

# ***We Must Fight Them More Vindictively*** **The American Civil War in 1863**

**D. Scott Hartwig**

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As the shattered nation turned its calendars to the New Year 1863, the citizens and soldiers of North and South pondered the state of their respective causes. With the disheartening defeat at Fredericksburg in December, and the failed "mud march" of January fresh in his memory, Colonel Patrick R. Guiney, commanding the 9th Massachusetts Infantry in the Army of the Potomac, reflected the despondency of that army when he wrote his wife Jennie on January 6.

My Dear, I can scarcely give an opinion as to the future of this war. I hope for success. I fear defeat. Of this, however, feel assured: our army will fight bravely and deserve success. If the nation dies the monument expected to commemorate its fall should be inscribed - "The Republic which had the world at its service, expired for the want of a General to lead its armies." How the thought of defeat pains me! Yet I cannot shake off the impression of events.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Henry L. Abbott of the 20th Massachusetts Infantry echoed Guiney's despair for the Union cause. On January 19 he wrote his father that "all evening the regiments were groaning Mr. Lincoln and cheering Jeff Davis in the most vociferous manner." Three days later he wrote his father and advised him to burn his letter of the 19th due to its potentially inflammatory information on the state of the army, which he added, "is terrible."<sup>2</sup>

1862 had been a discouraging year for the Union cause. In the course of the year the armies of the United States had suffered over 94,000 battle casualties in an unsuccessful effort to defeat the armies of the Confederate States. The year had ended on a most depressing note - the bloody defeat of the Army of the Potomac at Fredericksburg, Virginia on December 13. One week later, Confederate cavalry raided the rear of Ulysses S. Grant's force in northern Mississippi, cutting his communications and destroying his advance supply base. Grant was forced to retreat back to Memphis, Tennessee. This reverse freed Confederate troops to reinforce Vicksburg and confront an amphibious expedition that Grant had sent down the Mississippi under General William T. Sherman's command. On December 29 the Confederates easily repulsed Sherman's attack at Chickasaw Bayou, inflicting 1,776 casualties while only losing 207 men themselves. These reverses reinforced the notion that the South was simply too vast to be conquered and the Confederate armies were too skillfully led to be defeated. It also reinforced the opinion of good soldiers like Patrick Guiney that the army lacked the leadership it needed to win.

But the gloom that had settled over the North brightened slightly in the first days of 1863 as news of a great battle near Murfreesboro, Tennessee began to arrive. Between December 31 and January 2, Braxton Bragg's Confederate Army of Tennessee and William Rosecrans' Army of Cumberland had engaged one another in a bloody slugging match along Stone's River. When it ended, nearly thirty percent of both armies lay dead or wounded, or were prisoners. Both armies were wrecked but Bragg withdrew and Rosecrans claimed victory, although the claim had a hollow ring to it. However empty Rosecrans' "victory" was on the ground, it gave an important lift to flagging Northern morale. Lincoln sensed this when he wrote Rosecrans after the battle: "I can never forget, whilst I remember anything that about the end of last year, and beginning of this, you gave us a hard-earned victory which, had there been a defeat instead, the nation could scarcely have lived over."<sup>3</sup>

### *"THEY NOW MARCH IN SOLID PLATOONS"*

Stone's River and the "victory" Lincoln claimed there gave his January 1 Emancipation Proclamation a badly needed boost. Had Stone's River been a defeat, the Emancipation would have looked like an act of desperation, which its critics were already claiming that it was. Without the success and continued advance of the U. S. Army, the Proclamation was just so many words, for it only freed slaves in states that were in rebellion against the United States. Unless the army won victories and took ground from the Confederate army, no one would be free. But the army could not convince anyone, North or South, to accept the most controversial and, to white Americans, unsettling passage of the January 1 Proclamation - a passage that had not appeared in Lincoln's preliminary proclamation. This additional line stated that the people liberated by this proclamation "will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service." The government had already sanctioned the raising of black troops since the summer of 1862, but the Emancipation sounded the bells so that there would be no misunderstanding - raising and equipping blacks, both free and slaves who escaped to Union lines, was official Government policy, and would be pursued vigorously!

While those of an abolitionist bent in the North lauded the decision to enlist black troops into the U. S. Army, it elicited an angry response from many white soldiers serving in that army. To them, making soldiers of blacks placed them on an equal basis with whites, a concept few mid-19th century whites were prepared to accept. Whether a Republican or Democrat, abolitionist or constitutionalist, most Union soldiers were raised to believe that blacks were their inferiors. Joseph Glathaar, in his study of black soldiers and white officers, *Forged in Battle*, concluded "these white men had learned about the black race from a wide range of sources, primarily such novels as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and stories they either read or heard from supporters and opponents of slavery, but seldom through personal experiences." As one former officer of black troops wrote years after the war; "The colored man commenced his military life under the misapprehension and prejudice of an innate character. As the negroes had been dominated over for centuries by the white man, they were looked upon with suspicion, as though no good could come out of Nazareth, and all stories detrimental to their character, were accepted with unnecessary eagerness."<sup>4</sup>

In their letters home the soldiers expressed their deep-seated racial prejudice. One officer in the Army of the Potomac wrote to Lincoln himself, and stated bluntly that "a decided majority of our Officers of all grades have no sympathy with your policy; nor with anything human. They

hate the Negro more than they love the Union." A soldier in the Irish Brigade writing home to his wife in February 1863 expressed a similar sentiment; "They feeling against niggers is intently strong in this army as is plainly to be seen wherever and whenever they meet them. They are looked upon as the principal cause of this war and this feeling is especially strong in the Irish regiments." Yet, as intense as the feeling against blacks may have been in the army, it was not strong enough to cause soldiers to mutiny or desert in significant numbers. Most soldiers, it turned out, did not hate the Negro more than they loved the Union. The opposite was true. Although they would bluster and blow about the government's policy, their commitment to winning the war and restoring the Union proved stronger than their racial prejudice. And an increasing number of white soldiers gradually came to understand the truth of Lincoln's statement; "The colored population is the great *available* and yet *unavailed* of force for restoring the Union."<sup>5</sup>

Rufus Dawes, the lieutenant colonel of the 6th Wisconsin, reflected the changing mood of the army in a public address he delivered in Marietta, Ohio, county courthouse on March 19 while home on furlough. On the subject of the Emancipation Proclamation Dawes said:

We are hailed everywhere by the negroes as their deliverers. They all know that "Massa Linkum" has set them free, and I never saw one not disposed to take advantage of the fact. The negroes will run away if they get a chance, whenever they are assured of their freedom, and that the Proclamation places it beyond the power of any military commander, however disposed, to prevent. Slavery is the chief source of wealth in the South, and the basis of their aristocracy, and my observation is that a blow at slavery hurts more than battalion volleys. It strikes at the vitals. It is foolish to talk about embittering the rebels any more than they are already embittered. We like the Proclamation because it hurts the rebels. We like the Proclamation because it lets the world know what the real issue is.<sup>6</sup>

In his novel, *Red Tape and Pigeon Hole Generals* (actually a reminiscence of military service in 1863 thinly veiled as fiction) Lieutenant Colonel William H. Armstrong, of the 129th Pennsylvania Infantry, related a conversation between a captain and first lieutenant in his regiment which revealed that some Union soldiers understood that the enlistment of blacks could speed the defeat of the Confederacy. The lieutenant opposed using blacks, expressing the opinion that "we have men enough without their aid." The captain responded by pointing out that blacks were not benign bystanders of the war. "You forget, Lieutenant, that, as matters now are, we have them fighting against us," he explained. This perplexed the lieutenant, so the captain explained that those blacks that were slaves "raise the crops that feed the Rebel army. They are just as much, perhaps not as directly, but just as really fighting against us as the founders who cast the cannon." The captain continued with considerable logic and remarkably progressive thinking for a mid-19th century man: "And as to fighting alongside of them, they may have quite as many prejudices against fighting alongside of us. There is no necessity of interfering with either. Organize colored regiments; appoint colored line officers if efficient, and white field and staff officers, until they attain sufficient proficiency for command. As to their fighting qualities, military records attest them abundantly."<sup>7</sup>

The lieutenant may not have understood how slaves were a source of strength to the Confederacy, but Governor Joe Brown of Georgia understood the captain's logic perfectly. In a message to the state congress he said:

The official reports of Federal officers are said to show that the enemy now has 50,000 of our slaves employed against us. If these 50,000 able-bodied Negroes had been carried into the interior by their owners, when the enemy approached the locality, where they were employed, and put to work clearing land and making provisions, we should to-day have been 50,000 stronger, and the enemy that much weaker, making a difference of 100,000 in the present relative strength of the parties to the struggle. When a Negro man worth \$1,000 upon the gold basis, escapes to the enemy, that sum of the aggregate wealth of the state, upon which she should receive taxes is lost - one laborer who should be employed in the production of provisions is also lost, while one laborer, or one more armed man, is added to the strength of the enemy.<sup>8</sup>

No one understood the hazards military service promised for blacks, or the opportunity it offered, than the black men themselves who volunteered for service. They knew what perils awaited them, and many understood that their government was not enlisting them for noble reasons. The government intended to use them as labor battalions or garrison troops, so that white troops presently performing these duties could be freed for combat service. They were paid less than white troops (although, after much effort and time, this was changed), could not serve as officers (this too was not universal - a very few blacks did receive commissions as officers), generally received inferior equipment, clothing and medical treatment, and were the frequent victims of various forms of abuse from the army that they served. If they did get into combat, they could also expect little mercy from the enemy. But many men who signed on for service understood that more than their own life was at stake in this war. Corporal John H. B. Payne, of the 55th Massachusetts, clearly understood the cause for which he was fighting. "Liberty is what I am struggling for," he wrote, "and what pulse does not beat high at the very mention of the name?" James Henry Gooding, of the 54th Massachusetts, also fought for "liberty," not personal liberty and freedom, but liberty for his people. "Our people must know that if they are ever to attain to any position in the eyes of the civilized world, they must forego comfort, home, fear, and above all, superstition, and fight for it; make up their minds to become something more than hewers of wood and drawers of water all their lives," Gooding wrote in March 1863: "Consider that on this continent, at least, their race and name will be totally obliterated unless they put forth some effort now to save themselves."<sup>9</sup>

Men like Payne and Gooding also fought for respect as Americans, and the rights that this implied. "Now the white man declares that this is not our country, and that we have no right to it," Payne wrote; "They say that Africa is our country. I claim this as my native country - the country that gave me birth." He and his comrades intended to prove that point on the battlefield, for it was this perilous arena that they believed offered the best opportunity to prove their mettle and silence the voices who claimed they were the inferior race, and unworthy of equal rights.<sup>10</sup>

Black troops participated in skirmishes as early as the fall of 1862, but the assault at Port Hudson, Louisiana in May 1863 was the first time they were used in a general engagement. In this assault the 1st and 3rd Louisiana Native Guards, as they were called then, made what amounted to a forlorn hope assault against the Confederate works. The 1st Guards lost 35 killed and 95 wounded in the failed attack, but they and the 3rd Guards showed a grit and courage that left observers impressed. A *New York Times* correspondent who witnessed the attack reported, "It is no longer possible to doubt the bravery and steadiness of the colored race, when rightly

led." Two months later, the 54th Massachusetts made their now famous attempt to storm Battery Wagner at the entrance to Charleston harbor in South Carolina on July 18. Their effort, like that of the Native Guards, failed and incurred heavy losses - 34 killed, 146 wounded, and 92 missing - but the 54th earned high praise for their gallantry in the desperate encounter. A *New York Tribune* reporter, in his July 19 report of the battle, wrote, "The Fifty-fourth Massachusetts, (negro,) whom copperhead officers would have called cowardly if they had stormed and carried the very gates of hell, went boldly into battle, for the second time, commanded by their brave Colonel, but came out of it led by no higher officer than the boy, Lieutenant Higginson."<sup>11</sup>



*Sergeant William H. Carney, 54th Massachusetts, displaying the U.S. colors of his regiment that he save from capture during the Ft. Wagner assault. Carney was awarded the medal of honor for this action. Louis F. Emilio, History of the Fifty-Fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, 1863-1865. (The Boston Book Co., 1894).*

These engagements, and others, and the performance of black troops in combat, helped re-shape the attitudes of white soldiers who observed them, and, in some instances, of civilians at home, who read the stories filed by newspaper correspondents. Oliver Norton, who accepted a commission as a First Lieutenant in the 8th U. S. Colored Troops in the fall of 1863, joined the regiment possessing a typically stereotypical view of blacks. But service with these men began to change his opinion, and by the time they went into battle at Olustee, Florida, he wrote with pride to his sister that "no braver men ever faced an enemy." Another sign that the performance of black troops on the battlefield was influencing public opinion evidenced itself in New York City, when the newly raised 20th USCT marched down the city's streets in March 1864, en-route for the front. "Eight months ago the African race in this City were literally hunted down like wild beasts," the *New York Times* reported, "How astonishingly has all this been changed! The same men who could not have shown themselves in the most obscure street in the City without peril of instant death, even though in the most suppliant attitude, now march in solid platoons, with shouldered muskets, slung knapsacks, and buckled cartridge boxes down through the gayest avenues and busiest thoroughfares to the pealing strains of martial music, and everywhere are

saluted with waving handkerchiefs, with descending flowers, and with the acclamations and plaudits of countless beholders."<sup>12</sup>

Southern reaction to the Emancipation Proclamation and the organizing of black troops was what could be expected from people whose society believed blacks were "human beings of an inferior race." Some thought black troops "should be hung whenever taken," or shot on the spot - a sentiment some Confederate soldiers actually carried out (and black troops returned in kind). Others embraced the view expressed by Joseph Clisby, editor of *The Macon Daily Telegraph*. Clisby wrote; "We view the negro soldier in the Yankee camp rather as a dupe and victim, than a criminal and cut-throat. The negro race of the South is not warlike." Jefferson Davis concurred with Clisby's thinking. Black soldiers were "unwilling instruments" of the "most execrable measure recorded in the history of guilty man," he said in reference to the Emancipation Proclamation. Clisby and others reassured nervous Southerners that the black man "is a weak and

generally inoffensive creature," and that those who had engaged in combat against Confederate troops had been forced into combat with "brigades of bayonets behind them."<sup>13</sup>

Behind the rhetoric was an understanding that the Emancipation and enlistment of blacks into the Union army meant that the war had entered a new phase. Compromise, if any still thought it possible, was finished. Northerners also sensed the shift, even those who continued to resist the change that threatened to sweep the nation and upset the status quo. Among those who understood that whatever the outcome of the war, the nation would never be the same again, was Ulysses S. Grant. In a letter to Congressman Elihu B. Washburn in August, Grant wrote that from what he had seen in the South; "Slavery is already dead and cannot be resurrected. It would take a standing army to maintain slavery in the South if we were to make peace today guaranteeing to the South all their former Constitutional privileges."

### *"There is Always Hazard in Military Movements"* The Spring of Hope

The cheer that Rosecrans' "victory" at Stones River brought to the North faded as winter gave way to spring. Grant's efforts to get at Vicksburg failed, foiled more by the difficult geography he faced than anything else. "I fear Grant won't do," wrote one of his generals; "He trusts too much to others and they are incompetent." In Virginia, Ambrose Burnside had resigned as commander of the Army of the Potomac amid great dissent among his senior officers, and Lincoln selected Major General Joseph Hooker as his replacement. Hooker restored the morale of the army with a series of common sense reforms. By April, his splendid army of 133,000 men was ready to embark upon a new campaign. Confronting him was the 60,000 man Army of Northern Virginia, under Lee. The winter had been hard on Lee's army. Simply feeding it was a daily challenge. In February he detached Longstreet and one-half of his First Corps, consisting of Pickett's and Hood's divisions, to the vicinity of Suffolk, in southeastern Virginia. Longstreet's mission was to guard the vital rail communications that ran through Suffolk, but he was also tasked with collecting food and fodder for the army, and his absence meant that Lee had 17,000 fewer soldiers to feed and clothe. But it also left Lee with only 60,000 effectives to confront Hooker's juggernaut.<sup>14</sup>

Brimming with confidence, Hooker commenced his campaign on April 27. On May 1, his forces made contact with Lee in the Wilderness west of Fredericksburg, around Chancellorsville. Despite being outnumbered two to one, Lee took the offensive, carried the battle to Hooker, and defeated him in a furious three-day battle fought between May 2-4. The Army of the Potomac withdrew to the north bank of the Rappahannock, having lost 17,287 casualties. Lee lost 12,821 men, including his Second Corps commander, Lt. General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, who was accidentally wounded by his own men on May 2, and died of complications on May 10. Jackson's death cast a pall over the South and tempered the euphoria of victory.<sup>15</sup>

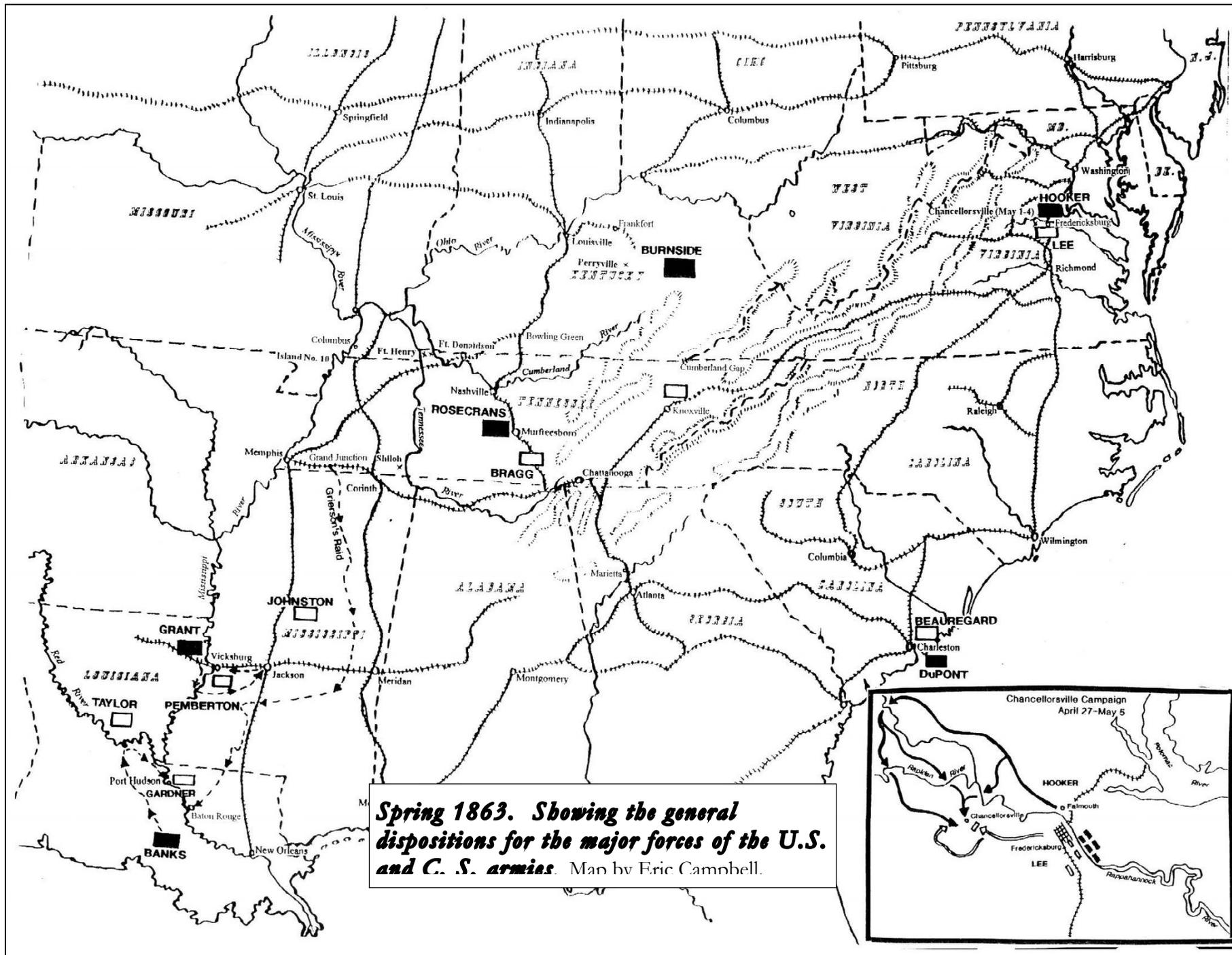
Lee felt no elation over his victory at Chancellorsville. His losses were heavy and he complained that "again we had gained not an inch of ground and the enemy could not be pursued." There had been no improvement in his supply situation and, unless his army was substantially reinforced, he feared he might have to withdraw to Richmond's defenses. Yet, Lee had won some significant advantages for the South at Chancellorsville. The Southern people received a badly needed morale boost. It reinforced the confidence of his soldiers in their fighting prowess and the ability of their generals to lead them to victory. Chancellorsville added fuel to the propaganda of the Peace Democrats in the North that the South could never be

conquered. The battle had also hurt the Army of the Potomac and the Union war effort more than perhaps Lee realized. Besides the 17,000 battle casualties, thousands of veteran troops who had enlisted for two years were discharged soon after the battle. Thousands more, who had enlisted in the summer of 1862 for nine months service, were destined to be discharged by June and July. By causing more discouragement in the North, the battle helped to sow more seeds of discontent about the impending draft.<sup>16</sup>

The victory at Chancellorsville, combined with the reduction in strength of the Army of the Potomac, offered the Confederacy the opportunity of delivering a counter-thrust at the Federals. The vital question was where to strike, for while Lee had temporarily stabilized the situation in the east, it had deteriorated in the west. There, U.S. Grant, in an operation of the greatest daring, had marched his army down the west bank of the Mississippi to a point thirty miles below Vicksburg. He had undertaken this movement against the advice of his best generals. Sherman thought Grant's plan – which entailed operating without a supply line against an enemy who enjoyed interior lines and could be reinforced more easily than Grant could - too risky and he encouraged his chief to return to Memphis and start again with a secure supply line. Grant refused. "The country is already disheartened over the lack of success of our armies," he told Sherman. What the country needed now was a "decisive victory." Without it, Grant believed "our cause was lost."<sup>17</sup>

So he went forward. On the night of April 16, the gunboats of Admiral David D. Porter successfully ran the batteries at Vicksburg, and took position to cover the crossing of Grant's forces to the east bank of the Mississippi. On April 30, while Sherman's Corps demonstrated against the northern approaches to Vicksburg, Grant crossed two army corps totaling 24,000 men to the east bank of the Mississippi, at Bruinsburg, Mississippi. To further confuse the Confederates, and draw off their cavalry, Grant sent a force of 1,700 cavalry, under Colonel Benjamin Grierson, on a raid through Mississippi to Louisiana. Grierson's column preyed upon Vicksburg's supply line and generally wrought havoc along their path. Lieutenant General John Pemberton, commanding the Confederate force defending Vicksburg, was convinced the enemy would advance upon the city from the north - an opinion which Sherman's demonstration helped reinforce - and he failed to pay sufficient attention to the warnings about the Union force that had landed below the city. Since he dispatched most of his cavalry to pursue Grierson, Pemberton was further hampered by a lack of information about enemy movements and intentions. Consequently, only 8,000 Confederates stood in Grant's path as he struck out from Bruinsburg. On May 1 Grant defeated this force, then ordered Sherman to bring his corps south and join him.

Sherman reached Grant on May 7, raising the army's strength to about 40,000. Over the next ten days Grant's army marched nearly 200 miles while living off the land, fought five engagements, winning each one, and drove Pemberton's army back into the defenses of Vicksburg. In an effort to stave off disaster, Jefferson Davis assigned General Joseph E. Johnston to command of Confederate troops in Mississippi. But Grant moved too swiftly, Pemberton proved too indecisive, and Johnston was unable to effect concentration of numbers that could stop the Federals. The "Gibraltar" of the Mississippi - Vicksburg - was besieged. Grant ordered an all-out attack on May 19, which Pemberton's defenders stopped cold. Hoping to avoid a drawn-out siege that extended into the hot weather of late spring and early summer, and to capture Vicksburg before Joe Johnston could assemble a relief force, Grant ordered another assault for May 22. This too failed, and Grant reluctantly settled down to take Vicksburg by siege operations.



*Spring 1863. Showing the general dispositions for the major forces of the U.S. and C. S. armies. Map by Eric Campbell.*

While Grant besieged Vicksburg, another Union army of nearly 13,000 men pushed out from Alexandria, Louisiana to capture Port Hudson, besides Vicksburg, the last Confederate bastion on the Mississippi. By May 25, Banks had laid siege to the Confederate garrison of some 4,500 men. Two days later he ordered an assault. The well-entrenched Confederates gave the Federals a thorough drubbing, inflicting 1,995 casualties. But Port Hudson remained beleaguered.

Pondering these calamities that had befallen the Confederacy from the perspective of the Army of Northern Virginia, Colonel William H. A. Speer, commanding the 28th North Carolina, wrote his father:

Father, the future looks dark and gloomy. No man, I think, can see the end with any satisfaction. If we can hold out at Vicksburg, the gloom will not be so dark, but if we lost Vicksburg it is a great blow to the C.S.; I think it of more importance to us than Richmond.<sup>18</sup>

Although Jefferson Davis and his Secretary of War, James A. Seddon, may not have agreed with Speer that Vicksburg was more important than Richmond, they certainly felt it was of equal importance and that its loss would be a crippling blow to the Confederacy's hopes of survival. How to extricate the nation from the crisis was the question that weighed heavily on both men. To relieve the siege of Vicksburg they needed men. Johnston was scraping together whatever scattered forces he could, but it seemed unlikely that he could assemble a large enough force to break Grant's lines. Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee could not provide reinforcements for they were confronting Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland near the old Mufreesboro battlefield. Seddon thought Lee could spare some manpower, and suggested that Pickett's Division be sent west to help reinforce Johnston. General Pierre G. Beauregard, commanding the garrison at Charleston, South Carolina, who liked grandiose plans, thought that Lee with Longstreet's entire corps should be sent to Tennessee. Taking command of the reinforced Army of Tennessee Lee could then fall upon Rosecrans and destroy his army, winning Tennessee back for the Confederacy, and upsetting Grant's operations at Vicksburg, perhaps even forcing the lifting of the siege.<sup>19</sup>

Lee did not favor either plan. He wrote Seddon that it would take the better part of a month just to move Pickett's Division over the dilapidated Confederate railroad system to Vicksburg, and by then he believed the issue would be decided there, "as the climate in June will force the enemy to retire." Either Lee was ill informed or he was fishing for reasons that would discourage Seddon from weakening his army. In September 1863 it took about two weeks to move two divisions of Longstreet's Corps to Tennessee, so it can be assumed that Pickett could have been moved to Mississippi in less than one month. As for the climate - if the Federals could operate in the mosquito infested, swampy areas on the Virginia Peninsula in June 1862, they could certainly maintain themselves in Mississippi in June 1863. Nevertheless, Lee's arguments against Seddon's plan made strategic sense. Seddon advocated dispersal of Confederate strength and reaction to Union threats, rather than concentrating strength on one front and using it to seize the initiative and disrupt the Federals plans, the strategy which Lee advocated.<sup>20</sup>

Beauregard's plan was more difficult to dismiss. But the logistics it entailed for the already strapped Confederate rail system were enormous, significantly more complicated and demanding than the movement of Longstreet and two divisions of his corps to Tennessee in September 1863. It also did not suggest who would command the Army of Northern Virginia while Lee and

Longstreet were gone. Bragg? Beauregard? The mere idea of either of these men commanding the principal army in the east likely sent shivers down Lee's spine. Lee believed that a summer offensive in the east posed less logistical difficulty and reduced risk for the same potential gain, than detaching part of his army to the west. Lee's opposition to sending reinforcements from his army to the west may have also reflected his opinion of the western generals who would use them, or rather, not use them; Bragg, Johnston, and Pemberton. Under the circumstances confronting the Confederacy in May 1863, Lee saw the strategic options at hand to be a grim choice as to "whether the line of Virginia is in more danger than the line of the Mississippi." Put more bluntly – if Vicksburg were lost it would be a grievous blow to the South; if Richmond were lost it would be a deathblow.<sup>21</sup>

Lee may have exaggerated the Confederacy's situation that spring, but his opinion did reflect a reality that the South's limited manpower and overworked rail system could not sustain multiple offensive operations. Lee wanted to carry the war north of the Potomac, where it would pose a threat to Washington as well as to vital east-west communications, and would upset whatever plans the Federals had for a summer offensive in the east. Military success in Pennsylvania would also fuel the fires of the burgeoning peace movement in the North. An invasion of Northern territory might also cause the enemy "to draw to its support troops designed to operate against other parts of the country."<sup>22</sup>

In mid-May Lee went to Richmond to meet with Davis and his cabinet to present his own plan for a summer offensive that would carry the Army of Northern Virginia into Pennsylvania. He succeeded in winning over everyone but Postmaster General John H. Reagan, who would not be budged from his belief that the relief of Vicksburg should be the number one priority. Lee proved less successful in obtaining reinforcements for his army. He had hoped to effect a concentration such as the Confederacy had done in June 1862, when they assembled an army of nearly 100,000 men to defend Richmond. But since then the Union army had successfully established itself at multiple points along the extended Confederate coastline from which it threatened vital rail communications, and agricultural and manufacturing centers. Departmental commanders in North and South Carolina, and southeastern Virginia warned of dire consequences if their forces were reduced, and Davis and Seddon were inclined to agree with them. Lee diplomatically attempted to point out the folly of a policy that dispersed the Confederacy's military strength. "I think our Southern coast might be held during the sickly season by local troops aided by a small organized force," wrote Lee to Seddon; "This would give us an active force in the field with which we might hope to make some impression on the enemy, both on our northern and western frontiers." Lee strongly believed that a concentration of strength in Virginia compelled the Federals to do likewise, forcing them to reduce their garrisons along the Confederate coast, just as they had done during the Confederate concentration at Richmond in 1862. But Davis and Seddon refused to take the chance. "There is always hazard in military movements," Lee explained to Seddon in early June, but to no avail. He received limited reinforcements, a few brigades of cavalry and several large, but untested infantry brigades to replace an equal number of veteran brigades on detached service. This brought Lee's army up to a strength of about 80,000 men by the end of May. By the beginning of June, although he continued to petition Seddon and Davis for reinforcements, Lee felt he could wait no longer to move. On June 3, he quietly began shifting elements of his army from Fredericksburg west toward Culpepper Court House. The Gettysburg Campaign had begun.<sup>23</sup>

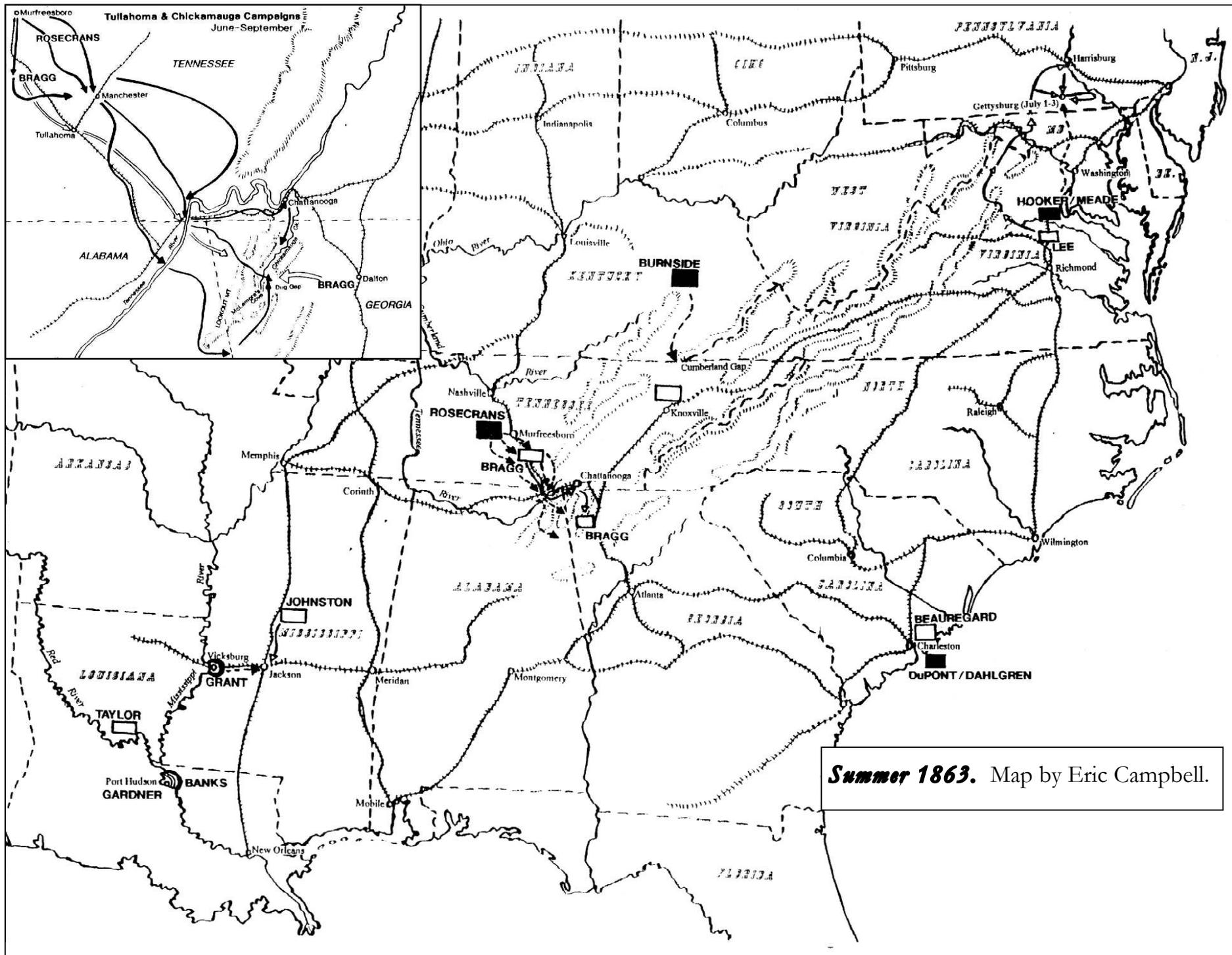
By the time Lee's columns were on the move, Joe Johnston had assembled a force of nearly 32,000 men in Mississippi. With the 30,000 Pemberton had in Vicksburg, this gave the

Confederates a temporary advantage in numbers over Grant. But reinforcements were en route to Grant and the window of opportunity to strike would not last long. Despite repeated urgings and orders from Davis, Johnston hesitated. He urged Pemberton to abandon Vicksburg at the same time that Davis was ordering him to hold the city at all costs. "I am too weak to save Vicksburg. Can do no more than attempt to save you and your garrison," Johnston wrote Pemberton on May 29. This was the handwriting on the wall. Johnston refused to hazard the perils that a relief of Vicksburg entailed. Instead he chose to let Pemberton look to his own devices and allowed Vicksburg to wither on the vine without so much as a whimper from his army. Lee had warned Seddon in early June; ". . . we must decide between the positive loss of inactivity and the risk of action." Johnston chose the positive loss of inactivity, and Pemberton, his army, and the Confederacy suffered the consequences. The spring of hope was about to give way to the summer of disaster and despair.<sup>24</sup>

*"The Armies of the Confederacy Are Recoiling at All Points"*  
**SUMMER OF DISASTER**

The outcome of the Gettysburg and Vicksburg campaigns is too well known to repeat here. But they were not the only setbacks suffered by the Confederacy that dismal summer of 1863. On July 9, less than one week after the Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, Port Hudson surrendered to Nathaniel Banks, giving U. S. forces uncontested control of the length of the Mississippi. Then in Tennessee on June 24, Rosecrans finally put his Army of the Cumberland in motion against Bragg's Army of Tennessee, advancing south from Mufreesboro. By dint of maneuver instead of fighting, Rosecrans sent Bragg scrambling back first to the important rail junction at Tullahoma, then all the way to Chattanooga. At a cost of 570 casualties, Rosecrans had won middle Tennessee and stood poised to evict the Confederates from the entire state. Only from Charleston, South Carolina, did any good news reach Richmond. The Union effort to seize Morris Island, which held Battery Wagner, one of the key defenses of the harbor city, was repulsed with heavy losses to the Federals in mid-July.

Port Hudson, the Gettysburg Campaign and Vicksburg Campaign cost the Confederacy 74,000 casualties. If Bragg's losses from desertion and skirmishing during the Tullahoma Campaign are included, it raises Confederate losses to 76,000 or 77,000 men. The numerically superior Union armies in the same campaigns, and including the failure at Battery Wagner, lost approximately 48,000. It had been a disastrous July for the Confederacy. For some, the defeats cast a gloomy pall over their dreams of an independent Confederate nation. J. B. Jones, a Confederate War Department clerk, wrote discouragingly in his diary on July 17, "At last we have the authentic announcement that Gen. Lee has recrossed the Potomac! Thus the armies of the Confederate States are recoiling at all points, and a settled gloom is apparent on many weak faces. The fall of Charleston is anticipated." Josiah Gorgas, the chief of Confederate ordnance, confided gloomily to his journal on July 28, "Events have succeeded one another with disastrous rapidity. One brief month ago we were apparently at the point of success. Lee was in Pennsylvania, threatening Harrisburgh, and even Philadelphia. Vicksburgh seemed to laugh all Grant's efforts to scorn. . . It seems incredible that human power could effect such a change in so brief a space. Yesterday we rode on the pinnacle of success - today absolute ruin seems to be our portion. The Confederacy totters to its destruction." Judith McGuire, a civilian visiting Richmond, sensed the "settled gloom" about which Jones wrote. "There is more unhappiness abroad among our people than I have ever seen before. Sometimes I wish I could sleep until it is over."<sup>25</sup>



*Summer 1863.* Map by Eric Campbell.

Yet, not all despaired. The defeat at Gettysburg, the loss of much of Tennessee, and the surrender of Vicksburg and Port Hudson were calamities to be sure, but not war-ending disasters. The *Richmond Dispatch* printed an editorial that cautioned citizens not to give up hope. "We observe that many of our contemporaries are addressing hortatory proclamations to the country, calling upon our people never to give up, but to fight on to the last man and the last drop of blood," the *Dispatch* wrote, and went on to say, "All this is very well in its place; but we maintain that the cause is in no such desperate condition as to require the aid of these powerful stimulants." There were many in the army who would have agreed with this editorial. One of Lee's soldiers wrote after Gettysburg, "the army here thinks it can whip its weight in wild cats and has no mistrusts or apprehension." Another soldier, hoping to encourage his wife, wrote that "we will have a grand army to battle for us. . .and by God's grace we will soon strike the enemy such a blow, that his hopes of subjugation will be as far off as before the fall of Vicksburg." Many of Lee's soldiers echoed similar sentiments. Yes, they had suffered heavy losses at Gettysburg, but so had the Yankees. For proof of the damage they had inflicted upon the Army of the Potomac, they pointed to the Federals cautious pursuit after the battle and its hesitancy to attack Lee when his army was trapped on the north bank of the Potomac by high waters. Even General Gorgas' was encouraged by the positive, confident reports he received from the Army of Northern Virginia following Gettysburg. On September 6 he entered in his diary, "I have no doubt from all the signs that Lee is also meditating an advance against Meade; if not into Maryland. His army is again in excellent condition."<sup>26</sup>

### ***"Rich Man's War and Poor Man's Fight?"*** **The Draft, Riots, and Peace Democrats**

The New York City draft riots of July gave the South renewed hope that despite the North's victories on the battlefield, the Northern people still opposed the war. "The news of the New York riots, which they got up in opposition to the draft, is cheering!" wrote Judith McGuire in her diary. If only, she hoped, the Yankees "would fight each other." But most Southerners misunderstood and misinterpreted the riots. They were not, as many Southerners thought or hoped, a sign of general resistance to the draft in the North. The riots, as Bruce Catton observed, "were based upon ignorance, misery, fear, and the inability of one class of men to understand another class." The rioters were nearly all Irish laborers from the city's Ninth Congressional District. They were also nearly all Democrats, and they had been told for months by their newspapers and their leaders that the Republicans wanted them to join the army to free the black man, who would then come north en masse and take their jobs. This was an issue sure to arouse fear and anger with the Irish, particularly the longshoremen, who had a history of conflict with blacks at the city's piers. The most recent discord had occurred in April 1863, when the Irish longshoremen went on strike to win a standard wage rate, and to enforce an "all-white" rule of employment on the docks. By "all-white" they meant Irish, for Germans and Italians, along with blacks, were considered non-white in the Irish longshoremen's terms. When the ship owners attempted to use black longshoremen to replace the striking Irishmen, trouble flared. There were clashes with the police, and blacks who were brave enough to cross the picket line to work risked their lives. The strike was finally settled by mid-June 1863, but the hard feelings remained, and the party leaders exploited these feelings when the draft came.<sup>27</sup>

Besides the race issue was the \$300.00 commutation fee. If an individual were selected in the draft he could buy a release from service for \$300, at least until the next lottery drawing, when he

VOL. VII.....NO. 182.

**THE RIOT!!**

**Terrible Scenes in Nineteenth Street.**

**THE MILITARY AND THE MOB.**

**CHARGES AND COUNTER CHARGES**

**Colonel Jardine Mortally Wounded.**

**One Captain, Two Lieutenants and Fifteen Privates Killed.**

**HOWITZERS OPEN ON THE MOB**

**The Street Strewed with the Bodies of Men, Women, and Children.**

**SCENES IN THE ELEVENTH AVENUE.**

**THE MILITARY FIRE ON THE MOB.**

**THIRTY MEN AND WOMEN KILLED.**

**LIST OF THE SLAIN.**

**A Woman Shot Through the Heart.**

**DEATH OF COLONEL O'BRIEN.**

**RAID UPON THE BLACKS.**

**SEVERAL NEGROES HUNG.**

**ONE NEGRO DROWNED**

**BLOCKS OF NEGRO DWELLINGS BURNED**

**LETTER FROM GOV. SEYMOUR**

**Firemen and Citizens Organizing for Defense.**

**RIOT ON STATEN ISLAND.**

**Railroad Depot Burned—Lyceum Sacked, and a Negro Hung.**

**GREAT FIRE IN BROOKLYN**

**CONFLAGRATION IN NEWARK.**

**ARRIVAL OF TROOPS.**

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*Headlines of the New York Daily News, July 16, 1863.*

would have to pay the fee again if his name were drawn. Otherwise, he could purchase a substitute, which permanently exempted him from the draft. Even though the Republicans had deliberately set the commutation fee at \$300 in the belief that it would keep the cost of hiring a substitute within the means of the working-class, the Democrats claimed that it was nothing more than a blatant effort by the Republican controlled government to let the rich buy their way out of service and have the working class shoulder the burden of fighting the war. A war, they were being reminded, that was being fought to free people who would compete with them for jobs. In reality, the claims of the Democrats held no water. James McPherson noted that in the New York City districts with the highest concentration of Irish immigrants, 98 percent of the men drafted, who were not otherwise exempted, either hired a substitute or paid the commutation fee. Political machines, such as Tammany Hall, raised funds through various means to keep their people out of the army. But the ease with which the draft could be avoided was not yet understood when the first drawing for the draft was made in New York on July 13. Then, the mixture of the race issue, combined with the intrusion of the Federal government into their daily lives, and the belief that this was nothing more than a "rich man's war and poor man's fight," erupted into violence.<sup>28</sup>

The riots were an orgy of the ugliest mob brutality. The principal targets were blacks, government officials, prominent Republicans and abolitionists. Even those who by their dress marked them as someone who could afford the commutation fee were fair game for the rage of the mobs. At least 105 people died in the four days of rioting. It took the combined efforts of the police, militia and Federal troops to suppress the rioters and restore order to the city.

Violent opposition to the draft flared in nearly every Northern state that summer, although the scale of the violence elsewhere paled in comparison to New York City. But in nearly every instance the active resisters were poor, foreign-born Democrats, who were inflamed by the rhetoric of Democratic newspapers and party leaders who encouraged them to believe the draft act placed an unfair burden upon them. The reasons for opposition largely mirrored those of the New York City rioters. As the resolve of the Lincoln administration to enforce the draft became apparent, violent opposition began to crumble. Non-violent opposition faded away too, partly because of the successes of Union armies on the battlefield that summer, but principally because people and communities began to understand how relatively easy it was to avoid being drafted. The Enrollment Act gave communities credits for men who had already enlisted under earlier calls for troops. Ten of twenty-two Northern states liable for conscription avoided the draft entirely in 1863 due to past credits and successful recruiting of volunteers. Credits were also given to areas that contributed black volunteers for the U.S. Colored Troops (which changed the opinion of some whites about blacks serving in the army). Paying the commutation fee, or hiring a substitute, proved to be the easiest way to avoid the draft. In some instances, entire communities raised funds by various methods to assure that

every one of their men called up would have his commutation fee paid, or that some gullible foreigner could be hired as a substitute. In other cases commutation clubs and insurance societies sprang up, where members contributed to a pool of money that bought the way out of the draft for any member whose name was drawn. Some states authorized substantial bounties to entice volunteers. The result was that very few men were actually drafted into the army. As James McPherson noted, the draft "was not conscription at all, but a clumsy carrot and stick device to stimulate volunteering."<sup>29</sup>

The handful of draftees, and larger number of substitutes and bounty men that were produced by the Enrollment Act introduced a new type of soldier to the Union armies. "What a contrast between such hounds and the enthusiastic and eager volunteers of 1861," wrote Lieutenant Colonel Rufus R. Dawes of the 6<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin, after sizing up a group of conscripts. "Our men thoroughly despise these cattle and certainly the honor of the old army will not be safe in such hands," he thought. On August 6, the 118<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania received 109 conscripts, from 159 who started for the front. 50 deserted along the way. Those that remained were considered by one of the 118<sup>th</sup>'s company commanders as "a fearful lot of loafers, bummers and substitutes."<sup>30</sup> Austin Stearns of the 13th Massachusetts found the conscripts his regiment received little better:

I don't know as there were any outright murderers, still there were those who had been engaged in riots in New York and had hung Negroes to lamp posts, but all other classes of villians were represented, picked up from the slums of the cities. There was almost all nationalities, from the cockney of "Old Hingland" to the "Creole of Cuba." There was two hundred of them when they started from Boston to join us, but about a dozen had been shot or drowned on the voyage out in trying to escape. After breakfast we went up to hear the roll call and see them as they answered their names. Many had forgotten the name they gave when they enlisted, and others would try to make them believe that was their name when one was called and there was no answer. There was less than one hundred men in our regiment and the prospect of having this crowd turned loose upon us was not pleaseing.<sup>31</sup>

Besides the draft, the defeats of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, and Grant's initial failed efforts to capture Vicksburg, fueled a smoldering peace movement in the North. The champion of those desiring peace was a former Democratic congressman from Ohio, Clement Vallandigham. Vallandigham, like many Democrats, longed for the restoration of the old Union. He was a dynamic man who enjoyed stirring up controversy, and he loudly advocated a negotiated settlement with the South - which the South did not want - and dismissed emancipation as a trick of the Lincoln administration. "In considering terms of settlement we [should] look only to the welfare, peace, and safety of the white race, without reference to the effect that settlement may have on the African," he argued. Emancipation was an issue that rankled many Democrats who opposed the war. An Ohio newspaper editor proclaimed the Emancipation as "monstrous, impudent, and heinous. . .insulting to God as to man, for it declares those 'equal' whom God created unequal." A popular slogan at Democratic political rallies that year was "Protect us from Negro Equality." The Democrats lured many Irish and German immigrants to their party by playing upon their fears that emancipated slaves would flood the low-wage job market and take jobs from them. As the fall elections came near, a Dayton newspaper encouraged its readers to "let every vote count in favor of the *white* man, and against

the Abolition hordes, who would place negro children in your schools, negro jurors in your jury boxes, and negro votes in your ballot boxes! . . . Down with the flag of Abolition; mount the flag of the WHITE MAN upon the citadel."<sup>32</sup>

Several factors took much of the steam out of the peace movement. First, was the battlefield victories at Gettysburg, Vicksburg and Port Hudson, which boosted Northern morale and challenged the claim of the Peace Democrats that the war was a failure. Second, was the arrest and exile of Vallandigham. Following his removal from command of the Army of the Potomac, General Ambrose Burnside had been ordered to take command of the Department of Ohio with headquarters in Cincinnati. Burnside disliked the disloyal talk and attitude he encountered in this part of the country and he decided to do something about it. On April 19, 1863 he published General Order No. 38 which threatened that "it must be distinctly understood that treason, expressed or implied, will not be tolerated in this department." Burnside's tactical acumen had not improved since Fredericksburg. Who would determine what was treasonous and what was not? Burnside decided that he would be the judge. Vallandigham, who was running on the Democratic ticket for Ohio governor, promptly accepted the challenge and made public his displeasure. Vallandigham did no more than speak out against the policies and war aims of the Lincoln Administration, albeit in Vallandigham's special way, but it sounded like treason to Burnside. He sent an infantry company to Vallandigham's home in the middle of the night to arrest him. In Dayton, Vallandigham's hometown, a crowd of supporters, their courage bolstered by alcohol, sought revenge by rioting and burning the offices of the *Dayton Empire*, a Republican newspaper. Burnside dispatched troops to deal with the situation. Upon arriving they shot one of the troublemakers, and established martial law in Montgomery County, Ohio.<sup>33</sup>

A military court tried Vallandigham, found him guilty and sentenced him to be imprisoned for the duration of the war. Bruce Catton observed of the verdict; "It had gone this far; for making a stump speech, a candidate for governor could be seized by the army, tried by army officers and locked up in an army prison-largely, when all was and done, because General Burnside did not approve of what Candidate Vallandigham had been saying." Burnside's ill-considered handling of the situation made Vallandigham a martyr of his cause. He and his supporters could sound off about the suppression of free speech and oppressive tactics of the Lincoln Administration with the end result possibly being his election as Ohio governor. Vallandigham was clever, but Lincoln trumped him. He ordered Vallandigham's sentence commuted, then directed that he be sent to the Confederacy. To those who complained of the president's handling of the incident, he responded: "Must I shoot a simple-minded soldier boy who deserts, while I must not touch the hair of a wily agitator who induces him to desert." Vallandigham discovered that the Confederacy had no interest in his vision of a negotiated peace that reunified the country. They explained to him bluntly that he was "badly deluded" if he believed they desired anything but full independence from the United States. So, he departed the South ingloriously and found his way to southern Ontario, where he attempted to wage his campaign as governor. But the combination of the success of Union armies on the battlefield during the summer, shock over the violence during the New York City draft riots, combined with his campaign in absentia doomed Vallandigham to a crushing defeat in the election for governor in October.<sup>34</sup>

While Vallandigham's activities, the New York city draft riots, and other unrest in various places had its impact on the North, they did not signify that the Northern people were nearly ready to throw in the towel before Gettysburg and Vicksburg turned the tide. Most areas of the North supported the war effort and the defeat of the Southern Confederacy. The unrest that did occur, as already shown, was localized to certain areas and involved specific groups, principally,

poor Irish and German immigrants who opposed the war for economic reasons. The peace Democrats did not represent a majority of the population; indeed, many Democrats supported the war. Although they often disagreed with Lincoln's policy of emancipation, they also wanted no part of Vallandigham's negotiated peace with the South.

*"All is Still as Death for Miles and Miles"*  
**The Northern and Southern Home Front**

Although the war brought significant change to the Northern home front, particularly for women and children, the average Northerner felt few of the hardships that Southerners experienced. For many Northerners who did not have a family member in the army, the war was often no more than an inconvenience, or an opportunity, depending on one's situation and occupation. When Colonel Elisha Hunt Rhodes of the 2nd Rhode Island Infantry visited home in April he "was surprised to find so little interest manifested in the war. The people seemed to take it as a matter of course, and hardly asked after the Army." Despite wartime inflation that reduced the buying power of some, particularly unskilled workers, the economy remained strong through 1863. Northern newspapers carried pages of advertisements of merchants who offered an array of goods that would dazzle a Southerner. "Sell, Sell, Sell is our Motto," read the advertisement at H. C. Ransom's Clothing and Fabric store in Hartford, Connecticut. Ransom's offered black silks, pianos, organs, fresh fruit, Italian salad oil, among a plentitude of other items that could hardly be classified as necessities of life. While one might find some of these items at exorbitant prices on rare occasions in select Southern cities in 1863, where they had been brought in by blockade runners, they were commonplace in Northern cities and towns. Food shortages in the North were unheard of. While Confederate soldiers saw their rations reduced throughout 1863, Union soldiers, like Captain Francis Donaldson of the 118<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania, could write home; "For dinner I will have boiled Mackerel, buckwheat cakes, chocolate, toast and milk punch. . . You will perceive I am in no danger of starving and will wager that as a Captain of the U.S.A. I live better than does the Commanding General of the C.S.A."<sup>35</sup>

Conditions on the Southern home front in 1863 were grim. There were no refugees in the North, except for a small number who suffered temporary dislocation during the Gettysburg Campaign. There were thousands in the South. One Union soldier wrote his sister from Hustonville, Kentucky in May 1863; "You folks at the North do not know the horrors of this war. You can all stay at home without the least fear of being molested, but if you could hear some of the reffugees from Tennessee that have come to us for protection tell their tale of woe it would freeze the blood in your veins." The only town of any size in the North to experience first hand the impact of combat and occupation by large armies was Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Hard as Gettysburg's experience was, it paled in comparison to what a citizen in, for instance, Fredericksburg, Virginia, Vicksburg, Mississippi, or Huntsville, Alabama experienced. These communities and many others sustained months of occupation by armies involved in active operations. Huntsville had been raided 21 times by the end of 1863. Roland Bowen, a soldier in the 15th Massachusetts, gave some idea of what Fredericksburg experienced. Writing home after the Battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862, he related that "we stole or distroyed everything in the City, great was the ransacking thereof. Mother you know but very little about War." Several months later, after Chancellorsville, he wrote to a friend about the Lacy House, once valued, Bowen thought at \$100,000. "Many of the windows are broken out and the house out side generally looks very much delapidated. Inside, every thing is ruin. The window sills have

been torn off, the partitions ripped out and the splendid folding doors smashed up, all to make a little fire so the Soldiers might have a little hot coffee."<sup>36</sup> A visitor to Fredericksburg in 1864, was shocked by the destruction he encountered:

... there is not a fence not an inhabited house all the way to Fredericksburg. A few cattle may be seen grazing on the rich plains which bear no crops now but crops of luxuriant weeds. . . There are no hands at work in the fenceless fields - no signs of animated life about the deserted house - the drowsy crow of the cock, the neighing of the horses, the cawing of the crow, and the laughter of the children in the yard, and the 'wo haw' of the plow driven, are no longer heard in this blasted region. All is still as death for miles and miles. . .<sup>37</sup>

By the time this visitor recorded these observations the population of Fredericksburg had fallen from a prewar size of 5,000 to between 600 and 800 people, mainly women and children.<sup>38</sup>



*A street in Fredericksburg, Virginia after the battle in December 1862.*  
National Archives

By January 1863 one resident of Richmond estimated that the food bill for an average family was ten times what it had been in 1860. In 1860 an average family could feed itself for \$6.65 a month. By 1863 the cost had risen to \$68, and threatened to go higher. Part of the problem was speculators, who bought up scarce goods to drive the price up. Judith McGuire recorded on April 2 that meal was selling for \$16 a bushel. Speculators bought it, raising its value, then sold it at a profit. "Strange that men with human hearts can, in these dreadful times, thus grind the poor," McGuire lamented. Conditions in Richmond were extreme. As the author of a recent study of Richmond in wartime noted, "Richmond was by far the most expensive, corrupt, overcrowded, and crime-ridden city in the Confederacy." But food shortages were felt everywhere. Even

regions that produced sufficient quantities of food suffered because of an inadequate transportation system to distribute it and the effects of runaway inflation.<sup>39</sup>

In some areas people were driven to the point of desperation and violence resulted. In a dozen or more cities, ranging from Mobile, Alabama to Richmond, Virginia, angry women took to the streets, often armed with pistols and knives, and broke into shops and stores to seize food and other necessities. The largest and most famous of these incidents occurred in Richmond in early April. It began when several hundred women gathered and marched on the governor's mansion and pled their desperate situation. The governor offered the crowd little satisfaction, so the women moved on. As they did so their numbers increased, as well as the volatility of the crowd. The crowd degenerated into a mob, breaking into stores and shops, taking food and other goods. Militia was dispatched to restore order and shortly Jefferson Davis himself arrived to disperse the rioters. Davis faced them down with a threat to have the militia open fire. The crowd disbanded, but the event underscored the hardships the war had brought to the people in some areas, and to what lengths they might be driven to improve their dire situation.<sup>40</sup>

It is a popular idea that the South had a united people who strongly backed the war, but the state of the Confederacy in 1863 differed sharply with this image. By the end of 1863, out of 465,000 soldiers in the army, 187,000 were absent. The reasons for the large number of absentees were many; suffering on the home front, dissatisfaction with the conscription act, dissolution with the progress of the war, and hardships of soldiering were among the leading factors. Some Southern governors exacerbated the situation, particularly Zebulon Vance of North Carolina and Joseph Brown, of Georgia, both of who vehemently opposed the conscription law. North Carolina courts freely granted writs of habeas corpus to deserters and conscripts and Vance did nothing to stop it. In July 1863, General Gideon J. Pillow reported to authorities that there were between 8,000 and 10,000 "deserters and tory conscripts in the mountains of [north] Alabama, many of whom have deserted the second, third, and (some of them) the fourth time." Pillow further reported that the numbers of deserters and draft dodgers was so formidable and "so thoroughly armed and organized as to hold the citizen population in terror of their displeasure. They rob, burn, and murder the unarmed and defenseless population of the country with impunity." By October 1863 so many deserters had gathered in the swamps of western Florida that the governor appealed to President Davis for help in cleaning them out. Similar troubles afflicted western North Carolina. In Wilkes County 500 deserters and draft dodgers organized themselves into a regiment, built a fortified camp, and commenced drilling. These men and their like in other Tar Heel counties were described by a conscription officer as "not only determined to kill in avoiding apprehension (having just put to death yet another of our enrolling officers), but their esprit de corps extends to killing in revenge as well as in prevention of the capture of each other." J. E. Joyner of Henry Court House, Virginia, who encountered a number of deserters infesting southern Virginia and the upper counties of North Carolina, wrote that the deserters invariably carried their weapons and accouterments with them. When asked for their furlough, "they just pat their guns and defiantly say, 'This is my furlough.'" Joyner related that "even enrolling officers turn away as peaceably as possible," when confronted with such earnest defiance.<sup>41</sup>

The deserters and draft dodgers were encouraged in their contempt for authority and disaffection with the war by a peace movement that gained momentum with the defeats suffered by Confederate forces in the summer of 1863. The Peace Society, which spread through Alabama, East Tennessee, Georgia, and Mississippi, as well as the Heroes of America in North Carolina, southwestern Virginia and East Tennessee, were the most well organized. While they

never gained the prominence of the copperheads in the North, since these peace groups were not affiliated with any established political party, they helped encourage thousands of men to either desert the Confederate army or avoid conscription.<sup>42</sup>

One of the most prominent members of the Heroes of America, and one of the more conspicuous agitators for peace, was William W. Holden, of North Carolina, a man who in some ways was to the Confederacy what Vallandigham was to Lincoln and the Union. The editor of the *Raleigh Standard*, Holden had resisted secession to the last moment in 1861. After North Carolina withdrew from the Union he used his paper to launch attacks upon the policies of the Davis administration, harping particularly upon the theme that it was a rich man's war and poor man's fight. Holden's constant agitation through his paper, combined with the opinion of North Carolina Chief Justice Richmond Pearson, that the Conscription Act was unconstitutional, encouraged large numbers of desertions in North Carolina regiments and defiance to conscription by those liable to be drafted. In April 1863, Brigadier General William Dorsey Pender, then a brigade commander in the Army of Northern Virginia, complained to army headquarters that at least 200 men had deserted out of one of his regiments. "This sir," Pender wrote, "I fear is not the worst of it, for unless some prompt measures are taken to arrest those already deserted, and severe punishment be inflicted after they shall be caught, the matter will grow from bad to worse." In Pender's opinion the source of the problem was Justice Pearson. When North Carolina Governor Zeb Vance began to use state militia to arrest deserters and draft dodgers, Pearson had ruled that state officials did not have authority to enforce Confederate laws. North Carolinians in the army, wrote Pender, "draw the conclusion that enrolled conscripts will not only be justified in resisting the lay, but that those who have been held in service by the law will not be arrested when they desert." Pender warned that "unless something be done, and quickly, serious will be the results. Our regiments will waste away more rapidly than they ever have by battle."<sup>43</sup>

As the summer's disasters unfolded Holden became more brazen and outspoken in his opposition to the war. Even before Gettysburg and Vicksburg, he had Confederate authorities concerned with his rhetoric. Major General D. H. Hill, commanding Confederate forces at Goldsborough, North Carolina, reported to Secretary of War James A. Seddon on May 9, "there is a powerful faction in the State, poisoning public sentiment and looking to a reconstruction. . . . Unless the Government will boldly take this matter in hand and arrest the editor and speakers who are daily uttering treason, the crime of desertion will go on, and I fear that there will be thousands in armed resistance to the Government." Holden and his allies organized over one hundred antiwar meetings starting in late July. At one the people demanded they wanted "the Constitution as it was, and the Union as it was." A North Carolina conscript officer warned his commander in August that "several peace meetings have been held in the Ninth and Tenth Districts, at which I understand, not officially, that the most treasonable language was uttered, and Union flags raised."<sup>44</sup>

Holden's influence and agitation remained strong through the end of 1863. He stirred up enough trouble that in early 1864 Davis urged Congress to suspend the writ of habeas corpus in order to deal with "citizens of well known disloyalty," which meant Holden and his compatriots. Congress did, so Holden suspended publication of his paper and announced soon after that he would run against Vance in a midsummer election for governor of North Carolina. Vance proved more adept at dealing with Holden than Davis, understanding that while most North Carolinians desired peace, they had no desire to cave to the Yankees. Holden may have miscalculated his supporters (just as Vallandigham had misunderstood the South's desire for peace), reading opposition to the policies of the Davis administration to equal a desire to deal with the Yankees.

Among them were men like Colonel William H. A. Speer, commanding the 28th North Carolina. Speer strongly opposed conscription and believed it was the "secessionists" who were responsible for the war, nevertheless he opposed making peace with the Yankees. He wrote to his parents in August 1863; "I want to see peace as bad as any man & I am sick or sicker of the war than any man, but backing down will not do now. It would have done some time ago but [it] is too late now. A strong front will do us more good than anything else." In the July election, Vance crushed Holden with an overwhelming majority. One of the Confederacy's most formidable adversaries, General William T. Sherman, also understood that the Holdens and those of their stripe were in the minority. He wrote to his brother in the spring of 1864; "when it comes to Stubbornness, intensity of earnestness and Zeal for the Cause the South beats us all to pieces."<sup>45</sup>

*"We Must Fight Them More Vindictively"*  
**The Hard War**

The limited war, where war was made upon the enemy's armies and not its civilians, that men like Union General George B. McClellan thought possible when the conflict began, had started to fade by the summer of 1862. It vanished by 1863. Emancipation had drawn a line from which there would be no turning back and no peace short of total victory. But even before the Emancipation Proclamation, the attitudes of the combatants had started to take on a sharper edge, to demonstrate a willingness to accept or excuse behavior that would have been unthinkable in 1861 or early 1862. U. S. Congress had encouraged a harsher conflict with the passage of the Confiscation Act of July 1862, which contained provisions that permitted Federal troops to confiscate the property of "traitors." This included slaves, who were to be considered captives of war and were therefore forever free. Under the leadership of Union General John Pope, a soldier who embraced the sentiments of the Confiscation Act, Union soldiers took a liberal interpretation of what constituted a traitor. As Mark Grimsley observed about the Act, "Union officers so inclined could see it as a green light to go after Southern property." Depredations mounted, which helped fuel the will of Southerners to fight on. Confederate soldiers and political leaders could hold up depredations committed by Union soldiers as an example of what fate awaited the South should it be defeated. "You know too well, my countrymen, what they [Union] mean by success," Jefferson Davis warned the people of the Confederacy in August 1863; "Their malignant rage aims at nothing less than the extermination of yourselves, your wives and children. They seek to destroy what they cannot plunder. They propose as to the spoils of victory that your houses shall be partitioned among the wretches whose atrocious cruelties have stamped infamy on their Government."<sup>46</sup>

Beyond policy, war weariness helped harden attitudes on both sides as the casualties mounted and no end to the conflict was in sight. More drastic measures, particularly toward civilians and civilian property, became acceptable if it was perceived to contribute to shortening the war and achieving victory. An Indiana cavalryman in the Army of the Potomac offered a taste of this when he wrote that his comrades, "will take a man's meal and demand his sack to carry it in, or kill the sheep and hogs in his door yards, and ask his assistance in dressing them. Women's tears are nothing, and their talk of starvation unheeded." Colonel Strong Vincent, an honorable man and fine soldier who fell at Gettysburg leading a brigade, reflected the hardening attitude of many veteran soldiers, and a growing acceptance of making war on civilians, when he wrote his wife in the spring of 1863; "We must fight them more vindictively, or we shall be foiled at every step. We must desolate the country as we pass through it, and not leave the trace of a doubtful friend or

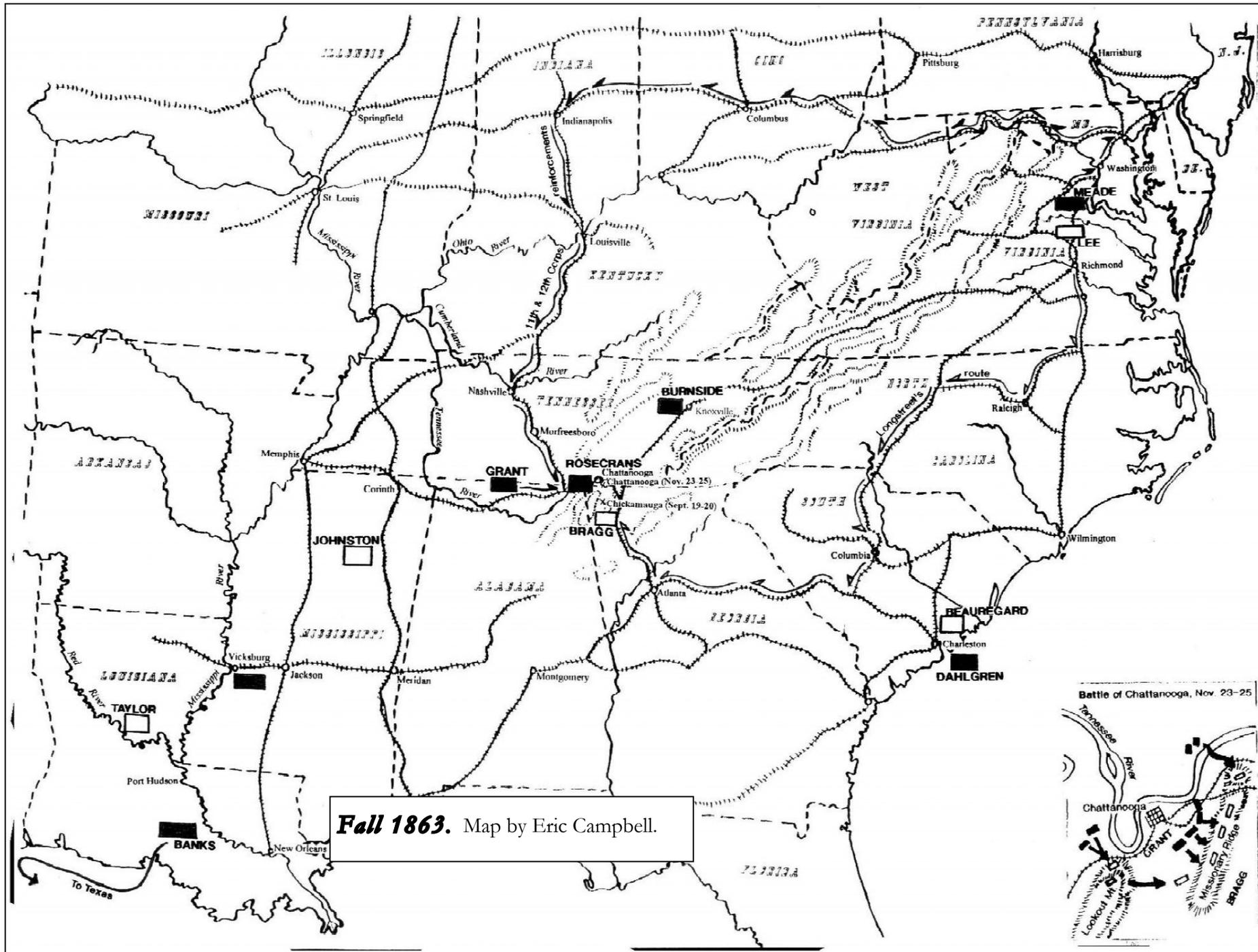
foe behind us; make them believe we are in earnest, terribly in earnest; that to break this band in twain is monstrous and impossible; that the life of every man, yea, of every weak woman or helpless child in the entire South, is of no value whatever compared with the integrity of the Union." Another veteran in the 24th Michigan Infantry, who had read that the shelling of Vicksburg had killed women and children, wrote his wife: "It seem hard dont it Sarah. But I suppose they thought because they had the woman and children and Vicksburg our foarces would not shell the city. But they have got the wrong man to deal with Genl Grant. I am sorry for the woman and children but such is *war*."<sup>47</sup>

Confederate soldiers and civilians increasingly echoed a similar sentiment. General Dorsey Pender wrote his wife on April 19; "Our people have suffered from the depredations of the Yankees, but if we ever get into their country they will find out what it is to have an invading army amongst them. Our officers - not Gen. Lee - have made up their minds not to protect them and some of our chaplains are telling the men they must spoil and kill." Learning that the Army of Northern Virginia had invaded Pennsylvania, Judith McQuire, a Virginian who lived near Hanover Junction, expressed satisfaction. "We are harassed to death with their ruinous raids," she wrote in her diary, "and why should not the North feel it in its homes. Nothing but their personal suffering will shorten the war."<sup>48</sup> Although the Army of Northern Virginia behaved (in comparison to Union armies campaigning in Southern territory) with remarkable self discipline during the invasion of Pennsylvania, many Confederate soldiers bristled against the orders that Lee issued to keep his army in line. One officer expressed his opinion immediately after that campaign that the policy of his government was far too soft on the Yankees:

Chambersburg or Carlisle should have been burnt by authority in retaliation for the ruthless destruction of Darien [Georgia]. Such destruction does not demoralize an army - whilst it gives the foe a wholesome lesson by which we vastly profit. How long will our Government pursue this weak-kneed policy of supinely receiving the enemy's cruelty and inhumanity and admitting it within the pale of civilized warfare by the sanction which this failure to retaliate inevitably carries with it. Burnt! but by authority. Destroy! but through official proclamation and always with reference to some desecrated home or ruined city that once adorned a sunny landscape in the South.<sup>49</sup>

### *"We Began to See Things Move"* **The Autumn of Hope and Despair**

Despite the disasters of the summer, the Confederacy soon demonstrated that they had lost neither the will nor the resources to carry on the war. In Virginia the Army of the Potomac remained quiet, still recovering from bloodletting at Gettysburg. Davis thought the time was ripe to seize the initiative. In September, adopting elements of a plan with similarities to that proposed by Beauregard in the spring, he ordered Lee to detach Longstreet and two divisions of his corps and send them by rail to reinforce Bragg's Army of Tennessee. With these substantial reinforcements Bragg took the offensive, and on September 19-20 whipped Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland in the bloody Battle of Chickamauga, and sent it reeling back in retreat to Chattanooga. Bragg badly fumbled the pursuit, otherwise he might have inflicted a more severe defeat to Rosecrans and perhaps have captured Chattanooga. Instead, Bragg had to content himself with besieging the Federals and attempting to starve them out.



**Fall 1863.** Map by Eric Campbell.



For a few brief days Chickamauga raised spirits across the South and cast gloom over the North. J. B. Jones, a clerk in Richmond, wrote that the announcement of Bragg's victory "has lifted a heavy load from the spirits of our people; and as successive dispatches come from Gov. Harris and others on the battle-field to-day, there is a great change in the recent elongated faces of many we meet in the streets." Lincoln's Assistant Secretary of War, Charles Dana, who was present at Rosecrans' headquarters after the battle, wired Washington, "Chickamauga is as fatal a name in our history as Bull Run." But as the days passed it became evident that although Rosecrans had been defeated and his army was in a tight spot, Chickamauga had been no Bull Run. George Templeton Strong, assessing the situation from his home in New York City, reflected a judgement matured by two years of war. "It [Chickamauga] looked like a grave disaster and perhaps it is," he wrote on September 23, "but later news looks better. . . It was probably a desperate but indecisive conflict, and every battle in which the rebels come short of complete victory is equivalent to a rebel defeat just now."<sup>50</sup>

The news of Chickamauga concerned, but did not panic Washington. Lincoln reacted resolutely and quickly to reverse the situation. He ordered Meade to send two army corps from the Army of the Potomac. Meade selected the 11th and 12th Corps, totaling 20,000 men. They arrived in Tennessee on September 25, only five days after the battle. Grant sent Sherman and 17,000 Vicksburg veterans, and suddenly the advantage in numbers swung to the Federals. Then, in October, the administration placed Grant in command of everything between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi, except for a small area around New Orleans that remained under Nathaniel Banks' command. The Confederate tide was about to ebb.

Grant went to Chattanooga on October 23 to take command of the forces assembled there. From this point on things began to change. One officer noted that after Grant arrived, "We began to see things move. We felt that everything came from a plan. He came into the army quietly, no splendor, no airs, no staff. He used to go about alone. He began the campaign the moment he reached the field. Everything was done like music, everything was in harmony." Bragg did not have the men or supplies to stop Grant, and he was not half the general. His army held a strong defensive position along a string of steep hills rising south, southwest and southeast of Chattanooga. After some initial maneuvering and skirmishing, Grant managed to get his forces into position by late November to assail this Confederate stronghold. On November 24 and 25 he struck. At some points, Bragg's men held fast, repulsing all attacks. But on November 25, General George Thomas's troops, who had orders to merely demonstrate in front of the powerful Confederate positions on Missionary Ridge, instead turned their demonstration into an all-out assault, stormed up the slopes of the ridge and broke the Confederate line. Bragg's line was smashed beyond repair and his army retreated in disorder. Only a skillful rearguard action by General Patrick Cleburne's division prevented a complete disaster. The siege of Chattanooga was over, and the sandcastles of hope that the victory at Chickamauga had created in the minds of Southerners were crushed.<sup>51</sup>

*"A Success Over the Enemy is What I Crave Above Everything Else"*  
**The Advent of Grant**

After Grant's spectacular victory at Chattanooga, coming four months after his success at Vicksburg, even the most unsophisticated person in the North knew it had found the man who could win the war. The New York *Herald* proclaimed after Chattanooga that "Gen. Grant is one

of the great soldiers of the age." The New York *World*, an anti-administration paper, was equally effusive in its praise of Grant. It also took note that his latest victory was particularly notable because it was "not coupled with news of a great and terrible slaughter." Grant's successes in 1863 were remarkable. The cold statistics are illuminating, both to show what damage he had done, and how relatively cheaply, in human terms, he had done so. In the entire year forces under his command had suffered 18,014 battle casualties while inflicting 50,235 upon the enemy (this figure includes the paroled garrison of Vicksburg), a ratio of nearly three to one. During the same time period Robert E. Lee suffered 45,213 casualties while inflicting 52,585. This is not to say Grant was a better general than Lee. Both were confronted with different circumstances, geography, and Lee certainly faced better opposing commanders than Grant. In 1864 when Lee and Grant faced off in Virginia, Lee would also demonstrate that he was Grant's equal as a battlefield tactician. But there is no comparison in 1863 between what Grant achieved and Lee did not. His accomplishments during this year not only confirmed his brilliance as a strategist, his audacity, or his famous dogged determination to win, but they also displayed his talent of harnessing the resources of the North and using them more effectively than anyone else could. To the Confederacy and its fading hopes for victory and independence, by the end of 1863 he was the most dangerous man in the North.<sup>52</sup>

Within three months of Chattanooga the rank of lieutenant general was restored in the U. S. Army and Grant became the highest-ranking officer in the army. This did not signal certain defeat for the Confederacy, for their armies were far from beaten, but it did mean that their best opportunity to win the war on terms they wanted had passed. In a letter to his brother soon after Grant was promoted, William T. Sherman articulated what made Grant both special and dangerous to the South:

Grant is as good a Leader as we can find. He has honesty, simplicity of character, singleness of purpose, and no hope or claim to usurp civil power. His character more than his Genius will reconcile Armies and attach the People. Let him alone, don't disgust him by flattery or importunity. Let him alone. He wants no help. If you are not satisfied with him, where is there a better?<sup>53</sup>

Under Grant's leadership and direction, the Union would apply the full weight of its strength and power, both on land and sea, like it had never done before in the war. Lincoln, wrote Bruce Catton, "at last had found the general he wanted, and if he could not win the war with him he could never win it with anybody."<sup>54</sup>

While 1862 had been a year of discouraging defeat for the Union and hope for the Confederacy, 1863 marked a distinct reversal in these roles. Statistics offer some evidence of just how disastrous the year had been for the Confederates. At the beginning of 1863 the Union army carried 918,121 men on its roles. The Confederate States Army numbered 446,622. By the end of 1863 the Union army reported 109,711 battle casualties, about eleven percent of their fighting force. The Confederate army lost 132,815 men, approximately thirty percent of their strength. Unless the Confederacy could reverse this ratio and inflict significantly higher losses on the Federals, they were doomed to defeat. This promised to be an uphill battle. The victories of Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Port Hudson and Chattanooga had thrown the Confederates on the defensive everywhere. The Union held the initiative and could pick the time and place to strike, either on land or from the sea, a posture that made it

easier for them to inflict higher losses upon the Confederates. The year's victories had also given the Federals important advantages in position from which they could strike. They controlled the length of the Mississippi, and had won Tennessee. From the latter state they threatened Alabama and Georgia. Their control of the Mississippi River, besides dividing the Confederacy, exposed Arkansas, and those parts of Louisiana and Mississippi not already under Federal control. To meet the multiple threats the Federals could mount, President Davis dispersed the strength of the Confederate Army, so that while they could offer resistance at many points, after Chattanooga they were not strong enough at any one point to pose a serious offensive danger. But Davis still had army enough to make a hard fight, and to win, although after 1863 the odds were a good deal longer. "The war is not yet over by a d--d sight," wrote Sherman shortly before the commencement of the spring campaign in 1864.<sup>55</sup>

The war might not yet be over "by a d--d sight," but it had brought dramatic change to the country in 1863. Things that few had dreamed possible two short years before were reality. After 1863 it would be a war to the finish. Emancipation had seen to that. On that issue there would be no compromise. "No other alternative is left you but victory or subjugation, slavery and the utter ruin of yourselves, your families and your country," Jefferson Davis announced to his soldiers in August 1863.<sup>56</sup> The country that men like Vallandigham and Holden hoped for, where the constitution and slavery were preserved as they had been before the war, was being swept away in smoke and fire. The notion, the hope, of "a new birth of freedom" was rising from these ashes and the country would never be the same again.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Christian G. Samito, ed., *Commanding Boston's Irish Ninth: The Civil War Letters of Colonel Patrick R. Guiney, Ninth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry* (Fordham Univ. Press: New York, 1998), p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Garth Scott, ed., *Fallen Leaves: The Civil War Letters of Major Henry Livermore Abbott* (Kent State University Press, 1991), pp. 162-163.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln to Rosecrans, quoted in, Bruce Catton, *Never Call Retreat* (Doubleday & Co.: New York, 1965), p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph T. Glathaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (Free Press: New York, 1990), p. 82. It should be noted that the government initially intended to use black troops as labor battalions or garrison troops in order to free up white troops for combat service. For a discussion of this see, James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 564-565.

<sup>5</sup> Army of the Potomac officer quoted in Glathaar, p. 10; Peter Welsh to his wife, February 1863, *Irish Green and Union Blue* (Fordham Univ. Press, 1986), p. 62. Lincoln quote is from, Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, p. 119. There were acts of violence against black troops by white troops in the early stages of recruiting black soldiers but these gradually subsided.

<sup>6</sup> Rufus Dawes, *Service With the Sixth Wisconsin Infantry* (Wisconsin State Historical Society: Madison, 1962), p. 126.

<sup>7</sup> Frederick B. Arner, *Red-Tape and Pigeon-Hole Generals* (Rockbridge Publishing: Charlottesville, VA, 1999), p. 69.

<sup>8</sup> Janet B. Hewett, ed., *Supplement to the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Broadfoot Publishing: Wilmington, NC, 1999), Part III, v. 3, p. 445.

<sup>9</sup> Edwin S. Redkey, ed., *A Grand Army of Black Men* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992), p. 210; James M. McPherson, ed., *On The Altar of Freedom: A Black Soldier's Civil War Letters From the Front* (Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1991), p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Redkey, 209.

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<sup>11</sup> Quote from the *New York Times* is in Glathaar, p. 130; Frank Moore, *The Rebellion Record* (D. Van Nostrand: New York, 1864), v. 7, p. 214.

<sup>12</sup> Oliver Norton, *Army Letters 1861-1865* (Reprint, Morningside House: Dayton, OH, 1990), p. 202; Quote from the *New York Times* is in, Glathaar, pp. 141-142.

<sup>13</sup> The quote is from a speech by Jefferson Davis to Congress on January 12 and published in *The Macon Daily Telegraph*, August 10, 1863; U. S. War Department, *The War of Rebellion: The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, (Washington, D.C., 1890-1901), Series II, v. 5, pp. 807-808.

Hereinafter cited as *OR*. All references to series I unless otherwise noted.

<sup>14</sup> Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, p. 87; The aggregate present for duty in Pickett's and Hood's divisions in January 1863 was 17,951; See, *OR* 25, pt. 2, p. 601.

<sup>15</sup> Ernest B. Furgurson, *Chancellorsville: Souls of the Brave* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), pp. 364-365.

<sup>16</sup> Lee's comment was made to Maj. John Seddon, who in turn related them to Henry Heth; see, Gary Gallagher, ed., *Chancellorsville: The Battle and Its Aftermath* (Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1996), p. xi.

<sup>17</sup> Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* (New York, 1885), v. I, pp. 542-543.

<sup>18</sup> Allen P. Speer, ed., *Voices From Cemetery Hill* (The Overmountain Press, 1997), p. 102

<sup>19</sup> *OR* 25, pt. 2, p. 790; Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, pp. 158-159; Longstreet even threw his own plan into the ring. While returning to Lee's forces on the Rappahannock from Suffolk he stopped off in Richmond and proposed his own plan for the Confederacy's salvation to Seddon. He suggested that he be sent west to Tennessee with Hood's and Pickett's divisions to reinforce Bragg. They would be joined by Johnston's forces from Mississippi. The combined force, under Johnston's command (Johnston had been a favorite of Longstreet's) would defeat and destroy Rosecrans. This would force Grant to lift the siege of Vicksburg to rescue Tennessee from the Confederates. See, James Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox* (J. B. Lippincott Co., 1896), p. 327.

<sup>20</sup> *OR* 25, pt. 2, p. 790.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*; There are good discussions on Confederate strategy for the summer of 1863 in, Edwin B. Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign* (Scribner's, 1968), pp. 3-8; Also see, Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, pp. 158-159, and McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, pp. 646-647. Lee also may have been wary of how effectively Pickett's men would be employed by the commanders available in the west, Johnston, Pemberton, and Bragg, none of whom had proven particularly effective during the spring crisis in Mississippi.

<sup>22</sup> For Lee's thinking on what a summer offensive in the east might gain for the Confederacy see, *OR* 27, pt. 3, pp. 880-882; pt. 2, pp. 305, 313.

<sup>23</sup> For background on Lee's meetings with Davis and his cabinet, see Edwin Coddington, *The Gettysburg Campaign*, pp. 6-7; Lee to Seddon, June 8, 1863, Clifford Dowdey, ed., *The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee* (Little, Brown & Co., 1961), p. 504. For additional correspondence between Lee and Seddon and Lee and Davis, see *OR* 25, pt. 2, and *OR* 27, pt. 2 and pt. 3. Lee tried repeatedly to get the brigades of Jenkins and Corse, about 4,000 men, returned to his army. Both belonged to Pickett's Division but had been detached for several months. Even as late as June 15 he wrote Davis; "Two of Pickett's brigades are at Hanover Junction & Richmond, so that I am quite weak." Lee to Davis, June 15, 1863, *The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee*, p. 515. D. H. Hill had 18,000 troops in his Department of North Carolina (which included part of southeastern Virginia), including four veteran brigades that had formerly served with the Army of Northern Virginia. Considering what little Hill did with these troops during the period of the Gettysburg Campaign, Lee would have benefited greatly if two or three of the veteran brigades had been sent to him instead of remaining inactive in Hill's Department.

<sup>24</sup> *OR* 24, pt. 3, p. 929. Lee to Seddon, June 8, 1863, *The Wartime Papers of R. E. Lee*, p. 504.

<sup>25</sup> John B. Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary* (Reprint by Time-Life Books, 1982), p. 381. Frank Vandiver, ed., *The Civil War Diary of General Josiah Gorgas* (Univ. of Alabama Press, 1947), p. 55. Judith W. McGuire, *Diary of a Southern Refugee During the War, by a Lady of Virginia* (Reprint by Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1995), p. 231.

<sup>26</sup> *The Macon Daily Telegraph*, July 21, 1863. The quotes from Lee's soldiers are from, Gary Gallagher, "Lee's Army Has Not Lost Any of its Prestige," *The Third Day of Gettysburg and Beyond* (Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1994), p. 17; Vandiver, ed., *The Civil War Diary of General Josiah Gorgas*, p. 61.

<sup>27</sup> McGuire, *Diary of a Southern Refugee During the War*, pp. 231-232; Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, p. 214; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, p. 609; For background on the labor disputes between the Irish and blacks, see, Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1990), pp. 119-120.

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- <sup>28</sup> McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, pp. 603-604.
- <sup>29</sup> See, James W. Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War*, (Northern Illinois Univ. Press, 1991), pp. 102-115; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, p. 605.
- <sup>30</sup> Dawes, *Service With the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers* (Reprint, Morningside Bookshop, 1984), p. 202; Gregory Acken, ed., *Inside the Army of the Potomac: The Civil War Experiences of Captain Francis Adams Donaldson* (Stackpole Books, 1998), pp. 324, 327.
- <sup>31</sup> Arthur A. Kent, *Three Years with Company K: Sergt. Austin C. Stearns* (Associated University Presses, 1976), pp. 215-216. Stearns account of soldiering in the Army of the Potomac is superb.
- <sup>32</sup> Vallandigham quote is taken from, McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, p. 594; Frank L. Klement, *The Limits of Dissent: Clement L Vallandigham and the Civil War*, (Fordham Univ. Press, 1998), p. 245.
- <sup>33</sup> Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, p. 172; Klement, pp. 160-161.
- <sup>34</sup> Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, p. 173; Klement, p. 209; Vallandigham lost by a record-breaking 100,000 votes.
- <sup>35</sup> Robert Hunt Rhodes, ed., *All For the Union* (Andrew Mowbray Inc., 1985), p. 102; *Hartford Courant*, July 9, 1863; Acken, ed., *Inside the Army of the Potomac*, p. 216.
- <sup>36</sup> Robert F. Harris and John Niflot, ed., *Dear Sister: The Civil War Letters of the Brothers Gould*, (Praeger Press, 1998), p. 81; Gregory Coco, ed., *From Ball's Bluff to Gettysburg and Beyond: The Civil War Letters of Private Roland E. Bowen, 15th Massachusetts Infantry 1861-1865* (Thomas Publications, 1994), pp. 142, 153.
- <sup>37</sup> William A. Blair, "Barbarians at Fredericksburg's Gate; The Impact of the Union Army on Civilians," in Gary Gallagher, ed., *The Fredericksburg Campaign: Decision on the Rappahannock* (Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1995), p. 161.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182; Steven A. Channing, *The Confederate Ordeal: The Southern Home Front* (Time-Life Books, 1984, p. 84; Judith McGuire, *Diary of a Southern Refugee*, p. 203.
- <sup>40</sup> McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, pp. 617-618.
- <sup>41</sup> The U.S. Army likewise suffered massive desertions and absenteeism. *OR*, series IV, v. 2, pp. 630, 638, 721-722, 783-785. Joyner wrote also that the deserters in his area and the upper counties of North Carolina "go in companies of from six to fifteen or twenty, and when they want anything they just demand it under threats of the most terrible violence; and if any citizen dares to vie any information in relation to them, or even says anything disapprobating desertions from the Army, the next thing his house is burned, he waylaid and murdered, or beaten nearly to death. Many of these cases have occurred, more particularly recently. The people in many places are in continual alarm." See, *OR*, series IV, v. 2, p. 721; Tatum, p. 82.
- <sup>42</sup> Tatum, pp. 25-33. According to Tatum the Peace Society was strongest in Alabama and Georgia. It also may have been present in Florida.
- <sup>43</sup> Tatum, pp. 112-118; *OR* 25, pt. 2, pp. 746-747; Pender wrote his wife on April 21, 1863 that the large desertions in his North Carolina regiments are "all due to those arch traitors Holden and Pearson." See, William W. Hassler, *The General To His Lady* (Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1965), p. 227. Governor Vance circumvented Pearson by reorganizing the state militia into the Guard for Home Defense and continued to use them to arrest deserters and draft dodgers.
- <sup>44</sup> *OR* 18, pp. 1052-1053; 29, pt. 2, 660; The conscript officer's commander forwarded his subordinates report with the annotation; "The state of things described by Captain McRae to a great extent exists in other parts of the State. The attention of the Department is earnestly recommended to this matter."
- <sup>45</sup> Davis quote is from, McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, p. 697; Davis' suspension of Habeas Corpus exposed him to further condemnation of the suppression of civil liberties in the South; Allen Paul Speer, *Voices From Cemetery Hill*, p. 112; Another example of opposition to Holden among North Carolina soldiers was Captain James I. Harris, of the 30th North Carolina, who wrote in August that he believed "Holden ought to be hung and every rascal who utters disloyal sentiments to the South ought to be shot." See, Michael W. Taylor, *To Drive the Enemy From Southern Soil* (Morningside Press, 1998), p. 297. Sherman to his brother, April 11, 1864, in Brooks D. Simpson and Jeanne Berlin, *Sherman's Civil War: Selected Correspondence of William T. Sherman* (Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1999, p. 620.
- <sup>46</sup> McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, pp. 500-501; Mark Grimsley, *The Hard Hand of War*, (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995), p. 78; *Macon Daily Telegraph*, August 6, 1863.

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<sup>47</sup> Grimsley, *Hard Hand of War*, p. 107; James H. Nevins and William B. Styple, *What Death More Glorious: A Biography of General Strong Vincent* (Belle Grove Publishing Co., 1997), p. 57; Coralou Peel Lassen, *Dear Sarah: Letters Home from a Soldier of the Iron Brigade* (Indiana Univ. Press, 1998), p. 128.

<sup>48</sup> Hassler, *The General to his Lady*, p. 226; Judith W. McQuire, *Diary of a Southern Refugee During the War*, p. 224-225.

<sup>49</sup> *Macon Daily Telegraph*, July 21, 1863; It should be noted that while Lee did not favor making war on civilians and their property, his strict orders about foraging during the Gettysburg Campaign were designed also to prevent discipline from breaking down, which is wont to happen when unlicensed plundering and looting is permitted. It also did not serve Lee's or the Confederacy's purpose to exact revenge upon the North. Such a policy might have hardened Northern resolve to fight and made the draft more acceptable to Northerners, precisely the reaction that Lee hoped to avoid. Lee wished to awe Northerners with the might and discipline of his army, not terrorize and antagonize them.

<sup>50</sup> J. B. Jone, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary*, p. 49; Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, p. 250; Allan Nevins, ed., *Diary of the Civil War 1861-1865*, (MacMillan Co., 1962), p. 357.

<sup>51</sup> Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, p. 12.

<sup>52</sup> The quotations from the *Herald* and *World* are both from Catton, *Grant Takes Command*, p. 91; The casualties taken and inflicted for Grant and Lee are drawn from *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 4 vols., and casualty reports in the *War of the Rebellion: The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 127 volumes.

<sup>53</sup> Sherman to his brother, April 5, 1864, *Sherman's Civil War*, p. 613.

<sup>54</sup> Catton, *Never Call Retreat*, p. 305.

<sup>55</sup> The strength and casualty figures are drawn from *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, the *Official Records*, and Thomas L. Livermore, *Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America 1861-65* (Reprint, John Kallman Publishers, 1996). Lee tried unsuccessfully through 1863 and early 1864 to diplomatically convince Davis that the policy of dispersing Confederate strength worked to the advantage of the Federals. Lee's army provides an example of the effect of this dispersal. Fully one-third of the army he took to Gettysburg was on detached service by the end of 1863. Pickett's Division was in the vicinity of Richmond, Petersburg and Suffolk, while Longstreet, with Hood's and McLaws's divisions, were engaged in a fruitless and unsuccessful campaign in eastern Tennessee. Sherman to his brother, April 5, 1864, *Sherman's Civil War*, p. 614.

<sup>56</sup> *Macon Daily Telegraph*, August 6, 1863.