

SERIES 2, VOLUME 4, PART 2

VOLUME OVERVIEW

A common theme throughout Part 1 of Volume 4 was the request for more troops, which did not arrive, leaving Gen. Nathaniel Lyon with insufficient force to battle the enemy and ending in his death at Wilson's Creek. Part 2 of the volume begins with a demand for immediate reinforcements (and money) for Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont, made by Congressman Col. Frank P. Blair, Jr. to the U.S. postmaster general. Frank Blair also blamed "red tape" for Lyon's death, who was not properly supported prior to the Battle of Wilson's Creek, and expressed concern in another letter to the postmaster general, over the failure of Washington to support the forces in Missouri. Later in the month, blame for Lyon's death shifted from Washington to Fremont, himself.

This volume includes several official and personal letters describing the Battle of Wilson's Creek, which occurred on August 10. It also includes letters discussing the death of Lyon, retrieval of his remains, and plans to transport his body to his final resting place. It includes a letter from the Adams Express Company offering to transport the deceased's remains to the East Coast free of charge, and Fremont's acceptance. Related letters include those from officers wishing to accompany Lyon's remains to Connecticut and Fremont's invitation to Maj. John M. Schofield to serve as pall bearer to take the remains to the boat from headquarters.

A special section is set aside for the Battle of Bird's Point, August 19-20, which includes a description of the event and a list of related documents, including five after-action reports, four Union and one from Rebel (MSG) M. Jefferson Thompson.

An extract of general officers whom President Lincoln promoted from May to August 1861, is included in the document section of this volume, and a complete list of appointments and promotions in the U.S. Army is found in the volume's Annex section.

President Lincoln issues a proclamation declaring any commercial activities with the Southern states unlawful, and goods being transported to those states without a special permit open to seizure by the government.

The C.S.A. Congress passes an act authorizing military power to the state of Missouri and grants the state admission into the Confederate States of America. Rebel (MSG) Maj. Gen. Sterling Price issues a proclamation to the people of Missouri claiming victory over the state's "invaders" prematurely and warns that those who support the "usurpations" of anyone claiming to be provisional or temporary governor of the state, or who give aid or comfort to the enemy will be held as enemies and so treated. C.S.A. Gen. Benjamin McCulloch, however, in a status report to C.S.A. Gen. William J. Hardee, described the Missouri forces as "in no condition to meet an organized army" due to the fact they were "undisciplined and led by men who are mere politicians."¹

The volume includes many Confederate letters, as well as C.S.A. Gen. McCulloch's proclamation, which claims that the Confederate army is in Missouri to rescue the state from Northern oppressors and return to them their right to free speech. Several letters from C.S.A. Gen. Hardee are included, explaining his reasons for not joining C.S.A. Gen. Gideon J. Pillow. There is also deposed Lt. Gov. Thomas C. Reynolds's letter to Fremont, in response to Col. Charles C. Marsh's threat against the relatives, currently prisoners, of Rebel (MSG) Capt. Charles Price, if any injury is inflicted by him on the people of Commerce,² accusing the Western Department of conducting the war in an uncivilized manner, and warning him that any departure from civilized conduct will be punished, and prisoners recently taken and belonging to Fremont's forces will be held in close custody. Rebel (MSG) Gen. Thompson responds to U.S. Col. Marsh's threat directly, warning him that if he fulfills his threats, Thompson will retaliate.

¹ See (FLP: Ser 2PS-Aug#225).

² Letter found in Part 1 of Volume 4. See (FLP: Ser 2PS-Aug#105.1).

Deposed Gov. Claiborne F. Jackson suggests to C.S.A. President Jefferson Davis that all military operations in Missouri should be under one head, an experienced or skillful general of the Confederate States. C.S.A. Maj. Gen. Leonidas Polk and Pillow move 6,000 men from Tennessee to Missouri, and McCulloch instructs his soldiers not to forage among the properties of citizens, as the quartermaster will provide all they need. Polk informs Pillow that although Hardee wants to join forces to advance immediately upon St. Louis, he believes they should meet at a point nearer the Mississippi River, such as Cape Girardeau. Hardee decides against a movement on St. Louis, explaining he does not have the necessary manpower. Thompson writes to Hardee, warning that if Pillow delays his movements much longer, the enemy will learn their real strength and position. He suggests that Cape Girardeau should be taken by a surprise attack. Hardee sent men to damage the Iron Mountain Railroad but asks that Pillow detail Thompson to ensure it happens. Several letters from Thompson discuss the intended movement to take Cape Girardeau. By the end of August, Hardee was ordered to New Madrid, and Pillow had advanced to Benton but had decided to fall back to New Madrid. Though Pillow asks Hardee to join him, Hardee plans to fall back to Pitman's Ferry. Thompson requests more ammunition and guns, and he suggests that Pillow charter steamboats up White River to make people believe he is joining Hardee.

Maj. Gen. Fremont places Gen. Benjamin Prentiss in command of the whole force at Ironton, and Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in command of Jefferson City. Later, he sends Prentiss to Cape Girardeau to assume command, but on August 28, Fremont sends Grant to take over from Prentiss at Cape Girardeau and explains to Prentiss that it had been determined that Grant outranked Prentiss. Prentiss's anger over this determination is not evident in this volume, but is discussed early in the next volume, which covers the first two weeks of September.

Provisional Gov. Gamble presents the guidelines for the formation of the militia in Missouri. He issues a proclamation, calling for 42,000 members of the militia into active service to protect the lives and property of Missourians. He mentions that if the number cannot be met, a draft is possible. Afterwards, Gamble requests authority from President Lincoln to raise state troops to protect citizens and maintain peace, and he points out that since it is the federal government's constitutional obligation to protect a state from invasion, it is their duty "to bear the expense incurred in organizing, arming and supporting" the troops.³

Fremont declares martial law throughout Missouri on August 30, and orders the soldiers to refrain from performing unauthorized searches and seizures. President Lincoln's response to Fremont's martial law, and more discussion on the subject is found in Volume 5 (September).

In northern Missouri, Gen. John Pope suspends his earlier order (Order No. 3), requiring public safety committees to keep the peace, but warns that "any abuse of this leniency will be instantly followed by results far more severe and difficult to bear."⁴

³ See (FLP: Ser 2PS-Aug#240.1).

⁴ (FLP: Ser 2PS-Aug#278)