

SERIES 1, VOLUME 8

VOLUME OVERVIEW

During the month of October, covered in this volume (Vol. 8), Gov. Hamilton R. Gamble is busy recruiting and organizing the state forces.

It is now explained why Cherokee Nation Chief John Ross shifted loyalty from the Union to the Confederacy after the Battle of Wilson's Creek and the death of Nathaniel Lyon in August. Instigated by emissaries of the Confederate States, the pro-secession sect within the Cherokees, against which Ross had heretofore successfully struggled, violently demanded an alliance with the South. Threatened by invasion from Arkansas and Texas, Ross gave in to the pressure from the secession party, and the Cherokee Nation severed their connection with the U.S. government and allied with the Confederate government.

In the previous volume, it is mentioned that there were reports of the possible removal of Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont from his command. At the start of October, it is evident that some believe that Fremont has been removed. Troops in St. Louis, upset by the premature reports of the commander's removal, declare that "they would fight under no other leader."¹ Discussion over Fremont's capabilities as commander of the Western Department also continue in the current volume. One editorial defends Fremont, accusing the War Department in Washington of ignoring his requests to equip his army and ordering troops to Washington when Fremont has lacked enough men to fight the much larger rebel army—"it really looks as if the War Department had actually intended to sacrifice Gen. Fremont and his army."² The *Missouri Democrat* lays out Fremont's case in detail, indicating many of the obstacles he faces, particularly the difference of opinion on how preparations should be made in the West—Fremont has favored extensive preparations while Washington has not, believing that rebellion in Missouri is a small matter and only needs a few regiments. Another editorial asserts that the opposition to Fremont arises "from political jealousy and mercenary motives."³ While the *Missouri Democrat* supports Fremont, it clarifies that its disagreement with the president's decision does not mean they are hostile to the president or would "fail heartily to sustain the government in the full extent of our power."⁴

As mentioned in the previous volume, Fremont arrested Col. Frank P. Blair, Jr. for insubordination. We now learn that the commanding general of the U.S. Army, Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott, has ordered Blair's unconditional release.

Sec. of War Simon Cameron and Adjutant Gen. Lorenzo Thomas visit Jefferson City, and "this visit is in some way or other connected with important matters in the Western Department."⁵ Later, an article, published October 21, reports that Cameron has postponed Fremont's removal from command at the latter's request, "but his removal has been decided upon to take place next week."⁶ Cameron orders the building fortifications around St. Louis and Jefferson City to be discontinued, as well as the erection of barracks near Fremont's quarters. He also says there will be no payments to officers whose appointments have not been approved by the president and no transfer of funds except to pay the troops.

An editorial questions the purpose behind the Lincoln Administration's order to cease the fortification of St. Louis and Jefferson City. It asks whether "hostility to Fremont" is "the disgraceful secret of this strange treatment" and points out that the fortifications were almost completed, that the expense had already been incurred, and that other cities in the East were being fortified. The editorial concludes that "it requires much charity to interpret otherwise than as springing from a determination to bring about, if possible, Fremont's defeat and disgrace."⁷ A letter to the editors proposes that the people of St. Louis set a good example in

¹ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#15).

² See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#12).

³ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#66).

⁴ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#72).

⁵ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#42.2).

⁶ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#53.2).

⁷ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#58).

Missouri and be the first to create petitions affirming that Fremont “cannot and must not be removed,”⁸ and send them to President Lincoln.

Having left Jefferson City, federal forces are actively moving forward in pursuit of Rebel (MSG) Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, whose army is “thoroughly disgusted”⁹ with the way he is conducting the campaign, some deserting daily. Price’s forces are seen in west central Missouri in early October, moving southward toward Arkansas in order to avoid a battle with Fremont’s troops. C.S.A. Benjamin McCulloch joins forces with Price.

Rebels burn the Big River Bridge on the Iron Mountain Railroad. Armed men appear before the North Missouri Railroad at Renick and call for federal officers and soldiers to disembark, then examine the mailroom for contraband. However, they fail to examine the United States Express Company office and miss the stash of arms, holsters, etc., carried there.

One article says that Fremont believes Price intends to retrace his steps to the Osage River and there give battle. The separate commands of Maj. Gen. David Hunter, Fremont, Gens. John Pope, Franz Sigel, Samuel D. Sturgis, James H. Lane, and Justus McKinstry are to converge at Warsaw (Benton County), with Sigel at the head.

A third session of the Missouri State Convention is held to mainly discuss three matters: the revision of the Military Bill, the deficit of the state treasury, and the postponement of state elections, which would result in either the extension of Gamble’s position as governor or the election of his successor.

This volume includes more reports and articles related to past battles, covered in previous volumes, including the battles of Wilson’s Creek (August 10), Lexington (September 13), and Blue Mills (September 17). It also includes a letter to the editors giving a description of the sacking of Osceola (September 22), along with a list of reasons why Gen. Lane’s forces burned the town.

Lane defends his brigade’s jayhawking ways in a speech at Stockton Hall in Leavenworth, Kansas. He speaks on slavery and the unfair treatment (in his opinion) of his Kansas Brigade. An editorial also defends jayhawking, to an extent, describing it as “the manlier and more respectable,” when comparing it with red tape, which the same editorial considers to be “imbecile and contemptible.” It notes that the *Missouri Republican* characterized Lane’s Kansas Brigade as made up of “thieves and vagabonds,” and their achievements as consisting of “undisguised robbery, plunder and outrage,” but also notes that “the government appears disposed to sustain Lane.”¹⁰ Another editorial notes that Lane’s officers have claimed the charges against their general are false and malicious, while still another asserts that if “Lane were to undertake a fraction of the atrocities imputed to him, he would be at once abandoned by the mass of his soldiers.”¹¹

Covered in this volume are the Action at Wet Glaze, the Affair at Linn Creek, the Skirmish at Underwood’s Farm, the Battle of Fredericktown, and Zagonyi’s Charge at Springfield, each with its own section, describing the event and providing a list of related articles.

As October nears the end, it is learned that Lt. Gen. Scott is ill and will soon retire from his position as commanding general of the U.S. army. (He retires on November 1, covered in the next volume.)

⁸ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#67.8).

⁹ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#29).

¹⁰ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#53.12).

¹¹ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Oct#66.3).