

SERIES 1, VOLUME 6, PART 1

VOLUME OVERVIEW

In the previous volume, Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont arrives in St. Louis and takes command of the newly created Western Department. Two major conflicts occur in the first week of August, covered in this volume, one a skirmish at Edina on August 1, and the other a battle at Dug Springs on August 2. Then in the second week of the month, there are two more, a skirmish fought at Potosi, and the other a battle near Springfield, both on the 10th of August. Most of the articles in this volume deal with the actions before, during, and following these encounters, especially the one near Springfield, better known as the Battle of Wilson's Creek. A special section is set aside for each of these battles and skirmishes, describing the event and listing the related articles.

Fremont urges that the Reserve Corps be voluntarily continued in full force (the three months term of enlistment had expired). He appoints Col. Benjamin Prentiss commander of the Cairo Division. The *Missouri Democrat* publishes an editorial that stresses the importance of army discipline, for which “the most complete obedience is essential.”¹

Also covered in the previous volume is the second session of the Missouri State Convention, which, as of July 31, vacated the seats of the governor, the lieutenant governor, the secretary of state, and the General Assembly. Hamilton R. Gamble was elected governor by the Convention, taking over the position as of August 1. In his Inaugural Address,² he warns the people that “it is utterly impossible that any one man can pacify the troubled waters of the state,” while still accepting the position so that he and other statesmen can restore peace in the state. In a proclamation³ a few days later, Gamble promises that he will protect the rights of citizens of all opinions, as long as they remain peaceful. Peace is his utmost priority, and he notes that the Military Bill is now void, which disbands any organizations formed under its umbrella. (For this reason, former Missouri State Guard are, from this month forward, referred to as “Rebel (MSG),” which indicates they are no longer a legal state entity.) Sec. of War Simon Cameron assures Gamble that the federal government will back him if he promises security to citizens in arms who voluntarily return to their allegiance.

According to a proclamation by C.S.A. Gen. Gideon J. Pillow, Jackson (whom the Confederate States continues to recognize as “the governor”) requests the state of Tennessee help Missouri against the federal army for their rights and freedom. Pillow promises Jackson he is placing some 20,000 men in Missouri at once. A witness places Jackson in Van Buren, Arkansas, and regiments from Texas join C.S.A. Gen. Benjamin McCulloch to fight Union forces in Missouri.

The *Democrat* publishes a letter,⁴ written April 15, by Missouri Volunteer Militia (MVM) Gen. Daniel M. Frost to then Gov. Jackson, with a P.S. from Merchants Bank President John A. Brownlee, approving said letter, which clearly shows a six-step plan of action against the federal government.

On the 5th of August, Jackson issues a proclamation⁵ proclaiming Missouri a free and independent republic, with all bonds between the state and the United States of America dissolved due to the unconstitutional acts of the U.S. government and their engagement of war.

Ten days after it was originally issued by Lt. Gov. Thomas C. Reynolds, the *Democrat* publishes his proclamation of July 31, in which he assures Missourians that warfare will be conducted in the most humane manner. Reynolds urges citizens to rally with him against the North and authorizes C.S.A. Gen. Pillow and Rebel (MSG) Gen. Thompson “to make and enforce such civil police regulations” as deemed necessary for

¹ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Aug#14).

² See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Aug#6).

³ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Aug#23.2).

⁴ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Aug#32).

⁵ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Aug#59).

the security of their forces, preservation of order and discipline in camp, and “the protection of the lives and property of the citizens.”⁶

Another rebel proclamation published in the *Democrat* is that of Rebel (MSG) Gen. Martin E. Green to the people of Knox County. Green claims to recompense those from whom his men have taken provisions and assures the people that they are safe, and only those taking up arms against them (the rebels) will be arrested, then released on parole. However, a letter to the editors describes Martin’s proclamation as impudence, affirming that the deprivations that have been reported are real.

In response to the destruction of railroads that took place the previous month and the civil disturbances in northern Missouri, Gen. John Pope, who has established his headquarters temporarily in the city of Mexico, holds the citizens responsible for any attacks or plunders. He also directs the appointment of committees of public safety in the various counties of northern Missouri to preserve the peace. Pope explains his actions to Isaac H. Sturgeon (president of the North Missouri Railroad), who had informed him that many people considered those actions harsh, unjust, and tyrannical. Sturgeon, in turn, sends a letter to the editors of the *Democrat* enclosing Pope’s explanation.⁷

Union clubs are proposed in St. Louis, and some recommend they be formed throughout the state, for in union, there is strength.⁸

Gen. Lyon falls back on Springfield, arriving August 5. His men have a slight encounter with the enemy. The rebels are moving up to Wilson’s Creek, and reports that more of the enemy are flanking the city has caused alarm. Stores are vacated, citizens start preparing to leave, and Lyon takes charge of the money from Springfield’s bank, at their request, to ensure its safety from the rebels. It is urged that more forces be sent by the federal and state governments. In the meantime, C.S.A. Gen. McCulloch awaits reinforcements.

On August 10, 1861, Lyon leads a battle against a much larger force at Wilson’s Creek. Here ends his story, the first Union general to be killed in the Civil War.

Martial law is declared in St. Louis, Maj. Justus McKinstry, the chief quartermaster, is made provost marshal, and the president of the Board of Police Commissioners is arrested and replaced. St. Louis is placed in the charge of the U.S. military, and an arrangement is made by the police and military to cooperate, for now, to preserve the peace.

President Lincoln promotes Cols. Ulysses S. Grant and Prentiss to generals.

For something different from the norm among these articles, yet saying something about the mentality of some people at the time, there is a letter to the editors that speculates why many women seem to be secessionists. It suggests the reason to be that “it is fashionable...it is a sign that you belong to the aristocracy...If you are so vulgar as to be a Union man, it is the evidence that you cannot trace a higher origin for yourself than the northern worker mudsill.”⁹

⁶ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Aug#44).

⁷ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Aug#19).

⁸ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Aug#15).

⁹ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Aug#38).