

SERIES 2, VOLUME 3, PART 1 VOLUME OVERVIEW

Volume 3, Part 1 of this series covers the month of June, which began under the command of Gen. Nathaniel Lyon. He had temporarily replaced Gen. William S. Harney at the end of May due to the Price-Harney Agreement, covered in the previous volume, and which Lyon felt was a stall tactic on the part of Missouri State Guard Maj. Gen. Sterling Price to allow the State Guard more time to organize. As Lyon was now in command of the Department of the West, the command of the St. Louis Arsenal was given to Col. Frank P. Blair, Jr., who also continued to hold his position as U.S. congressman.

The previous volume covered the start of the Civil War and the growth of the Confederate States, which had a total of ten states by the end of May 1861. In regard to Missouri, it demonstrated the growth of the inevitable confrontation between the secessionist governor, Claiborne Fox Jackson, and the loyal Unionists of Missouri, and this confrontation escalated even more in the present month of June. Volume 2 also covered the conspiracy of Jackson and Missouri Volunteer Militia Gen. Daniel Frost to take over the St. Louis Arsenal. They called for troops to meet, allegedly to train, at Camp Jackson. However, then Capt. Lyon, who realized, along with members of the St. Louis (Union) Safety Committee, that the camp's purpose was to take over the federal arsenal in town, surrounded the camp on May 10, 1861. Frost and his militia surrendered without a drop of blood being shed, but on the march back to the Arsenal, a riot ensued, and the Camp Jackson Affair, as it is called, raised the ire of many in Missouri, including the "Conditional Unionists," who had heretofore indicated a pro-Union stand. The Camp Jackson Affair also encouraged the legislature to pass the Military Bill, which Jackson had wanted from the start of his term in office, and as a result, the Missouri State Guard, under Sterling Price, was created.

On the sixth of June, the Department of the West was dissolved, and Missouri was added to the Department of Ohio, under Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan, who had no understanding of the course of policy in Missouri and remained distant, literally, from the state, unable to give it adequate attention. As a consequence, it is apparent through the letters and orders found in this volume that Gen. Lyon was the de facto commander, though he would inform McClellan of all relevant matters.

During this month, a Border States Convention was held, asking for peace and requesting Congress pass such constitutional amendments as would secure slaveholders their legal rights.

Gen. Lyon mustered in several volunteer regiments (the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 7th) for three years during this time, and requested more recruits be organized, armed, and sworn in. Throughout June, the number of regiments increased, as did requests for arms.

On June 11, Gen. Lyon and Col. Frank Blair, Jr. met with Jackson and Price at the Planter's House in St. Louis. However, after four hours, the gathering broke up without any resolution to the issues. Price had demanded the Home Guard be disbanded and that no U.S. troops be allowed to occupy or pass through the state, and Lyon adamantly refused. The next day, Jackson delivered his proclamation, declaring war against the United States and calling for 50,000 men to aid Missouri against the federal troops. Price ordered the destruction of all railroad bridges and telegraph lines. The bridges over the Gasconade and Osage Rivers were burned down to prevent federal troops from entering Jefferson City. Jackson and other secessionist members of the legislature fled the city after removing archives from the state Capitol.

Meanwhile, C.S.A. Gen. Benjamin McCulloch encouraged the Cherokee Nation to ally with the Confederate States, but Chief John Ross preferred to remain neutral. Later, the C.S.A. secretary of war authorized McCulloch to take position at Fort Scott, Kansas and give Missouri assistance. He warned McCulloch not to rile the Cherokees but to try and win their active cooperation.

This volume covers the Battle of Boonville, which took place June 17 between Lyon's troops and the Missouri State Guard. Lyon found that most of his prisoners were misguided youth. He therefore liberated them, on

the condition that they would “not serve in the impending hostilities against the United States government.”¹ Also covered is the massacre of Union men at Cole Camp on June 19. Both battles have their own sections, listing the names and FLP#s of related documents, as well as a brief summary of each event.

After Jackson fled the capital, Col. Henry Boernstein was appointed as commander over Cole County (in which the capital is located) and adjacent counties. James H. Lane of Kansas was made a brigadier general of volunteers, on President Lincoln’s advice, and authorized to raise two infantry regiments for Kansas.

Jackson, with his bodyguards, then fled Boonville, moving toward Arkansas. As a result, a discussion ensued concerning the need for a new session of the State Convention to convene in order to discuss and vote on removing Jackson and Lt. Gov. Thomas C. Reynolds from their offices by constitutional means.

Several key players on the Union side are introduced in this volume, including Gen. Benjamin Prentiss, Maj. Justus McKinstry, Maj. Horace Conant, Maj. Samuel D. Sturgis, Col. Chester Harding, Jr., and some others.

As for the rebel side, William J. Hardee was appointed C.S. Army brigadier general and placed in command of northwest Arkansas. This volume also presents Bishop Leonidas Polk, who was commissioned a major general in the C.S. Army and placed in command of the Western Department (the area between the Mississippi and Tennessee rivers).

¹ See (FLP: Ser 2PS-Jun#52.5).