

THIS WAS THE CIVIL WAR

Federals Learn About Lightning

By MERTON T. AKERS
UPI Correspondent

The Federal Army learned about lightning war the hard way — in May 1862. Their teacher was Stonewall Jackson, only recently an instructor at the Virginia Military Institute, and now applying his lessons.

His text was to save Richmond, the Confederacy's capital.

Brig. Gen. Richard Taylor, one of Jackson's generals, described his first sight of this dour, religious man who glorified in war:

"The mounted officer... pointed out a figure perched on the topmost rail of a fence... and said it was Jackson. 'Approaching, I saluted and declared my name and rank, then waited for a response. Before this came I had to see a pair of cavalry boots covering feet of gigantic size, a mungy cap with visor drawn low, a heavy dark beard and weary eyes — eyes I saw afterward filled with intense but never brilliant light.'"

Jackson asked Taylor how far his men had marched that day.

"Six and twenty miles," Taylor replied.

"You seem to have no stragglers," Jackson said.

"Never allow straggling," Taylor answered.

"You must teach my people," Jackson said. "They straggle badly."

Band Strikes Up

About that moment Taylor's band struck up a waltz and some of his Creole soldiers began to dance.

"Thoughtless fellows for serious work," Jackson remarked.

That was Jackson on the eve of his first triumph, "Stonewall" to the South, "Old Jack" to his men and "Fool Tom" to V.M.I. cadets.

On this day in May, Jackson was 38 years old. He was in the midst of a campaign in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia against two Union armies. By whipping both, he could create enough consternation in Washington to

keep reinforcements from going to the Army of the Potomac, which was miles to the Southeast.

Late the same night Jackson sat at Taylor's campfire. "If silence be golden," Taylor reported, "he was a 'bonanza.' He sucked lemons (Stonewall thought lemons helped the dyspepsia), ate hardtack and drank water, and praying and fighting appeared to be his idea of the 'whole life of man.'"

As he sat at the campfire Jackson was forming a decision which likely changed the course of the Civil War. Certainly it changed the course of Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's Peninsular campaign, the biggest Union drive of the war to date.

Sudden Strikes

If Jackson by quick maneuvers and sudden strikes against the Union armies of Gens. Nathaniel P. Banks and John C. Fremont in the Valley could prevent their going to the Peninsula to reinforce McClellan and if he could lure Union Gen. Irvin McDowell's 37,000-man corps from Fredericksburg, Va., toward the Valley, then the defenses of Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston with their backs to the Richmond defenses might have a chance to stop McClellan, even to destroy his army.

The man milling over how to do this had come from obscurity and stood where he now was because he had overcome poverty and lack of early education by hard work rather than brilliance. Born in Clarksburg, Va., (now West Virginia), he arrived at West Point an awkward boy in homespun. He barely managed to meet the minimum standards at the Point the first year, but by long hours of hard study, graduated in 1846, 17th in a class of 59. He won two brevets in the Mexican War, but by Civil War time he had quit the army and was a professor at V.M.I., austere, taciturn, a strict disciplinarian and a working Presbyterian.

He had won the name of Stonewall at the battle of Bull Run (Manassas) by holding his brigade firm under attack.

Now he was operating in the Valley, home ground he knew as well as a farmer knows his own land.

Strategic Corridor

Jackson's maneuvering ground, the Shenandoah Valley, is a long, strategic corridor running southwest and northeast the length of western Virginia. Two ranges of mountains, the Blue Ridge on the east and the Alleghenies on the west, bind the valley and protect the flanks of any army operating there as long as the passes are held. The Shenandoah river runs from south to north in the valley. Its two forks join near the north end (foot) of the valley and meet the Potomac river at Harper's Ferry.

The Massanutten Mountains split the valley near the north end for about 50 miles, leaving a valley on each side. The narrower one on the east is called Luray Valley after its principal town. Only one road crossed the Massanutten, running from New Market on the west to Luray on the east.

A macadamized road, called the Valley Pike, ran on the west side of the Massanutten.

Pointing straight into Maryland and Pennsylvania beyond the valley was one of the Confederacy's safety valves. Whenever pressure became too great on Confederate armies in eastern Virginia, a force could be thrown into the valley, thereby threatening Washington from the northwest as well as Baltimore and Pennsylvania.

Reading from north to south, the valley towns after Harper's Ferry were: Winchester, Mt. Jackson, Strasburg, Woodstock, New Market, Harrisonburg and Staunton in the west corridor; Front Royal, Luray, Conrad's Store and Port Republic in the east corridor.

Jackson consulted Gen.



CHICKAHOMINY CAMPAIGN—At the end of May, 1862, Confederate Gen. Joseph Johnston set out to level a blow at the Union Army of the Potomac. Near the Chickahominy river lay Fair Oaks, and this was the site Johnston picked for the first of a series of bloody battles for Richmond. Many died in the battle, but no real decision resulted. Gen. Johnston was wounded and carried from the field. After his injury, Gen. R. E. Lee would take command of Confederate forces. Here, in a lithograph from the Library of Congress collection, the Army of the Potomac is shown en route from the Chickahominy after the battle. (UPI)

Robert E. Lee, military adviser to President Jefferson Davis. Lee said to go ahead and try to stop the Federals and gave Stonewall command of Maj. Gen. Richard Ewell's division and the troops of Brig. Gen. Edward (Allegheny) Johnson. All together Jackson had about 10,000 men. Against him were allied about 70,000 Union troops scattered among three commanders.

Jackson prepared carefully for the campaign. His topographical engineer, Jed Hotchkiss, mapped the northern end of the valley. Stonewall himself drew up accurate charts of distances between the chief towns. He was ready to call to order the class in tactics and demonstrate his brand of lightning war.

His subordinates were told as little as possible of his plans, the foot soldiers nothing.

On May 8, 1862, Jackson opened up by hitting a part of Fremont's command — at McDowell, Va., in the southern part of the valley west of Harrisonburg and drove them about 30 miles north-west. Fremont now was out of touch with Banks, whose

troops were at Strasburg, Va., about 20 miles south of Winchester.

Jackson sent Ewell north in the Luray Valley, marching in his own men north from Harrisonburg, cutting across the Massanutten Mountains and joining Ewell at Luray.

The combined force hit a Federal detachment at Front Royal on May 23, and sent it flying north toward Winchester.

Supplies Abandoned

Banks at Strasburg was outflanked, realizing the danger, Banks raced north for Winchester. He barely escaped annihilation and made Winchester only by abandoning all his supplies.

Jackson was delayed on his way from Front Royal to Winchester when some of his troops stopped to loot one of the Federal wagon trains and missed pinching off Banks. He then attacked at Winchester on May 25. Banks, defeated, made a disorderly retreat 20 miles north across the Potomac river.

The strikes at Front Royal and Winchester netted 3,000 prisoners, 10,000 muskets, several cannons and wagon trains full of supplies, all of which Jackson and the Con-

federacy desperately needed.

With Jackson controlling the valley and threatening Harper's Ferry, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton panicked in Washington and ordered 20,000 of McDowell's troops to march west from Fredericksburg, Va., to the valley. This halted a planned move to reinforce McClellan before Richmond, a move that had a vital bearing on the Peninsula campaign.

Offensive Ordered

Fremont, little hurt so far in the south of the valley, was ordered to go on the offensive.

Banks was reinforced with 15,000 men and also ordered south after Jackson.

That left Stonewall in a tight spot with McDowell's troops under Gen. James Shields pressing in from the east, Fremont from the west and Banks from the north. His only route was south along the paved valley pike and he took it without delay on May 31.

Shields retook Front Royal; Fremont was skirmishing with Jackson's cavalry at Cedar creek, 20 miles south of Winchester.

All day and all night prodded his wagon train south along the Pike, his troops

In the Day's News

By FRANK JENKINS

In Las Vegas the other day, a radio station sent one of its reporters out to do a man-on-the-street questionnaire on Laos. Pausing his microphone on the sidewalk, he began asking passers-by: "Where is Laos, and why is it so important in the news?"

It was a washout. He found ONE person who thought it was somewhere on the other side of the world but didn't know where.

If the general run of people are as vague as all that about Laos maybe we'd better do a little backgrounding on Southeast Asia, of which Laos is a part.

WHAT we are reading about in the big headlines these days is the remnant of French Indo-China. French Indochina, historically, is a group of Southeast Asia states that for nearly a century before World War II were French colonies. It included Annam, Cambodia, Cochinchina, Laos and Viet-Nam — all familiar names in the news these days.

The Chinese ruled Indo-China until about the 900's A.D. The next seven or eight centuries saw more or less constant fighting to throw off Chinese rule. The French began to intervene in Indo-China about 1785. For three quarters of a century there was more or less constant fighting, and by 1907 the French gained control of the entire area.

In World War II, the Japanese overran practically the entire region, but when they were defeated they lost it all. In the peace settlement that followed World War II, the French took Indo-China back.

BUT—

In the meanwhile—

The PEOPLE of Indo-China had developed a strong desire for independence. When the war ended, they set out to throw off French rule. Under the leadership of Communist-trained Ho Chi Minh, they eventually ran the French out.

By that time, however, the

Chinese communists had come to the conclusion that THEY wanted and needed ALL of Southeast Asia. So they set out to TAKE it. By then, we had learned in the school of experience that these Chinese communists were not the "simple agrarian reformers" we had been claiming they were. So we started out to do what we could to checkmate them.

SAD TO SAY, we didn't have much luck then, and we haven't had much luck since. Because of Communist Ho Chi Minh's help in running the French out, the people of Southeast Asia, especially the people of the former French colonies, leaned toward the communists and were suspicious of us because we were allies of the French.

IN CAPSULE form, there is the background of this Southern Asia business. Communist China WANTS Southeast Asia. Communist China NEEDS Southeast Asia. Among other things, only Burma sells more RICE in world markets than this Indo-China area. Rice makes up two-thirds of its exports. Rice is the chief food of the Chinese. China, reportedly, can't produce enough rice to feed its people. If it could grab the rice of Indo-China, it would help.

That helps to explain why communist China is so deeply involved in this Southeast Asia business.

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