**American Civil War – Eastern Theater, 1862**

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**East #1 (Slide 4)**

**Stonewall Jackson’s Shenandoah Valley Campaign**

**23 March – 9 June 1862**

Background: In the Spring of 1862, while the Union was planning a massive water-born incursion into Virginia for an attack on Richmond, General Lee advised Confederate President Jefferson Davis that some sort of action must be taken to draw some of the concentrating Union forces off of Richmond. Lee proposed a diversionary action up the Shenandoah Valley that would pose a threat to Washington D.C. The Confederacy had the perfect man for the job; General “Stonewall” Jackson.

Analysis: Why were Union forces unable to trap Jackson in Shenandoah Valley 30 May- 7 June 1862?

Jackson’s Advantages (Reasons for success):

Smaller force of “only” 10,000-15,000; easier to move and *maneuver* through the valleys, gaps and passes of the Shenandoah Valley and mountains. Jackson’s maneuvers were aided by his detailed study and understanding of the *terrain,* which he used to effectively shield his movements and surprise his opponents by emerging from places believed to be unsuitable for unit movement.

Jackson was a superb *leader,* skilled at getting his troops to conduct hard and fast marches and arrive at objectives still ready to fight. So great was this ability that Jackson’s troops were known as “foot cavalry” – a real compliment, that predominantly infantry units could move seemingly as rapidly as horses.

Jackson’s leadership and rapid maneuver skills allowed him to take advantage of two more principles of war, *offensive* and *surprise.* By being able to maneuver rapidly, Jackson was able to attack Union troops at Front Royal and then Banks’ remaining division at Winchester, then sending them into retreat across the Potomac River.

Union Disadvantages (Reasons for Failure):

The three Union commanders (Fremont, McDowell, Banks) that Lincoln assigned to conduct this pincer movement to cut off and destroy Jackson’s army failed to:

* coordinate effectively, i.e. no effective *unity of command*
* energetically execute their orders and move their forces more swiftly than Jackson; did not realize the necessity of moving by the most direct route for interception (Fremont in particular overshot his target)
* Poor understanding of and use of *terrain* (Fremont marches much too far to the north before crossing the mountains on known major pass; with better reconnaissance and knowledge of terrain, he could have crossed further to the south, used the terrain to shield his movement and been in position to intercept Jackson )

Instead this “pincer movement” turned into a parallel race down the sides of the valley, with Fremont and Shields’ armies’ just behind and on either side of Jackson. When they finally reached the area around Cross Keys and Port Republic, they engaged Jackson and Ewell’s forces in two sharp fights that decided nothing.

Conclusion: By superbly maneuvering 15,000-17,000 troops, Jackson was able to tie up over 60,000 Union soldiers and disrupt two major Union campaign plans for attacking Richmond and securing east Tennessee.

**East #2 (Slide 5)**

**Unity of Command – Part I**

**Consolidating the Army of Virginia and the Army of the Potomac**

**Background:** By the spring of 1862, the Union high command realized that the command structure in the eastern theater was in dire need of reorganization. Lincoln’s problems with unity of command became especially clear during Stonewall Jackson’s incursion into the Shenandoah Valley in May.

At the time the best that Lincoln could do was send strongly worded messages to McDowell and Fremont urging them to move hastily to close the pincers on Jackson. Their movement was slow, linkage faulty, and Jackson slipped away and the Union suffered more losses. Clearly some major reorganization was needed. The different divisions, corps, and armies had to be more effectively coordinated and exercised on this scale and scope; the gaps and opportunities that Lee and Jackson were so adept at exploiting with creative maneuvers had to be eliminated.

On 26 June 1862, Lincoln took the first step. He consolidated the separate corps commands of Banks, Fremont, and McDowell into the Army of Virginia under Pope. Less than a month later, Lincoln brought both McClellan’s Army of the Potomac and Pope’s Army of Virginia under another commander, General Halleck, whom he named General-in-Chief.

**Analysis:**

Lincoln’s reasons for making these command changes were: The problem of *unity of command* had been plaguing the President for some time and had been growing worse as the scale and scope of the conflict grew. The old department system under which the Army had reasonably functioned in peacetime or for limited actions was proving unsuitable for managing a war consuming half a continent.

Part of the problem with unity of command stemmed from the fact that after General-in- Chief Winfield Scott retired to West Point the previous fall, the tasks affiliated with that position had fallen to McClellan who was more than fully occupied and challenged with his other duties as the commander of the Army of the Potomac. Thus, when the Army of the Potomac began its movements to the Peninsula, Lincoln relieved him of his General in Chief position to allow McClellan to concentrate on Army of the Potomac operations (more likely, it was to relieve Lincoln of the constant problems created from the argumentative and stubborn McClellan). Lincoln himself, took on the responsibilities, along with Secretary of War Stanton, of General in Chief. Predictably, direct civilian control of the overall war effort was just as problematic. Running the country and coordinating a consolidated effort by all the Union forces was simply too much for a civilian commander in chief. The lack of a military coordinator was a detriment to the Union war effort.

Recognizing that he could no longer act as General in Chief, Lincoln sought another experienced military man to determine priorities of effort and oversee and synchronize the actions of all the Union forces. For this position, on 10 July, Lincoln chose, on the recommendation of retired General Scott, General Halleck, known for his keen intellect and who was fresh from his successes in the western theater of operations.

Halleck’s most immediate problem, once he took the post, was to coordinate the actions of the two army commanders, Pope and McClellan that were now operating in the same eastern theater. Frictions between the two men, stemming from personal jealousies and differences of professional opinions, did not make this an easy assignment. Halleck, while superbly knowledgeable, competent and loyal to the administration, did not fulfill the role of General-in-Chief as Lincoln hoped for complex reasons. Reigning in the outsized egos of Pope and McClellan proved to be a task he was not able to carry out. Beyond the perfunctory transmission of intent and orders from the President, Halleck did not seek out or demonstrate brilliance in his efforts to unify the efforts of the armies below him nor did he believe that he needed to exercise field command in order to remedy these defects.

(See Doughty, et. al., 141, 145; Foote, 534-533.)

**East #3 (Slide 5)**

**Unity of Command – Part II**

**Lee’s Dilemma**

**Summary:** Lee’s dilemma was how to read the drama that was unfolding in Washington between Lincoln, McClellan, Halleck and Pope. After the Seven Days campaign and McClellan’s obvious withdrawal of forces by way of Harrison’s Landing on the James River, Lee did not know was how much of a threat McClellan’s dwindling ranks still posed to Richmond. As the man in charge of the defense of the Confederates’ capitol, it was crucial that Lee gauge this accurately and find a way to maximize the effectiveness of his substantially depleted forces while preparing to counter the growing threat posed by the formation of the Army of Virginia under Pope.

**Analysis:**  As Lee’s situation in front of Richmond changed, with enemy forces gathering to his north, but with still sizable enemy forces to his front, he would have to make a decision as to when he could disengage from Richmond to attack Pope’s forces to the north. Too early, and he might allow McClellan to shift back to the offensive and take Richmond, too late and Pope would have overwhelming force to defeat him. Lee would have to consider the following:

* Did McClellan have the ability to shift his forces back to the offensive? Could he influence a decision made by higher, and if so, would he be audacious enough to carry such and operation out successfully?
* How much would the enemy know of the Army of Northern Virginia once it moved north. Could Lee effectively add deception to the operation?
* Could Lee shift his forces faster than McClellan’s movement by sea?
* Did the Union intend to unify the Army of Virginia and the Army of the Potomac?

Lee would have to consider all the above questions, none of which had easy or definitive answers, and make a decision on how to act. He would have to gather all the intelligence available on the enemy situation, estimate the enemy’s most probably course of action based on past experiences and his capabilities, and decide on a course of action. Lee would have to calculate the risk of a wrong decision, weigh it against the benefit of a correct decision, and execute aggressively the course of action he chose. This is not a gamble that relied on luck. It was an assessment made by an experienced commander and it demonstrated Lee’s uncanny ability to ‘read’ his enemy and choose a very risky course of action, and ultimately be successful. Lee would prove this ability continuously throughout the war.

(McPherson, 525-533)

**McClellan and Pope – Poor Union Generalship Assists Lee in his Dilemma**

**Summary:** The results of Second Bull Manassas reveal that ultimately, Lee shifted his forces at the correct times. His decision making process, however, was greatly assisted by the Union chain of command. Even with the installation of Halleck as the General in Chief of the Army, throughout the summer of 1862, a dysfunctional rivalry persisted between McClellan and Pope. To Lincoln’s great disappointment, Halleck did little to intervene and stop the unseemly lapses in professionalism between the two men. As a result, the Armies of the Potomac and Virginia suffered from the distrust and antagonism festering between their leaders at the top.

**Analysis:** For Lincoln it was an extraordinarily difficult situation. He had given McClellan his chance for a big campaign on the peninsula and a shot at Richmond, but McClellan had squandered it with plodding movements bogged down by his belief of inflated enemy estimates. Under intense political pressure to make military gains somewhere in the east, Lincoln created the Army of Virginia and brought Pope in from the western theater to serve as a competitive counter-weight to the slow and cautious McClellan. The conceited personalities of the two generals spurred a rivalry between them that proved to be more than either Halleck or Lincoln could effectively corral or channel for productive military effect. When Banks, now operating under Pope’s command, engaged Jackson’s forces at Cedar Mountain, the engagement degenerated into a campaign positioning and endurance, with Pope badly in need of some relief from McClellan.

Instead McClellan let his conceit and petty jealousies of Pope shamefully get in the way military expedience and national priorities. McClellan, who previously resented being knocked down from the top position of General in Chief, further resented the arrival of Pope in “his” theater and the redirection of troops from his organization to be given to a rival command. Consequently, McClellan resisted Halleck’s urging for rapid movement of his troops to Pope, preventing two corps from ever reaching the battlefield. Further, Porter (a McClellan crony) whose corps had also been slow to reach Pope, was reluctant to actively fight during the battle. (This would later get him court-marshaled and cashiered) The defeat of Lee took a back seat to McClellan’s desire to be the one to defeat him. McClellan went so far as to shock Lincoln when he told him that Pope would have to get out of his own predicament as he had no more troops to spare from the defense of Washington—clearly a questionable statement at that moment.

Because of McClellan’s unwillingness to provide timely reinforcement to Pope, Lee had a chance to divide his force and reunite them at the critical moment, thus soundly defeating the Army of Virginia at Second Bull Run. In this respect, while not in command at the scene, McClellan can be viewed as a prime accessory in this defeat.

(McPherson, 526-533)

**Additional Analysis (Not on Slides)**

**The Emancipation Proclamation**

**How did the Emancipation Proclamation change the nature of the war**?

**Background:** At the outbreak of the war, the relationship of slavery to original war aims was debatable. The first year of the war clarified one aspect of “the peculiar institution”; slave labor *was* a significant military asset for the Confederacy. Even if the slaves were not directly engaged in fighting, they were providing essential direct and, even more, indirect logistical support. Without these services, the Confederates could not have sustained the conflict as long as they did. As the war progressed, Union strategists faced the thornier and more practical question of how to strip the Confederacy of all war making capability which, they increasingly understood, included slave labor.

Militarily, it was easy to know what to do with conventional captured military goods such as weapons, ammunition and soldiers, as many precedents existed. Slaves were more problematic for several reasons.

First there was much ongoing disagreement about the continuation of slavery and its relationship to the original war aims. What was the priority? Was it heeding *strategic political concerns* that allowed slavery to continue in North America or was it the growing *tactical necessity* to do something about and with this substantial special population? A year into the war, hard tactical realities rose to at least equal importance.

Second, wartime presented a substantial numbers of slaves with opportunities the condition of slavery deprived them of- agency, or the opportunity to decide fundamental matters of their existence themselves. For many slaves, the choice between continued servitude and the pursuit of as yet unknown changes in condition and potential opportunities was an easy one.

Third, many Union commanders had no doubts about what to do with the bonanza of militarily useful labor headed their way. Out of military necessity, if not loftier ideology, they attempted to craft *de facto* emancipation policies that suited the tactical circumstances within their respective commands. (i.e., Butler in Va. & New Orleans/ Fremont in Mo./ Sec. of War Cameron’s endorsements / Hunter in S.C. See McPherson, 352, 355-356, 499-501; Foote, 162, 535-536, 538-539, Doughty, et. al, 143. ) For the Union Army as a whole and for the government behind it, the need for a comprehensive policy governing the ever increasing number of “contrabands” behind their lines became more urgent.

Many Northerners did not appreciate these tactical realities or considerations. Their simple concern was that the Union be restored and that the slave problem not become their problem. But as the war dragged on, it became their problem when new draft calls were sent out.

The dilemma for Lincoln was how to prevent tactical realities from over-running national strategic objectives and threatening national support for the only unambiguous national objective, restoration of the Union. His second challenge was how to make Northerners who wanted only to restore the Union and did not understand the military necessity or want to fight for the elimination of slavery, understand that, tactically, doing so could potentially lessen the need for their military service. It was a two-step hard sell at best, as the ensuing draft riots showed. As Lincoln became convinced of the military necessity for a comprehensive policy for emancipation, his last consideration was how to deliver such a document for best effect. Timing was crucial. It had to be issued during a period of military successes. In no way could the document’s delivery be construed as a measure of desperation. It also had to be perceived as an *additional* war aim, supplementing the restoration the Union, not supplanting it. The battle of Antietam provided Lincoln with an opportune moment to add this goal and make the crucial linkage between tactical realities and strategic objectives.

**Analysis:** The Emancipation Proclamation was issued by Lincoln on September 22, 1862 as an executive order in his capacity as the Commander-in-Chief on the grounds of military necessity and consistency. It was essentially a warning order to the states of the Confederacy that if they remained in a state of rebellion after January 1, 1863, the Union would declare their slaves liberated and pursue all means to accomplish that objective. The document, though, said nothing about the status of slaves in the border states or the lands of the Confederacy that already had fallen under Union control. It also did not specify what exactly was to be done with the thousands of slaves who, upon hearing the news, proceeded to flock to Union lines in even greater numbers, at times ironically hindering Union military operations.

In the Confederate states, news of the decree was received with predictable derision and a deep-seated understanding that this was now a declared *total* war, with no assets spared and the Confederacy’s underlying reason for being, now placed squarely under attack.

In the Northern states, the response was mixed. Ardent abolitionists were disappointed that the document did not cover all areas under Union control . Others felt the document had gone too far and for a time desertions increased by men who believed they were fighting to preserve the Union, not to free slaves.

In Europe, the nobility initially sympathized with the Confederates, but thought it not prudent to help them when the working classes expressed strong support for the proclamation, eventually ending any hope of European intervention on behalf of the Confederacy. The proclamation seized the moral high ground from the Confederacy. The Confederates were merely the defenders of property rights. The Union now had a higher moral mission to free a clearly oppressed people.

The proclamation also served as a clarion call that the character of the war was changing to one of *total war*, where all assets of society on both sides were directed towards the prosecution of the conflict. No further compromise or gradation was possible. All property, government or private-- now explicitly including the slaves in the Confederate states, was deemed war materiel and eligible for confiscation or destruction as appropriate. The proclamation also opened the door for the establishment of “hard hand” policies which advocated sustaining armies through the maximum use of confiscation and denial by destruction of unneeded surpluses. These practices were calculated to convince sustaining populations of the futility of their support. When this type of war ended, one side or the other would be fully victorious in its aims and the other totally defeated. The proclamation made it clearer on which side the preponderance of favor lay. (Stewart, ed., 231-233; Millett and Maslowski, 203-206; Foote, 704-710;

**Leadership Rollup – 1862**

**Background:** Throughout 1862, both sides struggled with finding and developing senior leadership up to the monumental tasks of high command in a new type of total war. The prior collective experiences of eligible officers in the Mexican war and on the frontier were minimally relevant to the current conflict. What follows is an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each leader as he grappled with unprecedented challenges during the first years of the war.

*Instructor’s Note*: These are provided to give the instructor a more complete knowledge of the major commanders of the time. They can also be given to the students who can in turn brief their ‘character’ and discuss leadership traits that are important to the events as they develop.

**Union**

**Halleck**- West Point Class of 1839, third in class; Known as “old Brains” – author of the standard West Point text for many years prior to the war, “Elements of Military Arts and Science”; Resigned from the Army in 1854, practices law in California and writes authoritative law books; Brought back on active duty as a Regular Officer at the rank of Major General at the request of General Winfield Scott; First assigned to command the Department of the Missouri, later the Department of the Mississippi; took Grant’s advice on how to take down Forts Henry and Donelson and basks in the ensuing glory; Did not effectively cooperate with or support Buell in his advance on Nashville, but is credited with securing west Tennessee, much of middle Tennessee and northern Alabama, despite critiques of slow movements. (Millett and Maslowski, 184); When McClellan’s additional duty as General-in-Chief is terminated, Halleck is chosen by Lincoln for the job in July 1862 upon the recommendation of Winfield Scott. Extremely skillful at taking Lincoln’s ideas and communicating them in military terms subordinate Generals could understand and execute; While his service as General-in-Chief (after July 1862) did much to improve the quality of communications between the President and the field, he “did not solve the strategic communications problem,” nor did he exercise field command in that position (Stewart, 227; Warner, *Blue,* 195-197.).

Attributes: Intellect: Very smart, extremely well read, highly articulate and literate – strong communications skills, skillful at taking complex ideas and making them clear; Strong organization skills, especially for developing a wartime army. Character: Loyal to his Commander-an-Chief; dedicated and hard working

Flaws: Not a forceful field leader; rose on the successes of his subordinated and at times blamed them for mistakes that he should have taken responsibility for.

**Pope** – West Point Class of 1842; Most of military career prior to the war in the Topographical Engineers; At beginning of war, elevated from Captain to Brigadier General of Volunteers, perhaps with the help of extended family ties to Lincoln. Lucky breaks and early success in the war (at a time when the Union was having little luck or success overall) at Madrid and Island No. 10, catapult Polk into higher command at the head of the Army of Virginia in June 1862, and above his range of natural talents and competence. The assignment also puts him in an unproductive and egotistically driven struggle with McClellan for success and manpower when his new command is assigned units from McClellan’s Army of the Potomac as it is withdrawing from the stalled peninsula campaign. Besides a personality conflict, McClellan and Pope disagreed on how the war should be conducted: Pope’s methods reflected and understanding of total war, while McClellan continued to advocate practices promoting “conciliation”. A scant two months after taking command, Pope was beaten back at Second Bull Run-- almost to the Washington defenses. He attempted to place much of the blame for this disaster on the disloyalty of a subordinate (Porter) and did not acknowledge his own flawed assessments of enemy intentions and actions.

**McClellan**- Known as “Little Mac”, a very controversial figure; West Point graduate, Class of 1846, second in class; Veteran of the Mexican War; Resigns his commission as a Captain in 1857; At the start of the war was mid-western railroad executive; Obtained a politically connected position as a Major General of Ohio Volunteers.; Three weeks later, by force of organizational abilities and strong personality exuding an exceptionally high opinion of himself, he convinces Lincoln to convert his commission to a Regular Army. By this irregular process, he leaped over a long standing list of Regular Officers, to be ranked only by old General-in-Chief Winfield Scott. His unorthodox and rapid rise fueled his already over-sized ego; Embraced the task of building up the Union Army after First Bull Run and rebuilding it after battle; Many subordinates and soldiers in the Army of the Potomac were inspired by and adored him as they believed that he alone would make sure they were really ready to fight when committed; These abilities were countered by his equally famous inability or unwillingness to commit the fruits of his organizational labors to battle unless he had everything he deemed necessary; This excessive caution along with his chronic over-inflation of enemy strengths again and again, earned him a reputation for timidity and fearfulness, for risking his reputation; Disappointing performance at Antietam due to procrastination beforehand (even after Lee’s orders to D.H. Hill fall in to his hands) and lack of pursuit afterwards.(Millett and Maslowski, 182-183; Warner, *Blue,* 290-291; Foote, 646-647, 648-649; Stewart, 230-231.)

Attributes: Very intelligent, an excellent planner, organizer and administrator; Adored by many subordinates

Flaws: Conceited; expressed open contempt for Commander-in-Chief, raised questions about his loyalty; lacked boldness when required; frequently exaggerated enemy strengths; inertia when faced with battle; Refused to accept that “total” or “hard hand” war might be necessary to terminate conflict.

**Buell** – West Point Class of 1841; A veteran of the Mexican War; In the thirteen years prior to the Civil War he served in a variety of assignments in the adjutant generals department of the Regular Army. In May 1861, Buell was commissioned a Brigadier General of Volunteers and works for McClellan raising the Army of the Potomac; He was a career-long protégé and friend of McClellan’s.; Buell was instrumental in advocating a campaign through Kentucky and Tennessee by way of the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers and the assaults on Forts Donelson and Henry; His arrival at the last moment Shiloh to aid Grant at the end of the first day turned the battle into a Union victory; Served under Halleck at Corinth; Promoted to Major General in March 1862; Occupied Louisville and was slow to get to Chattanooga ; Lack of aggressive pursuit of Bragg after Perryville resulted in his relief and his being shelved for the rest of the war; Shared McClellan’s aversion to “hard hand” practices. (Warner, *Blue*, 51-52; Foote, 558-564)

Attributes: Strong organizational skills, strong disciplinarian (especially on the issue of “foraging,” a practice he disdained), and skillful logistician under difficult conditions

Flaws: Very reserved and cool manner; Strong McClellan association and demeanor lead to the perception that he was not fully supportive of the Lincoln administration.

**Confederacy**

**Lee** – West Point Class of 1829, Second in his class, graduating with no demerits; Most of his early career spent in Engineer service constructing coastal fortifications and service on the frontier in West Texas; At the outbreak of the Civil War, he declines Lincoln and General Scott’s offer of the top Union forces command and resigns his commission to accept one as a Brigadier General for the Confederacy; Initially involved in raising Confederate forces before pursuing an unsuccessful campaign to block Union advances in western Virginia where he earns the nickname “Granny Lee” for his lack of daring and audacity; Reassigned as an advisor to Jefferson Davis and proposes Jackson’s campaign into the Shenandoah Valley; He assumes command of the Army of Northern Virginia in May 1862 upon the wounding of Joseph Johnston at Seven Pines; Less than a month later, he cleverly counters McClellan’s maneuvers during the Seven Days battles but at a tremendous costs in Confederate lives (85,000 troops, 20,500 casualties, over 24% casualties) ; At the end of August 1862, he chases Pope back to the defensive lines of Washington after Second Bull Run; His ensuing advance into Maryland in September is stopped by McClellan at Antietam; He ends the year of 1862, stalemated at Fredericksburg in December after an engagement with Burnside. (Warner, *Gray*, 179-183; Millett and Maslowski, 192-196, 199; Foote, 129-131, McPherson, 302-303, 455, 472 )

Attributes: Highly intelligent; strong sense of “*nobles oblige*” (noble obligation), good organizational skills; motivational leadership- convinces Confederate soldier that they must dig-in and do their part for the defense, though they consider this work for slaves; Relentless pursued audacious and aggressive plans; sought to go on the offensive such as it was possible whenever possible

Flaws: Continues to sacrifice Confederacy’s scarcest resource, manpower, even after he knows that the war is militarily impossible to win; Believed that only Virginia was crucial to war aims; discounted difficulties in or significance of western theater.

**Jackson –** West Point Class of 1846; Served in the Mexican War as a Captain and Major; Resigned commission in 1852 to become professor at Virginia Military Institute; At outbreak of war, commissioned a Colonel in the Virginia militia; After his brigade’s stout performance at First Bull Run, he earned nickname “Stonewall” and a promotion to Major General in October 1861; Tactically brilliant in his execution of the Shenandoah Valley campaign in the late spring of 1862; Hard marching and fighting in Shenandoah fatigued him and his force and they perform disappointingly during the Seven Days battles in June; Regains his reputation for precisely placed tactical movement during Second Bull Run, effectively routing Pope’s forces; Promoted to Lieutenant General in October and ends the year with a successful right wing assault at Fredericksburg. (Warner, *Gray,* 151-152; McPherson, 456-457, 464-466; Millett and Maslowski, 193

Attributes: Embraces physically hard campaigning; master of tactics and use of terrain

Flaws: Campaigns to exhaustion, not able to perform his missions in subsequent campaign