

History 225

Re: Review of BCF, Chpt. 21

Begins w/ Grant's Vicksburg Campaign

Point here: Grant showed that Union army could live off the land without worrying about supplies. Here is the germ of an idea that Sherman would later expand upon in the March through the South.

Notes ben. Grierson's cavalry aid; perhaps the most strategically successful in the whole war. Vital to the capture of Vicksburg.

Milliken's Bend on Mississippi. First Northern exposure to the benefits of black troops. They block General Taylor's efforts to reinforce Pemberton at Vicksburg from the west. This was a "black flag" engagement; bayonet attacks; and indications that some of the black troops taken as prisoners were sold into slavery.

The campaign proved again that Joe Johnston was a great liability for the Confederacy; he refused to make any serious effort to relieve Pemberton and the siege of Vicksburg.

The Siege ends on July 4th. The Confederate garrison on the verge of mutiny and mass desertion; they had been fighting on 1/4 rations and were sick and suffering from hunger. Pemberton could not expect them to succeed in a breakout. The surrender and then Grant's terms of paroling the 30,000 instead of making them POWs.

The liberating Yankees do not rub it in. Actually they force open the holdings of speculators and feed the Johnny Rebs.

Finally the news of surrender of Vicksburg played havoc with the last Confederate holdout on the Mississippi, Port Hudson. It too fell to Banks and is Louisiana black troops. Now the Mississippi was completely in the hands of the Yankees and the Confederacy was now in half.

Points made: The successful use of black troops. Milliken's Bend and Port Hudson.

The germ of the idea of what Sherman expanded into what some have called "total war." The March through Georgia and the South in 1864/5. Adumbrated in the destruction of Jackson, Mississippi ("Chimneyville"). And the ensuing campaigns through Mississippi plantation country after fall of Vicksburg and Joe Johnston's evacuation of his army from Mississippi.

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Deals with Chancellorsville-this was Lee's finest hour. Outmanned two to one by Hooker, he still managed to divide his army and w/ Jackson's brilliant flanking attack to hand the Union one of its greatest defeat.

Notes here the fact that Hooker lost it after some initial brilliant maneuvering. Notes also that the pride of the Army of the Potomac incarnated in Hooker's staff officers who wanted to counterattack rather than slink back across the Rappahannock was vetoed by the completely stunned and demoralized Hooker. It is clear here that the fighting spirit of the Army of the Potomac was deeper and more determined than the Commander in Chiefs who led the army.

Notes, too, that Lee's army's fighting elan and determination at Chancellorsville encouraged in Lee the belief that his men would accomplish any thing he asked of them. (Pointing to G'burg and the Third Day).

Lee's rejection of sending Longstreet with two divisions from the Army of Northern Virginia to try and save Vicksburg and get Johnston's army back into Mississippi. (Later critics would blame Lee from his narrow Virginia theatre vision only; he did not see the bigger picture. Gallagher essay McPherson would rebut this allegation).

McP dwells on Lee's sense now of invincibility after Chancellorsville. He mesmerizes Davis and war cabinet w/ plans now to invade Pennsylvania. He spells out the advantages of such a great risk. here is Lee as the gambler, risk-taker, and the only one in the Confederacy with a larger vision. Lee was staking all on this invasion plan. He was quietly, in his own way, pushing himself forward as the Father of the Confederacy (that is, if the plan worked). Without question. Lee's plan was cast in Clausewitzian terms--he understands the underlining political potential for achieving the independence of the Confederacy. in this he seems totally alone.

Text notes on the G/
'Burg Campaign

Rebels an army of 75,000. Their morale was high. They were in better shape as far as shoes and equipment than in Sept. 1862.

Stuar's great faux pau. On his own initiative he decided to refurbish his reputation after being caught unawares at Brandy Station, by riding all around the Union forces in Pennsylvania. He was lost to Lee for a week and lost too was the vital intelligence that Lee needed. But check this old assertion out in Fishel's book

Confederates live off the land and despite Lee's order they forage liberally. In some cases they hold up cities for ransom like at York, Pa. The burning of Chambersburg. Part of this was in retaliation for what the Union had been doing for two years in the South. Special revenge taken for Union burning to the ground VMI in early 1863.

Auguries of things to come. Lee's hubris from Chancellorsville; Stuart's mindless decision to cut loose and ride around the Union army; Lincoln's removal of Hooker (who, like McClellan, suffered from "Lee syndrome"--psyched out by Lee); and the determination of the Army of the Potomac, regardless of their commander-in-chief, to get even with Lee, especially now that they were fighting on their own land w/ the invasion of Pennsylvania; Lee would now have the problem of being cut off from his base in Virginia. This was a Union advantage that Lincoln was fast to recognize.

A note about superior Union intelligence at G'burg. See Fishel.

Then follow an account of the three days. Standard stuff.

Union forces occupy the high ground on Cemetery Ridge. Ewell failure to take Cemetery ridge as ordered by Lee. Ewell was not the stuff for a Corps commander. Lee's losses of high quality officers at this level was beginning to show. Had Jackson been there it might have been different. Had the Rebs the high ground they would have prevailed in this campaign.

Lee/Longstreet fall out over strategy.

The second day. Failure to take Little Round Top.

The Third Day.