SERIES 1, VOLUME 9
VOLUME OVERVIEW

In the previous volume of this series (Vol. 8), it was mentioned that Adjutant Gen. Lorenzo Thomas visited Jefferson City on matters concerning the Western Department, and Sec. of War Simon Cameron had accompanied him and had later postponed Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont's removal from command. The current volume discusses Thomas's report on Fremont and the Western Department, and the removal of the general from his command. Fremont relinquishes his command on November 2, 1861, but the papers continue debating the issue, initially uninformed that Fremont's removal has taken place until it is reported in the *Missouri Democrat* on November 6. However, Fremont and his removal continue to be a topic of discussion throughout Volume 9.

Fremont received his orders in the middle of making preparations to meet the enemy, who was advancing. Several companies throw down their arms at the news, but Fremont persuaded the soldiers to do their duty out of patriotism, and they returned to their duties. However, the Body Guard accompanied Fremont and his staff to St. Louis. Included in this volume is Fremont's farewell address to his men at Springfield.[1] He is superseded by Maj. Gen. David Hunter, who assumed command on the 4th of November.

Thomas's report is included in this volume.[2] It sheds light on many questionable spending practices and command irregularities that allegedly occurred under Fremont. Thomas also investigates why Gen. Nathaniel Lyon was not reinforced at Wilson's Creek and looks at all the forces Fremont could have sent, where they were stationed, and why, and also looks at why the reinforcements for Lexington did not arrive on time. One editorial regarding this report dissects it, point-by-point, noting the inconsistencies, lies, and lack of proof for each of Thomas's accusations. It describes the report as one-sided, that "he could have written it without leaving Washington," and that it "is simply the *aimless diary of an official flying visit*."[3] Another editorial says the report "can be summed up in the statement that General Hunter…gave a *reluctant* opinion that Fremont was incompetent for his extensive command." The *Missouri Democrat* considers it "incredible that this high officer's late visit to Missouri was simply to learn what General Hunter would say of Fremont," and it notes that "impartial people" would not consider Hunter the man "to even furnish the data of Fremont's action, much less to give an advisory opinion upon them." It points out that the only "fact" furnished in Thomas's report is that Fremont ordered his army to march while badly equipped, but notes that it is not Fremont's fault that he lacked adequate supplies, but rather "the tardiness and failure of the supply trains."[4] One letter mocks Thomas's report, specifically mentioning the five hundred tons of ice that Fremont allegedly carried with his army. He explains that the maximum that one wagon can carry is one ton, so it would take 500 wagons carrying nothing but ice for Fremont to lug that much ice around. Another letter explains why Fremont was compelled in some cases to pay higher prices for arms, and points out that the government purchased the same guns bought by Fremont, having "expressed great satisfaction with the few purchases Gen. Fremont did make,"[5] and which Thomas describes in his report as being utterly worthless. One article refutes claims regarding the cost of construction of the fortifications in St. Louis. It explains that the cost of the forts was affected by the short amount of time given to complete them. The architect and superintendent of Benton Barracks writes to refute claims in the report and describes it as a pack of lies in regard to costs, materials, etc., in the construction of Benton Barracks. There are many other articles refuting various parts of the report or the report as a whole.

A letter to the editors asks who started the campaign against Fremont and why. It suggests that the general was removed for practical reasons, benefitting "certain restless, ambitious spirits,"[6] who are looking out for their own advancements rather than the good of the country. Another article agrees, asserting that Fremont's removal stemmed from "personal rancor, and not patriotic care for the public interests."[7]

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[1] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#10).
[2] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#3).
[3] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#4).
[4] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#1).
[5] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#4.2).
[6] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#1.1).
[7] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#23.1).

As noted above, Fremont received his orders to relinquish command in the middle of making preparations to meet the enemy, but Lincoln had instructed Gen. Samuel R. Curtis not to deliver the orders if Fremont "was in the immediate presence of the enemy."[8] One article accuses Curtis of not following instructions in order to ensure that Fremont not win a victory, as a victory would give the lie to his claim that Fremont was incompetent, a claim made to Adjutant Gen. Thomas. In a later editorial, the *Missouri Democrat* presents the fact that the situation under Fremont, with its many battles and skirmishes, "had driven the rebels down to the Arkansas line, and were still in pursuit when Gen. Fremont was removed," and in the situation at the present (under Maj. Gen. Henry W. Halleck), where the federal army has evacuated Springfield, all of southern Missouri has been left anew to be "overrun by the rebels."[9]

Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan, now the commanding general of the U.S. Army as of the 1st of November (Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott had retired due to illness), issued an order to counteract Fremont's order of removal due to the expectation of a battle with Rebel (MSG) Maj. Gen. Sterling Price's forces. The order was dated November 1, but it was not received until the next day, *after* Fremont relinquished his command. McClellan dismissed all those Fremont appointed into military service except regimental and company officers whose appointments were sanctioned by the president.

Maj. Gen. Halleck is first introduced in this volume with his biography. Afterwards, the *Democrat* publishes his orders of November 19, in which he announces he is assuming command of the newly created Department of the Missouri, replacing Hunter, who is now in command of the Department of Kansas, also newly created. Soon after taking command, Halleck issues orders banning fugitive slaves from the lines of any camp or forces on the march. The *Missouri Democrat* disagrees with Halleck's policy, fearing that it will have the opposite effect from that intended by the commander, and therefore suggests that the rebels' slaves should be held and questioned rather than returned. However, the *Democrat* also praises Halleck, demonstrating in another article that the commander's orders "indicate his determination to enforce rigid economy, system and discipline in this department."[10] Halleck's orders cover a few issues, including the lack of pay and supplies for the troops, strict guidelines for the use and confiscation of private property, and the proper procedure for handling prisoners sent to St. Louis.

A correspondent, who signs himself as "G. W. B.," and a group of other reporters, known as the "Bohemian Battalion (or Brigade)," visit the Wilson's Creek battlefield and discover the skeletons of a few soldiers that had been left unburied. In this report, G. W. B. gives a detailed description of the place.

Additional articles are included regarding past events, among them, Zagonyi's Charge at Springfield (October 25). One of those articles include a diagram illustrating the shape of the ground and the position of the respective forces, as well as the list of the killed and wounded. Another past event with added information is the Battle of Fredericktown (October 21), including that the Union troops would have been ambuscaded by the rebels if not for a friendly "contraband" slave, who informed them of the rebels' position.

This volume covers the Battle of Belmont and includes a special section describing the event and listing all articles relating to it.

The U.S. Department of War authorizes the Missouri State Militia, and Gov. Gamble appoints Halleck the major general of said militia and Gen. John Schofield its commander.

[8] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#26.2).
[9] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#49).
[10] See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Nov#43).