

SERIES 1, VOLUME 5

VOLUME OVERVIEW

At the start of July, covered in this volume, Missouri was part of the Department of Ohio, under Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan. Also at the very start of the month, the *Missouri Democrat* reports that the War Department is considering separating Missouri from that department, which does occur later in the month. The article reporting this, however, was incorrect in stating that the new department would be called the Department of Missouri and that it would be commanded by Gen. Nathaniel Lyon. Instead, it would be called the Western Department (organized on July 3) and the commander would be Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont, but the latter would not arrive in Missouri until July 25. In the meantime, Lyon acted as the de facto commander.

In the previous volume of this series (Vol. 4), we read that Gov. Claiborne F. Jackson fled from the capital after declaring war on the federal government. In the current volume, the *Democrat* reports that a called session of the circuit court for the District of Missouri is opening an investigation into the history of the insurrectionary movement of the governor and his aides. "They will ascertain who it was that had plotted against the peace of our state by conspiring to establish a secret order of traitors in all the principal towns on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and many of those in the interior."¹ Reports indicate that Jackson is near the Arkansas line, and it is supposed that "there, the grand and desperate stand will be made."² An article suggests that the federal government should detach a large force of Lyon's command from St. Louis and upper Missouri to operate and check these movements while the forces at Cairo act rapidly on the river line.

Congressman Col. Frank P. Blair, Jr. gives a speech in Washington declaring that he is for the war until no enemy is left in hostility to the government, and he opposes every compromise.

At the start of the month, Maj. Gen. Fremont arrives in New York City from Europe, and it is reported that he will proceed immediately to Washington to offer his services. An editorial, published on the 26th, the day after Fremont, now the commander of the newly created Western Department, arrives in St. Louis, expresses the hope that "military matters...will now move and make up for the unnecessary delays that 'red tape' and brass buttons for some weeks back occasioned."³ A couple of days later, the *Democrat* also publishes Fremont's first General Order, assuming command and announcing the names and positions of his staff. Fremont is received with a musical band and serenaded at his residence.

As mentioned in the previous volume, bridges and culverts were burned by the secessionists, on Jackson's orders, after the Planter's House meeting. It is now reported that those burned on the North Missouri Railroad have all been repaired, and that railroad is considered one of the safest in the country. However, in central Missouri, the telegraph lines west and south of Syracuse (Morgan County) are reported to be torn down.

In the previous volume, the trial of Joseph W. Tucker, the secessionist editor of the *State Journal*, had commenced, and the first couple of days of the trial was covered. In the current volume, the trial continues, reports resuming on the 4th day, with the testimony of Gen. Thomas L. Price, who states that the signature on the treasonous letter,⁴ written to Tucker and dated April 28, 1861, belonged to Gov. Jackson. (This letter will be used by the State Convention to confirm Jackson is guilty of treason and remove him from office.) Testimonies for the 5th and 6th days are also published on their separate days. A letter to the editor questions why the above-mentioned letter from Jackson has not been published. The *New York Tribune* publishes the letter, and the *Missouri Democrat* reprints it. On July 12, Col. John McNeil, on the orders of Gen. Lyon, suppresses the secessionist *State Journal*, and explains the reason why to the people of Missouri in his proclamation (included in this volume, along with his letter to the publisher of the *Journal*).

Jackson's popularity is decreasing. According to a letter to the editors, Osage County had voted for Jackson in the gubernatorial election of 1860, but now, sentiment toward him has changed since the passage of the

¹ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Jul#6).

² See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Jul#8.4).

³ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Jul#98).

⁴ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Jul-Annex-1).

Military Bill of May 14. The current perception of Jackson is evident in the articles that often emphasize his middle name and refer to him as “the Fox.” Jackson also quarrels with C.S.A. Gen. Benjamin McCulloch, who has been helping Jackson and the Missouri State Guard. McCulloch, after their hot dispute, calls Jackson a cowardly “son of a b**h”⁵ in front of his officers. As for the commander of Jackson’s Guard, Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, he is the butt of jokes in an article that uses double meanings, referring to his stomach ailment before the battle at Boonville in June.

Lt. Gov. Thomas C. Reynolds addresses the secessionists of Missouri to explain his motives for temporarily departing the state.

Some Missouri State Guard troops are moving toward Springfield. Gov. Jackson is north of that city while Price and Missouri State Guard Gens. James S. Rains and James H. McBride are to the south. Price swears to have Springfield or die.

Gen. Lyon’s army departs from Boonville, on their way to southwest Missouri. It is rumored that one of his goals is to seize and confiscate Gov. Jackson’s plantation in Saline County “to help pay for the damage to railroad bridges and other property.”⁶ Lyon arrives in Springfield on July 13, and the Home Guards rally to that town to stop the rebels, rumored to be on their way. (Contradictory reports state the rebels have left for Arkansas, and not Springfield.)

Several letters to the editors give the impression that Missouri is overwhelmingly Union; yet, many others relate stories about secessionists attacking Unionists, and some report that large bands of armed men are joining Jackson’s secessionist forces (the Missouri State Guard).

The *Missouri Democrat* publishes an official notice, notifying the State Convention to assemble for its second session and meet on July 22, in Jefferson City. A public meeting in Independence Township, Macon County, passes resolutions, asking the Convention “to relieve us from insurrection, anarchy and confusion” and provide a new governor and state officers, as well as new legislature “until an election can be had.”⁷ On the 24th, it publishes an editorial that reports a modified resolution by the Convention, declaring Missouri State Guard Maj. Gen. Price’s seat vacant. (By the end of the Convention, a new governor and new state officers are indeed elected, the information provided in this volume as an insert, mentioned below.)

Included in this volume are a couple of biographies of Col. Franz Sigel and several articles praising his military skill as seen at the Battle of Carthage. One article, a letter from a resident of New York, praises both Sigel and Lyon, and says, “it does seem as if pretty much all the thorough work, thus far, has been done in Missouri.”⁸

Also covered are the Battle of Carthage, the Skirmishes near Monroe Station, the Action near Harrisonville, and the Skirmish at Forsyth, each with its own special section that includes a description of the event and a list of articles dealing with that event. Three special inserts are also included: the first is from the *New York Herald*, describing the arrival of Gen. Lyon’s command in Springfield, Missouri; the composition, strength, and morale of his troops, and their privations; the difficulties of Unionists in Missouri; and Washington red tape. The volume ends with the last two inserts, one from the *New York Tribune*, giving the results of the Missouri State Convention, which closes on July 31, and the other from the *Missouri Republican*, extolling the virtues of the Convention’s newly elected provisional governor, Hamilton R. Gamble. This latter article states (unprophetically), “From this day forward a new and a peaceful policy is inaugurated in Missouri.”

⁵ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Jul#72).

⁶ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Jul#31.2).

⁷ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Jul#41.1).

⁸ See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Jul#63).