew him considered him a scholar, and he did have his share of admirers and supporters. There were also those that despised him, thought him envious, cunning and vindictive. Writings about Halleck are rarely ambivalent, authors tend to expose their love or hatred of the General no matter how objective their intentions. It is likely that Halleck’s personality encompassed all the traits attributed to him over time.

In “General Halleck-A Memoir,” (1905), former Union General James Grant Wilson, published a review of literature regarding Halleck in an attempt to improve the General’s failing reputation. Wilson opened his piece with an article written by the prominent Republican, James G. Blaine. Blaine’s work depicted Halleck as an envious, unfit commander, promoted to General in Chief to relieve Lincoln and Stanton from directing armies. The other object was to install General Grant as commander of the West. Wilson also included an article by Union General

Peter S. Michie, author of *General McClellan*. Michie criticized and blamed Halleck for the defeat at second Manassas due to Halleck’s inability to manage General McClellan. Historian James Ford Rhodes, in *History of the United States*, shared Michie’s criticism of Halleck’s leadership through the mishandling of McClellan on the eve of the Confederate invasion of Maryland. Additionally, Rhodes contended that Halleck possessed no strategic knowledge, and was of little use to McClellan, even with the discovery of Lee’s lost order.

In direct contrast to the criticisms cited in this review, Wilson presented complimentary remarks from notable persons of the era, including foreign military and prominent commanders of the Civil War. One example cites Grant in 1879 explaining to a friend that Halleck did not receive the credit he deserved for his services in the war, and praised him as being an able military man, devoted to the country and never resentful of Chief’s promotion. In this exchange, Grant stated that Halleck’s knowledge of military science aided commanders in the field, and in his, (Grant’s), memoirs, the General expressed the loyalty given to him by Lincoln and Halleck during the Vicksburg Campaign. Immediately following the war and prior to Grant’s positive remarks of Halleck, Adam Badeau, Grant’s military secretary, published a journal article belittling Halleck. Badeau’s article presented telegraphic correspondence between General McClellan and Halleck, depicting Halleck as a liar, and undermining Grant. To neutralize this

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charge, Wilson included original literature by and about Halleck, to prove that accusations against Halleck were, ‘grossly exaggerated.’\textsuperscript{11} Grant’s eldest son, Frederick, wrote another bitter article in 1885. This article illustrated, through primary documents, Halleck’s injustice to his father after the victory at Fort Donelson.\textsuperscript{12} In 1889, John B. Fry, Chief of Staff to General Don Carlos Buell, attempted to correct damaging assertions regarding Halleck by claiming ‘misunderstandings’ between the Generals in Halleck’s correspondence with McClellan.\textsuperscript{13} In the end, Wilson believed that the ill will directed at Halleck stemmed from allegiance to war heroes prejudiced against the general.

At the turn of the century, two residents of the Union occupied St. Louis wrote of their wartime experiences. In \textit{Story of a Border City during the Civil War}, clergyman and professor, Galusha Anderson spoke highly of Halleck. In his chapter, “Halleck and his Manifestoes,” Anderson painted Halleck as a confident, intuitive man possessing a ‘soldierly bearing.’\textsuperscript{14} The author praised Halleck’s actions against guerrillas, insurgents, and secessionists in the state, and for providing protection to Unionists and refugees within the city. In a 1909 publication, \textit{Struggle for Missouri}, reporter John McElroy commended Halleck in a chapter titled “General H.W. Halleck in Command.” McElroy stated that Halleck, “was complete a soldier as could be

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Wilson, "General Halleck," 334.}
\footnote{Simon, \textit{Grant and Halleck}, 31.}
\footnote{Galusha Anderson, \textit{The Story of a Border City during the Civil War} (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1908), 234, accessed December 1, 2016, \url{http://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/lsocivilwar/id/16257}.}
\end{footnotes}
produced." 15 The author also remarked Halleck never revealed his political persuasions, which was a testament to the General’s sense of professionalism. McElroy was clearly impressed with Halleck’s success in regaining control of the city and state, as well as his ability as a strategist, but confessed that Halleck lacked the necessary qualifications of a fighting general. 16

In the era preceding the Second World War, historians continued to recognize Halleck’s intellect as a tribute to Union, but demonstrated a preference for strong field commanders over an administrative officer. In 1937, amateur historian Milton H. Shutes published “Henry Wager Halleck: Lincoln’s Chief of Staff,” outlining Halleck’s service in the Mexican American War as “unsanguinary,” but credited the General with creating order out of chaos in Missouri. 17 The author does admit however, that the victorious armies used by Grant and Sherman later in the war were products of Halleck’s reorganization and drilling while commanding in Missouri. Shutes also praised Halleck for recognizing the need for a unified command in the West. The article presents Halleck as a scholar and capable administrator, but devoid of fighting prowess, evident in the slow march on Corinth. Apparently, the author and Blaine shared the belief that Halleck’s promotion to General in Chief was a ploy by the President to provide Grant with the opportunity of commanding in the West. In his own words, Shutes described Halleck as


16 Ibid.

a “scientific soldier,” and inserted condescending remarks about Halleck made by government officials at the time, noting Halleck’s unpopularity in Washington and among his peers.\textsuperscript{18}

In the 1962 biography \textit{Halleck: Lincoln’s Chief of Staff}, the author, Stephen Ambrose, capitalizes on Halleck’s strong points while downplaying the weak. As General in Chief and Chief of Staff, Ambrose noted that Halleck performed well as liaison between field officers and the Washington leadership, crediting Halleck with battling against politically appointed generals in order to maintain army professionalism and effectiveness. Moreover, Ambrose gave Halleck points for being an early supporter of hard war, which centered on annihilation of enemy resources.\textsuperscript{19}

Historians Herman Hattaway and Archer Jones devoted a full chapter to the General entitled, “The Emergence of Halleck,” in their 1989 publication, \textit{How the North Won}. The authors began the chapter with a fitting quote given to the Irish journalist William Howard Russell. “Do you know, in this country, if you can get enough people to start a rumor about any man, he would be ruined?”\textsuperscript{20} With this uplifting depiction of Halleck, Hattaway and Jones turned the table, giving the General recognition for his ability to combine knowledge of military history, logistics, law, and administration, and incorporate them into his command.

In 1990, producer Ken Burns released his documentary film, \textit{The Civil War} for television. This nine part series enjoyed a remarkable reception of 40 million viewers, winning

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 201.  \\
\textsuperscript{19} Ambrose, \textit{Halleck}, 181.  \\
\end{flushleft}
multiple awards.21 Five years in the making, this production included interviews with historians discussing war topics from multiple perspectives. However, in episode two, *A Very Bloody Affair*, Halleck’s reputation took another downward turn, which was particularly damaging due to the huge reception the series received. According to this program, Halleck was a commander jealous of his chief subordinate and rival, General Grant, relieving him after his victory at Shiloh, and taking command of the army.22

In his 1996 lecture, *Grant and Halleck: Contrasts in Command*, historian John Y. Simon noted that although Grant was unsuccessful as a civilian before the Civil War and lacked the genius of Halleck, Grant was the better soldier. Apparently, the author also preferred a strong battle commander to an administrator. In completing his portrayal of Halleck, Simon included his physical appearance as pudgy, with a double chin, flabby cheeks, and a habitual stare with “wide open owlish eyes.”23 According to Simon, Halleck was manipulative and deceitful, either unable or unwilling to perform effectively as a military commander; however, he did excel in supporting roles. While in Washington, Simon credits Halleck for acting successfully as buffer between the field and Washington, concluding his lecture by describing Halleck as a “military housekeeper.”24

In *Henry Halleck’s War: A Fresh Look at Lincoln’s Controversial General in Chief* 1999, military historian Curt Anders described Halleck with an analogy as the operator of the

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22 Ibid.

23 Simon, *Grant and Halleck*, 11.

24 Ibid., 33.
Union central control board. The author presented Halleck as a proficient manager of information, strategy, decision-making, and advising. Ander’s positive depiction of Halleck served to elevate the General’s reputation and demonstrated that Halleck’s performance positively influenced the war.

In 2004, historian John Marszalek wrote *Commander of all Lincoln's Armies: A Life of General Henry W. Halleck*. Maintaining objectivity, Marszalek provided an account of the General’s life. He credited Halleck for organizing and facilitating Grant’s successful attacks on Forts Henry and Donelson, as well as the success of his Western command. The author presented Halleck as having possessed strengths, weaknesses, and shortcomings while he was General in Chief, but praised his performance as Chief of Staff. Marszalek, unlike other authors, provided a psychological interpretation to describe Halleck’s deficits in his civilian and military life. Marszalek also included a detailed account of Halleck’s military career following the Civil War.

Another essential source deserving inclusion is the *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*. This compilation consists of orders, reports, and documentation from the Confederacy and the Union during the entire conflict. It is a valuable primary resource for Civil War studies, and a crucial support document for this paper. These records provide precise


language, conversations, and expose the mindsets of participants. As primary sources, they offer information necessary for contemporary interpretation, and combined with a focus on Halleck’s implementation of his knowledge into military operations, makes this study unique. Lastly, these volumes provide insight into personalities and relationships, which are important elements in understanding event outcomes.

The earliest sources of literature about Halleck provide intimate views revealing strong opinions, both critical and supportive. Halleck apparently evoked admiration or revulsion from people; there is rarely middle ground. This observation reveals the likelihood of Halleck being outwardly businesslike, having few intimates, and not overly concerned with peoples’ perceptions of him. Letters written to his wife during the war bring the General to life, humanizing him.

After the turn of the twentieth century, Halleck’s reputation took a backseat to celebrated figures of the war. Those basking in the battlefield glory obtained adulation. It is arguable that these traits still determine the popularity of historical figures. As the 19th century progressed, many historians have repeated views written about Halleck during and immediately after the conflict.

By the sixties, the revolutionary spirit of the times brought out other positive qualities of the General, apart from his scholarship. Added to his contributions were his advocacy of hard war, as well as his influence on the army’s organization and professionalism. During the latter end of the twentieth century, historians praised Halleck for shaping the role of Chief of Staff, and for his interpretation of his role as General in Chief. Additionally, the General received recognition for tutoring Lincoln in strategy, and for shouldering blame for the President’s
military blunders. Despite more recent, complimentary views of Halleck, his name and roles remain rather obscure outside of academia, and those familiar with him regard him as a petty, shallow character who failed to perform any task worth mentioning during the war. The aim of this study is to incorporate historiographical observations of the General, in comparison to primary documentation, and apply findings to the research question.
CHAPTER III

Trouble in Missouri

General Halleck entered the war with the reputation of being a military scholar and competent soldier. As commander of the Department of Missouri, Old Brains worked to legally unravel the administrative mess inherited from John C. Frémont, as he obtained rations, equipment, and supplies for his soldiers. Wielding a heavy hand, Halleck effectively dealt with disloyal civilians and guerrillas within his jurisdiction. He oversaw successful drives down the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers by his subordinate commanders, affecting the collapse of Columbus and Bowling Green, Kentucky. Taking the field with his large army, Halleck intimidated the like-minded Southern strategists, Generals P. T. G. Beauregard and Joseph E. Johnston, by seizing the strategically located city of Corinth, Mississippi. Commanders in the East paled in comparison to Old Brains, and President Lincoln began to take notice.

The American Southwest experienced an era of heightened violence, beginning with the admittance of Kansas as a free territory in 1854. The Jayhawkers, (or abolitionists) of Kansas fought mercilessly with Border Ruffians, pro-slavery Missourians who committed murders, insurgency, and incited guerrilla activities. Their violent activities were major contributing factors to the Civil War. By the secession crisis, the Border Ruffians were seasoned fighters who made Union occupation and control of Missouri a bloody, arduous task. Through the efforts of radical Republican Frank P. Blair and Union General Nathaniel Lyons, Missouri remained
(tenuously) in the Union. When General Lyon fell in the Union defeat at Wilson’s Creek, seizure of the state by the Confederacy posed a serious threat.\(^{27}\)

Washington’s answer to the growing need of Federal military influence in the region was John C. Frémont, a famous adventurer with strong ties in Missouri. Lincoln appointed Frémont, nicknamed “The Pathfinder” as Commander of the West, allowed him to raise a command, and gave him carte blanche to manage and equip the venture. While Frémont procured supplies in New York, Union General John Pope battled guerillas in Missouri, combatting railroad and telegraph destruction until Frémont’s arrival. Upon reaching Missouri, Frémont established his headquarters in a St. Louis mansion; taking advantage of the financial latitude he had been given. The General illegally appointed and paid his staff, authorized supply contracting without competition, improperly decreed martial law, and freed slaves of men disloyal to the Union. When asked by Lincoln to modify his emancipation order to coincide with the Confiscation Act, Frémont refused.\(^{28}\)

The Pathfinder’s administration alarmed Gustave Koerner, formerly Governor of Illinois and aide-de-camp, who reported his concerns to Washington. Koerner’s report spurred an impromptu visit by General Lorenzo Thomas in October of 1861. Upon his return to Washington, Thomas submitted a detailed report describing the chaotic climate and illegal actives occurring under Frémont. It was apparent that Missouri needed a competent military


commander to correct the chaos and corruption of Frémont’s administration, and regaining control of the state.29

During this period, Halleck was reporting for duty in Washington, where he received a situational briefing by the new General in Chief of the Army, George McClellan. The briefing contained orders that assigned Halleck to Missouri, and McClellan detailed the challenges he would face, as well as Washington’s expectations of Halleck. It is likely that Halleck’s supersession as General in Chief by McClellan came as a surprise, but Halleck accepted his command in Missouri without complaint. Informed of his challenge in the West, Halleck carried volumes of international war principles collected during the Mexican American War to use as legal guidance to his new post.30

The tremendous task awaiting Halleck in Missouri required a particular skillset, which the new general fortunately possessed. Halleck’s responsibilities as commander involved the welfare of his military command, the security of his operational areas, and the development of his officers, supplies, transportation, and strategy. Soon after Halleck’s arrival in St. Louis, he began reordering the chaos. He observed, listened and inspected, then commenced writing a flood of orders. As he was anxious to correct deficiencies within his new command, Halleck immediately issued General Orders No. 3, which prohibited refugee slaves within Union lines. Halleck and McClellan shared pro-slavery sentiments, preferring to keep slavery out of war.


Halleck was also aware that the military had no authority to free slaves. As Halleck had expected, General Orders No. 3 caused an upset with the large population of anti-slavery Germans and soldiers in St. Louis called “Charcoals,” and received sharp criticism from the German press. This set of orders incited an effort to relieve Halleck and replace him with the recently deposed German General, Franz Siegel. In Washington, Senator Charles Sumner called the order “irrational and inhuman on its face.”

Halleck, well aware of his unpopularity, attempted to modify the disapproval of politically connected Frank Blair. Halleck wrote to Blair and defended his action by explaining the order served as a security precaution. He ensured Blair that as a servant of the government, he would act in accordance with Federal law, including compliance with all legislation passed by Congress. Halleck reminded Blair that legislation requiring the acceptance of fugitive slaves was not within his power, and stated that he could not make laws, nor would he violate them. Unlike McClellan, Halleck demonstrated his clever nature by enacting his political views through subterfuge.  

When Halleck first arrived in Missouri, he supported the government’s conciliatory policy that excluded civilians from warfare, respected slaves as property, and protected Constitutional rights. He believed interfering with the property of non-combatants was an abuse of power and a violation of the laws of war. Decisions of this nature belonged to the highest-ranking officer of a command, and only in emergent situations. To reinforce this belief, Halleck

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31 Marszalek, Commander of all Lincoln’s Armies, 111.

issued General Order No. 8, prohibiting the seizure and destruction of private property. In reality, even at this early point in the war, Union commanders and soldiers fighting in Missouri had discovered the ineffectiveness of the conciliatory policy; retaliation against disloyal civilians was rampant. In July 1861, General Pope, frustrated with guerrilla activity in Northern Missouri, informed the population of their responsibility for destruction of “bridges, culverts, or portions of the railroad track within five miles on each side of them.”

Pope told citizens they would pay for damages by levy or property seizure to cover the costs of damage. Halleck would soon realize the futility of the conciliatory policy, and embrace a harder type of war against disloyal civilians.

Within a week of his arrival in St. Louis, Halleck began reporting gross irregularities involving requisitions, including the issuance and disappearance of supplies purchased by Frémont. He also informed the General in Chief of widespread illness and crowded hospital conditions within the city, and that his soldiers lacked arms, clothing, pay, and were greatly demoralized. To add to these maladies, Halleck contended with rebel Generals Sterling Price and Benjamin McCulloch moving northward through the state.

One root cause of the Missouri problem was the lack of funding for his command. Therefore, on 18 January 1862, Halleck wrote to McClellan and his West Point classmate, Chief Quartermaster Montgomery Meigs, requesting money. Immediate concerns included paying his

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disgruntled German troops, and averting the threatened strike of Pacific Railroad employees that worked for the government. A strike by the rail workers would be calamitous, as the railroad was responsible for transporting supplies for soldiers battling guerrillas, and currently enroute from Rolla to Springfield.  

Concerned for the physical welfare of his soldiers, Halleck inspected clothing and materials issued to his command, and found them grievously wanting. In a letter dated 22 January 1862, he informed Meigs that the clothing and blankets issued to his men were substandard, and would not last two weeks. Halleck did mention however, the most recent shipment was satisfactory with the exception of those from Philadelphia, and attempted to lower expenditures by suggesting deducting the money of prior shipments from the current bill. Continuing in a more personal tone, Halleck explained that his men possessed ill feelings toward authority, due to the issue of second-rate weapons and clothing, adding that quality goods would have a positive effect upon them. On 9 February 1862, Halleck wrote to the Adjutant General of Illinois, Allen C. Fuller, with an informed and explicit request for procuring suitable weapons.  

Six months earlier in July 1861, Frémont received two urgent messages from his Western commanders to send weapons posthaste. As it turned out, the U.S. government had placed thousands of rifles on order for the 300,000 new recruits Lincoln called for duty, therefore Frémont sought another weapon supplier, and discovered the Austrian “Consol” was available for purchase. General Frémont ordered 25,000. These rifles caused such problems that General

36 Henry W. Halleck to Montgomery Meigs (original letter), 18 January 1862, H.W. Halleck Papers, 1843-1896, box 1, folder 1, Manuscript Division, Library Of Congress, Washington, D.C.

37 Henry W. Halleck to Montgomery Meigs (original letter), 22 January 1862; Ibid.; Henry W. Halleck to Allen C. Fuller (original letter), 9 February 1862.
Ulysses S. Grant, then commanding in Cairo, Illinois, wired Frémont complaining about the unreliability of the weapons. Frémont believed that his German soldiers would be familiar with the weapon, but the Germans were displeased, all of which eventually resulted in expensive modifications. Frémont’s ordinance officer, Captain Franklin D. Callender, inspected the guns, and decided to rifle the weapons. Due to the expense, only half of the weapons received the modifications needed to function properly, and aside from rifling, Callender discovered that the primer caps needed rework to fit conventional percussion caps. In March of 1862, McClellan sent word that Halleck would soon receive 4,000 revolvers, 5,000 sabers, approximately 25,000 Prussian muskets, 2,000 single barreled pistols, and that the Governor of Illinois would receive 3,000 French rifled muskets and sabers. In this missive, McClellan reassured Halleck that 5,000 Springfield rifles were on order and should arrive, “as fast as they are manufactured.”

Due to the unruliness within the state, Halleck pressed McClellan for written authorization to proclaim Martial Law. In Halleck’s mind, Frémont failed to acquire proper legal authorization; however, Halleck would ensure his issuing of the proclamation complied with prescribed law, considering the need for it was paramount. Throughout December, Halleck received reports from his commanders detailing incidents of attacks upon Union soldiers on expeditions rooting out insurgents and destroying war impedimenta. On 3 December, one such incident detailed an attack on the Union post in Salem, Missouri. A familiar rebel guerrilla, Colonel Thomas R. Freeman, along with three hundred of his mounted men, attempted to seize


39 *OR*, vol. 8, 557.
witnesses scheduled for transport to Rolla. The Union troops repulsed the attackers, resulting in multiple deaths and casualties on both sides. On 18 December, Halleck reported a large skirmish that had occurred at Blackwater Creek to General McClellan. The fight involved a detachment of Pope’s men who surrounded and surprised an enemy camp. The Union troops took 1,300 prisoners, 1,000 stands of arms, 1,000 horses, sixty-five wagons, and numerous tents, supplies, and baggage. Halleck also reported the confiscation of two tons of keg powder, buried on the farm. Union losses were two killed and eight wounded. The state of Missouri was indeed experiencing a war within a war.40

Prior to decreeing martial law, Halleck issued General Orders No. 13, which explained to the community what constituted abuses of the laws of war, and warned citizens that such crimes were capital offenses. Persons who robbed, stole or committed murder within Union lines would suffer severe punishment. This order was a stopgap measure until Halleck received written authorization to declare martial law. Following several unanswered request for authorization from McClellan, Halleck wrote to President Lincoln, and received permission to proclaim the law, which he issued on 26 December 1861.41 Halleck’s proclamation applied only to regions severely affected by destruction, mayhem, and violence. As a man who embraced a conciliatory stance a few weeks beforehand, Halleck quickly realized his error, and hardened his responses to unruly acts.

Halleck’s legal knowledge benefitted his command by freeing it of the pain-staking chore of seeking guidance from Washington. In January 1861, Union General Benjamin Prentiss

40 Ibid., 33, 37.
reported the murder of Judge Thomas S. Richardson within his area of responsibility. Prentiss asked whether to conduct a civil or military trial, and Halleck instructed Prentiss on how to proceed. If a loyal civil court existed, Prentiss should try the case by that route, if not, he was to try the case by military commission. Halleck warned Prentiss, that if a military commission handled the case, Prentiss must document the absence of a loyal civil court for the official record. In fact, Halleck ended up appointing the committee investigating the murder.42

Halleck also advised and educated his subordinates and superiors on the laws of war. On 3 December 1861, Halleck settled an inquiry sent up the chain of command by General Grant. Grant received a request from Confederate General Leonidas Polk, desiring the exchange of an undisclosed number of prisoners from Grant’s command for two Confederate officers. Grant replied to Polk, stating that although he did not recognize the Confederacy, he would inquire about how to proceed.43 In his reply to the query, General Halleck included McClellan in the conversation. Halleck defined the exchange of prisoners as a “mere military convention” and explained that exchange under the laws of war did not exempt a prisoner from trial or punishment as a traitor. Halleck continued, “Treason is a state or civil offense punishable by the civil courts; the exchange of prisoners of war is only a part of the ordinary commercial belli.”44

As Unionists experienced widespread violence across the state, they poured into St. Louis as refugees seeking Federal protection. Halleck employed the use of taxation, as General Pope


43 OR, Series 2, vol. 1, 511.

did before him, authorizing collection of assessments from wealthy secessionists totaling $10,000 per family. The revenue provided aid for refugees, repaired railroads, telegraphs and other vandalized property. If a family refused to pay an assessment, property confiscation followed, with an additional 25 percent fee. There was no easy way to get around the fee under Halleck’s watch, as one St. Louis resident discovered. A Mr. Samuel Engler paid the assessment, and then attempted to recoup his loss through the civil court through a writ of replevin. Authorities discovered Engler’s contrivance, and expelled him from Union lines.\textsuperscript{45} Halleck extended the authority to subordinate commanders within their operating areas, but only with expressive permission.

Halleck’s assumption of command, his new staff and organizational modifications caused extreme dissatisfaction with the Germans; especially the replacement of General Franz Sigel with a West Point graduate, General Samuel Curtis. Many German soldiers from the region had enlisted specifically to fight under Sigel. The resultant uproar and heightened unrest eventually reached the ears of the President. Lincoln responded by sending Gustave Koerner to mediate between Halleck and the Germans in January 1862. In a sealed letter, Lincoln suggested for Halleck to add Koerner to his staff as a Brigadier General. Although Halleck disliked politicians in military affairs, he told Lincoln about secret meetings held by Germans in the city, and their intention to restore Frémont and Sigel to command. He made Lincoln aware of his employment of meeting infiltrators, and that he had matters under control. As far as his personal staff, the General informed the President that \textit{his} aide-decamps started as colonels, but if Lincoln insisted, Gustave Koerner would start as a brigadier. Lastly, the General made it clear that he was fully

capable of managing the situation without government interference. Following this incident, Halleck wrote to General McClellan regarding the situation, ensuring him all would be well, and, in the end, the situation died down. Halleck’s ability to assess the political situation allowed this situation to de-escalate, and demonstrated that as a hater of politics, even Halleck could behave an astute politician at times. Halleck also had the ability to recognize leaders, and encouraged them to excel. He mentored and advanced the careers of worthy subordinates. General Curtis performed extraordinarily well in his duty of driving rebels from the state, validating Halleck’s choice of him as commander in that particular sphere.

Halleck, in his performance as commander, gained the respect and emulation of several subordinates who later became celebrated heroes of the war. General Sherman, for example, reported to Halleck after resigning from a command, amidst accusations of insanity. Halleck gave his old friend inspection duties, but ultimately felt compelled to place the general on mandatory leave to calm his nerves. He wrote reassuring notes to Sherman’s powerful political family, and when Sherman returned to duty, Halleck successfully eased him back into command.47

One other commander aided by Halleck’s kindness was Philip Sheridan, who served as head quartermaster and commissary captain under General Curtis. In March of 1862, General Curtis arrested and planned to court-martial Sheridan for illegally seizing and branding horses from owners without issuing vouchers. Sheridan appealed to Halleck for aid, which Halleck

46 OR, vol. 8, 826; Anders, Henry Halleck's War, 59-60.

rendered by ordering General Curtis to suspend the arrest. Halleck then sent the young officer to Northwest Missouri to purchase horses for the government. Sheridan would leave his mark on the war, earning a reputation as one of its most successful cavalry commanders.

Aside from adequately supplying an army, strategy is another important component for a successful leader to manage. In his St. Louis headquarters in December of 1861, Generals Halleck, Sherman, and George Cullum discussed strategy for the Federal thrust into the South. The generals all agreed that piercing the center of the Confederate line would be the appropriate spot to break the rebels. Looking at his map, Halleck identified the Tennessee River as the “true line of operations” and insisted on using the Ohio River as base, then proceeding up the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers, targeting Nashville. He stated this move would turn and cause the surrender of the Confederate bastion at Columbus, forcing the abandonment of Bowling Green. At this point however, his ill equipped, untrained army was not ready for field operations.

By the next month, anxious for military movement, Lincoln pressured all of his generals to begin campaigning, and wrote Halleck asking him to contact General Don Carlos Buell, operating in Kentucky and Tennessee. In the Western Theatre, the President was particularly concerned about the liberation of Unionists in Eastern Tennessee, (within Buell’s jurisdiction), and wanted to gain control of the railway between Tennessee and Virginia. The problem was


49 Ambrose, Halleck, 19.

50 Hattaway, How the North Won, 65.
that neither Buell nor Halleck wanted to cooperate, each preferring to command a combined
campaign. Buell recommended a strategy to Lincoln tasking Halleck to cut the Memphis and
Nashville Railroad, leaving himself to capture Bowling Green, and freeing the Unionists in
Eastern Tennessee. Upon learning of this plan from the President, Halleck replied the plan
“would be madness” because taking men from Missouri would jeopardize Union control over the
state.\textsuperscript{51} McClellan suggested Halleck send troops to Buell. Halleck disagreed, arguing that
Washington failed to appreciate the tenuous situation in Missouri. Exasperated, McClellan
ordered an expedition up the Cumberland with Halleck cooperating with Buell, (who was to
advance on Eastern Tennessee), and for Halleck to demonstrate toward Columbus, and feint up
the Tennessee River. In preparation for this drive, Halleck ordered his commanders to wipe out
guerillas in their sectors. He informed General Curtis in particular, to ready his command for a
southward movement against Sterling Price. Halleck contacted Lincoln on 6 January, explaining
in detail why he was unable to assist Buell: inadequate troop strength, heightened violence in
Missouri, and the untrained nature of his raw troops. Halleck boldly gave the impression that he
was willing to help, but first, his army needed training and discipline, including his
officers. Lincoln sank into despair, claiming, “It is extremely discouraging. As everywhere else,
nothing can be done.”\textsuperscript{52}

Halleck wanted to enact his strategy when his troops were ready. The impetus spurring
Halleck into motion was the news that Confederate General Beauregard was approaching
Kentucky from Virginia with fifteen regiments. Halleck then ordered Grant into motion. Grant

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 56; Ambrose, \textit{Halleck}, 20.

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{OR}, vol. 8, 475, 532; Ambrose, \textit{Halleck}, 21.
was in Cairo, on the Ohio River near the mouth of the Tennessee River. The plan was for Grant to seize Fort Henry in cooperation with naval officer Andrew H. Foote. Grant was located in a position advantageous to launch the drive, and had previously advocated this strategy to Halleck. Only when Foote informed Halleck of his agreement with the plan did Grant obtain permission to move out.53

In preparation for the offense, Halleck worked relentlessly to augment Grant’s troop strength from within his Missouri command. On 23 January, Halleck ordered Sherman to send two regiments, giving precise rail and steamer embarkation instructions. On 29 January, Halleck ordered an initial force of two hundred men and horses from the Benton Huzzars to the Pacific Depot, with the remainder to travel the following day. In a short time span, Halleck transported 8,000 men by rail, the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers to Grant’s army. Although Halleck previously indicated sending men from Missouri would risk the state, he now claimed that if the rebels increased their criminal activity, he would, “put them down afterwards.”54 Hoping to optimize troop concentration, Halleck repeatedly begged for troops from McClellan and even from General Buell.55

In contrast to his usual vague instructions, Halleck’s orders to Grant regarding Fort Henry and Donelson read like an instruction manual. Grant was to move up the Tennessee River by steamer, land near Fort Henry, and seize the road to Dover in order to prevent the Confederates


55 Marszalek, *Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies*, 117.
from retreating. Grant should disable, but not destroy, the railroad bridges over the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers before Beauregard’s arrival. Halleck indicated the preferred landing ford, and gave the positions and caliber of weapons at Donelson.\(^{56}\)

Foote initiated the attack, bombarding from the Tennessee, prior to Grants arrival. Grant positioned the brigades of General Charles F. Smith along the west bank, and the majority of men under General John A. McClernand along the east bank. Recognizing their peril at the partially constructed, flooded fort, the majority of the Confederates fled to the safety of Fort Donelson, twelve miles east on the Cumberland. The commander, Confederate General Lloyd Tilghman held out for two hours while his men escaped. In the end, Tilghman surrendered 94 men, including himself, to Commander Foote.\(^{57}\)

After the surrender of Fort Henry, Foote’s wooden boats damaged the railroad bridges as Halleck ordered. Grant wired Halleck with news of the surrender, and of his intention of moving towards Donelson immediately. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate. Excessive rain and sleet swelled the rivers and destroyed road, delaying Grant’s advance. Halleck, in St. Louis, continued to coordinate the transfer of troops and transportation for the joint enterprise. Despite being thrilled with the news of Henry’s surrender, Halleck was genuinely concerned about the possible military response from Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston. Halleck’s first concern was of Johnston evacuating Bowling Green, leaving him free to attack Grant’s rear.

\(^{56}\) Hattaway,\textit{ How the North Won}, 66; Henry W. Halleck to Ulysses S. Grant (original letter), 30 January 1862.

Another threat was the possibility of Johnston’s army travelling by rail to reinforce Nashville prior to General Buell’s army. Halleck continued to muster support for Grant’s command and on 8 February confirmed continued naval support. The next day, Halleck wrote to General Cullum, requesting the sending of three gunboats from Cairo to Dover. He then penned an additional letter that sent Cullum dispositions of incoming infantry from Chicago, Nebraska, and Ohio.\(^{58}\)

As soon as it was practical, Grant’s men headed east overland towards Fort Donelson, commanded by the former Secretary of War, Confederate General John B. Floyd. The Federals attacked the fort on 12 February and were repulsed. Two days later, Grant received 10,000 additional troops from Halleck, and with their support, surrounded the fort. The Union force outnumbered the Confederates by two to one. On that day, four ironclads and two wooden gunboats arrived from Foote’s fleet. Despite suffering damage during the fight, the gunboats enabled Grant’s men to surround the fort. By daybreak, the Confederates made a desperate attempt to open an evacuation route and briefly succeeded, but significant pushback by the Federals compelled the Confederate soldiers’ to retreat to the safety of their trenches. Meanwhile, Foote’s naval bombardment helped to regain the lost ground. Grant’s men rallied, and once more surrounded the fort; surrender seemed imminent. General Floyd, accused of shipping arms south while in office, feared reprisal and relinquished command to General Gideon Pillow. Floyd escaped with 1,500 Virginia troops. Pillow, wishing to avoid capture, relinquished command to General Simon B. Buckner, and escaped with his staff across the river.

in a small boat. Also escaping was cavalry commander Nathan Bedford Forest and 700 of his troopers, as well as mounted infantry. Later that morning, General Buckner requested a meeting with Grant to discuss surrender terms. Grant did not negotiate, and demanded unconditional surrender, a stance that appalled Buckner, but resulted in Grant becoming the country’s sweetheart. From that day forward, U. S. Grant’s moniker was “Unconditional Surrender Grant.”

The fall of Forts Henry and Donelson significantly impacted the war. General Halleck’s command now controlled a great portion of the area rails, the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers. Moreover, without hope of aid, the Confederates at Columbus quickly evacuated their stronghold, which General Pope and his army immediately seized. Another prize followed these victories for the Federals; Buell’s Army of the Ohio occupied the industrial city of Nashville. Halleck’s strategy, planning, and supporting role demonstrated his talents to the country, evidenced by the stars and stripes being flown over the state of Kentucky and the majority of Tennessee.60

The day Fort Donelson fell, Halleck telegraphed the news to McClellan and demanded control of the West, which McClellan subsequently ignored. McClellan wanted Buell to capture the rebel stronghold at Columbus, an area that was clearly within Halleck’s jurisdiction. The very notion of Buell in his territory outraged Halleck, and certainly did not coincide with his strategic objectives. Halleck was persistent in his demand for control, and wrote to the Assistant


60 Hattaway, How the North Won, 76.
Secretary of War explaining his strategy, the urgency of action, and the need for unification in the West under his leadership. This message passed to Secretary of War, Edwin McMasters Stanton, and finally to Lincoln. Lincoln’s first response was negative, again calling for cooperation between Halleck and Buell. The President, dealing with the stagnant army in Virginia, finally released orders dated 13 March 1862, relieving General McClellan as General in Chief, and replacing him with General Halleck as supreme commander in the West. Halleck was satisfied, and began forming and carrying out new plans.61

Halleck ordered the armies under his command to consolidate, and Generals Charles F. Smith and Sherman selected Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River as their rendezvous point. The armies under Generals Grant and Smith arrived first, followed by Buell’s leading elements located at neighboring Savannah. General Lewis Wallace’s troops were also in the area, guarding Crump’s landing nearby. Confederate Generals A.S. Johnston and Beauregard were aware of the Federal buildup, and planned to strike before Buell arrived. The Confederate army began their northward march from Corinth, Mississippi to Pittsburg Landing to crush the Federals.62

While the Union army bivouacked at Pittsburg Landing, a few of Sherman’s commanders reported activity from the south on 4 and 5 April. Sherman disregarded the reports, and castigated one of his Ohio commanders for panicking. Grant agreed with Sherman and informed Halleck on the eve of battle that it was not likely Confederates would attack, but that if they were

61 Ambrose, Halleck, 40.

to do so, his command was prepared. On 7 April, at dawn, Sherman’s men came under severe fire, killing his orderly causing Sherman to exclaim, “My God, we’re attacked!” The fight that ensued lasted all day, ending with death of General Johnston, and the Union troops pushed back upon the river. Fortunately, Buell’s corps arrived that evening, along with the nearby division belonging to Lew Wallace. The next morning, Grant vigorously resumed the attack, forcing the Confederates to retreat. The casualty count of the battle was shocking for the nation, totaling 24,000 evenly distributed on both sides, making it the deadliest encounter of the Civil War until that point.

Halleck arrived at Pittsburg Landing on 11 April. In his diary, historian James Grant Wilson described Halleck in his new uniform as having a, “distant and somewhat austere manner” indicating sternness in his demeanor. Aboard a steamer, Halleck loudly reprimanded Grant, presumably for his neglect, failure to recognize a surprise attack, and for the near loss of the battle. The newspapers had a field day, insisting that the Federals were surprised, and accused Grant of incompetence and drunkenness. When pressured by Lincoln and Stanton on whether there was officer misconduct or neglect, Halleck replied, “A great battle cannot be fought or a victory gained without many casualties.” Halleck cautiously supported his command, denied officer misconduct, and never mentioned Grant by name in correspondence to Washington.


64 Marszalek, *Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies*, 122.

The next stage of Halleck’s strategy was to capture and occupy Corinth. Halleck divided his army into three columns, with Pope on the left, Buell in the middle, and on the right, was the newly promoted Brigadier General George Thomas, who assumed command of Grant’s forces. For well over a century, the reasoning behind Halleck’s decision to replace Grant with Thomas has been a topic of discussion among historians. Halleck claimed that he elevated Grant to second in command because it was a position appropriate for his rank. The problem with this arrangement was Grant’s exclusion from authority due to Halleck’s direct communication with his subordinate generals. Grant seriously contemplated leaving the service due to his perceived lack of responsibility. During the campaign, Grant made a recommendation to Halleck, receiving a sharp retort causing him to pen in his memoirs, “I was silenced so quickly that I felt that possibly I had suggested an unmilitary movement.”66 Grant’s good friend Sherman convinced him to remain patient and stay, certain that the exigencies of war would restore his friend to greatness.

On 30 April, Halleck’s consolidated army, numbering approximately 100,000, began their 20-mile march from Pittsburg Landing to Corinth. It took the gigantic force longer than four weeks to reach their destination. The marshy terrain separating the locations required the building of corduroy roads for marching, transporting, and communication. Halleck wanted to ensure his army would not be surprised, and therefore kept it in a state of readiness by frequently entrenching. The historian Stephen Ambrose credited Halleck with using Jominian principles on this march. In his book Elements, Halleck cited the few instances in which a commander should attack. The first is if a force decidedly outnumbers the enemy; secondly, if the enemy expects

reinforcements. The third instance would be defensive, to protect supply assets or reinforcements, and lastly, when winning is more advantageous than losing. Halleck’s army solidly met two of the criterion. Regarding the tactical aspect of Halleck’s approach to Corinth, historian John Marszalek wrote that his approach was based on the necessity of troop concentration in order to overwhelm the enemy, adding that French engineering principles, (taught by Mahan), stressed the importance of field works, especially for troops as inexperienced as those under Halleck’s command. In *Elements*, Halleck supported the use of entrenchments to protect defenders and hold positions while exposed to enemy fire, and believed that they were, “valuable and important accessories in the defense of a position.”

Halleck aimed to keep his columns tight, giving the enemy no opportunity to exploit openings between commands. When General Pope surged ahead of the others, Halleck pulled him back. Maintaining total control, Halleck expelled the press from his columns, thus preventing intelligence leaks, and called reporters, “unauthorized hangers-on.” If the press wanted news, Halleck and the War Department would regulate the content, and post it upon bulletin boards at Pittsburg Landing. Sherman approved, noting that the press had met their match with Halleck; however, the press was not pleased, and criticized Halleck as he and his army trekked southward. Opposing Halleck’s force was the 66,000-man army of General Beauregard. Well aware of the enemy approach, Beauregard had planned to attack on multiple occasions, but found the Federals well entrenched. When he realized that the next best course of


68 Marszalek, *Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies*, 124.
action was to evacuate in order to defend Memphis, Beauregard used the railroad to transport his command 50 miles south to Tupelo, Mississippi. In order to deceive the Federals of their true intentions, Beauregard’s soldiers cheered each time trains arrived to evacuate soldiers, painted logs to appear as gun muzzles, and capped scarecrows to resemble soldiers. When the Federals arrived, they discovered the Confederate withdrawal. The press mocked the victory as barren, and Union soldiers admitted that Beauregard’s clever ruse had fooled them. The evacuating Confederate troops left messages on for the federals on buildings announcing, “These premises to let; inquire of G. T. Beauregard.” 69 Halleck now occupied the town, complete with intersecting railroads to facilitate transportation of troops and supplies. Moreover, Corinth’s strategic location also enabled the captures of Memphis and Fort Pillow, and provided the Union with access to the Mississippi and Vicksburg. 70

69 Ibid., 123; Ambrose, Halleck, 50, 53-54; McPherson, Battle Cry, 417; Hattaway, How the North Won, 186.

70 Ibid.

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CHAPTER IV

Corinth to Washington

Halleck’s departure to Washington resulted in a palpable deterioration in the West as Federal commanders struggled to maintain the gains of the previous year. Urging General Buell to move proved an unfruitful, daunting task, and the Confederacy conspired to reclaim conquered territory, win back Kentucky, and maintain their strongholds. In the East, Old Brains found himself precisely in the position he had attempted to avoid: caught in the feud between McClellan and Stanton. Mounting pressure and subversive activities by McClellan and his officers culminated in the disaster of Second Manassas, Lee’s invasion of the North, and McClellan’s restoration of power. On 30 May, Halleck’s army occupied Corinth, Mississippi, a city laid bare by the enemy’s hasty withdrawal. General Pope pursued the rebels south of Corinth, and by 4 June, reported the capture of 10,000 prisoners and deserters, and 15,000 stands of arms. To support the pursuit, Halleck sent General Don Carlos Buell to assist Pope. Halleck then began to reorganize his command once again. On 10 June, Special Field Orders 90 returned the commands of generals Grant, Buell, and Pope to their previous condition.

Union occupation of Corinth was inarguably a beneficial asset in terms of location and transportability of men and materiel. However, Corinth lay in swampy marshland, an unhealthy environment for armies. Prior to evacuating the city, General Beauregard’s Confederate forces

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suffered a drastic reduction in effective troop strength due to illness and the lack of clean water. The Southern army had suffered there as well. Even as Halleck’s army approached from Pittsburg Landing, the Confederate general ordered wells dug for his army. Halleck inherited the problem, and wrote to Stanton explaining the dilemma and his solutions. Through a correspondence dated 25 June 1862, Halleck informed the war secretary of increased illness within his command due to the drastic climate change. Because of this, Halleck told Stanton it made little sense to pursue the enemy deep into the swamps. Making the problem worse were well-meaning officials onsite from the state’s Sanitary Commission and governors offering free transportation home to the sick, which further depleted his numbers. Halleck believed that of the thousands evacuated, many were fit for duty, and quickly regretted his proposed remedy that had offended so many of the benefactors. Halleck knew that part of keeping his army healthy was to keep them occupied and productive. After evaluating the pros and cons inherent with the acquisition of Corinth, Halleck conferred with his medical officers and arrived at a plan that would not only maintain the health of his soldiers, but also permit continuation of his mission.

The General began to deploy his armies along the Memphis, Charleston, Mobile, and Ohio Railroads. As these detachments advanced into healthier climates, they also repaired damages. Halleck’s armies were now decentralized and on the defensive in hostile territory. These Western commanders fought successful engagements, and their soldiers transformed into seasoned veterans. Halleck’s armies gained a realistic view of the war, and, out of necessity, implemented harsh methods on the disloyal civilian population.  

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72 Ibid., 288; Anders, Henry Halleck's War, 131-133.
Continuing in this correspondence, Halleck informed Stanton that he sent Grant’s army to Western Tennessee toward Memphis and Columbus, where they would quell guerrilla activities, and guard railroads around Hernando, Holly Springs, and Ripley, Mississippi. Buell’s army travelled east along the Memphis and Charleston Railroads through Decatur, Huntsville, and Stevenson, with anticipation of action at Chattanooga, and Eastern Tennessee. Halleck also suggested the possibility of Buell advancing as far as Atlanta. Pope travelled south, repairing the Mobile and Ohio Railroads, and Sherman headed west along the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. All told, Halleck’s men eventually repaired over 300 miles of track. Soldiers remaining at Halleck’s headquarters in Corinth improved the Confederate fortifications. Well aware of Washington’s concern of conquering Vicksburg, Halleck informed Stanton that he had not yet initiated actions toward the city, but believed, “two flotillas” could reduce it, and, if not, then perhaps there was a need for a new expedition. He closed by inviting thoughts or instructions from the War Department. 73

During the months of June and July, Halleck directed and advised his scattered command in the West; he handled every situation with confidence. There were mundane complaints related to rank and size of commands, as posed by McClernand. Halleck took the time to explain the importance of reserve elements, and the unpredictable exigencies of war to the political general. On 5 June, Halleck received a desperate cry for help in Tennessee from Governor Andrew Johnson. Johnson described the increase of Confederate army refugees in the state renewing their Southern allegiance. The governor depicted the treatment of Unionists in Tennessee as, “worse than beasts of the forest,” and begged for protection. In his area of

73 Ambrose, Halleck, 133.
operations, Pope complained of the rebels robbing families near Boonville, Mississippi, leaving them destitute, as well as forcing local men into the army. Pope also managed huge droves of Southern deserters, tasked with administering the oath of allegiance and paroling.  

On 19 June 1862, the Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, wrote to Pope as he took leave in St. Louis, requesting his presence in Washington if his orders permitted. Pope was an early supporter of the President, and had accompanied the inaugural train from Springfield to Washington. Moreover, his father was an acquaintance of Lincoln, and it may be that this connection, along with the General’s success in the West, resulted in the summons. Pope responded affirmatively to Stanton before requesting permission from Halleck, which Halleck subsequently refused. Before he received the response from Halleck, Pope was enroute to Washington. There he would command the newly formed Army of Virginia, comprised of troops from the commands of Generals Frémont, Irvin McDowell, and Nathaniel Banks. As Pope travelled east to command in Virginia, Grant’s Western army remained on the march, encountering increasing hostility among the local population. To suppress and control vandalism and conflicts, Grant instituted retaliatory measures. He levied taxes upon the inhabitants and banished guerilla supporters from Union lines; threatening treatment as spies should they return.

Halleck’s detached forces encountered skirmishes as they marched through the West. During this phase of the campaign, one soldier in particular, Colonel Sheridan, distinguished

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himself as a fighter. Now the cavalry leader of two regiments, Philip Sheridan’s force of 278 fought and withstood an enemy command numbering 4,700 men for seven hours. Remarkably, Sheridan drove the enemy back, resulting in Halleck recommending Sheridan for promotion to Brigadier General for his gallant conduct in battle.  

Halleck kept Washington informed of the events in his territory. On 2 July, Lincoln requested Old Brains to make a “flying visit for consultation” to the Capitol. Halleck could not commit to the meeting, due to increased unrest in his area of operations. He told Lincoln about the attack at Booneville, and of the enemy’s retreat. In Memphis, Halleck reported the enemy assaulting one of his trains and the subsequent destruction of eight wagons. He also reported knowledge of a planned attack upon his cavalry by General Braxton Bragg. In short, Halleck politely declined the invitation, stating his command required his full attention.

In the East, the situation on the Virginia Peninsula heated up. The newly installed Confederate Commander, Robert E. Lee, proved an ungracious host, fighting and forcing McClellan’s grand army back to the James River. Stanton and Lincoln, directing the armies, went into panic mode and sent a message to Halleck reporting a concentration of the enemy at Richmond, and requested troops for McClellan’s relief. On behalf of the President, the Secretary of War asked for 25,000 soldiers, but acknowledged Halleck’s priority regarding the Chattanooga and East Tennessee expeditions. Halleck responded quickly, and ordered reports of troop strengths, locations, and made preparations to forward men east. Several messages between

76 OR, vol. 17, pt. 2:76.
77 Ibid., 63.
78 Ibid., 64.
Halleck and Washington ensued over the course of days, with the stipulation of not jeopardizing Halleck’s priority missions. In his instructions to John McClernand, Halleck revealed his true feelings toward sending men to Virginia. “The entire campaign in the West is broken up by these orders, and we shall very probably lose all we have gained. I will do all I can with the few forces left. You go to a new theater. Success attends you.” After resigning himself to the inevitability of losing part of his command, Halleck decided to use the oft-mentioned expeditions of Chattanooga and East Tennessee to his advantage. On 1 July, Halleck wrote to Stanton demonstrating his compliance with orders. Believing Washington inflated the size of his command; Halleck provided numerical details regarding his effective troop strength and included estimates of the rebels opposing him. He then stated that sending troops to the east endangered the Chattanooga expedition, as well as the gains in the West thus far. This tactic worked, and Halleck soon received a message from the President permitting him to keep his troops. Halleck thanked him, claiming Lincoln’s permission saved Western Tennessee.

Unsettled by this turn of events, Halleck wrote his wife, Elizabeth. “I have been so much troubled and annoyed within the last few days that I have no heart to write to you.” Halleck then told of McClellan’s reverses before Richmond, and the subsequent request for 25,000 troops. He explained that he felt broken hearted, and the loss of his men would result in reversals of his gains in the Southwest. He stated that his first impulse was resignation, allowing him to return to California, but that he had a duty to his country. In a positive turn, Halleck told

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79 Ibid., 56.
80 Ibid., 42, 52-53, 55, 58-61.
81 Wilson, “General Halleck,” 555-556.
Elizabeth that the order he received gave him discretion, and he could now breathe more freely. He fretted that McClellan and Pope would work on Lincoln until the President gave them a portion of his army, and that would be almost fatal. In closing, Halleck described his loss of faith in McClellan’s judgment, calling the general selfish, and hoped that his, “ridiculous jealousies” would subside.  

Just as Halleck was able to breathe easier, he received another telegram from the President. On 4 July, Lincoln renewed his request for troops. This time he wanted 10,000 infantrymen, adding that a part of the former Corinth army was fighting against McClellan near Richmond. Halleck begged refusal, citing problems in Tennessee, and included that his officers’ concurred that sending troops away would grievously affect successful operations in Chattanooga and Southwest Tennessee. Lastly, Halleck suggested that Lincoln take men from the Shenandoah, stating it had no strategic importance at the present time.  

Lincoln and Stanton, operating as Supreme Commanders of the armies since March, quickly discovered that the job was not easy. They were in trouble, and the President sought a solution; he needed the right military man to control the armies. Lincoln travelled to West Point, where he conferred with former General in Chief, Winfield Scott, and upon his return to the capitol, Lincoln spoke to Governor William Sprague of Rhode Island about the possibility of giving Halleck the position. The governor thought Halleck a splendid candidate, and agreed to travel to Corinth to speak with the General about either going to Washington with troops, or sending troops to the east. Lincoln sent word to Halleck regarding Sprague’s stopover,  

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82 Ibid.  
83 Ibid., 70-72.
maintaining that while he concurred with the purpose, he did not direct the visit. Halleck cordially accepted his visitor, and was mildly surprised and flattered by the offer given him. In a letter to his wife, Halleck described his reluctance and uncertainty of leaving the West. He informed Lincoln of Sprague’s arrival, and at that time told the President in plain language, “If I were to go to Washington I could advise, but one thing: to place all the forces in North Carolina, Virginia, and Washington under one head, and hold that head responsible for the result.” Whatever transpired between the general and the governor remains to conjecture, but there is a possibility of a misunderstanding-taking place between the two. Two primary figures wrote of Halleck’s selection as General in Chief: in his memoirs, General Pope claimed Halleck was selected because of his success in the West; whereas Gideon Welles’s diary claims Pope exerted great influence on Lincoln’s selection of Halleck. According to Welles, during the crisis over the Peninsula, Pope had told Lincoln, “If Halleck were here, you would have, Mr. President, a competent adviser who would put this matter right.” Therefore, against the rigorous protests of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, Lincoln chose Halleck as General in Chief. Soon thereafter, orders dated 11 July 1862, appointed Halleck as General in Chief.

Hurried along by Lincoln, Halleck rushed to get his Western command in order. “I am anxious, almost impatient to have you here. Have due regard to what you leave behind. When

84 Ibid., 88.
can you reach here?”87 Halleck promised to meet with General Grant and then head to Washington on 17 July. He summoned Grant to Corinth, neglecting to explain the purpose of the trip, purposefully avoiding the appointment of Grant as his successor. Before departing for the capitol however, Halleck telegraphed Stanton inquiring about his replacement.88

Old Brains arrived in Washington on 23 July 1862. There, he met with the President, the Secretary of War, and Generals John Pope and Ambrose Burnside. They spoke of the problems in Virginia, and the President openly criticized George McClellan. During this meeting, Lincoln offered command of the Army of the Potomac to General Burnside, which he declined for a second time. The next day, Halleck boarded a steamer with Burnside and proceeded south to meet McClellan at Harrison’s Landing in Virginia. Prior to leaving Washington, Lincoln gave Halleck authorization to relieve or maintain McClellan. The President also warned the General of McClellan’s insatiable cry for more men, and instructed Halleck to offer McClellan 20,000 additional troops if he thought his army could take Richmond. If not, then the Army of the Potomac would need to return north to concentrate with Pope’s new army. Halleck met with McClellan, known as the “Young Napoleon or Little Mac,” and listened to his plan. McClellan estimated Lee’s force at 200,000, (which was far more than the actual figure of 75,000). He planned to cross the James River, arriving on its southern side, head west, and capture Petersburg, which supplied Richmond. Of course, for such an enterprise, Little Mac would require a great deal more than 20,000 reinforcements. After considering McClellan’s plan, Halleck relayed Lincoln’s offer. McClellan was against moving his army from the Peninsula, and thought he might be able to capture Richmond with the troops offered by

87 Ibid., 97.
88 Ibid., 91.
Halleck. Comfortable with the arrangements and plan, Halleck and Burnside returned to the capitol.  

Having recently been McClellan’s subordinate, Halleck found the situation embarrassing and troubling. More upsetting, was Burnside’s report that some of Little Mac’s officers spoke of marching on Washington to dispose of interfering civilians. McClellan had a staunch political backing, and his men adored him. Halleck possessed neither asset; before going to Washington, Halleck was acutely aware of the political and military cliques, and wanted no part. Yet now he found himself stuck between McClellan and the Lincoln administration, a predictable turn of events.

On the very day Halleck returned from the Peninsula, McClellan sent a telegram requesting all available soldiers from the East, plus an additional 20,000 from the Western theatre. Two days later, McClellan increased the number of soldiers he felt he needed in order to advance. Instead of reprimanding McClellan, as Halleck was apt to do with subordinates, he sent a message on 30 July, explaining his situation. Halleck claimed he held his present position against his wishes, and had tried to avoid going to Washington. He spoke of his dislike of political-military affairs. He reminded McClellan that he had always supported and cooperated with him. He appealed to the necessity of cooperation in order to smash the rebellion, and to put personal feelings aside. McClellan answered with a cordial letter commiserating about politicians, intoning his certainty that he and Halleck would save the country. In closing,

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89 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 132-136; Anders, Henry Halleck’s War, 157.

90 Ibid., 138.
McClellan once more reiterated his need for additional men, convinced his strategy was the most prudent.91

In the West, there was trouble brewing in Buell’s sector. On 31 July, Buell telegraphed Halleck with news that General Bragg had occupied Chattanooga, apparently with the intent of concentrating his army. Halleck quickly replied that he had ordered General Grant to reinforce Buell if the enemy was too strong at Chattanooga. Managing his new puppet strings, Halleck turned back to events culminating in the East. On 3 August, he telegraphed McClellan, ordering the withdrawal of his entire army back to Aquia Creek. McClellan, in turn, requested ferryboats for communications to the south side of the James River, stating the location of a large enemy force between Petersburg and Richmond, as well as north of the James. The Young Napoleon also telegraphed the Quartermaster General, Montgomery Meigs, for additional ferries. Meigs wrote to Halleck regarding McClellan’s call for boats. The Quartermaster stated there were 30 steamboats anchored off Harrisons’ Landing, and a large fleet of sailing vessels, barges, and canal boats. Nevertheless, the Assistant Secretary of War was to procure additional boats from New York. Meigs told his old classmate that McClellan claimed he requested additional boats from Halleck several times. On 5 August, an exasperated Halleck sent a brief telegram to Young Napoleon comprised of four words, “I have no re-enforcements.”92

On 7 August, Halleck received confusing information from General Buell in Huntsville, Alabama. Buell reported a large enemy concentration at Chattanooga intending on moving into Eastern Tennessee and Kentucky. The general reported his troop strength as 46,000 and spread


out, but easily concentrated. Buell believed Bragg planned to move on his line, towards Nashville, and laid out his counter-strategy to Halleck. He closed by promising to move upon Chattanooga at the earliest opportunity, unless the enemy strength was overwhelming. Buell then related uncertainty of the reported enemy strength, but ensured Halleck of an attack upon Bragg, should he decide to cross the river.\footnote{Ibid., vol. 16, pt. 2:278-279.}

Switching theaters, Halleck replied to McClellan’s correspondence from 1 August. Halleck now tried to reason with the general, who, as the former General in Chief, should have understood the needs of other commands. Unfortunately, that was not the case, and Halleck once again explained his responsibilities and subordinate position to the President. He asked McClellan to expedite the movement of his troops to assist Pope and Burnside, promising him command of their armies. Halleck explained that Buell needed troops in the West and jokingly questioned if Buell would ever reach Chattanooga.\footnote{Ibid., vol. 11, pt. 3:360.} Halleck’s tone with McClellan was not authoritative, and his attempt at humor was somewhat inappropriate, given that McClellan simply needed to follow orders.

As McClellan’s massive army prepared to move, Little Mac appealed one more time for permission to attack Richmond. His reasoning was that Lee had sent a large force to Gordonsville, leaving the defense at Richmond weak. McClellan described his plan to Halleck, finally acknowledging that his orders prohibited such a movement, and that he would continue to

\footnote{Ibid., vol. 16, pt. 2:278-279.}

\footnote{Ibid., vol. 11, pt. 3:360.}
send reinforcements and sick north as ordered. In actuality, McClellan did not commence withdrawing his army until 14 August, eleven days after receiving Halleck’s order.95

While McClellan and Halleck wrote back and forth, General Pope, in Northern Virginia, awaited reinforcements, and Old Brains labored to bolster Pope’s strength. One intervention was authorizing Pope to command General Cox’s troops in Western Virginia, and to arrange rail transport. Halleck also instructed Pope on tactics designed to locate the enemy, deceive, and safeguard the Federals as they waited on reinforcements. General Pope crossed the Rappahannock to Culpeper, and from that location, he threatened Gordonsville. Meanwhile, a battle commenced on 9 August between General Banks and forces belonging to Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain. Until this battle, Halleck had been extremely anxious, but after the fight, he wrote to Elizabeth that Pope’s victory at Cedar Mountain gave him breathing room, and that he was doing his all to supply troops to that army. In this note, Halleck told his wife that since his departure, everything in the West had fallen apart. Even while dealing with the calamity in the East, Halleck worried about his former command. He closed the letter stating, “It is the strangest thing in the world to me that this war has developed so little talent in our generals. There is not a single one in the west fit for a great command.”96 He reasoned it was likely due to political influence over promotions.97

The General in Chief was extremely busy during this campaign, directing, advising, and coordinating with commanders in both theaters. On 12 August, Halleck strove to ensure Pope’s

96 Wilson, “General Halleck,” 557.
97 Ibid.
safety and the consolidation of the armies in the aftermath of Cedar Mountain. Halleck warned Pope of enemy deception tactics, and advised where to position his rolling stock; he also reinforced the importance of guarding the bridge over the Rappahannock River. Halleck communicated with General Burnside in Falmouth in reference to guarding sites of troop concentration, and provided a fall back location if not reinforced. The situation was precarious, and Halleck had no rest. His attentions had once again turned to the West.  

As Halleck directed the Army of Virginia, he simultaneously chastised General Buell in Huntsville, and urged him to follow and break the enemy in Tennessee. As Halleck prodded the general to move, he also verified Buell’s status as commander of the Ohio and Indiana, and set about raising additional troops for him. Halleck then put Buell on his guard by informing him of Washington’s dissatisfaction with his slowness and the inefficiency of his forces against the rebel John Hunt Morgan’s entry into Indiana and Ohio with his cavalry. He told Buell the administration desired a more capable officer, but he did not believe any of the applicants competent to command. Adding to the problems with Buell was the news that Morgan surprised and captured a Federal command at Gallatin, Tennessee, complete with a freight train. Apparently, their victory over the union was so swift that the reporting Confederate officer described the extent of union surprise, stating, “not a man lost; not a gun fired.”

With his attentions back to the East, Halleck continued to shuttle men to Aquia Creek to reinforce Pope’s army. On 14 August, Pope informed Halleck of problems with the railroad from Washington to Culpeper, and asked the general in chief to investigate. Pope suggested

98 OR, vol. 12, pt. 3: 564-566.

contacting Colonel Herman Haupt to oversee all railroad matters, and Halleck complied. Halleck once again provided strategic guidance to Pope, advising him not to cross the Rapidan River, suggesting he instead position his army behind the Rappahannock, to avoid risks. Additionally, Halleck instructed Pope to watch the Germanna crossing in order to avoid having his left flank turned. Old Brains reassured Pope he was doing his best to reinforce his command.\(^\text{100}\)

On 18 August, Special Orders 193 placed General Samuel D. Sturgis in charge of the city of Alexandria, a collection point for reinforcements. On the same date, General Orders No. 22 identified Herman Haupt as the officer in charge of all railroads, especially the Orange and Alexandria Railroads, limited only by the Army of Virginia. As requested, Haupt began managing the transfer of troops and supplies to Pope’s army. On 22 August, at midnight, a problem occurred along this single-track railroad. As Haupt waited for the arrival of four late trains, a conductor informed him that General Sturgis ordered the trains stopped. Haupt went to Sturgis’s headquarters, where Sturgis threatened his arrest. Colonel Haupt explained he acted under instructions of General Halleck, and Sturgis replied insultingly, “I don’t care for John Pope a pinch of owl dung!”\(^\text{101}\) In Haupt’s presence, Sturgis ordered a train to run to Alexandria for wood and water, and to return immediately. Just then, an orderly arrived with a dispatch from Halleck stating, “No military officer has any authority to interfere with our control over railroads. Show this to General Sturgis, and if he attempts to interfere, I will arrest

\(^\text{100}\) Ibid., vol. 12, pt. 3: 571, 573, 576.

him.”

Apparently, in a drunken stupor, Sturgis failed to comprehend that had Halleck authored the message. When made to understand, Sturgis told Haupt, “Take your damned railroad!” In his memoirs, Haupt related that this incident held the trains for some time and kept at least 10,000 men from the battle at Second Manassas.

As General Lee advanced on the Army of Virginia, Halleck sent urgent advisory messages to his commanders. On 24 August, the enemy made a flank movement and crossed at the Waterloo Bridge. Pope ordered an attack on that segment, but the enemy escaped, having moved up the river in an attempt to access Pope’s rear and cut him from Washington. Halleck sent a telegraph to Pope on 26 August, instructing him to attack Lee’s flank to discover the enemy’s position. After that telegraph, the enemy cut the lines, and Halleck was unable to communicate with Pope until 30 August. While Pope battled with Lee, Halleck maintained communication with McClellan, who, now onsite, reported problems and accused Halleck of gossiping about him during the battle’s prelude. Halleck’s replies to all of McClellan’s anxiety-packed telegraphs were calm, coherent, and to the point. In one missive, McClellan accused Halleck of condemning him for not preventing the raid upon Manassas. The next transmittal from McClellan requested cavalry and infantry to aid a brigade at Bull Run Bridge, which was either “cut to pieces, or captured.” After reassuring McClellan regarding his supposed remark, Halleck informed Little Mac that he already advised bringing Sumner’s corps and, if necessary,

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102 Ibid.
103 Ibid.
104 Ibid., 82-83.
105 OR, vol. 12, pt. 2: 690.
Burnside’s as well. Halleck also related the only cavalry available was a small portion of a battalion, adding that a company was sent to scout up the river towards Edwards Ferry, and likely to be cut off.\textsuperscript{106} Finally, Old Brains flatly told Little Mac that, “More than three-quarters of my time is taken with the raising of new troops and matters in the West. “You will therefore, as ranking general in the field, direct as you deem best; but at present orders for Pope’s army should go through me.”\textsuperscript{107}

On 30 September, Pope telegraphed Halleck and reported that the enemy had attacked resulting in a daylong contest, with great losses on both sides. Pope stated that he had retreated in good order; the army lost neither guns nor wagons, and that Union forces had damaged the enemy heavily. Halleck responded, instructing Pope not to retreat further, assuring Pope that he would forward reserves and do all in his power for the army. Halleck asked if Pope would renew the attack, to send more information, and more often if possible. On 31 August, at 0330 hours, Halleck received news of the Union defeat from Little Mac. In fact, Pope’s army had suffered a grievous defeat, but retreated in good order. From 25 through 30 August, the Union suffered 16,000 casualties out of a force of 65,000, while Lee’s army suffered less than 10,000 from a force of 55,000.\textsuperscript{108}

During the period of 27 August through 1 September, Halleck oversaw, directed, informed, and advised his commanders via telegraph in Virginia, leaving him worn and ill. After the defeat, an exhausted Halleck waited for Little Mac’s arrival, mimicking the telegraph sent to

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., 6; Ibid., vol. 12, pt. 3: 688-692.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 690-691.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., vol. 12, pt. 2: 79; McPherson, \textit{Battle Cry}, 532.
him by Lincoln the previous month, urging him to Washington. Halleck now inquired of McClellan’s arrival, “Is the general coming up to Washington; and, if so, at what hour will he be here? I am very anxious to see him.” As worrisome as the situation was, the trouble in the West also continued as Confederate General Kirby Smith headed for Kentucky, and Braxton Bragg marched to prevent Buell from reaching Chattanooga.

There was no rest for the weary. Union troops crowded the capitol, and the enemy was on the doorstep. Lincoln took the lead and had Halleck accompany him to visit McClellan at his residence on 2 September. There, Lincoln presumably asked McClellan if he would save the country, and placed the general in charge of the troops garrisoned in the capitol. Of course, the young Napoleon accepted the job. Tellingly, Lincoln asked McClellan to write to his officers, and have them cooperate with Pope, whom they now served. When Lincoln’s cabinet discovered Little Mac now commanded the forces in Washington, they were stunned and outraged. Lincoln argued that it made sense to retain the general, explaining to the cabinet that McClellan was a good organizer, a good engineer and would prepare the army for the field. Lincoln also claimed General Halleck’s support on the matter, which effectively persuaded people.

Meanwhile, Pope remained in Virginia, unaware of the change in command. Pope wrote to Halleck on 3 and 5 September, asking for verification of McClellan’s command status, and accused McClellan and his officers of purposeful delays during the battle. Halleck once again

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110 McPherson, Battle Cry, 534; Anders, Henry Halleck’s War, 202-203.
111 George B. McClellan, The Civil War Papers of George B. McClellan: Selected Correspondence 1860-1865, ed. Stephen W. Sears (New York: Ticknor & Fields), 428; Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 146; Welles, The Diary of Gideon Welles, 104-105.
found himself in a difficult place, in the middle of a gigantic dispute involving Little Mac and the opponent of the day. As difficult as it must have been, Halleck replied to Pope, instructing him to report to headquarters when his troops arrived in Washington. He informed the General that McClellan, as the senior ranking officer did command the soldiers, and had charge until the reorganization of the field army. Halleck’s second reply demonstrated his eloquence and empathy for the justifiably angry general. Halleck explained that because of his allegations, Pope could not serve under McClellan, which relieved Pope as commander. Secondly, his accusations against Generals Porter, Franklin, and Griffin now required Pope’s testimony at a Court of Inquiry. Halleck informed Pope that the Cabinet declined to publish his report, and that there would be no orders in relation to the recent battles, as there was none in McClellan’s battles in front of Richmond. Halleck assured Pope he was not to blame, hinted at the embarrassment within the administration regarding the ill feelings between its generals. “This problem, if not addressed, could ruin the country,” reflected Halleck, while also emphasizing the need for cooperation between all in order to accomplish anything. In closing, Old Brains reassured Pope that he was his friend, and would see no injustice done to him.  

The news of the battle finally reached a stunned public. On 4 September 1862, the Alexandria Gazette reported that the Army of Virginia was ‘outgenerated and outflanked’ and disheartened by the daily, even hourly evidences of supreme Confederate leadership. The villains in this scenario were Generals Pope and McDowell, now held in low esteem by their

112 OR, vol. 12, pt. 3: 808-813.

soldiers, according to the report. The paper especially singled Pope out for his “pretentious announcements” at the campaign’s start, mentioning his comments of having his “headquarters in the saddle.” Remarkably, the savior of the day was General McClellan, whom Lincoln placed in charge of the troops as they flowed into Washington.

What is truly remarkable is that Halleck believed his role in this campaign saved Washington from ruin. He confided to his wife, “I hope and believe I have saved the capital from the terrible crisis brought upon us by the stupidity of others.” He also wondered at his ability to, “Keep up amidst the excitement and labor in my office.” Halleck had been moving non-stop since arriving in Washington. The general fell ill, and spent the majority of time on his couch, but he would rise again and perform once more.

In the early part of September 1862, the Army of Northern Virginia was on the move, taking the war into the North, where there was food and fodder. Lee and Confederate President Jefferson Davis hoped another Southern victory would force the Lincoln administration to sue for peace. General McClellan, the satisfied commander of the new, refit and improved Army of the Potomac marched from Washington to meet the threat.

114 Ibid.
115 Marszalek, *Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies*, 147.
116 Ibid., 148.
During the autumn of 1862, the Confederate and Federal armies advanced against each other in the East and West. The Union army numbered 85,000 men and quickly reorganized themselves after the defeat at Second Manassas, all while under the command of George McClellan. General Lee, with consent from Jefferson Davis, planned to capitalize on the Southern victory and take his army north. The goals of this invasion were to destroy the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, spare the Virginian farms from war and replenish supplies, all while living off of their hosts, gathering recruits, and weakening the Northern willingness to wage war. Additionally, there was a hope of obtaining foreign recognition to aid the Confederacy. During this period of grave crisis in the East, Old Brains competently dealt with the angst and pressures of the President, as well as Pennsylvania’s Governor Andrew Curtin.

With an increasing need for men, Halleck established a camp for stragglers, and organized them into units for deployment to key areas. As a valued asset to Lincoln’s administration, Halleck served as spokesperson to the Maryland State Governor, relaying the Federal position regarding the civil authorities in that region. In the West, General Buell readied his forces for the armies of Braxton Bragg and Edmund Kirby Smith as they advanced northward through Tennessee to Kentucky. Bragg’s goal was to establish a Confederate government in the state, thereby gaining access to its rich resources, and secondly, to enable the fall crop harvest in Tennessee. McClellan’s victory at Antietam coupled with his obstinate standstill brought additional problems to the table; however, Buell’s miraculous achievement at Perryville saved
Kentucky for the Union. Halleck would occupy a predominant role during these campaigns due to his appointment General in Chief.  

McClellan divided his army into three wings with a reserve, and headed to Maryland in search of the Army of Northern Virginia. He established his field headquarters in Rockville, Maryland, approximately 17 miles northwest of Washington. From this location, McClellan gathered intelligence, keeping Halleck well apprised of developments. The advance of the Army of Northern Virginia into Maryland caused a massive panic in the North. Having suffered two recent setbacks since Lee’s assumption of command, the northern populace was losing faith in the government and its armies. On 9 September 1862, an article in the *New York Times*, written in response to the rebel invasion, stated the Confederate army had, “been permitted by the Government to cross without resistance. Telegraphic reports from the Capital would almost lead us to believe that they had been invited there, for we are assured that the Government is perfectly satisfied with their position, and that none of them will ever return.” Continuing, the article stated, “We have too many of these official assurances already on hand unredeemed, to be especially eager for more.”

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At the same time in Nashville, Buell reported his progress to Halleck, who remained displeased with Buell’s slow pursuit of Bragg’s army. On 2 September, Buell informed Halleck of his intended move to Murfreesboro to intercept Bragg’s forces approaching from Chattanooga. Buell estimated Bragg’s force around 45,000 to 50,000, and believed his destination was Kentucky, but failed to make contact with his adversary. A frustrated Halleck dryly replied, “March where you please, provided you will find the enemy and fight him.”¹²¹ As a measure to defend Louisville, Lincoln and Halleck appointed West Point graduate, General Horatio G. Wright, as commander in that region. Unknowingly, General Buell had also sent one of his subordinates, General William “Bull” Nelson, to command the area. Wright received and prepared his forces to meet the enemy with the help and advisement of Henry Halleck over the course of several days. On 3 September, Wright had concerns regarding his lack of veteran soldiers, and inquired about obtaining additional troops from General Grant’s command at Corinth. Old Brains ordered a division under General Granger from Grant to assist in Louisville. Wright also wrote regarding the importance of the railroad between Bowling Green to Louisville, in case troops needed to be withdrawn. Halleck explained that he did not know Buell’s location or Bragg’s, but to withdraw if it seemed likely that his position would become isolated. Old Brains then advised Jominian strategy regarding the concentration of forces to a location best suited to strike the enemy. General Wright went to work, informing Halleck that his forces were concentrated at Louisville and Cincinnati, and he supplied his troop strength by

arms of service. The General gave Halleck the last known enemy location, estimated strength, and reported he was receiving many volunteers. 122

In the East, signal officers from McClellan’s army reported a portion of Lee’s army had crossed the Potomac at Noland’s Ferry. The Signal Command estimated the force to be 2,000 men, armed with two guns. During this phase of the campaign, Halleck received intelligence from General John Wool, a veteran from both the War of 1812 and the Mexican American War, who monitored the intelligence from Baltimore. Wool reported the enemy strength at 30,000, commanded by General Hill. With this intelligence, Halleck pointed out the threat to Harper’s Ferry, and deferred definitive actions regarding the defense of the arsenal to Wool. Admitting he had no knowledge of the region, Halleck nevertheless suggested withdrawing the garrison to Maryland Heights if overwhelmed. By 6 September, events escalated as Lee’s forces advanced toward Frederick, Maryland. Union cavalry commander, General Alfred Pleasonton, reported Lee’s main army crossing the Potomac the day prior, and suggested strategic points for the defense of Washington. Later that day, General Wool informed Halleck that 5,000 Confederates advanced toward Frederick, and had captured and imprisoned a telegraph operator along the way. The Confederates effectively employed the telegraph as an instrument of deception. That day, Union General Julius White reported for duty at Harper’s Ferry as directed by Halleck. Upon arrival, White received orders from General Wool to depart and report to Martinsburg, leaving his command and six other regiments under Colonel Dixon S. Miles. At

Martinsburg, General White telegraphed Halleck’s adjutant George Cullum, asking permission to return to his troops, but discovered that Halleck had not issued orders for White’s removal. The command of Harper’s Ferry was in the hands of Colonel Miles, and it was indeed a Confederate target. On 7 September, General Wool forwarded a dispatch from Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania. This dispatch detailed Lee’s arrival in Frederick, the number of guns he possessed, the condition of his troops, and the rumor that the enemy planned to enter Pennsylvania. Curtin also wrote that he feared the Confederates planned to raid the Cumberland Valley for supplies. The Confederates arrived, rag-tag and hungry to Frederick, but did not receive the anticipated welcome from its inhabitants. The combined forces under Robert E. Lee and James Longstreet arrived in Frederick the following day.  

On 6 September, General Buell was in Nashville, giving information regarding enemy movements and general conditions in Tennessee to a Mr. George U. Thatcher, whom he sent to Halleck in Washington. Consequently, on 11 September Halleck informed Buell that Thatcher was “not considered loyal” and that Halleck had evidence to support his allegations. Apparently, Thatcher had been under police surveillance for months. As Halleck once again chastised General Buell, he received notice from General John Pope that the commanding officer in Kanawha Valley, Colonel Joseph A. Lightburn, was in a fix. The enemy had turned on his left, and Pope advised an immediate withdrawal to Point Pleasant, in Ohio.  

In the West, Buell’s army continued its slow pursuit of Bragg’s army north towards Louisville, with Halleck pressuring him to move faster. Lincoln also showed concern about the


progress, and telegraphed Louisville on 7 September inquiring about the location of General Bragg. The reply from General Jeremiah T. Boyle, commanding the Military District of Louisville, did little to calm Lincoln’s nerves. Boyle relayed the information he knew, that Bragg was in Tennessee “threatening Buell”\(^{125}\) and that Bragg’s army probably numbered 35,000. Boyle also reported that General Kirby Smith was receiving reinforcements through the mountains. On 19 September, Bull Nelson, (sent by Buell to command in Kentucky), telegraphed General Wright, reporting that Bragg had crossed the Green River with Buell trailing behind, intent on a fight. Nelson was concerned that Bragg would beat Buell to Kentucky, and requested additional troops. Later that evening, General Boyle telegraphed the President to report that it seemed likely Bragg and Buell would cross the Cumberland River above Nashville, but he feared the merger of Smith and Bragg’s armies, and the danger their combined strength posed to Buell’s army.\(^{126}\)

As Lee’s army occupied Maryland and dispersed their forces, Washington anxiously awaited news. Commendably, through this difficult period, General Halleck displayed no evidence of panic, as was portrayed by others through telegraphic communication. Halleck was different; he received intelligence, absorbed situations, and advised the best courses of action. Old Brains believed the best way to defend the country was concentration of his troops, and established Washington as the mustering point for soldiers. When fresh soldiers arrived at the capitol, Halleck deployed veterans to the field, retaining the unexperienced to guard Washington.\(^{127}\)
The uncertainty of Confederate whereabouts caused rumors and apprehension, but the armies soon found one another and sporadic skirmishing ensued. One detachment of Confederates fought the soldiers under General White in Martinsburg, and was repulsed. However, due to their proximity to Harper’s Ferry, Lincoln grew concerned, and telegraphed Wool in Baltimore for information. Within this request for information, even the President entertained the possibility of Bragg’s presence in the Shenandoah Valley. General Wool told Lincoln he heard, (second hand), that Bragg was in the Shenandoah with 40,000 men, headed for Pennsylvania, and that the forces of Daniel Harvey Hill now harassed the detachment at Harper’s Ferry. From Rockville, Maryland on 8 September, General McClellan reported to Lincoln and Halleck that his cavalry under Pleasonton had reported a skirmish at Poolesville, as well as the presence of enemy infantry in that vicinity. Later that evening, McClellan told his chief that 7,000 of the enemy were actively destroying the railroad from Monrovia to the Monocacy. He also reported cavalry skirmishes near the Monocacy and of his ordered reconnaissance for the next day. Little Mac, knowing the importance of Washington’s protection to the administration, ensured Old Brains that he had positioned his army to protect the capitol.128

The importance of logistics to any army on the move is paramount, and Halleck handled these problems as they surfaced quickly, with appropriate orders. On 9 September, Halleck informed McClellan of a glitch in his supply chain. Apparently, empty wagons remained at unit level, and the quartermaster lacked vehicles to deliver requisitions. Halleck told McClellan to fix the problem through Colonel Ingalls. In response to the fighting that took place near Centerville, Halleck sent a telegraph to General Samuel P. Heintzelman in Arlington, ordering the evacuation

128 Ibid., 210-211.
of the wounded with 50 ambulances under a flag of truce, accompanied by a cavalry escort. He also advised the General to take care of his stragglers, reassuring him that he would cover those on his side of the river. 129

Perhaps no greater alarmist in the Eastern Theater existed than Governor Andrew Curtin of Pennsylvania. Throughout the period of Lee’s invasion, Curtin continually requested troops and arms for his state. Halleck, observing that information and reason did nothing to quell Curtin’s apprehension, offered the governor the services of a high-ranking officer at Harrisburg to “act as exigencies may require.” 130 However, Curtin knew what he wanted, and sent an emissary from his staff, a Colonel John A. Wright, to Washington. Before Wright’s arrival, the hyper-vigilant Curtin telegraphed Halleck the following day reporting Stonewall Jackson’s presence on the national road between Middletown and Boonsboro that morning, notifying McClellan as well. McClellan had received the same intelligence, and instructed Curtin to post his militia, especially mounted, to the areas of Chambersburg and Gettysburg in Pennsylvania. The next urgent message that day was a message from Colonel Miles at Harpers Ferry reporting an enemy column of 5,000 marching towards Hagerstown. 131

Colonel John Wright arrived from Harrisburg in the midst of Halleck’s difficulties with Curtin. Wright initially reported to the Secretary of War, seeking the procurement of artillery and ammunition to defend the Susquehanna region. Apparently, Curtin wanted Halleck to order weapons and munitions from Pittsburg, and transport them to Harrisburg using special

129 Ibid., 220, 242.
130 Ibid., 247.
131 Ibid., 248.
trains. Upon learning this information, Halleck responded that there was no real necessity to send the weapons, and if there were, he would order them. He then repeated his stance on defense. “The way to defend the Cumberland Valley is to send all available means of attack here. It will be time enough to order arms and ammunition from Pittsburgh when they are really needed.” Curtin so pressured the administration that when he requested the services of the Pennsylvanian General John Reynolds, Halleck telegraphed Little Mac, ordering him to send the general to Washington. McClellan refused, stating the General was engaged in an attack, and so Halleck himself ordered Reynolds to the city immediately, stating someone else could command Reynolds’s division.

On 11 September Colonel Miles telegraphed Halleck from Harper’s Ferry reporting the encampment of 40,000 to 60,000 enemy troops at Boonsboro. The General in Chief went into action and began gathering troops for McClellan’s support. Halleck ordered Fitz Porter’s reserve forward, as well as the Sixth Massachusetts from General Wool in Baltimore. General Wool reported that 15,000 infantry and cavalry had passed through Boonsboro the previous evening, likely enroute to Hagerstown. General Wool received an order to command in Philadelphia prior to this incident, but the situation within and outside of the city of Baltimore was so perilous that Wool refused to travel and informed Halleck of his decision.

In the West, there were problems between the civil and military authorities regarding defense of Louisville. The Department of Kentucky commander Jeremiah T. Boyle, telegraphed

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132 Ibid., 250.
133 Ibid., 249-250, 252.
134 Ibid., 266, 264, 251.
Lincoln on 11 September, concerned that General H.G. Wright was withdrawing troops from Louisville and sending them to Cincinnati, creating an alarm. Then, the Governor of Kentucky, James F. Robinson, contacted Halleck to voice the same concern. Halleck wired General Wright to ascertain the situation, advising the General not to abandon Louisville, also asking for the location of his troops and planned strategy. According to General Wright, he sent two regiments to Cincinnati as it was under immediate threat, whereas Louisville was not. Wright reported having twenty-three regiments of infantry and two cavalry regiments in Louisville for protection. The general informed Halleck that should it be necessary in the future to draw from Louisville, he would, but the city’s safety would remain his first priority. In another telegram dated 12 September, General Wright told Halleck he needed good generals, and asked for Sheridan, as he was “worth his weight in gold.”\textsuperscript{135} The next day, Halleck contacted General Wright informing him of Sheridan’s reappointment. Unfortunately, for Wright, Buell denied Sheridan’s transfer, retaining his most valuable cavalry commander.\textsuperscript{136}

On 14 September, Buell told Halleck that Bragg’s army was moving into Kentucky, concentrating at Glasgow. Buell relayed that he had ordered up all of his forces except for one division that would arrive at Bowling Green on 17 September. He reported Bragg’s position as being between himself and Louisville, and that he had received no communications, fearing the unification of Southern forces. In closing, the General informed Halleck that he maintained a slight hold on Nashville, hoped the city was safe, and again asked for instructions.\textsuperscript{137}

\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., vol. 16, pt. 2: 510.

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., 505, 507-508,513; Anders, \textit{Henry Halleck’s War}, 291.

\textsuperscript{137} OR, vol. 16, pt. 2: 515.
Keeping his promise to fortify the command of H.G. Wright, on 17 September Halleck assigned Major General Gordon Granger and Major General Stephen A. Hurlbut to him, as well as Brigadier General Joseph J. Reynolds. Halleck assured General Wright that, “several others will probably be assigned to you tomorrow.” The following day, General Wright reported that the enemy had retreated from their position in front of Cincinnati, and made mention of a dispatch from Buell in Bowling Green, stating that his forces would be following up a movement on Bragg. Buell had requested Wright’s assistance, and because of the rebels withdrawing from Cincinnati, Wright sent a division to Louisville under General Nelson to help fortify that location. He contacted Buell asking for his location and consent to cooperate. Wright stated that he planned to reinforce Louisville with 10,000 men and was expecting an additional five regiments that week. In order to bolster the defenses of that region, Halleck informed Wright that Western Virginia was a part of the Department of Ohio. Halleck then ordered the immediate reinforcement of Ohio troops to Colonel Lightburn at Point Pleasant. Halleck sent the same information to the commanders in the Department of Ohio.

Back in the East, the enemy was concentrated at Boonsboro, and General Wool stood by offering to send troops for McClellan’s command. Concerned with supplying men to multiple theaters, Halleck then answered a telegraph from the Young Napoleon, informing him that he had no further troops to send at present, and admonished him for leaving the capitol undefended, something reported by McClellan in a previous missive. Halleck spoke plainly, telling McClellan he was wrong for leaving the capitol so defenseless, and proceeded to explain why. On 13 September Lee’s army faced McClellan, but Little Mac had the upper hand.

138 Ibid., 523.
139 Ibid., 526, 528.
McClellan informed Lincoln that he had Lee’s plans, and would, “catch him in their own trap if my men are equal to the emergency.”

Later that day, Little Mac wrote Halleck, providing the details regarding Lee’s lost order, and the pertinent information it contained listing enemy locations, their commanders, and marching orders. McClellan also relayed knowledge of the attack of Colonel Miles’ force at Harper’s Ferry. He assured Halleck that his army would march in the morning to relieve the detachment, but after hearing that Miles had repulsed the enemy’s initial assault, he remained on standby. McClellan believed a general engagement would ensue the following day, providing Lee had not changed his plans.

The following day, McClellan reported that he was near Middletown and Jefferson, Maryland. Halleck received this information and warned Little Mac that the enemy occupied a position on the Virginia side of the Potomac, near Leesburg. He advised McClellan to guard his left flank, in case the enemy crossed by his rear, and asked if McClellan’s troops at Sugarloaf were able to confirm this information. Regarding the fighting, McClellan told Halleck that his troops were firing over the Blue Ridge passages, and possessed the heights on the left of Hagerstown Pike. McClellan was certain the Federals would control the passes by that evening. Later that night, Little Mac reported the success of Generals Hooker and Jesse Reno in carrying the heights over the Hagerstown Rd, followed by news of the death of General Reno.

McClellan received the news of Harper Ferry’s surrender on 15 September through a captured aide-de-camp of General James Ewell Brown “Jeb” Stuart. The captured message read,

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141 Ibid., 275, 280, 282.
142 Ibid., 289.
“The white flag was raised at Harper’s Ferry this morning at 9:30, and that he was to take possession immediately.”143 The prisoner stated that Stuart was between Keedysville and Harper’s Ferry. McClellan had the location of the premier Confederate cavalry commander.

Halleck explored every option available as he struggled to raise troops for the armies. Displaying his ‘type A’ personality, Halleck requested that General Nathaniel Banks establish a camp for stragglers. Halleck wanted the men organized into companies and regiments, according to the corps in which they belonged, and led by officers enroute to their commands. “Send these men to join their corps when numbers render them necessary,” Halleck ordered. Old Brains also sent word to the commanding officers in Greencastle and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania to “Do everything in your power to assist General McClellan by harassing the rear of Longstreet.” On 15 September, the War Department received official notification of the surrender of Harper’s Ferry. Coinciding with the surrender at Harper’s Ferry, there was a movement to remove General Wool from his post, stemming from general discontent with his actions. Lincoln asked Halleck to communicate the administration’s position in support of General Wool. Halleck wrote to Wool, reassuring him that the President did not concur with the “Jacobins” to remove Wool from his position. Old Brains continued, expressing that the President wished Wool to continue pursuing a conciliatory course of action with the civil authorities in Maryland, and to give Maryland’s governor one of the regiments to enforce the draft, if requested. Halleck pointed out the importance of the civil and military authorities in Baltimore acting in accordance with one another. The administration expected the military

143 Ibid., 296.
commander to prevent misunderstandings between the two factions.  

He added that the actions of the Provost, Marshall McPhail, would not be held against Wool, but since all parties involved were working towards the same goal, a “mere difference of judgment on matters of arrests should not prevent a cordial cooperation.”

The day prior to the epic battle of Antietam, Halleck received information concerning an immediate threat to the Du Pont powder mill near Wilmington. The factory produced large quantities of ammunition used by the government, and was of vast importance. Halleck notified General Reynolds in Harrisburg, (recently transferred), to post the Pennsylvania militia to guard the factory, and that he would supply volunteers, when available, to relieve the militia. At this point, Halleck sent all available men to support McClellan.

On 16 September, McClellan wired Halleck informing him that the enemy had massed in front of Sharpsburg. At present, the fog limited the visibility of the field. McClellan also spoke of the recent surrender of Harper’s Ferry, critical of Colonel Miles’ resistance. Anxious for news, Lincoln telegraphed Governor Curtin for news of McClellan’s army. Curtin informed the President that there was fighting between Sharpsburg and Williamsport. Washington and Harrisburg communicated throughout the day, with intelligence updates regarding troop positions for the impending battle. The next day, the forces of Lee and McClellan fought at Antietam, the bloodiest battle in the history of the United States. The fighting resulted in over

144 Ibid., 297, 303-304.
145 Ibid.
146 Ibid., 307.
20,000 combined casualties, and viewed as a strategic Union victory. Lincoln used the battle to announce the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation.147

Immediately following the battle, McClellan refused to pursue Lee over the Potomac. Instead, he requested supplies for his men, demanded more horses, and complained that his supply requisitions went unfilled. In a report to the Secretary of War regarding McClellan’s stagnation after the battle, Halleck answered, in his forthright manner, of the extraordinary measures taken by the quartermaster and rail personnel to satisfy Little Mac’s requests. Additionally, Halleck pointed out that he had requested McClellan’s planned strategy for the purpose of reinforcing him. Upon discovery that McClellan had planned to maneuver away from Harper’s Ferry, he received the order to cross the Potomac, find, and fight the enemy. Halleck stated that he urged McClellan to move while the roads remained “good.”148 This meticulous report to Stanton contained documentation supporting Halleck’s claims, including the exact dates of communications and the replies between him, McClellan, and the Quartermaster General, Montgomery Meigs.149

While the Battle at Sharpsburg raged, Grant’s forces also fought in the West. Part of Grant’s mission was to prevent the armies of Generals Sterling Price and Earl Van Dorn from uniting with Bragg in Tennessee. When Price entered the town of Iuka on 14 September, Grant immediately dispatched two divisions commanded by Union general William Rosecrans to destroy the enemy. By 19 September, the Federals successfully routed Price, but the

147 Ibid., 308, 311-312.
149 Ibid., 8-10.
Confederates escaped with their army and readied their forces for a campaign against Grant’s position at Corinth. Bad news arrived from Kentucky on 17 September; General Boyle notified President Lincoln that a portion of Bragg’s command forced the surrender of the Union held depot at Munfordville, Kentucky, and of Buell’s inability to assist. On 20 September, Halleck chastised Buell once more, commenting on his failure to react in a timely manner. “I fear that here as elsewhere you move too slowly, and will permit the junction of Bragg and Smith’s before you open your line to Louisville. The immobility of your army is most surprising. Bragg in the last two months has marched four times the distance you have.”  

In a further effort to aid General H.G. Wright, Halleck informed the general of his authorization to subsist Indiana state troops while in service. Halleck also inquired as to whether General Morris now commanded Kanawha, and if Wright had sent troops there, offering to provide troops if he had not. Wright immediately replied that Morris had not yet arrived, and would be grateful for troops, stating that he had no update on Kentucky. On 23 September, Wright sent a dispatch from General Nelson at Louisville warning that approximately 30,000 enemy troops had been at Bardstown the day prior, and were now enroute to Louisville. The dispatch stated that Buell’s army was attacking the enemy’s rear, and that the line of battle was between Woodsonville and Horse Cave. The message stated that Colonel John T. Wilder fought with Bragg’s forces from Sunday through Tuesday, but was finally compelled to surrender at daybreak; he also warned of a large force approaching Wright’s location.  

\[150\] Ibid., 530.  
\[151\] Ibid., 537-538.
Buell still failed to make contact with Bragg, additionally, his tardiness and confused reporting frustrated Washington. Finally, on 24 September Halleck, following the Secretary of War’s directive, sent a courier, with dispatches for Generals Buell and Thomas. The bearer, Colonel Joseph C. McKibbin, had instructions not to deliver the dispatches if Buell was in the presence of the enemy, had won a battle, or if General Thomas separated from Buell. The dispatches contained orders relieving Buell of command and appointed General George Thomas as his successor. However, on 26 September Buell reported his success of reaching Louisville, and the concentration of his troops at that location. He told Halleck his army required clothing, which they were receiving, and that he would immediately advance against the enemy. Buell also related to the General in Chief that he had assumed command of the entire force at that location. The following day, General Wright informed Halleck that Buell was present and assuming command of all troops. “The question of the relations between us, (he being my senior in date), should be at once decided, in order that the most effective steps may be promptly taken for operating against the rebel forces in Kentucky.”152 The creation of The New Department of Ohio with General Wright as commander caused a stir in August, with people speculating about the command relationship between the two generals. On 27 August, The New York Times reported that the state of Kentucky was no longer under Buell’s jurisdiction. To avoid further issues, Halleck contacted Buell stating that by virtue of Buell’s seniority, he commanded the Louisville troops, until further orders. Halleck added that he hoped Buell’s force was adequate to advance on the enemy, and that he should do so immediately. After that warning, it was business

152 Ibid., 549.
as usual for the General in Chief as he scrounged for troops and a competent commander for Point Pleasant, Ohio. 153

However, the situation with General Buell resurfaced unexpectedly. On 29 September, Halleck sent word to Colonel Joshua C. McKibbin to await further orders before taking action, but McKibbin did not receive the message in time. McKibbin delivered the dispatches, and informed Halleck that there was “much dissatisfaction with General Buell.”154 A few hours later, Halleck received a telegraph from Buell, confirming that he had received the orders and would transfer the command to George Thomas. Thomas however, replied to Halleck before Buell, and refused the command citing Buell’s preparations, and that he was not “as well informed as he should be as the commander of this army and the assumption of such a responsibility.”155 Halleck replied to Thomas, stating that the order to relieve Buell did not originate with him or on his advice, and that he was powerless to change it. Halleck continued by explaining that the decision to relieve Buell had occurred prior to Buell arriving in Louisville, and that he had attempted on two occasions to reach McKibbin telling him not to deliver the dispatches. Halleck emphasized the suspension of the order and requested that Thomas show Buell his statement in the telegram. This very day, Halleck received a telegram from the civil leaders of Kentucky informing him of the murder of General William Nelson by Union General Jefferson C. Davis. Included in the correspondence was the reported high degree of confidence


155 Ibid., 555.
that the state had in General Buell. The following day, Halleck received word from Buell stating
that he had received news of the suspension of his removal and would continue to serve.156

Halleck once again telegraphed Buell on 2 October, urging him to attack. In this note,
Halleck shared with Buell his fear that the enemy would turn a part of their force on Cincinnati,
which was not prepared to absorb an assault. Halleck then contacted General Wright and
instructed him to contact the state governors in his department to forward regiments, adding,
“One regiment now is worth what ten will be in few weeks hence.”157 The status of Kentucky
swung on a pendulum. As Halleck and the Western command prepared for battle, Grant,
(making do with his assets), experienced an attack on his position at Corinth. Between 3 and 4
October, Grant’s forces under General Rosecrans were attacked by the combined forces of Price
and Van Dorn, numbering 40,000. After two days of fighting, the Federals repulsed the enemy,
reinstating their communications with Columbus. The enemy retreated, but their losses had been
severe. In order to maintain an adequate defense of the critical town, Grant needed
reinforcements, which he requested on 5 October.158

A portion of Buell’s army now marched southeast, following Bragg. Water was scarce in
the region, and fiercely sought after by both armies. On 7 October, Sheridan’s cavalry attacked,
gaining access to Doctor’s Creek, and a ridge between the creek and Perryville. On 8 October,
the Battle of Perryville commenced with both sides suffering enormous casualties. Bragg, in

156 Ibid., 554-555, 557-559.
157 Ibid., 565.
158 Ibid., 564, 574-575.
need of supplies, withdrew from the field and headed south towards Tennessee. The battle was a Union victory and secured Federal control over Kentucky for the duration of the war.\textsuperscript{159}

As his scope of responsibility increased, Halleck effectively managed tasks ranging from the mundane to the delicate task of maintaining military and civilian relations. Due to his broad military background and experiences, Halleck was able to meet the administration’s expectations and prove effective in his new role. The year 1862 proved challenging for the Union, but Halleck enabled the war effort through advising, supplying, and establishing a spirit of cooperation between commands and services. The groundwork he inaugurated, his meticulously initiated processes, procedures, and expectations had lasting effects throughout the war.

\textsuperscript{159} Anders, \textit{Henry Halleck’s War}, 298-299; \textit{OR}, vol. 16, pt. 2: 565.
The administration realized that failing to conduct an aggressive pursuit of the enemy following victory would prolong the war. Commanders neglecting to perform this task increasingly experienced relief from command. Generals McClellan and Burnside fell victim to this dictate. The task in finding the ‘right generals’ was a tricky business, and sometimes resulted in negative political repercussions. Such was the case of Ambrose Burnside, whom the President had selected without feedback from Generals Halleck or Stanton. Burnside disastrously led his army to the slaughter at Fredericksburg, causing the administration to catch hell from both the media and other politicians. This debacle led to a “power play” by Lincoln, and Halleck’s subsequent resignation, which cemented Halleck’s interpretation of his supportive role in Washington. Aside from his unwillingness to perform the distasteful duties of others, Halleck now used his position to ensure the appointment of professional, competent officers for command. Additionally, he used this opportunity to educate officers regarding the conduction of warfare in adherence with the international laws of war, and historical precedence.

Replacing Generals Burnside and Buell were Joseph Hooker and William Rosecrans, respectively. Ignoring the fact that Generals Hooker and Halleck disliked one another, Lincoln worsened the situation in allowing General Hooker to report directly to him. This decision ruptured the chain of command, and undermined Halleck’s authority. Only when Hooker’s army suffered defeat at Chancellorsville, did Lincoln direct Hooker to the General in Chief. Overwhelmed, frustrated, and dismayed, Hooker tendered his resignation. Halleck regained his stature; uncomplaining and determined, he knew the one dependable general that the Union
possessed was Grant, who continued to revise his plans to conquer Vicksburg. Halleck kept his sights on his rising subordinate, ensuring that Grant received supplies, men, advice, and guidance.

Generals McClellan and Buell failed to follow up on their battlefield victories. McClellan believed his forces required refitting prior to the commencement of a new campaign, and Buell failed to pursue Bragg and liberate Eastern Tennessee. After the Battle of Antietam, Lincoln visited the battlefield with the hope of spurring Little Mac to take the initiative to cross the Potomac, further damaging Lee's army. Upon Lincoln’s return to Washington, McClellan’s army remained stagnant, compelling the President to write to him, urging him to move. The Army of the Potomac finally advanced on 2 November, but with the characteristic slowness of its leader. Three days later, after the elections, Lincoln instructed General Halleck to relieve McClellan, (a popular Democrat), and replace him with General Ambrose Burnside. On 7 November, the Adjutant General from the War Department arrived by special train to the Army of the Potomac’s headquarters. His purpose there was to relieve McClellan as commander, and offer the post to Burnside, who reluctantly accepted upon discovering General Joseph Hooker was Lincoln’s selected alternate. In the West, General Buell was also relieved due to his inability to fulfill the administration’s objectives. Lincoln replaced Buell with General William S. Rosecrans; Ulysses S. Grant and Henry W. Halleck retained their positions.160

When Burnside assumed command, Halleck sent a message instructing him to send a report of his troop positions and intended strategy, and within four days, the General had

160 OR, vol. 19, pt. 2: 545; Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 155.
completed the task. Burnside planned to move on Fredericksburg because of its proximity to both capitols, and for the resupply capabilities it offered. Burnside then divided his army into three corps under command of his three ranking generals.161

As Burnside settled into his new role, Halleck attended to other matters in Western Virginia. On 8 November, Halleck contacted H.G. Wright in Ohio regarding the successful withdrawal of the enemy from Western Virginia. Old Brains thought it unlikely for the enemy to return, but suggested Gauley Bridge as the best point of defense. With that portion of the state secure for the winter, Halleck proposed to keep half of Wright’s force in in their present location, and to withdraw the other portion.162

Back in the East, Old Brains travelled to Burnside's headquarters in Warrenton, Virginia, accompanied by Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, and Herman Haupt, an engineer, to discuss the logistic needs of the Army of the Potomac. On 12 November, these generals agreed that Burnside's army needed pontoons in order to cross the Rappahannock River. Prior to leaving Warrenton, General Halleck sent a telegram to General Daniel P. Woodbury at the engineer’s brigade in Washington, arranging barge transport for all pontoons and bridge building materials to the wharf at Alexandria.163

After receiving information relaying the locations of top enemy commanders, Burnside wired Halleck requesting approval of his proposed plan. The next day, Halleck replied, stating

162 Ibid., 556-557.
163 Ambrose, Halleck: Lincoln's Chief of Staff, 94; OR, vol. 19, pt. 2: 572.
the President had consented to his plan, but advised Burnside to strike rapidly, and to be wary of
enemy cavalry cutting off his supply chain. On 14 November, Burnside's headquarters received
notification through General Woodbury that 36 pontoons had arrived at his location in
Washington, and that he expected 40 more the following morning. Woodbury explained that one
pontoon train would be ready to ship either Sunday or Monday morning, depending upon the
Quartermaster Department; Halleck preferred not to send another train by land but would make
an exception if Burnside insisted. Woodbury also offered to send the second train by water to
Aquia Creek.164

Meanwhile, General Stonewall Jackson was on the move, and Halleck wanted to ensure
the stealthy general would not interfere with Burnside's campaign. Therefore, Halleck appointed
General George W. Morell to command troops positioned on the Upper Potomac. Halleck
warned Morell against defending Harper's Ferry from inside the city, explaining that the true
defensive point of that garrison was on Maryland Heights. Halleck also remained in close contact
with H. G. Wright concerning Jackson's movements, constantly advising about preparations for
defense.165

Burnside's army, 110,000 men strong, arrived to Falmouth on 17 November, before Lee
had the opportunity to place snipers along the Rappahannock. However, the pontoons had not
yet arrived, nor would they for more than a week. Lee took advantage of this delay and posted
his men to impede the Federal crossing. On the morning of 11 December, Federal engineers
began positioning three bridges opposite Fredericksburg, along with three more downstream

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164 OR, vol. 19, pt. 2: 574.
165 Ibid., 579-581.
protected by friendly artillery. The troops crossing at Fredericksburg took fire, and upon reaching the other side, quickly set about looting the city. On the morning of 13 December, the Federals advanced against the enemy, strongly fortified in their position on Marye's Heights. The Battle of Fredericksburg commenced, and the Confederates mowed down the Union soldiers as they attacked. That evening, Burnside’s casualties numbered 13,000, which was a great loss, especially compared to the Confederate suffering less than 5,000. Upon learning of the disaster, Lincoln stated, "If there is a worse place than Hell, I am in it."166 The tremendous loss of life caused an uproar, and there was plenty of blame to go around. On 14 December, Lincoln, accompanied the engineer Haupt, and paid a visit to General Halleck in his Washington quarters. There was trouble amongst the Republicans, and they demanded the dismissal of Lincoln's cabinet and his commanding general. Lincoln asked Halleck to order General Burnside to move his army back across the Rappahannock to the northern side, and Old Brains refused. Haupt stated that Halleck paced for a while, then stopped, faced Lincoln, and stated, "I will do no such thing. If we were personally present and knew the exact situation, we might assume such responsibility. If such orders are issued, you must issue them yourself. I hold that a general in command of an army in the field is the best judge of existing conditions."167 The next day, without needing an order, Burnside did indeed move his army back across the river.168

On 19 December, the New York Times announced that an inquiry of the Battle of Fredericksburg was under investigation by the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the

166 McPherson, Battle Cry, 574.
167 Herman Haupt, Reminiscences, 177.
War. The article expressed hope the investigation would reveal facts enabling swift punishments of the crime. “The feelings of the country are terribly strong upon this subject, and instead of decreasing, are daily becoming more intense. We assure those in authority that it will be dangerous to trifle with them.” On 20 December 1862, the publisher of the *New York Times*, Henry J. Raymond, wrote that Burnside had reason to complain because his proposed movement upon Fredericksburg received the consent of both the President and General Halleck. In Washington, the Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles recorded in his diary that he, “Felt it an error to fight an enemy in so strong a position” adding, “Halleck is General in Chief, but no one appears to have any confidence in his military management, or thinks him able to advise Burnside.” Another article critical of Halleck appeared in the *New York Herald*, blaming the disaster at Fredericksburg on Old Brains, Meigs, and Stanton. The journalist reported that Halleck did not hold himself responsible for any more than giving the order, (for the pontoons), and speculated that Halleck thought it was Burnside’s business to look after the pontoons in Washington. The article continued, “Burnside was suddenly placed in command of a large army, and was to leave it and go to Washington to look after pontoons, which Halleck and Meigs had already undertaken to send him, and when the Secretary of War, too was there to see the matter attended to!” If this was not enough, a popular rumor was circulating that maintained that Halleck and Stanton physically fought, and Halleck knocked Stanton down like a beef. It was


170 Welles, *Diary of Gideon Welles*, 192.

also said Halleck was “habitually tight, every day after dinner.” Halleck’s reputation was at rock bottom. His worst critic was a man named Count Adam Gurowski, a staff member on the New York Tribune, who had unsuccessfully applied for a position on Halleck’s staff. Speaking of the public insults aimed at him, Old Brains confided to his cousin, Bishop Henry B. Whipple that, “The fault was not in General Burnside, nor in the soldiers.” Instead, Halleck blamed the Northern press because they accused him of ordering Burnside to cross the river at “that place.” Halleck stated that, “When discovered I did not give the order, and advised against it, I was abused because I had not given him orders.”

Halleck, in his official report regarding the Battle of Fredericksburg, included General Burnside’s admission of his decision to disregard the advice of the President, Mr. Stanton, and Halleck. He testified that Burnside was to march his army south of the Potomac on the interior line to Richmond, remaining close to the Blue Ridge Mountains to monitor the passes, and battle the enemy when favorable opportunities arose. However, upon reaching Warrenton, Burnside stopped his pursuit, and asked to move down the north side of the Rappahannock to Falmouth. He wanted to establish a new base of supplies, at either Aquia Creek or Belle Plain. Halleck stated that he did not approve the plan, and urged the General to maintain his base at Warrenton, and to continue marching towards the Confederate capitol. Halleck reminded Burnside that this was also the President’s opinion, given to McClellan on 13 October. Burnside

172 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 162.

173 Ibid., 159.

174 Harold Holzer and Craig L. Symonds, The New York Times, 205; Ambrose, Halleck: Lincoln's Chief of Staff, 99; Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 159.
disagreed and modified his plan, desiring to move the army across the Rappahannock by the Upper Fords, then marching down and seizing the heights south of Fredericksburg. At the same time, a detachment placed north of the river would assist General Haupt in reopening the railroad and bridges. Halleck stated he refused to consent to this plan without the official approval of the President. Upon his return to Washington, Halleck presented the modified plan to Lincoln, who consented, but did not approve. Included in the response to Burnside were Lincoln’s reservations and comments. The General in Chief made it clear that Burnside had not received approval to have the army cross the Rappahannock above its connection with the Rapidan River. Regarding the plan of attack, Halleck clarified that Franklin’s corps was to advance upon the enemy’s right, turn his position on the heights to his rear, while Sumner and Hooker’s corps attacked from the front. Instead, Franklin’s corps deployed as on reconnaissance. To clear matters regarding the pontoons, Halleck explained that he telegraphed the pontoon order to General Woodbury while still with Burnside in Warrenton. Burnside mistakenly believed the pontoons were near Washington and Alexandria. In fact, the pontoons were on the Potomac, making the delay due to miscommunication inevitable.\(^{175}\)

In the West, General Grant correctly suspected that John McClernand had secretly planned, (with Lincoln and Stanton’s approval), to lead an expedition against Vicksburg with men that the political general had raised. Grant informed Sherman of this mission on 14 November, telling Sherman that Halleck confirmed that all troops sent belonged to Grant, and that Grant was to fight the enemy his way. It was Halleck that wrote the orders, ensuring Grant would maintain control of the men sent to him. In the meantime, Old Brains verified naval

\(^{175}\) *OR*, vol. 21, 46-48.
support for the Vicksburg mission with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Admiral Gustavus V. Fox. Rear admiral David Dixon Porter was present in theater, already working with the army. Stanton, none the wiser, maintained his communication with McClernand in Illinois, informing the general about his upcoming expedition. The President also remained under the impression that McClernand’s plans would come to fruition, and telegraphed Frank Blair on 17 November, alluding to the latter’s part in the campaign. In the meantime, Halleck ordered the men into two corps under the command of the senior-ranking Generals McClernand and Sherman. When Grant discovered that these soldiers were arriving at Memphis, he quickly sent Sherman to meet them. The idea was to have this contingent participate in the downriver movement against Vicksburg, while Grant conducted an overland invasion of the city. If McClernand arrived in Memphis before Sherman, he would command. Of course, Sherman arrived first, and the telegraph informing McClernand of the expedition arrived late due an attack on the Union’s communication network by General Nathan Bedford Forrest.\footnote{OR, vol. 17, pt. 2: 349, 239, 350, 420, 425; McPherson, \textit{Battle Cry}, 577-588.}

On 20 December, Sherman collected the troops in Memphis and made contact with Rear-Admiral Porter, sailing that same day for Vicksburg. The day after Sherman set sail, McClernand discovered that Halleck had assigned Grant command of the Vicksburg expedition, with McClernand leading the land forces of the same mission. McClernand protested to Lincoln, who advised him to follow orders for his own good and for the good of the country. McClernand then boarded a train to Memphis with his new wife and upon arrival, discovered the city empty. Because of the severed communications, Sherman had no idea his men had acted without the cooperation of Grant’s forces. On 29 December, Sherman unsuccessfully attacked the Chickasaw
bluffs above Vicksburg incurring great casualties. Sherman aborted the attack. As Sherman headed back to Memphis, McClernand met the steamer, and immediately assumed command of the force. McClernand transported the detachment to the Arkansas Post, which he captured. When learning of McClernand’s action, General Grant wired Halleck, stating that McClernand had “gone on a wild-goose chase to the Post of Arkansas. I am ready to re-enforce, but must await further information before knowing what to do.” Grant then sent a strong letter of reprimand to McClernand, reminding him of the primary mission to capture Vicksburg. On 12 January 1863, Halleck wired Grant, giving him permission to relieve McClernand from command of the expedition against Vicksburg, and to give the command to “the next rank or taking it yourself.”

In the East, after the disaster at Fredericksburg, General Burnside planned to once again cross the Rappahannock and battle the enemy. However, his division commanders disagreed with his plan, and complained to Lincoln. On 1 January, Lincoln conferred with Burnside to discuss his officer’s objections, sending for Stanton and Halleck to join the conversation. Halleck suggested arresting or cashiering the officers, but the others disagreed. With no consensus or decisions made, Burnside departed. Shortly after, Burnside wrote to Lincoln, offering to resign and advising the President to fire Halleck and Stanton as well, explaining that none of them held the public’s confidence. Lincoln then wrote to Halleck describing the situation plainly, asking Halleck to visit, speak to Burnside’s generals, form an opinion, and tell Burnside if he approved or disapproved of the General’s plan. In this letter, Lincoln included, “Your military skill is


178 *OR*, vol. 17, pt. 2: 553.

179 Ibid., 555.
useless to me, if you will not do this.” 180 Later that day, Halleck responded to the President’s letter explaining they had differing opinions regarding his relations towards army commanders in the field, and that he was unable to perform the duties of his office satisfactorily to the President or himself. Halleck then respectfully requested relief from further duties as General in Chief. After reading Halleck’s response, Lincoln wrote across the letter, “Withdrawn because considered harsh by Gen. Halleck.” 181

On 5 January, Burnside contacted the President, informing him that he had a plan for the advancement of his army, and that Halleck had thought it necessary to have his plan approved by Lincoln. Burnside stated that his officers were mostly opposed to his idea, and that he had no knowledge of how his plans would affect other armies. Once again, Burnside tendered his resignation if Lincoln disapproved. Burnside also wrote to Halleck, informing him of his decision to move the army, explaining to him the directions given to his engineers and artillery in preparation of the crossing. Burnside told Halleck that he had tendered his resignation to the President in the event that Lincoln disagreed with his intended plan, and that he had sent it because he had no additional strategies, and refused to go into winter quarters. Halleck responded to Burnside’s letter when it arrived on 7 January, reminding Burnside of their previous conversations where Halleck had made it clear that the defeat or scattering of Lee’s army was his objective, not the capture of Richmond. Halleck stated that the circumstances were different than they had been in November due to the change of season, but thought that if the army could cross in a position to meet the enemy on favorable terms, then the army would be

180 OR, vol. 21, 940.

181 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 164; Ibid., 163; OR, vol. 21, 940-941.
able to defeat the enemy on the Rappahannock. Old Brains advised moving against the enemy, and stated that if the enemy concentrated their forces at the chosen crossing point, to make it a feint, and try another point. Old Brains added that whenever Burnside decided to cross, perhaps he could cross at multiple points with smaller forces, cutting the enemy’s lines and communications. The point was to occupy the enemy, rendering them incapable of sending large raiding parties and to injure the enemy without suffering any casualties. Halleck thought it imprudent to keep the large army inactive, and advised Burnside to attempt a crossing as early as possible.  

Burnside decided to outflank Lee’s army that January. The roads in Virginia were boggy from the rain, and the soldiers in the Army of the Potomac dubbed the campaign the ‘mud march’. Generals Hooker and Franklin in particular criticized their General. Burnside once again turned to Halleck for help, but Old Brains stuck to his guns and instructed, “Judge for yourself as to the propriety of your coming up to Washington.” Burnside took the trip anyhow, and met with the President on 24 January, followed by a meeting with Lincoln, Stanton, Halleck, and Burnside on the 25th. General Burnside described the problem with his generals, threatening his resignation if they were not relieved of duty. Lincoln, acting alone, made the decision to relieve General Burnside, and in his place appointed none other than Burnside’s subordinate, General Joseph “Fighting Joe” Hooker. Hooker had seemed the best choice of Burnside’s three senior generals. General Edwin V. Sumner was 66 years old, and not in the best of health, and William

182 Ibid., 944-945, 953-954.
183 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 165.
Franklin had performed poorly during the Battle of Fredericksburg. General George G. Meade had been a contender, but subordinate in rank to the others.184

Hooker had a questionable reputation and Charles F. Adams Jr. described Hooker’s headquarters as “a combination of bar room and brothel.”185 Upon appointing Hooker as the new commander of the Army of the Potomac, Lincoln sent a letter informing Hooker that he was not satisfied with him. The President informed his new commander that he thought him a skillful and brave soldier, but was put off by the fact that he had conspired against Burnside. Lincoln also told Hooker that he had heard the general say, “both the Army and Government needed a Dictator.” To this statement, Lincoln replied, “Only those generals who gain successes, can set up dictators. What I ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship.”186

Hooker and Halleck were acquainted from their time at West Point, as well as the army in California. Hooker was an Assistant Adjutant General, and Halleck a territorial Secretary of State and lawyer. Hooker stated the animosity between he and Halleck began when Old Brains asked Hooker to find land business for his law firm, and that Halleck had taken advantage of the clients Hooker had sent. Halleck maintained that he knew information about Hooker and his questionable behavior from their California days. Due to their personal problems, Lincoln agreed to allow Hooker to report directly to him, bypassing the General in Chief and the chain of

184 Ibid.
185 Ibid.
186 Ibid., 166.
command, which would prove problematic to Halleck, who, as General in Chief, coordinated, advised, and met the needs of all the armies in the field. 187

Maintaining readiness and sending troops to battle was simply a portion of command responsibilities. As the war continued, Halleck received increasing requests for guidance from field commanders concerning matters involving deserters, treatment of disloyal civilians, and the authority to execute those deemed guilty. In February of 1863, for example, General William Rosecrans requested the authority to send details of officers to locate deserters, and to return with “absentees, paroled prisoners, skulkers, convalescents or stragglers.”188 In response to Rosecrans’s inquiry, Halleck informed the general that the power to execute deserters belonged only to the Secretary of War and the President. The reality of the situation was that neither Rosecrans nor Old Brains had the power to change the law and were obligated to adhere to it, until such a time as it was repealed. Halleck informed the general that Congress was examining a bill to address arresting deserters without depleting command strengths. Another question arose within Rosecrans’s command, generated by Generals Reynolds and Thomas, which ‘Old Rosy’ forwarded to the General in Chief. This inquiry concerned the problems that Southern Unionists faced, by the actions of their pro-Confederate neighbors. In response to this missive, Halleck sent detailed instructions to his commanders regarding their permissible actions according to the law of war. 189

187 Ibid.

188 OR, vol. 23, pt. 2: 75.

189 Ibid.
Halleck began to summarize the powers already in practice involving the procurement of subsistence, forage, and transportation assets, all within occupied country. He reminded Rosecrans that commanders had the authorization to implement and enforce all laws, however severe, and that they would maintain such power unless Congress passed an act stating the regulation of prohibited enforcement. Old Brains defined for his generals three classes of civilians: loyal, noncombatants, and the openly hostile enemy. The loyal, who did not aid the enemy unless compelled to do so, were those that preferred to assist Union forces. “This class” said Halleck “should receive the protection of our arms.” The second class consisted of those who did not participate in the war, meaning they were non-combatants. According to the General in Chief, within a Civil War, this class was non-existent. However, so long as members of this group performed no acts against the government, they should not have their property seized, except as a military necessity. This group was subject to provide loans, comply with military requisitions, and their homes opened to house and quarter soldiers. The entitlement to military protection extended to this class as well. Halleck remarked that while entitled to protection, persons of this class were obligated to maintain loyalty to the government, and explained that those who rose with arms against the occupying army were war rebels or military traitors, subject to the death penalty. This class was not entitled to the same treatment as prisoners of war when captured, and their property was open for seizure or destruction. Persons in this class relaying information to the enemy without proper authority forfeited protection, and subjected themselves to punishment as spies or military traitors, in accordance with the offense. Injecting another personal thought, Halleck stated, “Our treatment of such offenses has hitherto been altogether too lenient. A more strict enforcement of the laws of war in this respect recommended. Such

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190 Ibid., 207.
offenders should be made to understand the penalties they incur, and to know that these penalties will be rigidly enforced.”

The third class included those openly hostile to the occupying army, but did not go so far as to bear arms against the forces. This group, while claiming to be non-combatant, refused obligations incurred by other persons in the occupied territory. This class was subject to obligations imposed upon other non-combatants of the same territory, and liable to the same punishments, but treated as prisoners of war and subject to confinement or expulsion as if they were combatant enemies. Halleck preferred to prohibit persons of the second class from entering Union lines. His reasoning was that those capable of bearing arms may go to the enemy, thereby strengthening that force, but to imprison them took away strength from the occupying force. Old Brains instructed his generals to judge which resolution was most advantageous to the Union army on a case-by-case basis. He ended by remarking on his examples of referenced military offenses under the laws of war, and not applicable to civil offenses under the Constitution and general laws of the land. Again, the General in Chief reminded his commanders that the laws and usages of civilized war were to be their guide in the treatment of all classes of persons in their operating or occupied areas.

As violence intensified on both sides, Halleck realized that all Union commanders required definitive guidance regarding the International Laws of War. He had, the previous year, written his friend and law professor at Columbia University, Dr. Francis Lieber, regarding the applicability of war law to guerrilla warfare. Lieber’s long response defined the nature of

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191 Ibid., 108.
192 Ibid., 107-109.
guerrilla warfare, the status and rights of participants complete with historical examples. Halleck, pleased with the work, ordered 5,000 copies printed and circulated them throughout the army. Lieber also recognized the need for a definitive source on the law of war for commanders, and wrote to his Washington contacts, General Halleck and Senator Charles Sumner, suggesting that Halleck draft such a code. Halleck, pre-occupied with administrative duties, finally summoned Lieber to Washington. Together, Halleck and Secretary of War Stanton assigned two army lawyers, and two additional officers to assist Lieber in writing a code to regulate warfare. This tasking involved distilling a compilation of the international laws of war as they pertained to the present conflict. The committee produced two documents. The first, released as General Order No. 49 in February 1863, discussed identification and treatment of guerrillas, and paroles at the behest of Halleck, entitled Guerrilla Parties considered with References to the Laws and Usages of War. Halleck then identified other relevant problems for Lieber’s committee to address. These other issues culminated into the Lieber Code, and addressed topics such as spies, prisoner exchange, guerrillas, paroles, torture, bombardment of cities, and assassination. 193

Upon completion, Lieber presented the document to General Halleck for review and comment. Halleck reviewed the document and insisted upon including a section specifically on civil war, rebellion, and insurrection. The finished product was entitled Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field, and issued as General Orders No. 100 on 24 April 1863, endorsed by both Stanton and Lincoln. 194

193 Witt, Laws of War, 229-230; D.H. Dilbeck, ”The Genesis of this Little Tablet with My Name,” 232, 238; Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 167.

194 Dilbeck, ”The Genesis of This Little Tablet with My Name,” 231, 244; Ambrose, Halleck, 130.
In Washington, during the early months of 1863, stalled military operations began to cause a clamor amongst the Northern public. An article appearing in the *New York Times*, warned of the burgeoning strength of the Copperhead movement, cautioning readers to be weary of the faction’s true designs. The article labeled the Copperheads as disloyal and anti-administration, exposing their tactic of securing aid from men in the legislature, elected the previous fall. The article stated that the goal of the Copperheads was to suspend hostilities and make peace with the rebels on any terms. The writer pointed out that the present administration had neither the “disposition nor the power to make peace,”¹⁹⁵ as it was sworn to maintain the Constitution and the laws. According to article, the existence of the Copperheads was proof of the treacherous spirit and treasonable intent of politicians. The article expressed hope that the public would finally understand that the only safety, (in maintaining the Union), was in adhering faithfully to war policies. Due to the military’s stagnation, and waning public support of the administration, Halleck provided his officers with an incentive for military successes. On 1 March 1863, Halleck wired Grant stating, “There is a vacant major-generalcy in the Regular Army, and I am authorized to say that it will be given to the general in the field who first wins an important and decisive victory.”¹⁹⁶

In the West, Grant continued to look for ways to attack the formidable city of Vicksburg, and to keep his army occupied during the winter of 1862-1863. On the west side of the Mississippi, Grant’s men dug canals in an attempt to reroute the mighty river. On 7 March, Grant wired Halleck reporting the near completion of the canal, and reassured Old Brains that he


¹⁹⁶ *OR*, vol. 24, pt.1:19.
would, “have Vicksburg this month, or fail in the attempt.” That particular attempt failed, but Grant pressed on. Halleck kept a watchful eye on Grant’s operation and instructed his general to pay attention to his transports, or he would be short of supplies. Halleck gave information regarding the safe conveyance of vessels on the river between Memphis and Vicksburg, and told Grant to send requisitions for convoys to Admiral Porter. On 2 April, Grant wired Halleck stating, “In two weeks I expect to be able to collect all my forces and turn enemy’s left.” Grant’s plan was to move his army south of Vicksburg, and cross the Mississippi. There was high ground located on the eastern riverbank. To the General in Chief, Grant wrote, “I am pushing everything to gain a passage-avoiding Vicksburg.” As Grant labored to capture Vicksburg, Hooker began settling into his new command.

That January, Old Brains familiarized Fighting Joe with all of the locations of his detached forces and commanders. As stated to previous commanders, Halleck told Hooker he was the best judge of the operations of his army, when and where it could move, and to maintain coverage of Washington and Harper’s Ferry, no matter what. He reminded Hooker that Lee’s army, not the capturing of Richmond, was his objective. Hooker set about reorganizing his army, ensured that his men received proper supplies, and permitted lengthy furloughs for his enlisted. The morale in the army improved dramatically. General Hooker dealt with the General in Chief regarding administrative matters, but as far as operational plans were concerned, Hooker bypassed Halleck, conferring directly with Lincoln. Although Hooker never asked Halleck’s

197 Ibid.
198 Simpson, Ulysses S. Grant, 170.
199 Ibid., 171.
advice on military movements, Halleck would occasionally offer input. In April, Halleck, Lincoln, and Stanton visited Hooker’s army in Virginia, and Hooker refused to move immediately, warning the three “he would not submit to being interfered with.” In an attempt to discover Hooker’s plans to combat the enemy, Halleck asked Samuel P. Heintzelman, the commander of Washington’s defense under Hooker, for information regarding Hooker’s plan. In his journal, Heintzelman recorded that, “The President has taken the direction and General Halleck is not consulted.”

Halleck was not totally in the dark concerning Hooker’s operations. There was telegraphic traffic to follow, and many of Hooker’s subordinates wired information to Halleck. There were occasional problems related to the power dynamic between Hooker and Halleck. For example, Hooker wired Halleck on 13 April requesting a regiment of cavalry in order to patrol and guard the communication lines between Occoquan and Dumfries, stating that his cavalry had other duties to attend. Halleck replied that the safety of Washington did not depend upon the maintenance of communication with Hooker’s army, but it was Hooker’s responsibility to maintain communications with Washington, and to keep the War Department advised of his movements, real and intended. Halleck closed by stating, “You therefore have my orders to keep up such communications.” Hooker then wrote to Stanton with his inquiry with Halleck’s reply included, for Lincoln’s immediate review. In the end, Halleck wired Hooker the following day informing him that General Heintzelman ordered a regiment of cavalry to scout the area

200 Marszalek, *Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies*, 171.

201 Ibid., 170-171; *OR*, vol. 27, pt. 1: 31-32.

south of Occoquan and Dumfries. Lincoln’s permission for Hooker to bypass Halleck had other negative effects, beyond interrupting the chain of command and undermining Halleck’s authority. It also placed Lincoln in a position to make operational decisions, decisions Halleck maintained belonged to field commanders. Of course, Halleck was unhappy with the situation, and on 30 April, he wrote to his friend Dr. Lieber. “The great difficulty we have to contend with is poor, poorer, and worthless officers. Many of them have neither judgement, sense, nor courage. And I almost despair of any improvement.”

On 1 May, Hooker began to advance his large army towards the enemy, and his initial attack on the Confederate soldiers left at Chancellorsville proved successful. Instead of pressing onward, Hooker ordered his flanking force to entrench. The ever-observant R. E. Lee understood what was happening, and split his smaller force in two. He ordered Stonewall Jackson to take a detachment to outflank the soldiers on the Federal’s right. The right collapsed, and Hooker ordered a retreat, which did not sit well with his subordinate commanders. The Battle of Chancellorsville was an astounding Confederate Victory, causing union morale to sink, and uplift Southern spirits. However, the cost of victory came at a high price for the South. At Chancellorsville, Lee lost twenty one percent of his non-replaceable men, as well as the services of his trusted lieutenant, Stonewall Jackson, who received a mortal wound from friendly fire during the campaign, dying from his injuries shortly thereafter.

Following the Union defeat at Chancellorsville, the President and General in Chief graced Hooker with another visit. Lincoln assured Hooker that he blamed no one for the

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203 Marszalek, *Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies*, 171; *OR*, vol. 25, pt. 2:209.

204 Marszalek, *Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies*, 171.
defeat. Halleck remained with the army following Lincoln’s return to Washington. There, he spoke with a few commanders to ascertain additional facts about the battle. Upon his return to Washington, Halleck informed the President that Hooker was to blame for the Union’s defeat and retreat. Halleck also reported that Hooker was ready to resign his command, and thought that Lincoln should accept, if tendered. The President did not concur with Halleck, preferring to give Hooker an additional chance to show his fighting prowess. Although Halleck did not particularly like General Hooker as a person, when it came to his militarily courage, he judged him fairly. For example, Halleck told Francis Lieber that, “General Hooker’s army has met with no disaster. It simply failed to accomplish its object, but inflicted a loss upon the enemy much greater than our own.” Following his success at the Battle of Chancellorsville, Lee and his army once again set their sights north for their second invasion.205

205 Ibid., 172.
CHAPTER VII

*Harder War/Cooperative Management/End of Conflict*

When the Army of Northern Virginia began to march north on 5 June 1863, General Hooker devised a plan and submitted it to the President. Hooker’s strategy involved attacking Lee’s remaining detachments at Fredericksburg, and then move on Richmond. After reviewing Hooker’s plan, the President explained that Hooker’s inquiry called for professional military skill, and that he would forward it to General Halleck. However, Lincoln did provide a nonprofessional interpretation of the plan. “In one word, I would not take any risk of being entangled upon the river, like an ox jumped half over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear, without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other. If Lee would come to my side of the river, I would keep on the same side, and fight him or act on the defense, according as might be my estimate of his strength relatively to my own.”206

In his answer to Hooker, General Halleck first reminded him of the responsibility to cover the capitol and Harper’s Ferry. Old Brains then explained that it made more sense to fight the enemy’s moving force rather than attacking the entrenchments at Fredericksburg, especially considering the position of Hooker’s army on opposite sides of the Rappahannock. Due to the unpredictable nature of war, Halleck explained, Lee’s actions would dictate Hooker’s movements. To facilitate coordination, Old Brains told Hooker that Generals Heintzelman, Dix and Schenck would maintain contact with him regarding their actions. Lastly, Halleck reminded

Hooker that Lee’s army was fast and light, and advised Hooker to move with the same deftness.\(^{207}\)

While Lee’s army advanced, Hooker and Halleck continued to exasperate one another, with Halleck insisting upon the protection of Harper’s Ferry. Conversely, Hooker insisted upon incorporating the 10,000-man garrison into his army. Moreover, Hooker continued to press his strategy of capturing Richmond while Lee headed north. Hooker finally wired Halleck, explaining that he could not protect Harper’s Ferry and Washington all while monitoring Lee’s army, which outnumbered him, and respectfully tendered his resignation. Halleck notified Stanton, who passed the missive to Lincoln, which he accepted. When General Hooker visited the capitol without a proper pass, Halleck had him arrested. Hooker later described Old Brains as “the evil genius of the War.”\(^{208}\)

At this time, Grant’s repeated attempts to conquer Vicksburg had progressed. As usual, Halleck gave Grant his utmost support in addition to his responsibilities in the East. Despite the distance between Washington and Mississippi, Old Brains was able to maintain communication regarding Grant’s movement through General Stephen A. Hurlbut, headquartered in Memphis. In April, Grant and Rear Admiral Porter successfully ran past the Vicksburg defenses at night, shuttling troop transports and incurring minimal damages. To distract the Confederates, Grant deployed cavalryman Benjamin Grierson on an extended raid behind Confederate lines in Mississippi, and ordered Sherman’s infantry to feign an attack while naval gunboats shelled the city. Once below the fortress, the Federals were ferried across the Mississippi River without

\(^{207}\) Ibid., 31-32.

\(^{208}\) Marszalek, *Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies*, 175.
meeting any opposition. Although their ultimate objective was Vicksburg, the Federals first battled nearby Confederates to prevent the reinforcement of Joe Johnston’s army in Jackson. Grant’s forces fought and won battles at Port Gibson and Raymond, and Sherman demolished Jackson’s war making capacities. The Federals then headed west, where they successfully battled the guardians of Vicksburg, under Confederate General John Pemberton, at Champion Hill. Grant’s army pursued the Southerners to the Big Black River, where the enemy took a stand. The Union triumphed once again, and the Southerners retreated to the Vicksburg fortifications. Grant attempted futile assaults against the bastion, then lay siege to the city. When news reached Halleck regarding the deployment of massive reinforcements for General Johnston’s army, Halleck ordered thousands of troops from St. Louis, Memphis, Cincinnati, and Kentucky for Grant’s relief. Moreover, the General in Chief authorized the mounting of every possible soldier by General Hurlbut, informing him that the Ordinance Department would cooperate. Halleck instructed, “You are directed to obtain your supplies, as far as possible, from the country, for if you do not take them the enemy will.”

Starving inside Vicksburg, on 3 July, General Pemberton inquired the type of surrender terms would Grant offer. The terms were unconditional, of course, and Grant took the city, its guns, and 30,000 prisoners on 4 July 1863. Halleck showered Grant with praise stating, “These operations will compare most favorably with those of Napoleon about Ulm.” Likewise, Old Brains complemented Grant’s narrative report, calling it “brief, soldierly, and in every respect creditable and satisfactory.”


210 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 184.

211 Ibid.
Following the resignation of Hooker, General George Gordon Meade assumed command of the Army of the Potomac on 28 June 1863. In his orders to Meade, Halleck assured the general that he “would not be hampered by any minute instructions from these headquarters.”\textsuperscript{212} The protection of Washington and Baltimore was his responsibility, and Old Brains placed Harper’s Ferry and its garrison under Meade’s control. The bulk of the army was located in Frederick, Maryland. The new commander of the Army of the Potomac already faced an invasion, and a major engagement with General Lee. Obviously, Halleck wasted no time in telegraphing status updates and advice to his new commander. On Meade’s first day in command, Halleck warned of enemy cavalry crossing the Potomac near Seneca Falls, destined for the railroad, aiming to cut off Meade’s supplies. Halleck also reported another cavalry force south of the Potomac, and warned Meade that Washington possessed no cavalry, due to Hooker taking Heintzelman’s troopers. Having faith in the intelligence report stating that Stuart’s cavalry had crossed the Potomac at Williamsport, Meade asked permission to remove part of the garrison at Harper’s Ferry, leaving a force to defend Maryland Heights. Halleck concurred, stating the garrison at Harper’s Ferry fell under Meade’s command. The Southern forces wasted no time, and later that day captured 150 Union wagons near Rockville. Halleck feared a loss of communication with Meade, unless under the protection of his cavalry. Later that evening, Meade provided Halleck with his marching orders based upon enemy movements. Meade planned to head towards Emmitsburg and Westminster, further north into Maryland. Privy to intelligence regarding the enemy presence in Southcentral Pennsylvania, Meade decided to steer his army towards York. On 30 June, General Meade observed the enemy at the Cashtown Pass,

\textsuperscript{212} OR, vol. 27, pt. 1: 61.
informed his subordinate General Darius Couch, and requested Couch’s situation and additional information regarding enemy locations. He also asked Couch to forward his dispatches to Halleck, for he was no longer able to maintain direct communication. Halleck had approved Meade’s operational plans from the prior evening. On 1 July, Meade sent a message from Taneytown, Maryland, informing Old Brains of the enemy locations, and that he was selecting a field of battle. Later that afternoon, Meade reported the enemy’s presence at Gettysburg and that he expected a fight that day.\footnote{Ibid., 62-65, 67-71.}

The armies of Generals Meade and Lee clashed at Gettysburg, triggering a three-day engagement. On 1 July, Halleck sent messages to Meade advising the positioning of his forces and probable enemy tactics. In Washington, the administration nervously awaited updates from the battle. The diarist Gideon Welles recorded activities in Washington as the battle raged. According to Welles, the President cancelled his cabinet meeting, and remained with Stanton and Halleck. Welles believed the enemy in Pennsylvania, and expressed hope for their capture and prevention of their escape. He also expressed no faith in Halleck, believing Old Brains’ philosophy only included the act of pursuit. On 1 July, Welles heard that the rebels had left York, Pennsylvania. On 2 July, he recorded a “smart fight, but without results, near Gettysburg.”\footnote{Welles, \textit{Diary of Gideon Welles}, 354.}

On 3 July, General Meade pre-planned Union actions for the enemy’s retreat. He sent directives to General William H. French to forward to Halleck. In the case that the enemy fell back toward the Potomac, Meade wanted Harper’s Ferry reoccupied, and encouraged harassment

\footnote{Ibid., 62-65, 67-71.}

\footnote{Welles, \textit{Diary of Gideon Welles}, 354.
of the retreating columns. He ordered the enemy communication lines cut, and for French to remember to cover Washington. Gathering support for Meade, and unsure of the activity at Gettysburg, Halleck wired Couch in Harrisburg on the same day, requesting all available forces to assist by moving on Lee’s left flank. Couch, in turn, contacted the Union forces at Carlisle to assist in flanking Lee. The fighting at Gettysburg ended on 3 July, and was a Union victory. 215

In the West, Grant actively moved upon Vicksburg in Mississippi, and Washington urged Rosecrans to move in tandem, thus pressuring the enemy at multiple points, preventing their ability to reinforce. On 3 June, Halleck wired Old Rosie, informing him that Johnston’s force had received large numbers of soldiers from Bragg’s army, adding, “If you cannot hurt the enemy now, he will soon hurt you.” 216 General Burnside and Halleck attempted to push Rosecrans into motion. Burnside wired he was ready to cooperate, and if Rosecrans was not, Burnside planned to send troops to reinforce Grant. Halleck cut into the conversation, ordering Burnside to send 8,000 men to Grant immediately. On 14 June, General Hurlbut informed Halleck that he needed Rosecrans at once. Hurlbut said that he had abandoned Jackson, where the enemy had turned and exposed both his rear and flanks. Hurlbut stated he had notified Rosecrans, but Rosecrans, “does not seem to credit it.” 217 On 15 June, Halleck contacted Rosecrans with the intercepted troop strengths of Bragg, Johnston, Hardy, and Polk, and their cavalry. Old Brains informed Rosy of the ordering of seven enemy regiments to Tullahoma, inducing Rosecrans to move. Old Rosy finally moved on 24 June and masterfully attacked

217 Ibid., 428, 429.
Bragg’s flanks in the Duck River Valley. At the beginning of July, Bragg returned to
Chattanooga, which gave hope to the administration regarding the possibility of relieving the
Unionists in Knoxville. Lincoln urged Rosecrans to move on to Knoxville with the assistance of
Ambrose Burnside’s Army of the Ohio, but Rosy once again paused to repair rails and bridges,
and established a forward supply base. The Unionists of Eastern Tennessee had suffered unduly
at the hands of secessionists, and freeing this population was a top priority of the Lincoln
administration. Finally, on 16 August, Rosecrans advanced.218

In Pennsylvania, Lee’s forces began their retreat on 4 July, while Meade hurried to
prevent the crossing of the enemy to Virginia. On that morning, Halleck wired General Benjamin
F. Kelly in Cumberland, Maryland, sharing intelligence that the region between Lee’s army and
Richmond was desolate of troops. Halleck ordered Kelley forward, concentrating his forces near
Hancock, Maryland in an effort to flank Lee should he attempt to cross the Potomac. Gideon
Welles wrote that the Union army awaited supplies before following, and sarcastically added, “A
little of the old lagging infirmity.”219 Unbeknownst to Welles, that ‘lag’ was due to prior
planning; by 4 July, an expedition sent by French destroyed the rebel pontoon bridge over the
Potomac at Williamsburg, capturing the guard that consisted of one lieutenant and thirteen men.
Lincoln, keeping abreast of the telegraphic traffic, inquired, “Cannot the enemy ford the
river?”220

220 *OR*, vol. 27, pt. 3: 544.
In Washington, on 4 July, Stanton reported intelligence of Lee’s desperate request for reinforcements from the Confederate War Department. Stanton stated that the intelligence was the best indication the North ever had of the rebels’ condition, and that they were desperate. The War Secretary then alerted General Dix at Fort Monroe in Virginia of Lee’s defeat and retreat. Stanton told Dix that his command could break Lee’s communication and prevent his reaching Richmond. Halleck was determined to prevent Lee from escaping across the Potomac, and remained on the telegraph, directing movements as best he could. On 5 July, Old Brains ordered all cavalry detachments from the Army of the Potomac to Frederick immediately. The diarist Welles recorded a story relayed to him by the President on 7 July. Lincoln feared the possibility of Lee’s retreat from Pennsylvania without the army’s total destruction. Nevertheless, the President spoke to Halleck, urging him to infuse the right spirit into the men, and to remind the army of his expectations. General Halleck reportedly gave the President a curt reply. Lincoln concluded the conversation, “I drop the subject.”

On that same evening, Lincoln sent Halleck a message while at the Soldier’s Home. The President told Halleck of his dissatisfaction with simply driving the enemy from Northern soil, and inquired if Halleck’s policy was simply removal or destruction? In closing, the despondent Lincoln stated that if Halleck was satisfied in driving away rather than destroying the enemy, then Lincoln would accept it; if not, then Halleck was “to look to it.” Halleck telegraphed General Meade in Frederick, informing him that reliable information reported the enemy

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221 Welles, *Diary of Gideon Welles*, 363-364.

222 *OR*, vol. 23, pt. 3: 567.
crossing at Williamsport, and soon the opportunity of attacking Lee’s divided force would be
gone.\(^\text{223}\)

Halleck let Meade know that the President was anxious for the aggressive pursuit of
Lee’s army. Meade quickly replied that his intelligence in reference to the enemy’s crossing did
not match what Halleck reported. Meade’s intelligence reported the enemy between Funkstown,
and Williamsport, and of their pushing back Union cavalry to Boonsboro. He informed Old
Brains that his army was making forced marches; that they were short of rations, and barefoot.
Meade added that one corps had marched over 30 miles the previous evening, and that he was
pushing his army forward. Old Brains replied, with a notable change in tone, “Do not understand
me as expressing any dissatisfaction; on the contrary, your army has done most nobly.”\(^\text{224}\) Old
Brains explained that he had relayed the information he had, and understood that Meade, who
was on the ground, possessed better information. Halleck assured Meade that reinforcements
were on the way, and that the enemy might escape by crossing the river. In the midst of this
excitement, Old Brains wired Meade to ensure that if Meade and Lee made an agreement on
prisoners or parole, to ensure that it adhered to the seventh article of the cartel, which called for a
designated delivery location.\(^\text{225}\)

As Meade’s army approached the Potomac to prevent Lee’s crossing on 9 July, Halleck
alerted Meade of forthcoming reinforcements. Halleck understood and insisted upon relying on
the opinions of field commanders, so he added, “Do not be influenced by any dispatch from here

\(^{223}\) OR, vol. 27, pt. 1: 85.

\(^{224}\) Ibid.

\(^{225}\) Ibid., 86.
against your own judgment. Regard them as suggestions only. Our information here is not always correct." 226 He urged Meade to take any horses or supplies his army needed from the countryside. On 10 July, Meade informed Halleck that the enemy’s position extended from the Potomac, (near Falling Waters, Downsville and Funkstown), to the northeast of Hagerstown. He reported his cavalry pushing the enemy troops within a mile of Funkstown. The enemy responded with fire from twenty pounders. 227

Another decisive battle seemed imminent, and Halleck wanted to guarantee the devastation of the Army of Northern Virginia. He wired Meade and informed him to postpone a general battle until he consolidated his forces and received the necessary reinforcements. Halleck directed the general to assign staff officers on the Monocacy to direct troops, and urged him to hurl all of his forces at Lee. On 13 July, Meade sent an unexpected message to Halleck. The consensus of his officers was to not to attack Lee until the enemy position had been closely inspected. Halleck exploded. Old Brains bellowed that Meade was strong enough now to defeat the enemy before his crossing, and instructed him to act on his own judgment and to make his generals execute his orders. “Call no council of war…..do not let the enemy escape.” 228 On 14 July, Meade reported that the enemy had evacuated. Halleck insisted that Meade follow and cut the enemy up wherever they may have gone, reminding Meade of Lincoln’s dissatisfaction. That same day, Meade tendered his resignation. Perhaps Halleck felt his temper got the best of him, for on the evening of 14 July, he wrote to Meade explaining that his expressing the President’s

226 Ibid., 88.
227 Ibid., 89.
228 Ibid., 91.
disappointment at Lee’s escape was not a censure, but a stimulus for pursuit; he had not intended for Meade to apply for relief from command.\textsuperscript{229}

Following the Battle of Gettysburg, national attention turned to New York, now in the midst of a violent draft riot over the Enrollment Act of 1863, which included a $300 military exemption fee. Moneyed men had a way out of the war, but it was not so for the poor man. Draftees believed they were going to fight for emancipation, and possibly lose their jobs to the freedmen. In response to the Enrollment Act, workers in the city formed mobs and went on a rampage. The mob targeted wealthy looking white men, or murdered blacks on the street. News quickly reached Washington, and Halleck demanded that the Governor, Horatio Seymour, raise the militia to restore order. Halleck also ordered troops from his nearby armies to quell the unrest. Old Brains appointed General Dix from Fort Monroe to command the troops gathered there. Halleck’s friend Francis Lieber living in New York reported to the General, “Negro children were killed in the street, like rats with clubs.”\textsuperscript{230}

Troublesome news arrived in Washington regarding additional reinforcements sent to Braxton Bragg. Reports reached Halleck that General James Longstreet’s corps was deploying west to aid in Tennessee, and that Bragg expected men from General Johnston’s army. Halleck hastily ordered Burnside and Rosecrans to link up, and for Grant, Sherman, and Hurlbut to send all of their available troops to Chattanooga. Old Brains told Meade that his job was to keep Lee from sending any more troops west. Ready for action, Rosecrans finally began moving his army on 17 August, arriving in Chattanooga on 9 September. At the same time, Burnside’s army


\textsuperscript{230} Marszalek, \textit{Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies}, 182-183.
headed to Knoxville, Tennessee, which he captured on 2 September. On 6 September, Burnside contacted Halleck, informing him that he would move to aid Rosecrans. On 11 September, Halleck wired Rosecrans, informing him that Burnside held East Tennessee above Loudon and the gaps of the North Carolina Mountains. Halleck told Rosecrans that cavalry was enroute to Athens to connect with his army. Halleck wired Burnside congratulating him on his success, and instructed him to hold North Carolina’s mountain gaps. If possible, Halleck wanted Burnside to prevent enemy access to Virginia, to attempt to connect with Rosecrans, and to send cavalry.231

On 19 September, the forces belonging to Bragg and Longstreet attacked Rosecrans at Chickamauga Creek near Chattanooga. Rosecrans committed a grievous error on the second day of the battle by opening a patent line of defense. Longstreet’s corps took advantage of the mistake and collapsed the Federal’s right flank. This routed the Federals and they fled to the defenses of Chattanooga. General George Thomas and his force took a stand on Snodgrass Hill and held the Confederates back until his army retreated to safety, earning him the moniker, “Rock of Chickamauga.” Rosecrans also withdrew his men from the Lookout Mountain passes, which covered his line of supplies. The enemy immediately occupied them, and Bragg besieged the Union army, leaving Rosecrans’s army trapped and in need of relief.232

Back in Washington, Lincoln’s cabinet, along with General Halleck, decided to send Hooker with three divisions from the Army of the Potomac to rescue Rosecrans. With the aid of George McCullum, director of the military railroads, the first of the troops arrived in one week. Apparently, sending Hooker was not enough to ensure success in breaking the siege, so on 16

232 Ibid., 493.
October Halleck ordered Grant to Louisville. There, Grant received orders appointing him the commander of all military departments between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River, including the Departments of the Ohio, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee. General Sherman replaced Grant as the commander of the Army of the Tennessee. Exercising his new latitude, Grant relieved Rosecrans before reaching Chattanooga, and replaced him with General George Thomas. The Secretary of the Army met Grant and Sherman in Louisville, and they rushed troops to Chattanooga. Upon arrival, Grant, Sherman, Hooker, and Thomas devised strategy. They successfully opened the “cracker line” that brought in supplies, and enabled the defeat of the Confederates at the Battle of Chattanooga.233

In late November, the Union troops won the battle at Lookout Mountain under General Hooker. Men commanded by General Thomas attacked Missionary Ridge, routing the Southerners. General Halleck was pleased with his Western generals and wired to Grant, “I congratulate you and your army on the victories of Chattanooga, this is truly a day of thanksgiving.”234 So proud was Halleck that he bragged to Stanton, “Not only did the officers and men exhibit great skill and daring in their operations on the field, but the highest praise is also due to the commanding General for his admirable dispositions for dislodging the enemy from a position apparently impregnable.”235

233 Marszalek, Commander of All Lincoln’s Armies, 186-187; McPherson, Battle Cry, 676.


There was more trouble in the West. General Longstreet besieged Burnside’s forces at Knoxville, compelling General Sherman and his troops run to assist the command. Sherman’s men marched for six days in the cold, over mountainous terrain. When they finally arrived, Sherman found Burnside eating a turkey dinner complete with table linen and silverware. Burnside claimed that the rumors depicted a more difficult situation than actually existed. When General Longstreet viewed the approach of Sherman’s army, he retreated to back to Lee in Virginia. In December, Sherman wrote to his brother, Senator John Sherman, “Halleck has more capacity than anybody in the army. Grant has qualities Halleck doesn’t, but not such as would qualify him to command the whole army. The war hasn’t developed his equal as a commander in chief.”

In February 1864, the House of Representatives nominated Grant for promotion to Lieutenant General, a rank specifically created for him. The only other generals to hold that rank in the past were George Washington and Winfield Scott. The bill passed in the Senate, Lincoln signed it, and Stanton had Halleck order Grant to come to Washington. Halleck informed Sherman he would be thrilled if Grant became the General in Chief, as he would be glad to be relieved from such a thankless and disagreeable position. Old Brains gladly relinquished the post. Halleck harbored no ill feelings regarding Grant’s promotion, and on 5 March, Halleck telegraphed General Nathaniel Banks in New Orleans, stating he presumed that Grant would take his place as General in Chief. Halleck added that he sincerely congratulated Grant on the recognition of his distinguished service. Grant was to become the commanding General in the

236 Ambrose, Halleck: Lincoln’s Chief of Staff, 157.
field, travelling with Meade’s Army of the Potomac, while Halleck remained in Washington, taking care of the administration of the army, as usual.  

On 12 March 1864, General Orders 98 stated that, by his own request, Major General Halleck was relieved from duty as General in Chief of the Army, and General U.S. Grant was to be assigned duty to the command of the armies of the United States. The headquarters of the army would be in Washington, with Lieutenant General Grant in the field. The orders assigned Halleck to duty in Washington as Chief of Staff of the Army, under the direction of the Secretary of War and the Lieutenant General commanding. In reference to Halleck, the orders stated, “His orders will be obeyed and respected accordingly.” Halleck became the intercessor between Lincoln and Grant, of the field commanders, and Washington.

As Chief of Staff, Halleck translated for all parties and dealt with administrative matters. He could now perform his duties without the pressure of command. It was a well-deserved relief. Of Halleck, Lincoln said he was a true General in Chief only until Pope’s defeat, and after that, he shrank from the responsibility whenever possible. When Halleck became the Army Chief of Staff, his critic Adam Gurowski, referencing Old Brains’ mischievous ways, stated, “He will find an outlet, and in some way or other repeat his former accursed tricks, I am certain.” The New York Times offered the opinion, “No officer in the army who is less ambitious, and more ready to serve in any capacity, so that he can serve his country.” A military aide to Halleck wrote,


238 Marszalek, *Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies*, 197.

239 Ibid., 198.

240 Ibid.
“My chief is to be ‘Chief of Staff of the Army,’ or in other words to remain the scapegoat for other people’s blunders and interference. People may abuse him as they like, but his whole course has shown a disregard of self-interest and devotion to the cause.” Halleck wrote of his new position, stating, “Someone must be here to attend to the vast amount of military administrative duty.” He added, “Although I am to perform the same duties as before, the responsibility of deciding upon plans of campaigns and movements of armies must hereafter rest on the shoulders of others. It will be my business to advise, and theirs to decide.”

The other officers included in the command change were General Sherman, now commander of the Military Division of the Mississippi, comprised of the Departments of the Ohio, the Cumberland, the Tennessee, and the Arkansas. Additionally, General McPherson was now commander of the Department and Army of the Tennessee. The order contained a personal comment to Halleck from the President, expressing his “approbation and thanks for the able and zealous manner in which the arduous and responsible duties of that position have been performed.” The President clearly appreciated Halleck’s service and held him in high regard.

Without asking Halleck for input, Generals Grant and Sherman planned strategy for the upcoming year. Grant, with the Army of the Potomac led by General Meade, would move against Lee in Virginia, and Sherman would battle Johnston in Georgia. The key to operations was for all the Union armies to advance simultaneously, in order to prevent the enemy from being able to reinforce and strengthen one another. Under this plan, the main armies were those

241 Ibid.
242 Ibid.
243 OR, vol. 32, pt. 3:18; Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 197.
under Meade and Sherman, and they maintained a nearly 2:1 advantage over their Confederate counterparts. Grant also tasked Sherman with moving into the interior of the country, hoping to inflict all the damage possible against Confederate war resources. In addition to these forces, there were three smaller armies commanded by political generals. Benjamin Butler commanded the Army of the James, whose mission involved advancing northward on the Virginia Peninsula, severing the railroad between Petersburg and Richmond, and threatening Richmond from the south. General Banks commanded the Army of the Gulf in Louisiana. The mission of his army involved devising a campaign to seize Mobile, and then move northward, preventing the enemy in Alabama from reinforcing Johnston. General Franz Sigel’s mission was to move up the Shenandoah Valley. Sigel was to use columns when moving against the Virginia and Tennessee Railroads, putting down the rebels in the valley and cutting their communications. Lincoln, when learning of the roles of the three political generals, declared, “Those not skinning can hold a leg.”

Grant left Washington on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad near Culpeper, joining Meade’s army in May 1864. He then told Meade his primary objective, “Wherever Lee goes, there will you go also.” Sherman moved on Johnston in Georgia as planned. Halleck remained informed of their movements and needs. Sherman and Grant pushed their opponents back; however, the minor armies of Sigel, Banks, and Butler were not successful in accomplishing their missions.

244 McPherson, Battle Cry, 722; OR, vol. 32, pt. 3: 245; Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 203; Anders, Henry Halleck’s War, 539.
245 McPherson, Battle Cry, 722.
Bank’s mission underwent a modification by the administration. Before seizing Mobile, the General was to travel up the Red River in Louisiana, seizing cotton and increasing Federal control of the state. Once that task was completed, he would then turn to Mobile. The only success by General Banks was the seizure of cotton; his army managed to destroy civilian property, making the Federals more unpopular in that region. His command repulsed an attack by rebels under the command of General Richard Taylor, and retreated. Bank’s army did not return to Southern Louisiana until late May, arriving too late to capture Mobile. Because of his failure, the Confederate General Johnston inherited 15,000 reinforcements from Alabama.²⁴⁶

Butler, with his army of 30,000, moved up the James River, landing between Petersburg and Richmond on 5 May. The opposing force numbered only 5,000 men, and their commander, General Beauregard, was not yet present. Butler failed to take advantage of the situation, moving cautiously, which gave the rebels time to reinforce themselves, putting them back on even footing. The two armies fought at Drewry’s Bluff, resulting in a Federal retreat. The Confederates had successfully entrapped Butler’s army in their own entrenchments.²⁴⁷

Franz Sigel and his army moved up the Valley to capture Staunton. Opposing him was a Confederate force comprised of cadets from the Virginia Military Institute, under the command of General John C. Breckinridge. On 15 May, the students drove the Federals back. Generals

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 722-723.
²⁴⁷ Ibid., 723-724.
Halleck and Grant strove to remove General Sigel from command, writing of his possible replacement, the West Point alum General David Hunter.\(^{248}\)

Back in Washington, Halleck was once more responsible for supplying the vast armies, now in continuous operation. He kept track of movements, informed, and advised. When Sherman campaigned against Johnston, he sent daily reports to Old Brains, who edited them before sending them to Grant. The opposite was also true; Grant prepared orders for his commanders, which Halleck edited and dispersed. In this position, Halleck could anticipate the army’s needs, thereby keeping the Army of the Potomac and the Western army well stocked with provisions, sometimes prior to requisitions. For example, prior to Grant requesting a pontoon bridge for Fredericksburg, Halleck had ensured it was constructed and in place. As Grant battled Lee in the wilderness of Spotsylvania, his army’s needs were tremendous. Halleck told Grant, “Every man we can collect should be hurled against Lee, wherever he may be, as his army not Richmond, is the true objective of this campaign. I therefore propose to send to you everything I can get without regard to the calls of others, until you direct otherwise.”\(^{249}\) Calling attention to Butler’s ineptitude, Halleck reminded the General in Chief that Butler’s force was part of his immediate command. Grant ordered Butler’s troops sent to him, minus those left for defense of City Point.\(^{250}\)

The working relationship between Grant and Halleck was smooth. Anticipating Grant’s needs, Halleck would simply ask about the condition of the army, and respond with appropriate

\(^{248}\) Ibid., 724; \textit{OR}, vol. 32, pt. 2: 840.

\(^{249}\) Marszalek, \textit{Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies}, 201.

\(^{250}\) Ibid., 205.
actions. With Halleck, Grant could confidently express the needs of his army in the briefest terms. As Grant required additional men, he pulled from Washington’s defenses. Halleck, as always, commented and advised, working to secure the placement of competent personnel in their assignments. When new recruits deployed, Halleck ensured that each man possessed five days of rations and 150 rounds.  

In June, Grant shifted his army south of the James River, hoping for a quick capture of Petersburg. Unfortunately, the local commander waited too long to move, and Lee brought his troops up and reinforced the rail hub city. While Grant moved towards Petersburg, Halleck grew concerned regarding the exposed capitol. Grant told his staff, “We can defend Washington best by keeping Lee so occupied that he cannot detach enough troops to capture it.” There would be a multitude of problems associated with Grant’s move in the future.

In the Southeast, the Confederate Generals Early and Breckinridge defeated Hunter at Lynchburg, proceeded northward, and chased Franz Sigel into Maryland. They were 40 miles from Washington on 9 July. Grant did not believe this activity constituted a major problem, and neither did Halleck, initially. Halleck wrote Grant and told him that he did not think it necessary to send troops to Washington, but to send dismounted cavalry because invalids and militia were responsible for Washington’s defense. Later that day, Halleck began to fear he needed additional men, and wired Grant. Grant immediately dispatched 3,000 dismounted cavalry, also sending 6,000 infantrymen to Baltimore. Grant, enraged by the Confederates, ordered the destruction of any force the enemy sent north, and ordered another Union raid on the Shenandoah Valley,

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251 Ibid.; OR, vol. 33, 879; Ambrose, Halleck, 166.

252 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 205.
specifically sent to destroy communications and supplies. Halleck confided in his friend Lieber that he had predicted this raid before Grant had crossed the James River.²⁵³

On 7 July, General Lew Wallace, dealing with the invasion near Frederick, wired Old Brains informing him he had repelled the enemy. Halleck informed Grant that the raid was larger than first thought, and that their objective questionable. Halleck then ordered 3,000 cavalry to the Monocacy and arranged for supplies, forage, and payment, alerting the Commissary General to make ready provisions for eight to ten thousand men arriving at that location. That evening, General Wallace reported the expulsion of the enemy from Frederick, but he was mistaken. Within a few hours, the full force of the enemy had developed, and on 9 July, and the Battle of Monocacy took place, resulting in a Southern victory.²⁵⁴

The Secretary of War assigned Halleck the duty of organizing the troops in Washington for defense. Stanton directed quartermaster Meigs to report to Halleck for field duty. Halleck wired Grant once again, requesting him to send the remainder of the VI Corps to the capitol. Grant ordered them forward and offered to accompany the men if the President desired. The Chief of Staff then telegraphed Philadelphia, instructing General George Cadwalader to collect all convalescents capable of defending forts and rifle pits, and to send them to Washington.²⁵⁵

Washington experienced a panic; the trains stopped running and the telegraph went quiet. Unionists from Maryland rushed into Washington for protection, and government employees brought weapons to work, fearing for their safety. On the afternoon of 10 July, Lincoln calmly

²⁵³ Ibid., 206.
²⁵⁵ Ibid., 136,153.
summarized the situation to Grant, suggesting that he accompany soldiers to Washington to
destroy the enemy, keeping in mind that his primary mission was to maintain a hold over
Virginia. In closing, Lincoln emphasized that his thoughts were not orders but suggestions. On
11 July, Halleck wired General Hunter with a strategy designed to capture the rebels, based on
the cooperation of Wright’s forces. Halleck’s plan involved the junction of Hunter’s and
Wright’s army by Edward’s Ferry. The goal was to intercept the enemy’s rear, thus preventing
their escape. By 12 July, Horatio Wright’s men had arrived, and the city breathed a sigh of
relief. The forces fought at Fort Stevens, and by dawn on 13 July, Early retreated. The
implementation of Halleck’s plan was moot.256

There was backlash in the capitol over the invasion; Halleck once again received the
brunt of the public’s criticism. Unfortunately, for the General, his publisher recently released
Halleck’s translation of Jomini’s life, which gave fodder to his detractors. Benjamin Butler
wrote, “At a moment when every true man is laboring to his utmost, when the days ought to be
forty hours long, General Halleck is translating French books at nine cents a page; and, sir, if you
should put those nine cents in a box and shake them up, you would form a clear idea of General
Halleck’s soul.”257 In case of another such invasion, Lincoln appointed Halleck as commander of
the defenses of Washington. Once again, the President outwardly expressed his confidence in
Halleck, and, once again, the media misrepresented Old Brains, creating an atmosphere in which
falsehoods prevailed.

257 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 211.
The Union push of 1864 slowed, and the hopes of a quick end to the war failed to materialize. In late July, a portion of Confederate Cavalry raided Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, while the Army of the Potomac besieged Lee at Petersburg. The Confederate General John McCausland demanded the residents of Chambersburg pay $500,000 dollars in cash for retribution for destruction in the Shenandoah Valley. When the citizens failed to pay, McCausland torched the town. At this time in the West, Johnston had defeated Sherman at Kennesaw Mountain in Georgia, and General McPherson fell at the Battle of Atlanta.258

Failing to obtain his objectives, Grant decided to make command changes. He replaced Franz Sigel with Philip Sheridan, and instructed Halleck to order Sheridan to “put himself south of the enemy and follow him to the death.”259 Prior to sending Sheridan his orders, Halleck questioned the change of General Hunter’s status, and told Grant he would give no instructions until the finality of that decision. Old Brains told Grant he would carry out whatever he decided. In actuality, Halleck probably shared Grant’s exact sentiments regarding the situation, but knew how to protect himself when it came to politics. When Grant made his decision, Old Brains wired Sheridan a lawful version of his new duties.260

The stalemates continued at Petersburg and Atlanta during the summer of 1864. The Northern populace tired of the war, and the Presidential election loomed. General McClellan was the candidate for the Democratic Party, embracing a peace platform. Lincoln realized that without substantial change, the Republican Party would lose. Francis Lieber, in correspondence

258 Ibid., 212.
259 Ibid.
with Old Brains, thought McClellan’s running was “shameless, disgraceful and treasonable.” Halleck, a lifetime Democrat, replied, agreeing, “McClellan’s election would lose us all we have fought for.”

Towards the end of the summer, the Union’s fortune improved. On 23 August, Admiral David Farragut captured Mobile Bay, and on 3 September, General Sherman finally captured Atlanta. Sherman wrote to Halleck with thanks, stating, “I confess I owe you all I now enjoy of fame.” Halleck answered that he did not “hesitate to say that your campaign has been the most brilliant of the war.” Later that month, Sheridan won the Battle of Fisher’s Hill in the Shenandoah Valley. Halleck told his best friend and aide George Cullum, “Nearly all the Western Generals that I selected and put forward, have turned out trumps.” Sherman and his army set out on their March to the Sea on 16 November. During the march, Old Brains encouraged Sherman’s hard war tactic, approving of “taking away or destroying whatever may serve as supplies to us or to the enemy’s army.”

That November, General John Schofield battled the Confederate forces under John Bell Hood, resulting in a resounding Union victory at the Battle of Franklin. Schofield then fell back to Nashville to join General Thomas’s forces. As Thomas struggled to prepare his force, (largely the leftover remnants of other armies), Grant grew anxious. Thomas, though a competent commander, had a nickname among his friends, “slow-trot.” Grant and Halleck urged Thomas to

261 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 213.
262 Ibid., 214.
263 Ibid.
264 Ibid.
attack, but it was to no avail. Thomas was short on men and supplies and tried to make do, and simply refused to move unprepared. Grant requested additional troops from Halleck, but there were none. Finally, Grant ordered Halleck to direct General Grenville Dodge to send all available troops to Thomas. Grant also instructed that if Thomas had not yet attacked, that he was to turn his command over to Schofield. At that, Halleck shot back that if Grant wanted Thomas relieved, Grant should issue the order. Halleck added, “No one here will, I think, interfere. The responsibility, however, will be yours, as no one here, so far as I am informed, wishes General Thomas’ removal.” Halleck warned Thomas that he must attack, but Thomas would not move until he felt prepared. Grant insisted upon removing Thomas and reluctantly, Halleck prepared the order. To make matters worse, and at the worst possible time, there was an ice storm, further delaying Thomas. Halleck, in a last ditch effort, wired Grant, informing him of Thomas’ circumstances. Grant yielded, although temporarily. When the ice thawed, Thomas attacked on 15 December, pummeling Hood’s army, causing a route. Hood’s army was shattered, but not destroyed. Halleck recommended detaching 20,000 men from Thomas’s army for services at another location. Old Brains felt that Thomas was too slow to live off the land; a fast moving army existed best under those circumstances. Grant disagreed, and refused to permit winter quarters, maintaining that Thomas had to monitor Hood’s army.

Halleck cheered General Sherman on as he made his way in to the Carolinas, stating, “When you capture Charleston, I hope that by some accident the place may be destroyed, and if a little salt should be sown upon its site it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification.

266 Ibid., vol. 45, pt. 2: 96.

267 Ibid., 16-17, 96; Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 217.
and secession.” Clearly, Halleck admired both Sherman and Grant, but he remained more critical of the latter. Corresponding about Grant’s performance in Virginia, Halleck stated, “Grant’s campaign is almost as great a failure as that of McClellan, so far as strategy is concerned.” Halleck also added, “Grant’s bull-dog tenacity will do much to redeem his faults of strategy.”

Halleck was closer to Sherman, and definitely more protective. In December 1864, Sherman took the city of Savannah, Georgia. Sherman then wired Lincoln, “I beg to present you as a Christmas gift the city of Savannah, with one hundred fifty heavy guns and plenty of ammunition, also about twenty-five thousand bales of cotton.” The North went wild with joy; however, while Sherman was in Savannah, Halleck wrote to him and warned about rumors in Washington concerning Sherman’s ‘criminal dislike,’ of Blacks. Halleck suggested that perhaps there was available land for the freed men to tend, whilst Sherman continued his march. Secretary Stanton, onsite for a surprise visit, agreed with Halleck’s suggestion. This suggested culminated into Special Field Order No. 15, in January of 1865, which permitted the freed men to farm forty acres of land, and permitted the use of government mules. The freed men mistakenly believed that the land was now their property.

Union success continued throughout 1865. Sherman started his march through the Carolinas, and Grant continued to pressure Lee. Thanks to Sheridan, the Confederacy no longer had the fertile Shenandoah land to provide supplies. In April, after Lee broke from Grant in an

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268 OR, vol. 44, 741.

269 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 219.


attempt to join Johnston’s army, his rag-tag army was cornered and captured. Lee surrendered to
U.S. Grant in April of 1865, at Appomattox Court House, Virginia. Grant gave generous terms,
permitting officers to retain their side arms; and soldiers, their horses and mules. An elated
Halleck wrote to Sherman claiming that if Johnston had surrender as Lee, he presumed that
Sherman would have given him the same terms. On 14 April, in the midst of the celebration
surrounding the Union’s victory, the President was murdered. Sherman was in North Carolina
and in the middle of drafting the surrender of the Confederate army with General
Johnston. Sherman then overstepped his authority, and agreed to terms applicable for civil
authorities. He permitted the Confederate army to retain their weapons, and reinstated the
political rights of its citizens. The subject of slavery never surfaced. Sherman then forwarded the
terms to Washington, and, satisfied with his accomplishment, never realized his error.272

Meanwhile, in Washington, Halleck ordered military commanders to “arrest all persons
who may enter your lines by land or water.”273 Halleck also warned Sherman of a possible
assassin named Clark, sending his description. Shortly after the assassination, Halleck received
orders to assume duties as Commander of the Military Division of the James in Richmond. There
was no protection for him now with Lincoln gone. Halleck told Stanton of his desire to return
home to California, but Stanton denied his request.274

When the cabinet viewed Sherman’s terms, havoc broke out. Grant hurried south to save
his friend, hoping to institute the terms given to Lee at Appomattox. Halleck, now in Richmond,

272 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 221; Anders, Henry Halleck’s War, 657-658.

273 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 222.

274 OR, vol. 47, pt. 3: 221, 46, 3,788; Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln’s Armies, 222.
wired Stanton, stating that “respectable parties” had reported Jefferson Davis leaving the city with a tremendous amount of money, hoping to, “make terms with General Sherman or some other Southern commander by which they will be permitted with their effects, including this gold plunder,” so Davis could escape to Europe or Mexico. Halleck continued, “Johnston’s negotiations look to this end.”275 Old Brains recommended warning all commanding generals in reference to this development. Stanton correctly surmised that the disapproval of Sherman’s agreement was unknown to Halleck, and made the order to resume hostilities. Halleck then informed Generals Meade, Sheridan, and Wright to disregard any truce or orders given by General Sherman suspending hostilities. Halleck advised Stanton to send those directives to the entire army.276

When learning from Grant that the agreement now reflected Lee’s terms, Halleck sent out directives to commanders to disregard Sherman’s initial agreement. Halleck told his friend Cullum he had done all he could to counteract the supposed treaty, so that no unit was bound to Sherman’s command. Sherman was stunned to learn of the fallout behind his error. He shunned Stanton, and refused to have further relations with Halleck. Old Brains attempted to mend the friendship in a letter stating, “You have not had during this war, nor have you now, a warmer friend and admirer than myself.” Halleck explained he had been, “carrying out what he knew to be the wishes of the War Department, in regard to your armistice.”277 Halleck deeply regretted his actions, but Sherman refused the olive branch. Instead, Sherman wrote that his army would march through Richmond, taking, no notice of Halleck personally or officially. Halleck blamed

276 Ibid., vol. 46, pt. 3, 968.
277 Ibid., 454.
the incident on Sherman’s temperament, insinuating it was “one of his (Sherman’s), grand
excitements, worse even than in Kentucky and St. Louis. In a letter to Lieber, Halleck stated of
Sherman, “He is easily excited, and on such occasions his mind loses its balance, and he has no
self-control.” True to his word, Sherman’s army passed the review stand in Richmond, marching
by without saluting General Halleck.278

This was to be the conclusion of Halleck’s service during the Civil War. Halleck
remained in Richmond after the war on active duty. There, he collected records in the Customs
House and appointed an officer as Keeper of Public archives. He wanted to preserve all possible
documents, knowing that they would provide the history of the rebellion. When the papers and
books arrived at the Customs House, Halleck had them shipped to Washington. General
Schofield captured a collection of Confederate War Department records, weighing 10 tons, and
Halleck shipped them to the capitol as well. The appointed head of the archives in Washington
was Francis Lieber, who worked with the records for several years. Halleck’s preservation of
these records became the Official Records of the Union and Confederate armies and
navies. These records are an indispensable asset for serious studies regarding the rebellion.279

In June of 1865, Grant reorganized the army command structure and created five military
divisions. Halleck received a new assignment as commander of the Military Division of the
Pacific, including the Department of the Columbia, and Department of California, with
headquarters at San Francisco. Halleck departed Richmond by boat with his wife and son in
July. They arrived in San Francisco on 25 August, and received a salute of welcome. In 1869,

278 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 225, 223-224.

279 Ibid., 231-232.
Halleck received orders to command the Division of the South with headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky. Halleck accepted the assignment and relocated, assuming command on 13 June 1869. Old Brains remained on active duty until his death in St. Louis on 9 January 1872.\textsuperscript{280}

During the second half of the war, participants learned from their errors and honed their crafts. In Washington, Old Brains labored as he undertook dual roles, operating as the General in Chief and Chief of Staff. Having abandoned the conciliatory policy prior to leaving Missouri, Halleck advised hard war tactics to his field commanders. This was the brand of war enabling the Confederacy’s defeat. Grant’s appointment as General in Chief released Halleck from the role as the principle military director in Washington. With Grant directing the simultaneous advances of Union forces, Halleck anticipated field requirements, and made them happen.

The surrender at Appomattox seemed the grand finale of the war, until Lincoln’s assassination. Northern passions heated, and, with this backdrop, Sherman committed his famous folly in drafting surrender terms most beneficial to Johnston. The resulting orders issued by Old Brains initiated the permanent fissure between himself and his former subordinates, Grant and Sherman, now heroes of the Union. Misunderstood and out of the limelight, Halleck continued to labor in Richmond. Once more, providence had placed the General in the appropriate place because in this city, the military historian discovered the papers that documented the rebellion.

\textsuperscript{280} Ibid., 234, 235, 244, 248.
SUMMARY

Through the application of military art and science, the International Laws of War, and practical experience, Henry Halleck enabled the government to pursue the hard war tactics that eventually led to the Union’s victory. When the General assumed command in Missouri, he corrected organizational deficiencies with apparent ease, having performed the same type of duties in the pre-war army, as well as in the California militia. In addressing the substandard food, equipment, and lack of pay within his command, Halleck corrected any inadequacies, having lectured and written on the subject of logistics as a young lieutenant. Once Halleck achieved order within his command, he turned his attention to the disloyal population of St. Louis, establishing martial law and requiring its citizens to take the oath of the allegiance. Refusal to take the oath resulted in banishment from Federal lines. One other stringent act by Halleck was the levying of assessments upon wealthy secessionists. The collected money funded the repairs of damaged property and provided relief for the growing number of refugees in the city. Each one of Halleck’s acts perfectly embodied permissible actions under the laws of war.281

Old Brains applied his knowledge of strategy to his many campaigns. According to military theorist Henri Jomini, one method of destabilizing an enemy defense line involved attacking its center. This is exactly the tactic employed by Old Brains as he sent Ulysses Grant up the Tennessee River to destroy Forts Henry and Donelson. The surrender of Fort Henry was quick, due to the majority of the garrison having fled east to defend Fort Donelson. The Army and Navy ran into stiff resistance at Donelson, but never the less, they emerged victorious thanks

281 Marszalek, Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies, 103, 110-111.
to the reinforcements supplied by General Halleck, as well as blunders committed by
Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston. The conquering of these two forts provided
justification for Halleck in his demand for control of the West.\textsuperscript{282}

With the goal of capturing Corinth, Mississippi, Halleck’s army concentrated in the area
surrounding Pittsburg Landing, approximately twenty miles north. Corinth was a strategic target,
possessing connecting rail lines and transport facilities. The officer in charge of Pittsburg
Landing was General Ulysses Grant, who had received instructions and was cognizant of Old
Brains’ expectations regarding fortification of the area against enemy attack. According to
military theory, the preferred method of fighting with raw troops was behind fortifications.
However, instead of entrenching as ordered, Grant drilled the green troops, claiming the soldiers
benefitted more from drilling than entrenching. While Grant drilled his troops, Confederate
Generals Beauregard and Albert Sidney Johnston received intelligence regarding the Federal
concentration, and of the Union’s failure to fortify their location. The enemy attacked, causing
Grant’s troops to retreat towards the Tennessee River, thus ending the first day’s fighting.
General Beauregard failed to exploit his gains, and on day two, paid dearly for it when the Union
prevailed with the help of additional soldiers from the army of General Don Carlos Buell.\textsuperscript{283}

Halleck arrived at the scene and spoke with his commanders to ascertain details of the
battle. He instantly realized that Grant had disobeyed orders, and that his command was in
disarray. There had been significant casualties in the battle, and the public demanded an

\textsuperscript{282} Halleck, \textit{Elements}, 51; Ambrose, \textit{Halleck}, 29-33.

\textsuperscript{283} Ibid., 51, 64-65; Edward Hagerman, \textit{The American Civil War and the Origins of Modern Warfare:
Ideas, Organization, and Field Command} (Bloomingdale: Indiana University Press, 1988), 169; \textit{OR}, vol. 10, pt. 2:
384, 50-51.
explanation. Halleck deflected and defended his commanders amidst a firestorm of inquiry, and continued his preparations for the march on Corinth. Old Brains planned his army’s approach with textbook efficiency, dividing his force into three wings with General Grant commanding on the right. On 23 April, prior to the move, Halleck received an inquiry from the Secretary of War regarding Grant’s actions at the Battle of Shiloh; there was a cry for Grant’s removal, and accusations of drunkenness. Halleck again deflected the inquiries with neutral commentary, but removed Grant from command of his wing, and placed him as second in command of the expedition. Taking into account Grant’s subsequent rise during the war, an accepted rationale explaining Grant’s ‘demotion’ involves Halleck’s supposed jealousy of Grant. In his article, “Ulysses in His Tent: Halleck, Grant, Sherman, and The Turning Point of the War,” historian Carl R. Schenker raises important issues debating the popular theory. Upon learning of the Union victory at Shiloh, Halleck was pleased with the news, and informed the Assistant Secretary of War, Thomas A. Scott. Additionally, Halleck told Generals Curtis and Steele that Grant had defeated the enemy, driving them back and doing the enemy great harm. A second wire to Curtis stated, “General Grant’s victory on the Tennessee is most decisive.”

Schenker opined in his article the improbability of these comments coming from a jealous general. In fact, it is arguable that Halleck did not think highly enough of Grant to be jealous of him. Halleck viewed Grant as a disobedient, disorganized subordinate, albeit with promise. Another factor contradicting this theory was that it took nearly three weeks for Halleck to change his marching orders, designating General Thomas to command Grant’s wing. In the interim, General Sherman

spoke glowingly of Grant to Halleck, defending their actions at Shiloh. Even after Washington’s inquiry on 23 April, Halleck continued to retain Grant as commander as late as 28 April. According to Schenker, Halleck chastised Grant on three occasions for lateness and faulty compliance with orders. Halleck had requested a map to visualize Grant’s troop positions, which were tardy and displeased Old Brains. Two days later, Halleck amended his orders, with Grant still on the right wing but now designated as second in command of the army. The author notes that the position as second in command of a large army was common, and provided examples of this arrangement among Civil War generals. As early as 1892, historians claimed that Lincoln had decided to place Grant as second until passions cooled. However, contemporary historian William McFeely suggests that Washington’s inquiry spurred Halleck to move Grant, but that the change did not occur until five days later. John Marszalek believes that Halleck was dissatisfied with Grant’s administrative deficiencies and wanted him to correct his ways. I tend to concur with Marszalek, in that Halleck attempted to correct Grant, and pulled him from direct command to observe how to run an army in an organized fashion. I would add that Halleck and Grant preferred operating independently, and this similarity between them, caused problems.

During the march on 11 May, Grant wrote to Halleck expressing his position as ‘anomalous’, and much like ‘an arrest.’ Grant demanded to have his position defined, or else to be relieved. If Halleck was actually jealous of Grant and had truly wanted him gone, this was his opportunity. Halleck did not accept the resignation, and for the remainder of the march he consulted with Generals Grant, Thomas and Sherman on several occasions regarding the right wing of the army. Of Grant’s behavior, General John Pope wrote that Grant’s, “mortification

285 Ibid., 209.
was excessive, far beyond what the circumstances demanded.”

Grant, in all probability, needed to operate independently, and he sulked amidst cries for his removal by Western governors and the papers. Halleck demanded proficiency from his officers, and Grant was an impulsive general. Although Grant respected Halleck and his knowledge, their personalities were like oil and vinegar; they would have a complex working relationship.

After placing Grant as his second, Halleck led his huge army towards Corinth, intent on making no blunders and operating by the book. Emphasizing the importance of the city, Halleck stated, “Richmond and Corinth are now the great strategical points of war.”

Old Brains mitigated risks by ordering entrenchments at all pauses during the march, and insisted on crossroads for concentration and cooperation in the event of an enemy assault. General Beauregard, defending Corinth, planned and aborted several attacks during this period, due to the cohesiveness of Halleck’s position and his entrenched positions. As his large army proceeded southward, Halleck threw out his flankers in front, on the flanks and to rear of his columns. General Beauregard recognized Halleck’s tactics, knew he was outnumbered, and that retreat was his best option. When the Union army arrived at Corinth, it was vacant. The press labeled Halleck’s accomplishment as a barren victory. Through a planned maneuver, Halleck deprived Beauregard of opportunities to exploit weaknesses or mistakes, and Old Brains achieved a victory without a major engagement. Corinth, complete with the connection of two major railroads stretching in each direction, and lines leading into the western half of the Confederacy,

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286 Ibid., 212.

287 Ibid.

was anything but a barren victory. Within one week of the city’s capture, the Union possessed Fort Pillow and Memphis, and navigated the Mississippi as far south as Vicksburg. With this victory, Halleck had now established an operating base for future campaigns within the Deep South.289

Upon his appointment as General in Chief, Halleck travelled to Washington, but his mind remained occupied with unfinished business in the West. A huge problem in that region involved lack of information of permissible actions under the laws of war regarding partisans, guerrillas, and disloyal civilians. Halleck, busy with the overwhelming responsibilities in Washington, asked and obtained directives concerning guerrilla warfare from Dr. Francis Lieber. Once reviewed, Halleck approved the document, which was published as *Guerrilla Parties, Considered with Reference to the Laws and Usages of War*. Old Brains ordered five thousand copies, and disseminated them throughout the army. Halleck also saw the need for guidance targeting the specific needs imposed by the rebellion. Therefore, Halleck and Edwin Stanton arranged for a committee to work with Dr. Lieber in order to create a compilation of the laws of war applicable to their present conflict. Upon completion, Old Brains reviewed the document, suggested additional topics, and edited portions. The resulting set of directives became General Orders No. 100, or the Lieber Code, which stood as the first set of instructions that listed permissible actions in situations experienced by commanders, particularly during the current conflict. Armed with this knowledge, commanders gained confidence, as they were able to put down the insurrection with tenets found within these pages. In addition to their written

instructions, Old Brains addressed unique situations or clarified information directly regarding commanders in the field.\textsuperscript{290}

During the many disasters experienced in the war, the administration and Halleck would often receive severe criticism and insult. Such a situation occurred in the aftermath of the Union defeat at Fredericksburg. The news media claimed that Halleck was remiss in his duties to the Army of the Potomac. Halleck, in his official reporting of the campaign, and in his answers to inquiries by the Committee on the Conduct of the War, failed to sway public sentiment. Nor was this the only occasion Halleck suffered abuse from a misinformed public. Following the attack on Washington by Jubal Early, the papers ridiculed the General for failing to provide proper defense for the capitol. In actuality, the General in Chief, Ulysses Grant, travelling with the Army of the Potomac, left Washington uncovered as he laid siege to Petersburg. As the former General in Chief, Halleck warned every commander in the Army of the Potomac to keep Washington and Baltimore covered. With news of an enemy approach, numbering 20-30,000, Halleck quickly went into action, sending troops to the Monocacy under the command of General Lewis Wallace. The troops under Wallace suffered defeat on 9 July at the Battle of the Monocacy, and Early headed toward the capitol. During the interim, Halleck requested thousands of troops, arranging for their transportation and equipment. Under Halleck, invalids, clerks, and government civilians joined the ranks in the fortifications surrounding the city. The arrival of General Horatio Wright’s VI Corps quickly drove Early away from the capitol. Halleck, not trusting the situation, contacted Grant, explaining that as long as his army

\textsuperscript{290} Marszalek, \textit{Commanders of All Lincoln's Armies}, 167-168; Grimsley, \textit{The Hard Hand of War}, 148-151.
stayed south of the James River, Washington and Baltimore would remain uncovered. Grant had stripped the capitol defenses to bolster his numbers during the Overland Campaign, but if the situation remained the same, Halleck warned, they should expect additional raids. Old Brains’ warning was prophetic; after his withdrawal from the capitol area, General Early’s forces again moved northward, this time into Pennsylvania. In Chambersburg, the Confederates demanded a ransom from the townspeople. When the citizens failed to raise the money, the Confederates burned the town. In order to improve the new command organization, Lincoln realized there was a need for a chief in Washington to command its defense, should the need arise. The observant President recognized the true circumstances, and after Early’s attack on Washington, appointed General Halleck as the officer in charge of defending the capitol. 291

Throughout the war, Halleck fought against the appointments of non-professional political generals. Halleck, reared at West Point, believed in a competent, educated officer corps, and fervently defended the necessity of professional army leadership years before in his Element lectures. On multiple occasions, Halleck exercised his influence by replacing political generals with West Pointers. He did so in Missouri, when he replaced Franz Sigel with Samuel Curtis, and again when he wrote orders regarding General McClernand’s expedition to Vicksburg. As history demonstrates, Curtis successfully diminished the influence of pro-Confederate factions in Missouri, while Generals Grant and Sherman proved instrumental in the phenomenal action required to conquer Vicksburg. 292


292 Ibid., 69-60; McPherson, Battle Cry, 577-588.
As a commander, Halleck received criticism for his inflexibility and strict adherence to policy and procedures. In actuality, he possessed a similar ethical mindset as fellow lawyers, Abraham Lincoln and Benjamin Butler. More specifically, to such men, whatever information a regulation failed to state, was permissible. Lincoln demonstrated this early in the war when he defined his war powers, and Butler famously took advantage of the Confederate definition of property as he deprived Southerners of their belongings, labeling their slaves as contraband of war. Halleck, like the President, defined his role in the government in absence of precedent, and stood by it. In the field, and when advising his commanders, Halleck encouraged and applauded original thinking and solutions, as long as it were permissible by law. As General William T. Sherman marched through South Carolina, Halleck recommended the application of salt to the crops. Sherman did not mistake the hidden meaning in that particular missive. There also came a time in the war when Old Brains realized that in failing to pursue and crush an enemy after victory simply prolonged the war. In his report to Congress regarding the aftermath of Antietam, Halleck addressed this issue, and thenceforth, Union commanders usually received the guillotine for failing to pursue their foes.293

During his tenure as Chief of Staff, Halleck’s duties truly epitomized his talents as he worked within a coherent command team, running like a finely tuned machine. The General in Chief, President, and Secretary of War finally obtained definitive duties within a tighter scope of practice. The members of this capable team were intuitive and proactive. Armed with lessons learned during the conflict, they easily identified risks and mitigated them as soon as was

293 McPherson, Tried by War, 5; McPherson, Battle Cry, 574; OR, vol. 44, 741; Ibid., vol. 19, pt. 1: 5-6.
practical. Through their collaborative efforts, the armies of the United States became the best-supplied and strongest force in the world.\textsuperscript{294}

General Halleck was a pioneer manager of modern war. Old Brains effectively used the telegraph, trains, barges, and steamships in order to supply and transport both troops and information. He knew the importance of a cooperative effort between services, and worked as a collaborative team member in Washington. As an astute scholar and military historian, Halleck used precedents from history to break the rebellion. During the war, Old Brains held the respect of his subordinate generals to include Sherman and Grant. The General’s dedicated service during this conflict deserves greater recognition because his steadfast performance proved instrumental to the war fighting capability of the Union army. Apparently, the President valued Old Brains, for he retained his services, and only after his premature death did Halleck receive orders to Richmond. While in the Confederate capitol, Halleck discovered documentation of the war, and sent all ten tons worth of boxes to Washington, to ensure the government possessed these valuable, historic records. Halleck spent a large portion of his personal wealth to ensure the documentation of the history of the rebellion. In a sense, Old Brains is the champion and catalyst for the creation of \textit{The War of the Rebellion} compilation, although he did not survive to see its completion.\textsuperscript{295}


\textsuperscript{295} Ibid., 36.
Primary Sources


During the war, Halleck and Grant developed a close relationship. The two corresponded frequently about strategy, and Halleck gave advice and support.


During the war, Halleck and Grant developed a close relationship. The two corresponded frequently about strategy, and Halleck gave advice and support.


As the liaison between the field and Washington, General Halleck corresponded frequently by telegraph and letters.


Halleck discusses and defines the necessity of war, what constitutes justifiable versus unjustifiable war, the roles of commander and general in chiefs, and of the necessary flexibility of commanders to adjust strategy and tactics in accordance with situations on the ground. When put to the test, ideologies imparted in these lectures would change with the exigencies of war.


Hitchcock’s diaries reveal an insider view to the Lincoln administration during the Civil War.


At the request of General Halleck, Professor Francis Lieber wrote this pamphlet in 1862. Halleck commanded in Missouri, which was especially rife with insurgents, and commanders
had no definitive guidelines in their treatment. Lieber covers definitions and permissible retaliation measures.

McClellan, George B. *The Civil War Papers of George B. McClellan: Selected Correspondence 1860-1865*. Edited by Stephen Sears. New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1989. This work contains the wartime dispatches and personal correspondence of General McClellan, and his opinions on his peers, the war execution, strategy and his bid for the Presidency.


This huge archive was initiated by General Halleck, while in Richmond, after the surrender. These records include reports, maps, diagrams, telegrams and correspondence of the north and south during the entire Civil War.


Gideon Welles took a special interest in Halleck’s job performance and person. Much of the diary presents Welles’s perception of Halleck.

Books

Ambrose capitalizes on Halleck’s strong points, while downplaying the weak. He portrays Halleck as the central point in the Union War machine, directing from Washington headquarters.

Anders describes Halleck as the central control board of the war, and as a competent information collector, translator and disseminator between the field and Washington.

A primary account of a citizen of St. Louis during the Civil War with observations of Fremont and Halleck’s actions in the volatile state.

Senator Blaine depicted Halleck as envying General Grant, and deliberately removing him from direct command as the army marched on Corinth. Blaine also believed Halleck an unfit general in chief, and professed multiple negative opinions of Halleck.

Discussion upon the difficulties officials faced in regulating war torn Missouri during the war with records of detained civilians.


Bowery describes the campaigns, challenges and commanders of the Western Theatre during the war in 1862, at this time, Halleck commanded in Missouri.


This detailed study describes the evolution and phases of Union policy upon southern civilians from conciliatory, to pragmatic, to hard war.


An analytical and detailed presentation of the tactics, organization and strategies of the Union and Confederate armies, and their uses by commanders.


Hattaway and Jones provide an analysis of the senior leaderships and details of battle strategy and tactics, demonstrating Halleck’s involvement with his commanders.


Halleck and Haupt worked well together during the war, both engineers and experts in their respective fields. Halleck supported Haupt’s rail and rebuilding duties in the war, revealing Halleck’s leadership ability and personality.


Holzer and Symonds present articles from the New York Times during the Civil War with commentary.


________. *Sherman: A Soldier's Passion for Order*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2007. Marszalek attempts to explain the motives and philosophy behind Sherman’s approach to warfare in order to restore the country to one nation.


________. *Tried by War: Abraham Lincoln as Commander in Chief*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2008. McPherson tells the story of the evolutionary journey taken by Lincoln, as he taught himself to become an effective commander in chief, and how his war aims were actualized through the military.

Mountcastle covers the challenges faced by the Union as they fought guerrillas and insurgents throughout the Civil War, and subsequent retaliation measures taken by soldiers and the government.


Simpson provides a biography of Grant detailing his life challenges and his accession in the military during the Civil War.

Simpson covers the war in the east and includes perspectives of the senior military, civilians, the governments, and the perceived importance of the two Capitols.

Trudeau provides the military aspect to Sherman’s march from Atlanta to Savannah, and demonstrates precautionary measures taken by the General to feed and regulate occurrences as he marched into the Confederate hinterland.

Witt describes the backdrop and creation of the codified laws of War, designed for the conduction of a humane war, and the legacy of the document.
Journals


Dilbeck provides the knowledge of law and the background of Francis Lieber, and the making of the Lieber Code. The article discusses Lieber’s involvement in the Union cause, and his acquaintances in Washington that facilitated the creation of General Orders No. 100.


Freidel describes the realization of the need for a uniform ethical code for union commanders during the war, and discusses the merits of the code.


The eldest son of Ulysses S. Grant writes of the correspondence between Halleck and McClellan after his father’s victory at Donelson. It is young Grant’s opinion, that Halleck undermined his father.


Historian Mark Grimsley provides the backdrop and story behind Sherman’s Special Field Order No. 15. Amid accusations of overt racism, Sherman provided Black refugees with 40 acres to farm, and the use of government mules. Land which was returned to the owners under the Johnson administration.


John Marszalek discusses Halleck’s careful approach to Corinth Mississippi with his newly concentrated force. The author also includes a brief discussion involving the aftermath of Shiloh, its connection to Halleck’s treatment of General Grant, and public perception of Halleck’s victory.

Rafuse discusses the disagreements and interactions between General McClellan and his attempt to control the West with his subordinate General Halleck.

Schenker, Carl R. "Ulysses in his Tent: Grant, Sherman, and the Turning Point of the War". *Civil War History* 56, no. 2 (January 2010): 175-221.
Schenker takes a fresh look at a century old accepted fact concerning Halleck’s jealousy over Grant arguing that Halleck took steps to preserve Grant’s promising career, from the vultures of the press and his enemies.

Shutes writes of Halleck’s positive scholarly attributes and performance as an administrator, but in the end, dismisses him as a “scientific soldier.”

Robert Suhr provides the details regarding the acquisition, modifications, and use of the Consol Musket by troops in Missouri at the start of the Civil War.

This article discusses the strategy, tactics and outcome of Halleck’s only venture as field commander, and the implications of conquering Corinth.


Former cavalry commander General Wilson provides a review of literature written about Halleck during the war until the turn of the century. The results are negative. Wilson uses time period correspondence and period telegrams to revitalize Halleck’s reputation.
Websites