

SERIES 2, VOLUME 3, PART 2

VOLUME OVERVIEW

On the 3rd day of July, 1861, Missouri was again transferred to a new department and placed under a new command. The previous volume covered Missouri's move to the Department of Ohio under Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan, who knew nothing of Missouri and remained physically distant from the state, allowing for Gen. Lyon to be the de facto commander, and he would continue to be so for most of July, until the new commander, Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont, would arrive at headquarters in St. Louis, which would not be until July 25. The volume includes a description of the situation in Missouri when Fremont arrived.¹

The past month had seen the Battle of Boonville and the massacre at Cole Camp, and in the current month, the fighting increased. The volume covers the Battle of Carthage, the capture of Union troops at Neosho, the skirmishes near Monroe Station and at Forsyth, and the action near Harrisonville. Each of these battles has its own special section, with a description of the event and the list of documents associated with it. Other special inserts included are Col. Harding's description, written in October 1861, of the situation in Missouri on Fremont's arrival; four letters from Gen. John Pope concerning General Orders No. 3 from the headquarters of the District of North Missouri, which orders the creation of public safety committees, preferably mostly made up of secessionists, to ensure maintenance of the peace; and the 1861 annual report of Missouri's adjutant general, dated January 1, 1862, which contains the size of Gen. Lyon's force and an estimate of Home Guards kept in active service, who were exposed to malaria fevers without adequate supplies and not yet recognized or paid.

One recurring theme during this month is Lyon's move toward Springfield and his need for men, transports, supplies and weapons. Acting Gen. Thomas W. Sweeney awaited Lyon in Springfield, with no ammunition for his field pieces and rifle muskets. Meanwhile, the term of the three-months men was coming to an end, and any new or reorganized regiments would now muster in for three years. The volunteers, however, had not been paid, which affected their willingness to reenlist. Col. Chester Harding, Jr. was handling affairs for Lyon in St. Louis; Col. Ulysses S. Grant's regiment was sent to help Cairo, Illinois and Bird's Point, Missouri; and Gen. Stephen A. Hurlbut was in charge of protecting the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad. On Lyon's orders, Col. John McNeil, of the 3rd Regiment, U.S. Reserve Corps, suppressed publication of the secessionist Missouri *State Journal*.

The rebels were also preparing for war. Missouri State Guard Maj. Gen. Sterling Price reorganized his command; Lt. Gov. Reynolds was making arrangements for Missouri to secede from the Union and join the Confederate States in war in order to reclaim the sovereignty of the state. C.S. Army Gen. Benjamin McCulloch waited in Bentonville, Arkansas, ready to support Price when needed but unable to hold a position on the border due to the scarcity of water and supplies. However, he also informs the C.S.A. secretary of war that Price's command is in bad shape and unorganized. Later in the month, C.S.A. Gen. William J. Hardee assumed command of the Confederate troops north of the Arkansas River to the Missouri line, and west of the White and Black Rivers. C.S.A. Maj. Gen. Leonidas Polk directs Gen. Gideon J. Pillow to move troops through New Madrid, and shares with C.S.A. Sec. of War LeRoy P. Walker that Cairo and Bird's Point are not a problem due to their shortage of men and arms, further suggesting the possibility of seizing St. Louis.

Lyon arrived in Springfield in mid-July, but his supplies did not. As mentioned previously, this was a serious theme in his letters during this month and the following, as the supplies he needed, as well as the troops he ordered, did not reach him. The result of this situation would become evident in August (Volume 4), with Lyon's untimely death at the Battle of Wilson's Creek.

On the 15th of July, Lyon wrote to Fremont that he was needed in Missouri, and they were in need of more men and horses. Two days later, Gen. Pope asked Fremont for cavalry, sabers, and revolvers.

On Fremont's approval, Gen. John Pope became commander of the District of North Missouri, and after Fremont's arrival in Missouri, Gen. Benjamin M. Prentiss received command of the Union troops at Cairo.

An important event covered in this volume is the second session of the Missouri State Convention, held from July 22 to July 31. A summarized day-by-day description of the proceedings is provided. The significance of this convention is the vacating of the offices of governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, and the General Assembly, as well as the voiding of the Military Bill and all acts related to the creation and financing of the Missouri State Guard. After this date, the Missouri State Guard would be referred to in these volumes as Rebel (MSG). The vacancies were filled by the

¹ See (FLP: Ser 2PS-Jul#134.1).

following: Hamilton R. Gamble, provisional governor; Willard P. Hall, lieutenant governor; and Mordecai Oliver, secretary of state.

On Fremont's arrival in St. Louis, he was immediately urged to send Lyon reinforcements and equipment, which he attempted to do but was unsuccessful, and also to see to the payment of troops and purchases, a matter which he addressed with Postmaster Gen. Montgomery Blair. Additionally, he was asked to raise more troops at once for the protection of the Kansas border. After asking for help from Washington, Montgomery Blair informed him that he was on his own, as it was "impossible" to get Washington to pay attention to Missouri.²

This volume presents Jessie B. Fremont, wife of the commander of the Western Department. It is made evident through her published letters that she is a true helpmate, supporting her husband. She informs the postmaster general of Fremont's desperate need of arms, money, and morale, as well as the disorderly and insurrectionary condition in which she and her husband found the Western Department upon their arrival in St. Louis. She also points out that attention should not be focused only on the Potomac, neglecting St. Louis.

C.S.A. Gen. Hardee sends out a detachment to support Missouri State Guard Gen. M. Jefferson Thompson, moving upon Greenville, Wayne County, and he plans to eventually put cavalry on the railroad between Ironton and St. Louis to break up the railroad and burn the bridges. C.S.A. Maj. Gen. Polk arrived in New Madrid, which he planned to fortify.

On the other side of the state, C.S. Army Gen. McCulloch's army starts the march to Springfield at the end of July, while Price's force was encamped around Cassville, in Barry County, and Arkansas State Militia Gen. Nicholas B. Pearce's force was within a few miles of the town. Then Price ordered the march to Springfield, which would begin at the start of August.

² See (FLP: Ser 2PS-Jul#134).