"CAMPAIGNS REPLETE WITH INSTRUCTION": GARNET WOLSELEY’S CIVIL WAR OBSERVATIONS AND THEIR EFFECT ON BRITISH SENIOR STAFF COLLEGE TRAINING PRIOR TO THE GREAT WAR

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This thesis addresses the importance of the American Civil War to nineteenth-century European military education, and its influence on British staff officer training prior to World War I. It focuses on Garnet Wolseley, a Civil War observer who eventually became Commander in Chief of the Forces of the British Army. In that position, he continued to write about the war he had observed a quarter-century earlier, and was instrumental in according the Civil War a key role in officer training. Indeed, he placed Stonewall Jackson historian G.F.R. Henderson in a key military professorship. The thesis examines Wolseley’s career and writings, as well as the extent to which the Civil War was studied at the Senior Staff College, in Camberly, after Wolseley’s influence had waned. Analysis of the curriculum from the College archives demonstrates that study of the Civil War diminished rapidly in the ten years prior to World War I.
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CHAPTER 1
A WONDERFULLY MODERN WAR

In the century since the First World War, the notion that Britain squandered a
generation in its foolhardy handling of its armies has become a central trope. Indeed,
virtually every discipline – history, political science, arts and literature, criticism and
philosophy – operated, at least in the earlier decades of the twentieth century, in the
shadow of the Great War and the well-accepted ignorance among senior British
leadership.

Scholarly study of that leadership’s training has itself been an occasional topic of
interest. The question, however, has often been approached in a manner inverse to the
usual study of the education of great leaders and minds. Rarely, that is, does one
undertake an academic inquiry with a question as simple as, —How could they have been
so stupid?‖ Yet, strongly influenced by the conventional perception of the donkeys
leading their lions, that issue has colored many historical studies of this question.

Commentators on the Great War naturally gravitated toward examination of the
American Civil War. The Civil War was the largest land war in the century following
Napoleon I, and had many of the hallmarks of modernity; large volunteer forces, rapid
firing weapons, rifled artillery, decisive movement of troops by rail. Indeed, if the central
paradigm of the First World War is the trenches of the Western Front, the battlefield of
Petersburg is one of its logical forebears.
Post-Great War analysis of the effect of the Civil War on British operations began in earnest in the 1920s. Not surprisingly, the two leading voices on British strategy, J.F.C. Fuller and Basil Liddell Hart, both authored prominent, if unusually personal, works on the topic. Fuller's 1929 *The Generalship of Ulysses S. Grant* addressed the issue at the very outset in the Preface to the British Edition. He called the Civil War "wonderfully modern . . . . So much, in fact, that probably of all wars it is the most instructive in teaching us how to avoid the next war; and if we fail to do so, how to win it . . . ." (viii). General Fuller explained the comparison:

The same sequence of events [as occurred in 1861] is to be witnessed before 1914, the same sequence follows 1919 as followed 1865, because the World War was but a thinly veiled European Civil War. The causes of these two wars were very similar, the natures of these two wars were very much alike, and the peace which followed the one and the other were equally chaotic (viii).

Fuller argued that "[s]ince the age of the war schools native genius has been crippled by pedantry . . . ." (ix). In that regard and given his tendency to perceive professional training as tending toward sclerotic, he lauded the Civil War as "a very unprofessional one," and Grant as a simple genius, and -- crucially -- "typically non-academic" (ix).
Not to be outdone, Liddell Hart published *Sherman, The Genius of the Civil War* in 1930 and one of his central works, *The British Way in Warfare*, two years later. His *Sherman* study certainly touched upon the lessons evident from his “genius” subject; indeed, Liddell Hart introduced his work with a comment that so far as any impression of the American Civil War penetrated the consciousness of the General Staffs of Europe it was that of the battledore and shuttlecock tournament in Virginia—which they faithfully imitated with even greater lavishness and ineffectiveness on the battlefields of France from 1914 to 1918 (vii-viii).

He also passed judgment on the entire body of leadership the world had witnessed in the Great War. —As [the Civil] war was the first modern war, so was Sherman the first modern general. And hitherto the only one” (430). While these comments raised the topic, his later *British Way* is generally accepted as the beginning of the real debate about what could have – or should have – been gleaned from the American battlefields.

In his famous Chapter IV, “The Signpost that Was Missed,” Liddell Hart noted that European armies focused so much on study of the Wars of German Unification that they essentially ignored the Civil War. In that respect, he claimed having been told by one of the foremost German generals of to-day that while a student at the Kriegsakademie he never heard this war mentioned” (75).¹ Liddell Hart then briefly chronicled the entire American Civil War, drawing out points of special interest for his nascent indirect-approach theories, which he introduced in the following chapter.

¹ Like many of Liddell Hart’s arguments, the contention seems more convenient than true. (Or, maybe Herr General was not at the top of his class.) While Prussian observation of the American Civil War is a less-studied topic than British, and Prussian respect for what they saw was not great, Luvaas credited observation of the Union railroad for Moltke’s creation of the *Feldbahnabteilung*. More fundamentally, German observers and correspondents wrote extensively about the war and a large body of German-language literature would have been available at the time.
Fundamentally, Liddell Hart asked, “What might have been the effect, and the difference, if military thought in pre-1914 Europe had been nourished on a comprehensive study of 1861-65 instead of on 1866-71?” (90). Chiefly, he posited that there would have been no expectation of a swift end to the war. The unwieldy, unrealistic pre-war plans dependent upon luring the enemy into a strategic trap, like the “egregious Plan XVII” or on a Russian “noisy but immobile advance of the ‘steam-roller’” would have been abandoned (90-91). His comment on German planning is an extraordinary exercise in damnation by faint praise:

The German plan as designed by Schlieffen was more hopeful. Based on an analysis of war two thousand years earlier, it could hardly have been improved by a wider study of the last fifty years. But a healthy fear of indecisive results might have outweighed Moltke’s fear of Schlieffen’s bold plan, which led him to strengthen the left wing at the expense of the right and so to counteract its essential purpose as bait (91).

Liddell Hart drew the conclusion that Liddell Hart always drew. Better study of the lessons of the American Civil War would have necessarily led the European powers to recognize that a long war would not be won by any but the indirect approach.

“In default of a fresh trap, economic factors would decide the issue. Realizing this, they might have so guided the military effort as to strike, like Sherman, at the enemy’s economic foundations or at least to help the blockade in undermining its foundation” (92).

Only one military service – the Royal Navy – served this purpose, Liddell Hart argued, and it did so with spirit and vigor.

Issues Addressed

Scholars since Fuller and Liddell Hart have recognized the critical role that Colonel George Francis Robert Henderson played in emphasizing the Civil War as a part of the British military curriculum. Henderson had been a protégé of Viscount Garnet
Wolseley, who had observed the Civil War, interviewed Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee, and later wrote a detailed set of articles on the war. Thus, Henderson, a Civil War scholar and acclaimed biographer of Jackson, was a natural fit in Wolseley’s “ring” of officers and acolytes, and an ideal selection as commandant of the Staff College at Camberley. By the time Colonel Henderson left Camberley to serve as Director of Intelligence in the Boer War, his influence was extraordinary in making the Civil War – especially the Valley Campaign – a critical aspect of officer training.² Liddell Hart’s comment on Henderson is iconic:

> [T]he finest fruit of his literary work was his book on ‘Stonewall’ Jackson. This led his countrymen to study the American Civil War at least equally with the Franco-German War. But only one aspect of it, and here lay a dangerously narrow tendency. That the book perhaps embodied more of Henderson’s conception of war than Jackson’s execution did not matter, even enriched it as a military course of instruction and a school for commanders. But by the very spell it cast, his pupils and their pupils were led to concentrate their attention on the campaigns of Virginia to the exclusion of all else (76).

The problem with this observation is that there has simply been little academic study to support it. Instead, anecdotal evidence – like Lord Roberts’s comment that Henderson’s Stonewall Jackson was instrumental in his decision to march on the Boer capitals of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal – has been the principal basis of the supposed long-term influence of the work on British military education.³

Lord Roberts’s comment was a kind tribute to a dearly respected subordinate who died quite young, but it is hardly proof positive of the sort of influence the teaching of the

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² Henderson died in Cairo from an illness contracted in South Africa.

³ The comment appears in Roberts’s dedicatory Memoir to Henderson in the latter’s posthumously published The Science of War (xxxiv-xxxv).
Valley Campaign is supposed to have had on British operations. Indeed, General John Monash, Australian Corps Commander in the First World War, and Montgomery’s pick as the best general of the Western Front, considered the book his favorite, and used it for training his staff. But he never attended the schools in which Henderson supposedly held such sway (Serle 191).

Put simply, Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War was a great book and Colonel Henderson a great professor, but there has really been limited discussion of the extent to which Wolseley and his protégé Henderson actually imparted their admiration of Civil War history on the tactics and training of the British officer corps. By examining, to the extent possible, the curriculum of the Staff College in the years between the Boer War and World War I, the issue can be put to at least the beginnings of a measurable test. To what extent did the training at Camberley reflect the special affinity Henderson and Wolseley felt for the Confederate Army? What did the Staff College identify as the salient teachings of the Civil War; how were those points taught? Did the teaching of the Civil War survive Henderson’s departure? And, critically, was there a tangible link between the Staff College papers and theories in the years leading up to World War I, and the operations that were planned and attempted in the early years of the war itself?

Civil War Observers

Not surprisingly, the “Secession War” drew foreign interest and observers from its very outset. Many of the foreign observers garnered fame for their reports. The Comte de Paris, Heros von Borcke, and Justus Schiebert each, for example, published noted
accounts of their time observing (and sometimes fighting alongside) the combatants.\footnote{Heros von Borcke served on J.E.B. Stuart’s staff for a year until wounded shortly prior to Gettysburg. He demanded to be referred to as “Chief of Staff,” plainly foreseeing the extraordinary future value in Europe of holding a title unknown to the Confederates. Luvaas, Military Inheritance, 56. Von Borcke wrote and published in England, but his translated German work, Zwei Jahre in Sattel und am Feinde, appears to have been a paean to just the sort of arme blanche cavalry spirit relished on the Continent. Prince Kraft zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen said it “could make any Cavalry soldier’s heart beat fast,” and other senior Prussian officers exhibited similar admiration for the book and, by extension, for Stuart. Ibid. at 59.}

Foreigners arrived for many reasons, and their observations came in many forms. Some were members of official delegations, whose orders generally called for analysis of their areas of specialty. Engineers, for example, tended to focus on fieldworks and bridges, artillerymen on employment of guns.

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\footnote{Captain Justus Scheibert was dispatched by Prince von Radziwill, Chief Engineer, seeking information about rifled artillery and its effect on various materials. Scheibert seems to have carried out his mission with extraordinary zeal, eventually observing fourteen battles, sometimes helping out Stuart’s staff (as with translations of captured German-language letters, and design of breastworks), participating in the Battle of Brandy Station, and watching the Battle of Gettysburg a short distance from Lee. Scheibert became a recognized expert on the War, and his 1874 Der Bürgerkrieg in den nordamerikanischen Staaten, is a thorough treatment of the subject, with an interesting thesis on the development of tactics from isolated combat to linear fights to tactical defensive,” a period of intense trench digging where Lee showed what Scheibert considered his true brilliance. Ibid., 65.}
Both sides in the Civil War welcomed these guests, with the exception that the Union interposed strong objections to foreign visitors seeking to visit the Confederacy on “official” status. The Federal concern was that official accreditation would confer a subtle recognition upon the rebelling states. Thus, foreign officers who visited Southern armies typically slipped surreptitiously across the Potomac or otherwise arrived from Mexico or by running the blockade.

While official delegations were not infrequent, others arrived unofficially, either as soldiers of fortune, volunteer-immigrants (there were, for example, 200,000 Germans in the Union Army), or what might be called war-tourists. The latter, a not uncommon phenomenon of the time, were simply interested men, who, with or without accreditation, visited leaders and battlefields and eventually recorded their observations.

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6 This paper focuses on military observers, but journalists also had an important role in the contemporaneous views of Europeans toward the war, and subsequent historical understanding of a nation in civil war. No better example of this literature exists than English special correspondent Edward Dicey's *Six Months in the Federal States*, published in 1863. Likewise, William Howard Russell, already prominent for his coverage of the Crimean War, and special correspondent for *The Times*, wrote the Bull Run Letter, an especially famous – and influential – account of the Union debacle at First Manassas. (Miller, 173).
The most famous of the military observers were the British, some of whom took leave from posts in Canada to see the action for themselves.\(^7\) One of these officers was then-Lieutenant Colonel Garnet Wolseley, who later fought in Canada and much of Africa, and rose to Commander-in-Chief of the Forces of the British Army. By century’s end, “right as Sir Garnet” had entered the lexicon as a by-word for attention to detail, and Field-Marshal The Right Honourable Viscount Wolseley, K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.M.G., V.D., P.C., was even immortalized in \textit{The Pirates of Penzance} as Major-General Stanley, “the very model of a modern major general.”

Although never forgotten, Wolseley’s initial observations, first published as \textit{A Month’s Visit to Confederate Headquarters} in \textit{Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine} in 1863, were not the most prominently studied in either the nineteenth- or the twentieth-century. That honor arguably went to Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Fremantle, a Coldstream Guards officer whose \textit{Three Months in the Southern States} is the most frequently cited of such works in the literature.\(^8\) This may be a

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\(^7\) The British garrisons in Canada had been reinforced as a result of the \textit{Trent} crisis and its attendant, if ephemeral, threat of war with the United States. Wolseley was one of the many officers billeted to Canada as the \textit{Trent} situation played out.

\(^8\) Fremantle himself became a General and Governor-General of Malta, as well as being knighted, later in his career. Fremantle’s story underwent a resurgence of popularity in the United States following his portrayal in the motion picture \textit{Gettysburg}. There, he was depicted wearing his Coldstream Guards uniform, replete with bright red tunic; in fact, he wore civilian clothes for the entire journey. \textit{Gettysburg}, directed by Ronald Maxwell, TriStar Television, et al. (1993).
function of timing; although Fremantle spent slightly longer in the United States than Wolseley, he published a much more extensive commentary – an entire book, no less – while the war was still ensuing. Moreover, Fremantle’s wanderings took him to Gettysburg, a critical battle that took place after Wolseley had returned to active duty with the British Army. Indeed, his description of Lee after Pickett’s Charge was one of the original accounts of a defining moment of the Civil War:

I saw General Willcox (an officer who wears a short round jacket and a battered straw hat) come up to him, and explain; almost crying, the state of his brigade. General Lee immediately shook hands with him and said, cheerfully, “Never mind, General, all this has been my fault—it is I that have lost this fight, and you must help me out of it in the best way you can.” In this manner I saw General Lee encourage and reanimate his somewhat dispirited troops, and magnanimously take upon his own shoulders the whole weight of the repulse. It was impossible to look at him or to listen to him without feeling the strongest admiration, and I never saw any man fail him except the man in the ditch (275-76; emphasis original).

Fremantle also visited both sides in the conflict (he was in Manhattan during the 1863 Draft Riots); Wolseley only spent time with Southern troops, slipped quickly through the North, and wrote nothing particularly memorable about the days spent in transit. Regardless, because Wolseley later attained such senior rank, and was a key figure in the development of British military doctrine, his observations merit substantial further review. They present an extraordinary window into the mind of an ardently pro-
Southern Englishman whose respect for the Confederate leaders seems to have imprinted upon him (or confirmed) important lessons which manifested themselves again later in the century.

A quarter-century later, Wolseley wrote another series of articles on the Civil War and its leaders, confirming most of his opinions but modifying a few others; these are significant as they were authored near the peak of his fame, and ramify the importance the American rebellion played in his thinking. Like Wolseley’s initial observations, they are a fascinating insight into a leading officer’s politics, prejudices and theories.

Wolseley and Henderson

As Commander-in-Chief of the Forces, Wolseley’s personal connection with the American Civil War also had another, subtler effect on the future of the British Army, which carried well past his tenure in command. Among the many reforms he implemented in the late Victorian era, was a modernization and improvement of the officer training system at the Royal Military College Junior Division (—Sandhurst,” the school for initial officer training) and at the Senior Division or Staff College (the adjacent campus of —Camberley,” where mid-level officers were trained) (Bond, 110). Wolseley was instrumental in placing a young, scholarly captain, G.F.R. Henderson, as an instructor at Sandhurst, and later (1892-99), as the Commandant of the Staff College. Henderson quickly rose to Colonel, and while his tenure was short – he died at 47 in 1903 – his influence was substantial, and his Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War, is considered his masterpiece and a first-rate work of biography.

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9One was published as a review of Armistead Long’s Memoirs of Robert E. Lee: His Military and Personal History (Stoddart: New York) 1886; others were published in 1889, as a review of the Century Battles and Leaders series in North American Review.
The work reflects Henderson’s scholarship, but also possesses two unique characteristics that set it apart from all other Jackson works. First, he had access to Jackson’s papers; these had been jealously guarded by Jackson’s widow, Mary Anna Jackson, and had not previously been the subject of general study, save for her hagiographic memoirs. Second, he spoke at length with Mrs. Jackson and his interviews incorporate part of the personal biography.

Less remembered by historians is Wolseley’s ten-page introduction to Stonewall Jackson, in which he lauded Henderson’s “grasp of tactical and strategical principles [and] his knowledge of the methods which have controlled their application by the most famous soldiers, from Hannibal to Von Moltke” (viii). “But,” Wolseley advised, the application of strategical and tactical principles, and the example of nobles, are not the only or even the most valuable lessons of great wars. There are lessons which concern nations rather than individuals; and there are two to be learnt from the Secession War which are of peculiar value to both England and the United States, whose armies are comparatively small and raised by voluntary enlistment (ix-x).

The first lesson Wolseley derived from Henderson’s work was the importance of a large standing army or readily-available reserve (ix). A century later, the concept resonates with all but the most ardent pacifist. The second, however, provides an interesting insight into the mind of a Victorian Field Marshal:

The second lesson is that to hand over to civilians the administration and organisation of the army, whether in peace or in war, or to allow them to interfere in the selection of officers for command or promotion, is most injurious to efficiency; while, during war, to allow them, no matter how high their political capacity, to dictate to commanders in the field any line of conduct, after the army has once received its commission, is simply to ensure disaster (x).

Arguably, this principle, irrespective of how firmly rooted in the British psyche, died in the mud at Passchendaele. Moreover, Wolseley (and Henderson) may have drawn this
lesson from the American Civil War, but it is certainly to President Lincoln’s credit that he did not subscribe to it.

The Work of Jay Luvaas

Whether because of changing tastes, the onset of the Second World War, or academic indifference, the study of the Civil War and its effect on the Great War lay essentially dormant between Liddell Hart’s and Fuller’s 1930s scholarship and Jay Luvaas’s seminal *The Military Legacy of the Civil War: The European Inheritance*. This 1959 work is still recognized as the most thorough, far-reaching and scholarly treatment of the subject, and, while recent writers have questioned some of its conclusions, *Military Legacy* certainly reflects a depth of research and analysis of the very highest order.

The work opened with a brief historical overview, outlining the general experience of foreign observers in the Civil War. Not surprisingly, the bulk of the visits took place in the eastern theater of the war, and whatever lessons Europeans distilled from the Secession War, *Die Bürgerkrieg* or *Le Guerre D’secession*, they chiefly got in Virginia, Pennsylvania or Maryland. The sole exception seems to have been Charleston, whose fortifications were the subject of extensive study.

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10 See Preston; also, Luvaas himself published a few journal articles in the late 1950s that were incorporated into *The Military Inheritance*. Also, during World War II, Dr. Ella Lonn wrote two prominent books on foreigners in both armies, *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, and *Foreigners in the Union Army and Navy*. These works detailed the roles played by Schiebert and Von Borcke, among others, and summarized the principal visitors’ adventures, including those of Fremantle and Wolseley, but did not address the post-war study of them.

11 See Reid, 413-14.
Luvaas’s work detailed English, German (principally Prussian) and French observers, and the reports they submitted to their respective nations. Of the three, Luvaas focused the greatest attention in the British chapter; this is not surprising. Although the Germans were perhaps the most perceptive and thorough observers, the British were the most frequent. Moreover, to the extent the polyglot Luvaas had a true singular specialty, this was it. He devoted a chapter in this work to the work and legacy of G.F.R. Henderson, and later authored *The Education of an Army: British Military Thought, 1815-1940*. While Dr. Luvaas was certainly adept at German and French strategic philosophy (witness his books on both Frederick the Great and Napoleon), this first work signaled a career interest that would mark his military legacy.

The most thorough report from an English officer was likely that of Lieutenant Colonel Henry Fletcher, who traveled with the Army of the Potomac during the 1862 Peninsular campaign, and — later . . . visited both the Union and Confederate armies in the West” (16). Eventually, he wrote a three-volume history of the Civil War. Fletcher, like many observers, was keenly taken by the engineering background of the West Point graduates in the war, and his recommendations from a visit to the Military Academy were later inculcated in the creation of the Royal Military College of Canada (16).

As with virtually every European officer who observed (or later commented on) the Civil War, Fletcher perceived shortcomings in the use of cavalry. The notion of cavalrymen riding to their position, then fighting dismounted, was so literally foreign to the Europeans that it was nearly universally recognized as probative of the amateurishness of the Americans.
Luvaas discussed the other unofficial British observers, including the young Wolseley (whom he admired but wrote off as "not to be regarded as a profound student of the war" based on the derivative nature of his commentary) and the well-traveled and published Fremantle, but also explored the role of the official observers (51). While the reports were exhaustive, Dr. Luvaas stressed that it would be a mistake to assume that the Civil War materially influenced the subsequent development of fortifications in Great Britain" (44). This is chiefly because, while the reports were detailed, the observers saw little that they could actually recommend. Having learned all they needed to know by defeating Napoleon, conducting their own tests, and observing the contemporaneous Danish War, the first generation of English observers saw much but liked little. While the war would eventually have the greatest measurable effect on the British Army of any of the powers discussed, that would not be until century's end.

The British, using Sir Edward Bruce Hamley's 1866 The Operations of War, studied some of its lessons from the outset, although he perceived much of the war as barbarous and unprofessional. Interestingly, an early edition had so many misstatements about Sherman's Georgia campaign that Sherman himself forwarded numerous papers and copies of orders, which Hamley, no fan of the Union, included in later-edition revisions (Luvaas 101-03). Other first-generation scholars saw problems in American single-track rails and, inevitably, in the misuse of precious cavalry as mere mounted infantry.

British officers seemed at first quick to distance the untrained masses of American soldiers from their situation, only later coming to realize that, logistically, British Army Volunteer units could profit much from lessons of the Civil War. These included even
the Yeomanry or Volunteer Cavalry units, who could, *mirabile dictu*, properly serve a mounted infantry function (114). Such exceptions to the contrary, Dr. Luvaas again cautioned that, given the education available by studying the Prussians, the British extensively studied the Civil War through the nineteenth century, but allowed it to impart no “direct bearing upon official doctrine” (115). This would not change until the fin-de-siècle rise of G.F.R. Henderson.

The early Prussian histories are more interesting, Luvaas wrote, for their display of indifference to the war, than as actual histories of it. Much of their best work was the most technically-specific, focusing on fortifications, rifled cannon and siege operations, and rail operations. The *Feldeisenbahnabteilung* was created in May 1866 as a direct result of the Union’s success with a similar detachment. Save for that detail, however, prior to the Franco-Prussian War, the Civil War offered little of interest tactically, especially given what appeared a foolish use of firearms rather than cavalry charges for shock (123).

Post-unification Germany began a more comprehensive study of the war, mostly in journals such as the *Jahrbücher für die deutsche Armee und Marine* (128). Scheibert’s history was the standard factual predicate for most analysis, but, in the event, the Germans may have studied the war carefully, but gleaned little from it.

They found the war instructive in matters of materiel and technology; it even offered useful examples in coast defense and joint army-navy operations. But insofar as the tactics of the three arms was concerned, the Germans placed their trust in their own experiences (130).

Luvaas concluded his discussion of the Germans by paying tribute to two civilians, Polish banker Ivan Bloch (whose 1898 *Is War Now Impossible?* made only occasional references to the Civil War) and Karl Bleibtreu, who mocked German military tendencies
to downplay the “amateurish” volunteers of the American war.\textsuperscript{12} It was only a matter of time, Bleibtreu presciently noted in 1912, before large volunteer armies of the American model would fight European wars from fortified entrenchments, with cavalry yielding pride of place to firepower as the decisive killer on the battlefield (142).\textsuperscript{13} He did not need long to see his predictions reified on the Western Front.

The French study of the war focused on logistics, entrenchments (often as a negative inducement against an offensive strategy), and the inevitable debates about the role of cavalry on the modern battlefield. Creation of dual-role (mounted and dismounted) horse troop missions in 1904 did appear to have been Civil War-related, owing to a history written by Captain de Thomasson in 1901. \textit{The Military Inheritance} discounted most other study of the war by the French, who saw too much defensive struggle, and too much digging, in the American war.

Only one officer, Captain Louis Auger, seemed willing to praise the Americans for having entrenched and built field fortifications in a time of rapidly increased firepower. Luvaas called Auger’s 1895 \textit{La Guerre de Secession} one of the most remarkable books ever written about the Civil War—remarkable not only for its insight but because it was written at a time and place when such ideas were considered heresy”

\textsuperscript{12} De Bloch, Jean. (Long, R.C., trans.) \textit{The Future of War: in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations}. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1902. “Is war now impossible?” was the title of the sixth and final volume of Bloch’s work, but was also the title given a one-volume abridgment.

\textsuperscript{13} Bleibtreu, Karl. \textit{Weltbrand}. Berlin: C. Schwetsche u. Sohn, 1912. Bleibtreu wrote several novels in the popular war-to-come genre, or as fictional retellings of battles from the Franco-Prussian War.
Not surprisingly, Auger's book was neither well-received when it was issued nor widely disseminated.

After analyzing Henderson, Fuller and Liddell Hart, Dr. Luvaas arrived at his essential, if disappointing, finding; while railroad development in Europe patterned itself on the American military model, nothing else really taught the Old World anything that its military was willing to inculcate. “In every instance when the experience of the American armies conflicted with popular opinion at home or the lessons of more recent wars, the latter prevailed” (233).

To some extent, this conclusion is always true, whether the object lesson is Cannae, Lepanto or Stalingrad. Put simply, just as McClellan is still criticized for trying too hard to employ the strategems of wars fought fifty years earlier, so, too, would any B.E.F. general have been assailed if he consciously, overtly saw himself as the next Grant rather than the next Kitchener, Wellington or Roberts.

Luvaas followed The Military Inheritance with The Education of an Army: British Military Thought, 1815-1940. He was clear in his mission:

The purpose of this book is to determine when, if ever, and under what conditions the pen has been mightier than the sword, by investigating the nature and extent of the influence that various military writers—historians, theorists and journalists—have exerted upon British military theory, doctrine, and policy from 1815 to 1940 (viii).

The work was a series of eleven individual biographic chapters. Beyond Henderson, Fuller and Liddell Hart, Luvaas also added Major General Sir Patrick MacDougall to the list of British strategists whose work bore on Civil War study in the preparation of

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14 Auger, Louis. La Guerre de Secession. Paris: Charles-Lavauzelle, 1895. The work is in the public domain and easily available, but does not appear ever to have been translated into English.
British military theory and training. The primary British figure chronologically appearing after MacDougall (and before Sir John Maurice, Wolseley’s right-hand and biographer) was General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley. Although the author of the extremely influential treatise *The Operations of War Explained and Illustrated*, Hamley seems to have cared little for the military lessons of the Civil War, save for the eventual realization that the Union would eventually wield tremendous power (138). As noted earlier, Hamley’s *Operations of War* treatment of the Civil War was so slipshod that Sherman himself submitted numerous changes for a later edition.

MacDougall’s whereabouts during parts of the Civil War are not certain (he was presumably in Canada but wrote anonymously for a time). Nonetheless, Luvaas called his 1863 *Modern Warfare as Influenced by Modern Artillery* the first [work by a] European to incorporate lessons from the Civil into a military text” (109). Luvaas painted with too broad a brush; he may have been technically correct, but the work only tangentially addressed Luvaas’s subject. The work was not a Civil War analysis; rather, it took Napier’s *Peninsular Wars* as a starting point for analysis of all of military history, including cursory discussions of early campaigns of the American Civil War.16


16 Napier, William. *History of the War in the Peninsula*. Originally published in six volumes 1828-40. Napier was MacDougall’s father-in-law. Incidentally, MacDougall, Napier and Hamley served as mid-century Commandants of the Staff College, well before the period studied in this paper.
Post-Luvaas Study

Dr. Luvaas so thoroughly surveyed his subject that there has truly been little scholarship in the area since. While the social, economic and political influences of the Civil War on Britain have been a mainstay of American and British historians, its military influence has not. Brian Holden Reid, in one of the few articles on the subject, explained:

All historians of this subject owe an enormous debt to Jay Luvaas's superb book, *The Military Legacy of the Civil War: The European Inheritance* (1959). For more than forty-five years it has served as the unassailable authority, the first point of reference, and is likely to do so for many more. Luvaas always intended to add a successor volume on the lessons drawn by the United States Army from the largest, and certainly the most costly, conflict in which it has ever been engaged, but never did so. Luvaas is unusual among American scholars of this subject in being equally expert in British and European history as well as American history, and being conversant in the literature in French and German. Luvaas's mentor, Sir Basil Liddell Hart, readily acknowledged that “This is a very rare capacity, and combination—which has already made his contribution in the field of military history almost unique” (385).

Reid’s article challenges many of the long-held beliefs regarding the effect of the Civil War on British thinking. He is especially critical of Liddell Hart’s suggestion that the British were the only Europeans to focus on the “modern” aspects of the Civil War, but only after G.F.R. Henderson (406). Reid contends that other thinkers, especially on the political and economic sphere, learned much from the American experience. He cites Spenser Wilkinson as an example, for recognizing that the civilian government must comprehend the scope of the war if it is to be prosecuted effectively (408). Essentially, whether at Bull Run or Ladysmith, nations cannot simultaneously conceive of a limited action and fight a large one.
Likewise, Reid argues, the importance of unity of command, control of the sea, and of the future potential of amphibious warfare were not lost on nineteenth-century analysts, including Viscount Wolseley (407-08). As with most studies at the time, this reflects a focus on the organizational aspects of the war rather than its tactics. Reid notes that in later nineteenth-century American discussions of the war, that emphasis on organizational study derived from two factors. First, American officers saw the likelihood that near-future combat would be with Plains Indian tribes rather than foreign armies. Patterning cavalry patrols on the classic maneuver of corps would yield little against native horse soldiers. Second, like all organizations, there was an institutional resistance to change (407). Whether disdain for the amateurishness of the American forces or a similar resistance obtained in European armies is not clear.

Regardless, the first —modern war” was not really recognized as such until later, European wars showed how much the Civil War could have taught. Reid concludes with admirable clarity:

If historians stop judging the lessons of 1861-65 exclusively by comparison with the challenges posed by the First World War, or indeed the Second, then the British writers pondering the matter before 1914 reveal themselves as both perceptive and adventurous, and undeserving of the opprobrium that has been heaped upon them (414).

Professor Hugh Dubrulle took a similarly broad look at the question in 2003, and arrived at a less charitable conclusion. Surveying much of the same literature, he arrives at a more critical understanding of the British and their army.

The British had not ignored the Civil War. Indeed, they believed not only that the war had many lessons to teach, but also that they had made the proper choices based on these lessons. In light of Britain's experience during World War I, their preference for limited wars fought by an aristocratic, professional, and disciplined army seems inadequate. Although many forces led British elites to embrace these semiofficial
conclusions, a decided political conservatism played perhaps the most important role in limiting the American Civil War's potentially revolutionary impact on both British military thought and policy (179).

Dubrulle is a social and political historian, as much as a military one, and he focuses his thesis by questioning Luvaas's methodology. Rather than examining Radical opinions and commentary about the Civil War, Luvaas relied solely on “official” sources, and “on the minutiae of tactics and technology[;] . . . these sources reveal little about broader issues, and they certainly do not capture the full range of thinking in Britain about the conflict's military dimension” (154).

Finally, and in a study tacking most closely to the analysis of this thesis, a 1997 University of Richmond master's thesis examined the methodology of “tactical instruction” at Sandhurst, principally through case-analysis of the teaching of the 1762 and 1866 Battles of Burkersdorf, and the effect of that instruction on British policy at the outset of World War I. Its author, David J. Prestia (who has since received his doctorate), analyzes Henderson’s use of Civil War battles in his lectures, but his treatment of the war is otherwise limited.

This thesis looks at British study of the Civil War from a different, and quite specific, perspective. In general, the education of the senior commanders of the B.E.F. has been well-researched and studied. Field-Marshal French did not attend Camberley, but Field-Marshal Haig did, and his biographers, like those of his peers, have had the luxury of personal papers that include several he wrote while in graduate school. Much less scholarship addresses officer education in the early twentieth century. While an exhaustive study of their entire course of study is not possible for a study of this scope,
the effect that Wolseley, Henderson and the American Civil War imparted on their curriculum certainly is.
CHAPTER 2

“A WAR THAT WILL AFFORD AMERICAN HISTORIANS SOMETHING TO WRITE ABOUT”: VISCOUNT WOLSELEY AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Figure 4. Field-Marshal Viscount Garnet Wolseley.

Viscount Garnet Wolseley was as eminent a Victorian as anyone who served Britain in the late nineteenth century, yet, save for scholars and specialists – and those familiar with the Wolseley plumbing supply and automobile companies founded by his brother – his name lacks the familiarity of his colleagues Roberts, Gordon and Kitchener.¹ He is not unique in that respect; the fickleness of history picks favorites for reasons sometimes neither predictable nor discernible by contemporaries. While this thesis cannot restore to common parlance the phrase “right as Sir Garnet,” it can

¹ As Joseph Lehmann, one of his principal biographers, wrote, “Wolseley. It is strange how quickly that name has passed into oblivion – or merged in confusion with that of a sixteenth-century cardinal” (9).
certainly review the career and Civil War writings of an enormously successful, influential and fascinating general.

Early Life and Career

Wolseley was born in Ireland in 1833, the son of a major with the mixed fortune of having served in the West Indies while Wellington fought the French in the Peninsular War, and of the daughter of a Dublin Protestant. He grew up in relative poverty; although descended from landed gentry (and from a general who rode with William III at the Boyne), his family had little, and even less when his father died in Garnet’s youth. He had some formal education, but the cost of tuition required that his mother principally undertake what today would be called home-schooling (Kochanski 1-3). Ireland, in the midst of the blight, offered little professional hope for Wolseley, who wanted to enter the clergy but lacked the necessary finances. Instead, he looked to the army, which also required a substantial initial investment, but which made limited exception for children of those who had served the country with distinction. At fourteen, Wolseley applied to the Commander in Chief, the Duke of Wellington, another soldier born in Ireland. The Iron Duke “promised to consider him for a commission when he reached the minimum age of sixteen” (3). Wolseley seems to have had as little love for Ireland (or at least Irish Catholics) as Wellington, who famously, if apocryphally, observed that “to be born in a stable does not make a man a horse” (Corrigan 3).

A few rounds of his mother’s written pleadings to Wellington’s secretary, Lord Raglan, eventually secured him a commission as an ensign in the 12th Foot. Wolseley was both hungry for action, and ravenously ambitious. As he later wrote, “There is only
one way for a young man to get on in the army. He must try to get killed in every way he can” (Kochanski 4). Thus, he almost immediately sought transfer to the 80th Foot, an Indian-based regiment then actively engaged in Burma. His service there showed flashes of bravery, including a Mention in Despatches, but he was badly injured in a raid on the stronghold of the “robber baron Myat-noon,” and nearly died in convalescence (8).

An eventual return to Dublin incident to transfer to the 90th Foot was uneventful; he was thus overjoyed, when his health having returned, his unit was called to the Crimea. He arrived in November 1854 while Sebastapol was still under siege, and though a young officer, formed opinions (principally negative) about most of the senior officers he observed. One exception was Colonel Charles Gordon, with whom he formed a friendship that would last until Khartoum. Again badly injured (in a wound that permanently blinded his right eye), and again mentioned in Despatches, Wolseley was assigned a staff position and remained in the Crimean Peninsula until the war ended in 1856 (15).

Less than a year later, he and the 90th Foot were supposed to go back into combat, this time in the Second China War, but their transport ship encountered mechanical problems and then foundered near the Indian coast. For an officer looking for action, the fortuitousness of arriving in India (and as the only officer in his unit with prior service there) during the outbreak of the Sepoy Mutiny must have seemed heaven sent. Wolseley’s troops were billeted for a time in the midst of the bodies from the
Cawnpore massacre, and he wrote his brother that his “sword is thirsty for the blood of these cursed women slayers” (17).¹

In the event, Wolseley made the best of this, his second tour in India. By the age of twenty-six, he was the youngest (brevet) Lieutenant Colonel in the British Army, and his time as a regimental officer had ended. He had already received six decorations and was rising to relative prominence given his age, abilities and rise through the ranks. (Lehmann 77). What he thought would be a pleasant few years in India was interrupted by yet another military expedition, this time, again in China. As the British saw it, the Chinese were becoming recalcitrant in the granting of comprehensive peace (read: economic concessions), and negotiations were moving inadequately slowly. As he left for China in February 1860, Wolseley hoped the talk would end, and war would resume.

Professor Lehmann explained that in the wake of English military losses the year prior, Britain’s prestige was at stake. No Englishman’s life would be safe in China, [Wolseley] argued, “until we make it universally felt, that as a nation we are so much their superiors that we can always punish an injury inflicted upon the most lowly of our people.” If war should be averted, it would be a great national misfortune, “for we are ready and prepared to carry it on which we seldom are at such a distant part of the world as the neighbourhood of Peking” (84).

¹ The Cawnpore (modern Kanpur) massacre was an important event in the Sepoy Mutiny. It involved the killing and dismemberment of about 120 soldiers and civilians who had negotiated a surrender and withdrawal from the garrison there. The actual massacre took place at the Bibhigar Well, by which the event is also known.

William Howard Russell, reporting on the Mutiny as he had earlier done the Crimea and would later cover the Civil War, “witnessed a detachment of Sikhs roast a sepoy alive over a small pyre while English officers looked on without protest” (Lehmann, 73). A common form of execution for the rebels, although formally banned by Sir Colin Campbell, was blowing the prisoner’s head off from the mouth of a cannon, “usually a 9-pounder loaded with three pounds of powder,” in a manner formerly used by the Mogul emperors and continued by the British (52-53).
Wolseley again distinguished himself in the taking of the Taku forts, and was under consideration for command of the native 3,500-man Ever Victorious Army, which instead went to his friend, who would thence always be known as “Chinese” Gordon (Farwell 202).

After his return to England, Wolseley was granted eighteen months leave during which he studied art, fell in love with Louisa Erskine, whom he would later marry, and hunted foxes in Ireland. As with every stage of Wolseley’s career, duty soon called. The Union boarding of the Royal Mail Steamer Trent (and seizure of Confederate envoys Mason and Slidell) precipitated a brief, but fervent international incident between the United States and the United Kingdom. Although both sides threatened war, neither seems genuinely have been interested in fighting the other (Myers 67).

While the Trent affair was afoot, the British sent additional troops to Canada, including Lieutenant Colonel Wolseley, but by the time his ship arrived at Nova Scotia, the matter was settled. President Lincoln apologized and the Confederate diplomats were released. Once again, Wolseley was now posted in a pleasant, relatively peaceful location. This time, rather than studying the local women as vigorously as he had in India (and as many of his colleagues were now doing in Canada), he developed a strong interest in the war that had broken out in the United States (Farwell 203-04).

Wolseley’s Observations of the American Civil War

Garnet Wolseley secured two months leave to visit the war. As he explained at the outset of his report published three months later, he had closely followed the first year and a half of the war from reports and newspapers. This left him quite unsatisfied; not
trusting American journalism, he was “very anxious . . . to get to the South and judge for [him]self as to the condition of its people, the strength of its government, and the organisation of its armies” (Wolseley 5). Like much in his career, Wolseley had chosen a propitious time to visit; he would leave for the South through New York (notwithstanding the “barbarity of conduct” which imprisonment by the Yankees would entail (5)), and spend mid-September through mid-October 1862 in Virginia. The trip coincided with the Battle of Antietam, which he did not observe, but which was fresh on the minds of the officers with whom he soon met.

Like many contemporaries, he bemoaned the travails of mid-century American travel. These included bad roads, shared inn beds, and the decidedly American distaste for travelers carrying luggage beyond a comb and a few dollars. Nonetheless, Wolseley explained that while the trip into “Dixey” was arduous, the more difficult the journey, the stronger his “desire to obtain some personal acquaintance with the Secession leaders and generals” (7). His description of conditions in the border states is telling; the iron fist of the “Lincoln Ministry” distressed him greatly, but he was much less troubled by slavery (8). Slaveholders joined the United States with the guarantee of property protection, he argued, but

No cavalry patrol ever passes through a village or plantation in that part of the country without carrying away some negro, for whom perhaps a large price has been paid. I am not now going into the vexed question of slavery; no man abhors the institution more than I do; but I love justice, according to the established laws, more dearly than any wild theory regarding abolition: of which all that we know is that, as carried out in our West Indian possessions, it has been a failure in every respect. (8)
The trip continued with a surreptitious row across the Potomac, and a troop-train ride to Richmond. The train was full of battle-wounded soldiers and their attending family members. The condition of these “pale, haggard” men, many amputees, deeply affected him. Wolseley, already a veteran of wars in India, China and the Crimea, wrote that “though well inured to the sight of human suffering, I never remember feeling so moved by it as during that short railway journey” (9).

Wolseley liked Richmond (and spoke approvingly of the Confederacy’s ban on spirits), but insisted that the not-so-distant future would see a permanent capital moved elsewhere. He surmised that such a capital likely would be in the middle of the new country (not too close to the North) and suggests that the “high lands of Georgia” should serve that purpose well (19). One reason for a new capital was that just as the United States government required Maryland and Virginia to cede sovereignty over the District of Columbia, the Confederacy would expropriate jurisdiction for its capital from its domicile state. Wolseley aptly predicted that “The people of Virginia would never consent to relinquish Richmond upon such terms” (18). Those familiar with Richmond and its place in the hearts of Virginians would have difficulty even today arguing with this sentiment.

From this point on, Wolseley’s report introduced an extraordinarily well-placed cast of characters. He visited Secretary of War George Randolph, who provided him

2 “Prohibition in the Confederacy was the enforced product of war conservation” (Robinson 50). Rather than a single legislative action, it was a result of local and state enactments. Although Wolseley viewed the legislated lack of alcohol as a temperate act of good behavior, Professor Robinson was quick to point out that “[i]t was never a high moral issue” (Ibid.).
with passes to visit where and whom he wished. Wolseley was struck by the large pile of captured Union regimental colors in Randolph’s offices. Recalling how dearly these flags are guarded by properly trained units, at first he felt almost sad for the Yankee troops.

But my next impulse was to smile at the utter folly they exhibited in rushing into a great war of conquest, with the avowed object of bringing into subjection those every way superior to themselves, in all qualities essential to good generalship and the formation of a soldierlike character. (19)

Again, Wolseley was not a reporter wont to keep his personal feelings close to his breast. After a digression to discuss slavery in the South (he insisted that Southerners always referred to them as “servants” and only the white men of lower classes deigned to have relations with their “servants”), he visited some of the nearby battlefields of the recent Peninsula Campaign. Here, he argued (or repeated the arguments of Southern commanders) that “M’Clellan’s” army was saved by the “non-execution of General Lee’s orders” and by the presence of Union gunboats at Harrison’s Landing (21).

In this portion of his letter, Wolseley made two comments that resonate through the decades. First, he suggested that the American fear of artillery owed much to the type of units raised in both armies, “who [unlike older regular armies] possess no traditions of how their regiments in such and such former wars stormed batteries and performed other feats in action (21). Second, and relatedly, he believe[d] that artillery “frightens more than it kills,” a point he said was even more true for gunboats, firing as they did at distant land targets (22).

The notion that well-trained, high-spirited troops, steeped in the pride of their regiments, can prevail when charging straight into advanced weaponry aimed squarely at
them, was a lesson that Wolseley’s generation passed on to the generals of the First World War. Indeed, Travers, in his landmark study *The Killing Ground*, described the late nineteenth-century British Army as placing “overwhelming emphasis on the influence of individual personalities, and on social and regimental hierarchies” (6).

Given that Wolseley was the officer in charge of doctrine development and training in that period (as Quartermaster General, Adjutant General and then Commander in Chief), his sentiments as a younger officer seem to exemplify the antecedent roots of that tradition.

While traveling from Richmond to meet with senior Confederate generals, Wolseley chided the American military tradition, which glorified very small battles, chiefly minor-sized Revolutionary War engagements. “If this war has no other result, therefore, it will at least afford American historians something to write about, and save them from the puerility of detailing skirmishes in the backwoods or on the highlands of Mexico, as if they were so many battles of Waterloo or Solferino” (25). As with his comments on the lack of a longstanding military tradition, this comment provides a glimpse into a theme noted earlier in the literature review of the twentieth-century; the limited attention paid by Europeans to the lessons of “modern” large-unit warfare from the Civil War. It is, of course, easy to ignore the actions of soldiers whose bravery and bearing one may admire, but whose intellect and ability one disdains.

Wolseley left Richmond and headed toward the Shenandoah Valley. He was amused by the enormous quantity of captured U.S. goods that he saw used by the soldiers, describing several marching units, command posts and cavalry squadrons whose
equipment and provisions all bore the “US” mark (29). He took this as another sign of Union inferiority. Wolseley did not conjecture whether the equipment was actually “captured” or simply seized from posts in the Confederate states.

Finally, he reached Winchester, headquarters of the Army of Northern Virginia, where he met Robert E. Lee. Wolseley was effusive in his physical description, only a portion of which noted that

his whole face is kindly and benevolent in the highest degree. In manner, though sufficiently conversible, he is slightly reserved; but he is a person that wherever seen, whether in a castle or a hovel, alone or in a crowd, must at once attract attention as being as splendid specimen of an English gentleman, with one of the most rarely handsome faces I ever saw. (31)

Lee spoke quite freely about the recent battle of Antietam, “assur[ing] us that at no time during that day’s fight had he more than thirty-five thousand men engaged.” Wolseley needed hear nothing further, for one had only to “be in [Lee’s] society for a very brief period to be convinced that whatever he says may be implicitly relied upon” (31). Based on his discussion with Lee and his generals, Wolseley wrote that “when the results of the expedition into Maryland are calmly reviewed, they will be found to have been highly favourable for the Southern side” (33).

Wolseley’s observation reflects the narrow perspective that may well have obtained just days after the battle. From a tactical standpoint, he was tenably correct; the South fought a larger Union army to a standstill and successfully withdrew to fight another day. But strategically, the value of Antietam, in precipitating the Emancipation Proclamation, in putting paid to the notion of European recognition of the Confederacy, and in leading to the second and final cashiering of McClellan, lay squarely with the
North. That neither Wolseley nor the Southerners whom he was visiting recognized this
dichotomy is not an indictment of their savvy (they were soldiers, not soothsayers), but it
does suggest why the following year’s repeat invasion of the North by Lee’s army, which
ended at Gettysburg, might have seemed a logical step to take.

While Wolseley never met George McClellan, this did not prevent his describing
him as the sort of “idol . . . indispensable” to the Union army. He derided the then-Union
commander as “a Napoleon without glory, and a Fabius without success,” but a man so
beloved by his men that “no amount of failure or defeat has as yet shaken their
confidence in him” (32). This description contrasts sharply with yet another passage
describing the “marked respect” shown Lee at his headquarters; “whilst all honour him
and place implicit faith in his courage and ability, those with whom he is most intimate
feel for him the affection of sons to a father” (34).

Regardless of the “injur[ies] heaped upon” Lee by the North (destroying his
homes, turning Arlington into a cemetery and even stealing and publicly displaying his
prized George Washington relics), Wolseley wrote that “when speaking of the Yankees,
he neither evinced any bitterness of feeling, nor gave utterance to a single violent
expression, but alluded to many of his former friends and companions amongst them in
the kindest terms” (35).

At this point, Wolseley took leave of Lee, whom he later called “the greatest man
[he] ever conversed with,”3 and headed to Bunker’s Hill, Virginia.4 Here, he “spent a

4Actually, Bunker Hill, now part of Martinsburg, West Virginia.
“most pleasant hour” with the surprisingly amiable Stonewall Jackson, whom he had expected to be “silent and almost morose” (35). He enjoyed his conversation with Jackson, and found a grin lurking behind almost everything he said. Wolseley noted that Jackson’s men revered him as Lee’s men did their general, but in a markedly different way. Lee, he suggested, was admired as Wellington was, inspiring a fixed confidence and faith in all that he does. “But Jackson, like Napoleon, is idolized with that intense fervor which, consisting of mingled personal attachment and devoted loyalty, causes them to meet death for his sake and bless him when dying” (36).

Unfortunately, from an historian’s point of view, Wolseley noted little else about his interview with the “world-wide celebrity” Jackson (35). As an experienced combat veteran, few correspondents could better have elicited the General’s opinions about the conduct of war in general and the Shenandoah Campaign in particular. Of course, it is equally possible that Jackson steered the conversation away from such matters, but Wolseley provided his reader little real insight into General Jackson, other than noting keen, grayish-blue eyes and a strong belief in God.

The remainder of Wolseley’s report focused more on what he perceived as the qualitative advantages of the Confederacy over the Union. The letter virtually drips with loathing toward the North, and portrayed a South that cannot seriously be expected to lose the war. He noted that even the under-equipped Southern soldiers march and fight with a bounce in their step and a contentedness in their condition, and asked,

Will any one who understands what it is that makes and unmakes armies, for a moment believe that such men are to be beaten by mobs of Irish and German
mercenaries, hired at $15 a-month to fight in a cause they know little and care less about?” (38).

Wolseley described Southern troops on parade, noting their Van Dyke beards and long hair, which he (perhaps provincially) ascribed to an overt attempt to imitate the cavaliers of the English Civil War. He also proclaimed that “each man had that unmistakable look of conscious strength and manly self-reliance, which those who are accustomed to review troops like to see” (39-40).

According to Wolseley, many Southerners now believed the Revolution of 1776 was a mistake and that the acts complained of in the Declaration of Independence were a “mere trifling” compared with the indignities imposed by the North (40). He discounted an argument heard in England the year earlier during the Trent Affair, suggesting that the North was hoping to draw England into a war because the South would drop its rebellion and join the Union in defense of America. Rather, he contended, “many generations must pass ere [the South] would be willing to fight side by side with the men of New England in any cause whatever” (41). Again, Wolseley’s perspective, as an observer among the troops, is evident; the antipathy of the war cooled sufficiently that Americans were jointly fighting Indians, Spaniards, Filipinos and Germans far sooner than the span of “many generations.”

Although the legendary exhortation of Major General Joe Wheeler to the troops at San Juan Hill, to “go get those damn Yankees” suggests Wolseley was not completely off. A contemporary report had him saying, “I see them—they are running away, the damn Yankees—no, no, I mean the Spaniards—are running away!”, a week earlier, just after the battle of Las Guasimas (MacQueen 19).
Wolseley then expressly made his case for diplomatic recognition of the Confederacy by England. Such a position would have resonated with *Blackwood’s* readers, and with the ardently pro-Southern John and William Blackwood themselves (Cooper 627). Wolseley argued that Britain’s interests were best served by the presence of more than one great republic on the American continent and archly contended “that if by any accident [the United States] should succeed in their war of subjugation, their insolence and arrogance would be more intolerable than ever” (41-42).

He accepted the Southern description of the future Confederacy as one much like that created by “Washington, Jefferson and Co.,” but with a right of secession guaranteed each state (43). Such a right is unlikely to be exercised, he maintained, and repeated the notion well-accepted among the South that had the Union let South Carolina secede, it would have quickly re-entered (43). Wolseley also predicted a future in which the Confederacy would itself face further division between more northerly states where manufacturing would end the institution of slavery, and those in the less temperate climates, which would never develop a market for “white labor” and would thus continue to enslave blacks (45). Unstated in such an opinion was an obvious advantage inuring to England by further division among the American states.

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6 Wolseley raised an interesting, if arcane, point in this discussion; whether Confederate states could have seceded from the Confederacy? The right was not enumerated in the Confederate Constitution, just as it was not in the United States Constitution. Presumably, secession was one of the powers reserved to the states by Article VI, section 6 (“The powers not delegated to the Confederate States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States, respectively, or to the people thereof.”), which is substantially identical to the Tenth Amendment.
A quick description of cavalry was tossed in (not surprisingly, the Southerners rode well, while the Union horsemen could barely sit on their mounts (44-45)); additional slights were directed at Union generals McClellan, Banks and Pope, and then Wolseley turned once again directly to his insistent refrain that his nation’s government should recognize the Confederacy. “To have its independence acknowledged, and to allow the border States to express their own wishes freely as to the side they wish to adhere to, is all the South demands” (47). Against this sentiment, the Northerners “fully intend to continue this fratricidal struggle, during which not only millions of money have been already expended, but thousands of valuable lives lost” (48). The war, he maintained, would never end without foreign intervention and mediation, and he closed by calling for Parliament to 

put[] an end to the most inhuman struggle that ever disgraced a great nation, such as the Republic of the United States once was, though now it is merely the military despotism of a portion of the States striving under the dictatorship of an insignificant lawyer to crush out the freedom of the rest. (48).

Devotees of President Lincoln will be pleased to note that later in life, Wolseley had better things to say about the “insignificant lawyer” and his leadership.

The Fenians and the Red River Expedition

Wolseley returned to Canada, where, as only he seems able to have done, he soon found more opportunities for action. His first, in 1866, was defense against the Fenian Raids. These were attacks, of sorts, by 800 Irish Americans against Niagara, with the intent of pressuring the English to end their rule of Ireland. The Niagara raid ended quickly with no real fighting on the Canadian side of Lake Ontario. (George Meade quashed the revolt on the American side of the lake.) While Wolseley saw no action
against the Fenians, he organized formal drill and training, culminating in his publication in 1869 of *The Soldier’s Pocket-Book of Field Service*. This small volume brought him great acclaim within the Army, but also great derision among those who felt it too modern, and antithetical to traditional ways. The *Pocket-Book* made occasional reference to the American Civil War, including this discussion of the value of good staff officers:

> The best example of how helpless an army must be without an efficient staff is that afforded by the army organized at Washington by M’Clellan, and, in a lesser degree, by his successors. Hundreds of thousands of men were enrolled, splendidly equipped, abundantly fed, provided with all sorts of artillery and engineer material of the most approved patterns and upon the most lavish scale; yet, as a distinguished officer said, it was a huge giant lying prostrate on the ground, who, through powerful in outward appearance, was destitute of bones and muscle, and consequently helpless for action. The bone and muscle required was a good staff to put it properly in motion. In the Southern Army, affairs were never so badly conducted as at the North, which, in a great measure, is to be accounted for by the fact of its having received into its ranks the large proportion of regular officers who had been educated at West Point. (61-62)

Wolseley again found himself in the right place at the right time, as he was soon given command of the Red River Expedition. The 1,200-man detail was ordered to quell the Riel Revolt in Western Canada. Its less overt mission was to protect against the possibility of American attempts to lay claim to the area, adjacent to its recently-acquired

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7 Wolseley’s supposition is not entirely sound; roughly 48% of West Point graduates from slave states (including those that did not secede) either stayed loyal to the Union or stayed out of the war. Even in Confederate states, about 34% did not join the southern army, with about 20% joining, or remaining in, the Union Army (Hsieh 92). Weighing that number against the total number of West Point graduates, including the large number from nonslave states, suggests that the Confederate Army did not have an imbalanced percentage of USMA-trained officers relative to the Union. Perhaps he was confused by the percentage of Virginia Military Institute graduates who served in the Confederate Army; of approximately 1,800 who served in the war, only 19 were in the federal army.
Alaska. Louis Riel was a leader of the Métis, a group still recognized as First Nation Canadians of mixed native and European ancestry (Farwell, 203-06).

The Expedition was Wolseley’s first independent command, and Britain’s last North American military expedition. Among his troops, which included infantry and artillery, was the young Lieutenant Redvers Buller, who would later himself become as famous for his failures in Africa as Wolseley would his success (Lehman, 136-37). Accounts of the 600-mile march across Canada to quell the Rebellion have an *Anabasis* air to them, full of adventures and intrigues, but always a move west to contact.⁸ Wolseley famously calculated the necessary time of march within hours (forty days), gaining further acclaim for his technical skill. Against all that, however, the actual conclusion of the Expedition was a bit anticlimactic. On approach of Wolseley’s column, the Métis fled.⁹

The authority of Her Majesty had been restored in the land of the Red River in a bloodless campaign. No shot had been fired from the beginning to end. Many soldiers were left with a sense of frustration. Having endured so much they had no opportunity to avenge themselves on the rebels. Buller remarked bitterly that he was “disgusted at having come so far to hear the band play ‘God Save the Queen.’” (153)

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⁸ Suffice it to say that the principal account also has a very pro-Wolseley tone. The article, “Narrative of the Red River Expedition: by an Officer of the Expedition,” appeared in two parts in *Blackwood’s* (Dec. 1870-Feb. 1871). Garnet Wolseley was the “Officer,” but was referred to in the Narrative as “Colonel Wolseley.”

⁹ Riel sought refuge in the United States and was, for a time, involved in politics chiefly in Montana. He also held a seat in the Canadian Parliament, but his participation in a later rebellion led to his trial and execution in 1885. He is considered one of the founders of the Province of Manitoba, where Louis Riel Day is celebrated annually.
Needless to say, Her Majesty would soon afford both Wolseley and Buller ample opportunities to kill plenty of native warriors.

Once more, Wolseley’s return to England came at a fortuitous time as Secretary of State for War Lord Cardwell was effecting post-Franco-Prussian War military reforms. Cardwell’s private secretary recommended his old India tent mate Wolseley as Assistant Adjutant-General, Discipline Branch, a senior training and doctrine position. Cardwell’s principal reform, for which Wolseley was a leading advocate in testimony before Parliament, was the abolition of the commission purchase system. Having secured that, Wolseley worked actively on Cardwell’s other great change, the reorganization of the regiments on a more logical and practicable basis. Wolseley’s reward for this work would be the source of his single greatest triumph; command of the 1873-74 expedition against the Ashantis.

The Ashanti War

Although a search for Ashanti will garner 8,700,000 Google hits, the African warriors of the nineteenth century were as famous in their day as the singer-model-producer is today. A notoriously blood-thirsty West African warrior tribe, the Ashantis threatened British colonial tribal areas in the Gold Coast region, which Gladstone directed to be protected by an armed force. Wolseley was by now a brigadier, and began to surround himself with mid-level officers who would one day form the core of his Ring. Accompanied by them, and by war correspondents including Henry Stanley, he marched

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10 Commission purchase required officers to purchase both their initial commission and subsequent promotions (from other officers). While there were going rates for each rank, great premiums attached to better units or senior positions, and the system was seen as something of a pension system for retiring officers (Spiers 188-89).
a mixed force of British, West Indian and native troops and bearers about two hundred miles inland. There, his rifles and cannons soundly defeated a musket-armed host of 5,000 under King Kofi at Amoafu and Kumasi. Wolseley had finally commanded a large formation in actual combat, and had decisively prevailed.

His return to England is the stuff of legend. He was promoted to Major-General – the “very model of a modern major general,” as he was kindly caricatured just a few years later – honored and knighted by Queen Victoria in a formal review ceremony at Windsor, given the unanimous thanks of both Houses of Parliament, and awarded £25,000. Sir Garnet, the poor boy from Dublin, declined a baronetcy, noting that the same title had been bestowed on the gardener to the Duke of Devonshire (Kochanski 72-73).

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11 In an 1897 interview, George Grossmith, the leading Gilbert & Sullivan actor who first portrayed Major-General Stanley, indicated that “His Lordship was so interested in the likeness that he wrote asking me to exchange photographs with him” Hyde, 275.

12 Kochanski also notes the unfortunate loss in a fire at the Pantechnicon warehouse, of all of Wolseley’s papers to that time. Whether this explains the strong similarity between her work and that of Lehmann 35 years earlier is an open question.
Natal

Wolseley returned to the War Office for a time, where he focused on strengthening the Volunteer forces and formalizing both a pension system and an increase in the number and quality of the officers for future wars. By 1875, however, he was released to the Colonial Office and made Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, South Africa. Secretary of State Lord Carnarvon gave him the mission of convincing the Natals to abandon the privileges secured in an 1856 agreement, with an eye toward confederation. Sir Garnet, through a legislative council, concessions to the Natals, and judicious recommendations that intransigent civil servants take extended leave, succeeded in this mission. A less creditable aspect of his tour in Natal was Wolseley’s passing along Native Affairs Secretary Theophilus Shepstone’s estimate that the 30,000 local Zulus under Cetshwayo could be successfully challenged by a force of a thousand British with
modern arms.\textsuperscript{13} This report to Carnarvon would have a disastrous influence on the Zulu War by decade’s end (80-82).

The Zulu War

After brief service in England, Wolseley served as the first High Commissioner of Cyprus after Turkey ceded it to Britain at the close of the Eastern Crisis in 1878.\textsuperscript{14} Then, the great Zulu battles of Isandhlwana (Cetshwayo) and Rorke’s Drift (Dabulamanzi) were fought on January 22, 1879. For England, only one man was appropriate to replace Lord Chelmsford as commander of the British troops. \textit{Punch} evidently agreed:

\begin{quote}
When Wolseley’s mentioned, Wellesley’s brought to mind;  
Two men, two names, of answerable kind:  
Call to the front, like Wellesley, good at need,  
Go, Wolseley, and like Wellesley, greatly speed.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

As with Canada, Sir Garnet arrived with troops in time to find that Chelmsford had already secured the frontier. While this left the actual capture of Cetshwayo to Wolseley, it was likely small recompense. Further punitive, pacification actions eliminated the Zulu threat in South Africa, but Wolseley returned to England to find that Lord Roberts had gotten the job Sir Garnet prized, Commander in Chief in India. The professional rivalry famously carried out through their respective “rings” had already been simmering by this

\textsuperscript{13} Cetshwayo and his half-brother Dabulamanzi were nephews of the more famous Zulu tribal leader Shaka.

\textsuperscript{14} The Crisis involved threats of a renewed Crimean War alliance of Turkey and Britain against Russia, after war broke out between Russia and Turkey in 1877. The Crisis ended with the July 1878 Congress of Berlin.

\textsuperscript{15} Kochanski, 97 (citing Lehmann, 245).
point. Wolseley’s appointment as Quartermaster-General did nothing to assuage his disappointment.

Figure 6. Cetshwayo.

Quartermaster-General and Peerage

Soon after acceptance of that post, Britain fought two, simultaneous colonial wars with decidedly unsatisfactory results. In South Africa, the Boers (whom Wolseley had tried to bring within the confederation while there), were given greater self-government rights; in Afghanistan, the British withdrew from the Kandahar region, as untenable. Wolseley’s attempts to reform the service were facing stiff resistance, especially from the Commander of Chief, the Duke of Cambridge, who considered Wolseley insubordinate in the manner that he corresponded about reform with the Royal Family and the press. Nonetheless, Wolseley had powerful allies, including Gladstone, who unsuccessfully recommended him for a peerage in 1881.
After Quartermaster-General, Wolseley became Adjutant-General, an extremely important position in an era in which the job included principal communication between the Royal Family and the army. Since Commander-in-Chief Cambridge (the Queen’s cousin) already considered Wolseley a rival, this was a highly contentious government appointment. Wolseley held this position from 1882 to 1890, and it was then that he achieved his greatest fame. The first major issue he faced was the Channel Tunnel controversy; Wolseley successfully challenged attempts to threaten what he considered England’s greatest protection. Other debates included the tendentious arguments of the Colour Committee (should the troops change from red to khaki [Wolseley] or stay the way they always had [Cambridge]? (Kochanski 129-30).16

In 1882, the Egyptians, nominally owing fealty to the Ottomans, but “protected” by the British, had the temerity to seek independence from both suzerains. The

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16 Gray was also in the running, as there was a shortage of khaki dyes. Victoria weighed in that she considered “the Kharkee hideous and hopes she may never see it in England” (Kochanski 130).
Victorians were not amused; Gladstone appointed his trusted commander Wolseley as head of the expedition to put down the Egyptian rebellion. Landing at Port Said (instead of the Nile Delta), the British quickly and bloodlessly secured the Suez Canal, and then marched west against Tel-el-Mahuta, where, Farwell writes, “more British soldiers were felled by the sun than by Egyptian bullets” (225). While the Egyptians were making a poor showing, it was not the fault of inferior rifles; in this campaign, British Martini-Henrys met Egyptian Remingtons in a decidedly even fight.

Further west was Tel-el-Kebir, guarding the approaches to Cairo. It was a logical and necessary target, against which Wolseley planned a night attack. Departing at 1:30 on 13 September 1882, the British navigated across the barren desert using naval officers’ expertise at astronomical direction-finding. Wolseley’s force of 11,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry and 61 guns was to face 20,000 Egyptian regulars with 6,000 Bedouins in support (Farwell 225). An unexpected light rose in the sky at 4:50; a comet, of all things. Egyptian sentries at Tel-el-Kebir opened fire five minutes later, and the battle was over by 7:00. The British had lost less than five hundred dead and wounded in a battle in which thousands of Egyptians were killed, mostly by bayonet.
On his eventual return to England, Wolseley was again feted as a grand Victorian hero. He was awarded £30,000 (after haggling; the first offer was 25,000; he sought 35,000), vested with the peerage denied him a year earlier, and promoted to General (145). Henceforth, he was Baron Wolseley of Tel-el-Kebir and of Wolseley. Greater honors were still to follow, although he would forever be associated with the stain of his next, final, campaign.

The Gordon Relief Expedition

The story of General Charles “Chinese” Gordon, rushing to the Sudan to put down the Dervishes and their leader the Mahdi, to protect Egyptians left undefended after the British defeat at Obeid, is well-known among even casual students of British history. Indeed, *Khartoum*, a motion picture starring Charlton Heston and Laurence Olivier, cannot but have brought the tale into common currency, even 45 years after its first
Gordon was not well liked among the government officials in both England and Egypt, but fate – and the popular press – dealt him an unlucky hand. General Gordon had recently accepted a post offered by King Leopold of Belgium to suppress the Congo slave trade, and was passing through London on the way to arrange his pension and resign his British commission. He had previously forcibly ended the slave trade in the Sudan, and received great acclaim for having done so. When the Cabinet requested that Gordon return to Sudan at the head of a quick relief column, he consulted with King Leopold, and then accepted.

Gordon had such little time and resources to prepare, that Wolseley collected money at local gentleman’s clubs and famously handed him £300 to cover the costs of travel (Kochanski 150-53). By other reports, Wolseley gave Gordon “his gold watch and chain and all the cash in his pockets” (Trench 206).

The Victoria Station scene, a mainstay of British army lore, was described in a short book written while the Sudan expedition was underway. What was occurring in Khartoum was “yet clouded and misty” (Forbes 251):

Whatever Gordon's own views were as to the policy which ought to be pursued in the Soudan, he loyally subordinated them to the instructions he took from the Ministers at that afternoon consultation on his arrival from Brussels. “I go to cut the dog's tail off. I've got my orders, and I'll do it, Coute que coute.” At eight o'clock he started. “The scene at the station,” said the Pall Mall Gazette, “was very interesting. Lord Wolseley carried the General's portmanteau, Lord Granville

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18 Lytton Strachey had it at £200, and confirmation of a promise that, the following morning, every member of Cabinet would receive a copy of Dr. Samuel Clarke’s Scripture Promises (295).
took his ticket for him, and the Duke of Cambridge held open the carriage door.” His companion was Lieut.-Colonel Stewart, 11th Hussars. (231)

Gordon became a nineteenth-century victim of what is now routinely called “mission creep.” Once he arrived in Egypt, his quick rescue mission became a permanent occupation, pending transfer of nominal authority to the Egyptian authorities. A debate over an appropriate successor further delayed his withdrawal.

Figure 9. Major General Charles “Chinese” Gordon.

Eventually, Gordon’s garrison in Khartoum was surrounded, with only intermittent messages (and correspondent reports) describing an increasingly dire situation. After several months of dithering, Parliament authorized £300,000 for the Gordon Relief Expedition. Who better to command than the hero of Tel-el-Kebir? The Duke of Cambridge, still Commander-in-Chief, believed the answer to be William Earle or George Greaves, but given Wolseley’s strong support for the mission, he was the logical – indeed, politically necessary – choice (Kochanski 158-59).19 Again, a march upcountry took place, this time by boat, camel and foot-march from Cairo to Khartoum. Gordon

19 Both Earle and Greaves were members of the Wolseley Ring; Earle was killed in command of one of the columns of Wolseley’s Relief Expedition. Greaves eventually rose to General, and Commander in Chief of the Bombay Army.
and Wolseley corresponded by occasional message, although with Gordon’s cipher books having been possibly compromised, they went to a secondary code based upon Wolseley’s old *Soldier’s Pocket-Book* (164).

Sir Garnet had been restricted by orders from traveling further than the telegraph, thus when his troops arrived on 28 January 1884, to find that Gordon had been killed (and his head severed) two days earlier, he was in Korti, several days march away. Wolseley never forgave Gladstone for the delay in dispatching the Expedition, and, indeed, refused to attend his funeral twelve years later. Wolseley was made Viscount after the Expedition, but the mission ended with the ignominy of withdrawal of troops needed to back threats of yet another action against the Russians.
CHAPTER 3

“THIS MEMORABLE STRUGGLE”: VISCOUNT WOLSELEY’S LATER CIVIL WAR COMMENTARY

It was in this era that Wolseley wrote his longer series of articles on the Civil War, the first of which was a tribute to Robert E. Lee, with the remainder more general discussions of generals and their campaigns. The Lee piece was published in March 1887, in *Macmillan’s*, as a review of Armistead Long’s *Memoirs of Robert E. Lee.* Wolseley followed the then-British custom of using a book review more as a jumping-off point for a discourse on the topic covered by the work, than (solely) as a critique of the book itself (Rawley, 51). The others, published in seven parts, two years later in the *North American Review*, were Wolseley’s detailed musings on the war, based on the three-volume *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* reference set published by *Century* magazine (the “*Century* War Book”).

Wolseley’s essay on Robert E. Lee is so highly complimentary of the general, and of the United States, that Americans may blush on first reading it. He rated the eventual importance of the Civil War on human history as easily on par with the Franco-Prussian War, which was manifestly high praise for the time.

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1 Wolseley’s *New York Times* obituary refers to a book that Wolseley wrote about “Robert E. Lee which became one of the standard works on the conflict between the North and the South” (Mar. 26, 1913). There was a book by Viscount Wolseley, entitled *Robert E. Lee*, (Rochester, N.Y.: C Mann & Co., 1906), but it was simply a 62-page reprint of the *Macmillan’s* article.
Think of what a power the re-United States will be in another century! Of what it will be in the twenty-first century of the Christian era! If, as many believe, China is destined to absorb all Asia and then to overrun Europe, may it not be in the possible future that Armageddon, the final contest between heathendom and Christianity, may be fought out between China and North America? (325)

His feelings on the underlying legitimacy of the Civil War as a rebellion were not greatly tempered by the passage of two decades. While conceding that the federal government and its supporters may genuinely recognize an importance or an inherent “strength” in unity, “The unprejudiced outsider will generally admit the sovereign right, both historical and legal, which each State possessed under the constitution, to leave the union when its people thought fit to do so” (321). Tellingly, he recalled Lee’s comments on slavery, which he had not shared in his letter a quarter-century earlier:

Lee hated slavery, but as he explained to me, he thought it wicked to give freedom suddenly to some millions of people who were incapable of using it with profit to themselves. He assured me he had long intended to gradually give his slaves their liberty. He believed the institution to be a moral and political evil, and more hurtful to the white man than the black man. (325)

Wolseley was so uncritical of this position, even twenty years after the war and a half-century after emancipation within the British Empire, that his Southern sympathies (or his ardent racist underpinnings) seem to have been inordinately strident. Indeed, a majority of even pro-Confederate British politicians were extensively more critical of slavery during the war than Wolseley was in the late 1880s (Blackett).

Nothing in Wolseley’s writing suggests that modesty was his strongest suit. Thus, there is more than a little projection onto Lee in Wolseley’s description of the general’s boyhood, taken solely, one suspects, from Long’s book. He noted that Lee lost his military-hero father when he was eleven and deeply worshipped the mother who had
raised him in their financially “straitened circumstances” (322). Wolseley’s upbringing was, of course, virtually identical; although descended from aristocracy, by the time he lost his officer-father at seven, his small family was equally impecunious. Surely, Wolseley had himself at least partially in mind when he wrote that, “Like many other great commanders, [Lee] was in consequence brought up in comparative poverty, a condition which has been pronounced by the greatest of them as the best training for soldiers” (322). Of course, the “greatest of them” – Napoleon – also grew up in a needy family, and like Wolseley, rarely exhibited an inability to recognize within himself the traits of genius.\(^1\) The comment is even more pointed, given that Wolseley’s rivals – the Eton-schooled Roberts and the royal-born Duke of Cambridge -- did not benefit from childhood poverty as had he, Lee and Napoleon.

Garnet Wolseley may have seen himself in Robert E. Lee, but he pointed to another great soldier as most reminiscent, in every favorable aspect, of the Confederate leader. Lee took command when he was “just fifty-four years old, the age of Marlborough when he destroyed the French army at Blenheim: in many ways and on many points these two great men much resembled each other” (326). Both were of sterling moral character, Wolseley opined, with extraordinary looks, carriage, charm and character. Notably, both inspired their troops to “believe[e] almost superstitiously in their certainty of victory, their contempt of danger [and] their daring courage” (326).

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1 Napoleon’s Maxim LVIII, circulating since the 1820s, is generally stated as, “The most important qualification of a soldier is fortitude under fatigue and privation. Courage is only second; hardship, poverty and want are the best school for a soldier.”
The Lee essay briefly addressed the war, but was mostly a reminiscence of a great man Wolseley had met (with a few brief stories from the 1862 meeting retold), and a gentle tribute to him. He declined to seriously analyze the Civil War, noting that lessons from both sides were so easily drawn – given that he was “of the same race as both belligerents” -- that the exercise was not necessary (329).

Lee did, however, have “his faults,” Wolseley reported, although they provide insight into the latter’s views on both military and civilian affairs. Lee was literally loyal to a fault, too concerned with offending others to the point that he kept some subordinates in command longer than appropriate. In Wolseley’s eyes, that was nearly a criminal offense. Worse, though, his sense of duty, made him too subservient to those charged with charged with the civil government of his country. He carried out too literally the orders of those whom the Confederate Constitution made his superiors, although he must have known them to be entirely ignorant of the science of war. . . . It was very clear to many at the time, as it will be commonly acknowledged now, that the South could only hope to win under the rule of a Military Dictator. If General Washington had had a Mr. Davis over him, could he have accomplished what he did? (330)

As evidence of Lee’s apparent ineptitude at grabbing the reins of power from civilian authority, Wolseley pointed to his “final defence of Richmond . . . for political, not military reasons” as “a great strategic error” (330). He argued, somewhat dismissively and in a very off-handed way, that had Grant been lured into a long Fabian campaign in the forests, the Southern army could have whittled away at its enemy piecemeal.

Regardless, Wolseley’s admiration for General Lee, “who was cast in a grander mould, and made of different and of finer metal than all other men” was profound (331). Wolseley closed by predicting that when the passions of the Civil War cool, Lee will be
seen as among the greatest Americans of his century. He then paid the highest of compliments, “I have met but two men who realize my ideas of what a true hero should be: my friend Charles Gordon was one, General Lee the other” (331).

The 1889 series “An English View of the Civil War” was tenably Wolseley’s most important Civil War writing, but it was almost entirely based on articles compiled in the *Century* War Book. *Century*’s project started small – two articles on John Brown’s raid from differing points of view – but quickly blossomed into a multi-year attempt to record the participants’ memories and arguments about the war. From the outset, there was an expectation that the magazine articles would form the basis for an eventual Civil War encyclopedia of sorts. U.S. Grant’s *Personal Memoirs* had just proven how popular such a series might be. Because so many senior officers (and other participants) were still alive only twenty years after the war, it remains an exceptional source for Civil War scholarship, the more so given the editors’ stated “chief motive [of] strict fairness to the testimony of both sides, and the chief endeavors [of] prov[ing] every important statement by the ‘Official Records’ and other trustworthy documents, and to spare no pains in the interest of elucidation and accuracy” (Preface).

Professor Rawley pointed out in his edited version of Wolseley’s Civil War writings, that “Partisanship had not been eliminated by checking for accuracy, and it was fitting that an outsider, a foreign critic and expert, be invited to review it by a third party—the *North American Review*” (73). Of course, Wolseley was not without his opinions, most famously his criticism of U.S. Grant’s generalship and Jefferson Davis’s leadership.
Both, indeed, are among the subjects of the first installment Wolseley submitted to *North American Review*, which he wrote after receiving Volume I of the *Century War Book*. He conceded from the outset that the events Volume I presented (chiefly, the preparations for war; early battles in Arkansas and Missouri; First Bull Run and Shiloh; naval operations and the *Monitor / Merrimac* fight) occurred before his brief visit, and thus reflected only his “comment[s] on the evidence supplied to us, as a deeply interested student of the mighty struggle” (538). Nonetheless, by his fourth paragraph, he put duty above discretion:

> It is with the deepest regret that I feel obliged, at this early point of my review of the War, to call into question the fitness of Mr. Jefferson Davis for the high position he occupied. . . . [He may have been sincere in his zeal and patriotism.] But that he was a third-rate man, and a most unfortunate selection for the office of President, I cannot conceal from myself. . . . The tremendous indictment against his capacity which is drawn by Mr. R. Barnwell Rhett, so strongly support my views regarding him that I regret very much no answer has been printed side by side with it . . . . If the Northern troops had then really known how he unwittingly worked for them, would they have wished to “hang Jeff. Davis to a sour-apple tree”? (539-40)

In that light, General Lee’s “failure” of having not assumed dictatorial powers begins to make more sense in the Wolseley view of the Confederacy.

The article itself is neither chronological nor parallel to the structure of the volume he was reviewing. Rather, Wolseley took a detailed look at the western battles, principally Wilson’s Creek and Pea Ridge (which he found both similar to each other and equally didactic), then turned his attention to the east. These small engagements were a

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2 The monthly articles appeared in the *North American Review* from May through December, with the exception of June. The June 1889 *North American Review* is the one history has remembered; it contains Andrew Carnegie’s “Wealth,” in which he introduced the “gospel of wealth.” Pagination for citation is from the *Review*. May 1889 is contained in Volume 148; the remainder are in Volume 149.
good example of the general, and immutable laws of war. “In both, the attempt was made to carry out distinctly separated movements by isolated parts of an attacking force, in order to strike upon the flanks or rear of a concentrated defensive force. Both attempts failed, as might have been predicted beforehand” (541).

The problem, as was often the problem as Wolseley saw it, was that civilian concerns for protection of rear areas precluded the freedom of movement that would have allowed sufficient troops to carry out the intended assaults. This shortcoming – in civilians, not their soldiers – would equally apply “[i]f England were invaded, or threatened with invasion” (543). Surely, northern counties would be loathe to send their troops to defend London, if they themselves felt threatened.

It is for this reason that I hope the Century’s admirable narrative of the Confederate War may be read attentively by the large numbers of educated volunteer officers whom we now have in England. Its campaigns are replete with instruction for all our auxiliary forces, as well as our army. (543)

When Wolseley turned to Shiloh, his great distaste for U.S. Grant’s military acumen was first unfurled. Quoting Don Carlos Buell’s description of the Union Army’s essentially inactive defense as the likelihood of battle neared, he suggested that only luck or insufficient Southern execution saved the federals from sheer disaster. Wolseley disclaimed actual animus, but in a decidedly back-handed way:

It is hoped that no one will imagine for a moment that I wish to throw a stone at General Grant. We are all of us liable to human error. The greatest generals have made great, perhaps some of the greatest, mistakes ever in war. . . . As a matter of fact, it would seem that Grant and Sherman before Shiloh, like Wellington and Blucher before Quatre Bras and Ligny, were contemplating an offensive, not a defensive campaign.

In both instances alike, the error of taking for granted that an active and able enemy is restricted to one course of action, was severely punished. In both
cases alike, it very narrowly missed being fatally punished. In no other way, with, perhaps, the reservation that Grant had not at that time acquired the experience he afterwards gained, can I explain the facts. (545-46)

Wolseley also used Confederate General Leonidas Polk’s confusion at the orders issued verbally by P.G.T. Beauregard as an important “lesson of staff-work” (551). Had the corps commanders simply jotted out a two-line memorandum, an example of which Wolseley provided, there would have been no ambiguity about where Polk’s troops were to be, and when.

In his discussion of First Bull Run, Wolseley argued, predictably, that the Union disaster was not one principally of the Union Army’s making but of its government’s. “Here, as in almost every other instance, the defeat of McDowell seems to have been due to the blunders of the authorities at Washington, acting under the influence of public opinion” (561). The problem there, as with the Confederates in Arkansas, was that a flanking threat on Washington from the Shenandoah Valley forced Winfield Scott to keep Robert Patterson’s small force there (in the event, unsuccessfully), rather than as a maneuvering arm under McDowell. His point was not that Scott should have disregarded fears about the District’s safety, but rather that public opinion forced action at Manassas on a Union force already deprived of sufficient troops to carry the field.

Wolseley must have chortled when penning the last paragraph of his first section. “I have always had a great respect for General McClellan,” wrote the man who had twenty years prior described him as more the beneficiary of misplaced hero-worship than of merit-based selection (562). Notwithstanding Wolseley’s new-found admiration for McClellan, he again portrayed him as vainglorious and incompetent, taking unearned
credit for victory at Rich Mountain, Virginia, and once more adored by a public hungry for good news.³

Whereupon McClellan was photographed in the Napoleonic attitude, and duly promoted to the command of the Potomac Army, to be dealt with afterwards according to the time-honored fashion of that hoary-headed and cruel old rascal, Public Opinion, toward his broken idols. (563)

Parts II and III of Wolseley’s *English View* address Volume II of the *Century War* Book from the Union and Confederate perspectives respectively. As with Part I, he freely admitted little knowledge or expertise on naval matters, but his discussion of the capture of New Orleans is noteworthy for several reasons. “For us of the old country,” he wrote, “these ‘amphibious’ operations, as Mr. Kinglake would call them, have a quite peculiar importance” (30).⁴ While continental armies can operate independent of the sea, “[a]n English general has almost always to make his calculations strictly in accordance with what the navy can do for him” (31). Wolseley recognized the strategic success the Union achieved by securing the Mississippi River and described it as certainly worth extensive study by all military men.

Wolseley criticized the Confederate naval commander at New Orleans as utterly unwilling to accept counsel from his army counterpart. (General Duncan reportedly had correctly predicted Admiral Farragut’s strategy.) But to Wolseley,

³ Rich Mountain is in Randolph County, one of the counties that two years later would become West Virginia. The two-hour battle there took place on July 11, 1861, ten days before First Bull Run.

Captain Mitchell [seemed] one of those men, common enough in every service, who cannot bring themselves to imagine that anyone outside their own calling is other than a stupid fool. Such men usually conceive it to be their first duty to ignore, as an impertinent interference, any suggestion which comes from outside their own charmed circle. (32)

This was not mere puffery; at Tel-el-Kebir, of course, Wolseley used naval officers as desert navigators to great effect. Nonetheless, there is more than a tinge of irony to Wolseley’s comments, given that much of the same essay (and series) is a screed against civilian interference into matters military. Surely, notwithstanding their position outside his “charmed circle,” the Ministers and Secretaries of War against whom he railed so much in his lifetime had something other than petty careerist intrigues in mind when managing troops and resources.

Farragut’s success at New Orleans was a result of daring, in Wolseley’s telling, and “was based on a knowledge of the superior importance in war of material over moral force” (34). Here, the Victorian notion whose antecedents were evident two decades prior was now clearly and unambiguously articulated. In fact, “[o]ne can hardly offer a higher compliment to any naval or military commander” (34).

Again, Wolseley turned to McClellan with a generous eye, blaming Washington (and more particularly, Edwin Stanton) for failures in the field. The Union government was adamant in keeping too many forces away from the main body in a unnecessary defense of the capital (this time to fall victim to Jackson’s Valley Campaign), rather than in the bold stroke planned for the Peninsula. “Military history, had it been known to Mr. Lincoln and his ministers, would have taught them that, under the then existing circumstances, the Confederate army could not venture far away from Richmond” (37).
Given the troops and the explicit order to march directly on Richmond, however, McClellan was destined for failure. Wolseley contrasted Imboden’s famous quotation of Jackson (“mystify, mislead and surprise,” which itself is from the *Century* War Book)\(^5\) with what he facetiously suggested was the order given by Stanton to McClellan:

> Go straight at the enemy at the very point where he expects you, and where he has been expecting to receive you. Let everyone know what you are going to do, so that we may announce it in the public press, and chuckle and crow over your coming victory. . . . Go ahead without preparation, forethought, or care; only let us hear that you are moving, so that the newspapers may brag. (39)

Rawley noted that Wolseley was uncharacteristically satirical in Part II, which is objectively true (105). He was by all accounts, a pleasant, but serious person. In a circle peopled with “Bobs” Roberts, “Chinese” Gordon and “Bean” Kitchener, Wolseley, after all, was a man whom no one ever imagined with a nickname (Lehmann 292). Nonetheless, “[t]here is scarcely any folly possible in relation to the command of an army which Mr. Stanton [did] not propose with the gravest face to General McDowell [*sic:* here, he was discussing Pope]” (40).

Wolseley deemed the promotion of John Pope, from a different region, to command of troops who did not trust him as they did McClellan, over the heads of competent corps commanders, an unwise idea. Regardless, “the disasters of [his] campaign were due to the order from Washington which required him to maintain an advanced position on the Rappahannock” (42). This left an unguarded flank at Manassas for which Pope was not to blame. While Wolseley predicted that history “will hold responsible the Administration at Washington rather than the generals,” he quickly

\(^5\) The quotation and its provenance are further discussed in Chapter 3.
exculpated Lincoln who, too trustingly, placed too much authority in the hands of Stanton (43).

As Wolseley turned to discussion of these early Eastern campaigns from the Southern perspective, his tone changed from sardonic to reverential. Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley was afforded the opportunity to display “the most brilliant illustrations of his military principles” (164). Curiously, McClellan saw through and understood the greater strategic goals of Jackson’s exit toward Cross Keys; “not so, however, those who ruled at Washington” (166). Indeed, he noted further, “the moral effect of Jackson’s Valley operations was so great at Washington that McClellan could not expect any reinforcements” (167). Wolseley then began a multipage lecture (suggested again by Imboden’s essay on Jackson) on the importance of a leader’s keeping information to himself when appropriate. In war, he explained, often the information network is so loose (and, of course, public opinion so dangerous), that a commander should often only share his intent with his commander or with a very small number of subordinates. While such a leader may be misunderstood by his subordinates, his secrets will not be unintentionally betrayed by them.

Wolseley noted a tactical error in Jackson’s erroneous calculation of the march time toward McClellan’s flank at Gaines’ Mill, a function of poor maps and muddy roads. He faulted Jackson (and the Virginians in general) for thinking themselves too familiar with their territory to properly scout the routes of march, and noted that McClellan had been much more deliberate in his scouting and mapping. Here, it is worth
recalling that Wolseley’s ability to time a march was part of his legend, beginning as early as the Red River Campaign a quarter-century before.

Returning to the Peninsula, Wolseley suggested that better communications or siting of the Southern troops might have made the victory more decisive. The chance was ephemeral, however, and he noted aphoristically, “The lost moment never returns in war” (172). McClellan’s failings in the Peninsula Campaign are the subject of great commentary, but Wolseley was able to pinpoint his single greatest weakness. He should never have separated his forces in a dangerous way at the Chickahominy River, notwithstanding “Government orders” to the contrary (173). He noted that McClellan’s retreat to the James River was undertaken well and orderly; here, he contends Lee and Jackson, who, of course, knew their adversary well, underestimated his ability to maneuver (173-74). In Wolseley’s mind, this was a trifling problem; these were the towering geniuses of the war and the mistake was little more than oversight.

Jackson was less active for about three weeks following this Campaign and was criticized then, and by some authors in the *Century* War Book. The reason, in Sir Garnet’s view, was obvious. “These are just the times when every newspaper in a democratically-governed country begins to cry out against the sloth and inactivity of a general” (174-75). He suggested Wellington faced similar detractors during *his* Peninsular campaign. Put simply, by this point, Wolseley’s anti-democratic bias was

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6 Wolseley is an unusually unquotable historical figure. Perhaps his most famous quote, such as it is, was his exhortation during the Second Ashanti War, to “fire low, fire slow and charge home; the more numerous your enemy, the greater will be the loss inflicted on him, and the greater your honour in defeating him” (Farwell 56-57). The fuller quotation has an overtly racist tone typical of Wolseley’s writings and sayings.
evident in almost every other page of his writing, and would show little sign of abating henceforth.

McClellan’s return to command was the final subject of Part III. Wolseley imputed to McClellan an almost messianic-like feeling derived from the adulation of his troops. This, he suggested, may have overcome his natural predilection toward methodical planning (along with capture of Lee’s plans of attack). Lee, meanwhile, knowing “how demoralized [the Union] armies had become from repeated defeats, [and] aware of the scare which Pope’s disasters had occasioned at Washington,” wanted to stave off another year’s threats to Richmond by decisive action (180). A “really great general” he flatly contended, with Lee’s plan in his pocket, would have destroyed Lee’s army in Maryland. Instead, Wolseley repeated his (and Lee’s 1862) Blackwood’s contention that Antietam was a clear battlefield victory for the South, although he tempered his position by noting that “the Confederacy had failed in its intention to carry the war into the enemy’s country” (181).

The fourth article, which principally discussed most of the battles of 1863 (Fredericksburg, Gettysburg and Chancellorsville in the east; Vicksburg, Chickamauga, Chattanooga and others in the west), also served as a platform for Wolseley to excoriate another general. Like many who rallied around Lee’s memory in the 1870s, Wolseley cannot but have felt his blood boil on reading James Longstreet’s commentary on his service in the Army of Northern Virginia.7 Plainly, if Lee was Wolseley’s Caesar,

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7 Professor Reardon noted that after Longstreet’s “criticisms of Lee’s command decisions at Gettysburg” were published in Century, assignment of blame for the loss there promptly shifted from J.E.B. Stuart and Richard Ewell to Longstreet (85).
Longstreet was his Brutus, and his comments about Lee were the unkindest cuts of all. Worse, in Wolseley’s telling, was that Longstreet was so inferior in every way, to his predecessor as Lee’s chief lieutenant, Stonewall Jackson (279-80). Repeatedly, he derided both Longstreet’s tone toward his superior and his inability to recognize the genius that was before him:

I must, however, express a feeling which will, I think, be shared by many of those who fought against Generals Lee and Longstreet, that it is not pleasant to read reports by the surviving general of conversations between the two in which he seems to have treated, not to say reprimanded, his great leader like a schoolboy under instruction than like one of the most brilliant commanders and remarkable men of his own, if not of all, time. Whatever other great qualities as a soldier General Longstreet may possess,—and he certainly does possess some very brilliant qualities,—that of appreciating the military genius of the commander under whom he served cannot be reckoned among them. (280)

Wolseley soon described Longstreet’s description of his meetings with Lee as “unspeakably pathetic” (281). Given Longstreet’s apparent lack of confidence in his leader’s acumen, the tone must have made clear to Lee a terrible weakness in the lack of devotion or support from his chief subordinate (281).

The substantive issue which Longstreet raised – and which Wolseley disdained – was a belief that the South’s best strategy was to avoid a fight whenever possible; to “be offensive in strategy, but defensive in tactics” (281). Wolseley conceded that, while there is a time and place for this, like all theories of war, Longstreet seemed to have championed aversion to even decisive engagements against fragmented forces. “It is needless to point out how directly that principle brings him into conflict with the admirable views on war of Stonewall Jackson” (282).
Wolseley took Longstreet to task for using as support for his military theories, his correct prediction, during the Franco-Prussian War that “MacMahon would be a prisoner in ten days.” (283). Longstreet, argued Sir Garnet, wholly misunderstood even why he got it right. “The Prussians at Sedan did not ‘force MacMahon to attack,’” but attacked him on all sides. . . . In no sense whatever is the battle of Sedan an example of offensive strategy and defensive tactics” (283 emphasis original).

As the archetypal Victorian officer, Wolseley also noted a problem with Longstreet’s defense-minded philosophy. Wolseley claimed it was understood by contemporary Germans as well as Jackson, Grant and “perhaps” Lee, “that defensive tactics carried on behind intrenched positions have a very dangerous tendency to unfit soldiers for rapid offensive action” (283). This was, of course, one of the tenets of the so-called cult of the offensive, notwithstanding that rapid offensive action against rifled weapons often “unfit soldiers” for further action of any sort.

Turning to the battles themselves, Wolseley identified what he termed Lee’s “greatest” mistake; his failure to crush Burnside’s army after Fredericksburg (285). To Wolseley, the war would have been markedly different if the Union troops – the same ones who would eventually fight Lee until Appomattox – had been destroyed against the Rappahannock after their mauling in the day’s battle. “That battle was a brilliant success. Lee ought to have made it a crushing, if not a final, victory” (285).

Longstreet explained in *Lee’s Right Wing at Gettysburg*, that he had been following the Franco-Prussian War by wire reports in New Orleans, charting and mapping the battles as they were received. He reported rendering this prediction to New Orleans Creoles, who thereupon accused him of being a Republican and anti-French. *Century* War Book III, 353-54.
Gettysburg was a Southern defeat because Longstreet played too central a role. If this is an overstatement of Wolseley’s position, it is only mildly so. Longstreet obstreperously failed to attack on the second morning as he was directed, instead, not sending his troops until 4 that afternoon. Wolseley fired a torrent of extraordinarily direct shots at Longstreet, of which the following is merely illustrative:

If General Longstreet had not been too much absorbed by his own ideas of the way in which the campaign ought to have been fought, to pay attention to the literal and prompt execution of his chief’s orders, he must have seen for himself that suddenness and earliness in the attack were of the essence in that scheme (287-88).

The more popular image of Longstreet, early on the third morning of Gettysburg “not even able to make up his mind to order the charge of Pickett’s division recalls the bitter memories of our own attack upon the Redan in September, 1855” (288). Wolseley rejected arguments that the charge was wrong, simply because, in the end, it failed. It would have worked, had Longstreet properly applied more force to the attack. Moreover, Wolseley added, at both Seven Pines and Second Bull Run, Longstreet was also unduly slow in moving his division into place. Joseph Johnston at Seven Pines, like Robert E. Lee after Manassas and Gettysburg, was “too generous a man, to reproach him for the miscarriage” (290).

Part four closed with a discussion of the importance of cavalry – and then a return to the most familiar of Wolseley’s refrains. J.E.B. Stuart was absent from Chancellorsville and absent from the main battle of Gettysburg, yet one was a brilliant success for Lee, the other a decisive defeat. “There is just this difference,” Wolseley

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9 A failed British assault upon the fortifications at Sevastopol during the Crimean War.
opined, “that during the Gettysburg campaign the absence of the cavalry was contrary to Lee’s intention” (291). Unless armies are essentially stationary (as they were at the Peninsula in 1862),

it is a risk too great to be worth running, even for the sake of breaking in upon the communications of an enemy, to deprive the army of its eyes, as one must do if the bulk of mounted troops are sent off on some entirely isolated operation” (291).

This sort of gentle disapprobation is more typical of Wolseley’s tone when noting error among the generals he was critiquing who were either dead or not bitter critics of Lee.

The last point in the article was that the great battles of the east and west were heavily influenced by the Union government. Needless to say, the Northern directives were improvidently arrived at and foolishly undertaken. “The decisions from Washington and the criticisms from Washington, based upon the loose and rampant public opinion of the day, were in every instance wrong, and were disastrous to the cause of the Union” (292). Wolseley looked forward to a future when the “surviving” civilian officers of the federal government will recant their numerous errors and warn future generations to stay out of the soldiers’ business.  

Wolseley devoted the bulk of his fifth article to battles of the west; the article reflects a basic misunderstanding of those campaigns. He was under the impression that a “general peculiarity” obtained with respect to the western battles; “they were fought very much to secure recruiting districts” (450). He suggested that nothing quite like that had

10 While he noted nothing for which his government needed to apologize, General James Fry suggested that Wolseley had meant to say “successors” (Fry 737). Context suggests otherwise; Wolseley was calling on actual members of the Lincoln Administration, not future politicians, to recognize the danger in which they had placed the Union through their hasty, improvident decision making.
occurred in Europe since the Thirty Years War, which may be true, but which is irrelevant since the fights in the west were much about control of logistic supply, not fresh replacements for the lines. Physical occupation of Louisiana, Arkansas or Tennessee was not more likely to yield Union soldiers from territory under Union martial government (the opposite was true), and it is not entirely clear why Wolseley believed otherwise. To some extent, he seemed to have conflated the far west (New Mexico and California) with the western campaigns, noting that had Confederate sympathizers taken California and its gold, the war might have turned out differently.

The fifth article, however, does have much to recommend it, including what is perhaps Wolseley’s snarkiest comment. Discussing Henry Halleck, he made his usual disclaimers about not wanting to judge either his private character, or to disparage the general’s “many high qualities”.

But taking the history of these [eastern] campaigns from the time when he was appointed to the general command of the armies of the United States till the moment when, on “the coming of Grant,” he was reduced to the position of a highly useful subordinate, I cannot trace the least evidence of his having ever given a decision which represented more than the embodied prejudices of the moment. (447)

Needless to say, he saw Halleck as too political; to Wolseley any general affected, in any way, by public opinion, was unsuited for his command.
Wolseley also weighed in briefly on the notion of “councils of war.” He suggested that they are more the creature of newspaper reporters (who refer to every meeting of senior commanders by that title) and represent an entirely unfeasible way to actually command troops. While a strong commander can certainly solicit the advice of his equally strong-minded subordinates, in the end, only he can make decisions. He noted that the most famous genuine council of the Civil War – Meade’s meeting with his commanders on the second night at Gettysburg – ought not be a model for future decision making, notwithstanding its having arrived at what turned out to be a correct plan. Councils of war usually decide, as the Union did, not to attack, which is not always the best approach (449).

The western campaigns were discussed by Wolseley in more summary fashion than the eastern ones. The exceptions were Perryville and Corinth, which he covered in greater detail than many modern historians of the War, and with an understanding, as with Pea Ridge earlier in his essays, that small battles can teach great lessons. When he turned to Vicksburg, however, he did so with relish.
Though not prepared to modify the opinion expressed elsewhere, that General Lee was the most remarkable man the Civil War produced, and though I cannot admit that General Grant possessed at all the same genius for command, yet it must be at once confessed that it is an immense relief to turn from the mirage of these indecisive battles and movements in the West to the story of the Vicksburg campaign. (454)

Wolseley paid Grant the high praise of suggesting that the Vicksburg campaign, in its use of surprise and concentration of force resembled Jackson in both the Valley and Second Bull Run. Moreover, it provided moral support to a beleaguered North, which had the time to send correspondents to the siegeworks and hear first-hand reports of the success.

If there was a Southern equivalent of Henry Halleck in Wolseley’s mind, perhaps it was Braxton Bragg, who seemed to have shown “a strange mixture of qualities” since his withdrawal from Kentucky. General William Rosecrans was so able to maneuver around Bragg, forcing him back to Chattanooga in June and July 1863, that Wolseley questioned Bragg’s fitness for command.

The art of finding out the position, movements, and intentions of the enemy is the A B C of generalship. Of this art, General Bragg was not only ignorant, but he lacked even the power to put together into one intelligible whole the information daily supplied by his outposts and obtained from other sources. (457)

Even Chickamauga, Bragg’s greatest success, Wolseley ascribed to unnamed others, presumably chance or James Longstreet, neither of whom Wolseley would have been inclined to credit a victory.11

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11 At Chickamauga, confusing Union orders opened a broad gap in the line at precisely the place and time where Longstreet had been directed to attack.
Wolseley turned then to analysis of the battle of Chattanooga and Lookout Mountain, and the successful actions by Union soldiers when the siege around them was lifted by force. Wolseley noted, in the manner of the English chauvinist,

Those are circumstances under which you may securely trust Anglo-Saxon troops, at least when once released from the leash, to go forward as those of General Thomas did, with a bound that carries everything before it, and that probably exceeds both your wishes and your orders. (459)

The fifth installment closed with Wolseley’s brief, Parthian comment about the end of Volume III of the Century War Book. He found it “curious” that the book would close with a discussion of Longstreet’s first corps command, and his Knoxville campaign, “which, ill-prepared and ill-advised, ended in failure” (459). Plainly, once Wolseley chose a side, he was not one to act in half-measure.

Part five was not the only Civil War article in the October 1889 North American Review. Jefferson Davis also contributed, responding to “Lord Wolseley’s Mistakes.” His introductory sentence set a breathless pace that was maintained throughout the piece:

LORD WOLSELEY has twice conspicuously assumed the part of a self-appointed judge of certain military problems presented by the war between the States, and has presumed to pronounce his decisions in a tone of authority that, viewing his capacity, amuses, and, viewing his record, amazes, the reader competent to judge between the critic and the movements and men he has undertaken to criticize (472).

According to Davis, there was nothing personal in his insistence to respond; rather, he was doing so in order that history and rapprochement between the States would be assisted.12 After all, “in order that crimination and recrimination between the States may

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12 From a solely American perspective, perhaps Davis’s questioning of Wolseley’s general competence to comment on such matters need not be taken cum grano salis. The Current, a weekly Chicago compendium of news clippings and commentary, noted on
forever cease, it is needful that the truth, and the whole truth, should be known, and not perverted in the interest of faction” (472). Indeed.

Davis generally referred throughout the article to Wolseley by his name, but frequently called him “the Adjutant-General,” the better presumably to answer the Englishman’s “slanderous perversions of Confederate history” (472). The actual issues rebutted are specific (E.g., Did Davis underestimate the troops or rifles needed? Should the 1860 cotton crop have been spirited out of the country and factored abroad? Were shipbuilding efforts properly undertaken overseas?), and referred to comments that Wolseley made about Davis in Part I.\(^{13}\)

Beyond his ad hominem theme, Davis responded by factual denials and inclusion of correspondence from such figures as Confederate Treasurer Christopher Memminger

February 14, 1885, that a Pall Mall Gazette survey of 1,400 readers had voted Wolseley the greatest English soldier, Huxley its greatest scientist, Millais its greatest painter and so forth. “It seems a little inopportune, however, to decide as to Wolseley, and it is curious that neither Gladstone nor Tennyson obtained places” (110).

\(^{13}\) Part I appeared in the May edition. Given typesetting and writing-time, the editors apparently afforded Davis an opportunity to respond as soon as Wolseley’s initial entry was complete. The Davis article contained the following asterisked footnote:

General Wolseley having criticised the Hon. Jefferson Davis in one of his articles, it seems but fair that the ex-President of the Confederacy should have an opportunity to reply. At the same time, it should be remembered, in justice to General Wolseley, that that distinguished soldier expressly states that his articles deal only with the information supplied by The Century’s history of the Civil War; and he cannot be held responsible for deficiencies in that source of information. EDITOR, NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW (472).

Much like his first installment, Wolseley’s fourth article began by reminding “the reader of these articles . . . that they deal only with the information supplied by The Century magazine’s history of the struggle” (278).
and Admiral Raphael Semmes, in support of Davis’s positions. Some were in response to Davis’s inquiries for the article; others had responded to similar allegations in the intervening 25 years since the war.

Clearly, the same factual charges upon which Wolseley had based his opinions had been swirling around the United States and Europe ever since Appomattox. (Indeed, many seem to have emanated from P.G.T. Beauregard.) This was, presumably, cold comfort to Davis, who seemed extraordinarily peeved at the manner in which a “self-constituted authority upon military affairs and civil government, ignorantly or maliciously to me— it matters not which” accused him of the misfeasance reflected in *An English View of the Civil War* (481).

Whether the Davis – Wolseley debate would have continued is left to conjecture. Davis wrote the article in August and it appeared in the October edition of the *Review*, but he died within two months.

The fourth and final Century War Book volume is the subject of articles six and seven. Wolseley strenuously recommended the study of the attack and defense of Charleston to European soldiers, because it was so very instructive on “this question of naval attack versus land defence” (594 emphasis original). While, he noted, there was a great deal of hypothetical discussion in England as to the power of naval artillery and ramming strategies for attacking land bases, here was the most recent and thorough example of operations undertaken by capable foes.

Almost all our arguments are taken from the time of Nelson, or from even earlier days. No one who looks into the matter can fail to see that at least these records of the Civil War represent facts much more closely analogous to the present
relations between fleets and land batteries than any other operations of the kind in previous wars. (595)

Wolseley continued on this theme, perhaps recognizing that as his narrative was ending, so too was his opportunity to forcefully advocate further study of the Civil War. He pointed to New Orleans and Vicksburg as instances in which thorough naval-military cooperation successfully carried the day.

This coöperating action of the naval and military services, mutually supporting each other, and the fact that neither can be neglected without detriment to the other, seem to be among the most important lessons taught in the whole history of the American Civil War. These lessons are of worldwide interest. (597)

Wolseley suggested that just as success at Morris Island, South Carolina was the result of such cooperation, so, too was the British operation at Kerch during the Crimean War. He closed this portion by paying special tribute to Beauregard, whose defense fortifications made him the “Todleben of Charleston” (598). 14

Wolseley then turned to two of his central themes – the greatness of Lee and the importance of central command authority – as he discussed the period between the Wilderness and Cold Harbor. While Grant enjoyed command of the entire Union Army, Lee still only commanded the Army of Northern Virginia.

Lee was so great, not only in character, in genius, and in reputation, but in the affections of the whole Confederacy, civil and military, that, if he was not to be the commander-in-chief of all the armies of the Confederacy and to direct and control their movements, no one else could effectually take that place.” (599)

14 General Eduard Totleben was a Russian officer credited with engineering the exceptionally sound fortifications at Sebastopol in the Crimean War. Kerch (or “Kertch” to Wolseley) is a key port on the eastern side of the Crimean Peninsula. Its capture entailed a multi-column land-based attack, supported by gunboats.
Indeed, the idea of centrality of command carried much of the remainder of Wolseley’s articles. He did not discount Grant’s genius, nor his ability to process the information provided him; nonetheless, “few impartial educated soldiers will deny that throughout [this period] Lee simply and completely out-generalled his great opponent” (600).

With the Wilderness, Wolseley wrote of another battle, but with an old refrain. Lee’s plan was brilliant, and fully recognized precisely what Grant was planning. But, “General Longstreet’s wing, arriving in magnificent order, was just a sufficient number of hours too late to produce the decisive result which Lee had justly reckoned upon” (601). Needless to say, Wolseley conjectured, had Jackson been there, rather than Longstreet, Lee would have crushed Grant. The troops might not have been as parade-ready, but they would have arrived at precisely the time directed.

Wolseley’s commentary on Cold Harbor was as protective of Grant as his discussions of other battles were critical of Longstreet. Cold Harbor, generally recognized by most commanders – including Grant – as Grant’s greatest error, was, instead Meade’s fault. Wolseley accepted reports that Meade consciously abstained from taking appropriate actions at the battlefield out of a petulant slight in not having received proper press coverage of his earlier successes. In Wolseley’s telling, Grant, as overall commander, had delegated to Meade actual control, but Meade failed. If such “jealous sulkiness” really caused the massive slaughter that Cold Harbor became, it was

15 In his Memoirs, Grant wrote, “I have always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made. I might say the same thing of the assault of the 22d of May, 1863, at Vicksburg. At Cold Harbor no advantage whatever was gained to compensate for the heavy loss we sustained” (Vol. II 276).
criminal in Wolseley’s – or anyone’s – mind. Nonetheless, Grant did the right thing after Cold Harbor; he continued his campaign with “firmness and sternness” (603).

Part six closed with Wolseley’s observation that Cold Harbor was the turning point of 1864, and, to some extent, the war. Until that point, the Union was pressing forward, albeit not decisively. But by now, J.E.B. Stuart was dead (and thus Lee’s cavalry greatly diminished), Sherman was pressing on Atlanta, and the Confederate soldiers, seeing the federal troops carry on their campaign after the horrible result at Cold Harbor, finally began to sense that the war was no longer theirs to win.

This idea continued in the beginning of Wolseley’s final installment, which he framed in the familiar vernacular of the late Victorian soldier. Plainly, he maintained, Lincoln’s decision not to accede to public opinion and relieve Grant decided the war. Conversely, the Confederate exchange of Hood for Johnston was only another misstep for an army that had, in the west, had nothing occur “that would have tended to restore its morale” (713 emphasis original). To Wolseley as with Napoleon, an army’s moral power was to its physical as three is to one, and the steady decline of Southern fighting spirit, notwithstanding their extraordinary military leadership, was beginning to tell.

Sir Garnet never visited the deep south or the west, and as with his earlier misperceptions of the west, he manifested a misunderstanding of what the “mountains” looked like in Sherman’s approach to Atlanta from Chattanooga. Between Pine, Lost, Kennesaw and Carnes, “the word ‘mountain’ is . . . scattered over [the map] almost as
thickly as peas in a pod” (715). Wolseley admitted to an uncertainty respecting the topography of the area, and the extent to which Sherman or Johnston could have better outflanked, or counter-trenched the other.

Wolseley suggested that both generals suffered from the campaign in very different ways. Sherman did so to the extent that he greatly extended his supply line, Johnston in that defensive tactics and even well-executed retreats “told seriously on the morale of the Southern troops” (717). Nonetheless, and notwithstanding Richmond’s foolish relief of him, “[i]t is difficult to see what better Johnston could have done than adopt a Fabian strategy during this time” (717).

Wolseley here picked John Bell Hood as another target for his subtle wrath. To Sir Garnet, Hood’s relief of Johnston was a foolish interference wrought by public opinion rather than military necessity. He noted that to Hood’s army friends, he was notoriously “unlucky,” but quoted Disraeli to the effect that unlucky generals often reflect a lack of skill. Johnston’s sacking, however, was indicative of the larger problem in the Confederacy; lack of a commander-in-chief. The competing needs of multiple armies moving across multiple theaters and campaigns needed far better leadership than Davis and his military chief Bragg could exercise. This was especially evident, argued

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16 One of the issues he raised was whether “Kenesaw Mountain” would have been visible from Dalton (714-15). Wolseley was certain that it ought to have been, but fourteen years living in North Georgia (and numerous visits to the battlefield) suggest to this author otherwise. While the drawings he had seen depicted Kennesaw as a steep landmark, Kennesaw is over fifty miles south of Dalton, and not terribly high in the first instance (1,808 feet above sea level in an area where the average elevation is about 1,000 feet).
Wolseley, while Sigel and then Hunter were in the Shenandoah Valley, Grant was driving his Overland Campaign toward Petersburg, and Sherman was marching on Atlanta.

In his final pages, Wolseley mused about his visit 27 years earlier, and noted that, while some ideas take years to understand or investigate, one thought popular even when he was there had been borne out as true. “I refer to the opinion that, amid the crowds of able men, of gallant soldiers, and of clever statesmen whom the epoch of the American Civil War produced, the two men Abraham Lincoln and Robert Lee stand out a head and shoulders above all others” (725). Whether Wolseley consciously glossed over his earlier reference to Lincoln as the dictatorial “insignificant lawyer” or had genuinely forgotten the ire of three decades earlier is not certain, but, as an historical tract, his kind words for the sixteenth President add credence to his arguments. Or fix a blot from his first essay.\footnote{In 1891 and 1892, Wolseley wrote two other Civil War-related articles. The first, a memorial tribute to William Sherman, contains little of substance not already included in his other writings. The second, which appeared on the front page of the New Orleans \textit{Times-Picayune} and was reprinted extensively, eulogized Nathan Bedford Forrest. The article exculpated Forrest for what was already known by then as the Fort Pillow Massacre, in which his troops murdered several hundred principally black troops who had surrendered in an 1864 battle. To Wolseley, the evidence suggested only a vigorously contested battle. Once more, Wolseley added a Lincoln accolade:}

Although the war was a terrible hardship on the country, he argued that the United States, like any great power, was now a better place for having such a heroic, martial story added to its narrative. “Would there be any pride in belonging to the Anglo-Saxon race if we had no Crécy, Agincourt, Armada, or other achievement of our ancestors to

\begin{quote}
If ever England has to fight for her existence, may the same spirit pervade all classes here as that which influenced the men of the United States, both North and South. May we have at the head of our government as wise and far-seeing a patriot as Mr. Lincoln, and, to lead our mounted troops, as able a leader as General Forrest (332)!
\end{quote}
look back upon” (726)? Plainly, to Wolseley, only the military hero can strengthen a nation’s character, and such heroes provide much more to history than “the best platform orator or the best money-grubber” (727).

His final paragraph both exemplified the core of Wolseley’s classic Victorian world view and asked a rhetorical question surely answerable by any who knew or have closely studied him:

I close the pages of this volume with a sincere feeling of thankfulness and pride that I belong to the race from which sprang the soldiers and sailors who fought upon both sides in this memorable struggle. Who can say which to admire the more—the Southern pluck and daring, or the stern, sober determination which eventually led the North to victory? (727)

The December 1889 edition also had a responsive companion article, this one by General James B. Fry, who had been Provost Marshal in Lincoln’s White House. In that position, Fry had been both a close military aide to the President and chief of Army appointments at a time when commissions were passed out like none other in the nation’s history. Like Jefferson Davis, Fry took exception to much that Wolseley had said, but in a much more generous, and conciliatory tone. He saw value in Wolseley’s military commentary, based solely on the self-serving Century War Book commentaries, and not at all on the personalities or the fuller factual record.
Figure 11. Brigadier General James Fry. (Library of Congress).

In that respect, Fry saw The English View as well-suited for the discrete purpose of “draw[ing] military lessons for his own people” and as pure military commentary (especially on the importance of naval-military cooperation), but for little else. Beyond the criticisms of Halleck, of Stanton’s leadership and of other Union strategies, Fry justly called Wolseley to task for being so patently anti-democratic. Noting Wolseley’s screeds against public opinion and its influence on both belligerents in the war, Fry asked, “Is not this, in the free countries of Great Britain and the United States, complaining of the inevitable? (730).”

Considering the longstanding dislike that Wolseley held for civilians who had affected his career -- and most recently, in his mind, cost the life of his closest friend Gordon – the veracity of Fry’s point was unlikely to cool his rancorous feelings about governmental intrusion into military matters. Moreover, while Wolseley continued writing for the next decade, his memory was showing signs of diminished capacity. He retired in 1900, but by the time of his death in 1913, dementia had completely overtaken his mind.
The Wolseley Ring

In his later years as both Adjutant General and then Commander in Chief, Wolseley pursued a variety of reforms within the army. Wolseley firmly believed that the principal mission of the British Army was undefined – in 1868, the Government had eliminated “preservation of the balance of power in Europe” – but the competing needs of home defense and imperial colonialism called for different forces and, either way, a dramatically larger force level (Kochanski 188-89). Wolseley eventually addressed this problem, in a manner of speaking, by pushing for greater Territorial and Volunteer units for home defense, and smaller, nimbler corps for imperial duties.

The Wolseley era, if famous for anything, is noted for the professional rivalry between two competing cliques within the Victorian Army; the famous Roberts and Wolseley Rings. The two differed on many subjects, including the superiority of a short-service army (Wolseley) versus a smaller, long-serving professional service (Roberts) and on ideas respecting the proper defense of India. But, to a large extent, their rivalry was personal; both wanted senior commands in India and South Africa, but Roberts had gotten them (Lehmann 272).

Wolseley was also greatly troubled by the lack of truly qualified senior officers in the army. He vigorously campaigned for change to the ossified, seniority-based system, which was deeply defended by those already in authority. His public campaign earned the continued enmity of the Duke of Cambridge, and of many of his peers. “Distrusted and disliked by the old school, he was regarded more than ever as the army’s worst enemy” (Lehmann 380).
In a way, the Rings are also emblematic of both officers’ tendency to surround themselves with trusted subordinates, and to choose younger officers whom they would mentor and promote when opportunities presented themselves. A key example of this was appointment of Captain George Francis Robert Henderson to Sandhurst in 1886. Henderson had a distinguished combat career (he commanded a company at Tel-el-Kebir) but for health and financial reasons, had transferred to the Ordnance Department. A tour of American battlefields sparked a lifelong interest, which first brought him notice with his 1886 publication of *The Campaign of Fredericksburg.*

Colonel G.F.R. Henderson

Henderson’s *Campaign of Fredericksburg* was well-received and caught Wolseley’s attention, leading directly to his appointment as a Sandhurst instructor. His next publication, *The Battle of Spicheren,* reflected Henderson’s philosophy of military scholarship. Professor Luvaas explained,

> We have here a new concept of the use of military history. Henderson did not study Spicheren to develop tactical ideas or to illustrate “the tabulated maxims and official regulations”; he was not even concerned particularly to discover the reasons for the Prussian successes. Military history to Henderson offered “an efficient substitute for practical acquaintance with almost every phase of active service.” Rather than to test memory, Henderson used military history to test the ability of his students.

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20 Luvaas, *Education of an Army,* 221.
This book propelled Henderson from Sandhurst to a colonelcy as Commandant at Camberley. “Rarely,” Luvaas quipped, “has publication resulted in more rapid promotion even in an academic atmosphere (223-24).”

Colonel Henderson’s influence on the Staff College has been frequently addressed. Beyond Lord Roberts’s comments in the preface to *The Science of War*, Henderson’s 1903 *Times* obituary compared his influence on the British Army to von Moltke’s on the Germans and predicted that it would be felt in the next war. Field-Marshal Robertson’s post-war tribute to Henderson confirmed that thought. “Of the different causes which are alleged to have given us the victory over Germany, not one should be assigned a more prominent place than the influence and teaching of Henderson at the Staff College” (Bond, 159).

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21 The position of Staff College Commandant itself could mean swift promotion. Bond noted that Henry Wilson’s rise from “Captain to Brigadier-General in only five years and one month,” was achieved when he was appointed to the position over the heads of numerous senior rivals.

22 Today, the second-most prominent dining hall/social room at the Joint Services Command and Staff College is named for Henderson. The main dining room, the Victory Room, displays a plate from the silver service of H.M.S. *Victory*.  

Figure 12. Colonel G.F.R. Henderson.
Col. Henderson wrote *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* while at Camberley, and, although the Staff College archives do not reflect the extent to which the Civil War was part of his curriculum, the papers of some of his students do. Examples Bond provides from Field-Marshal Haig’s student “Military History” projects (1896-97) include four papers on the Valley Campaign, one on the Battle of Ligny, and one on Waterloo. (Bond, 166-67). As noted in a subsequent chapter of this thesis, an assignment to “Write General Jackson’s orders for the battle of Kernstown on 23 March 1862,” is one that continued into the period addressed in this thesis.

The immediate effect of G.F.R. Henderson on Camberley and on the many senior officers of the First World War whom he taught is plain. The man who at the time was among the leading Civil War scholars of the world certainly had a place in his teaching for the war. Moreover, his patron, Lord Wolseley, by now Commander-in-Chief, was a strong proponent of Civil War study and discussion. But both Henderson and Wolseley were out of the picture by the end of the Boer War. How lasting was their influence on the curriculum? More specifically, how much did the Civil War (and especially the Valley Campaign of Jackson) dominate the studies at Camberley?
CHAPTER 4

“AN ART OF EVOLUTION, NOT REVOLUTION": THE COURSE OF STUDY AT THE STAFF COLLEGE

The Staff College at Camberley trained the best and brightest officers of the late Victorian and Edwardian British Army. The notion is well-established and hard to dispute. It was an elite senior training college with stringent admission standards (unlike Sandhurst, its Royal Military College sister institution across the county line) and the initials “p.s.c.” (“passed staff college”) were a ticket to success in the army of the day.

By the turn of the century, there were only about 64 students in the Staff College, with 32 students admitted each year. There was a limit of one officer per regiment attending at any time, and of the students entering annually, eight were appointed by special selection of the Commander-in-Chief, with the remainder admitted on competitive examination. The competitive examinations contained further quotas by branch, such as Engineers, Artillery, Ordnance and India Service. The annual examination contained the following prescribed topics and scores:

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1 A second Staff College, at Quetta, Baluchistan, served a similar purpose for many British officers assigned to overseas regiments, after its 1905 founding by Kitchener. (For its first two years, it was housed near Bombay.) Field Marshals Wavell, Auchinleck, Montgomery, Slim and Blamey are among its most noted graduates. It remains a primary training facility for the Pakistani army. http://www.cscquetta.com/ (accessed November 20, 2010).

2 Camberley is in Surrey; Sandhurst is adjacent to it, in Berkshire. The Royal Staff College building was designed by Sir James Pennethorne in 1862, and is a Grade II Listed building on the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst grounds.
Subjects of the examination:

Obligatory:
Mathematics (Arithmetic, Algebra to Quadratic Equations, Euclid, Logarithms, Plane Trigonometry, etc.), 900 marks, 450 qualifying;

Field Fortification, 600 marks, 300 qualifying;

Military Topography, 500 marks, 250 qualifying;

Tactics, 600 marks, 300 qualifying;

Military Law, 400 marks, 200 qualifying;

Military Administration, 400 marks, 200 qualifying;

French or German, 500 marks, 250 qualifying (or for Indian Staff Corps, Hindustani or Russian, 300 marks, 150 qualifying).

Voluntary:
Two other languages, 300 to 500 marks; Geography of certain named countries, 300 marks;

Military History, 500 marks; less than half-marks in a voluntary subject do not count (Mockler-Perryman 92-93).

Additional admissions requirements (such as several mandatory certifications) also obtained. But what did the captains and majors fortunate enough to attend learn there?

Figure 13. The Staff College, Camberley (ca. 1890-1900). (Library of Congress.)
Brian Bond did the most extensive study of the Staff College; indeed, he examined some of the archives and records relied upon for this thesis in his extensive 1972 work, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College, 1854-1914*. Professor Bond’s focus was broader than this study, and discussed the personalities of the Commandants, instructors and Governors of the College more thoroughly than it addressed the curriculum. Others (including Liddell Hart and Luvaas) extensively analyzed G.F.R Henderson and his legacy. The closest Bond came to addressing the American Civil War in his treatment of the curriculum was in support of General Sir Harold Franklyn’s much later contention that the prewar course was dated and unrealistic. “Certainly,” Bond asserted, “the Waterloo Campaign and the American Civil War continued to be studied in the most minute detail” (Bond 289).

But no one has expressly noted what the officers were learning and how, precisely, it was taught. One reason is limitation on resources. Unfortunate decisions decades ago led to the purposeful destruction of many of the Staff College’s permanent

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1 While addressed in somewhat greater detail, a single paragraph encapsulates the era addressed in this thesis:

The contents of the course were also made more practical and up-to-date. Although the Continental tours to inspect the battlefields of the Franco-German War were resumed, the South African War was also scrutinized for its practical lessons, while during the Russo-Japanese War a syndicate of students used to lecture every Saturday on the events of the week. Far more attention was now being paid to administration, and such problems as the organization of a base and lines of communication were studied in detail (Bond, 197).
papers. Thus, there are no useful records within the Staff College archives prior to the twentieth-century, and only bound copies of carbons submitted to the Commandant for (most of) the years between the 1903 College’s reopening after the Boer War until its closure on the eve of the Great War. (Camberley had a 1914 session, but its records were not archived.)

Nonetheless, those bound records are themselves a superb window into Edwardian training and preparation for war. Additionally, certain of the Junior Division records are also available, and although used in the military education of pre-commissioned Gentlemen Cadets rather than top-drawer staff officers, they are also illuminating.

Camberley student-officers were assigned for two years, during which they wrote numerous papers, took several staff rides (including, most years, visits to the battlefields of the Franco-Prussian War), and trained in frequent field exercises without troops, normally in Southeastern England. (Camberley is in Surrey, about 30 miles southwest of London.) Sandhurst cadets, likewise, studied many of the same subjects with many of the same professors, at a level more appropriate for officer candidates.

The Senior Division papers available from 1903 to 1913, as well as selected Junior Division papers, illustrate the role the Civil War played in military study. The progression is striking.

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2 Interview with Aaron Cripps, Assistant Librarian, Joint Staff and Defence Service College, Shrivenham.
1903

There was very little mention of the American Civil War in the Senior Division in 1903. This appears to have been an anomaly; the school had only just re-opened, following the Anglo-Boer War, and the curriculum appears less developed than in subsequent years. Thus, when comparing 1903 with the following years, the fact that there is only one, brief, mention of the Civil War stands out as an exception to the methodology of teaching, rather than as an example of it. That reference, in a listing of Senior Division lecture topics, was simply a line including “Stonewall Jackson’s Use of Railways Vol. I, p. 393.”\(^3\) No one had to ask what “Volume I” referred to; that portion of Henderson’s *Stonewall Jackson* addresses Jackson’s “Stratagems” toward the end of the Valley Campaign in the Spring of 1862.

Equally interesting – and equally anomalous, compared to coursework just a few years later – was a field exercise conducted 29 June through 2 July:

**General Idea.**

France and Germany, having declared war on England, succeeded in obtaining command of the sea.

A French army has effected a landing near BRISTOL.\(^4\)

The following year the French were *still* a potential enemy for training exercises, but with another ally, as noted below. As time and the “conversations” between France and the

\(^3\) Staff College Minute, Lectures and Schemes, Senior Division, 24 Jan 03. The document is marked “CONFIDENTIAL,” but has a hand-written annotation “Why?” As noted further, Confidential and Secret notations appeared occasionally before, and frequently after, 1910, but for documents with much clearer bases for secrecy.

\(^4\) Haking, Senior Division, Staff Tour June 29th to July 2nd 1903.
U.K. progressed, however, almost all European threat scenarios focused solely on Germany and her would-be allies.

1904

By the following year, a much broader curriculum was taught to both Junior and Senior Division students. A syllabus for the 1904 Junior Division (and re-used for the next three years), akin to an end-of-semester exam guide, provides a good road map for understanding the substantive, classroom education of the Gentlemen Cadets:

Syllabus for examination in Military History and Geography, Strategy and Tactics.

(1). Tactical outlines of the Drill Books of the three arms, and Combined Training.

(2). The main principles of strategy as exemplified by the Waterloo Campaign; the Campaign in Virginia, 1862 up to 21st June, (Jackson’s operations, only, studied in detail). The Bohemian Campaign, 1866.

The “grand tactics” of the important actions in the above Campaigns have been considered, also the geography of the Theatres of War.

(3). Savage warfare (Callwell’s “Small Wars”).

(4). “Grand Tactics” of the battles of Austerlitz and Waterloo.

(5). Camps and bivouacs. (Combined Training Part VII amplified by lectures.)

The Tactics course the Junior Division cadets faced in 1904 is illustrative. Taught by Lt. Col. Launcelot Kiggell, the first subjects studied were the campaigns in South

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5 Staff College Minute, Junior Division, 9 Nov 04. A second syllabus covered the semester’s other subjects “Fortress Artillery and Transport and Supply.”
Africa, the positions of the Allies and the French in the Peninsula, and a group preparation of (written) lectures from the Combined Training 1902 manual. As Kiggell explained, “The chief object in preparing these papers is to ensure that all officers at the Staff College are thoroughly conversant with the official book on Tactics, and also to practise them in writing clear and concise papers on any military subject.” Only two weeks later, they were assigned their first Civil War-related Tactics paper:

Write a short paper quoting the paragraphs of “Combined Training” the principles laid down in which you consider are well illustrated by the events of the Battle of “Bull Run”.

Brief explanations, showing the connection, to be given in each case.

Lt. Col. Richard Haking, the Strategy instructor, was working from the same maps, as indicated by his first assignment to his cadets:

As a Staff Officer to General Mc Dowell write a memorandum dated prior to 11th July 1861 reviewing the situation, suggesting what you consider should be the objective, and selecting the best lines for the strategical deployment of the Federal Army.

Needless to say, the paper was written from the Union perspective, but addressed Jackson’s first Civil War action and, if not the site of his finest moment, then certainly both a key battle, and the place where his legendary nickname was given.

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6 Kiggell Minute, Junior Division, 11 Feb 1904.

7 Kiggell Assignment, Junior Division, 27 Feb 1904.

8 Haking Assignment, Junior Division, 16 Feb 1904. First Bull Run was fought 21 July 1861, with General McDowell commanding the Union forces.
Kiggell’s Tactics class wrote their very next paper on Jackson’s first Valley Campaign clash, with an assignment similar to that which Haig had written when he was at Camberley many years earlier.

Taking the situation at Kernstown at the moment (about 4.30 p.m.) when the Federal Commander determined that Ashby’s operations were merely a demonstration.

Write the orders you consider Kimball should then have issued.

(Any brief explanation of your reasons that you may consider necessary should be added.)

Kernstown, a footnote to most mainstream American study of the Civil War, was an important part of the Staff College curriculum almost annually. The town is “down the Valley,” just south of Winchester; the battle there took place on March 23, 1862. It is actually the only battle Jackson ever lost, but Henderson’s description of the general after the battle is typical of the reverent tone with which he treated his subject:

Such was the battle of Kernstown, in which over 1200 men were killed and wounded, the half of them Confederates. Two or three hundred prisoners fell into the hands of the Federals. Nearly one-fourth of Jackson's infantry was hors de combat, and he had lost two guns. His troops were undoubtedly depressed. They had anticipated an easy victory; the overwhelming strength of the Federals had surprised them, and their losses had been severe. But no regret disturbed the slumbers of their leader. He had been defeated, it was true; but he looked further than the immediate result of the engagement. “I feel justified in saying,” he wrote in his short report, “that, though the battle-field is in the possession of the enemy, yet the most essential fruits of the victory are ours.” (Henderson I, 245-46).

After some extended field exercises (and no mention of the Civil War), the Tactics class moved on – or backward – to the Napoleonic Wars. Students were directed to briefly comment on the following:

9 Kiggell, Assignment, Junior Division, 5 Mar 1904.
In June 1815, Napoleon advanced into Belgium by Charleroi. Wellington expected him to come by MONS, or even further to the West, and always maintained that he (Napoleon) would have gained greater advantage by doing so.¹⁰

A visit to the Isle of Wight (for which officers were directed to bring baggage and bicycles), directed them to envision themselves a visitor from a foreign power. They were to note fortifications, troop deployments and other information of similar military value.¹¹ The importance of these sorts of data (and the relative paucity of it regarding potential adversaries and battlefields) would become more evident as the decade progressed.

In the Intelligence course taught by Lt. Col. Hugh Gough, a similar exercise directed officers to “send . . . all the information you possibly can [about any country visited except the U.K.] that would be useful from a military point of view.”¹²

Likewise, a Blue versus Red Staff Ride exercise appears fairly innocuous, as British officers trained to take on other British officers, each assigned organic British equipment and troops.¹³

By this time, students had begun study of von Moltke and the Wars of German Unification. An October 1904 assignment combined the two great minds, Stonewall Jackson and Helmuth von Moltke, in a manner of speaking:

¹⁰ Kiggell, Assignment, Junior Division, 20 Jun 1904.

¹¹ Isle of Wight Visit Orders, Junior Division, 9 Jul 1904.

¹² Gough, Intelligence Assignment, Junior Division, 24 Oct 04.

¹³ Staff Ride Orders, Junior Division, 26 – 29 Sep 04.
The Campaign in Bohemia 1866

(a) What steps do you suggest each side might have taken between 18th and 20th June 1866 to “mystify and mislead” the adversary?

(b) What different courses of action were open to Moltke after the capture of Dresden (19th June)? Discuss briefly the advantages and disadvantages of each, stating which you would have adopted.

General Jackson had been associated with the term “mystify and mislead” since the publication of the *Century* Civil War articles, but the phrase appeared at least once earlier in an article about him. In 1866, *Harper’s* reported, “It was Jackson’s habit to do every thing in his power to mystify and mislead all” (414). Nonetheless, the phrase is generally credited to Brigadier General John Imboden’s post-war writing, in which he noted that early in the war, Jackson often told him:

> Always mystify, mislead, and surprise the enemy, if possible; and when you strike and overcome him, never let up in the pursuit so long as your men have strength to follow; for an army routed, if hotly pursued, becomes panic-stricken, and can then be destroyed by half their number. The other rule is, never fight against heavy odds, if by any possible maneuvering you can hurl your own force on only a part, and that the weakest part, of your enemy and crush it. Such tactics will win every time, and a small army may thus destroy a large one in detail, and repeated victory will make it invincible.

Imboden was quoted verbatim in *Stonewall Jackson* by Henderson, who, in turn, cited the *Century* War Book in which Imboden’s account was published (Henderson, I, 357). In any event, Kiggell’s use of the words “mystify and mislead” suggests an expected familiarity with Jackson’s maxim, perhaps owing to his having just covered the Valley Campaign.

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14Kiggell Assignment, Junior Division, 23 Oct 1904. The assignment, for groups of three, was limited to four pages of foolscap.
The first theoretical foreign war the cadets wrote about did not involve either North America or Europe. Rather, in Gough’s Intelligence class, the assignment was a potential landing on the Persian Gulf to counter Russian moves toward Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{15} The Great Game was still afoot in these days, and how better to plan for it than a Memorandum regarding assets and organizations needed for the landing?

The 1904 Senior Division students faced a similar curriculum, but with substantially more emphasis on staff rides and field exercises. Lt. Col. Richard Haking tasked teams (“syndicates”) of two to write the following assignment on what the College referred to as the Franco-German War:

As an officer on Napoleon III staff draw up a memorandum showing what would be the best course of action to follow in the preliminary operations against the German Army.

Your paper should not exceed four pages of foolscap and should be dated prior to 1st August 1870.\textsuperscript{16}

A similar Strategy assignment tasked pairs of students to assume they were “Staff Officer[s] to Mac Mahon,” and “write an appreciation of the situation dated 9 a.m. 3rd August 1870.”\textsuperscript{17} The week following they were to do the same thing as “a Staff Officer to the Crown Prince of Germany.”\textsuperscript{18} Unlike the Sandhurst cadets, their study began with a focus on Europe, not Virginia.

\textsuperscript{15}Gough Assignment, Junior Division, 31 Oct 04.

\textsuperscript{16}Haking Assignment, Senior Division, 5 Feb 04.

\textsuperscript{17}Haking Assignment, Senior Division, 13 Feb 04.

\textsuperscript{18}Haking Assignment, Senior Division, 22 Feb 04.
This was mirrored in the Senior Division class on attack and defense operations in which Lt. Col. James Johnston’s students were to “[i]llustrate the teaching of Combined Training” using, inter alia,

Advantage of mobility and of securing surprise in defensive operations. By reference to the campaign in the S.E. of France between the French and Germans at the end of 1870 and the beginning of 1871.19

A field-exercise break signaled a change to study of American Civil War Cavalry. In April 1904, Senior Division “Attack and Defence of Positions” students were to illustrate the advantages and disadvantages of cavalry raids to the opponents’ rear areas “by reference to the operations in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania between June 9th and July 14th 1863.”20 Not insignificantly, Stonewall Jackson died in May 1863; this series of classes on Brandy Station and the movements around the Gettysburg campaign, was one of the few early items involving any study of the war without reference to one of his battles.

Lt. Col. Haking, around the same time, was teaching about Mars-la-Tour and St. Privat; the student body took an annual June trip to principal Franco-Prussian battlefields, including Metz, Wörth and Spicheren.

On return from the Alsace, Lt. Col. Johnston’s students returned to the same period of the U.S. Civil War, this time using Gettysburg as the teaching point. As is evident, the class was not merely one of rote history; instead, the officers were actively

19 Johnston Assignment, Senior Division, 27 Feb 04.
20 Johnston Assignment, Senior Division, 4 Apr 04.
challenged to use both their own initiative (greatly aided by hindsight), and their own equipment:

**Attack and Defence of Positions**

1. Taking the positions of the opposing forces as actually existed on the evening of July 1st, 1863 at Gettysburg,

Write an appreciation of the situation for the Confederate leader on which to base his operations for the following day.

... 

2. Assuming that Stuart’s Cavalry had rejoined Lee and was opposed by the full cavalry of the Federals, but that Jones’ and Robertson’s Brigades had not joined, and that it is decided to attack,

Write orders for the attack on the Federal position for a force consisting of 3 Army Corps, 1 Cavalry Division, strength the War Establishments now in force.

The Federal Cavalry may be assumed to be of equal strength (i.e., 1 Cavalry Division). Modern armaments are in use.

Army, Army Corps and Cavalry Division orders are required [from all but the short-handed team].

The assignment approaches the history of the Civil War’s most famous engagement from a surprisingly fresh and informative perspective. At least in the early years of the twentieth-century, this was not an especially uncommon methodology.

Neither was Lt. Col. Haking’s return of study to the Peninsular Campaign and to Austerlitz, around the same time. Thus it comes as a bit of a surprise that immediately after lectures and papers on those battles, the next written assignment pertained not only to Jackson and Lee, but to the latter’s generally-acclaimed masterstroke:

21 Johnston Assignment, Senior Division, 16 Jun 04.
CHANCELLORSVILLE

Write a paper limited to five pages foolscap discussing the operations around Chancellorsville in 1863.

A description of the events is not required.\(^\text{22}\)

Save for the repeat of the mention of Jackson’s use of trains in the railroad lecture, no further study of the Civil War was indicated for the term.\(^\text{23}\) Among the topics studied were telegraphy, naval operations, and Imperial Strategy. Students in the last-listed class were assigned the following paper by Lt. Col. May:

Prepare a summary of the advantages and disadvantages to France of forming an alliance with Spain in case of war with the British Empire, and state the conclusions you arrive at from the materials available.\(^\text{24}\)

While the great majority of this thesis analyzes the study of previous military campaigns, much of the 1904 classroom work dealt with the nuts and bolts of the Empire and its military. Moreover, a great deal of study was directed at operations in India, Afghanistan and Africa and the “small wars” that brought the Empire there in the first instance.

1905

The 1905 curriculum looked much like 1904, in that the Valley Campaign was still an important part of the curriculum and much that had been taught in 1904, again was used for the following year. A new outdoor exercise in the Junior Division used the Valley as a principal teaching point:

\(^\text{22}\) Haking Assignment, Senior Division, 19 Oct 04.

\(^\text{23}\) The same reference that was the sole mention of the Civil War the year prior.

\(^\text{24}\) May Assignment, Senior Division, 2 Nov 04.
Military History Problem

1. Discuss the different courses open to Stonewall Jackson on 17th April 1862 after he fell back to Harrisonburg.

2. In the “Red v. Blue” scheme which you have just completed, assuming that the Red Division from Dogmersfield could reach Reading before the Blue Brigade forces could interfere with it – in what essential particulars would the positions of the Red Division (at Reading) have resembled and differed from Jackson’s position at Swift Run Gap in April 1862? 

The exercise was accompanied by quite detailed and sophisticated maps that used the regional terrain southwest of the Camberley area as a surrogate for the Valley of Virginia.

Likewise, 1905 in the Senior Division did not have quite the focus on the Civil War that 1904 depicted, but the preface to a Memorandum for an Inspection Staff Tour began with the following preface:

“Always mystify, mislead, and surprise the enemy if possible, and when you strike and overcome him, never give up the pursuit as long as your men have strength to follow.”

“A defensive campaign can only be made successful by taking the offensive at the proper time. Napoleon never waited for his adversary to become fully prepared but struck him the first blow.”

Although unattributed (except to “Stonewall Jackson”), both quotes came from Henderson’s Stonewall Jackson. The exercise itself involved a tour of the east coast of England with a view toward defensive operations against European invasion.

A “what I learned in France”-type assignment from Lt. Col. Haking suggests the use and purpose of the Staff College staff tours:

25 Kiggell, Military History Problem, Junior Division, 1 July 05.

26 Rawlinson (The Commandant), Inspection Staff Tour Memorandum, Senior Division, October 2nd to 6th 1905.
1. Discuss, from the point of view of modern war, what you consider to be the most instructive lessons that you learn from your visit to the battlefields in the spring.

2. Two lessons only should be deduced from each of the battles of Königgratz, Woerth, Spicheren & Graveotte, and one from each of the other engagements.

3. The Memoir will be written manuscript in the books provided for the purpose, and will be limited to 25 pages with one inch margin.²⁷

The fall of 1905 marked a signal moment in the curriculum at Camberley, although likely no one noticed at the time. Two projects, two weeks apart, marked the first real discussion of Belgian neutrality and the possibility of a continental war. The first was a brief assignment, from Colonel Robert Whigham:

Discuss the present relations of the powers of the world, and state what course of events you consider will be most likely to lead up to the violation of the neutrality of Belgium, and thus necessitate the intervention of Great Britain.²⁸

The second project was a detailed indoor map exercise (with a written assignment) presented by Lt. Col. Haking. In a document not marked confidential, he posed an extremely detailed scenario for British intervention against Germany in concert with France. The general assumptions of the exercise were clearly set forth:

Scheme for the defence of Belgium.

²⁷ Haking, Subject for Memoir, Senior Division, 24 Mar 05. Students were given four months to write the paper. This is the only staff tour indicating an excursion to Königgratz, the key 1866 battle of the Austro-Prussian War. (Unless context suggests otherwise, “memoir” connotes a written assignment along the lines of a memorandum.)

²⁸ Whigham, Assignment Minute, Senior Division, 24 Sep 05.
1. A direct attack on Belgium, with the objection of annexation, by any Continental Power, appears to be extremely unlikely. The political conditions of the country being entirely to that of the Elbe Duchies in 1864, or to that of the small states in the S.E. of Europe at the present time.

2. If, in the event of war between France and Germany, either power were to violate the neutrality of Belgium, in order to gain sufficient space to deploy its great army, the country would be over run, and the Belgian army driven back, or annihilated, before the British Army would have time to come to its assistance.

3. It is possible, however, that after the commencement of a war between France and Germany, one or other of these states might be compelled, in order to gain success or avert disaster, to send reinforcements through Belgium, or to use that country as a line of supply.

4. Owing to the comparative strength of the fortifications of France and Germany along their coterminous frontier, it is probable that Germany rather than France would undertake such an operation.\(^{29}\)

The exercise was given an entire day in a conference room, and was based on a three-army German attack directly across its French frontier, with a three-corps plus one cavalry division sweep through Belgium to establish a line of communication. Students were to assess strategic concerns for an expeditionary force to be landed at Antwerp. The Schlieffen Plan it wasn’t, but the Staff College had taken its first, tangible steps toward the coming European war.

Another advent of the 1905 Senior Division term was inclusion of group-lectures by students. Topics were varied, including analysis of the Yemen rebellion then taking

\(^{29}\) Haking, Scheme for the defence of Belgium, Senior Division 10 Oct 05.
place against the Ottoman Empire, the Wars of German Unification, and fortifications of Gibraltar.\textsuperscript{30} No students addressed the American Civil War.

1906

By 1906, the Civil War – and specifically, the Valley Campaign – continued to be a mainstay of the Junior Division, but the Senior Division records for that year are lost from the archives. A Junior Division essay tasked cadets to write a maximum of four pages foolscap on the following for Lt. Col. Walter Braithwaite:

> As a Staff Officer of General Banks, write an appreciation of the situation on March 1st 1862, that General having reason to believe that he might be called upon to march on Staunton with two Infantry Divisions and 2,000 Cavalry; this advance being simultaneous with Mc Clellan’s advance on Richmond from Fortress Monroe.\textsuperscript{31}

![Figure 14. Map of the Confederate States used as an overview for Civil War discussions at Staff College, 1906. (Staff College Archives).](image)

1907

Two 1907 Senior Division exercises stand out as among the few in which the American Civil War was mentioned that year; then, as in previous years, the Battle of

\textsuperscript{30} Student lectures, Senior Division. Individual officers’ names are not legible in the archives.

\textsuperscript{31} Braithwaite, Strategy Problem, Junior Division, 5 Jul 06.
Kernstown was the subject of special consideration. A tactical exercise, directed by Colonel George Aston, pitted Red against Blue. The instructions to the tactical staff explained:

**GENERAL IDEA.**

1. The situation is based on Ashby’s action previous to the battle of KERNSTOWN (BISLEY) and the subsequent battle of March 23rd 1862.

   The Confederates are Red, the Federals Blue.

2. A Blue force (1 Division) is being withdrawn from BAGSHOT (WINCHESTER VA.), to reinforce the main Blue Army at CAMBERLY. In order to prevent this withdrawal, a Red detachment, strength 1 Brigade Infantry, 1 Brigade R.F.A, and 2 squadrons, is advancing North to attack the portion of the Blue Division still remaining at BAGSHOT, this portion is estimated at 4 battalions, 1 battery and 1 squadron.  

A second exercise, about two months later, posed almost an identical overall idea, except that instead of Kernstown, students were role-playing the Battle of Winchester on slightly altered terrain.

Another noteworthy aspect of the 1907 academic year was an increased focus on foreign countries. Early in the year, Colonel Aston repeated the 1904 assignment of having students identify the foreign countries they had visited. This time, it was for the express purpose of setting up Imperial Strategy two-man teams to make presentations on “allot[ed] countries and topics” with assistance from naval officers attached to the College. (Only France and Germany had more than one group reporting on them, broken into mainland versus possessions, etc.) The archive contains some of the papers

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32 Aston and Du Cane, Tactical Exercise, Senior Division, 23 May 07.

33 Aston, Tactical Exercise, Senior Division, 22 Jul 07.
associated with the assignment, with titles such as "*CONTEMPORARY GERMANY* from a social, military and political standpoint," "The question of Austria," and "Artillery Lessons of the Russo-Japanese War."³⁴

The Russo-Japanese War also served as a basis for the only other mention of the Civil War in 1907. Brig. Gen. Henry Wilson, who had recently succeeded Brig. Gen. Henry Rawlinson, assigned the following paper

> How far are the strategical and tactical lessons drawn from the Campaigns of 1815, 1862, 1865, and 1870 confirmed, or modified by the experiences of the recent wars in Manchuria.³⁵

1908

By 1908, the American Civil War, including Bull Run, Kernstown, the Peninsular Campaign, and Gettysburg were an extensive part of the Junior Division curriculum. Detailed notes, lectures and assignments (similar to those in years prior) are extant, with the same sorts of "appreciations of situations" and draft orders assigned as in years prior. The Anglo-Boer War was also making an increased appearance. After first submitting a paper based upon a Waterloo scenario, Junior Division Artillery students were assigned to draft orders assuming the following:

> Assume that you are in command of a British Division (existing War Establishments) wishing to cross the R. Tugela at or near Colenso, and that you are opposed by a force of Boers similar in numbers and equipment to that which opposed Sir Redvers Buller on 15th December 1899.

³⁴ Aston, Imperial Strategy Minute, Senior Division, 24 Jan 07. The names of the captains (and R.F.A. major [possibly Geddes]) who presented are unintelligible in the archive records.

³⁵ Wilson Memoir, Senior Division, 12 Dec 07.
Assume that from reconnaissance and information received you believe the Boers to be disposed very much as they actually were disposed, guns and rifles, on that date.

Assume further that your plan of attack is based on first seizing Hlangwhane Mountain.

Assume date to be 14th December and that you mean to attack on the following day.36

A similar exercise the following week used Kimberley and the Modder River fight for a similar order-drafting assignment.37

Lt. Col. Sackville-West’s 1908 Junior Division Strategy classes followed a familiar pattern. After study of Napoleonic campaigns, he turned, as his forebears had, to the American Civil War. His notes to lectures on “The Campaign in Eastern Virginia” indicate a difference in both the manner that the war was studied by this point, and the purpose for which it was included in the curriculum. Rather than (merely) a look at troop movements – and the principally-rail logistics which aided them – Sackville-West addressed the following:

1. The Political considerations and the causes of the war.
2. Armament – equipment – tactics – Staff. It was the leaders not the men who won the battles.
3. Command of the sea and the configuration of the coast line.
5. Resources of the two belligerents.

36 Furse, Artillery Scheme No. 2, Junior Division, 18 Feb 09.
37 Furse, Artillery Scheme No. 3, Junior Division, 25 Feb 09.
6. The theatre of operations. The physical obstacles. The effect on the operations of the Shenandoah and the Massanutten.
   Lee’s reasons for the choice of a theatre of operations.
   The effect of the position of the two capitals.
   The available railways.

7. Three main lines of advance against Richmond.
   (i) via the Shenandoah Valley.
   (ii) via Alexandria, Manassas Junction, Culpeper and Gordonsville.
   (iii) via Aquia Creek, Fredericksburg and Hanover Court House.

8. Outline of events up to the engagements of 1862;
   (a). The Battle of Bull Run.
   (b). McClellan organizes the Federal Forces.
   (c). Confederate leaders analyses to assume the offensive.
   (d). Jackson in command in the Valley.
   (e). The expedition to Romney.\textsuperscript{38}

While Sackville-West did not exhibit exceptional outlining skills, he clearly taught the subject more broadly than had previous instructors. Further, he assigned three reading sources, relying on more than simply the standard \textit{Stonewall Jackson} text.\textsuperscript{39} For a faculty that still revered G.F.R. Henderson (and continued to promulgate his “Notes on Writing papers associated with Military Subjects”), this was no small pedagogic advancement.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{38} Sackville-West, Notes. The Campaign in Eastern Virginia, Junior Division, May 1909.

\textsuperscript{39} The other two were Wood, W. Birkbeck, Edmonds, J.E. \textit{A History of the Civil War in the United States, 1861-5}, London: Metheun (1905) and Ropes, John Codman. \textit{The Story of the Civil War: A Concise Account of the War in the United States of America Between 1861 and 1865}. London and New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1895.

\textsuperscript{40} The document was used annually for many years. Sackville-West either spoke from it, or handed it out, in January 1908, over his own initials as his predecessors had done each year prior.
After his detailed introduction, Sackville-West seems to have moved toward a more typical treatment of the Civil War. The first written assignment was similar to those from previous years:

As a senior Staff Officer on the Head Quarters Staff to Richmond, write an appreciation, for the information of the Secretary of War, of the situation in Eastern Virginia at the end of February, 1862.41

The remainder of the Junior Division lectures then followed a familiar path; Kernstown, McDowell (another 1862 Valley Campaign action), Front Royal, and other key Valley battles, plus separate lectures on First Bull Run, Gettysburg and the Seven Days.

Sackville-West’s lecture notes continue to reflect a more thorough treatment of the material. With respect to the Junior Division, 1908 was probably the highwater mark of Civil War study, both in terms of lecture time allocated toward it, and the breadth of study.

Study of the war was also intertwined with Cavalry tactics classes taking place at the same time. Lt. Col. Furse’s first Cavalry lecture stressed the importance of independent cavalry, whose mobility allows it the power to both change direction and fight as a separate unit.42 His next lecture used three Civil War cavalry missions as his sole teaching examples:

“Screening”, or concealing maneuvers of main army.

Ashby, April 1862.

41 Sackville-West, Appreciation of the Situation, Junior Division, 27 May 1908. Papers were limited to 1,200 words.

42 Furse, Cavalry No. 1, Junior Division, 25 Jun 08.
Raids.
Stuart in Gettysburg Campaign – 1863.
Stuart on Chickahominy – June 1862.43

Immediately after these discussions, the military history class turned to study of Wörth and the Franco-Prussian War (and then Sadowa), and the Cavalry lessons turned to combined arms, especially cavalry in the Franco-Prussian War, in South Africa, and in Manchuria. There was no further examination of the American Civil War.

1909

Only the Senior Division records for 1909 are archived, and this was the first year since 1903 in which there were no American Civil War references. While study of the war was already in substantial decline, 1909 seems another outlier. Indeed, when compared to previous and subsequent academic years, the absence seems inexplicable, except perhaps for that year’s change in the Field Service Regulations, and a slightly greater focus on indoctrination of its new principles.

1910

One of the first lectures Senior Division officers received in 1910 covered “Railways in War”. Lt. Col. Whigham began his presentation with an historical overview that paid special attention -- and apparent tribute -- to rail operations in the American Civil War:

1. **HISTORICAL.** Early experiences – Russian corps from Poland to Austria in 1849; Austrian concentration by rail 1850; Railways in the campaign of 1859; experience of the American Civil War; Railway achievements in Campaign

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43 Furse, Cavalry No. 2, Junior Division, 4 Jul 08. He also assigned a 1,000-word paper on the “principal strategical lessons” of the 1862 Campaign in Virginia four days later. Assignment Memorandum, Junior Division, 11 Jul 08.
of 1865 the basis of the scientific development of railways as an instrument of war. 44

There was only one further reference to the Civil War in the Senior Division curricular archives of 1910. Brigadier General Henry Wilson, then the Commandant, re-used a memorandum assignment from three years earlier that touched on the lessons of earlier wars as borne out (or not) in more recent campaigns:

How far are the strategical and tactical lessons drawn from the Campaigns of 1815, 1862, 1865, and 1870 confirmed, or modified by the experiences of the recent wars in South Africa and Manchuria. 45

(Wilson’s addition of South Africa was done, post-printing, in pencil.) While the American war had essentially fallen off the table, the Franco-Prussian War, and the Napoleonic battles of Ligny and Vauchamps, were important parts of the cavalry curriculum. Indeed, even Cromwell’s cavalry was the sole subject of a detailed lecture. Students also focused on tactics for colonial wars, with substantial emphasis on East Africa and Southwest Asia. Rather than an eastern counties tour (which generally presented a topography similar to that in Western Europe), the Staff College undertook a staff tour to Wales, whose mountainous terrain was the explicit surrogate for operations in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Northwest Frontier of India. 46

The likelihood of a European war was reflected in various ways in the 1910 academic year. A briefing on European travel began with extremely detailed translations

44 Whigham Lecture Memorandum, Railways in War, Senior Division, 25 Jan 10.

45 Wilson Memoir, Senior Division, 15 Feb 1910.

46 Wilson Memorandum, Staff Tour in Wales, Senior Division, 14 Jun 10.
of the laws pertaining to “Foreign Officers travelling in Germany”, with special emphasis on reporting requirements (to local authorities), possession of secrets, and proscriptions against drawing or photographing fortifications. Significantly, the lecture was not in conjunction with what had been an annual visit to the Franco-Prussian battlefields. Although that war was the most extensively studied, a tour was not conducted that year. Moreover, the lecture covered all of Germany (including specific laws for Silesia, for example), not merely the Alsace-Lorraine region, and was followed with a more generalized overview of similar, espionage-related regulations of Austria, France and Russia.

The coming continental war was also evident in an extensive group-exercise conducted late in the year. The new Commandant, William Robertson, oversaw a broad, and unusually prescient assignment. The project required fairly thorough group essays, from Belgian, German and English and French points of view, assessing a variety of logistical and strategic issues which emanated from the following broad overview:

Study of operations involving the employment of the British Expeditionary Force on the Continent of Europe.

NOTE

There are many sets of circumstances which might necessitate the employment of a British Expeditionary Force on the European Continent. In order to manufacture a suitable situation for the study of this problem, certain policies are herein ascribed to various powers, but it is not to be assumed that these policies

47 The reading list assigned students that year, however, included numerous French, German and English texts on the Franco-Prussian War.

48 Perceval Notes, Instructions re Foreign Officers Travelling in Germany, and laws dealing with espionage, Senior Division, 22 Mar 10.
necessarily represent present day conditions. The studies, however, as outlined below, and all work conducted therewith, must be regarded as SECRET.

Relations between France and Germany have become strained. The immediate cause was trivial and need not be discussed, but Germany was the aggressor and her object apparently is to break up the understanding between France and England. Warlike preparations both in Germany and France have commenced but mobilisation has not yet been ordered. 49

In several further pages of instructions, the exercise assumed Franco-British cooperation, breach of Belgian neutrality by Germany (and sole use of the Belgian army for defense of Antwerp), Russian mobilization on the German frontier, Austrian neutrality (until Russia attacks Germany), and neutrality for other countries including Switzerland, Holland and “the Remaining Powers”. In many respects, the exercise presented the well-accepted picture of Europe as a powder-keg waiting for a fuse. That Serbia, one of the unnamed Remaining Powers, provided it, does not lessen the value of the exercise as an actual rehearsal of General Staff activity a few years later. 50

1911

The 1911 Senior Division archives contain no reference to the Civil War. It was, nonetheless, a fascinating academic year, in which the English were clearly preparing for

49 Robertson Memorandum, Belgian Scheme, Pt. I, Senior Division, 10 Nov 10.

50 One other noteworthy aspect of the 1910 curriculum was the use of “Allez, Allez” exercises, in which a series of rapid-fire questions were asked of students; they had to answer quickly, verbally and on the spot. The question and answer keys remain for several of these pop quizzes. In The Guns of August, Barbara Tuchman mentioned the affinity Brigadier General Wilson developed for these drills while visiting his counterpart at the Ecole Supérieure de la Guerre, General Ferdinand Foch, and noted that they became known as “Wilson’s ‘allez operations’” (48-49). See, also Bond 261 (“This was just the sort of thing to tickle Wilson’s fancy and henceforth, ‘Allez, allez’ schemes were frequently practiced at Camberley.”)
war against Germany. “Foreign Armies” had become a fairly standard item on the agenda by this time, taking up a much larger portion of the curriculum than studies of previous wars and campaigns, with the exception of the Russo-Japanese and Franco-Prussian Wars. The first several lectures and essays of the academic term addressed the “Franco-German War,” in preparation for a battlefield tour later that spring. While Lt. Cols. Bols and Ross led those classes, Lt. Col. Hoskins provided detailed briefings on the contemporary organization of the German Army Corps.

The first “Foreign Armies” assignment was typical of what had become a stronger focus on contemporary events and armies:

Consider the more important changes in training adopted by the French and German Armies consequent on the South African and Manchurian Wars, especially those applicable to ourselves, and derive therefrom, and put forward in definite form, proposals for improvement in the training of our Army.51

From a professor’s perspective, Lt. Col. Hoskins had the good sense to include the following among his further instructions, “Deal with 2 or 3 subjects only, of which ‘Co-operation’ must not form one.” Presumably, that topic was a given, upon which every student would have pounced.

Among the oddest curricular items of the entire period studied was a confidential briefing and assignment of 15 February 1911. Major General Robertson, the Commandant, gave an address about the “Canadian Frontier,” and assigned the following:

51 Hoskins Assignment, Senior Division, 15 Feb 11.
Prepare a memorandum showing to what extent the Frontier of Canada between the Atlantic and Lake Superior is exposed to attack, and in what strength.\footnote{Robertson Assignment, Senior Division, 15 Feb 11.}

This was the only time this odd question was asked, and in an environment in which “Blueland” generally fought “Redland” over the hallowed soil of “Eastland,” it clearly stands out. The document’s Confidential legend appeared very rarely on Staff College documents, generally in papers presenting specific capabilities of the British forces, coding/decoding exercises, or commentary on potential allies and enemies. Indeed, in the remaining prewar years, it appeared most frequently in discussions of war-planning against Germany, including, especially, plans for a defense against invasion on British soil. In any event, it seems to have reflected a real-world concern, in \textit{1911}, about the potential defense of Canada on its southeastern border with the United States. What drove that concern is a question that may never be answered, but presents an appropriate topic for further study.

An Eastern Counties Staff Tour, in May 1911, pitted those old rivals “Redland” and “Blueland” in a fight over “Northland.” The overall instructions for the exercise left little to the imagination:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Northland} 3 Divisions and 2 Cavalry Brigades, about the same fighting value as the Belgian Army.
\item \textbf{Redland} 4 Divisions, 2 Cavalry Brigades and 1 Mounted Brigade – the same fighting value as the British Regular Army.
\item \textbf{Blueland} 3 Divisions and 4 Cavalry Brigades -- about the same fighting value as the German Army.\footnote{Gough Eastern Counties Staff Tour Memorandum, Senior Division, 11 May 11.}
\end{itemize}
Further instructions for supervisory officers included more detailed unit designations, including, for the Blueland forces, such uniquely German designations for units as Uhlans, Jägers, and Pioneers.\textsuperscript{54}

An additional set of orders for a related exercise, which pitted Eastland against Westland, required a paper to be written by the student based on similar assumed units. Eastland’s Guard Corps appeared drawn directly from German tables of organization, including multiple abteilungen of artillery, and a section from the Field Artillery School of Gunnery.\textsuperscript{55}

By this time, the curriculum included a briefing on aviation that was specific to airplanes, rather than dirigibles. Captain Robert Brooke-Popham, who was still attending Camberley (and had received his pilot’s training in the summer of 1911), spoke to both the Junior and the Senior Division about military aircraft and their capacities. His charts appear principally to have discussed reconnaissance missions, engine speeds, numbers of pilots of the major European nations, and aircraft types. Most interestingly, the future

\textsuperscript{54} Uhlans (properly, in the German Army, Ulans) were lance-bearing cavalry or “Lancers.” Jägers were German light infantry units. Pioneers (properly, Pioniers) were, broadly speaking, the army engineers, including both combat troops and railroad and construction units.

\textsuperscript{55} Gough Staff Tour Memorandum, Senior Division, 29-31 May 11. An assignment in this operation evokes the Blackadder spirit; the student was to assume himself a staff officer named “Colonel Kunningdash.”
Air Chief Marshal noted that there were only seven pilots in the British Army with any experience of cross-country flying.\textsuperscript{56}

For this year, and a few following, the Commandant’s final address to the students was itself archived. In 1911, General Robertson shared his thoughts about essays that had been assigned in June and submitted in October, regarding Expeditionary Forces. Clearly, students had been thinking a great deal about how significantly aircraft would affect the next war. This was a sentiment the former enlisted cavalry trooper (and soon to be Chief of the Imperial General Staff) sought to quell.

With respect to aeroplanes, many of you seem to think that they will revolutionise the whole of the military science. It is difficult to forecast what the consequence of their introduction may be, but history proves that the military art is one of evolution rather than revolution, and I think it would be well to withhold judgment for the present. There is, in fact, a considerable difference of opinion amongst aeronauts themselves about what can and cannot be done. . . . We many for the present hold the opinion, I think, that these machines cannot by any means supplant cavalry but only supplement it. Remember also, that cavalry has many duties to perform besides reconnaissance, and that it will be required for those duties in the future as in the past.\textsuperscript{57}

Plainly, the prewar cultic primacy of cavalry was not solely something of legend.

1912

France and England had had their “conversations” resulting in both the Entente Cordiale and the Triple Entente. As the fiction-reading public devoured predictions of a

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{56} Brooke-Popham Lecture Memorandum, Junior and Senior Division, 3 Nov 11. The initials at the close of the lecture suggest that fellow student “H.R.W.” assisted, although his identity is unclear.
\item \textsuperscript{57} Robertson Lecture Comments on Memoirs, Senior Division, 15 Dec 11.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
war with Germany like Erskine Childers’s *The Riddle of the Sands*, so too had the Staff College moved decidedly toward preparation not for a war, but for *that* war.\(^{58}\)

The 1912 Senior Division term began with an essay on the Franco-Prussian War, again used as a teaching point on the army in which these students had already served for several years:

Taking instances from the 1870 Campaign up to and including August 6th, discuss the exercise of absence of initiative on the part of subordinate commanders and deduce any lessons which apply to our army.\(^{59}\)

Next came a Red-against-Blue exercise in which the modern battlefield began to take form. The area of operations was still the south of England (Reading, London, Guildford, Portsmouth are areas of troop concentrations). But this time, Directing Staff (the instructors managing the exercise), were to issue an order that began:

My aeroplanes report large Forces in READING and MAIDENHEAD and great activity about those places. Some troops have been seen about five miles south of READING, but we can not find out if the enemy are holding the woods south of WOKINGHAM.

The 1st Leib Hussars, one battery F.A. and the 71st Infantry Brigade are placed under your command.\(^{60}\)

The use of aircraft for intelligence indicates that as early as 1912, the year in which the Royal Flying Corps was founded, and when there were less than a dozen pilots in British service, the army already contemplated a role in the next war.

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\(^{59}\) Perceval Assignment, Senior Division, 22 Jan 12.

\(^{60}\) Bols, Confidential Instructions to Directing Staff for Indoor Tactical Exercise. Wood Fighting. 25 Jan 12.
Equally important, however, was the use of a German unit for the Blue side (the Leib Hussars) rather than a British one. Plainly, the Staff College was conducting a more realistic, enemy-oriented wargame, rather than simply British units versus British units.

After study of the “Lines of Railway Used by the Germans for the Strategic Concentration in 1870, organized by Army, Corps and Railway Line,” the Senior Division conducted another indoor exercise based on war with Germany.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Indoor Tactical and Staff Duties Exercise. Supply and Retirement.

________________________

31st January

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GENERAL IDEA.

1. GERMANY and her allies seized an opportunity, assumed temporary command of the NORTH SEA and ENGLISH CHANNEL without any formal declaration of war.

2. A GERMAN force commenced to land about NEW SHOREHAM on the 27th January. Reports received in LONDON were most conflicting, but one reliable wireless message stated that up to noon on the 28th January about 1 Army Corps with a strong force of cavalry had landed and the landing was still in progress. Since then all direct communication with BRIGHTON and the vicinity has ceased.

3. Mobilization was ordered throughout GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND on the 25th January.

4. A strong NE wind has been blowing since the 26th January and aeroplanes have been unable to ascend.62

61 Bols, Table showing Lines of Railway Used by the Germans for the Strategic Concentration in 1870, Senior Division. 27 Jan 12.

62 Stewart, Indoor Tactical and Staff Duties Exercise, Supply and Retirement. Senior Division. 31 Jan 12.
Here, for the first time in years, the enemy was explicitly Germany. Again, the document bore a Confidential legend. Whether the classification resulted from the potentially embarrassing aspect of war against Germany – or of planning for a defense against invasion on British soil – is uncertain, but it began to appear more frequently over the next two years.

Once more, aircraft were contemplated as part of a hypothetical operation. In a small way, on a table in southeastern England, British officers were beginning to think of warfare in the aviation age. Later in the exercise, the situation was to be altered:

Aeroplanes were able to ascend during the afternoon. German machines being more numerous held general command of the air and reconnoitred as far as the NORTH DOWNS. One British aeroplane reconnoitred German Army and reported at 3.30 p.m. that reserves estimated at one brigade at each place were visible at NUTHURST and CRABTREE . . . 63

Again, at a time when there were less than 25 aircraft in the United Kingdom, this was truly forward thinking. It was not, however, Jackson in the Valley.

A different exercise, two weeks later, pitted Great Britain and its European ally “Greenland” against “Blueland.” The identities of the countries, and their neutral neighbor, is not difficult to discern:

GENERAL IDEA.

1. The River MEUSE above NAMUR forms the frontier between an Eastern State, BLUE, and a Western State, GREEN. A third State, YELLOW, lies to the north; the frontier between YELLOWLAND and GREENLAND is a line drawn due west from NAMUR; the frontier between YELLOWLAND and BLUELAND follows the MEUSE below NAMUR.

63 Ibid.
2. War has broken out between GREAT BRITAIN and GREENLAND on the one side, and BLUeland on the other; YELLOWLAND is neutral.

3. It is well known that the main forces of GREENLAND and BLUeland are carrying out their strategical deployment south of the ARDennes forest. Once more, as the exercise continued, the “real-world” German nature of the Blue force was evident in a march-order:

**Advanced Guard.**

O.C. 1st Regt Commdg.
3rd Hussars.
1st Regt 1st Bde.

**Main Body in order of march.**

Div. Hd. Qrs.
3rd Bn Jaegers.
1st M.G. Battery.
1st Fd. Art Bde.
1st Pioneer Co. 3rd Bn.
1st Inf. Bde (less 1st Regt.)
2nd Inf Bde
1st Bearer Co.
Div. Bridging Train.
Train.
1st 2nd 3rd Supply Cols.

Simply put, these were German units, not British ones.

When the Senior Division returned to classroom study, its next historical subject was the Russo-Japanese War. Although touched upon in prior years, that war now received a larger part of the curriculum with numerous, detailed maps depicting operations in Korea and Manchuria.

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64 Stewart Indoor Tactical Exercise. – Encounter Battle, Senior Division, 14-15 Feb 12.
The next wargame, in early March, kept the Red and Blue only for the purposes of determining which color documents to distribute to which team. The identities of the combatants were not concealed:

**Senior Division, 1912.**

**WAR GAME. 4th, 5th & 6th March.**


**GENERAL IDEA.**

Redland (GERMANY) has, to-day, 3rd March declared war against Blueland (FRANCE). Whiteland (BELGIUM) is neutral, but it is known that she does not intend to attempt to prevent the invasion of her territory on the right banks of the SAMBRE and MEUSE by either of the belligerents.

The initial unit assignments were standard “British War Establishments” but these were altered later in the exercise with a partial complement (on the Red side) of German units: Artillery Regiments again were organized by abteilung, Corps Troops had Pioneers, and the Cavalry was assigned “Ulans.”

This classroom work was followed by the annual trip to the 1870 battlefields. When the Senior Division returned, its first field exercise presented a now-familiar scenario: “England is at War with Germany and has temporarily lost command of the sea.” This exercise stands out because it is the only one in which there was any mention of the American Civil War. Notes to the Directing Staff indicated that the

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65 Stewart Indoor Tactical Exercise. – Encounter Battle, Senior Division, 14-15 Feb 12.

66 Malcolm Outdoor Tactical Problem (Action of Inferior Forces, Senior Division, 28 May 12.)
exercise was based on the pursuit after the Battle of Wörth, conducted by the German 4th Cavalry. In suggested topics for discussion, instructors were reminded that the lesson was to strike an enemy column as far forward as possible:

Tactics generally those of the Boers outside of LADYSMITH on “Black Monday”. Compare also pursuit after battle of Franklin Dec. 17, 1864: Sheridan at Appomattox: Austrian cavalry after Custozza.

By 1912, this was it. Save for a chart indicating army and corps groupings of the last two centuries, the sole Senior Division classroom reference to the American Civil War in 1912 was a sidelong reference to two late cavalry actions, mixed in among references to the Boer War and an Austrian pursuit in the Third War for Italian Unification. 67

Meanwhile, at least half a dozen other field and classroom exercises began with the assumed fact of war with Germany.

Indeed, that year, the only reference at all to Stonewall Jackson was in General Robertson’s end-of-year Commandant’s address. In ten pages of single-spaced foolscap, he briefly commended Moore, Napoleon, Wellington, Jackson and Lee as generals who successfully retreated until a more favorable situation presented itself, and then on the same subject declared, “You cannot do better than to study the methods of Wellington in the Peninsula, and the teaching of the American Civil War on the same subject.” 68

Clearly, the long-vaunted influence of the Valley Campaign had waned.

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67 M.M. Examples of the Subdivision of an Army for purposes of Command, Senior Division, Jul 12.

68 Robertson’s Final Address by the Commandant, Senior Division, 4 Dec 12.
1913

In the last archived year prior to the First World War, the curriculum began with an announced change to the norm. While the Franco-Prussian War would continue to play an important role in the students’ professional understanding of the military art, building renovations would limit classroom capacity for instruction; therefore, Senior Division officers were directed to conduct extensive self-study and submit a 30-page paper on key lessons from “the evening of August 5th, 1870 to Sedan inclusive.” Once more, the obvious lessons were excluded, so among the four or five lessons to be drawn, Wörth and Spichern were not to be addressed. An additional memorandum, essentially a recommendation to Emperor Napoleon III on the evening of 7 August 1870, was also assigned, again based on self-study.69 This explains – in a sense – the diminished focus on that war in the year’s published agenda.

As noted previously, for most of the Edwardian era, one of the year’s first items was a brief lecture on the rules of proper military writing, based on G.F.R. Henderson’s precepts. In 1913, however, the first assignment in a subject called “English Composition” was the translation into “idiomatic English” of a paragraph from Jules Valles’s Refractaires, and “a couple of paragraphs” on two topics to be chosen from a list including “the different kinds of prose,” and “style as an incentive to action.”70 Anyone who has attended an officer’s training course will recognize the intent (if not the

69 The Commandant (Robertson), Memorandum on 1870, Senior Division (1913), 29 Nov 12.
70 Oxley Assignment in English Composition, Senior Division, 3 Feb 1913.
substance) of this assignment, which was plainly geared toward improving the writing skills of Staff Officers. Whether this was in response to a general feeling that compositions could be improved or a general’s feeling that his officers’ prose was lacking is uncertain.

The year turned to “Wastage of Personnel” with detailed analysis, provided by a Medical Officer, of the numbers and causes of German, Russian and Japanese in the Franco-Prussian and Russo-Japanese Wars. “Wastage” is a term often associated with World War I; evidently, its use preceded the war.71

When the year turned to the Franco-Prussian War, in preparation for the resumed battlefield tour, the difference from previous years’ study was evident. Rather than extensive examination of battles and leaders, the coursework and maps indicate that logistics were the key concern, including movement and supply of men, forage and food by both armies early in the war.72

A briefing on the modern German Army and its manpower resources was the first instance of 1913 in which current events came to the fore.73 Students were also provided an extensive reading list on topics including Overseas Expeditions and the Russo-

71 The Commandant (Robertson), Lecture Notes on Wastage, Senior Division, 3 Feb 1913. The word in its human capital context appears in old War and Peace translations, Book Fifteen, Ch. IV. (“The chief cause of the wastage of Napoleon's army was the rapidity of its movement, and a convincing proof of this is the corresponding decrease of the Russian army.”), but its use in British English to specifically refer to field deaths, is less certain.

72 Perceval, Franco-German War, 1870-71, Transport and Supply, Senior Division, 11-12 Feb 13.

73 Hoskins, Table showing liabilities for service of the various categories, 28 Feb 1913.
Japanese War. The latter seems related to the officers’ next written assignment, in which Lt. Col. Neill Malcolm required a “Strategical Paper” on the following:

“War is an instrument of policy; it must necessarily bear its character, it must measure with its scale; the conduct of War, in its great features, is therefore policy itself, which takes up the sword in place of the pen, but does not on that account cease to think according to its own laws.”

Discuss the statement with special reference to the strategy of the Russo-Japanese War.

The responses to this assignment are lost to history, which, all things considered, may be for the best.

A special lecture followed later in the year on “Village Fighting” by Captain E.N. Tandy of the Royal Army. Tandy appears to be the same E. N. Tandy, a garrison artillery officer, who became a Brevet Lieutenant Colonel on the General Staff during the War, but he was not a faculty member (or a student) when he gave his lecture. His 13-page, single-spaced foolscap speech transcript is noteworthy, because he discussed the notion of village fighting in Europe in the next war. He discounted entirely Friedrich von Bernhardi’s 1906 _Cavalry in Future Wars_ contention “that the increased power of Artillery has rendered the defence of villages and woods practically an impossibility” (Tandy 1). Put simply, Tandy’s lecture haplessly underestimated the lethality of modern

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74 Jebb, Overseas Expeditions (list of books on subject), Senior Division, 9 Mar 1913.

75 Malcolm, Strategical Paper – Russo-Japanese War, 29 Mar 1913. Clausewitz is not cited (and, indeed, this is a rare appearance of a Clausewitz quote in the Staff College of this period), but it is from the J.J. Graham translation (1873).

76 Tandy, Lecture: “Village Fighting”, Senior Division, March 1913.
artillery; greatly overpredicted the likelihood of infantry battles for towns and villages; and placed extraordinary faith in soldiers of high morale facing much greater numbers of conscripts.

The Senior Division continued its annual visit to the battlefields of the Franco-Prussian War. By now, “motorcars” were optional for officers who preferred them to bicycles; evening dress was unnecessary, with dark suits sufficing. Substantively, some new twists were thrown into the lists of questions to discuss with students during the tour. In the discussion of the Battle of Villers-Brettoneaux (27 November 1870), officers addressing the German situation were provided a copy of Manteuffel’s orders of 26 November. The first question for consideration was a novel one for the time:

The fog of war created by a hostile population and the failure of the German Cavalry to discover anything. If good use is made of the country would aircraft have given Manteuffel better information? 

Ostensibly, the question could have been regarding use of balloon-observers, except that in the same term, the students also received a lecture based upon a detailed, and hand-written “Summary of Aeronautical Strength in Foreign Countries, 1912.” The briefing was broken down by serviceable dirigibles and “Aeroplanes,” ownership (State/Private/Army/Navy), expenditures on aeronautics, and organization of air corps. Once again, the Senior Division was plainly studying the use of modern aircraft by 1913.

77 Oxley, Instructions for the Visit to Foreign Battlefields, Senior Division, March 1913.

78 Summary of Aeronautical Strength in Foreign Countries. 1912. Senior Division. 15 May 1913. The entry for France indicated 15 government dirigibles, 5 private. 500 Army aeroplanes, 7 Navy. 750 trained pilots. £1,485,589 annual expenditures, with an additional £130,000 private subscription. This was markedly higher in almost every category than any other country.
With the return from the battlefields of the Franco-Prussian War came the return to study of Manchuria. Colonel Malcolm’s 1,200-word assignment was terse:

REQUIRED:

As Chief of the Staff under General Kuropatkin, an APPRECIATION OF THE SITUATION on the evening of the 26th August, 1904, about 8 p.m. when operations for that day had practically ceased.

Also

Army Orders for carrying out your proposed plan.79

The Eastland versus Westland training exercises in the middle of the year were not particularly noteworthy, save for the detailed and Secret “Defence of Eastland” memorandum by Captain Henry Karslake, who became a prominent World War II commander.80 More interesting was the Senior Division exercise positing a war in Europe, with support from a New Zealand Expeditionary Force. The scenario was set forth by Captain Barnett-Stuart (a Great War staff officer and leading figure in pre-World War II mechanization). The fundamental assumption for this Confidential exercise sounds very much like the war for which England was, in fact, preparing:

Scheme for Special Expeditionary Force.

1. The general political situation in Europe has become so strained, that war appears inevitable. In no case, as yet, have official relations been broken off, nor has mobilization in any country been actually ordered; but every nation which is a party either to the Triple Alliance or to the Triple Entente is quietly preparing for

79 Malcolm, Senior Division Assignment, 13 June 13. 26 August 1904 was the Battle of Liaoyang.

80 Karslake, Plan of campaign in event of war against Westland, Senior Division, 24 Jul 13.
war. The grouping of the Great Powers is as at present; the attitude of the United States of America is one of renewed friendship to Great Britain, while there is no likelihood of Japan departing from the terms of her alliance.\textsuperscript{81}

Mixed in with additional logistics, rail, and defense of India coursework, was extensive examination of the Field Service Regulations that had been promulgated in 1909 and revised in 1912. It is entirely possible that the 1906 publication and 1909 and 1912 revisions also took up substantial class or student time in those years but were recorded as military work rather than the sort of substantive classroom training reflected in the archives. What is clear from Brigadier General Kiggell’s memorandum (he had just been appointed Commandant) is that groups were to seriously study the new F.S.R. with an eye toward further actual revision, rather than as a training exercise.\textsuperscript{82}

The last major exercise in Col. Louis Bols’s 1911-1913 Intelligence classes would seem extraordinarily clairvoyant, except that it reflected only the broader expectations of the era:

\begin{center}
CONFIDENTIAL.
\end{center}

\begin{center}
SENIOR DIVISION, 1913.
\end{center}

\begin{center}
Intelligence Exercise, 8th and 10th December.
\end{center}

\begin{center}
PART I (8th December)
\end{center}

References: Map of N.E. France.

\begin{center}
GENERAL IDEA.
\end{center}

GERMANY and FRANCE entered on a war on the 18th October.

\textsuperscript{81} Burnett-Stuart, Scheme for Special Expeditionary Force, Senior Division, 19 Nov 13.

\textsuperscript{82} Kiggell, Revision of Training Manuals and General Staff Conference, 21 Nov 13.
The BRITISH Empire decided to support FRANCE by land and by sea.

Declarations of neutrality were made by all other nations and states.

SPECIAL IDEA.

On the 1st December, the BRITISH C-in-C. reached PARIS to confer with the C-in-C. of the FRENCH Armies.

At this conference it was agreed that the BRITISH Army would be responsible for the protection of the left flank of the FRENCH Armies against GERMAN forces which might advance the district MALMEDY – TREVES through BELGIUM and through LUXEMBOURG.

It was expected that the BRITISH Army would be concentrated about VALENCIENNES, CAMBRAI, ARRAS on the 7th December.\(^{83}\) The Special Idea included detailed intelligence estimates of the German plan to deploy “four armies of four or five corps each,” to be countered by the French plan of “four armies, two being of four and two of five army corps . . . .” The exercise itself was an attempt to teach officers about the mixed value of field intelligence; as reports flooded in from civilians, alleged spies, and others, students were to discern what was useful and what not. In addition,

The exercise has been prepared in order to give the students some idea of the variety of messages which may have to be dealt on service in a thickly populated and civilised country. We have no experience of war in such countries.\(^{84}\)

The British were preparing for a continental war, and may have done so in a way that, as Bond suggested (again, discussing Franklyn), lacked either urgency or realism. But it is simply wrong to support that contention by arguing that they did so by studying the American Civil War in minute detail. By 1913, on the eve of a war more immense than

\(^{83}\) Bols, Intelligence Exercise, Senior Division, 8-10 Dec 13.

\(^{84}\) Bols, Notes for the Directing Staff [of the Exercise], Senior Division, Dec 13.
perhaps any instructor or officer could have imagined, the Civil War had been fully excised from the curriculum.
CHAPTER 5

“SENDING MEN TO FIGHT IN THAT”: THE STAFF COLLEGE CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM AND ITS EFFECT ON THE GREAT WAR

Assigning a single, irreducible cause to the many mistakes and miscalculations of the Great War is a fool's errand. The alchemy of technology changes, weapons production, nationalism, training methodologies and competing empires that led to the events of 1914 quickly renders the search for a simple explanation impossible. Liddell Hart unintentionally demonstrated this in his conclusion that had the European powers simply studied the Civil War more closely, they would never have implemented either Plan XVII or the Schlieffen Plan. By that facile, post hoc analysis, had the Germans studied Napoleon more closely, they would never have attempted Barbarossa; had Ford studied the Packard more closely, it would never have released the Edsel.

Nonetheless, some aspects of Civil War study -- and, here, Staff College Civil War study -- are probative. Clearly, the curriculum of a graduate military college does reflect the thinking of its instructors and does influence the thinking of its students. And, if any institution represents the repository of doctrinal thinking (outside the General Staff itself), the premier officer-training institution of an army is the natural place to look. But there is another factor, reflected in the Edwardian Staff College, and unique to its time.

Today, whether at Fort Leavenworth, Carlisle, or Swindon, students at War and Staff Colleges are principally taught by professional educators. They are generally career instructors either with civilian academic backgrounds or whose military service was
capped by advanced academic study and a conscious decision to exchange the sword for the pen. But assignment as a Camberley instructor in the period studied was an active, General Staff Officer position. The Staff College itself was a training component of and for the General Staff.

That unique organizational aspect helps explain why nearly all the Camberley instructors whose classes have been discussed in this thesis were themselves soon senior command or staff officers in World War I. Lord Roberts observed that when Colonel Henderson, a hero in Egypt and a garrison officer after that, arrived at Sandhurst as an instructor, he was consciously emulating his hero Stonewall Jackson. Jackson had served bravely in Mexico then in American garrisons, before accepting a VMI professorship. According to Roberts, both the hero and his Bosworth did so with the notion of “better fitting [themselves] for command.”

In a greater sense, Henderson’s successors did the same, virtually en masse, when the Great War began.

In that respect, it is worthwhile to briefly examine the World War I positions held by the key instructors whose coursework has been discussed. Among the earliest officers who taught post-Boer War (and thus among the most senior in 1914), was Richard Haking. Haking took command of 5 Infantry Brigade in 1911, during which he wrote *Company Training*. As its name suggests, the book was a guide for company

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2 Truly, the faculty at Camberley forms a substantial portion of the *Who Was Who* of World War I. Career descriptions presented here are based on their *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entries (cited in the Bibliography) or the Liddell Hart Military History Centre and National Archives biographical entries for the officers discussed, except where otherwise noted.
training, and reflected the high importance accorded morale by the British Army of the day. It is no great exaggeration to say that the following passage is typical of Haking’s discussion of the moral factor in war:

“Love of our country, colonies, and dependencies, and love of our Anglo-Saxon race, which has spread itself over the two hemispheres, is a far more potent incentive to brilliant and successful operations on a battlefield than any sense of duty. Let us, therefore, teach our soldiers what Britain has won in the past by the life-blood of their forefathers; let them understand the value of the possessions we have gained, make them realize the greatness of the Empire, and show them that it is worth fighting for, and that no one shall take it away from us. This is a far higher incentive to heroic and successful action on the battlefield than any sense of duty.” (14-15)

Imbued with this spirit, Haking took his Brigade to the continent, where he led it until wounded in August 1914 on the Aisne. He returned to France in command of 1 Infantry Division, and then XI Corps, whose engagements under him at Loos (1915) including the Hohenzollern Redoubt (1915) are textbook disasters. He was no more successful on the Somme at Fromelles (1916). Nonetheless, he maintained command of the corps when it was transferred to the Caporetto the following year, and when it returned from Italy for the successful action at Lys (Fourth Ypres 1918).

Launcelot Kiggell arrived at the Staff College in 1904, soon after distinguished staff-officer service in the Boer War, and remained there, until 1907, when he assumed a series of domestic staff officer positions as a Brigadier General. In that year, he also substantially revised Edward Bruce Hamley’s *The Operations of War*, bringing it up to date with “the latest requirements.” He consciously refrained from substantially revising the work’s “principles of strategy,” save for alterations to reflect such matters as increased rail capacity (Hamley, Kiggell b). Kiggell’s real contribution to *The
Operations of War was a new Part VI (Tactics), which he completely re-wrote based on the Russo-Japanese and American Civil War. Kiggell’s expertise on the former is someone suspect; he was quick to note that the Japanese had much better intelligence on Manchuria than the Russians “[a]s the Japanese somewhat resemble the natives in appearance, [making it] comparatively easy for their spies and secret agents to mix with the population” (357).

Kiggell’s Civil War commentary reflects the strong influence of Henderson. Indeed, his comment that “The battle of Kernstown shows clearly that strategy may have uses even for a tactical defeat” (400), is drawn almost directly from Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War. He also noted, in a section on detachments from the main body, that “[p]opular clamour and ignorance of the principles of strategy on the part of a government have often forced commanders to detach, much against their own will and judgment” (397). The comment is wholly consistent with the Civil War views of Garnet Wolseley, and was, perhaps, representative of the entire officer corps of the day.

Kiggell is often held up as an archetypal old-school officer of the period; over thirty years ago, Professor Travers noted that Kiggell differed from his peers in the lessons learned from the Russo-Japanese War. When others saw that firepower was becoming the preeminent force on the modern battlefield, Kiggell demurred, insisting that the opposite was proven in the Manchuria. “Everyone admits it. Victory is now won actually by the bayonet, or by the fear of it.”

General Kiggell returned to Camberley as Commandant in 1913, and left there at

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3 Travers, The Offensive and Problem of Innovation, 531.
the outbreak of war the following year. Initially, he held the influential positions of
director of military training (Haig’s post for several years) and then of home defense. In
late 1915, however, he became Chief of the General Staff of the British Expeditionary
Force, essentially number two to his colleague from the War Office, Douglas Haig. Sir
Launcelot was relieved in January 1918 (after the Third Ypres disaster at Passchendaele),
ostensibly on medical exhaustion grounds. Kiggell, who had held only staff positions
since 1897, is perhaps most famous as the red-tabbed senior officer, who, upon finally
visiting the dense, muddy battlefield at Passchendaele, reputedly exclaimed tearfully,
“Good God, did we really send men to fight in that?” (Wolff 297).

Henry Rawlinson, who had studied under Henderson at Camberley, and returned
as its first Commandant after the Boer War, began the Great War without a posting (he
was a major general on temporary half-pay), but soon became chief of recruiting. He
rose through division command to lead IV Corps at First Ypres (October 1914), and then
at Neuve Chappelle, and Loos (September 1915), none of which did much for his
reputation. By the time of the Somme (July 1916), Rawlinson was Fourth Army
commander. His proposal of successive artillery bombardments that attacked belted
trenches successively (rather than all at once) was overruled by Haig. This was not the
sole reason for the disaster that at the Somme, but is illustrative of the tactical problems
brought on by inadequate British firepower doctrine. Likewise, his early use of tanks
presented a clear instance of a technology that was beyond the understanding or expertise
of its initial adopters.

Rawlinson’s reputation was revived (and forever saved) by the counterattacks in
the Spring of 1918, and the “big push” associated with the battle of Amiens, which
finally led to collapse of the German positions on the Western Front.

Neill Malcolm, a captain when he edited G.F.R. Henderson’s papers and prepared
*The Science of War*, and a colonel as an instructor later in the decade, rose through the
general staff of Haig’s I Corps early in the war, until his posting as Chief of Staff, 11
Division, with whom he landed at Gallipoli. He later served in a similar role in the
Salonika Expeditionary Force. Malcolm’s most noted position in the war was as Chief of
Staff to Hubert Gough at Fifth Army, where he was posted through much of 1916 and
1917. Malcolm was relieved, another sacrifice to the mauling at Passchendaele. Gough
later criticized Malcolm as ineffectual and unpopular, although the evidence is far from
certain as to the quality of the work either man performed. Malcolm assumed command
of 66 Infantry Division in late 1917; he was badly injured, and his division severely
overrun in the Spring Offensive of 1918.

Hubert Gough taught at Camberley from 1904-1906 and then left for command
positions, most famously prior to the war, in Ireland. There, in “the Curragh Incident,”
he, and the brigade officers under him, were unwilling to undertake offensive actions in
Ulster (as opposed to using force to quell Irish attacks). Although the Incident left
political-civilian relations damaged, Gough survived it with his reputation unscathed, and
quickly rose to division command soon after the war began.

Gough’s rise through command coincided with some of the worst events in
British military history – First Ypres, Loos, and, by the time of Third Ypres, command of
Fifth Army. Gough’s Army, on the left flank of the Ypres Salient, did not fare as well as
Second Army did later, and its reputation thereafter suffered. Thus, when Gough requested reinforcements prior to what he thought was an incipient German attack in March 1918, his demands fell on deaf ears. The Spring Offensive, in fact, was aimed directly at his repositioned troops, and Gough was soon relieved, serving as the principal scapegoat for the initial failures in the defense against Operation Michael.

William Robertson, who assumed the Camberley commandancy in June 1910, was the first British officer to go from Private to Field-Marshal. He began the war as Quarter-Master General, and then served as John French’s Chief of the B.E.F. General Staff, until the latter was himself replaced by Haig, in late 1915. Robertson then moved to the War Office, where he served as Chief of the Imperial General Staff until early in 1918, when his clashes with David Lloyd George over the extent of British participation in the Allies Supreme War Council led to his dismissal. He soon assumed command of Eastern Command, a home territories unit that was, in every respect, far away from the action in France. Interestingly, this was the first command Robertson had ever held.

Henry Wilson, the francophile Commandant of Camberley from 1910 until 1913, began World War I as deputy to the Chief of Staff of the B.E.F., but effectively assumed the Chief job, owing to the ill health of the incumbent. Douglas Haig is normally credited with the Field Service Regulations of 1906, and Wilson with the 1912 revisions. The key to both was epitomized in Chapter I: “Success in war depends more on moral

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4Robertson succeeded General Sir James Wolfe-Murray as General Officer Commanding, Eastern Command. Wolfe-Murray’s sin had been association with the Dardanelles expedition, during which he had been Chief of the Imperial General Staff.
than on physical qualities” (13). This was underscored in the formal description of a commander’s considerations on whether to “offe[r] battle.”

**Decisive success in battle can be gained only by a vigorous offensive.** Every commander who offers battle, therefore, must be determined to assume the offensive sooner or later. If the situation be unfavourable for such a course, it is wiser, when possible, to manoeuvre for a more suitable opportunity; but when superiority in skill, moral or numbers has given a commander the initiative, he should turn it to account by forcing a battle before the enemy is ready. Superior numbers on the battlefield are an undoubted advantage, but skill, better organization, and training, and above all a firmer determination in all ranks to conquer at any cost, are the chief factors of success. (127: emphasis original)

Even in defense, a position was over-extended “[i]f the frontage occupied in battle is so great as to reduce the force kept in hand for the ultimate assumption of the offensive much below half the total force available” (141; original in boldface). One imagines the hapless staff officer who objected to defensive unit assignments at Mons or Ypres as overextended on these grounds.

In January 1915, Wilson became chief liaison to the French Army, a position he held until the end of the year, when Douglas Haig, the new B.E.F. head, put Wilson in command of IV Corps. The corps saw little action during the year that Wilson commanded it, and in December of 1916, he started a brief tour as British military representative to the Russian government. He then returned to French Army liaison in March 1917, during which he was promoted to permanent representative to the joint war council and to full General. From this position, he replaced Robertson as Chief of the Imperial General Staff, a position he held through the end of the war.

Other instructors held significant positions that are less remembered, except by specialists in their particular fields. William Furse, an instructor from 1908-11 became a
division commander and then Master of Ordnance for the bulk of the war. George Aston, a Royal Marine Artillery officer, commanded a detachment at Ostend and Dunkirk early in the war, although ill-health limited his service. He was commander of the Royal Marine Artillery until 1917, when his health forced him to retire (after which he became a prominent military reporter and historian). Charles Sackville-West commanded various brigades through the war, was badly (and repeatedly) wounded, and ended the war a Major-General on the General Staff.

Thompson Capper taught at Camberley from 1904-06, then served as first Commandant at the new Staff College in Quetta, India. He returned to England (and the General Staff) in 1911, was considered one of Britain’s brightest officers. He was shot by a sniper at the battle of Loos, while commanding 7 Division, and was noted for his strong belief, like so many of his peers, in the superiority of dash. As Ian Beckett noted in Capper’s biographical entry,

Capper had been true to the principles he had set out in one of his lectures in June 1908: that wars could not be won ‘unless the individuals composing an army set out to fight with the determined spirit that they will conquer, or they will die in the attempt to do so’.

Professor Bond charted senior command and staff positions for the B.E.F., its divisions and numbered corps, the Cavalry Corps and the Royal Flying Corps, for the first four months of the year. Although weighted to prove a point, of the 45 officers listed, only five lacked the p.s.c. qualification (most notably, Sir John French), and of the
forty with it, fully seventeen had been commandant or instructors at Staff College (338-40).\(^5\)

Irrespective of whether this cadre consciously applied the lessons of the American Civil War as Lord Roberts claimed to have done against the Boers, it was certainly part of their experience and their military training. Many, ten to fifteen years older than their students, had themselves been students when Camberley study Civil War had reached its apogee. That, of course, was when Colonel Henderson was the Commandant, and Garnet Wolseley his Commander-in-Chief. But the departure of G.F.R Henderson – and the advent of two twentieth-century wars in Manchuria and South Africa – forever changed the role played by the American War at Camberley.

So, too, of course, did the principal role of the British Army of the early twentieth-century. The extent to which the Staff College focused on a war in Europe, rather than the subcontinent of India, is significant, and not only because the next war its graduates ended up fighting was against the Germans. The curriculum balanced training for large wars and small ones in a way that reflected the very different pressures upon a colonial – and a continental – Great Power. That Camberley concentrated its study as much as it did on fighting Germans as the decade progressed, is a positive aspect of its program. It may also properly explain the decline in Civil War (and Napoleonic) study, and the absence of such large European engagements as Solferino and Magenta. While

\(^5\) The weighting is in the choice of which positions to include on the list. Presumably, though, including more of the corps and division staff officers would have increased the percentage of p.s.c. Of the seventeen instructors (Directing Staff) and Commandants, one had taught only at Quetta.
large-formation battles against German corps were a likely scenario for the next British engagement, just as likely was another defense of India, the Suez Canal or West Africa.

Measured by any standard, Staff College study of the Civil War declined through the Edwardian years. What began with detailed assignments on Jackson’s Valley Campaign, exercises modeled after Civil War engagements, and essays on Stuart’s cavalry, ended in the years immediately prior to the First World War with just brief, ancillary references to a few American battles and leaders. Professor Bond’s contention that the Camberley program had been stale and outdated, as evidenced by fastidious Civil War study just before 1914 fails in the face of the evidence. Other evidence – lack of rigor, insufficient technical training, inability to foresee the increased importance of firepower, and overemphasis on the moral battlefield – better supports the argument.

But what about Liddell Hart’s position that, to the extent the Civil War was part of the curriculum, there was too much focus on the eastern theater and, specifically, on Stonewall Jackson? Whether there was too much focus is semantic; the Civil War played a small role in the curriculum, thus any concentration in one subject would have constituted a focus.

That said, save for an occasional cavalry reference to Appomattox, the study of Gettysburg and the maneuvers leading to it, and Sackville-West’s lectures on the approaches to Richmond, virtually every class, lecture and exercise that covered the American war focused on Jackson and the Valley Campaign. Kernstown, a small engagement rarely discussed by all but the most scholarly Civil War historians, played a
greater role in the curriculum of many of the years studied than perhaps any other Civil War battle (although even that battle’s role was small in the overall picture).

At least Gettysburg, Kernstown and Richmond were in the eastern theater. In the ten years of Camberley curricula examined, the entire western Civil War, including the battles of Shiloh, Vicksburg, Nashville, Chattanooga, Chickamauga and Atlanta, were ignored, except for passing comments about cavalry actions at Franklin, Tennessee. Even the defense of Charleston, pointed to by Garnet Wolseley as an ideal teaching point for naval-military cooperation received no mention.\(^6\) In this aspect of his analysis, Captain Liddell Hart hit the mark.

Garnet Wolseley’s Civil War writings, both in 1862 and in the 1880s, were not themselves the subject of any classroom instruction or tactical exercises. Indeed, in the Edwardian period, during which he was already in physical and mental decline, virtually nothing about Wolseley, save for the battle of Tel El Kebir, was studied at Camberley. But his effect on Civil War study was apparent for two, independent reasons.

First, and most substantively, as G.F.R. Henderson’s great patron, Wolseley essentially fostered the career of one of the great Civil War historians, and placed him in precisely the positions (at Sandhurst and Camberley) where his research would have the most immediate and far-reaching effect on command and staff officers.

Second, of course, was the mere fact of Wolseley’s having written so extensively about the Civil War, during the very pinnacle of his influence as a British Army general. Modern generals, active in their career, are not known for their writing, save for

\(^6\) In fairness, naval operations received greater interest at Camberley throughout the period prior to World War I, as naval liaison officers were inculcated into the curriculum.
occasional battlefield experience memoirs or leadership monographs. Generally, the notion of contemporary officers writing about policy or politics is so anathemic on both sides of the Atlantic, that they must first retire before freely sharing their thoughts with their fellow officers and the general public. But for Sir Garnet, the favored general of much of the army, the Queen and the nation, to have dedicated substantial efforts to commentary on the Civil War plainly had an instrumental effect on the officer corps. At the time when most of the Camberley Directing Staff described here were young officers, it would not only have been bad form to be uninformed on the writings of the senior officers of the Army, it would have been a bad career move.

But if Wolseley’s real effect on the Staff College was his support of Henderson’s work, and Henderson is the great link to Civil War study, what were the lessons these Civil War battles taught? In this respect, traditional analysis seems correct; too much dash, too much focus on sweeping movement, and insufficient study of the logistical and large-formation volunteer aspects of the American war. Given the obvious focus on the Valley – in which a smaller number of well-led, highly trained, highly motivated troops defeated much larger, better armed formations of volunteers – it is easy to say that perhaps the wrong lessons were drawn. There, were, however, at least occasional discussions of use of the railway by the American forces, indicating at least a nod to the logistical aspects of that nascent modern war.

More conclusively, the record suggests that Civil War study was but a very small component of the classroom experience of the Senior Division officer, indeed, a nonexistent part by 1913. In that respect, it is fair to say that while the World War I
senior commanders of the British Army were well-schooled in the American Civil War, their mid-level staff officers were not. In the years just before the Great War, Germans, not Yankees, were the principal army studied at Camberley.
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