



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. BOX 5028, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

FEBRUARY 1973

Vol. 16 No. 6

133rd Meeting

DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1973

SUBJECT: CIVIL WAR ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

SPEAKERS: TWO TEAMS: "THE FEDS" & "THE REBS"

PLACE: THE HERMIT CLUB, DODGE COURT

PRELIMINARIES: 6 PM DINNER: 7 PM

CIVIL WAR ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

This will be a first for our Roundtable. You'll be in for the time of your Civil War Roundtable life when you see these two teams battle it out for the academic honors of the organization. "The Feds" led by that renowned jurist, Judge Milton Holmes, and ably supported by Dr. Ken Callahan and Bernard Drews will battle with "The Rebs" who will be led by an undaunted Dr. William Schlesinger, with substantial aid from Neville Bayless and Charles Clarke. Boy what a night we're going to have on February 13th.

The session will be run in three sessions. The first two sessions each team will be racing the clock to see how many questions they can answer before the time is up. In session one the questions will be worth 10 points each and no penalty if a question is missed. In session two the questions will be worth 20 points and if a question is passed the other team may answer, if correctly they win the 20 points, if not they lose 20 points. Finally, in session three the two teams will be in head-to-head competition and against the clock. Here the questions will be again worth 20 points, and if missed will be deducted from the team score and the other team given a chance to answer. There are the rather simple ground rules. Now the questions. I've given a couple of samples below. See how you would have done.

General Edward Porter Alexander while at the US Military Academy helped perfect the wig wag system. During the Civil War for what general did he serve both as Chief Signal Officer and Chief of Artillery?

- a. General James Longstreet
- b. General Thomas Jackson
- c. General P.G.T. Beauregard

What is the name of Union submarine?

- a. The Huddley
- b. The Ablemarle
- c. The Alligator

CWRT OF CLEVELAND BULLETIN BOARD

VICTORY ON SIGNAL HILL

(This is taken from Si Cornell's "Special Hazard" column in the Cincinnati Post, dated November 30, 1972.)

Some builders, if you didn't watch them, would pave the Ohio River as a parking lot. In Virginia, an ex-Cincinnatian has saved Signal Hill, an historic knoll which played a crucial part in the First Battle of Bull Run, from being turned into a subdivision.

Roger Costello, 55, former Cincinnatian now the mayor of Manassas Park, Va., was out for a drive on a recent Sunday when he spied surveyor's stakes amid what's left of Confederate trenches on Signal Hill. Quick checking showed a developer had purchased 13 acres atop the knoll and was preparing to sell off one-acre homesites.

Shocked, Mayor Costello rallied his little town behind him and now Manassas Park has bought Signal Hill from the developer for \$110,000. Plans are to turn Signal Hill and surrounding land of the battlefield into a fine regional park.

It was on Signal Hill on July 21, 1861, that a Confederate signal officer spied the dawn's sun glinting from Union bayonets and cannons, and flagged a warning to his superiors they were being outflanked. The Confederates shifted to meet the threat, and the Union forces suffered nearly 3000 casualties in the ensuing battle, regarded as a Confederate victory.

Mayor Costello, a native Cincinnatian, now is an official of the U.S. Defense Department. He is a graduate of Walnut Hills High, and an honors graduate of the University of Cincinnati, the Harvard School of Business Administration, and the Georgetown College of Law.

Maybe all that education helped him recognize a surveyor's stake.

EDITOR'S NOTE: It would be quite a nice gesture on the part of all who will read this to write a letter of commendation to:

Mayor Roger Costello
Manassas Park, Virginia 22110

CWRT of TEXAS

A belated "congratulations" and "welcome to the group" to this new roundtable with headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas. Colonel Harold Simpson of Hillsboro had a hand in helping the group in Fort Worth. Thanks Hal and all the others that brought another find group into existence. The address is: P.O. Box 16382, Fort Worth 76133

DUES

You're already late by the time you read this notice. Remember the dues are \$15 for the year and if you wish a subscription to the CIVIL WAR HISTORY QUARTERLY its an extra \$6.50. Please send your check to the treasurer: Dr. Thomas Cretter 3005 Lander Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44124. DO IT NOW -- NOT LATER.....

NEW MEMBERS

Brayton, John C. 12546 Cedar Road, Cleveland Hts., Ohio 44106 - Retired
Madachik, William 5854 Laylor Drive, Parma Hts., Ohio 44134 - Electronics Technician
Meany, Frank 13519 Rugewater Drive, Lakewood, Ohio 44107 - Physician
Wilson, John H. 11000 Chillicothe Rd., Chesterland, Ohio 44026 - Physician

CIVIL WAR HUMOR

GUARD: Who goes there? RECRUIT: Aw, you wouldn't know me...I just got here today.
(CWRT of Arkansas)

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THE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE OF CLEVELAND, OHIO
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THE ASSASSINS OF A PRESIDENT

Reminiscences of the Prosecution of Lincoln's Murderers
recalled from the notebook of the Official Stenographer.

A dramatic incident connected with this memorable trial.
Interesting sketch by Benn Pitman in the Phonographic
Institute.

Some of my reporting experiences during the war were of so abnormal a character that they will probably never recur in the experience of any American phonographer. Looked at from this point of time it would seem a little romantic and very un-American for a reporter to ride from his office to his daily duty at court, in a special conveyance, driven by a United States soldier, and followed by an escort consisting of two mounted cavalymen, with clanking swords and carrying loaded Winchester rifles, and all to guard the reporter and the transcription of the preceding day's testimony from possible violence and mishap. Yet this was my experience at Washington in the spring and summer of 1865, during the trial of the assassins of President Lincoln.

The day after the assassination of the President a telegram reached me at Cincinnati, requesting me to report at the Attorney General's office in the War Department, Washington. I left home by that night's train and for the following three months was engaged on duties connected with the saddest and most notable event of the war.

My duty for several weeks consisted of writing the narration of those who knew anything of the facts connected with the assassination, or with previous plottings to abduct the President; also as to the alleged implication of the chiefs of the Confederacy at Richmond and in Canada, and further as to alleged attempts to introduce infected clothing into the Union army and the attempted destruction of United States buildings, vessels, etc. Most of those who were examined were held as witnesses at the trial. Sometimes The Assistant Judge Advocate, Colonel, afterward General H. L. Burnett, conducted these preliminary examinations; at other times they were left wholly to the reporter. I wrote as the witnesses talked, but with constant reminders to avoid irrelevant matters, with such hints as "Well, never mind that; tell us about so and so." These narratives were generally briefed on the same day for the use of the Secretary of War, Mr. Stanton, and the Judges Advocate who were to conduct the trial.

My duties commenced at 9 o'clock in the morning, and I rarely left the War Department until between 10 and 11 at night. A register was kept at the entrance door, and every person, from the Secretary of War to the humblest clerk entering the department, registered his name and the exact time of day. The registration was repeated at each person's exit.

At the trial of the assassins over four hundred witnesses were examined. The proceedings on the busy days required the services of six reporters, among whom were

the experts, Dennis F. and J. J. Murphy, reporters of the U. S. Senate; R. R. Hitt, R. Sutton and Edward V. Murphy. When fewer witnesses were examined I reported the entire proceedings. Two press copies were taken of the transcribed notes by the old-fashioned letter press. Two intelligent privates from the army were detailed to assist me in making the press copies. The original formed the Court record, one copy was kept at the War Department, and the other was afterward confided to the writer for the compilation and publication of the proceedings of the trial, and was published by the authority of the Secretary of War, the Honorable Edwin M. Stanton, making an octave volume of over four hundred closely printed pages.

The whole trial was conducted on the theory that the assassination of the President and the attempted assassination of William H. Seward, was the culmination of an organized conspiracy, in which John Wilkes Booth and the eight prisoners who tried were the active participants; and that Jefferson Davis and other chiefs of the Southern Confederacy at Richmond and in Canada, were the instigators and leaders. Subsequent events have shown that the assassination of President Lincoln was suddenly determined upon by Booth on the 14th of April, when it was known that the President would attend the performance at Ford's Theater that evening. The attempted assassination of Mr. Seward was confided by Booth to Payne, and the coward Atzerodt was to have given the quietus to Vice President Johnson. The bullet that was to have sent Mr. Johnson to his long account is still in the possession of the writer. It is now well known that the leaders of the Southern Confederacy had no knowledge of the intended conspiracy and had no communication, whatever, with the actors in the tragedy. Some time after the war I chanced to meet Mr. Jefferson Davis on a Mississippi steamboat, and the leisurely ride afforded occasion for a good deal of interesting talk. When Mr. Davis found I had been connected with the assassination trial and held no prejudice against him personally he was affable and communicative on subjects respecting which I had a right to inquire. I was fully confirmed in my opinion that the assassination of President Lincoln was entirely without his knowledge or sanction or that of his immediate advisers.

A dramatic incident connected with this memorial trial, in which phonography figures as a prime element, has never yet been told. Among the seizures of property that had been made at the house of Mrs. Surratt, was a carpetsack belonging to one of her boarders, who was a friend and had been a fellow-student of John H. Surratt. The conduct and character of the young man who owned this sack were subjected to most careful investigation, as were all those who resided in the house. With other like matters, the carpetsack came to me for safekeeping, examination and report. In this sack, to my surprise, I found copies of my "Manual of Phonography" and "Reporter's Companion", together with a quantity of phonographic exercises. I particularly noticed that the exercises were carefully written, and were dated continuously up to the time of the great tragedy. These were significant facts in favor of the young man. I could not believe that a student who had recently left college, and who was pursuing a study like phonography, could in any way be cognizant of a conspiracy so dangerous. I soon had an opportunity of making the acquaintance of the gentleman, and found him to be a young man of prepossessing appearance, with a clear and placid eye, and a countenance indicative of intelligence, modesty and conscientiousness. I communicated the fact to the Judges-Advocate, and laid stress upon the fact that the study of phonography without a teacher, save the books, required considerable application, and necessarily demanded the time, interest, and energy of the student, and that such a one would be a very unlikely person to have anything to do with such a conspiracy. My suggestions received a most careful consideration. The gentleman appeared as a witness in the case, was on the stand three days, and passed through a most trying ordeal unscathed.

The compilation of my book on the assassination trial, the endeavor to embrace every important fact of testimony and yet to bring it within reasonable limits, was attended with peculiar difficulty. So great was the number of witnesses to be examined that the majority were brought to the stand without the Judges-Advocate seeming to recollect the precise facts to which the witness was to testify. Many questions were asked that only drew forth unimportant or irrelevant matter, and frequently it was only toward the close of an examination that the special facts for which the witness was called were evolved. As I had written the story of all the important witnesses from their own lips, had listened to or reported the testimony given at the trial, and had read over the manuscript for the correction of errors in copying, I was pre-

pared by glancing over the transcribed notes to dictate, in narrative form, the story each witness testified to; always giving important details in the exact words of the witness. When the language was doubtful or evasive, admitted of double interpretation or no interpretation at all, I retained the language used on the witness stand. My wife acted as my amanuensis, and afterward transcribed her notes for the printer, and more accurate work was never done.

Among my most vivid recollections of that memorable trial are, first, the patient, pitiful, now hopeful, now despairing, resignation of Mrs. Surratt. That Mrs. Surratt knew of the intentions and plottings of her soon, Booth, and Atzerodt, to waylay and abduct the President, there can be little doubt; but that she was wholly innocent of the crime for which she was hanged I have never changed my belief since I compiled the last page of my book. Then the frightful spectacle four of the prisoners presented as for many days they were brought into Court, manacled, with heavy ballchains to their feet and their heads and faces hooded, leaving only breathing space at the mouth and nostrils, was a picture never to be forgotten. Not less vivid is my remembrance of that wonderful human paradox, Payne, whose real name was Lewis Thornton Powell, a son of the Rev. George C. Powell, a Baptist minister of Alabama. Payne evinced a stoicism and equanimity that enabled him to sit day after day, through that dreadful trial, with a countenance the picture of complacency and interested simplicity. He was not indifferent, but, seemingly, utterly unconcerned as to his own fate, yet interested and alive to every detail of the trial. He sat placid as a sphinx, but never other than hopefully indifferent. Many a time I watched him when the details of his tiger-like attack on Mr. Seward were narrated, and he never betokened an emotion beyond the quietest and gentlest smile. His counsel waived all claim of insanity, and there was none; he simply showed this human anomaly to be the product of Southern birth and surroundings, developed and intensified by the hate and violence of war; unsophisticated by nature, confiding and trustful; and masterful when moved by emotions of love, hatred or revenge.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Taken from a newspaper clipping in the scrapbook of David Ross Moore. The clipping may possibly have been from the Cincinnati Enquirer, or Commercial Tribune about 1899.

LINCOLN IN REDLANDS, CALIFORNIA
by Charles Hillinger
Los Angeles Times, February 12, 1972

No other town in the West marks Abraham Lincoln's birthday with as much pageantry and fervor as Redlands.

Today, 1,500 Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and Camp Fire Girls will march through town and bands will play songs of the Civil War era. It will be the first in a series of special events over the next several days.

The Redlands celebration all started 40 years ago on Lincoln's birthday. That was the day the only shrine to Lincoln's memory west of the Mississippi was dedicated.

Few in Southern California know about this memorial. But everyone in Redlands (population 36,000 and 70 miles east of Los Angeles) is familiar with the impressive octagonal marble shrine and much of what it contains--original Lincoln letters, personal belongings of President and Mrs. Lincoln, one of the finest private collections of Lincolniana.

The shrine was the gift of an English immigrant who came to this country as a penniless, 22-year-old coal miner and became a millionaire.

Robert Watchorn, who died in Redlands in 1944 at the age of 86, spent \$100,000 in 1931-32 erecting the memorial because in his words: "Kind-hearted, pure minded Abraham Lincoln is America's greatest hero. Personally, I feel so strongly that the influence of Lincoln is powerful enough to help the whole world, if it were widely enough realized and utilized."

In 1912 Watchorn commissioned famed sculptor George Grey Barnard to do a massive head of Lincoln.

Barnard, born in 1863, had already done several other sculptured works of the

late President. He did a Lincoln statue that stands in Manchester, England. Others are in Cincinnati and Louisville.

He did the two great groups of marble figures at the capitol in Harrisburg, Pa., and the Urn of Life, 19 marble figures in Pittsburgh's Carnegie Museum.

Elmer Grey, the architect for the Beverly Hills Hotel and Pasadena Playhouse, designed the shrine. And artist Dean Cornwell did the colorful and richly symbolic murals under the shrine's dome ceiling.

Contributors to the Lincoln Shrine collection include Presidents Herbert Hoover, Calvin Coolidge, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Theodore Roosevelt; Vice Presidents Charles Curtis and Charles G. Dawes; Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, and Secretaries of State Henry L. Stimson and Frank B. Kellogg.

On exhibit in the shrine is crepe material from the coffin of the assassinated President, original Lincoln letters, a well-worn cane belonging to the President, his favorite set of cuff links.

All photographs known to have ever been taken of the President and nearly every book written about Lincoln are in the library as well as numerous books, manuscripts, documents and newspapers of the Lincoln era.

Lincoln scholars and researchers come from across the nation to use the shrine, as do the children of Redlands.

The children probably are better informed about Lincoln than the children of any town in America.

Each elementary school class visits the shrine at least once a year.

"Youngsters are always popping in asking me to tell them a story about Lincoln," said Mrs. Beatrice Knight, curator.

Mrs. Knight is inventorying the collection. A large amount of material is stored in the basement of the shrine --unopened since the dedication day in 1932.

"Its amazing what treasures we come across," said Mrs. Knight. "The collection has never been catalogued before."

"There are original letters from leaders on both sides of the Civil War in boxes official documents . . . "

Girl and Boy Scouts donate their time to help in the inventory, earning merit badges for their work.

"It scares me to handle some of these things, original letters of the President his personal belongings," said the curator.

"The incredible thing about the shrine is that although most people in Redlands take it for granted, few, other than authorities on Lincoln, outside the community have ever heard of it."

Robert Watchorn, the man who made it possible, left an endowment fund -- now valued in excess of \$150,000 -- to maintain and operate the shrine.

Born at Alfreton, Derbyshire, England, in 1853, Watchorn immigrated to this country and went to work in the coal fields of Pennsylvania, going to school at night.

By 1890 he had become the first secretary of the United Mine Workers of America. Later he became U.S. commissioner of immigration.

In 1916 he became founder-president of the Watchorn Oil & Gas Co., Oklahoma City.

Watchorn maintained two homes --one in New York and the other at Redlands. In the early 1900s Redlands was a favorite winter resort for wealthy Easterners.

Because Watchorn wintered in Redlands, this city goes all out each year to mark the anniversary of Lincoln's birthday.

FROM THE "SMALL WORLD" DEPARTMENT: Classmates at West Point in the 1840's included Thomas J. Jackson, George Pickett, Ambrose P. Hill, Dirck Davenport Fry (later to become commander of the Tennessee Brigade), and Fred Dent (whose sister Julia would marry a West Point graduate named Hiram Grant, better known as Ulysses Simpson Grant. James Longstreet was also a distant relation of the Dents). General Richard Taylor (USA) was the son of President of Zachary Taylor, who later served as a Confederate Congressman. James Dunwoody Bulloch, A Confederate agent in England, has a half-sister who married Theodore Roosevelt, Sr.; Franklin D. Roosevelt was related by blood or marriage to 11 former U.S. Presidents, including Civil War participants Zachary Taylor, U.S. Grant, and Benjamin Harrison (Minie News)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

A talk given by Mr. Eldon "Josh" Billings before the Cleveland Civil War Round-Table on October 10, 1973.

Lincoln's use of his war powers fell into two generally separate fields; the actual overall direction of military operations; and the curbing of civilian resistance to the war effort in areas outside the actual theater of war. Most of my attention tonight will be upon the actual overall direction of military operations.

To many early historians and military writers Lincoln was a blunderer who interfered with military affairs without knowing anything about them to the constant detriment of the cause of the Union. Later historians and military critics, particularly British writers, are inclined to view Lincoln as a military genius, who saw instinctively the broad military problems the North faced and was far ahead of most trained military men of his day in his concept of the steps necessary to conquer the South. Which of these views is correct? An examination of pertinent evidence may prove helpful in solving this problem.

When Lincoln became President he found that the most onerous duty he had undertaken was prescribed by Section 2 of Article II of the Constitution, "The President shall be Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy of the United States." Mere Lincoln believed the President's power to be broad, that of Congress explicit but restricted. Under these interpretations he felt authorized to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, to issue the Emancipation Proclamation and to restore the reoccupied states into the Union as well as to assume many direct war powers.

Few presidents have entered office with as little prestige as Abraham Lincoln. To most Americans he was an unknown quantity. As the leader of a new party which had never been in power he faced a myriad of problems. A situation unique in American history faced him. Seven states of the lower South already had seceded from the Union, had set up the Confederate States of America and had elected Jefferson Davis and Alexander H. Stephens, president and vice president respectively. Federal property had been taken over by Southern state governments.

Practically self-educated, experienced only as a lawyer and politician, with one brief term as a member of Congress, Lincoln had no knowledge of the theory of war. As a member of the Illinois legislature he had shown no leadership in the military field. He had opposed setting up a committee to revise the laws on the militia; he had avoided voting on a bill to fine soldiers for delinquencies; he had probably supported - no record vote was taken - a bill giving soldiers the right to elect their own officers.

True, he had had brief military experience in the Black Hawk War of 1832 as captain of a militia company from Sangamon County, Illinois, and as a private in another company. Tradition says that Lincoln had difficulty in controlling his company and that, more than once, he was forced to carry a wooden sword for infraction of military rules.

Lincoln, however, always made light of his military experience. While a member of Congress in 1848, he reviewed his military career.

If Gen. Cass went in advance of me in picking huckleberries, I guess I surpassed him in charges upon the wild onions. If he saw any live, fighting Indians, it was more than I did; but I had a good many bloody struggles with mosquitos.

His most noteworthy deed in his brief military career was in saving the life of an aged Indian who had been captured by his company.

Immediately after assuming office, Lincoln faced the problem of Fort Sumter. His Cabinet and General Winfield Scott, head of the army, were virtually unanimous in recommending its surrender. Lincoln, however, decided that a relief expedition should be sent. Consequently, as is well known, an attempt was made to provision Fort Sumter, but this failed. Few military critics today find fault with Lincoln's action.

Promptly, on April 15, Lincoln called out 75,000 militia, proclaimed a blockade of the Southern Coast (a strategic step of great importance) and scheduled a special session of Congress to meet on July 4.

Criticism has been made of the call for only 75,000 men for the short period of three months, but under existing legislation, that was the longest period for which militia could be summoned. Events proved that the War Department would not have been able to handle more men.

As a result of the proclamation, North Carolina, Virginia, Arkansas and Tennessee joined the Confederacy.

The nation was woefully unprepared for hostilities. As a guard for the national frontiers, the army could not furnish two soldiers per mile; for protecting the territory west of the Mississippi there was only one soldier for every 120 square miles; to aid in the enforcement of the laws in the remaining states of the Union we had only one soldier for every 1,300 square miles. The army consisted of 198 companies of which 183 were stationed on the frontier. The remaining 15 companies were scattered along the Canadian frontier and the Atlantic Coast from Maine to Mexico. At the beginning of 1861 the army totaled only 16,367 men.

From April 14 to July 4 President Lincoln exercised the war powers of the Congress as well as those of the Presidency. When it met in special session on July 4, the Congress approved the calling of the militia, the blockade of the Southern coast and other actions taken by Lincoln.

Lincoln soon realized that human and material resources were on his side and called for the mobilization of over 400,000 men. He urged his generals to keep up a constant pressure on the whole strategic line of the Confederacy until a weak point could be found and break-through made. Lincoln believed from the start that the destruction of Confederate armies and not the occupation of Southern territory was the true objective of his armies.

One of Lincoln's greatest difficulties in 1861 was the War Department. Simon Cameron had been appointed Secretary of War with many misgivings. He appears to have had little conception of the function of the War Department. Cameron was an incompetent administrator and was totally unable to plan.

So overwhelmed was Cameron in providing arms and supplies for the 75,000 men called for in Lincoln's April 15 proclamation that the subject of organizing the volunteers and regulars called for in a May 3rd proclamation was tossed into the lap of Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury.

A board of officers was detailed to aid Chase which, acting on sound lines, recommended a three-battalion organization for all regiments, a 3-year enlistment and a call for 300,000 volunteers. Secretary Chase, who had the final decision to make, rejected the battalion organization for the volunteers. The result was the addition of 22,714 officers and men to the Regular Army, 18,000 men to the Navy and 42,834 volunteers, and aggregate increase of 82,748 officers and men. This action by Chase and the Board has been described by General John M. Palmer as "the most inadequate and unscientific scheme...ever proposed to the head of a great nation upon the outbreak of a great war." And further, "No laboring mountain ever brought forth a more insignificant mouse." General Emory Upton, however, believes that the nation owes a great debt of gratitude to the officers because they established the term of service at 3 years.

Perhaps the greatest error, and one to which Lincoln apparently agreed was the decision not to utilize the officers of the regular army to train and to lead the volunteers. General Winfield Scott, head of the army, insisted on maintaining the regular army practically intact and Cameron, as well as the Adjutant General of the Army, supported him. Congress, many of whose members distrusted West Point, was not inclined to argue the issue and Lincoln seems not to have insisted that the regular army be used to officer and to train the volunteers. This error resulted in many capable officers serving in minor capacities in the Regular Army while hundreds of untrained officers leaped to the command of divisions and armies in the volunteers. As a result of this policy only about one quarter of the West Point graduates who had remained in the service reached the grade of general officer while more than half those who had left the service and returned after the outbreak of hostilities attained general officer rank in the volunteers. About 80% of the West Point graduates who came back to the army attained the rank of colonel, while only 44 per cent of those who remained in the army reached that rank. Truly Lincoln blundered in permitting this situation to exist.

Blithely, Lincoln appointed many of his friends and many prominent Democrats to high military positions without any consideration as to their qualifications. Yet so

great an authority as Bruce Catton has pointed out that the political general was an instrument that the Government had to use if the war was to be fought and won. Catton also emphasized that the really disastrous mistakes were made by professionals, not by the amateur political generals.

The First Manassas campaign was forced upon his generals by Lincoln and was, possibly, a mistake. Lincoln, however, seems to have made his decision for reasons he considered militarily sound, and not primarily because popular opinion demanded action. Military success would have strengthened the Government at home and abroad. A decisive Union victory might even have ended the war. There is good reason to believe that the failure of the campaign was due more to faulty leadership than to lack of readiness for combat. Undiscouraged by the failure of the offensive Lincoln soon promulgated a new plan.

On July 23 and 27, 1861, Lincoln issued memoranda which have been hailed by some eulogists as conclusive evidence of his brilliance as a strategist. In black and white, however, his recommendations appear somewhat disappointing. These are the steps suggested in his July 23 memorandum:

Tighten the blockade
Drill the volunteers at Fort Monroe
Hold Baltimore
Strengthen the forces in the Virginia
Mountains and in Missouri
Reorganize the Manassas remnants
Discharge the unwilling three months men
Bring up new recruits as rapidly as possible.

On July 27 he recommended that two offensives be launched:

One, to seize Manassas or a point on the
railroads near it.
Two, a joint movement from Cairo, Illinois
against Memphis and from Cincinnati
into East Tennessee.

These two memoranda were Lincoln's first acceptance of the obligation to exercise the duties of the Commander-in-chief.

Here Lincoln's ideas were commendable. Seizure of Strasburg would prevent an attack on Washington via the Shenandoah Valley--although later experience was to show that Winchester would have been a preferable point. If Manassas Junction were to be seized it would prevent a rail attack on Washington. However, his suggestions of joint movements from Cairo against Memphis and from Cincinnati to East Tennessee were premature because the armies were not sufficiently organized for such complicated tactics. The Eastern Tennessee campaign was impracticable because the area had poor roads, few towns and insufficient food supplies to support an army.

George B. McClellan, who had been successful in some minor campaigns in West Virginia, was called to Washington to head the Army of the Potomac and became Commander-in-chief of all armies on November 1, 1861.

Lincoln had a so-called general staff when he assumed office. Composed of the heads of the bureaus in the War Department it held no joint meetings and framed no common war plans. Its work was purely technical and administrative. The Secretary of War was charged with the fiscal affairs of the Department, but had no control over the army.

As the weeks passed and McClellan did not move, Lincoln growing restive because of popular clamor, issued a "memorandum for a plan or campaign" about October 1, which suggested that Union forces in Kentucky move and seize a point on the railroad connecting Virginia and Tennessee near the Cumberland Gap and that the Navy send an expedition to occupy Port Royal off the Coast of South Carolina.

On January 1, 1862, Port Royal fell to Union troops.

In November, Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, and D. D. Porter, then a naval lieutenant, conferred with Lincoln over a plan to capture New Orleans. Immediately Lincoln took them to McClellan and ordered a formal plan drawn up. Going to a map Lincoln expounded on the importance of getting control of the Mississippi.

New Orleans and Vicksburg were the keys to a successful termination of the war, he emphasized. This action resulted in Admiral David Farragut's capture of New Orleans, April 25, 1862.

In December 1861, the Congress formed a Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War. Organized for the purpose of determining why the generals were losing so many battles and also to secure to the Congress a voice in the conduct of the War, the Committee often embarrassed the Lincoln administration; By 1864 it had become an anti-administration organization. Lincoln, with his usual tact and political understanding, did not oppose formation of the Committee. Despite the fact that no member of the Committee had any military training whatever the group did not hesitate to tell the generals or Lincoln what it considered the correct strategy to carry on the war. Although the Committee did much injustice to many worthy officers and activity promoted many incapable generals, the ultimate effect of its activities was to spur the war effort to greater intensity.

McClellan, once in Washington had submitted a plan in August, probably at Lincoln's instigation, calling for 273,000 men in Virginia. This vast army was to advance on Richmond; then after its capture to carry on a city-by-city campaign against Southern ports. This plan was defective because it concentrated the military effort in one theater to the neglect of the others.

It was impossible in other ways. Even if the government could have raised such a huge force in a relatively short time, it could not have housed and led it, especially if collected in the Eastern area only. There was not enough water transportation to carry the army to the Southern coasts. What Lincoln thought of this plan we do not know. In all likelihood, he was appalled by it.

So dilatory was McClellan in advancing on the enemy, that Lincoln is represented as stating that "if General McClellan did not want to use the army he would like to borrow it." On January 27, 1862, Lincoln issued his famous General War Order No. 1, which ordered an advance on the enemy by or on February 22. This was followed by 2 other General War Orders and A Special War Order, outlining what Lincoln thought the army should do.

Briefly, General War Order No. 1 set the date of February 22 for a general movement of all United States forces; No. 2 stipulated that McClellan's forces seize a point on the railroad southwest of Manassas and No. 3, ordered that sufficient forces be left behind to defend Washington. Although Lincoln has been criticized severely for issuing these orders, it seems to me that McClellan left him little choice. In my opinion, these orders or at least the first 2 orders were not hard and fast directives for specific procedures, but rather were intended to spur McClellan to action. McClellan, by failing to take Lincoln into his confidence, was partly responsible for the President's action.

The unfortunate misunderstandings between McClellan and Lincoln while the Peninsula and 7 Days campaigns were fought, I shall not trace in detail. Perhaps the foremost reason for them was that McClellan did not tell Lincoln of the problems he faced. Another reason was the gap in the organizational structure for conducting the war. McClellan was at one and the same time the military adviser of the government, in general command of all Union armies and in executive command of its main army--any one of these positions was a full-time job. Small wonder that Lincoln removed McClellan from command of all the armies so that his attention could be focused on the situation. Lincoln had a definite military policy as I have spelled out, but he required a military interpreter as well as a commander for his army, a need that it took him some time to discover. During McClellan's absence no one served as military adviser at least until July.

McClellan was not impressed by Lincoln's suggested overland campaign against Manassas. He preferred to ship troops to Urbana which would permit the army to operate on the shortest land route to Richmond and would force the Confederates to evacuate Manassas in order to defend Richmond. If Urbana proved to be unavailable McClellan suggested shipping troops to Fortress Monroe. Although Lincoln remained unconvinced of the wisdom of the Urbana movement, he assented grudgingly.

When the Confederates retreated from Manassas and it became necessary to transfer troops to Fortress Monroe to undertake the campaign, Lincoln did not agree until 8 of 12 of the senior officers of the army voted in favor of McClellan's plan.

Lincoln showed his continuing doubts of the plan by his order dividing the army into 4 corps and decreeing that sufficient forces be left for the defenses of

Washington.

At this time Lincoln "reorganized" the Army of the Potomac, dividing it into 4 Corps, commanded by E.V. Sumner, Irvin McDowell, S.P. Heintzelman and E. D. Keyes. The background of Lincoln's action is too involved to describe in detail. Dissatisfaction with McClellan, civilian interference and the wishes of the Committee on the Conduct of the War were the main considerations. Apparently Lincoln chose the 4 men because they were opposed to McClellan's ideas on the Peninsular Campaign. Under McClellan, the so-called younger generals, thinking as he did, dominated the Army. After Lincoln's action, any future general council would be controlled by these Lincoln appointees and not by the younger "McClellan Generals" as before. In effect, this action made Lincoln General-in-chief of the Army of the Potomac.

On March 11, 1862, the War Department was brought into the center of affairs by an order requiring commanders to report to Secretary Stanton.

During the same month General E.A. Hitchcock, a retired officer, was called to Washington and greatly to his surprise was offered the command of the Army of the Potomac. He refused, but was retained on special duty in the War Department as a quasi military adviser to the Secretary of War and to the President.

Then an Army Board, consisting of the Chiefs of the various bureaus of the War Department, was formed to advise the President.

In this period Lincoln made some mistakes due primarily to his ignorance on how to conduct the war. First, he detached Blenker's division of 10,000 men from the Army of the Potomac and sent it to Fremont in West Virginia. This action was largely a political move, although Fremont had suggested that, with Blenker's help, he could invade East Tennessee, one of Lincoln's favorite projects. Lincoln should have resisted this plea because Fremont had adequate forces to defend West Virginia and, even with Blenker's troops, had not enough strength to invade East Tennessee.

Another error was that he did not appoint anyone as commander-in-chief when McClellan was removed temporarily to undertake the Peninsula campaign. Instead he divided his forces into departments, attempting personally to coordinate their activities with some assistance from Stanton.

During the course of the Peninsular campaign in May, President Lincoln, on a visit to the Peninsula, assumed actual military and naval command of combined operations against Norfolk which were successful. This action resulted in the destruction of the Virginia by its officers.

While McClellan conducted his campaign on the Peninsula, Lincoln and Stanton attempted to capture Stonewall Jackson's Force in the Shenandoah Valley by withholding from McClellan the forces of McDowell and by dictating the movements of Fremont, Banks, and other generals in the area. They failed. One caustic critic comments that their action was a blunder of the first magnitude; that even if it had been successful it would have been accomplished at the cost of scuttling a much more significant campaign.

Another writer suggests that with a little more speed from their generals the two amateur strategists might have succeeded. A third believed that there was some chance of bagging Jackson, but not nearly so much as Lincoln thought. Here Lincoln failed to take into account the sheer logistical problem of moving separate armies over long distance on a fixed schedule. He took little account of human frailties.

In July, 1862, Lincoln, in a desperate search for new talent as commanders, brought from the West General Henry W. Halleck, to be general-in-chief, and John Pope to command the newly created Army of Virginia, which had been formed by combining the Washington and the Shenandoah forces into one army. Neither succeeded, although Halleck remained in Washington until the end of the war. Halleck was supreme commander in name until the advent of Grant in March, 1864, but he did little save to provide Lincoln with technical advice.

Finally, for failure to move promptly against Lee after the battle of Antietam, McClellan was removed from command of the Army of the Potomac and was succeeded by Ambrose E. Burnside. With Burnside's brief and disastrous tenure of office we need not dwell. Lincoln probably shares in the blame for the fiasco at Fredericksburg.

Joseph Hooker was a logical, although an unfortunate, choice to succeed Burnside. Lincoln selected him without consulting Halleck, Stanton, or his Cabinet, although S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, and most members of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, had long espoused Hooker. At Chancellorsville Hooker was worsted largely because he lost his nerve and failed to follow Lincoln's advice to "put in all your men". Halleck and Hooker detested each other so the latter reported

directly to Lincoln. Hooker lacked the ability to command and to fight a large army.

Before Hooker could plan another campaign, Lee began his invasion that ended at Gettysburg. Hooker proposed to attack Lee's rear first at Fredericksburg, then at Harper's Ferry. Lincoln disapproved of both, pointing out that Lee's army and not Richmond should be his objective. Some modern critics believe that an advance toward Richmond by Hooker would have led to the abandonment of Lee's invasion. On June 27, 1863, Hooker resigned and was succeeded by General George G. Meade.

Lincoln was grievously disappointed over Meade's failure to follow up Lee's defeat at Gettysburg. He had visualized the capture of the Confederacy's best army with the consequent early end of the war. What Lincoln failed to comprehend was Meade's uncertainty because of his short tenure as commander of the army.

Perhaps Lincoln accused himself when he said, "I regret that I did not myself go to the army and personally issue the order for an attack."

Between the removal of McClellan and the end of the battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, Lincoln seems to have given no positive orders to his generals. True, he corresponded with them, gave his opinions freely, but always qualified them. After Gettysburg he believed that Lee's army could be destroyed and he caused the most vigorous orders to be sent to General Meade. Unfortunately, the orders went through General Halleck who qualified them so much that Meade was given almost free judgment as to the policy he would follow.

When on July 14 Lincoln learned that Lee had escaped, he penned, but did not send to Meade, one of the harshest messages he ever wrote to one of his commanders.

Here Lincoln was at fault because he failed to centralize responsibility and to provide a clear and unconfused chain of command. If he had sent positive orders to Meade in his own vigorous style, instead of communicating through Halleck, quite possibly he could have spurred Meade to make a strong attempt at the destruction of Lee's army. However, the poor policy of issuing official orders through Halleck and, at the same time of sending Meade (and other generals) personal suggestions and advice, created much confusion.

Later, when he could look at the pursuit of Lee's army more calmly, Lincoln remarked that Meade's actions reminded him of "an old woman trying to shoo her geese across a creek."

In the West Lincoln had virtually the same difficulties as in the East. His July 27, 1861, memorandum advocated "a joint movement from Cairo on Memphis and from Cincinnati on East Tennessee." The first would cut the Confederacy in two along the line of the Mississippi River and the other would break the railroad communications of the Confederates between Chattanooga and Virginia. However, he found it difficult to get Fremont, Halleck (his successor) or D. C. Buell to move. U. S. Grant, however, received permission from Halleck and in February 1862 captured Forts Henry and Donelson, thus beginning the movement from Cairo to Memphis.

In a letter of June 30, 1862, to General Halleck Lincoln showed his keen insight into military strategy when he wrote:

To take and hold the railroad at or east of Cleveland, in East Tennessee, I think fully as important as the taking and holding of Richmond.

Buell, who was much like McClellan, did little to cut the railroads between Tennessee and Virginia.

When Halleck was called east in July 1862, his command was split up into three independent armies, the Tennessee, the Ohio, and the Mississippi, under Grant, Buell and Rosecrans. On October 26 the Army of the Mississippi was discontinued and Rosecrans succeeded Buell as commander of the Army of the Ohio. This situation was not changed until Grant was placed in supreme command in the West after Chickamauga, about a year later. One author hazards the guess that if Lincoln had placed Grant in supreme command when Halleck left the war would probably have been shortened by at least a year.

Lincoln appears not to have taken as active a part in the war in the West. He was far removed from the scene, and had little or no acquaintance with the leading actors.

One of the greatest strategic blunders of the war was the failure to occupy Vicksburg in 1862 when it could have been accomplished with little effort. For this lapse Halleck was largely to blame, but Lincoln was not without guilt, because he failed to overrule Halleck's decision that no troops could be spared to seize Vicksburg.

October 25, 1862, when placed in command of the Department of the Tennessee, Grant proposed to move on Vicksburg. He abandoned this attempt in December when Van Dorn captured his base of supplies at Holly Springs. However, another reason, for which Lincoln was primarily responsible, was perhaps the real underlying factor. By secret order, Lincoln had placed General John A. McClernand, an ambitious Illinois politician, who had recruited 30,000 men for the purpose, in command of an expedition to capture Vicksburg. Grant, as the only officer senior to McClernand in the area, was forced to abandon his campaign and return to the Mississippi in order to absorb McClernand and his troops. This action slowed the Vicksburg campaign by as much as 6 months. Outside this one attempt at interference and although he watched events closely and often impatiently, Lincoln's despatches and orders to officers in this area are few in number and give little in the way of instruction or even suggestion. His part in this area may be summed up in a few words - he sought a commander and when he found him in the person of U. S. Grant, Lincoln left him alone.

When Grant was called East and made commander in chief in March 1864, Lincoln took a much less active part in military affairs, although he did keep himself informed of every military event that occurred.

Grant as general in chief was charged with the function of planning and directing the movement of all the Union armies. Halleck served as a channel of information between Grant and Lincoln and between Grant and his 17 departmental commanders. Lincoln and Stanton confined most of their attention to providing Grant with the men and supplies necessary to carry on the war. Grant's plan of campaign was similar to the strategy that had been advocated consistently by Lincoln.

In summary, was Lincoln a military genius or a blunderer? Opinions vary.

True, Lincoln had a remarkable aptitude for choosing incapable generals. Certainly McClellan, Pope, Burnside and Hooker (to name only those in the East) left much to be desired. In his defense, it must be said that America had no military tradition and Lincoln chose commanders on the only criterion available - success in campaigns. Yet it must be remembered that Lincoln first chose Robert E. Lee as the officer to command all the Union armies.

He early devised an overall plan of strategy and under his leadership the North finally organized a unified command system for the entire military machine.

From the very beginning of the war Lincoln stressed that his generals should make Confederate armies their objectives and that all Federal forces move against the enemy simultaneously. This he did not succeed in achieving until Grant took command.

Although I have not mentioned the Navy, except for the blockade, I must emphasize that Lincoln was quick to accept the Navy as an aid to ground troops, particularly in the river wars in the West and against Southern ports.

In military matters Lincoln was eager to learn and he seldom made the same mistake twice. He studied all the military and strategical books he could find; he questioned officers, enlisted men, and anyone else he thought might have information useful to him.

His failure to provide McClellan with promised reinforcements probably saved Richmond in 1862 and added three years to the war, but McClellan had refused to take Lincoln into his confidence so that the latter was not cognizant of McClellan's real needs.

Lincoln did not hesitate to admit when he was wrong as in his letter of congratulations to Grant after the capture of Vicksburg.

In my opinion Lincoln showed a firm grasp of the military problem throughout the war. Numerous instances appear of his intuitive knowledge of military strategy. In one of his most famous quotations he gave quaint emphasis to a cardinal military principle.

...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 in front and rear, without a fair chance to gore one way or kick the other.

and he often stated that "Lee's army and not Richmond is your sure objective point."

Lincoln's handling of the other departments of the government, especially the Treasury, which had to furnish the sinews of war, his dealings with Congress, his influence on public opinion, his diplomatic finesse - all are closely related to the military and naval campaigns, but, in a brief talk, they must be neglected.

In conclusion: I have sought to show the military ideas and activities of Lincoln; Many factors that influenced him necessarily have been omitted. Political considerations often modified his action. Specific measures which he undertook primarily for military reasons, have been neglected because, while significant, they do not bear directly on my subject. The best known of these are the Emancipation Proclamation and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus.

When the evidence is examined dispassionately, I believe that it can be concluded that Lincoln was neither a military genius nor a blunderer. He was more intelligent than most men with whom he was surrounded, so that when he placed his admittedly great powers of logic and concentration upon the military problem, he learned rapidly. With study and observation he acquired a more profound knowledge of strategy than most of his army officers, but in tactics he showed little grasp of inherent problems. During the last year of the war he began to show comprehension of the technical difficulties of maintaining armies in the field.

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GENERALS IN GRAY STATISTICALLY ANALYSED

That the statistics of the general officers serving in the Confederate army can be made an interesting subject for study was clearly established in the paper given by W. W. Jones at our March meeting. With neat tabulations on the states where born, the ages, educational attainments, pre-war and post war occupations, preparation for leadership and battle casualties, our speaker gave us an unusual insight into the 425 general officers of the Southern army.

Of these, 368 were born in Southern states, 48 in Northern and Western states, and eight in foreign countries. Virginia was the birthplace of 93, or one-fourth of all who were Southern born. The average age of the eight full generals on the date of attaining that rank was 48 years; lieutenant generals 41, major generals 37, and brigadier generals 36.

There were nine sets of brothers holding general rank in the Confederate army, and three sets of brothers of general rank who fought on opposite sides. Seventy-seven Confederate generals were killed in action or died from wounds suffered in battle. The 348 generals who survived the war lived to an average age of 67 years.

One hundred and fifty-six Confederate generals attended West Point and 146 of these were graduates. Thirty one of the generals had attended some other military academy or institution. Thus, 44 percent had been formally trained in military science.

From Bill Jones' carefully compiled figures, he drew several significant conclusions: 1) the general officers of the Confederacy were comparatively young men; 2) a high percentage of the general officers were militarily educated; 3) purely political generals were comparatively few; 4) the high percentage of battle field deaths and woundings among general officers does not so much indicate brashness as it does elan, example, and an extraordinary degree of courage; 5) as the war moved along general officers in the field were subjected to ever increasing physical strain and nervous tension as their own fighting forces dwindled while those of the enemy increased; 6) the post-war lives of many of the general officers were shortened because of the self-imposed disciplines and deprivations they shared with the rank and file.

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