

## American Military Thought in 1860

### Part 1: Drivers and Influences (Doctrinal Underpinnings)

*One of the surest ways of forming good combinations in war would be to order movements only after obtaining perfect information of the enemy's proceedings. – Baron Antoine-Henri de Jomini*

In previous articles we touched on some of the political and social mindsets leading into the Civil War, so it's fitting that we turn our attention to military thinking. This is a big topic, so I'll approach it in two parts. Part 1 will look at the influences driving the American military mind in 1860. Part 2 will look at Application – how that mindset drove initial strategies, North and South. In future articles we will assess how these influence-driven strategies were applied early on and then evolved as generals met the cudgel of reality.

This first part is an overview of theory and antebellum military practice. To facilitate our discussion, think of military thought resting on a three-legged stool: theory, operational history, and leadership (i.e., command guidance\*). Intertwined into one base, their collective strength is determined by the weakest leg.

*\* In the context of today, I would categorize this as command doctrine, but there was precious little doctrine prior to the Civil War.*

#### Theory

Prior to the Civil War, relevant military theorists were European. Niccolò Machiavelli and Sebastian le Prestre de Vauban were popular, as were the histories of warfare in Europe in the preceding 200 years – wars fought by Frederick the Great, for example – but they depicted an old style of war that was fast becoming outmoded. Machiavelli's *Art of War*, for example, expressed various concepts that would pass the test of time (the purpose of war must be expressly defined, the necessity of state militia, and an armed citizenry), but he spoke of military operations with small armies and very limited artillery (firearms on the battlefield were in their infancy during his time). Vauban was a military engineer renowned for his designing and construction of fixed fortifications, and how to break into them (his *Traité de l'attaque des places*). The stand-outs for study, though, were Napoleon Bonaparte and Baron Antoine-Henri de Jomini.



Napoleon Bonaparte

Bonaparte – a bright, shining meteor – was the wellspring of Western military theory in the 1800s. He was Europe's most famous strategist and field commander but left little written record of his concepts and philosophies: 78 maxims, a long list without much amplification and thus not a system of warfare per se – he wasn't inclined to give away his secrets;<sup>1</sup> and while exiled on the remote island of Saint Helena, he dictated a commentary on the wars of Julius Caesar, later published in 1836 under the title

*Précis des Guerre de César*, wherein he summarizes the events of various campaigns and adds comments from the standpoint of his own military knowledge.<sup>x</sup> His contributions to the operational art for the most part are gleaned from the study of his field organization for active campaigning and the conduct of the individual campaigns themselves. These were standard fare for every student of war, then and today.

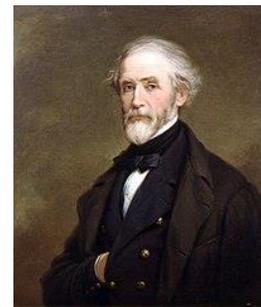


Antoine-Henri de Jomini

Jomini (1779-1891) was the leading military theorist of the times; the first great military thinker to analyze the Napoleonic way of war. Swiss-born and a staff officer for his entire military career in both the French and Russian armies, he never attained a command of his own; his participation in military action was limited to his staff duties. He was an ambitious, yet frustrated, soldier whose forte was an ability to analyze and record the basic concepts of war. He sought to devise a theoretical system for winning battles using his understanding of Napoleon's failures and successes.<sup>2</sup>

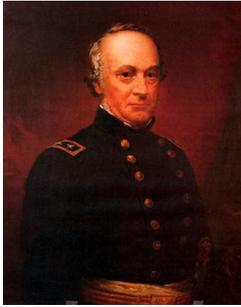
Jomini's first book on military theory was *Traité des Grandes Operations Militaires* (Treatise on Major Military Operations). It was an immediate success, appearing in several volumes from 1804 to 1810 and read and discussed throughout Europe. He went on to write several major works and military histories. The influence of Jomini up through the Civil War was profound.

His greatest work, *The Art of War*,\* was first published in 1838. Translated into all the major languages, it remained the foremost textbook on warfare well into the 1870s. Jomini's teachings were first introduced in America at the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1817. The few textbooks available at that time were written in French. In fact, a translation of Gay de Vernon's *A Treatise on the Science of War and Fortifications* was, for years, the standard text on the science and art of war. Although this work primarily emphasized the engineering aspects of war, it also included a summary of Jomini's strategic precepts.<sup>3</sup> Cadets also encountered Jomini's teachings in the classes of Professor Dennis Mahan. He integrated Jominian principles he had learned in Europe into a nine-hour course for seniors on the art of war. In 1848, he published his own short volume of Jominian theories: a pocket size book that is usually referred to by its short title *Outpost*.<sup>4</sup> The most influential of his works, it focused on offense and became the basis of pertinent parts of the Army Regulations of 1857.<sup>5</sup>



Dennis Hart Mahan

\* In its original French: *Précis de l'Art de la Guerre: Des Principales Combinaisons de la Stratégie, de la Grande Tactique et de la Politique Militaire*. You will often see its title as *Summary of the Art of War*, a more literal translation from the French, but typically in English translation it came out *Art of War*, which I use here.



Henry Wager Halleck

Another Jomini proponent was Henry Wager Halleck (USMA 1839). He was the first American writer to attempt a “systematic exploration of the principles of strategy...with his publication of *Elements of Military Art and Science* in 1846.”<sup>6</sup> Halleck owed his ideas on strategy mainly to Jomini. “He took Jomini’s first tenet of strategy as his very definition of the word: ‘Strategy...is defined to be the art of directing masses on decisive points, or the hostile movements of armies beyond the range of each other’s cannon.’<sup>6</sup>

Jomini’s principles in *The Art of War* are spread over 47 Articles collected into 7 chapters. He focused on four strategic principles – principles that many Civil War generals had memorized and could recite.\* To explain how his principles should be applied in war, he worked out an elaborate doctrine based on geometrical formations and devised twelve model plans of battle. In each were a theater of operations, a base of operations, a zone of operations, and so forth. The smart commander chose a line of operations that would enable him to dominate three sides of the rectangular zone; this accomplished, the enemy would have to retire or face certain defeat. Jomini talked much of concentric and eccentric maneuver and interior and exterior lines, being the first theorist to emphasize the advantage of concentric maneuver and interior lines. But there were defects – anachronisms – in key points. For example, he always stressed the offensive and spoke of the hard blow followed by the energetic pursuit, his line of operation strategy allowing the enemy the option of retiring. He thought that the primary objectives in war were places rather than armies: the occupation of territory or the seizure of such “decisive strategic points” as capitals. He affected to be the advocate of the new Napoleonic ways of war, but actually he looked backward instead of forward.<sup>7</sup> He did not (nor could he) anticipate the changes that would come about in the Civil War.

\* I will not recite his Articles here. Those wanting to dive into his theories in detail can indulge themselves at [http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/readings/jomini\\_art\\_of\\_war/13549-h.htm](http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/readings/jomini_art_of_war/13549-h.htm)

Examples of the application of Jominian principals and the problems they led to in the early years of the war abound on both sides, but space precludes us from delving into them in detail. Suffice it here to say, as characterized by John R. Elting, “American generals of 1861, facing a military problem as vast as Napoleon’s invasion of Russia, studied Jomini in the misguided faith that they were studying Napoleon. They marched against strategic points – Corinth, Richmond, Atlanta – content to let...armies escape to fight again, so long as they could occupy this real estate. And so the war worried on, until other commanders emerged, possessing the true, brutally clear Napoleonic appreciation.”<sup>8</sup>

Before we move on to the next leg of the stool, let me mention the other great military philosopher of the 1800s, Count Carl von Clausewitz. Of Prussian birth, Clausewitz is probably the best known, most quoted, and least understood of all military theorists read or studied in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and possibly twentieth centuries. His greatest desire was to understand the true nature of war and “... to iron out many creases in the heads of strategists and statesmen . . . at least to show the real point to be considered in War.”<sup>9</sup>

Although serious military thinkers today are more likely to refer to Clausewitz, Jomini had that distinction in the Napoleonic age itself. In general, Clausewitz addressed the political and strategic levels of war and Jomini addressed the operational level. The two were born only a year apart and held similar staff positions in the Napoleonic wars, albeit in different armies. Jomini was by far the more celebrated thinker in his own lifetime.<sup>10</sup>

Clausewitz's signature work was his three-volume *On War*. It was unfinished when he died in November 1831. His wife Marie completed it for him. The first edition was published in 1832. Twenty years later a second edition was published that clarified many of the obscurities of the original text, but this really did not help, for even Clausewitz considered his unfinished work a "formless mass" of ideas. A French translation was published as early as 1849 but gained little attention until 1870. In 1874, Colonel J. J. Graham produced the first English translation.<sup>11</sup>

From this timeline it is easy to conclude that Clausewitzian theories had little impact on US military thinking leading into the Civil War. His impact – his importance – would blossom in the latter part of the 1870s. We will come back to him in Part 2 (our Application part).

### **Operational History**

The War of 1812 was a watershed event in US military thought. It was fought almost without strategic design, but "led immediately to a clarification of the national military policy for deterrence of foreign attack and defense in case of attack."<sup>12</sup> First reliance would be put upon the Navy, but since neither the army nor navy was large enough to protect against an overseas adversary from invading, reliance would also be put on a series of coastal fortifications supported with artillery. Similarly, fortifications would also be located along the border with Canada and to support westward expansion, particularly located along strategic waterways (although these latter "forts" were not the elaborate, fixed coastal type, but rather were typically wooden stockades meant for temporary use only).

Plans were made from time to time to expand both the Army and the Navy but were never aggressively pursued. There were a few large ships, but over time the Navy tended toward sloops of war scattered in small squadrons across the seas to protect American commerce by showing the flag and suppressing pirates – essentially a defensive, constabulary posture. The Army grew and was deployed in a similar manner. A large engineering corps was needed to support the construction and maintenance of the extensive system of fortifications, along with a significant amount of artillery support, particularly for coastal defense. The largest tactical units of infantry and cavalry were regiments, but peacetime deployment was usually in companies and smaller. Expansions would occur during periods of war – the various Indian wars and the war with Mexico – but those expansions evaporated afterwards.

Andrew Jackson gets a lot of play in history for his role in the War of 1812, but the most important figure in American military history from that time up until the Civil War was Winfield Scott. After early attempts to be a lawyer, Scott found his way into the Army. He had a bit of a rough start but found his groove by the beginning of the War of 1812. He was involved in combat action throughout, rising to the rank of Brigadier General in March 1814 at the age of 27. Highly successful in the war, he emerged as a Brevet Major General, which he held until June 1841 when he was advanced to the full rank and was appointed General in Chief of the Army. He held that position even though he took personal command of forces in the southern campaign in the Mexican War. Because of his success in that war, in March 1847 he was promoted to Brevet Lieutenant General. He was only the second officer to hold that rank, the first having been George Washington. (The next one would be Ulysses S. Grant.) Scott retired on November 1, 1861, handing over the position of General in Chief to George B. McClellan (who remained a Major General).



Winfield Scott in 1861

Throughout his career, Scott's military ideas were essentially those of eighteenth-century Europe. He had no formal military schooling; his initial education came from reading European books. This gave him a taste for eighteenth-century manners and turn of mind, no doubt contributing to his earning the nickname "Old Fuss and Feathers". He encountered Napoleonic ideas through his readings and a visit to France just after the War of 1812, but to his death "he clearly felt most at home with a small professional army. In strategy he was at his best in a war of limited objectives which could be pursued by maneuver and occupation of territory rather than by ruthless destruction."<sup>13</sup> This lent itself to the post-1812 role of keeping peace on the Indian frontier – a small-unit, constabulary role.

The biggest military challenge to the nation after the War of 1812 was the Mexican-American War. From strategic and operational standpoints, this was a fascinating conflict, too often overlooked in the popular study of American military history as a regional conflict, little more than a training ground for the generals of the Civil War. It was, in several ways – baptism of fire, large unit maneuvers, technological advances – but it also fostered the Jominian mindset.

There were two major campaigns in the Mexican-American War – Zachary Taylor's land invasion of northern Mexico in 1846, and Winfield Scott's seaborne invasion of central Mexico and subsequent march on Mexico City in 1847. (No disrespect meant to Kearny's campaign to San Diego in 1846.) Scott's campaign was the decisive operation, but both were steeped in Jominian theory.

Scott understood the way to victory was not through the north. Mexico's northern states were important, but Mexico City – the center of government – was the key. Americans would not get there from the north – too many miles of hard, near impassable territory with ever-lengthening supply lines. Whatever Mexican forces went north to oppose the Americans, Taylor could deal with, but to bend Mexico's will required a blow to Santa Anna's government. Moreover, the way to get there required a movement by sea, a landing on an enemy beach, and a subsequent movement inland. Classic Jomini!

Scott decided on a bold move. He would cut his line of communications and maneuver to the capital, Mexico City. It may appear this decision removed Scott from the realm of Jominian warfare, but Jomini was not rigid in his maxims. Regarding base camps and critical lifelines, he wrote, "In general, we cannot expect to find in an enemy's country safe positions suitable even for a temporary base; and the deficiency must be supplied by a strategic reserve." Scott, of course, had just such a reserve in the new troops that were to reach him in force by August. Upon receipt of the reinforcements, Scott again assumed the offensive and moved toward the capital. Note that he did not include in his campaign the intention to destroy the Mexican army. He was maneuvering for the capital and wanted to take it with as few casualties on either side as would be necessary. Inasmuch as Mexico City rested in a basin ringed by a defensible perimeter of substantially higher ground, Scott's campaign took on an all-or-nothing quality when he moved into the valley. His advance occasioned the Duke of Wellington's now famous verdict that "Scott is lost! He has been carried away by successes! He can't take the city, and he can't fall back on his bases!"<sup>14</sup> Well, he was wrong. The city fell and the Mexican government capitulated. War over.

Scott's generalship was one of consummate audacity and skill. In short, there never was a campaign like it in the military history of the United States. Grant, later criticized some of Scott's actions; but even so, he stated his conviction that the general's overall conduct of the war was almost flawless.<sup>15</sup> It was these traits, this experience, that Scott brought into the Civil War.

## Leadership

This is the third leg of our stool, but as seen from the discussion above, it is entwined with Operational History – particularly with Scott. He was the Army's spinal cord for decades, but there were other aspects of military leadership that shaped thinking.

During this period Jominian influence had worked its way into American military thinking primarily via West Point. We've mentioned Denis Hart Mahan, a disciple of Napoleon. Starting his teaching role at West Point in 1830, he taught that the spade was as useful in war as the musket, although he regarded field fortifications ultimately as springboards for concentrating strength and launching attacks. He believed that defense alone could not win military campaigns; that seizing the initiative through aggressive action was the key to victory. In his *Treatise* he said, "Vigor on the field and rapidity of pursuit should go hand in hand for great success...Carrying the war into the heart of the assailant's country...is the surest plan of making him share its burdens and foiling his plans."<sup>16</sup> Shades of Grant and Sherman in 1863 forward, and also Lee and his campaigns into Maryland.<sup>17</sup>

Mahan's early-on favorite student, his protégé at West Point, was Halleck. A military intellectual eventually to become known as "Old Brains", he was the third-ranking graduate in 1831. He was Jominian in outlook, relying heavily on Jomini's ideas in his own book, *Elements of Military Art and Science*. He also translated Jomini's *Life of Napoleon* from French into English. Halleck did stray, though. He strongly endorsed the strong series of coastal fortifications to "defend the United States from foreign

attack by buying time for the mobilization and training of citizen militia.” In this sense, he took it further than Jomini.<sup>18</sup>

Note that even the tactical manuals were derived from the French. Case in point, Major William J. Hardee’s (West Point 1838) *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics* became the standard instructional manual for the Army. Hardee drew extensively on his knowledge of the French military. He knew then Secretary of War Jefferson Davis wanted to thoroughly modernize the U.S. infantry into a faster, lighter force, capable of taking advantage of the new rifle. His task was made simpler by the 1845 publication of a French manual that did just that for the French infantry. Hardee’s manual was finished in 1854; it was tested, approved, then published in June 1855.<sup>19</sup> Like other period manuals, they were focused on soldiers’ individual drill and lower unit tactics. The manuals were almost direct copies of the French manuals including the copying of the illustration that show soldiers in French uniforms.

Brief mention must be made of the commission sent by then-Secretary of War Jefferson Davis to observe the military activities of the Crimean War (1853-1856) “for the purpose of obtaining information with regard to the military service in general, and especially the practical working of the changes which have been introduced of late years into the military systems of the principal nations of Europe.”<sup>20</sup> The commission comprised Majors Richard Delafield and Alfred Mordecai, and Captain George B. McClellan. It eventuated that they toured British and French lines during the latter stages of the war, but not the Russians’. In several ways a precursor to the Civil War, certainly more so than the Mexican War just a few years earlier, the British and French armies were steeped in Jominian theory mixed with budding interest in Clausewitzian thought. The impact on our army was that it reinforced the learning of the West Point-based US military officer corps.

In the period 1833-1861, West Point graduated 997 officers who ultimately fought in the Civil War (359 confederate and 638 union). Although that number is impressive, remember that the academy’s primary purpose was the education of engineers. The heavy emphasis on engineering was reflected in both the curriculum and subsequent assignments following graduation. During four years at West Point, 71% of classroom time was devoted to engineering subjects with the remaining 29% devoted to all other subjects including tactics. The engineering subjects also had a considerable influence on class standing, which largely determined branch assignments following graduation. Among graduating officers, those in the top of the class were assigned to the Corps of Engineers, next in preference went to the Topographical Engineers or Ordnance, and the remainder to the combat arms. Of the 26.2% of cadets that failed during this period, the vast majority did so in either mathematics, science or engineering; of 2,609 cadets admitted, only two failed tactics. It is apparent from these figures that success at West Point had very little to do with the mastery of military subjects. Additionally, there was no formal classroom instruction in tactics until the senior year. A cadet’s exposure resulted mainly from practical exercises in drill and living in a military environment.”<sup>21</sup>

Historians place West Point graduates in command of both armies in 55 of the 60 major battles of the Civil War and in command of one army or the other in the remaining 5.<sup>22</sup> Notable graduates for the South were Lee, Jackson, Stuart, Pickett, Beauregard, Bragg, Longstreet, J.E. Johnston, and President

Jefferson Davis. For the North, there were McClellan, Burnside, Hooker, Custer, Meade, Buell, Halleck, Grant, Sheridan, Sherman, Thomas, Hancock, and Rosecrans. None had before 1861 any actual experience in directing large numbers of troops. Thus, the picture painted by General J. D. Hittle (editor of a 1965 edition of *Art of War*) of Civil War generals riding into battle with "a sword in one hand and Jomini's *Art of War* in the other" is not so farfetched.<sup>23</sup>

There were other influences on American military thought in the antebellum period, to be sure: the philosophical underpinnings of our republican form of government which was born with a strong bias against strong central governments and large standing armies; the cultural traditions and traits of the various European ethnic groups (Germans, Scots, Irish, French, English, Celts and so on), manifested regionally<sup>24</sup>; and, of course, the nature of the perceived threats facing the growing nation, both from abroad and in its expansion westward – fulfilling its so called Manifest Destiny.

In this first part we've seen how French doctrine, derived from Napoleonic warfare as interpreted and codified by Jomini, and mixed with the army's own challenges and experience after the War of 1812, along with the influence of General Winfield Scott across the decades, were tightly woven into our professional military education and training systems in the antebellum period, forming the foundation of the nation's military thought as we approached the Civil War. In Part 2 we will discuss how it was applied at the strategic and operational levels, how it failed to live up to the new demands of the Civil War, and how it evolved to reflect that new reality – blood and thunder. Catch you next month.



## **Part 2: Application** (Driving Strategies)

*American generals of 1861, facing a military problem as vast as Napoleon's invasion of Russia, studied Jomini in the misguided faith that they were studying Napoleon. They marched against strategic points – Corinth, Richmond, Atlanta – content to let Confederate armies escape to fight again, so long as they could occupy this real estate. And so the war worried on, until other commanders emerged, possessing the true, brutally clear Napoleonic appreciation.*

*John R. Elting, "Jomini, Disciple of Napoleon?", Military Affairs 23 (Spring 1964), 17-26.*

In Part 1, we looked at how French doctrine, derived from Napoleonic warfare as interpreted and codified by Baron Antoine-Henri de Jomini, mixed with the army's own challenges and experience after the War of 1812, formed the foundation of the nation's military thought as we entered the Civil War. Here we will focus on the factors and considerations that went into the initial set of strategies on both sides. Strategy is dynamic, continually adjusting to changing circumstances and situations. We do not have space here to detail how Union and Southern military strategies evolved across the theaters and what drove their evolution as the war progressed. We will deal with that later, building it into various articles about specific campaigns and battles.

Part 1 focused on the military theories of Jomini. We mentioned only in passing the other great 19<sup>th</sup> century military theorist, Count Carl von Clausewitz. While a contemporary of Jomini, Clausewitz was not well known in the US and had little direct impact on our military thinking. His signature work, the three-volume *On War*, wasn't even translated into English until 1874<sup>25</sup>, and it was the 1960s before he finally achieved the widespread standing in the US and around the world that he enjoys today. Still, I will relate strategic thinking North and South to his concepts. While we did not think of or refer to him directly during the Civil War, today we can interpret and better understand events in his context.

### First, A Bit More Theory (Definitions)

One of Clausewitz's most famous dictums is that ***war is a political act*** used to achieve critical ***national policy*** goals sought by governments in arms.<sup>26</sup> These goals are sometimes referred to as ***primary political aims*** or ***war aims***. This is the top rung of strategy formulation.



*War is not an independent phenomenon, but the continuation of politics by different means.*

When speaking of national policy and goals, we should also think in terms of needs and focus. Neither side wanted armed conflict, but neither Lincoln nor Davis was willing to back down from his central focus. The South's core political goal was independence from the North; it wanted to be out from under what it generally perceived to be northern political suppression and manipulation; it wanted freedom to establish and follow policies it thought best in its long-term interests.<sup>27</sup> The secessionist states made the decision to leave the Union, and Davis as the Confederacy's leader was willing to go to war to safeguard that end. He had wide backing across the Confederacy.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, the Union's core political goal, as conceived and pursued by Lincoln despite considerable political dissent, was maintenance of the Union in perpetuity. He was willing to go to great lengths (political concessions) to keep the South in the Union peacefully but would use military force to do so if necessary. His mindset was crystal towards the end of his first inaugural address, "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government, while I shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect, and defend it.'"

The manner in which governments seek to fulfill their national policy goals is the grist of ***grand strategy***: the bringing together of all national tools and capabilities – military, economic, national, social, cultural, and diplomatic – to achieve national objectives. These are the elements of grand strategy – the sum total national power.

Diplomacy was a particularly critical component of grand strategy for both sides in the Civil War, particularly the diplomatic relationships that were attempted and realized between the Confederacy and Great Britain, and the Union and Great Britain (and, to a lesser extent, between both and France). Understanding the British connection is critical to understanding how the Civil War played out on the

world stage.<sup>29</sup> Southern attempts to achieve recognition by Great Britain as a sovereign power were vital to achieving their goal of national identity and sovereignty. They never achieved it.

Today, warfare is divided into three levels: **strategic**, **operational**, and **tactical**. These divisions weren't as defined or distinct during the Civil War as they are today, but they provide a useful way to categorize and describe war activities.

**Strategy** (derived from the Greek word meaning *generalship*) is the broad application of military force as an element of a nation's grand strategy to achieve its national policy objectives. The US Army today defines *strategy* as the relationship among ends, means, and ways. *Ends* are the objectives or goals sought, *means* are the resources available to pursue the objectives, and *ways* are how one organizes and applies the resources. Each of these components suggests a related question. What do we want to pursue (*ends*)? With what (*means*)? How (*ways*)? In the Civil War, this included, for example, implementing economic blockades, use of attrition warfare (to wear the enemy down), and coordination of major military operations to force the enemy to your will.

*Means* are more than materiel and human resources; they include *leadership* and *cost*. Leadership is a factor that affects all levels. A good plan is for naught if those responsible are not capable of implementing it; a poor plan may still work if strong leadership is pursuing it. Include in this *personality* and *attitude* in addition to *competence*. Davis, for example, would have preferred a field command. His sense of duty drove him to accept the position of President of the Confederacy instead, but it didn't prevent him from (over)emphasizing his commander-in-chief role, which manifested itself in his micro-management of field activities throughout the war. And then there's not only the cost in lives, misery, and physical devastation (which came to be enormous in the South), but the dollars and cents cost of prosecuting the war. Probably little consideration was given in this regard in the beginning since both sides expected (desires distorting probabilities?) a short conflict, but certainly became a factor as the conflict intensified.<sup>30</sup> The take-away here is how components of strategy formulation can and will change over time.



*If the leader is filled with high ambition and ... pursues his aims with audacity and strength of will, he will reach them in spite of all obstacles.*

Union and Southern naval strategies were critical to each side's prosecution of the war. Coastal and river operations were in effect a bridge between blue water and land operations.\* We will touch on them in Part 3, but for now I'll defer discussion of blue water activities to Kent Wright.

*\* Kent Wright is deep into this field, covering it in detail in presentations and in much-anticipated publishable written materials. His handling of this topic – its role and importance overall – is substantive and eye opening.*

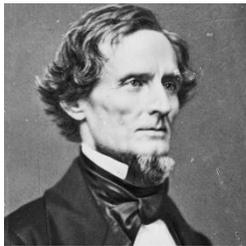
Lying between the strategic and tactical levels, **operations** are the movement and employment of one's forces to bring the enemy to combat or to otherwise achieve strategic goals. At this level, campaigns and major operations are planned and conducted to accomplish strategic goals within theaters of operations. These activities imply a broader dimension of time or space than do tactics; they

orchestrate tactical successes to achieve objectives at higher levels. Planning at the operational level of war determines *what* we will affect, with *what* courses of action, in *what* order, for *what* duration, and with *what* resources.

The **tactical** level of war is where individual battles and engagements are fought. While resulting effects may be described as operational or strategic, military actions occur almost entirely at the tactical level.

### Now, Some Applications (The Curtain Rises)

And so, it came to be – open military conflict on a scale hitherto unknown in the Americas. The South’s war aim was to achieve its goal of independence. To do this, the South had “only” to survive as a

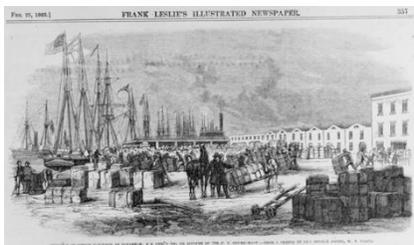


*Let them smell Southern powder and feel Southern steel!*

coherent political unit until the North acquiesced to its secession. The North’s war aim was to maintain the Union. To do this it had to defeat (to conquer) the South. The military analyst of the *Times* of London offered the following comments early in the war: "...It is one thing to drive the rebels from the south bank of the Potomac, or even to occupy Richmond, but another to reduce and hold in permanent subjection a tract of country nearly as large as Russia in Europe. . . No war of independence ever terminated unsuccessfully except where the disparity of force was far greater than it is in this case. . . Just as England during the revolution had to give up conquering the colonies so the

North will have to give up conquering the South..."<sup>31</sup> This was the canvas upon which each side’s efforts played out.

Was either side – their political or military institutions and leaders, their populations – ready for it? In a word, No. While there were individual exceptions (Scott and Sherman, for example), neither side expected a long war. Neither had allies that could help support it in the conflict that lay ahead. Few on either side envisioned the length and kind of conflict awaiting them, or the economic and diplomatic ramifications.<sup>32</sup> They truly were stepping into the belly of the beast.



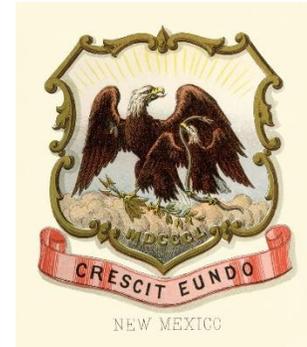
*Cotton is a global commodity*

The South’s grand strategy revolved around the need to survive as a viable political entity and to achieve the standing of a sovereign power. It could do this only if it could withstand the military challenges of opposing nations. International recognition-- principally from Great Britain and France – would validate this, along with the expectation that economic and military assistance would follow. Davis believed that British recognition alone would discourage the North from prosecuting the war and that the Union

would withdraw from the fight from a fear of British intervention. To facilitate this, Davis also planned to leverage British demand for US (Southern) cotton, believing (correctly, near-term) its economy would be hurt without it. Unfortunately for the South, Britain also relied on Union grain and found alternative sources for cotton to support its fabric industries (Egypt, Brazil, India, and the West Indies).<sup>33</sup> Southern diplomacy would also downplay slavery. Seward assured the British and the French that it provoked the

US would go to war with them.<sup>34</sup> Great Britain came close to diplomatic recognition of the Confederacy, but never quite got there.<sup>35</sup>

In the meantime, the South also wanted to maintain international trade to obtain war materiel and other necessary resources, as well as have open sea lines of commerce for its exports. This meant keeping ports open and functioning. It needed to increase industrial capacity to support the war effort. It started the war with almost no modern weaponry sufficient for battlefield use; those that it had had been taken from federal arsenals. It also wanted to extend control into the New Mexico Territories (comprising today's New Mexico, Arizona, and southern Nevada) and on into Colorado and southern California. It wanted the mineral resources throughout the region (as well as to deny them to the North), along with access to Pacific shipping routes in California. A sideshow, but one that had significant potential impact.



Once the shooting started, the North's war aim was to maintain the Union by quelling armed resistance as quickly and with as few casualties and collateral damage as possible. In every sense this included thwarting the South's grand strategy. As time went on and the South's challenge became clearer, maintaining the Union meant decisively defeating (conquering) the South. How this would be accomplished (the military strategy) would also evolve from an overall Jominian approach of capturing terrain and facilities (e.g., Corinth, Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Atlanta) to a more classic Napoleonic (Clausewitzian) approach of destroying the enemy army and its means to resist (e.g., Vicksburg, Sherman's March, and the Overland Campaign – and, of course, Lincoln's blockade).

The region of decisive operations encompassed the country from the Atlantic coastal zone to the Mississippi River basin. The area was unequally divided by the looming barrier of the Appalachian Mountains, as much as two hundred miles wide in places, over which communication was difficult. At points, the eastern section of the country beyond the range was two hundred miles wide and the western section about three hundred miles wide. In Maryland, northwestern Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri sentiment was divided between the Union and the Confederacy. The Mississippi River separated three of the seceding States (and one border state) from the remaining eight.

This broad topography added a scale of action surpassing the Revolution and the Mexican War. It lent itself to three defined theaters on land in the South and the border states: Eastern (mid-Appalachian Range to the Atlantic, with the range mid-line extending south through Georgia and Florida to the Gulf of Mexico), Western (mid-Appalachian Range to the Mississippi River), and the Trans-Mississippi (everything west of the Mississippi).<sup>36</sup> The Union and Confederacy also divided itself into various military districts -- a command and control measure already in use in the Union. The theaters remained throughout the war; the military districts changed constantly as the situation demanded.

At the outset, the South pursued a forward defense posture (*defend everything*) with a so-called *offensive-defensive* strategy (assume a defensive posture and await Union advances while seeking

opportunities to initiate offensive action). Punish the invader, discourage future attacks, and convince the Union public that future attacks would be futile, and the military efforts conquer the Confederate states would fail. This was classic Jomini describing a nation forced into a defensive position.<sup>37</sup> This led to small armies being dispersed around the Confederate perimeter along the Arkansas-Missouri border, at several points on the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, along the Tennessee-Kentucky border, and in the Shenandoah Valley and western Virginia as well as at Manassas. This spread the Confederate army so thin that Union forces could easily break through somewhere, which they did at several points in 1862.

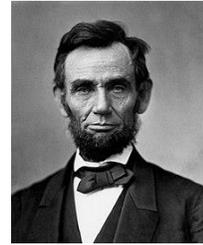
In the event, the Army of Northern Virginia (AoNV) and the Army of Tennessee were much more aggressive than this implies.<sup>38</sup> They didn't raid and counter-attack just to defeat their opponents on the battlefield, they initiated offensive campaigns designed to disrupt and destroy the enemy in a decisive battle(s), seize strategic targets (e.g., Nashville), and influence foreign and Northern public opinion (e.g., Gettysburg). On the scale they approached this, it proved their undoing.<sup>39</sup>

Each side, particularly the Confederates, used *interior lines* to move forces from quiet fronts through the interior to threatened fronts more quickly than the enemy could move around the military border. In practice, though, Southern supply lines were insufficient to the task; despite longer distances, Union forces often moved in shorter time due to their superior lateral communications. In each case the use of rivers, railroads and the telegraph were critical.<sup>40</sup> In this regard, Grant's coordinated strategy proved decisive in 1864-65. He concentrated Union forces for simultaneous advances in the Eastern and Western Theaters to pin and defeat Confederate troops on all major fronts. To use Clausewitzian monikers:<sup>41</sup> **concentration of forces in space** (the use of mass) to counteract the South's use of interior lines, and **unification (concentration) of forces in time** (the use of maneuver) for simultaneous advances, which had the intrinsic advantage of acting as a force multiplier.<sup>42</sup> The South had no coherent defensive strategy between its field armies and theaters to counter this. Given the manpower and materiel imbalances, this flaw proved fatal.

Until Grant took command, the South could count on reprieves during periods of Union inactivity (including winter stand downs) to refit and restore their logistic and supply bases. Grant's **operational tempo** bankrupted Lee and other Southern generals of their supplies, morale and manpower, and their ability to concentrate against one army while delaying or holding against another. Grant used maneuver to increase tempo as well as to place his forces advantageously. Indeed, Grant's use of maneuver was every bit as important to his generalship as it was to those given more credit for using maneuver – Lee and Jackson, Sherman and Sheridan.<sup>43</sup> Grant believed that strategic concepts were nothing more than common sense, claiming "the art of war is simple enough: find out where the enemy is, get at him as soon as you can, strike at him as hard as you can and as often as you can, and keep moving on. (Sounds much like Forrest!)

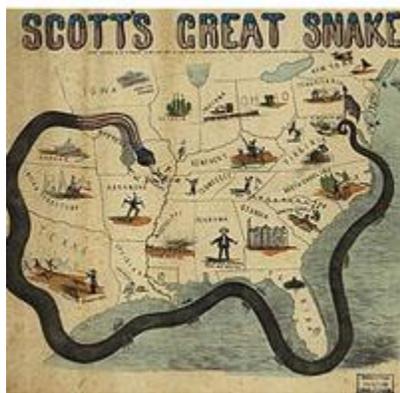
Other critical elements of Southern strategy included enticing the border states to secede – particularly Kentucky and Missouri (Maryland and Delaware were geographically more problematic), maintain the integrity of the Mississippi River (maintain physical connection with states west of the river), and make the war as costly to the Union as possible so as to stimulate and capitalize on Union war weariness.

Northern strategy included pressing on all fronts, leveraging the South's limited resources and causing it to overextend; seize critical areas, including Richmond, agricultural and mineral production areas, and the Mississippi River; and wear the South out and suffocate it. Key elements of this strategy were the blockade of Southern ports and retention of border states in the Union. Retention of Maryland and Delaware was a foregone conclusion. Lincoln simply wasn't going to give up his capital, Washington, DC. More Jominian thinking, but in this case apropos. Kentucky was just as important and came to be a Confederate target, but in the end it stayed in the Union. The North simply could not give it up.<sup>44</sup>



*I hope to have  
God on my side,  
but I must have  
Kentucky!*

Squeezing the South included a blockade of major ports. The press at the time labeled it General Scott's



1861 Cartoon of the Union  
Blockade of the South during the  
Civil War

Anaconda Plan, and so it has come down to us in popular histories. In the event, he wasn't the originator. Scott described the concept in his May 6, 1861 letter to McClellan and briefed the cabinet on June 29, but Lincoln had already proclaimed the blockade. As described in Wikipedia, Secretary of State William Henry Seward recommended adopting a blockade shortly after the Battle of Fort Sumter. Gideon Welles, the Secretary of the Navy, argued for a de facto but undeclared blockade, which would prevent foreign governments from granting the Confederacy belligerent status. President Abraham Lincoln sided with Seward and proclaimed the blockade on April 19. He extended it to include North Carolina and Virginia on April 27. Lincoln's blockade initially was more paper than substance due to size limitations of the Navy, but the policy was put into place.

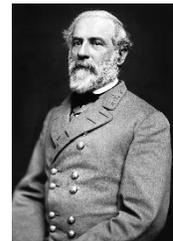
While the idea may have been picked up by Scott in his thinking and subsequently fleshed out and managed by the Navy's Blockade Board (established June 25, 1861), Lincoln was its father. By July (at least partly in response to the outcome of the First Battle of Bull Run<sup>45</sup>), the Union Navy had established blockades of all the major Southern ports. Great Britain grappled with the legality of blockade, but did not grant the South belligerent status, which in essence would have meant formal recognition of the Confederacy.\*<sup>46</sup>

*\* Kent Wright has done a prodigious amount of research in this area. His conclusions regarding Confederate privateers, unleashed by Jefferson Davis immediately following Ft Sumter, are particularly fascinating. Reliance on privateers as an immediate action force constitutes what today we would label asymmetric warfare.*

Let's touch again on leadership—the selection of senior generals and field commanders — as a factor in



developing strategy. Davis relied on past relationships, apparently looking for those with whom he could work well. This makes sense until you take in Davis' penchant for micromanaging field strategy and operations. His choice of Lee and Cooper (a general all but invisible in popular histories) were fortuitous, but



his other selections were fraught with problems, never to be fully resolved. Lincoln would hire and fire regularly while looking for the winning number. He finally found it in Grant (and his posse Sherman, Sheridan, and others). There were good field generals on each side, to be sure (e.g., Jackson, Stuart, Forrest, and Hardee for the South; Thomas, Reynolds, and Meade for the North), but Lee and Grant became the center of action.<sup>47</sup>

*\* Another aspect Part 3 is going to look at generalship – what it took to be a good general, how senior generals were selected, and so forth. For now, we'll settle for the idea that leadership is a necessary factor in strategy development and in operational application.*

Another key Clausewitzian concept is **center of gravity**. Today's Army sees the enemy's center of gravity as his "source of strength" – capabilities-based rather than, as Clausewitz seems to hold, effects-based.<sup>48</sup> Jomini defined a decisive point as anything "whose attack or capture would imperil or seriously weaken the enemy".<sup>49</sup> The difference is crucial given the situation of its use. I hold that either can be the case. It depends on the situation. Think of a foe's center of gravity at any given level of warfare as its Achilles heel: find and exploit it, and the enemy flounders.



*To achieve victory, we must mass our forces at the hub of all power & movement. The enemy's 'Center of Gravity'.*

Davis' *defend everything* strategy presumed that South's critical mass to be a combination of its political integrity, the individual states, and protection of resources. We've discussed the political integrity issue. To be a sovereign nation, you must be in control. As to the individual states, Davis had a Congress and 11 individual state governors with which to contend. How could he pull defense back from the Confederacy's borders for the sake of establishing a more coherent defense and thereby sacrifice all or part of some of these states to the forces of the Union? How would that play with the Secessionist's states' rights meme? The imbalance of resources – human, natural, and materiel – vis-à-vis the Union is well known. Again, how could he sacrifice any of these without a fight? National integrity, the individual states, the availability of/access to resources, of which human resources were primary – all drove the South to a forward defense strategy. Moreover, the imbalance meant the South had to win in the first year or two – it simply didn't have the legs for a long fight.<sup>50</sup> It also appears that Davis overestimated his ability to shift forces to counter a thrust.

The North's center of gravity was public opinion. The South didn't need to defeat Union military forces or occupy Union territory for purely military purposes per se, but for political purposes – to facilitate Northern war weariness. There was a wide-spread, well organized political resistance to armed conflict with the South. The plight of the slaves didn't move many (albeit public opinion in this regard increasingly shifted toward abolition as the war went on). Many were for simply letting the Southern states secede, and good riddance! This resistance was exacerbated in the early years of the war by the Confederate Army victories, particularly in the East. If the Confederacy was going to break Northern will to fight, it had to do so quickly. The greater the cost in terms of blood and treasure to the North, the greater the chance the North might opt for peace. On the battlefield time started to run out for the South by mid-1863 (Vicksburg and Gettysburg); politically, time ran out in November 1864. Political opposition peaked going into 1864 when Lincoln ran against the Democrat McClellan. With his

reelection, the outcome of the war was decided. Unfortunately, too many in the Confederate leadership decided to keep fighting even though there was no chance at that point of reconciliation. The remainder of the war was an irresponsible waste of blood and bullets.

This brings an interesting question to mind. The Civil War was an “all or nothing” affair. The South either achieves independence — a sovereign political identity — or the Union is preserved status quo ante. There was no in between. To what extent did that play into strategic mindsets as strategy developed and evolved on each side (think Lincoln and Grant, and Davis and Lee)? Did it lengthen the war and thereby harden attitudes in the field as the war dragged on, and result in more casualties and destruction? Not only yes, but it couldn't have been any other way. Go back to the primary policy goals of each side: basically, do or die.

It was Jominian thinking that fed Davis' *defend everything* strategy; it was Clausewitzian thinking that drove Lincoln. Whether presumption or intuition, he knew the Union must destroy the South's ability to fight. That meant defeating the Confederate Army in the field, and that came to be focused on the AoNV, supported by Sherman's sweep through Georgia and up through the Carolinas. The Civil War, given its broad landscape and the depth of resources and manpower brought to bear, required broader vision to achieve success than the bulk of the American military, North and South, had been educated.<sup>51</sup> Lincoln would sometimes fall victim to this limited thinking, but he managed to throw off such shackles. He encouraged his general to do the same, and he hired and fired until he found the winning combination.<sup>52</sup> Davis didn't rise up in the same way.

Lincoln understood the center of gravity concept that supported his aggressiveness — the strategy that eventually was implemented by Grant and Sherman. In a letter to Buell on January 13, 1862, Lincoln said, “With this preliminary, I state my general idea of this war to be that we have the greater numbers, and the enemy has the greater facility of concentrating forces upon points of collision; that we must fail, unless we can find some way of making our advantage an over-match for his; and that this can only be done by menacing him with superior forces at different points, at the same time; so that we can safely attack, one, or both, if he makes no change; and if he weakens one to strengthen the other, forbear to attack the strengthened one, but seize, and hold the weakened one, gaining so much.”<sup>53</sup> This was pure Grant before Lincoln knew who Grant was. Mass and maneuver; concentration in space and time — Jomini out; Clausewitz in. Lincoln knew he needed better senior commanders in the field, and he kept searching until he found Grant, a general who understood how to be decisive. When he gave Grant command of all Union armies in March 1864, he gave the Grant the authority to specify the strategic objective: the point upon which to concentrate the greatest effort, the gaining of which will mean the success or failure of the cause. It was destruction of the Confederate field forces. For Grant it was clearly Lee's army, and he intended it to be the same with other commands as well.<sup>53</sup> There is no stronger indicator of this than Grant deciding to not only locate his headquarters in the field, but to do so opposite Lee and the AoNV. These are excellent examples of how strategies can evolve and mature.

Southern generals had learned military theory at West Point at a time when the available text was heavily based on Jominian theory. They practiced that theory in the Mexican War, and used it throughout the Civil War, constantly seeking decisive field victories that would push the Union to peace. They should instead have engaged in what Jomini described as a defensive war to accomplish their political and military goals. As it was, the South exhausted itself. Union men and materiel losses were heavy, but better absorbed.

Union generals were equally influenced by Jomini as demonstrated by their reliance on concentration of force in a defensive posture, cautious movements, geometric lines of operations, set piece battles, capture and possession of territory, and such. (The so called Dare Line – the upper Rappahannock River – is a prime symbol.) Lincoln moved away from Jomini towards a Clausewitzian approach, finding his hammer in Grant. Grant clearly favored experience over theory when it came to fighting. In Lincoln and Grant, the full political and military powers of the Union were brought together to achieve victory.

We have seen how grand strategy is developed to achieve the primary political objectives of the nation and how the military strategy is formulated as a part of that grand strategy. The military strategy is derived from political aims, but it's formulation it is built on numerous factors that come into play. Strategy is developed to achieve political aims, but its content — the fabric and patchwork — is situation dependent, resource driven, and dynamic. Strategy formulation and application is a complicated, dynamic process, to say the least.



*If you have the wrong tactics, but the right strategy, you will win. If you have the right tactics, but the wrong strategy, you will lose.*

*General Vo Nguyen Giap*

As we get into discussions of campaigns and battles (i.e., the operational level of the Civil War), we'll look at whether the military thinking was Jominian or Clausewitzian, and how well they supported the extant strategy. But that will be next year. See you in January 2019!



*Many thanks to Jeff Ewing, John Mason, Arley McCormick, and Kent Wright for their valuable guidance and editorial support. --Emil*

### **Notes –**

<sup>1</sup> David Chandler, in his General Introduction to the 1901 edition of *The Military Maxims of Napoleon*; New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1987; 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Analysis and Comparison of the Ideas and Later Influences of Henri Jomini and Carl von Clausewitz*, Major Francis S. Jones; Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, April 1985; 7.

<sup>3</sup> Jones, 18.

<sup>4</sup> *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy*, Russell F. Weigley; New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1973; 87. Its full title: *An Elementary Treatise on Advanced-Guard, Out-Post, and Detachment Service of Troops, and the Manner of Posting and Handling Them in Presence of an Enemy, With a Historical Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Tactics. Obviously, Out-Post is easier.*

<sup>5</sup> *Civil War Generalship: The Art of Command*, W.J. Wood; Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1997, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Weigley, 84 (both quotations).

<sup>7</sup> T. Harry Williams, 3-4.

<sup>8</sup> "Jomini, Disciple of Napoleon?", John R. Elting, *Military Affairs* 23 (Spring 1964), 17-26.

<sup>9</sup> Jones, 27.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas M. Huber, *US Army Command & General Staff College*, date unknown.

<sup>11</sup> Jones, 38-39. (Some maintain the first English translation was published in 1874; Huber.)

<sup>12</sup> Weigley, 59.

<sup>13</sup> Weigley, 66.

<sup>14</sup> *Agent of Destiny: The Life and Times of General Winfield Scott*, John D. Eisenhower; New York: The Free Press, 1997; 261. According to Jeff Shaara (*Gone for Soldiers*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2000), Wellington also said that Scott's cutting of his lines of supply and movement on Mexico City was one of the greatest military feats in history. I have not found a documented source for that comment, but he was right about it if he said it.

<sup>15</sup> *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* (2 vols.; New York, 1885-1886), I, 166.

<sup>16</sup> Russel F. Weigley, "American Strategy from Its Beginnings through the First World War", *Makes of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, Peter Paret; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986; 415.

<sup>17</sup> Lee, commissioned as an engineer in 1829, was not strong on field fortifications early in the war. Part of this may have been due to his experiences with a strong offensive and the types of weapons employed in the Mexican War, but also note that Lee graduated West Point before Dennis Hart Mahan, who stressed field fortifications, taught there. Weigley, "American Strategy", *ibid*.

<sup>18</sup> Weigley, "American Strategy", 416.

<sup>19</sup> Geoff Walden and Dom dal Bello, "Manual of Arms for Infantry: A Re-examination Part 1", [http://www.drillnet.net/manualarms\\_1.htm](http://www.drillnet.net/manualarms_1.htm).

<sup>20</sup> Davis's letter of instructions to the commission as reproduced in Arthur T. Frame, "The U.S. Military Commission to the Crimean War, 1855-1856", *Fort Leavenworth, KS*, 1983; 79.

<sup>21</sup> James L. Morrison, "Educating the Civil War Generals: West Point, 1833-1861", *Military Affairs* (October 1974), 108-111.

<sup>22</sup> T. Harry Williams, "The Military Leadership of North and South", *US Air Force Academy Harmon Memorial Lecture #2*, 1960, 2 (<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usafa/harmon02.pdf>)

<sup>23</sup> Jones, 19-20.

<sup>24</sup> For an excellent example, see *Attack and Die: Civil War Military Tactics and the Southern Heritage*, Grady McWhiney and Perry D. Jamieson; Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1982.

<sup>25</sup> I sympathize with my antebellum brethren. The most popular translation in use today is Michael Howard's and Peter Paret's "On War" (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Clausewitz's style was ponderously dense and pedantic. I confess that it took me three attempts over several years to work my way through most of it even using Howard's and Paret's iteration, with its indexing, commentary, and accompanying translations. Even with years of conversational German in high school and college, I found the thought of attempting "On War" in German intimidating in the extreme.

<sup>26</sup> *The Grand Design: Strategy and the U.S. Civil War*, Donald Stoker; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010; 5.

<sup>27</sup> This included not only the continuation but the expansion of slavery, and the desire to wall off states whose abolitionists would incite more slave rebellions (more John Brown's, as it were) – slave rebellions being a continuous fear since colonial times.

<sup>28</sup> There was plenty of anti-secessionist, or Unionist, sentiment in the South, but it never posed a significant Confederacy-wide political threat to reverse secession and rejoin the Union.

<sup>29</sup> This is a topic deserving of a separate paper. In the meantime, there are a couple sources that will be useful for independent reading: *A World on Fire: Britain's Crucial Role in the American Civil War* (Amanda Foreman; New York: Random House, 2011) and *Our Man in Charleston: Britain's Secret Agent in the Civil War South* (Christopher Dickey; New York: Crown Publishers, 2015).

<sup>30</sup> The US government estimated in January 1863 that the war was costing \$2.5 million daily. A final official estimate in 1879 totaled \$6.190 billion. <https://www.civilwarhome.com/warcosts.html>. That would equal close to \$96 billion today (2018). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer price index, prices in 2018 are 1,448.71% higher than prices in 1865. The dollar experienced an average inflation rate of 2.28% per year during this period. In other words, \$1 in 1865 is equivalent in purchasing power to \$15.49 in 2018, a difference of \$14.49 over 153 years. <http://www.in2013dollars.com/1865-dollars-in-2018?amount=1> The Confederacy spent perhaps \$2,099,808,707. Inflation affected both Northern and Southern assets but hit those of the Confederacy harder. Northern currency fluctuated in value. At its lowest point \$2.59 in Federal paper money equaled \$1 in gold. The Confederate currency so declined in purchasing power that eventually \$60-\$70 equaled a gold dollar. By 1906 another \$3.3 billion already had been spent by the US government on Northerners' pensions and other veterans' benefits for former Federal soldiers. Southern states and private philanthropy provided benefits to the Confederate veterans. The amount spent on benefits eventually well exceeded the war's original cost.

<sup>31</sup> *London Times*, July 18, 1861, as noted in James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1988), 336.

<sup>32</sup> Stoker, 17.

<sup>33</sup> Stoker, 28-30.

<sup>34</sup> Stoker, 39.

<sup>35</sup> Per Kent Wright: Britain recognized both the US and CS governments as belligerents while upholding the Lincoln government as the LEGAL government of all the American States. Belligerent status was an internationally recognized legal status short of diplomatic (official) recognition as an independent country. It simply recognizes the

right of revolution for any nation (meaning a grouping of like-minded people). It is what made the war legal in the eyes of foreign nations. It was obviously not legal in the eyes of the established government, who had the recognized right to OPPOSE revolution. The British policies are most clearly stated in "No Need of Glory: The British Navy in American Waters, 1860-1864," by Regis Courtemanche, 1977, Naval Institute press.

<sup>36</sup> Note that the Mississippi River was (and still is) the boundary between states throughout most of its length. It's understandable that when it came time to designate military districts, it appeared to be a natural boundary line. In reality, it is rarely wise to make a prominent strategic feature a command boundary. The Mississippi River basin was a strategic target from the outset of the war, critical to maintaining the physical integrity of the Confederacy. The boundary between the Western and Trans-Mississippi Theaters should have been well to the west of the river to allow unity of command in its defense (think about Confederate command and control coordination issues with regard to Island Number 10, among other engagements along the Mississippi during the early stages of the war).

<sup>37</sup> In Article XXXI "Offensive Battles, and Different Orders of Battle," he wrote "An army reduced to the strategic defensive often takes the offensive by making an attack, and an army receiving an attack may, during the progress of the battle, take the offensive and obtain the advantages incident to it." In theory, the defending forces would execute retrograde movements drawing the attacking forces with them, thus continually lengthening the attacking forces lines of communications. The defender would employ simultaneous raids or attacks against them with the goal of forcing the attacker to guard as much of his lines of communications as possible and thereby reducing the the main attacking force. Also, see Article XVI "Of the System of Operations" in which he speaks to advantages of offensive and defensive war.

<sup>38</sup> Davis long favored offensive warfare over defensive and would continue to do so throughout the war. The South's resources didn't permit an extended conflict, though. If they didn't force the North to peace within a campaign season or two, the North likely would overwhelm them. By taking the offensive, the Confederates hoped to crush or capture large Union armies but were never able to accomplish that goal. Instead of conserving their resources and remaining in defensive postures, they attacked the Union forces in eight of the first twelve major battles of the war. Over the course of the first three years of the war, the Confederate army almost bled itself to death by taking the offensive. *Attack and Die: Civil War Military Tactics and the Southern Heritage*, Grady McWhiney and Perry D. Jamieson; Tuscaloosa: 1982; 5-7.

<sup>39</sup> I believe the South's only chance for an offensive victory lay in the East: Defeat the Union Army of the Potomac, move across the Potomac River into Maryland and Pennsylvania, threaten Philadelphia and New York, and thereby drive the Union to peace. They never had the legs for it, though. Lee tried three times (1862, 1863, and 1864) and failed. Very Jominian approach, too. The North's combat power, in terms of human, manufacturing, and materiel resources, along with political determination (Copperheads and such notwithstanding) was enormous. On the other hand, the North's key to an offensive victory lay in the Western Theater: Interdict the Mississippi River in its entirety, strangle foreign trade and supply via a blockade, and drive through the Tennessee Valley into the rich agricultural and manufacturing Deep South. This is what they did. Note that the constant hammering on the AoNV was indecisive until Grant and his 1864 Overland Campaign. In conjunction with Sherman's March to the Sea and back up through the Carolinas (the culmination of the fight through central Tennessee – the area generally bounded by Memphis, Corinth, Chattanooga, and Knoxville), the Confederacy's fate was sealed.

<sup>40</sup> Due to space limitations, we'll factor the use of railroads and other technological advances into the discussion of operations in future articles.

<sup>41</sup> Paret's "On War", 204-205.

<sup>42</sup> Mass places overwhelming combat power at the decisive place and time – synchronizing all the elements of combat power where they will have decisive effect on an enemy force in a short period of time. (Massing effects, rather than concentrating forces, can enable numerically inferior forces to achieve decisive results, while limiting exposure to enemy fire (Chancellorsville, for example). Maneuver places the enemy in a position of disadvantage through the flexible application of combat power. Maneuver is the movement of forces in relation to the enemy to gain positional advantage. Effective maneuver continually poses new problems for the enemy by rendering his actions ineffective, eventually leading to defeat.

<sup>43</sup> Stoker, 352-354.

<sup>44</sup> For an interesting discussion of strategies promoted within Lincoln's cabinet see *A People's History of the Civil War and Reconstruction, Volume 5, Trial by Fire*, Page Smith; New York, McGraw-Hill, 1981; 97-99.

<sup>45</sup> Stoker, 45.

<sup>46</sup> Another key part of Scott's thinking was a push by 75,000 men down the Mississippi to secure the river. In the event it took from March 1862 (New Orleans) to July 1863 (Vicksburg) and significantly more than 75,000 Union troops to secure the river. This is yet another indicator that, while he predicted a long war, Scott had no idea of the scale of the conflict to come.

<sup>47</sup> Another aspect Part 3 is going to look at generalship – what it took to be a good general, how senior generals were selected, and so forth. For now, we'll settle for the idea that leadership is a necessary factor in strategy development and in operational application.

<sup>48</sup> LTC Artulio J. Echevarria II, USA, "Clausewitz's Center of Gravity: It's Not What We Thought", *Naval War College Review*, Winter 2003, Vol LVI, No. 1.

<sup>49</sup> John Shy, "Jomini," in *The Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1986; 152–4.

<sup>50</sup> To what extent was Virginia a Southern center of gravity? Recall Secessionist efforts to bring Virginia into the Confederacy, and Howell Cobb's declaration, "...We wanted to let Virginia know that whatever threats or dangers were presented to her, filled our hearts with sympathy for her, which we are willing to exhibit, to show that there was not a man in the Confederacy who was afraid to be at his post on Virginia soil...We felt the cause of Virginia to be the cause of us all. If she falls, we shall all fall; and we were willing to be at the spot to be among the first victims. We are ready to say to Lincoln, when he attempts to put his foot on Virginia soil, 'Thus far shalt thou come, no farther.'" [Richmond Dispatch, May 30, 1861] As the war wore on, Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia, became the South's center of gravity. Davis was expendable; Lee and the AoNV wasn't. They were the Confederacy's life blood.

<sup>51</sup> Stoker, 37.

<sup>52</sup> Stoker, 79. Also see <http://housedivided.dickinson.edu/sites/lincoln/letter-to-don-buell-january-13-1862/>.

<sup>53</sup> Some may point to Sherman's March to the Sea as straying from this objective, but that is an incorrect assessment. Sherman took the war into the Deep South, created havoc, destroyed railroads, manufacturing facilities, storage facilities, and materiel and agricultural supplies. In the process he sliced the Deep South in two, seized the major port and rail junction at Savannah, and then swung north through the Carolinas to directly support

*Grant's operations against the AoNV (and in the process kept Johnston from uniting his small army with Lee's).  
Properly synchronized operations.*