THROUGH FOREIGN EYES
THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR IN
EUROPEAN MILITARY THOUGHT

BY
MORTEN JAY LUVAAS
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THROUGH FOREIGN EYES

The American Civil War in
European Military Thought

by

Date: April 9, 1956
Morten Jay Luvaas

Approved:

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy in
the Graduate School of
Arts and Sciences
of
Duke University

1956
The American Civil War was witnessed by numerous foreign soldiers, including official military observers from England, France and Prussia. Since 1865 it has also been the subject of considerable study in each of these armies. In this work I have tried to discover the military lessons that contemporary observers learned from their experiences in America and the reasons why European soldiers continued to show an interest in the Civil War long after the event. Whenever possible I have also tried to determine the influence of the Civil War in the English, French and German armies. The Austrian army has been excluded because Austrian soldiers paid little attention to the American campaigns. I do not know the Russian language; hence, I could not make a study of the reaction of Russian soldiers to the Civil War.

I am indebted to many people for help given along the way. Duke University has provided several scholarships and excellent library facilities: Mr. Emerson Ford, of the Duke Library Staff, was indispensable in locating and obtaining many books not in the Duke University Library. The late Mr. L. S. Amery generously presented me with the first volume of his Memoirs, and the late Dr. Douglas Southall Freeman graciously took an hour from his own research to answer my questions. General Friedrich von Boetticher, Lieutenant-Colonel Alfred H. Burne, Generalleutnant Kurt Dittmar,
Lieutenant-Colonel Pierre Evrard, Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, Lieutenant-Colonel G. A. Rimbault, and Lieutenant-Colonel F. W. Young have all supplied information not available elsewhere. General Gunther Blumentritt volunteered many vital suggestions and Dr. Frederic B. M. Hollyday shared his extensive knowledge of the bibliography of German military history.

I am particularly indebted to three people. Dr. Theodore Ropp first suggested the topic, and has given constant and much-needed encouragement and advice during the course of this work. I cannot express adequately my gratitude to him. Captain B. H. Liddell Hart has in generous measure answered my questions about his ideas and writings, and has similarly approached others on my behalf. And finally, I am greatly indebted to my wife, the most understanding of Civil War widows.

M. J. L.
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THROUGH FOREIGN EYES

The American Civil War in European Military Thought
Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

On April 12, 1861, Confederate batteries mounted around Charleston Harbor opened fire upon the United States troops occupying Fort Sumter. The ensuing bombardment lasted a scant two days and resulted in no casualties to either side. The four years of internecine war that followed, however, were years of bitter struggle and frightful losses. Over two thousand separate battles were fought, at a cost of nearly half a million lives -- in battle, disease, or through some service-connected injury -- to the Union Army alone!  

1. Europe had seen nothing on a comparable scale since the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleon.

In many respects this was a unique war. Distance, the nature of the armies, and technological innovations in weapons and equip-

ment all influenced the strategy and tactics of the Civil War. Fought over a geographical area "twice as large as the German Empire and as thinly populated as [European] Russia," it created new problems in logistics; rivers and railroads -- the latter used here for the first time to transport troops in war -- became the essential lines of supply and of communication. Frequently officers with little or no previous military experience were given responsible commands in the hastily raised armies, which more often than not were poorly trained and inadequately supplied.

It was a war of organized campaigns and of guerrilla fighting, a war of siege operations, independent cavalry raids, and amphibious landings; a war of bloody and indecisive battles. East of the Alleghenies the armies maneuvered and fought in the heavily wooded area between Richmond and Washington. West of these mountains the Union Army gradually won control over the strategic rivers and rail centers, thus giving the North -- in conjunction with an effective naval blockade -- a strangle hold over the South. The Trans-Mississippi theater was of minor strategical importance; the fighting there was by small forces, often nothing more than local guerrilla bands of uncertain loyalties, and had little effect upon the course of the war elsewhere.

The war was no less interesting from the standpoint of technology and tactics. New weapons such as the breech-loading

rifle and rifled artillery resulted in new or modified tactics. Magazine-loading repeating rifles -- issued sparingly to Union cavalry in the later years of the war -- land mines, hand-grenades and even a "stink shell" added to the destructive power of the Civil War armies. The field telegraph, lamp and flag signalling, and the captive observation balloon revolutionized battlefield communications. It was a war of extraordinary engineering feats -- Union engineers once built a railroad bridge 414 feet in length in forty hours\(^3\) -- and of significant advances in military hygiene and medicine, while the introduction of the ironclad and corresponding developments in coastal defense altered concepts of naval warfare. It was, in short, the first great war fought with the weapons of the Industrial Revolution.

In Europe and especially in the three great military and industrial powers of England, Prussia and France, the American campaigns attracted considerable attention. This was an era of international tension and consequently of intensified interest in military matters. Englishmen, for example, were seeking to remedy the military weaknesses which had been exposed in the Crimean War (1854-1856) and the Indian Mutiny (1857). In Prussia, where important army reforms had been carried out in 1860, Bismarck was talking of -- and planning -- the unification of the German states, "with blood and iron" if necessary. And France,

universally regarded as the leading military power on the conti-
ment after two victorious wars, was pursuing foreign policies
which might give rise to still another war.

But there were other reasons why these three powers should
manifest a special interest in American affairs. England, of
course, had strong cultural and linguistic ties with America, and
war talk in 1861 brought on by the Trent incident\(^4\) served to focus
attention upon the war already in progress. Besides, Englishmen
in general were interested in the slavery issue, and within the
British Army there was considerable pro-Confederate sentiment.
Personal rather than political considerations explain the interest
of the Germans, many of whom had close friends and relatives
fighting with the Union armies. France, on the other hand, had
political aspirations that for a time threatened to involve her
in the Civil War. Aside from the question of diplomatic recog-
nition for the Confederacy, which in itself would call for some
appraisal of the military situation, Napoleon III's support of
Maximillian in Mexico, if continued, would have made a showdown
with the United States likely. For this reason alone there must
have been many French officers who were anxious to learn what

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\(^4\) The Trent was a British mail vessel which had been
stopped by a Union warship on the high seas and, despite vigorous
protest, two Confederate emissaries to Europe had been forcibly
seized and removed. This incident nearly led to war between the
United States and England, but fortunately cooler heads pre-
vailed in both London and Washington and war was averted.
they could about the Union army. For a variety of reasons, therefore, even though England, Prussia and France were primarily concerned with diplomatic and military events nearer home, there were men in each army who followed the campaigns of the American armies with more than a casual interest.

There were three types of eye-witness accounts available to European officers who desired to learn something about the Civil War. The most obvious source of information was, of course, the newspaper. Various war correspondents, first seen in the Mexican (1846-1847) and Crimean wars, sent home articles on the main issues and events. This was especially true in England, where interest was greatest and where Sir William Howard Russell's forceful and controversial articles appeared frequently in the Times.


6. Russell, the most celebrated War Correspondent of his time, had made his reputation covering the war in the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny for the Times. William Howard Russell, *My Diary North and South* (Boston, 1863); Rupert Furneaux, *The First War Correspondent: William Howard Russell of The Times* (London, 1944), pp. 140-163. Frederick Milnes Edge, a "Special Correspondent of the Morning Star with the Armies of the United States," was less famous, but he saw more of the war (Russell departed for England soon after the first battle of Bull Run, July 21, 1861). Cf. Edge, *Major-General McClellan and the Cam-
Le Moniteur also maintained a regular correspondent in America, and the German papers gave the war wide coverage. Few of these correspondents were military men, however, and like the majority of their readers they were strictly interested in general conditions and the broad issues at stake. The reader who was looking for more exact technical data was forced to turn elsewhere.

This information often could be found in a second type of source—the published narrative of someone with a military background who had actually visited the seat of war. Sometimes this writer would be a soldier of fortune, such as the Prussian Heros von Borcke. Often he would be an army officer who had had an opportunity to visit America in an unofficial capacity: most British officers and several members of the French Royal Family belong to this category. Occasionally someone in the Union or Confederate army with a European military background would publish an account of his experiences. With the notable exception of von Scheliha's *Treatise on Coast-Defence*, these books were

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8. Lieutenant-Colonel Viktor Ernst Karl Rudolf von Scheliha, *A Treatise on Coast-Defence: based on the experience gained by*
usually personal reminiscences rather than military texts. Most of them were obviously prepared for popular consumption, and, like the accounts of the newspaper men, they contained little useful military information. Though a few of these who had witnessed some part of the war in America, such as Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher and the Comte de Paris, were trying to record the history of a campaign, their works were, for all practical purposes, secondary accounts. The significant fact about most of these personal narratives, however, is that they were usually published while the war was still in progress or shortly thereafter, and were therefore available for the few short years when European interest in the Civil War was at its peak.

The third and main source of information was the published reports or articles of official military observers. Apparently nothing of an official nature was ever published in England, although various officers who had been sent to the United States wrote about their experiences for the military journals. We know what these observers were sent to investigate, and these writings reveal the gist of what they brought back. The Prussian government sent Major Justis Scheibert to study military conditions in the Confederacy and the French sent a military Commission to observe the Union army: both Scheibert's report and the report of the French military Commission were subsequently published. These

officers of the corps of Engineers of the Army of the Confederate States and Compiled from Official Records of Officers of the Navy of the United States . . . From 1861 to 1865 (London, 1868).
reports provide much technical information about the American armies and reveal even more exactly what European soldiers hoped to learn from the American Civil War.

Perhaps it should be pointed out that there were no regular official channels for such information in the 1860's. Army officers were occasionally stationed abroad to report on new military developments, but the practice of exchanging military attachés was still in its infancy. No foreign military attachés resided in Washington during the war years, even though such officers were frequently exchanged in Europe at this time.9 Thus

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9. "The practice by the French Government of sending Military Attachés to foreign countries was originated by the official ordinance of 1833. Before that time French officers were sent to the Headquarters of a Foreign Army. But this was done only by temporary agreement between two allied sovereigns, and the assignment was transitory.

The first Military attaché was officially appointed in 1851 to the French Embassy in Berlin; other appointments followed in 1860, to the French Embassy in London, Vienna, Italy and Russia.

As far as the United-States are concerned, it was only in 1872 that a Military Attaché was sent to the French Embassy in Washington. This appointment was made at the same time as similar ones to Brussels, The Hague, Madrid, Pekin and Tokio."

Lieutenant-Colonel Pierre Evrard, French Army, Assistant Military Attaché, to the writer, June 15, 1955. Major General Arthur G. Trudeau, writes that existing records ("which are not complete in all respects") indicate that the first accredited military attachés to the United States Government from the three countries in question were: Great Britain (1899), France (1881), Germany (1889). Major General Arthur G. Trudeau, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, to the writer, March 21, 1955. The English were late comers in this field: there had been some talk of sending a military attaché to Berlin in 1860, but nothing was done until 1864, when the Government became sufficiently alarmed over the "disturbed state" of Europe to send such officers to the principal European capitals. Colonel Willoughby Verner, The Military Life of H. R. H. George, Duke of Cambridge (London, 1905), I, 361-362. See also the Almanach de Gotha, Annuaire Diplomatique et Statistique (Gotha, various dates).
the only practical way to secure technical military information was through observers or military Commissions. This was accepted practice: the United States had sent such a Commission to Europe during the Crimean War. (Captain George B. McClellan, General-in-chief of the Union Army in 1861, had been a member of this Commission and his predecessor in command of the Army of the Potomac, Major-General Irvin McDowell, had spent 1859 on leave in Europe.) These Commissions were usually composed of Engineer and Artillery officers and the information they compiled was essentially of a scientific and technical nature, but their published reports often included broader aspects of strategy, tactics, organization and equipment.

In this day of super spies, the Central Intelligence Agency and rigid "security" measures, it is difficult to conceive how elementary military intelligence was in the 1860's. It was not unusual for individual officers to exchange technical information about their respective armies: Field Marshal Sir John Burgoyne, Inspector-General of Fortifications, corresponded with his counterparts in Belgium, Russia and the United States. Brigadier-General Joseph G. Totten, Chief of Engineers in the Union Army, sent Burgoyne, for example, two copies of a "document on permanent fortifications and sea-coast defences," and Sir John

felt free to ask Totten to give one of the British observers, a fort or part of one, showing your most modern improved system of construction, application of materials, interior arrangements for the convenience and efficiency of the service, etc.; in short, a good understanding of the progress in the service and art of military engineering that your countrymen are so likely to have produced at this eventful period of the general introduction of rifle guns, armour plating, etc.

Information of this type was frequently published in the military journals and, as Sir John candidly admitted,

After all, though we are bound to respect the desires of those whom we visit, you and I, General, know very well that for any sinister object we might have, we can obtain all that is most important by cursory view as ordinary passers by, and by open ordinary conversation; and on that principle, as well as for the duty of being courteous to strangers, I have myself constantly advocated the opening of all our sources of military engineering information to all the world.11

During the Civil War these official observers and military commissions were usually sent to the Union Army, probably because any official mission to the Confederacy was apt to involve the question of diplomatic recognition.

Most foreign observers were well received by both belligerents. This was especially true in the South, perhaps because the Confederate government was anxious to win friends -- and if possible, recognition -- in Europe. In spite of the attitude

11. Lieut.-Col. The Hon. George Wrottesley, Life and Correspondence of Field Marshal Sir John Burgoyne, Bart. (London, 1873), II, 412-413. The officer whom Sir John was sending to Totten was Lieutenant-Colonel Gallwey. See below, pp. 41-42.
of the English and French governments toward the United States, the North, too, was hospitable to military visitors, and there seems to have been no reluctance on the part of the Union Army to give foreign officers access to technical information. Even General W. T. Sherman, whose dislike for visitors of any kind became almost an obsession, behaved "most courteously" toward an English officer who visited his headquarters. ¹² Union officials did object, however, to foreign officers entering the Confederate lines, not so much for fear that they would impart military information to their enemies but because most foreign officers, particularly the British, were suspected of being "rebel sympathisers." For this reason most foreign observers had to visit the Confederacy illegally. Lieutenant-Colonel Fremantle entered by way of Texas, Lieutenant-Colonel Wolseley was smuggled via the "Underground Route" across the lower Potomac, and Captain Scheibert ran the blockade from Nassau to Charleston.¹³ This Union attitude was not without precedent. The French officials had not permitted the Delafleld Commission to visit their lines during the Crimean War after the Americans had revealed their


intention of visiting the Russians.\textsuperscript{14}

Finally, it may be noted that the Civil War presented unique difficulties to the foreign military observer. It was a new kind of war, one which he could not always understand. Improved weapons, modified tactics, unusual terrain, unheard-of problems of communication and supply -- all made it difficult for the foreign observer to appreciate the significance of the American campaigns and the lessons they might hold for the future.

In addition, the distances involved made it almost impossible for him to visit the armies in the West, where the character of the war was somewhat different from that in Virginia. Because he was apt to be either an Engineer or an Artillery officer, he was not always aware of the more general problems, such as morale, the raising of volunteer armies, conscription or the relationship in a democratic state between statesman and soldier in time of war. As a career soldier he often found it difficult to understand the American armies, and if he was an active sympathizer -- such as the Comte de Paris with the Union Army, von Borcke, Scheibert, and Fremantle with the Confederates -- it was sometimes hard to be objective.

It is understandable, then, that the "fog of war" should settle over the Civil War battlefields, obscuring certain lessons

\textsuperscript{14} Delafield, \textit{Report on the Art of War in Europe}, p. xv.
and distorting others, and that undue attention should be devoted to those military and geographical areas where the visibility seemed clearest.
Chapter II
THE ENGLISH OBSERVERS

The Civil War was closely followed in England. At first many military men were inclined to regard it largely as an affair between amateurs, but eventually even these skeptics began to take the American campaigns seriously. Lord Wolseley, then a young officer, later recalled "the breathless interest and excitement with which from month to month, almost from day to day, we English soldiers read and studied every report that could be obtained of the war as it proceeded." 


By 1862 English officers began to arrive at the scene of hostilities. Some came all the way from England to "see something of this wonderful struggle," while others managed a visit from nearby Canada, where the British garrison had been strengthened as a result of the war threat growing out of the Trent incident. How many of these unofficial observers came to this country during the war will never be known, but the available evidence suggests that it must have been a considerable number.

Toward the end of the war, certainly by 1864, the British also sent official observers to the United States to obtain technical information not available in the reports forwarded by Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador in Washington. While nearly all of the official observers remained in the North, many individual officers went South, either because they sympathized with the Confederacy or because most of the war news came from Union sources and there was no other way they could obtain "trustworthy


information regarding the Southern plans, or operations, or mode of fighting."⁶ The English were thus able to observe the war from both sides; in this respect, at least, their coverage of the military operations was more complete than that of any other nation in Europe.

This interest in the Civil War was doubtless related to the army reform movement of the 1860's. The Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny had exposed glaring weaknesses in the British military structure,⁷ while public concern had been further accelerated in 1859 by a French invasion scare. To meet this "threat," hundreds of Volunteer Rifle Corps were formed; "fiery meetings were held all over the country at which militant patriots let off steam against the French," and from his death-bed General Sir William Napier, author of the renowned History of the Peninsular War, grew sufficiently alarmed to bombard his friends and the Times with elaborate plans for the use of these Volunteers against Britain's old enemy.⁸ This invasion scare

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⁶ Fremantle, Three Months in the Confederate States, p. 3; Wolseley, Story of a Soldier's Life, II, 119-120; Lonn, Foreigners in the Confederacy, pp. 348 ff.

⁷ Most of the army reforms in the years immediately preceding the Civil War were in the field of military education, the most significant of which was the creation of the Staff College in 1858. Fortescue, History of the British Army, XIII, 520-560, passim; A. R. Godwin-Austen, The Staff and the Staff College (London, 1927), pp. 111-147.

had hardly subsided when war broke out in America, and the reform movement continued to grow until it resulted in the Cardwell Reforms of 1870-1871.

This reform movement undoubtedly influenced the British soldiers who observed or studied the American Civil War. Because of the Volunteer Movement, a British observer would be particularly interested in the performance of the American soldiers, the vast majority of whom were volunteers with little or no previous military experience. Remembering the mismanagement of the Crimean War, a British observer would also watch for signs of civilian and political interference in military matters. With the campaigns of the great Napoleon — scientifically analyzed and interpreted by Jomini — now forming the basis of his formal military education, he would probably also be careful to notice to what extent the American campaigns conformed to the generally accepted doctrines of war.


9. In the twelve years following the Crimean War, seventeen Royal Commissions, eighteen select Committees, nineteen Committees of Officers within the War Office, and thirty-five Committees on Military Officers were called upon to report on various aspects of military policy. *Ibid.*, p. 555.

The first and one of the most prominent English officers to observe the Civil War armies in action was Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Charles Fletcher, of the Scots Fusilier Guards. Fletcher accompanied the Union Army during the Peninsular Campaigns in April-June 1862, and later he visited both the Union and Confederate Armies in the West. His observations, therefore, cover both sides of the war, and although he wrote more to acquaint his countrymen with details of the campaigns than to point out specific military lessons, his professional views occasionally colored the pages of his three-volume *History*, the first volumes of which appeared in 1865.

Fletcher's writings show the influence of the Volunteer Movement, which must have been much on his mind at the time he came to America. Unlike many English officers at the start of the Civil War, he did not scoff at the apparent ineptness of the volunteer soldiers. He noted that inexperienced troops often behaved surprisingly well under cover, but that frequently they were difficult to manage when in the open or exposed to enemy fire. "Like all young and undisciplined troops, the men were fond of using their rifles but careful not to expose themselves," therefore "much powder was wasted at long ranges" and "little harm was done." Yet Fletcher detected a gradual improvement in these volunteer armies. As late as June 1862, when he departed from the Union Army near Richmond, he considered the rank

and file "half-disciplined" and the officers "unpractised"; but he thought that the Union Army had vastly improved by the following year.\(^1\)2

The rapid, well-sustained attack, which in many of the great European combats has led to important successes, does not appear adapted to the qualities of the Federal soldiery. Indomitable perseverance, cheerfulness under fatigue and hardship, diligence in entrenching, and stubbornness in defending these entrenchments, seem to be especial characteristics which render them, when well-armed and skilled in the use of their weapons, most formidable opponents.\(^1\)3

Given capable leadership, Fletcher considered the American armies "equal to any task which might reasonably be required."\(^1\)4

Later, in a Report on the Military Academy at West Point, Fletcher again stressed the importance of good leadership to an army composed of volunteers "raised hastily from the States militia. . . ."

Gradually . . . the value of previous [military] education became felt, and as the war progressed, the West Point officers more and more came to the front, until at its termination with scarcely an exception on both sides, those who have left a name in its history had previously received their training at the Academy.

There is no higher testimony to the value of military training, and to the efficiency of that training as afforded at West

\(^{12}\) Ibid., II, 33 n., 284-285; III, 118-119. Like most foreign soldiers, Fletcher believed in the natural superiority of the Southern soldier.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., III, 366.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., II, 437.
Point, than the narrative of the four years . . . [of] struggle. . . . 15

Fletcher saw a "considerable analogy" between the needs of the United States and Canada in this respect, and he recommended that --

unless Canada rely on the Imperial army for educated officers, she must be prepared to organize a system of professional training, and should she with this object in view determine on the establishment of a military academy somewhat on the model of West Point, she would find but little difficulty in adapting the means at her disposal to the purpose required. 16

In 1876 Canada established the Royal Military College "somewhat on the model of West Point," adopting "a course which it was considered met the special requirements peculiar to Canada." 17

Although Fletcher witnessed a major campaign and was personally acquainted with generals in both armies, his History is disappointing. For all practical purposes it must be regarded as a secondary source, since Fletcher wrote about battles he did not see and leaned heavily upon the published works of others. By depending upon official dispatches and available American


17. George F. G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers 1604-1954 The Military History of an Unmilitary People (Toronto, 1954), p. 244. "The length of the course at the Royal Military College was four years, as at West Point; the courses at Sandhurst and Woolwich were at that time only two years." Lieutenant-Colonel O. E. Hewett, another British observer with the Union Army in 1862, became the first commandant.
sources he deprived posterity of an eye-witness account, and instead of recording the impressions of a military observer he often merely reflected American views. Although he showed considerable insight in his remarks about the peculiarities of the volunteers, he did not appreciate the value of field entrenchments. And despite his knowledge of the western campaigns, Fletcher remained primarily interested in the war in the east, which to him "gradually assumed the characteristics of the more regular operations conducted by European armies."\textsuperscript{18}

It is indeed unfortunate that Fletcher tried to record the Civil War campaigns rather than to analyze them, for his speeches and the pamphlets he wrote after the war indicate that he saw much more than he wrote about. At the time, Fletcher, like most foreign observers, was puzzled by the American cavalry tactics. In 1862 most European cavalry was still armed with the lance and saber and fought almost exclusively by "shock tactics." Cavalry was massed into dense formations and hurled at the enemy in an effort to crush his forces by the sheer impact of the mounted charge; in the mêlée that followed, the sword and saber ("cold steel" was the phrase preferred by advocates of shock tactics) were effective weapons, far handier than rifles at close range. In the Civil War, however, certain conditions prevailed that precluded the handling of cavalry in such masses. Rarely was the

\textsuperscript{18}. \textit{History of the American War}, II, 185.
terrain adaptable for the traditional cavalry charge, while the increased range and rapidity of fire of modern infantry weapons put an end to traditional shock tactics. Consequently the Civil War cavalry was armed with the rifle and fought for the most part on foot, relying upon fire power for its chief weapon. Such tactics were not new: dragoon regiments had fought dismounted since the seventeenth century. But never before had mounted infantry, as the Civil War cavalry came to be called, been employed on such a large scale -- to the incidental bewilderment of foreign military observers.

Fletcher, while recognizing that "the nature of the country and the absence of the requisite military training" had prevented cavalry "from performing the duties usually assigned to that arm in European armies," did not believe that the rifle had replaced the lance and saber. He could appreciate the advantages of dismounted tactics with respect to scouting and reconnaissance, but he remained a loyal advocate of shock tactics. "Neither at Gettysburg, nor indeed at any of the great battles of the war, had cavalry borne a conspicuous part," and the reason for this, according to Fletcher, was because the cavalry in both armies had failed to master the technique of shock tactics. "Jeb" Stuart,

the famous Confederate cavalry leader, had "admired the arme blanche [shock tactics] as the true weapon for a horseman, but unfortunately, neither time nor means were at hand to organise and discipline a force on the model of European cavalry. . . ." 20

Ten years later, however, in a lecture on problems relating to the defense of Canada, Fletcher was more willing to admit the value of mounted infantry, at least insofar as Canada was concerned:

". . . in the greater portion of Canada there is little ground for the action of Cavalry organized similarly to that of European armies, although for mounted infantry there might be considerable scope, and this question of the best method of organizing and arming horsemen requires deep consideration and a careful study of recent campaigns, especially those of the great American Civil War. It is, I believe, the opinion of General [Phillip H.] Sheridan . . . that the teachings of modern campaigns show the desirability of augmenting the mounted infantry, or cavalry armed with good rifles and taught to fight on foot, at the expense of the artillery. No doubt there is much that may be urged on the other side, but this instance is given with the view of showing that modern military history together with a just estimate of the probable theatre of war, should influence the decision of those whose duty it is to organize an army." 21

The Marquis of Hartington, 22 a prominent young Liberal member of Parliament with an interest in military affairs, also visited the Union Army in 1862. Landing in New York in August 1862, he spent several weeks touring the North with Lord Edward


Cavendish, his brother who was then stationed in Canada. These two young representatives of the great house of Cavendish received a guided tour of the Washington defenses ("some of the forts . . . looked very strong"), and met both General McClellan and President Lincoln ("a very well-meaning sort of a man, but . . . about as fit for his position now as a fire-shovel"). They also rode over the battlefield of Antietam ten days after the battle (September 17, 1862), and Lord Hartington wrote home in amazement at what he saw: "... in about seven or eight acres of wood there is not a tree which is not full of bullets and bits of shell. It is impossible to understand how anyone could live in such a fire as there must have been there." 23

Lord Hartington wanted to see something of the Southern side of the war and because the Washington authorities would not grant him permission to pass through the Union lines, he and his brother were hustled across the Potomac at night by Confederate sympathizers. They visited Richmond, where they met Secretary of War James A. Seddon and President Jefferson Davis, and they spent a week with Robert E. Lee's army, then encamped on the heights above Fredericksburg. They returned to New York via Charleston and a "blockade-runner." Shortly after his return to England, Lord Hartington was named Under-Secretary at the War Office, in which position he soon became involved in reform

measures connected with the Volunteer forces. 24

Lord Hartington had no occasion to see the American soldier in combat, but his opinion of the volunteer soldier in 1862 resembled that of Fletcher. He described a regiment of New York Volunteers as --

a very fine-looking lot of men indeed, mostly farmers and country people from Western New York, quite as respectable a looking lot as any of our volunteers. They seemed very jolly and in good spirits, but they have had no drill whatever, and I don't see who is to give it to them. The sentry at the Colonel's tent was sitting on a camp-stool and reading the newspaper. I believe a few of the officers have been in other volunteer regiments, but I could not make out that they had a single regular officer among them. It seems a great pity that such fine material should be thrown away, as they very likely may be, by having utterly incompetent officers.

Lord Hartington also wrote critically of the replacement system then in practice in the Union Army. Not only were there many regiments no better trained and disciplined than the New York Volunteers he had visited, but what made the situation worse was the fact that --

All this time there are old regiments which are reduced to seventy or eighty men, but they [the United States Government] will not fill them up, but go on raising new ones from some rotten reasons about bounties and length of service and that sort of thing; but really because the State Governors like to have the appointment of the new officers. . . . 25

24. Since the Secretary of State for War was a peer, Lord de Grey, Lord Hartington had to represent the War Office in the House of Commons. He was named to the post in April, 1863. Ibid., I, 55-56.

25. Ibid., I, 44.
Here he had touched upon a tender issue, for the replacement system which allowed veteran regiments to be depleted while new regiments were being raised was foolish and inefficient. In the opinion of General W. T. Sherman, this mode of recruitment and promotion was "the greatest mistake in our civil war." Sherman himself preferred the German method of recruitment whereby each regiment in the field had a depot from which it could draw trained replacements, a system adopted in 1870 by the British Army as a result of the Cardwell Reforms. 26

The state of the regiment of New York Volunteers made a lasting impression on Lord Hartington. In the Parliamentary debates over the Volunteer Act of 1863, which regulated the organization and discipline of the numerous Rifle Corps that had sprung up several years previously, he frequently underlined his arguments by referring to his experiences in America. "Military men say that we have not acquired much additional information upon any scientific point in the art of war from the contest now raging in the United States," Lord Hartington told the Commons in 1863. However, he thought that —

... from that war we might learn very many useful things in connection with the services of Volunteers. The army of the North, which seemed to be imperfect in discipline, and which was wanting in esprit de corps, had not been found efficient in ag-

gressive warfare; but the army of the Southern States was composed of men animated by very much the same feeling, and drawn from the same class as our Volunteer force.

The English Volunteers, he stated, would compare favorably with the Confederate soldiers, and if the Volunteer Act were passed 150,000 of these men would be available to drive back an enemy "if the soil of England should be invaded." 27

For the purposes of this study it is indeed unfortunate that Lord Hartington did not see more of the Civil War and that he did not write much about his observations, for he was by far the most prominent British politician to visit the battlefields. He was twice appointed Secretary of State for War: once for a brief period in 1866, at the age of thirty-three, and again in 1882 during Gladstone's second ministry. In 1888 he was appointed chairman of the Hartington Commission, the purpose of which was to inquire into the "civil and professional administration of the Naval and Military Departments and their relations to each other and to the Treasury." The work of this Commission is not relevant to this study and many of its recommendations were never adopted, but because Lord Hartington left an enduring mark upon the British Army his impressions of the Civil War are significant.

27. Parliamentary Debates, 3rd Series, CLXX (1863), 1698-1699; The Volunteer Bill (Bill 108) was passed as amended June 16, 1863. Ibid., CLXXI, 964.

Another visitor to the United States was Captain Edward Hewett, Royal Engineers, who had been among those sent to reinforce the British troops in Canada in 1862. During the fall of that year, Hewett made a trip to Washington and spent some time with McClellan's army on the upper Potomac, after which he went to the western theater and returned to Canada sometime late in November. "Official reports which Hewett is known to have made on his return to Canada cannot now be located," but a lengthy letter which he wrote to his mother reveals his impressions of the Union Army.

Hewett described the Union soldiers as "splendid looking and intelligent fellows," well equipped but poorly disciplined, and he blamed most of their faults on incompetent leadership. He concluded that unless better officers were developed soon, "all the arms, clothing material and harness, and guns of these insane armies will be unserviceable in a year or so," and he felt that "nothing but the hard school of manoeuvers, wars and reverses will create the spirit of order and discipline . . . which


30. Hewett was one of the few who did not maintain that the Southern soldier was the better fighting man. He wrote to his mother: "You must not think that there is any want of courage on either side, for there is not, nor must you think that the Southern soldiers are much better than the Northern, for they are not, only the courage of them is better directed and applied in earnest. . . . Ibid., pp. 53, 56.
will at last work its own cure and gradually reform the army."  

Hewett was not at all impressed by what he saw of the Civil War cavalry.

The Southern cavalry are the better \textit{sic} than the Northern, but still as cavalry they are poor enough. The Cavalry on both sides, but more especially the Northern \textit{sic} are merely mounted infantry. They are not taught to use the sword at all, and indeed several regiments can muster but few swords anyway. They are armed with rifles and revolvers, the consequence is that they never charge or get well amongst the infantry, (the only chance for cavalry) but dismount and skirmish, and of course get beaten as all cavalry must, in that sort of work against Infantry.

Manifestly Hewett was an advocate of shock tactics: so much so, in fact, that when he personally charged the empty forts around Cincinnati in the best Quixotic tradition to demonstrate the merits of "a sudden dash of \textit{well mounted} cavalry," he could not understand why his Union acquaintances "were absolutely aghast at the idea of cavalry charging even the slightest obstacle."  

Like Fletcher, Hewett noticed the tendency of American troops to seek cover. "Neither side," he wrote --

can be manoeuvred under fire, and this is about the secret of the whole present American War, the men on either side can be brought under fire, and when there will stand well: but they

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31. Preston, "British Military Observer," pp. 53-54. Hewett's comments on the inefficiency of the Union officers is interesting in view of the fact that 131 officers were dismissed from the Union Army in 1862, most of them because they were regarded as unfit. In 1863 only 17 officers were dismissed on the same grounds, and 8 of these had their dismissals revoked. Kenneth P. Williams, \textit{Lincoln finds a General} (New York, 1949), II, 544-545, 828.

are not good enough either in morale or field movements to advance, change position, or retire — The moment they have to manoeuvre, they get into confusion and break, this their own officers admit and also that the charges either of Cavalry or Infantry are purely imaginary; they may and have occasionally made a rush; but never get within 300 yards of one another; but normally wavered, halted, and fired irregularly and when one side or the other gets tired first bolts, led by their officers almost invariably on the Northern side.33

One of the most prominent English officers to witness American armies in action was Lieutenant-Colonel James Arthur Lyon Fremantle, of the celebrated Coldstream Guards. Fremantle was on leave from the British Army when he entered Texas in the spring of 1863, and he spent three fascinating months traveling through the Confederacy. His wanderings took him to every Confederate state east of the Mississippi save Florida, and during his visit Fremantle saw many of the leading personalities and events of the war. He spent a few days with General Joseph E. Johnston during a crucial period in the Vicksburg campaign; he observed the damage done by Union cavalry during Grierson's Raid through Mississippi;34 he stayed for awhile with General Leonidas Polk in Tennessee; he witnessed the siege of Charleston and he interviewed top officials in Richmond. The climax of his trip

33. Ibid., p. 56.

34. Colonel Benjamin H. Grierson left La Grange, Tennessee, on April 17, 1863, with a brigade of Union Cavalry, and swept through the entire state of Mississippi, destroying Confederate supplies and disrupting communications.
was the battle of Gettysburg, which he viewed from the headquar-
ters of Robert E. Lee. Fremantle subsequently entered the Union
lines and made his way to New York, but before leaving for Eng-
land he witnessed still another scene in the great American
drama -- the New York Draft Riots.

Soon after his return to England Fremantle wrote a narrative
of his trip entitled *Three Months in the Southern States*. He was
an observant traveler, and his recorded impressions present a
vivid, detailed and sympathetic picture of conditions in the Con-
federacy. Since his book was of a popular nature it is difficult
to determine what Fremantle thought professionally of the mili-
tary events he observed, although his comments on the Civil War
cavalry tactics may provide a clue.

Like many other observers, Fremantle was frankly puzzled by
the American cavalry:

... every impartial man confesses that these cavalry fights are
miserable affairs. Neither party has any idea of serious charg-
ing with the sabre. They approach one another with considerable
boldness, until they get to within about forty yards, and then,
at the very moment when a dash is necessary, and the sword alone
should be used, they hesitate, halt, and commence a desultory
fire with carbines and revolvers. ... Stuart's cavalry can
hardly be called cavalry in the European sense of the word. ... 35

35. Fremantle, *Three Months in the Southern States*, pp. 284-
285.
He was right: they were not cavalry in the "European sense of the word." But what Fremantle and others failed to realize was that the European concept of cavalry was being rendered obsolete by new weapons, particularly the breech-loader. Like Fletcher, he did recognize the advantages of American cavalry in heavily wooded terrain, but he did not believe that it could stand a "fair charge of regular cavalry" in the open. And he doubted whether Stuart's men in their turn were capable of charging infantry.36

Fremantle had a higher opinion of Civil War infantry. At Gettysburg he was amazed by the conduct of the battle-worn Confederates "who certainly go under fire with the most perfect nonchalance. They show no enthusiasm or excitement, but the most complete indifference. This is the effect of two years' almost uninterrupted fighting."37 He considered the troops to be fairly well disciplined, though poor marchers.38 What impressed him most about the army leadership was the way in which the American soldiers would follow only those officers who were outstanding in personal conduct in battle. Thus "every atom of authority has to be purchased by a drop of ... blood."39

36. Ibid., pp. 158, 251.
37. Ibid., p. 253.
38. Ibid., pp. 226, 289.
39. Ibid., p. 159.
Fremantle noticed another peculiarity of the Civil War: battles tended to escape the immediate control of commanding generals. At Gettysburg he was astonished to discover that Lee, "during the whole time the firing continued . . . only sent one message and only received one report. It is evidently his system," Fremantle concluded, "to arrange the plan thoroughly with the three corps commanders, and then leave to them the duty of modifying and carrying it out to the best of their abilities." 40 This was a cogent observation. As other observers and later studies would show, Fremantle here captured the essence of Lee's system of command. 41

Whether Fremantle actually observed more than his book indicates will never be known. In all probability he did, since there is some reason to believe that he deliberately withheld certain kinds of information in order not to be suspected of revealing military secrets. 42 What little Fremantle did devote to military technology suggests that he was an alert observer, but unaware of any fundamental changes in the mode of conducting war.

40. Ibid., p. 260.


42. "As Fort Sumter must be in a very different state now to what it was when I saw it, I think there can be no harm in describing the fort as it then stood." Three Months in the Southern States, p. 180 note. "I have omitted a description of this little gunboat, as she is still doing good service in Charleston harbor." Ibid., p. 192 n.
He mentioned the occasional use of entrenchments (had Fremantle visited the Virginia battles one year later it is likely that this subject would have received more attention), and he described Fort Sumter in considerable detail, but nowhere did Fremantle attempt to evaluate what he saw. The late Douglas Southall Freeman once wrote that "a more dignified picture of the Confederate cause could not have been presented." Perhaps so, but Fremantle might well have written a clearer analysis of the military aspects of the Civil War.

Another foreign observer worthy of mention was Captain Fitzgerald Ross. Ross, despite his Scotch name, was an officer in the Austrian Hussars at the time of his visit to America; but because he had the benefit of an unusually long stay here and because his writings were published in England and were used by subsequent English historians of the Civil War, his views should be discussed, however briefly.

Arriving in Virginia in May 1863, Ross spent nearly one year traveling about the Confederacy. During this time he had the good fortune to witness the battles of Gettysburg and Chickamauga, as well as the bombardment of Charleston. He wrote of his experiences in a series of articles for Blackwood's Magazine, expressing the hope that "a little account of my travels . . .

might interest the public generally." 44

A cavalryman, Ross was especially interested in the American cavalry tactics.

The cavalry here is differently organized from the same branch in Europe. They are, in fact, mounted infantry. Every man's horse is his own property [this was true only of the Confederate cavalry] and that may be one reason why they prefer fighting on foot. . . . Besides, there has been no time to put them through a regular cavalry drill, and teach the efficient use of the sabre -- the true arm of real cavalry -- whilst with the use of the rifle they have been familiar from their earliest youth. To handle a rifle efficiently . . . a man must dismount. . . . I think they have acted judiciously in taking their men as they found them and not trying to establish the European system. Besides, the country is so wooded and broken . . . that opportunities for a regular cavalry charge on a large scale seldomly occur. 45

Most of the observers from the British Army were from the Royal Engineers. After their experience in the Crimean War and the building of new fortifications around London, these officers seem to have been primarily concerned with the effect of modern artillery on fortifications, though they naturally commented on a fairly wide range of subjects. Hewett, it will be recalled, was a Royal Engineer: another, who remained anonymous, visited the Army of the Potomac in Winter Quarters in 1863. Like Hewett, this officer did not

44. A Cavalry Officer (Ross), "A Visit to the Cities and Camps of the Confederate States," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, XCVI (December, 1864), 626. These articles were later published in book form under the same title.

think much of the Federal cavalry . . . and, in my humble opinion, they would disgrace some of our wildest Irregulars raised in the north of India at the time of the mutinies . . . . Their horses were poor and ill kept, their equipment ragged, and their discipline bad, and they looked more like a disorganised mob of infantry on horseback, than the cavalry they were intended to represent. They were, however, well armed with swords, revolvers, and breech-loading carbines, which latter, by a Yankee device, fire seven rounds without reloading, and may with ease be discharged by one hand.46

As for the infantry, he saw a "crack regiment" at drill, and judged its performance as "certainly not better, if as good as one of our moderate County Volunteer Regiments in England." Though he was an engineer he did not describe the Washington defenses except to state that he "would rather have to defend than attack them."47

Captain F. Beaumont was another Engineer officer who visited the Union Armies during the first years of the war. He accompanied McClellan's army during the Peninsular campaign, ascended in Professor Lowe's observation balloon48 and returned to England convinced that the captive balloon "is capable of being turned to practical account" for military purposes. He wrote an article on his observations because, "being so little known, any remarks


47. Ibid., p. 333.

on the subject based on actual experience, must ... be of some value." Beaumont subsequently became one of the pioneers of ballooning in the British Army, serving as an Associate-Member of the Ordnance Select Committee which conducted experimental balloon ascents for reconnaissance purposes at Aldershot and at Woolwich in 1863.

In 1864, however, the British Government began to feel the need for more exact technical information, and official observers were sent to learn of "the improvements, alterations, or expediency applied to the implements, devices, and usages in the art of war -- particularly to those of the Engineer branch of the service." In February 1864, Lord Hartington was asked if any official observers had been sent to study the war. He replied that until recently the War Office had learned all it needed to know from reports forwarded from the Embassy in Washington. They were especially interested in "the progress of science applied to artillery, of all experiments, and of all new guns manufactured. . . ." However, he admitted that the diplomatic officials were unable to supply "such correct detailed information as ap-
peared to be necessary," and that consequently three officers had been sent out "for the purpose of investigating and reporting to the War Office . . . all the improvements and alterations which had taken place in artillery science in the United States."

A similar Commission had also been sent to Denmark to observe the operations there. 52

Accordingly Lieutenant Featherstonhaugh and Lieutenant-Colonel Jervois 53 were sent to visit the works at Richmond and Petersburg. Featherstonhaugh was able to slip into Petersburg, but was forced to write "entirely from memory, the route by which I left the Confederate States not permitting me to take any description whatever, on paper, of the defence of Petersburg, then besieged by the Federal Army." He considered the Confederate lines "by no means formidable, either in trace or profile," but he noted the "extensive use made of bomb-proofs" and he wrote

52. Parliamentary Debates, CLXXIII (London, 1864), 564. The following spring (1865) Lord Hartington was pressed for particulars regarding military observers in America. He again stated that "military officers had been sent over from time to time," but that a British naval attaché was the only one he knew of at the moment. The Government had proposed to send a military attaché to Washington as well, but this could not be done until Congress convened, since the Americans thought "some reciprocal action on their part necessary." He further stated that several medical officers had proceeded from Canada to observe medical practices in the Union Army. Ibid., CLXXIII, 83-84. See also Preston, "Military Lessons of the American Civil War," p. 232.

53. See below, p. 44.
of the great value of land mines in the defense of fortified places. His report was considered of such significance that the 1865 issue of the Professional Papers of the Royal Engineers was delayed until it had been received.

In 1864, a Lieutenant Innes made a similar trip to Charleston. Like Featherstonhaugh, the notes Innes took were "necessarily rather meagre," partly because he was "unable to take anything bulky in the way of drawings" with him on his return, "but chiefly because the publication of more detailed plans . . . would be obviously unjustifiable under the circumstances." He forwarded copies of Union General Q. A. Gillmore's official reports to England, where they were immediately made available to all officers of the Royal Engineers. Writing from Halifax, Innes described a typical Confederate battery at Charleston and submitted much technical information on the various types of artillery used there. Confederate light guns, he reported, were "almost worthless"; the damage to Union warships "was done principally by the 10 inch Columbiads and 7 inch rifles." Fort


55. R. E. Professional Papers, XIV, preface by the Editor.

56. Copies of Gillmore's Engineer and Artillery Operations against the defences of Charleston Harbor in 1863 . . . (New York, 1865) were distributed to all of the Royal Engineer libraries, and Extracts from his Report of the Siege of Fort Pulaski, were published in the Professional Papers of the Royal Engineers in 1864 (ibid., XIII, 147-152).
Sumter had "suffered no injury of any consequence" from naval attacks, but the Union heavy artillery on Morris Island had caused heavy destruction. He concluded that rifled guns were "much more effectual ... than smooth bores," and that earthworks were more effective against modern artillery fire than forts constructed of brick and masonry.57

Lieutenant-Colonel T. L. Gallwey, the official observer whom Sir John Burgoyne sent to General Totten "to obtain as much general useful information as possible for the benefit of our own service,"58 visited the Union Army before Charleston in the spring of 1864. He reported that "The results as regards comparative penetration and effect of rifled and smooth-bored ordnance in these operations confirm those arrived at in England."

There has been but little experience gathered in America with regard to the effect of rifle shells on earthworks, owing to the imperfection in the fuzes; in fact, during my recent official visit ... I failed altogether in collecting information on this subject.59

Gallwey did see enough, however, to convince him that guns mounted en barbette -- that is, in open topped earthworks or masonry -- were no longer practicable.


58. Wrottesley, Life and Letters of Sir John Burgoyne, II, 413. See above, p. 11.

With imperfect shells and fuzes, and with a system of artillery inferior in accuracy to our own, the Federals effectually silenced the barbette armament of Fort Sumter, at distances from 3,000 to 4,000 yards. We may admit . . . the impossibility of sustaining a fire from barbette guns under the fire of the more powerful armament of a fortress at a distance so great even as 2,000 to 2,500 yards.60

From the "Observations" which one officer of the Royal Artillery submitted to the Adjutant-General, it would seem that -- aside from purely technical information -- the official reports differed little in basic interpretation from the earlier observations of men like Fletcher and Fremantle. Major H. A. Smyth was sent to observe the fighting around Petersburg shortly before the end of the war. He was close enough to Union headquarters so that "many of the dispatches were read, and most matters openly discussed" in his hearing, and he witnessed Grant's final assault against Lee's lines on April 2, 1865.61

60. Ibid., pp. 46-47, 49. Captain E. Harding Steward, Royal Engineers, did not actually visit the United States during the Civil War, but while stationed at Bermuda and Halifax in 1865, he "fell in with several American officers who had been serving in the late Civil War." From them he learned -- and reported to England -- much technical information about the employment of mines, at the siege of Charleston and elsewhere. Capt. E. Harding Steward, "Notes on the employment of Submarine mines (commonly called Torpedoes) in America during the late Civil War," R. E. Professional Papers, XV (1866), 1-28, passim.

61. H. A. Smyth, "Account of the final attack and capture of Richmond, by the Federal Army, commanded by General Grant," Minutes of Proceedings of the Royal Artillery Institute, IV (1865), 363. Major Smyth was subsequently sent to France as an observer with the Prussian Army in 1870. Ibid., VII (1871), 184-202, passim.
Like most English observers before him, Smyth questioned the value of dismounted cavalry tactics. He thought that the battle of Five Forks (April 1, 1865), which was fought by such cavalry, went "far to modify the novel opinions expressed to me by Federal cavalry officers, both before and after, that 'their cavalry was a self-supporting institution,' and was, besides being good cavalry, as efficient on foot as most infantry." Admittedly such cavalry were "very effective" in corralling prisoners, but this was generally done by "pursuing mounted when organized resistance was at an end." Smyth did not regard Sheridan's victory at Five Forks as the decisive maneuver in the Petersburg campaign; he maintained that the Confederate lines had been taken by infantry "and that in a more old fashioned way." 62

Smyth was naturally much interested in the progress of field entrenchments during the later stages of the war. He was astonished to see "a breastwork, perfectly efficient against musketry fire, thrown up along the entire front of a brigade, in forty minutes," and he was well aware of the need for flank attacks against a position thus fortified. He considered the Union artillery effective "even in dense woods," and because of the heavily wooded terrain he did not think that the new rifled artillery would render obsolete the old twelve pound brass Napoleon

field gun. 63

Apparently none of the confidential reports submitted by these official observers was ever published, but the articles that appeared in English military journals provide many clues to their contents, and there is some evidence that the findings of these observers influenced subsequent military thought. Lieutenant-Colonel W. F. Drummond Jervois, Director of Works for Fortifications, had inspected the lines around Richmond and Petersburg. While he did not write specifically of his experiences in America, the official reports he submitted on fortifications and the defense of Canada show the influence of these experiences. He mentioned the "great strides [that] have been made in the construction of armour-plated ships and rifled ordnance," and the "experience gained in the late war in America" that "has shown the great value of submarine mines employed in connection with forts." 64 Sir John Burgoyne unquestionably reflected the information recorded by his observers in an article entitled "On Hasty Intrenchments in the Field," which appeared in 1870. Sir John emphasized three major points: that the increased power of the improved rifled arms "will lead to greater dispersion and use of cover than hitherto"; that earthworks provided the best fortifi-

63. Ibid., pp. 365, 370.

64. (Jervois) Great Britain. War Office. Report with Reference to the Progress made in the Construction of the Fortifications for the Defence of the Dockyards and Naval Arsenals, etc., of the United Kingdom (London, [1867]), pp. 9, 10 n.
cations — any other structure would take too long to erect and would be too expensive; and finally, that entrenching tools should become standard equipment. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that the Civil War actually influenced the subsequent development of fortifications in Great Britain, for rarely, if ever, does a nation remodel her defenses because of the "lessons" of a foreign war. In his monumental work on *Fortification*, Sir George Sydenham Clarke concluded:

In the works constructed within the past thirty years at our home ports and fortresses abroad, no sufficient indication of the results of the experience obtained in the Peninsula, the Crimea, and the American Civil War can be traced. It is evident that the rich and varied war experience available was fully appreciated by many minds, and that but for the want of all real organization of scientific thought, the progress of Fortification would have been more wisely ordered.\(^66\)

With regard to tactics, none of the observers placed his fingers on the fundamental reason for the new developments. It is true that the terrain was unusually rough and heavily wooded, and that in the early stages of the war both armies had grievous shortcomings: there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the observers on this point. It is likewise true that some of these faults, such as the election of officers by the rank and file,

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were ironed out as the war progressed, as Fletcher and others have indicated. But even after the American soldiers became experienced veterans, battles were still fought without close direction from the commanding general; the armies remained unwieldy and difficult to maneuver, and there were remarkably few instances of successful frontal attacks by cavalry or infantry. This was in sharp contrast to the situation in Europe, where the terrain favored the use of cavalry in its traditional role and where wars were waged by professional long-serving armies. It is not surprising, therefore, that aside from technical developments, most of the British observers -- official and otherwise -- would tend to dismiss the American experiences as aberrations due to unique conditions. Most of them overlooked the basic fact which now appears so obvious -- that the new tactics resulted from an increase in fire-power, and that armies would have to extend their formations, dig for cover, and move by the flanks if they were to survive on modern battlefields.

Of all English officers to visit America during the Civil War, none was to become more renowned or influential than Lieutenant-Colonel (later Field Marshal Sir Garnet) Wolseley, who in later years as Commander-in-Chief of the British Army was instrumental in re-awakening English interest in the Civil War. In 1861 Wolseley, a young veteran of four campaigns, had been ordered to Canada as Assistant Quartermaster-General of the British garrison. Like many of the British troops stationed in Canada, Wolseley was anxious to see something of the war, and in September 1862, he obtained a two-months' leave. Entering Virginia via
the "underground route," Wolseley first visited Richmond and inspected the Seven Days' battlefields. He then made his way to Lee's headquarters near Winchester, where the Army of Northern Virginia was recuperating after a strenuous campaign in Maryland. Wolseley spent several weeks with Lee and Lieutenant-General T. J. "Stonewall" Jackson and then returned to Canada. Soon afterwards he sent an account of his travels to Blackwood's Magazine.

Fletcher, Hartington and Hewett had all observed the Civil War armies in 1862 and Fremantle made his trip the following spring, so it is not surprising that Wolseley's initial views should agree with theirs. The Confederate cavalry reminded him of "irregular Indian cavalry," and while he admitted the value of mounted infantry in scouting and reconnaissance, Wolseley returned to Canada convinced that "cavalry that could not fence well would be utterly useless in Virginia." Even more than Hartington and Hewett, Wolseley (none of the three ever witnessed a major Civil War battle) was disdainful of the qualities of the volunteer armies, especially those "mobs of Irish and German mercenaries" of the North who were hired "to fight a cause they know

67. (Wolseley), "A Month's Visit to the Confederate Headquarters," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, XCIII (January, 1863). Cited hereafter as Wolseley, "Month's Visit." This article was given "foremost place" in the January issue and earned Wolseley an unexpected forty pounds. Wolseley, Story of a Soldier's Life, II, 126.

68. "Month's Visit," p. 27.
little and care less about." This impression tainted most of Wolseley's later writings, and after thirty years he still looked upon the American soldiers as "very raw levies . . . who have never gone through any course of military training although they had . . . been present during some . . . fierce but very loose fighting against levies as undisciplined as themselves." Battles fought with such troops and conducted for the most part by amateur officers did not, in Wolseley's opinion, convey many useful tactical lessons to the professional and highly trained armies of Europe.

Even though Wolseley did not see fighting of any consequence, his visit with Lee and Jackson kindled an interest that never died: many years later, after he had become one of the foremost soldiers of the Empire, he still contributed articles on the Civil War to English and American periodicals and maintained correspondence with friends he had made in the Confederacy.

69. Ibid., p. 23.


71. In 1870 Wolseley commanded the expedition to quell the uprising in the Red River district of Canada. Three years later he led a successful expedition against the Ashanti in Africa, and in 1882 he won a stunning victory at Tel el Kebir, thereby suppressing a serious rebellion in Egypt. He also played an important part in the reforms during Cardwell's administration in the War Office, and in 1895 he succeeded the aged Duke of Cambridge as Commander-in-Chief of the British Army. His literary life was scarcely less active, Major-General Sir F. Maurice and Sir George Arthur, The Life of Lord Wolseley (New York, 1924), passim.
In 1887, prompted by the publication of the English edition of Long's *Memoirs of Robert E. Lee*, Wolseley wrote an eloquent tribute to the late Confederate leader. Two years later, although burdened by his duties as Adjutant-General, he found time to prepare a series of articles for the *North American Review*. These and various other writings reveal how Wolseley's opinions had changed since 1862. Then he had merely attempted to describe what he saw and to record first impressions: now his approach was essentially that of the professional student of war. As one of those responsible for the condition of Her Majesty's forces, Wolseley now pointed to lessons from the Civil War which would be of particular value to the British Army. England and the United States were both dependent upon sea power and comparatively small volunteer armies for defense: why, then, could not one nation benefit from the experiences of the other?

It is not necessary to discuss in detail all of the lessons which Wolseley presumably learned from studying the Civil War. Actually the war taught him very little that he did not know already. It would be more correct to say that he emphasized broad


73. Wolseley, "General Lee," *Macmillan's Magazine*, LV (March, 1887), 321-331. Cited hereafter as Wolseley, "Lee." Wolseley was personally acquainted with Sherman, Moltke and Bismarck, but he regarded Lee as the ablest general and the greatest man he had ever met. *Story of a Soldier's Life*, II, 135.

74. These articles were intended as a review of C. C. Buel and R. E. Johnson, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (4 vols., New York, 1887).
areas which he thought worthy of study, and that certain aspects of the war provided useful illustrations that he drew upon to bolster his own arguments. For example, "among the most important lessons taught in the whole history of the American Civil War" was the "cooperating action of the naval and military services." Certainly this was true: amphibious operations were common during the Civil War campaigns. But this was no "lesson" for Wolseley, who had fought in Burma, China, Canada, Egypt and South Africa and knew the history of his own country. Manifestly he hoped to stimulate study of the Civil War by stressing such timely topics as combined operations, coastal defense, and amphibious warfare. He feared that too much emphasis in recent years had been placed upon the study of German military methods. Writing always with the problems of England uppermost in his mind, Wolseley now suggested a close examination of the war in which the North had utilized sea power.

The originality and force with which all the resources and ingenuity of a great industrial and commercial people were thrown into the struggle, give to these combined naval and military movements a modern form, unique of its kind. Each campaign is full of useful suggestions for us, upon the employment of similar means, should we, as seems more than likely, be forced to throw our whole weight into some distant struggle for Imperial existence.

Wolseley was therefore convinced that "full accounts of the methods used in these great river campaigns are of great value to English soldiers and sailors. Owing to our insular position, all operations of war outside Great Britain must necessarily begin with combined naval and military operations." 76

Another case in point is Wolseley's attitude toward the eternal problem in a democracy at war -- who should make supreme decisions, the soldier or the statesman. Wolseley took obvious delight in mentioning instances where political decisions in Richmond or in Washington had seemingly jeopardized the actions of generals in the field. 77 Yet it would be absurd to assume that the Civil War first taught him to be wary of politicians. He had commanded the unsuccessful expedition to relieve "Chinese" Gordon at Khartoum in 1884, an experience that caused him to despair the policy of "cant and cowardice" of the Gladstone administration (in which Lord Hartington was Secretary of State for War); and since he had spent his military life in an army ruled by a civilian War Minister, Wolseley must have seen similar instances of "meddling" or indecision. Besides, he had a personal axe to grind, for one of the recommendations of the Hartington Commission in 1889 -- the same year that Wolseley's articles appeared in the North American Review -- was to limit

the powers of the Commander-in-Chief, beginning with the Duke of Cambridge's successor, Wolseley himself. In any case, it was not unusual for Wolseley to cite frequent examples from the Civil War to support his contention that civilians should not interfere with the plans of military commanders. "Keep your hands off, ye iconoclastic civilian officials who meddle and muddle in Army matters. Clever politicians you may be, but you are not soldiers. . . ." 

Even in military matters Wolseley saw nothing really new in the Civil War campaigns. On the contrary, what apparently impressed him most was "the regularity with which the old rules and principles assert their supremacy." He noted that the Civil War armies had made frequent use of field entrenchments, but he argued that such tactics were injurious to army morale and had "a very dangerous tendency to unfit soldiers for all rapid offensive action." Wolseley conceivably arrived at this conclusion from his own study of the Civil War, but it is more likely that he was influenced by continental military writers who were beginning to preach the "doctrine of the offensive."

78. Dunlop, Development of the British Army, pp. 21-22; Maurice and Arthur, Wolseley, pp. 204, 290-292.
79. Wolseley, Story of a Soldier's Life, II, 376.
81. Ibid., CXLIX, 283-284, 718.
82. See below, pp. 274-275.
In his later writings Wolseley took a different view of the Civil War cavalry. As an on-the-spot observer he had found little good to say about dismounted tactics except that they were suited to the American forests, but by the 1880's he had become an exponent of the dragoon, or mounted infantry. This is not to say that he completely abandoned the *arme blanche*, as enthusiasts of shock tactics described their method of fighting: in his well-known *Soldier's Pocket-Book*, Wolseley still extolled the mounted cavalry charge, but with reservations. But Wolseley did recognize the growing importance of mounted infantry. The chief danger as he saw it was that cavalry would try to accomplish too much. He was against the "military Jack-of-all arms," believing that "the man would have the efficiency of neither" infantry nor cavalry. What he proposed was the creation of a strong and independent mounted infantry from "our splendid Yeomanry" -- the Volunteer cavalry. Wolseley ventured the hope that such a force would "turn to the history of the Confederate war for instructions as to the best mode in which the dragoon can be used in the field." 

Here Wolseley shows the influence of Sir Henry Havelock and Colonel George T. Denison, both of whom had urged the adoption of

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mounted infantry a quarter of a century previously. By this time, too, he had become convinced that if England were invaded, "the enemy will bring no cavalry here" because between the south coast and London "there is no country where cavalry, as cavalry, could maneuver or engage . . . such cavalry as did land could easily be defeated by mounted infantry . . . ." Wolseley used all of his influence to establish in 1888 two schools for mounted infantry, and certainly his views strengthened the case of those later writers who no longer believed in "the speed of the horse, the magnetism of the charge, and the terror of cold steel."

Wolseley never lost his enthusiasm for the Civil War nor his attachment for the friends he had made in 1862. To the closing days of his life he maintained that Lee was "the ablest soldier of my day," a "highly cultivated military genius." Such laudatory statements embroiled him in a controversy with General W. T. Sherman, who declared that Wolseley and the British "were still

86. See below, chapter V. Wolseley knew Denison personally and strongly recommended his Modern Cavalry to English officers. ("Forrest," p. 5.) Although stationed in Canada at the same time as Havelock, there is no evidence to indicate that the two ever met. Story of a Soldier's Life, II, 148.


88. At Aldershot and the Curragh. The Cavalry Journal, II (July, 1907), 347-351.


judging military matters by antiquated standards." Still, when Stonewall Jackson's widow published a biography about her famous husband, Wolseley in his enthusiasm undertook to help dispose of one hundred copies in England. According to G. F. R. Henderson,

Lord Wolseley wanted to take the whole lot himself and to hand me over a check, but he is as extravagant in the way of kindness as in his admiration of the Confederates, so I absolutely refused to let him do it. He is not well off for his position [Commander-in-Chief of the British Army], and I guess that Lady Wolseley would have "combed somebody's hair" if the transaction had been concluded.92

Although he displayed a sound knowledge of the Civil War campaigns and could often see in them much that was pertinent and timely, Wolseley ought not to be regarded as a serious student of the war. He did not examine it closely or critically, he did no original research, and he did not formulate any new theory on the basis of his observations. His most comprehensive and technical analysis, "An English View of the Civil War," was based almost entirely on the articles contained in Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, and most of his other writings were the result of his admiration for generals such as Forrest, Sherman and above all, Lee.


Wolseley is therefore significant to this study, not because of what he himself wrote about the Civil War, but because of his influence in the British Army. He was among the first to re-introduce the study of the Civil War to English soldiers. Unlike most of his fellow officers, Wolseley was not held spellbound by the dazzling successes of the Prussian armies in 1870. He could appreciate the need for studying other wars as well.

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Chapter III

THE PRUSSIAN OBSERVERS

At the time, the Civil War attracted much less attention among political and military circles in Prussia than in either England or France. This is not to say that there was no interest in the American war. On the contrary, the "overwhelming majority" of the people in Prussia and the other German states sympathized with the Union, thousands of native Germans actively participated in the great struggle — an estimated 200,000 served in the Union Army alone\(^1\) — and the war was given good coverage in many newspapers and journals. But while North was fighting South, Prus-

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\(^1\) Wilhelm Kaufman, *Die Deutschen im amerikanischen Bürgerkriege* (Munich and Berlin, 1911), pp. 121-125. According to Kaufmann, "Of all the great European powers Germany alone stood in the most fervent sympathy for the Union cause," and furnished more soldiers than any foreign nation. So many people in Berlin clamored to join the Union Army that the American Minister there felt obliged to post a sign declaring "This is a Legation of the United States, and not a recruiting-office." Jordan and Pratt, *Europe and the American Civil War*, pp. 195-197.
sian officers were busy trying to remedy the defects in their own army organization exposed in recent mobilizations. In 1860, the year Lincoln was elected, the Prussian Army was greatly strengthened and the reserve system overhauled. In September 1862, when the Confederates were invading Maryland and Kentucky, Bismarck was brought to power to force the scheme of army reform on a hostile Parliament. In the spring of 1864, when Grant and Sherman were preparing to move against Richmond and Atlanta, Prussian troops stormed the Danish positions at Düppel (April 18), and in June 1866, just a little over a year after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Prussian armies invaded Austria.  

This was not accomplished without considerable intellectual preparation in the army itself. Helmuth von Moltke, Chief of the General Staff, and his staff officers evolved new doctrines, studied recent campaigns -- particularly the war between France and Austria in 1859 -- and paid close attention to military developments in neighboring countries. In 1862, the Historical Section of the General Staff brought out an elaborate official history of the war of 1859, a work which was compiled under close supervision of Moltke himself. So thorough were their studies, in fact, that a

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2. The best account of the Prussian Army Reforms of this period is found in Curt Jany, Geschichte der Königlich Preussischen Armee (Berlin, 1933), IV, 214-232. Short summaries can also be found in Herbert Rosinski, The German Army (Washington, 1944), pp. 51-53; Walter Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff 1657-1945 (New York, 1953); and Lieut.-Colonel F. E. Whitton, Moltke (New York, 1921), Chapter XII.
prominent French general complained that the Prussians "know more about us than we know ourselves." This activity was naturally concentrated upon events in Europe, and it is scarcely surprising that there was but limited official interest in a war being waged on a distant continent, particularly when Prussia's national interests were not involved.

Most of the Germans who came to America during 1861-1865 actually served in one army or the other. The revolutions of 1848 had wrecked the military careers of many Prussian liberals, and a good number of those who had a military background found in the Union Army opportunity and a cause to fight for. On the other hand, a "considerable portion" of the Prussian nobility and army officers corps instinctively sympathized with the Confederate cause. They seemed to resent the democratic flavor of the large German element in the Union Army, perhaps because it was Liberals such as these who were furnishing most of the opposition to their attempts to reform the Army at home. Considering the thousands of Germans who participated in the Civil War, the number of eyewitness accounts published in Germany is disappoint-


4. Lonn, Foreigners in the Union Army, pp. 174-175; Rosinski, German Army, p. 56; Julius von Wickede, Ein deutscher Landsknecht der neuesten Zeit . . . (Jena and Leipzig, 1864), III, 114-115. The fact that this book is spurious (see below, pp. 66-67) should not detract from the validity of the author's prejudice in this regard.
ingly small, and with few exceptions they tend to tell more of the writer's trials and triumphs than of the military practices of the Americans.

One of the better Civil War books written by a German participant is Otto Heusinger's Amerikanische Kriegsbilder, published in 1869. Heusinger, later an officer in the Royal Brunswick Infantry, served four and one-half years in the 41st New York Regiment, a German outfit; a diary which he kept during this time formed the basis for his book. Heusinger fought in the Shenandoah Valley against Stonewall Jackson, was wounded at Chancellorsville, recovered and was sent to Charleston to take part in the siege of that port, and later fought under Grant around Richmond and against "Jube" Early in the Shenandoah Valley. He wrote his book to give his countrymen a picture of the Civil War, which he felt was little known in Germany because of the near-concurrent wars for German unification. Like many of his English contemporaries, Heusinger wrote only of his own experiences and made no attempt to derive military lessons from the war. Most of his descriptions are of marches and camp life, with

5. One exception is the series of brief articles written by a German Captain of U. S. Volunteers. Intended "to present a picture of the great machine" of which the writer was a part, these articles were brief and very general outlines of the organization and tactics of the Union Army and deserve no more than passing mention. Karl Erdt, "Die reguläre Armee der Vereinigten Staaten," Allgemeine Militär-Zeitung, Nrs. 1-8 (1863); "Die Staatsmilizen," Nrs. 27-36 (1863); "Die Armee der Freiwilligen," Nrs. 28-41 (1865).
a few tense battle scenes. Only a casual comment here and there gives his professional evaluation of his experiences.

From these few comments, however, Heusinger emerges as one of the most observant foreigners to describe a Civil War campaign. His account of conditions in Union hospitals and his detailed description of the Petersburg fortifications⁶ are very fine, while most of his military judgments were basically sound. For example, Heusinger was favorably impressed by the Civil War artillery. He respected the accuracy and terrible destructive power of this weapon against attacking infantry, particularly whenever cannister was used, and he cited the assaults at Fredericksburg and on Fort Gilmore as convincing illustrations.⁷ He also appreciated the value of field fortifications and admired the durability of the Confederate works protecting Charleston Harbor.⁸ Finally, Heusinger was not blind to the chief weakness of the Civil War armies: his Kriegsbilder includes many scenes of loose or even non-existent discipline on the part of Union soldiers. Like Fletcher, he too noticed a gradual improvement and by the time he rejoined the army on the islands off Charleston (1863), he considered the discipline of the besieging


8. Ibid., p. 167.
army sehr gut and the inspections, parades and trial exercises "praiseworthy." 9

Heusinger's most interesting remarks are about the cavalry. In the Shenandoah Valley in 1864, he had obtained a quite different -- and far more accurate -- impression of the value of mounted infantry than most foreign officers. By this time the Union cavalry had acquired experience, and capable leaders such as H. J. Kilpatrick, W. W. Averell and Sheridan had learned how to make the most of this new arm. Heusinger believed that the mounted infantry "accomplished excellent service." "Equipped as lightly as possible," and armed with new, rapid-loading rifles, it could fight as both infantry and cavalry.

These regiments had the great advantage, especially in this war, of being able to be sent quickly to a fixed point without tiring a man through great exertion, and the usefulness of this arm was proved first-rate, especially in the case of Sheridan's march toward Richmond, where he destroyed railroads, bridges and canals in the enemy's rear and threw the inhabitants of the city into considerable consternation.

Heusinger credited mounted infantry with being largely responsible for the Union victory at Five Forks (April 1, 1865), and he praised Sheridan for his foresight in realizing and developing

9. Ibid., p. 148. It is interesting to note that Heusinger thought less of the Civil War generals than many of his contemporaries -- perhaps because he had served under some of them. Sherman and Lee were the only two he regarded as well-rounded generals; the others, Grant, Sheridan and Jackson included, he considered capable enough, but on a far lower plane. Ibid., p. 166.
this potential in the Union cavalry. Perhaps he oversimplified the problem, and perhaps because he was a Union soldier he tended to give Sheridan more credit than was due; in the west Confederate cavalry under Morgan, Wheeler and Forrest had performed similar and even greater feats. Nevertheless, Heusinger was one of the first foreign soldiers to understand and to appreciate the characteristics of the Civil War -- the effectiveness of modern artillery fire, a growing dependence upon entrenchments, and the revolution in cavalry tactics.

These views were not shared by a fellow German who had served two years in the Union cavalry. This anonymous soldier had resigned a commission in Germany -- he does not indicate which of the German states he was from -- to manage the family estate. He had about decided to give this up and to re-enter the army when a friend recently arrived from America persuaded him to gain war experience and fame by enlisting in the Union Army. Accordingly he proceeded to New York, and in May 1863 he joined the 16th New York Cavalry. He fought in numerous small engagements and was present at the battle of the Wilderness.

This officer had a low opinion of the Union soldiers, particularly the militia, and he did not consider the Union cavalry as cavalry in the true sense at all. They would ride at the enemy in loose formation, fire a few shots with the revolver (a weapon "which left almost nothing to be desired") and disappear,

10. Ibid., pp. 208-209.
provided the Confederates had not done so first. On the other hand the Confederates, whom the writer regarded as superior to the Union cavalry in matters of training, discipline and leadership, preferred the close fighting of shock tactics, and as a result usually emerged victorious. As an example he described a small cavalry combat which had involved a portion of his regiment.

A detachment 70 strong met with an enemy cavalry detachment of 40 near Fairfax Station. The Union captain, a former hatmaker's journeyman, drew up his men in a single rank and directed them to fire a volley. The Confederates, however, would not enter into any Feuergefecht, but instead attacked, sabre in hand, at full gallop and in closed ranks. The bullets went way over their heads and in the next moment they had ridden over our company; disbanded in wild flight our men scampered away, hard pursued by the Southerners. Most of them were either struck down or captured, and only about a dozen saved themselves.

There are several reasons why this officer should differ from Heusinger in his evaluation of the Civil War cavalry. First, the skirmish described above was not a typical cavalry combat. On August 9, 1864, sixty of the 16th New York Cavalry were attacked and routed at Fairfax Station by forty of Colonel John S. Mosby's guerrillas. But the behavior of the Union troops was so bad that a special board of investigation was called to examine

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11. "Erlebnisse eines deutschen Officiers in nordamerikanischen Kriege," Daheim, I, Nr. 36 (June, 1865), 530. The personal background of this writer is given in ibid., Nr. 35 (May, 1865), 513.

12. Ibid., I, Nr. 37 (June, 1865), 546.
the "disgraceful mismanagement" of the battle. The 16th New York Cavalry did not participate in Sheridan's impressive victories in the Shenandoah Valley in the late summer and fall of 1864. It remained east of the Blue Ridge Mountains and played only a supporting role in that campaign. The writer was not with Sheridan's cavalry at Five Forks and in the decisive Appomattox campaign. He had been discharged in January 1865 and had returned to Germany, glad to have survived his "unfortunate" experiences.

Of even less value to this study is Ein deutscher Landsknecht der neuesten Zeit. Supposedly assembled from the papers of an anonymous German soldier of fortune who had died of wounds in 1863 while serving in the Confederate Army, this book is strangely barren of original or even interesting military observations. Its author did not think much of the Civil War armies. Prussian recruits who had been drilled by a tough Unteroffizier for only two weeks could accomplish more than most Confederate soldiers who, as soon as they learned how to "load their rifles and shoot


14. See the correspondence of reports of Colonel H. M. Lazell, commanding the 16th New York Cavalry, in ibid., parts 1 and 2, passim.

in some measure, and could execute the most necessary movements," were promptly marched off to fight an army equally deficient in training and discipline. But this had been stated many times, and by men who were better informed and closer to the actual situation than this romantic Landsknecht. Actually this book is, to a large extent, a work of fiction. Its probable author was not an unknown German officer who had died a hero's death on foreign soil, but Julius von Wickede, a popular military writer who was in the habit of passing off his books as "Memoirs" or edited literary remains. The first two volumes are at least partly autobiographical in that they deal with events in Schleswig-Holstein (1848), the Crimea and Italy (1860) at which von Wickede was present. But von Wickede never visited America and, from internal evidence, it is certain that much of the third volume, or at least that portion of it concerning the Civil War, is a fabrication. Von Wickede may have based his narrative upon the

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17. See the sketch on Julius von Wickede in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (Leipzig, 1897), XLII, 318-319. Von Wickede, who at various times acted as special military correspondent for English and German newspapers, was a prolific writer: "... abgesehen von seinen Kriegsberichten bilden die von ihrem hinterlassen Buches ein sammlung von mehr als sechzig Bänden."

18. The evidence on this point is overwhelming. (1) In "editing" the papers, von Wickede gives few facts about the anonymous author; he does not mention his name, and he fails to explain how he came into possession of the manuscripts. (2) In the first two volumes, those dealing with events at which von Wickede was actually present, many minor figures are mentioned by name. In America, on the other hand, no one below the rank of general or cabinet member is identified. (3) Von Wickede makes a
life of General C. R. Wheat, for Landsknecht's experiences bear a remarkable resemblance to the actual career of this American soldier of fortune. Both von Wickede and Wheat had served under Garibaldi, and it is entirely possible that they knew one another. In any case the book is of interest principally because

mistake typical of those who have never visited America: he shows no comprehension of the vast distances involved. For example, the hero of this work is supposed to have fought along the Potomac River in September 1861 (p. 159), and at Belmont on the Mississippi two months later (p. 160); he is supposed to have spent Christmas eve at Chattanooga with Stonewall Jackson (pp. 67-73), who actually was in Winchester, Virginia, at this time; he claims to have been one of the fortunate soldiers who escaped capture at the fall of Fort Donelson in February 1862 (p. 164), to have served under Morgan in Tennessee in March (p. 165), to have fought at Shiloh in April (p. 175), and to have participated in the Seven Days' Campaign around Richmond in June (p. 187). This would have been a remarkable feat for an unattached war correspondent; for a Confederate officer with a command it was absolutely impossible. There was no single Confederate organization present at all these engagements. In addition, the hero is supposed to have met Lee and McClellan in the Crimea (p. 191); Lee, of course, was never there.

19. The resemblance between Landsknecht and Roberdeau Wheat is striking. Wheat, like Landsknecht had participated in "Fillibustering" expeditions to Latin America; both had served under Garibaldi, and they were both mortally wounded during the Seven Days' Battles and were buried on the spot. There are other parallels: Rob Wheat had settled in New Orleans, where Landsknecht, too, had spent much time; they both commanded outfits comprised mainly of Irish toughs, and they both encountered, among captured Union prisoners, foreign officers whom they had known previously. Most of Landsknecht's observations on Southern society have a Louisiana background: the only plantation he described in detail was in Louisiana, and he was persuaded to fight for the Confederacy by the son of a Louisiana planter whom he met in Italy. Cf. Ein Deutscher Landsknecht, passim; Leo Wheat, "Memoir of Gen. C. R. Wheat, Commander of the 'Louisiana Tiger Battalion," Southern Historical Society Papers, XVII (Richmond, 1889), 47-59. Cited hereafter as S. H. S. P. See also Douglas Southall Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants A Study in Command (New York, 1945), I, 87-88, 432.
it depicted the Civil War as many undoubtedly saw it from Europe. It may also be significant that a military writer such as von Wickede would want to tack on this bit of fiction to what otherwise appears to be a partial autobiography; evidently the interest of the German public in the Civil War encouraged him to do so.

Of all the German officers to visit America during the Civil War, none was better known through his deeds at the time and by his writings later than Heros von Borcke, a romantic young giant who ran into financial difficulties and sailed in 1861 for the newly formed Confederacy: he was the Landsknecht incarnate. Of all the German officers to visit America during the Civil War, none was better known through his deeds at the time and by his writings later than Heros von Borcke, a romantic young giant who ran into financial difficulties and sailed in 1861 for the newly formed Confederacy: he was the Landsknecht incarnate.

Offering his huge Damascus blade to the Confederacy, von Borcke was commissioned a captain of cavalry and assigned to Jeb Stuart's staff. He served with Stuart until wounded in June

20. The original Landsknechts were Swabian mercenary bands who vied with the Swiss pikemen as soldiers for hire in the sixteenth century.

21. Von Borcke liked to refer to himself as the "former Chief of Staff" of Stuart's cavalry. Actually he was nothing of the sort, and it is enlightening to read what another member of Stuart's staff had to say about von Borcke: "He owed everything to General Stuart and it was a debt he was inclined sometimes to forget latterly. I remember now many little things which I did not then see through clearly. He got General Stuart to place the body of couriers detailed at headquarters ... under his command and to give him the title of Chief of Staff in consequence. We could not conceive why he was so tenacious of this trifling matter until his book [Memoirs of the Confederate War for Independence] appeared after the war in which he calls himself Chief of Staff of the Cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia. This position, Chief of Staff, in European armies is second in importance to that only of the General himself [sometimes, in fact, it was more important]. In our army there was no corresponding position, the Chief of Staff in this case being
1863, when he returned to Prussia. He wrote of his experiences in a series of popular articles for Blackwood's Magazine (September, 1865 - June, 1866), which subsequently were published in book form in England and later in Germany. Although his narrative was non-technical, von Borcke did see enough of the war to understand some of the basic changes that had occurred, and amidst all the bluster and romantic trappings of his writings are passages which reveal this clearly.\(^22\)

For all his saber rattling, von Borcke was realistic enough to appraise correctly the meaning of Civil War tactics. He respected that increase in fire power which had forced cavalry to fight afoot and infantry to seek shelter. During the Seven Days' Campaign, von Borcke "looked with astonishment at the effect of the heavy artillery fire," which he thought was at Malvern Hill (July 1, 1862) "more disastrous than had ever been before produced by artillery."\(^23\) Landsknecht had written of exciting charges pressed home with the bayonet, but von Borcke took pains to examine many corpses and found so few stabbing wounds that he

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\(^22\) Information on von Borcke's career is found in Major Edgar Erskine Hume, Colonel Heros von Borcke, A Famous Prussian Volunteer in the Confederate Army (Southern Sketches Number 2, Charlottesville, 1935).

\(^23\) Heros von Borcke, Memoirs of the Confederate War, I, 71, 74.
concluded "bayonet fights rarely if ever occur, and exist only in the imagination." Medical records lend weight to his testimony.\textsuperscript{24} He also noted the disappointing effects of volley firing, the usefulness of the Signal Corps ("an institution peculiar to the American armies"), and he held the fighting qualities of the Americans -- especially the Confederates -- in high esteem. Above all, von Borcke appreciated the special problems of supplying an army "in a war of such magnitude, carried on over so vast and thinly populated a territory."\textsuperscript{25}

Since von Borcke was a cavalryman his attention naturally centered on this arm, and despite his obvious preference for the saber over the rifle he appreciated the conditions which made shock tactics impracticable in Virginia. His first major battle convinced him that the lance, "formidable enough in the hand of one accustomed to wield it, is a downright absurdity and encumbrance to the inexperienced." He realized fully that the nature

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} Ibid., I, 63-64. Cf. von Wickede, \textit{Ein Deutscher Landsknecht}, III, 153, 163, 176. "Bayonets were so little used that many men threw them away." E. M. Lloyd, \textit{A Review of the History of Infantry} (London, 1908), p. 248. According to one Civil War surgeon, "that the armies rarely crossed bayonets was evident from the small number of bayonet wounds, except accidental ones, which were presented to surgeons after a battle. I think half a dozen would include all the wounds of this nature that I ever dressed. Cavalrymen would occasionally get close enough to slash each other with their sabres, but these wounds were few and far between." Major Albert Gaillard Hart, "The Surgeon and the Hospital in the Civil War," \textit{Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts}, XIII (Boston, 1913), 265. Cited hereafter as \textit{Military Historical Society Papers}.
\item \textsuperscript{25} \textit{Memoirs of the Confederate War}, I, 13, 19-20, 160 n; 243-244; II, 7.
\end{itemize}
of the Virginia terrain discouraged the operations of cavalry in the regular sense and that "the great improvement in firearms in our day had necessitated a very material change in cavalry tactics."^26

Yet despite his admission that "a genuine cavalry fight, with sabres crossing and single combat" would "very rarely occur in modern warfare,"^27 von Borcke was not won over to the new tactics. He remained the dashing cavalier and reveled in the mounted charge. In later years he tended to minimize the effectiveness of dismounted tactics, even though he had served with a regiment of Prussian Dragoons in 1866. Perhaps the experiences of that campaign persuaded him that the Civil War had been something of an aberration, or possibly as he grew older the Civil War battles acquired more glamor. In any case, though he always regarded a combination of shock and fire tactics as necessary for modern cavalry, he retained his faith in the arme blanche and continued to believe that conditions in modern battle still favored its use. "How would it have been possible," he wrote to Lieutenant-General Keith Fraser, Inspector-General of Cavalry in the British Army —

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26. Ibid., I, 55; II, 107.

27. Ibid., I, 114. For a description of a typical Civil War cavalry skirmish, see ibid., p. 111.
... to execute that famous ride through McClellan's whole army in the days from June 12 to 15, 1862, with Mounted Infantry? ... We were obliged to fight all our way through, charging continually and dispersing again and again, sabres in hand, the hostile cavalry. ... Any development for dismounted fighting would have been out of the question. ... [Stuart] was a Cavalryman from head to heel, and he wished nothing more than to form his troopers into dashing Cavalry soldiers. ... Stuart delighted in the charge with sabres drawn. ... 28

He even went so far as to state:

The Mounted Infantryman will regard his horse as good enough to suit his easy locomotion and very useful to carry him out of a dangerous position. ... If I was ordered to hold a very important position at all hazards with M[ounted] I[nfantry], I would in the first place have the horses shot to deprive the men of the arrière pensée that they were near for their salvation. 29

Irrespective of the merits of von Borcke's theories on cavalry, he was probably correct in claiming that Stuart preferred shock tactics whenever possible. According to the most recent biographer of the famous cavalry leader, "He fought dismounted when he had to -- notably and stubbornly in rearguard actions, or when he had to fight for ground. But all his feeling was for the white weapon [l'arme blanche]. ..." 30

28. Quoted in Charles Sydney Goldman, "Cavalry: Its true functions in Modern War," The Cavalry Journal, I (January, 1906), 76-77. Excerpts from several letters from von Borcke to General Fraser are reprinted in this article.

29. Von Borcke to Lieutenant-General Fraser, quoted in Captain W. H. James, The Rôle of Cavalry as affected by Modern Arms of Precision (Aldershot, 1894), pp. 7-8.

In 1893 von Borcke collaborated with his close friend and former comrade-at-arms in Virginia, Justus Scheibert, in writing a study of the cavalry battle of Brandy Station. Both had participated in this fight, and while the views expressed on the subject of cavalry more nearly approximate the arguments of Scheibert than those of von Borcke,\(^3\) they were certainly approved by the latter. The burden of this book is that beginning in 1863, the Union cavalry had grown and improved to such an extent that the Confederates were no longer able to dominate the field. Thus Sheridan's cavalry, described here as being primarily mounted infantry, "were victorious principally because they found no enemy before them." Von Borcke and Scheibert implied -- and the writings of other foreign observers, English and German alike, suggest similar views -- that the Union cavalry had grown dependent upon dismounted tactics not so much to meet the challenge of modern firepower but because it seemed like the best way to fight the Confederates.\(^4\)

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31. See below, pp. 84-86.

32. Heros von Borcke and Justus Scheibert, *Die Grosse Reitschlacht bei Brandy Station* (Berlin, 1893), pp. 63-64. Their estimation of the comparative qualities of the Union and Confederate cavalry in 1863 was probably correct: they claimed that the Union cavalry had improved considerably since the beginning of the war and was now numerically superior, better armed, and held a slight edge in discipline. The Confederate cavalry, on the other hand, was composed of better raw material both in men and in horses, had superior leaders and because of its numerous victories enjoyed higher morale. It also functioned better as a unit. *Ibid.*, pp. 64, 124-125.
In 1877 von Borcke's *Memoirs* were published in Germany.\(^{33}\) Translated by Lieutenant-Colonel von Kaehler, "an outstanding German cavalry officer,"\(^{34}\) they were recommended to German cavalry officers "not as a textbook of military science," or even a "work of military history," but as a "fragment of cavalry life. . . ."\(^{35}\) It was the flavor of the book rather than any specific military lessons that appealed to the German appetite. In a day when the *arme blanche* was coming under increasing attack, von Borcke's *Memoirs* attractively portrayed the traditional cavalry spirit. This is why Prince Kraft zu Hohenlohe Ingelfingen, the great strategist, described it as a book that "could make any Cavalry soldier's heart beat fast,"\(^{36}\) and why Prince Friedrich Carl and General Karl von Schmidt, the two foremost organizers of the modern German cavalry, were both such admirers of Jeb Stuart.\(^{37}\)

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34. General Friedrich von Boetticher to the writer, March 4, 1955. I am indebted to General von Boetticher, former Military Attaché to the United States and himself a student of the Civil War, for drawing my attention to von Kaehler and his foreword, which was published only in the scarce 1877 edition.

35. Von Kaehler in the foreword to the 1877 edition of *Zwei Jahre im Sattel*.


In the words of Douglas Freeman, "swords clash and bugles blow on every page. . . ."38

In February 1863, a young Prussian officer of Engineers was summoned to Berlin by General Radziwill, Chief of the Engineer Corps, and informed that he was being sent to America to observe "the behavior of armorplating on land and at sea" and "the effect of rifled artillery against earth, masonry, and iron." After conferring with von Prittwitz, deputy inspector general of Fortifications, and Roon, the War Minister, Captain Justus Scheibert departed on his mission.39

Scheibert was admirably suited for this task.40 With all the requisite social attributes, he was observant, interested

38. Freeman, South to Posterity, p. 22. Among the prized possessions of the late Dr. Freeman was a much worn copy of Zwei Jahre im Sattel, which a young German officer once borrowed from the Wurtemberg Military Library and never returned. The name of the culprit was Edwin Rommel, who later was to earn the title of the "Desert Fox" for his brilliant campaigns against the British in North Africa. Dr. Freeman once showed this volume to the writer, explaining that it had been picked up in Europe by an American officer who later sent it to him. The same story is told in Monroe F. Cockrell, After Sundown A Venture into the Shadows of Yesterday ([Chicago], 1955), IV, passim. In his last years von Borcke wrote two autobiographical novels based on his experiences in America, Auf dem Kriegspfade (1895) and An des Grabes Rande (1896). Because these have been described as "less technical" than his other works (Hume, Heros von Borcke, p. 24) and "a romantic and reminiscent revision of his "Memoirs" (Freeman, South to Posterity), they have not been consulted for this study.

39. Scheibert, Mit Schwert und Feder, pp. 35-36.

40. See Blackford, War Years with Jeb Stuart, pp. 203, 206-209. Scheibert was fond of dancing and social functions, and it is evident that he met people well. Mit Schwert und Feder, pp. 24-25.
in his profession, and a capable writer. He had early attracted
the attention of an influential officer, Colonel von Voigts-
Rhetz, by his habit of spending his annual leave studying the
army maneuvers and by the intelligent observations of these which
he recorded in his diary. In 1859 he began to spend his free
hours writing articles on the war in Italy for the Illustrirten
Zeitung. These were well received by several officers on the
Great General Staff. Although they had been written anonymously
Scheibert's identity eventually became known. But perhaps
Scheibert was best known for a pamphlet he wrote in 1861 on the
influence of rifled artillery on fortress warfare. This sub-
ject, like that of coastal defense, was timely and important and
Scheibert soon acquired a reputation as an authority on modern
fortifications. Whatev er else may have influenced the Prussian
authorities in their decision to send Scheibert to observe the
Civil War, this reputation probably made him appear a logical
choice for the assignment.

Scheibert arrived in New York the first week of March 1863.
Originally it was intended that he should accompany the Union

41. Ibid., pp. 15-16. Generalmajor Konstantin Bernhard von
Voigts-Rhetz in 1859 was named Director of the General War De-
partment in the War Ministry; he was a prominent staff officer in
the wars of 1866 and 1870-1871. See the sketch on Voigts-Rhetz
in Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie (Leipzig, 1896), XL, 216-220.

42. Justus Scheibert, Einfluss der neuesten Taktik und der
gezogenen Waffen auf den Festungskrieg. Mit benutzen der vor
Sebastopol gemachten Erfahrungen (Berlin, 1861).

43. Scheibert, Mit Schwert und Feder, pp. 22-23, 29-30.
Army, but because he wished to examine the Charleston defenses and was at heart a strong Southern sympathizer, he persuaded his superiors to allow him to "visit" the Confederate Army in an "unofficial capacity." (For diplomatic reasons the Prussian Government chose not to "order" him South.) After a brief stay in New York, during which he saw enough of the Union Army to form a lasting prejudice against it, Scheibert sailed to Nassau and there caught a blockade runner bound for Charleston. This city fascinated him, but since there were no active military operations at the time, he proceeded to Richmond, where he met several high-ranking officials and made a tour of the outlying fortifications and battlegrounds. Eventually he hoped to reach the Confederate Army in the West, but first he planned a brief visit to the Army of Northern Virginia, then entrenched on the heights above Fredericksburg.

Arriving at Fredericksburg in April, Scheibert spent one week with Lee's army before he met von Borcke, who persuaded him to join Stuart's cavalry then encamped at Culpepper. Scheibert remained with the cavalry until May, when, mindful of his primary purpose in visiting the Confederacy, he left Stuart to ob-

44. Ibid., pp. 35-36.

45. As in the case of most professional soldiers, the drill of the Northern recruits made a very unfavorable impression upon Scheibert, just as it had upon Wolseley and Hartington. Ibid., p. 45.

46. Ibid., pp. 45-61, passim.
serve the Festungskrieg at Vicksburg: a sudden illness and the news that Vicksburg had been cut off by Grant's army caused him to return to the Army of Northern Virginia. He accompanied Lee's staff during the Gettysburg campaign and became acquainted with Fremantle and Ross. After the retreat from Pennsylvania, Scheibert and Ross journeyed to Charleston, which was then being besieged by Union naval and land forces. As soon as he had seen "what was valuable for the Prussian Army," Scheibert moved north to Wilmington, and after a tour of the works there he departed for Bermuda and Europe.

An eye-witness of fourteen battles or engagements, Scheibert by this time knew the Confederate Army well. He had served as a sort of handyman (Rittmeister was the title he preferred) on Stuart's staff, preparing maps, translating letters taken from German-born prisoners, carrying messages and even helping on occasion to construct bridges and entrenchments. He had come under fire (for the first time in his life) at Chancellorsville, had participated in the cavalry fight at Brandy Station, and had viewed Gettysburg from a tall oak tree overlooking Lee's headquarters. He was familiar with the Southern soldier and had observed and conversed with Jackson, Stuart and Lee during anxious moments in battle. He had many personal friends among the lesser known officers and from these he had gained much inside information about campaigns and incidents at which he had not been present. Scheibert had seen as much of the war as Fremantle, and like Fremantle, von Borcke and the other foreign officers he met in
Virginia, Scheibert departed for Europe a full-fledged Confederate. 47

Upon his return, Scheibert reported to Prince Radziwill, discussed his findings with Prince Frederick Karl and Field Marshal von Wrangel, and lectured before various military organizations. He subsequently fought with the Prussian Army in 1864, 1866, and 1870 (when he was wounded at the battle of Wörth). In 1868 he wrote a popular account of his trip, Sieben Monate in den Rebellen Staaten, 48 which savored somewhat of the narratives of Fremantle and von Borcke, except that it was more informative in a military sense than the former work and excelled the latter in modesty.

In 1874, feeling that professional interest in the Civil War now warranted it, Scheibert published a more detailed and technical report of his observations. By this time he was well-known as the official Prussian observer of the Civil War (according to Scheibert, this reputation explains why Bismarck asked

47. Mit Schwert und Feder, pp. 66-167, passim. Scheibert mentioned only two other Prussian officers whom he met while accompanying the Army of Northern Virginia -- von Borcke and an unidentified officer named Massow. Scheibert, "Oberst J. S. Mosby," Jahrbücher für die Deutsche Armee und Marine, XVIII (January, 1876), 65 n. Cited hereafter as Scheibert, "Mosby," Jahrbücher für die Deutsche Armee und Marine will be cited hereafter as Jahrbücher.

48. Scheibert, Sieben Monate in den Rebellen Staaten während des nordamerikanischen Krieges (Stetten, 1868). The greater portion of this book was reprinted in Mit Schwert und Feder, and it is interesting to note -- and perhaps significant -- that in 1868 Scheibert did not mention specifically what he had been sent to America to observe.
specifically for his services as guide through the captured Danish lines at Düppel), 49 and could evaluate his findings in the light of more recent campaigns.

Der Bürgerkrieg in den nordamerikanischen Staaten, 50 written for the "enlightenment" of the German officers, is an analytical examination of the Civil War armies. It goes far beyond Scheibert's own experience: beginning with a précis of the military operations, it includes separate discussions of the organization and tactics of the infantry, cavalry and artillery, in addition to accounts of the engineers, navy, the sanitary services, and a series of biographical sketches of the war's foremost military leaders. 51

The Civil War infantry posed special problems. Scheibert had spent most of his time either with the cavalry or observing siege operations; the printed sources were confusing and often contradictory. He could see little difference in the two armies in organization and training, since each had borrowed heavily from the French Army -- then at the height of its prestige -- in these

49. Mit Schwert und Feder, p. 228.


matters. The tactical manuals were likewise taken from the French: both Casey's *Infantry Tactics* and Hardee's *Infantry Tactics*, used by the Union and Confederate armies respectively, specified a line of two ranks, with skirmishers shoved out in front, as the standard combat formation. Scheibert recorded that the Confederates "acquired great skill" in mastering these regulations and could form a battle line "in an incredibly short time." But he also added that in battle both armies often failed to follow the peace-time regulations, which frequently is the case, and that from the chaos and confusion of the initial campaigns emerged a new system of infantry tactics "which merits examination in its different phases."52

The first phase, according to Scheibert, was characterized by isolated and disjointed combats, with neither army being sufficiently organized or trained to sustain a major offensive drive. Like Fletcher, Scheibert detected a tendency, especially on the part of Union troops, to waste ammunition by useless skirmishing at too great a distance. He thought that the Confederates preferred to fight at close range, which he attributed to the fact that at the outset they had been equipped with inferior firearms. According to Scheibert it was the undignified performance of both armies at Bull Run (1861) more than any other single factor that killed the interest of most European soldiers in the Civil War,

with the unfortunate result that later developments in infantry tactics had been all but ignored in Europe.\textsuperscript{53}

The second phase (1862-1863) saw the gradual development of linear tactics. By this time the massing of troops in column had been abandoned because of the effectiveness of artillery fire. The armies now fought in linear formation, with skirmishers one hundred or so feet in advance. Each side would generally form in two or three lines, which tended to blend together into one confused mass as the fighting progressed. Fremantle had observed that the Civil War armies tended to outreach the immediate control of the field commander, and Scheibert noticed the same tendency.

He once discussed this matter with Lee and was told: "I do my duty as far as my powers and capabilities will permit, until the moment when the battle begins: then I leave the matter in the hands of God and the . . . subordinate officers. . . ." Once Lee had brought his troops "to the right place at the right time," there was little else that he could do.\textsuperscript{54} Scheibert described this second phase as a period when the Confederates took the initiative strategically and acted on the tactical offensive in most battles.

\textsuperscript{53} Ib\textit{id.}, pp. 4, 51-54, 59.

The third, and to Scheibert the most significant phase, was the period of the tactical defensive. A direct outgrowth of this dispersion of tactical unity and the lack of centralized command, this period was said to have begun when the Confederates were forced to abandon the strategical offensive in mid-summer 1863 for lack of numbers. This was the period of the spade and the axe, when field fortifications ruled the battlefield. Entrenchments had been used before this: Scheibert had seen them in the battlefields around Richmond and had been present when they were used at Chancellorsville. But Scheibert maintained that it was not until Grant began to use his vastly superior resources to wear down the Confederate Army that Lee was forced to resort to the tactical defensive. "In this period, the least known of the Civil War, General Lee . . . employed all of his talents as general and tactician, talents which, brought to their complete development by three years of experience and extensive study, [and] supported by experienced troops, produced brilliant results." Scheibert did not advocate such use of entrenchments

55. He quoted Lee after Pickett's charge at Gettysburg as saying: "Captain, the Yankees are entrenching themselves also. How fervently I would have wished for my people that the enemy would crack his own skull just as bad against our position. I can now fight everywhere only on the defensive; for you see, the last youth of our land are assembled around me and each life must be sold dearly." To which Scheibert added: "And the old gentleman kept his word." "General Lee," p. 306.

56. Le Guerre Civile, p. 75. It is generally agreed that Lee was at his best during the 1864 campaign. Cf. Maurice, Lee the Soldier, pp. 217 ff; Douglas Southall Freeman, Robert E. Lee (New York, 1936), III, 447.
as the most desirable method of fighting. He preferred an offensive in the open field, if one's forces were strong enough and it was not necessary to conform to the enemy's tactics and choice of ground. But he was forced to admit that in 1864, "the superiority of ... [defensive] tactics over all other means of fighting was demonstrated to the point that all attempts made to employ different tactics failed completely."  

Scheibert's views on the Civil War cavalry can be summarized briefly. In general he agreed with his friend von Borcke that while conditions in America seemingly favored the rifle and dismounted fighting, the Confederate cavalry nevertheless preferred shock tactics and fought accordingly whenever practicable. Both men drew a distinction between the Union and Confederate cavalry, maintaining that the former was inferior in quality, spirit and leadership, and mainly for that reason resorted to dismounted tactics. If toward the end of the war the Union cavalry achieved some success, "this was chiefly due to a great superiority in numbers which the Southern cavalry ... could no longer counterbalance by its superior tactics."
From his studies of the Civil War cavalry Scheibert was convinced that shock tactics remained "the fundamental principal of cavalry combat," and that dismounted fighting, while occasionally successful, involved inherent dangers such as the lowering of overall efficiency and loss of the so-called "cavalry spirit." He doubted whether mounted infantry could operate as effectively in the open fields of Europe as it had in Virginia and he questioned the value of the strategic cavalry raid under conditions such as would apply in Europe. He believed that the effect of the raids of Stuart, Forrest and Morgan had been exaggerated. Even when conducted against untrained troops and armies dependent upon supply depots, in a country with few railroads and an inadequate telegraph system, where thick forests often masked movements from an inferior enemy, cavalry raids had succeeded only a few times. In Europe where these favorable conditions did not exist, such raids were bound to be less effective.

Yet Scheibert believed that the Civil War had opened new fields for cavalry. After the Crimean War and the Italian campaign of 1859 there were many who said that the heyday of cavalry had passed, and that henceforth the infantryman would be the most

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which the cavalry had played in the Civil War, particularly when the terrain was as unfavorable as possible for great developments."  


effective soldier. The Civil War convinced Scheibert that this was not so. European cavalry still had a future. The Americans had combined shock tactics and dismounted fighting to a remarkable degree, making cavalry virtually an independent arm, and Stuart's men illustrated the indispensable value of cavalry in reconnaissance and in screening the army's movements. Above all, the American cavalry possessed le véritable esprit chevaleresque that had so appealed to von Borcke. He dismissed those English military writers who championed the American-type mounted infantry on the ground that because the nature of the English countryside would not permit shock tactics, the British were therefore not in need of "une véritable cavalerie." 62

Naturally enough Scheibert's most instructive remarks were those regarding the Civil War artillery and fortifications, for this is what he had been sent to observe. He noted that the field artillery of both armies, at least in the latter stages of the war, employed tactics similar to those used in the German service, but he did not elaborate upon this point. 63 Actually he was more interested in determining the effect of the new rifled siege artillery upon fortifications. Although rifled ar-

62. "General Stuart," p. 265; "General J. E. B. Stuart's letzter groszer Raid," Jahrbücher, XXXIII (October, 1879), 164; La Guerre Civile, pp. 93, 121-123, 129. Scheibert here referred specifically to Chesney (see below, pp. 142 ff.), but doubtless he also had Havelock and Denison in mind.

63. Ibid., pp. 131-138. For once Scheibert was willing to give the North the edge, being particularly impressed with the Union field artillery.
tillery did not altogether live up to his expectations during the siege of Charleston, Scheibert saw enough damage done by the Union siege guns to become convinced that the day of brick and mortar fortifications had passed. Earth-constructed forts, particularly when equipped with a good bomb shelter such as the Confederates had at Battery Wagner, provided the best defense against modern artillery. The most important fact in the operations about Charleston was that the attacking force, "despite the use of the very latest technical means" -- the "iron-plated ships and the great rifled calibre of the guns" -- did not "succeed in taking the fortifications by means of a siege." Charleston did not fall until threatened by Sherman's Army marching northward from Savannah. Scheibert further concluded that against land defenses even the ironclads had played "only a secondary role," and that the torpedo, or submarine mine, was essentially a moral weapon rather than an instrument of physical destruction. He regarded the siege of Charleston "as the point of departure in a new period of siege artillery." 64

In 1887 Scheibert prepared a monograph on still another aspect of the Civil War, the cooperation between ground and naval forces. This was a timely subject, for the German Colonization Society had been founded a scarce five years before and although Scheibert did not actually believe that the German Army would be

64. Ibid., pp. 152-167; Sieben Monate in den rebellen Staaten, pp. 109-112; Mit Schwert und Feder, pp. 158-161.
used to occupy colonial territory, there might be occasion for combined operations along some of the many rivers emptying into the North Sea and the Baltic. In such an event, the operations of the Union Army and Navy along the Mississippi, though of an earlier period, contained lessons that were still applicable.65

Scheibert's study of these campaigns confirmed an observation he had made at Charleston: naval power alone could not overcome land fortifications. This was evident at Island Number 10 and "in all battles . . . from Fort Henry to the Grand Gulf. . . ." A fleet, "despite its mobility, despite its clear superiority both in the caliber and the quality of construction of its guns, was not equal to land batteries if unsupported . . . by land forces." The greatest results could be achieved only through combined operations of the army and navy.66 By combined operations Scheibert was not referring to tactics only. Skilled use of the navy in inland waterways had helped the Union Army solve the problem of logistics; for in addition to bombarding shore installations, the Union gunboats had also furnished reliable means of transportation and could carry substantial quantities of supplies and munitions. Thus a gunboat served as a "floating magazine, capable of protecting itself. . . ."67

66. Ibid., pp. 23, 64.
67. Ibid., pp. 3-4, 8, 17, 30.
Scheibert resigned from the army in 1876 and took up journalism as a career. He had travelled widely, met many interesting and important people, and he did not feel that the Engineer corps was receptive to many of his ideas, particularly on fortifications. So he became a military propagandist, one of the so-called "Press Hussars." For a time he served as military correspondent for the politically conservative Kreuzzzeitung. He wrote numerous books and articles and lectured to military discussion groups about the country. Considering himself an authority on the subject of fortifications, he became embroiled in a controversy over the Festungskrieg (Scheibert claimed that he was the only soldier in the German Army to have participated in the defense of a fort in actual war, at Charleston in 1863). In the twilight of his career von Waldersee, then Chief of the Great General Staff, brought him out of quasi-retirement to write on behalf of that organization, and Scheibert used his pen to defend three-year military service from attacks by "the radical parties."68

A prolific writer on many military subjects, Scheibert made the most of his Civil War experiences.69 He not only wrote eulo-


69. In a letter to the Reverend J. William Jones, Scheibert listed no less than sixteen articles he had translated from the Southern Historical Society Papers alone, to say nothing of "many interesting parts" of Jones' own life of Lee. Scheibert to J. Wm. Jones, October 13, 1881, reprinted in S. H. S. P., IX (January-December, 1881), 570-572.
gistic articles about Lee, Jackson, Stuart and Mosby, but he also translated countless articles and reports for publication in the *Jahrbücher für des Deutsche Armee und Marine*, usually under his own name. As a rule these were not even true translations, but were "mixed up by remarks which I have given from my personal observations." A few of his articles have historical merit, such as his study of Sherman's March through Georgia, and the book he wrote with von Borcke on Brandy Station has been described as "the most comprehensive narrative" of that battle.

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70. The following is an extract from a letter which Scheibert wrote to Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel John Page Nicholson, a well known Civil War collector. "You will receive with the present mail . . . 'Stonewall Jackson's Virginienthal Feldzug,' *Jahrbücher*, XXXI (April-June, 1879), 204-216, 313-328. I regret very much, that you will not find any news in this little study, because it is a mere translation from Col. [William] Allen's lecture in the [Southern] Hist. Society, only mixed up by remarks which I have given from my personal observations, and some hints about the real unparalleled campaign of old Stonewall.


71. Scheibert, "Sherman's Marsch durch Georgien. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Sezessionskrieges," *Jahrbücher*, LVIII (January-March, 1886), 13-35, 173-190. In this article Scheibert was critical of Sherman's generalship, contending that the celebrated March to the Sea was nothing more than ein harmloser Übungsarsche. This was in contrast to his earlier view (1874), when he endorsed without qualification the remarks -- highly favorable to Sherman -- of a contemporary, F. von Meerheimb (see below, p. 169). *La Guerre Civile*, pp. 303-307.

But the majority of Scheibert's writings during this later period were superficial and do not merit further study. By his own admission they were written "to pay the rent," and incidentally to convince German readers "that the so-called Rebel army is an inexhaustible store of military and psychological treasures."  

As an historian, Scheibert was partial to the South and often inaccurate. Except for his brief study of the Mississippi campaigns he was unfamiliar with the war in the West; like most European soldiers, he attached undue significance to the Virginia campaigns. He seems to have had a good knowledge of the printed sources, even the Official Records, and his studies of Sherman's March to the Sea, the Mississippi Valley campaigns, and the battle at Brandy Station show that he was capable of writing creditable history. Unfortunately his poor financial condition and indestructible loyalty to the former Confederacy often prevented his doing so.

Scheibert was more thorough as an observer. He was one of the few to understand the special characteristics of the American

73. "... zur Erhaltung meines Hausea." Mit Schwert und Feder, p. 339.


armies, and he was not fooled by appearances: ragged men could fight. Believing, as most European soldiers did, that the Southerner was intrinsically the better soldier (purer motives, good Anglo-Saxon background, accustomed to outdoor life, managerial experience on the plantations, etc.) he could see the Northern armies improving both in quality and leadership, and making use of vastly superior resources until even Lee's genius was unable to save the South from defeat.\textsuperscript{76} He appreciated the difficulties of provisioning these armies and he grasped the importance of the railroad both as a means of supply and as an aid to strategy.\textsuperscript{77} He was particularly struck by the work of the Union Eisenbahn-Abteilung that had kept the railroads in operating order, an American innovation that is supposed to have induced Prussia in 1866 to create a similar Field Railway Section.\textsuperscript{78} In justifying the appearance of one of his later articles, Scheibert revealed why he thought the Civil War worthy of study:

It may appear odd that the Jahrbücher should from time to time return to the war on the other side of the Ocean. But that war is interesting not only because of the significant accomplishments of cavalry, the first use of armored ships, the heavy rifled artillery, the greater application of technical science in war, the colossal development of sanitary methods; it will also

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{76} \textit{La Guerre Civile}, pp. 27, 38, 280; "General Lee," p. 99.
\item \textsuperscript{77} \textit{La Guerre Civile}, pp. 183-184, 193.
\item \textsuperscript{78} "Sherman's Marsch durch Georgien," p. 179; Edwin A. Pratt, \textit{The Rise of Rail-Power in War and Conquest} (London, 1915), p. 122. See below, chapter VI.
\end{itemize}
remain for centuries an inexhaustible mine for the soldiers who see in the din of war more than mathematical combinations of battalions and squadrons.79

Yet some aspects of Schiebert's analysis of the Civil War are open to question. His interpretation of the three phases in the evolution of infantry tactics, for example, is oversimplified and arbitrary, and his explanation for the appearance of trench warfare is not valid. Lee was not responsible for the general use of field fortifications in 1863. As early as 1861 the Confederates had constructed elaborate earthworks near the battlefield of Bull Run, and by 1862 similar works were used at Fort Donelson and in the battles around Richmond.80 Scheibert's assertion that the Confederate cavalry preferred shock tactics while the Union cavalry chose to fight dismounted is also disputable. Stuart himself may have preferred the saber -- it would have suited his colorful personality; but Forrest, Morgan and other Confederate leaders in the west were as dependent upon fire-


80. Major Arthur L. Wagner, "Hasty Intrenchments in the War of Secession," Military Historical Society Papers, XIII, 127-154, passim. In reviewing La Guerre Civile, Colonel C. S. Venable, onetime officer on Lee's staff, wrote that he had found "some errors, especially . . . on the campaign of 1864 of the Army of Northern Virginia -- the greatest of all of Lee's campaigns. . . . S. H. S. E., IV (1887), 89. Scheibert explained this by writing that he "was obliged to take the events of the campaign of 1864-65 from foreign officers. I studied Fletcher and Chesney (not relying on Northern authors). . . . Scheibert to J. Wm. Jones, 1876, reprinted in S. H. S. E., II (July-December, 1876), 318.
power as the Union cavalry. 81 As a matter of fact, even Stuart's men were dependent upon the rifle, and one reason advanced for the decline of Stuart's cavalry after 1863 was a serious shortage in firearms, particularly breech-loaders.

The want of proper arms and equipments placed the Southern cavalry at a disadvantage which can hardly be overestimated. . . . Breech-loading carbines were procured only in limited quantities, never more than enough to arm one, or at most two squadrons in a regiment. The deficiency was made up, generally, by Enfield rifles . . . [but] the difference between a Spencer carbine and an Enfield rifle is by no means a mere matter of sentiment. 82

Thus one may conclude that Scheibert, for all his specialized military background, did not fully comprehend the extent to which the breech-loader and rifled artillery had determined the development of Civil War tactics. In fact he took the position that the breech-loader had created a new problem in that it encouraged troops to fire ammunition away needlessly. Lee had once said something of the sort to Scheibert, 83 but Scheibert ought to have realized that the Confederates were plagued by a chronic supply problem and that this condition would not necessarily obtain in another war. Scheibert recognized that the use of entrenchments had strengthened defensive tactics, but he attributed


83. La Guerre Civile, p. 46.
this development to Lee's numerical inferiority rather than to the superiority of modern weapons. And in stating that dismounted tactics were more popular with the Union cavalry, it apparently did not strike him as inconsistent that an "inferior" cavalry should resort to inferior tactics to compensate for their inferiority. A well-known Union cavalry leader, Major-General James H. Wilson, was probably closer to the truth when he wrote:

The armament of cavalry is of great importance, but not until the closing days of the war did we wake up to what our experience ... ought to have taught us.... Green regiments, that you couldn't have driven into a fight with the old arms [sword and sabre] became invincible the very moment that good arms were placed in their hands.... There are only two arms that cavalry should use in modern warfare, -- the repeating magazine gun, either rifle or carbine, and the revolver. 84

Because the Confederate cavalry grew rapidly weaker after 1863, 85 it was possible for Scheibert to overlook this fact.

This tendency to minimize the effect of firepower upon tac-


85. "Up to the winter of 1863-64, the Confederate cavalry was well organized and had proved its efficiency ... but its weakness from that period grew rapidly. The sources of supplies of both men and horses had been exhausted, and the best ... men and officers had fallen in battle.

On the other hand ... the Federal cavalry ... armed with repeating carbines and fighting on foot, as well as mounted ... became the most formidable arm of the Federal service. When the war ended, it was but reasonable to aver that the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac was the most efficient body of soldiers on earth." Holmes Conrad (Major Cavalry Corps, Army of Northern Virginia), "The Cavalry Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia," in Miller, Photographic History of the Civil War, IV, 114.
tics is partially explained by the nature of Scheibert's mission and the time and extent of his visit to the Confederacy. His observations on the subjects of artillery and fortifications were sound, and have since become the accepted interpretation. His views on cavalry paralleled those of von Borcke, and both had come under the personal influence of Stuart. Had Scheibert spent a similar time with Forrest, or even had he seen Sheridan's cavalry at its best, he probably would have arrived at somewhat different conclusions. And so it was with the infantry: the only campaigns Scheibert actually observed belong to his second phase (1862-1863), the period of linear tactics which he compared to the German tactics in 1870-1871. He left America just as the war had entered its third phase, that of the tactical defensive, and it was only in this phase that the infantry tactics differed radically from accepted tactics in Europe. The same was true of most foreign observers, it might be added; the great majority of them visited Virginia in 1862 and 1863, during Scheibert's "period of linear tactics."


87. In both cases the column had given way to the line, the influence of the commander-in-chief in battle had diminished (Scheibert cited Wörth and Spicheren as typical examples), and there was a general tendency to commit reserve units prematurely. The Prussians had done this at Wörth and the Confederates made this mistake "nearly every time." According to Scheibert, the chief difference between the Civil War armies in 1862 and the Prussian Army in 1870 was that the latter benefited from superior peace-time training and was led by better junior officers. La Guerre Civile, pp. 65-71; "General Lee," pp. 208-209.
Scheibert's failure to realize the full significance of the tactical developments during the Civil War should not detract from the importance of his writings. He correctly interpreted the Civil War as the product of the machine age and his error in evaluating Civil War tactics was largely one of emphasis. His views were accepted by virtually every German who wrote about the Civil War and there was no fundamental difference between his concept of Civil War tactics and official doctrine. Both, for example, recognized the need of occasional dismounted fighting for cavalry yet prescribed shock tactics whenever possible. Both admitted the defensive value of field entrenchments yet recommended offensive maneuvers on the open battlefield. Scheibert's arguments against the use of dismounted tactics and reliance upon entrenchments reappear in most theoretical works as well. The general feeling was that cavalry and infantry lost their offensive spirit when forced to dismount or fight behind cover.

Both Scheibert and von Borcke nourished Stuart's reputation until that officer became the best known Civil War general in Germany except for Lee and possibly Jackson. They pictured Stuart as a dashing leader whose deeds should "go down in history in golden letters."88 Scheibert was justified in boasting that "Heros von Borcke and myself have brought it about that in the German-Prussian Army nothing concerning the Civil War . . . is so in fashion as accounts of the deeds of Southrons. Sherman and

Grant, the pets of ten years ago, are forgotten, and Lee, Jackson and Stuart are now the favorite heroes of our officers.  

Thus the Germans came to lionize Stuart in much the same way as a later generation of British officers was to esteem Jackson, with the end result in each case being the same: the perceptiveness of the author was often obscured by the brilliant subject he had helped to create.

Scheibert's observations on the defense of Charleston were confirmed by Lieutenant-Colonel von Scheliha, a Prussian who as Chief engineer of the department of the Gulf had "erected a new and extensive line of forts" near Mobile "which proved models of strength and judicious arrangement." After the war von Scheliha returned to Berlin and wrote a technical treatise on Coast Defense. Although much of this book was based upon personal experience, it included many actions at which von Scheliha had not been present and was written "to develop and establish theory from fact." In addition to Confederate accounts it included lengthy extracts from the official reports of officers in the United States Navy. Curiously enough, von Scheliha's book was published in England, even though the subject was one of some

89. Scheibert to J. Wm. Jones, reprinted in S. H. S. P., IX, 571.

90. Lonn, Foreigners in the Confederacy, p. 243.
According to von Scheliha the science of coast defense was static at the beginning of the Civil war: it --

... seemed to have come to a stand-still, and received a new impulse only after the brilliant success of the Federal fleet under ... [Admiral David Glasgow] Farragut had proved the absolute necessity for the military engineer to cast aside many time-honoured ideas, and to raise himself to the point already reached by the naval architect and artillerist.

The South's response to this situation had produced "new combinations and improved methods, which in some cases proved to be of the highest value." 92

Von Scheliha observed from reports of the operations at Forts Sumter and Pulaski and from his own experience at Mobile "the incapacity of masonry to resist the fire of modern artillery." He became convinced that earthworks, properly constructed, offered "better protection" than permanent fortifications. As evidence he cited the results of the Union bombardment of Battery Wagner in Charleston Harbor, where during a period of forty-two hours 2,864 shells had been fired against this battery. "The bomb-

91. An expression of official concern on the subject of coast defense is seen in [Brigadier-General Albert von Stosch] "Unsere Küsten in einem Kriege mit Frankreich," Die Grenzboten, XXVI (1867), Vol. II, 246-248. Although von Scheliha dedicated his book to "Admiral His Highness Prince Adalbert of Prussia," there is no record of any German edition in Kayser's Bücher Lexikon. Like von Borcke's Memoirs, A Treatise on Coast-Defence was evidently written in English (cf. ibid., p. vii) and it was probably never translated. There is no mention of von Scheliha in the Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie.

proof had been hit over 1,200 times, the parapet and traverses over 1,400 times, and yet but three guns had been totally dismounted and the bomb-proof remained intact. 93 At Wilmington, Fort Fisher had survived a bombardment of even greater intensity and had likewise remained "substantially uninjured as a defensive work." The meaning was clear: sand and earth were not only the "cheapest" but the "best material" for the construction of shore batteries. The reduction of such works, when left to the navy alone, required much time and enormous quantities of ammunition, and while well-protected guns could often be silenced they were rarely dismounted or permanently disabled by artillery fire. 94

But if warships alone could not destroy well built shore defenses, von Scheliha noted that such works rarely could prevent a steam fleet from forcing a passage "free of obstructions." Hence it was necessary to supplement shore batteries by underwater obstructions such as sunken craft or mines: "too much importance cannot be attached to this most potent element in coast defence." Von Scheliha devoted three lengthy chapters to a technical discussion of the various types of obstructions, paying particular attention to the potentialities of a new weapon, the submarine mine, or torpedo. 95 He wholeheartedly endorsed the opinion of Union Rear-Admiral David D. Porter, who in his Report (February

93. Ibid., p. 33.
94. Ibid., pp. 32-45. Von Scheliha did not favor guns mounted en barbette.
95. Ibid., pp. 48-77, 177-218, passim.
1, 1865) stated that "Obstructions and Torpedoes form a better defense than our present Forts." 96

The experiences of the Civil War also convinced von Scheliha that a successful coast defense depended not only upon strong local fortifications but on cooperating action of land and naval forces as well. Passive defense was not enough, for the war had demonstrated that even though defenses could be erected that were practically invulnerable to an attack from the sea, an enemy army by threatening the rear could compel the evacuation of a seaport. Therefore von Scheliha advocated floating batteries and the construction of railroad lines to points along the coast selected for defense, in order that sufficient reinforcements could be rushed to a threatened area -- something the Confederates had rarely been able to do. He felt that the Confederates had erred in trying to defend too much with too little, 97 rather than adopting a more elastic defense and concentrating only on the more important ports and river entrances. 98

Von Scheliha arrived at nearly the same general conclusions as Scheibert except for their estimate of the torpedo. They both realized that earthworks formed the best protection against modern artillery fire, and that naval action alone could not reduce

96. Ibid., p. 175.


98. A Treatise on Coast-Defence, pp. 3-6.
coastal fortifications. Von Scheliha's formula for a successful coast defense was based on two vital ingredients: a series of strategically important and well-constructed local defenses complete with shore batteries and channel obstructions, and an efficient communication system to insure prompt relief in the event of an enemy landing in force.

Von Scheliha's work is probably the most authoritative study on the Civil War of its kind. Not only was he able to draw from his own vast experience; he made skilled use of published documents as well. His deductions from the siege of Charleston, for example, were substantiated in the "official" Confederate history of The Defense of Charleston Harbor which appeared in 1890.99

The author of this book testified to the effectiveness of earthen fortifications, and torpedo defenses ("The iron-clad squadrons of Rear-Admirals DuPont and Dahlgren were as effectually stopped for more than two years by fear of these as by anything else"), and the need for a cooperating land army, both in the attack and in the defense of a fortified harbor.100

99. John Johnson, The Defense of Charleston Harbor, including Fort Sumter and the Adjacent Islands, 1863-1865 (Charleston, 1890). Johnson was one of five members of a Board appointed April 19, 1864, "for the purpose of compiling a military history of the siege of Charleston. . . ." Before publication it was approved by General Beauregard, in 1863 Commander of the Department of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, and by two other members of the original board. Ibid., pp. 3-5.

100. Ibid., pp. 261-276.
Chapter IV

THE FRENCH OBSERVERS

In contrast to the situation in both England and Prussia, no military reforms were pending in France at the time of the Civil War. Not that none was needed -- the unheeded warnings of General Trochu¹ and the swift collapse of France in 1870 were to reveal grave weaknesses in army organization and training. But in 1861, France was still basking in the glow of the Napoleonic tradition. Besides waging successful campaigns in Indo-China and Algeria, the French Army had performed creditably in the Crimea and in Italy, campaigns which had earned the respect of Europe. Other nations borrowed French regulations, studied French military institutions, and even imitated French uniforms. "The American Civil War, to give an obvious example, was fought, both by North and South, in what were, in effect, French uniforms,

¹. L'armée française en 1867, pp. 41, 313, 320.
even to the peculiar form of the képi."² "Everything took on a slightly French look."³ This situation may have led to a certain amount of complacency, for --

... the very ease of the success won with deplorable conditions of preparation, organisation and command had the most fatal effects upon the spirit of the army. It favored the natural tendency of the French to neglect effort, to believe that dash and bustle were all that were necessary to solve military problems. The Imperial Government, absorbed by domestic political considerations, was persuaded that it could have an army fit for war without spending in advance the necessary sums for its maintenance and preparation. Thus the victories of Magenta and Solferino marked the route to Sedan.⁴

The Civil War was only a few months old when several prominent French civilians, including some with previous military experience, arrived in the United States. The first of these was Prince Napoleon, nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte and a cousin of the French Emperor, Napoleon III.⁵ Prince Napoleon landed in New York in July 1861, and, accompanied by two officers on his staff, he paid a visit to both armies. His views deserve only passing

2. James Laver, British Military Uniforms (London, 1948), p. 20. The képi was the military cap worn by most of the Civil War soldiers. It had a round, flat top which sloped toward the front, and a visor.


5. Prince Joseph Charles Paul Napoleon was the son of Jerome Bonaparte, youngest brother of Napoleon I. Charles Louis Napoleon (Napoleon III) was the son of Louis, another of Napoleon Bonaparte's brothers.
mention, inasmuch as the Civil War armies were in embryonic stage when he saw them and he witnessed no fighting whatever. The militia he saw in New York appeared to Prince Napoleon as "de¬
testable troops," but the volunteers he inspected in the camps outside Washington struck him as being somewhat better: they marched "well enough," their discipline was adequate, and they performed the drill regulations "so-so." He held the same opinion of the Confederate soldiers, although those he viewed in the encampments at Bull Run impressed him as being better raw material. Nothing Prince Napoleon wrote, however, indicates more than a casual interest in military matters. The same was true of his military aide, Lieutenant-Colonel Ferri Pisani, who also considered the American soldiers inferior. This officer seemed especially distressed at the lack of military protocol and the weak chain of command in the Union Army, and he was disgusted at the theatrical displays he had witnessed. Did such volunteers compare favorably with the professional armies of Europe? "No, a thousand times no." 


A more sympathetic reaction was recorded by the Prince de Joinville, who had sailed for America in August 1861, accompanied by a son whom he hoped to enroll in the Naval Academy and two nephews, the Comte de Paris and the Duc de Chartres. A former Rear Admiral in the French Navy and a well-known and influential writer on naval matters, the Prince remained with his nephews, both of whom had enlisted in the Union Army, during the Peninsular campaign. In July 1862, he and Captains "L. P. d’Orléans and R. d’Orléans" took leave of the Army of the Potomac and returned to Europe, and in October the influential Revue de deux mondes published his account of McClellan’s Peninsular Campaign.

8. Francois Ferdinand d’Orléans, Prince de Joinville, was the third son of Louis Philippe, King of France from 1830 until he abdicated in 1848.

9. The Naval Academy was then located in Newport, Rhode Island, where it had been moved from Annapolis for safekeeping during the war.

10. These Bourbon princes were the sons of Ferdinand, Duc d’Orléans, the eldest son of Louis Philippe. After the death of his father in 1842, the Comte de Paris, as eldest son, became heir apparent to the French throne. They had been in exile since 1848. See Le Marquis de Flers, Le Comte de Paris (London, 1889), pp. 45-75.

11. See Memoirs of the Prince de Joinville, translated from the French by Lady Mary Loyd (New York, 1895), for the Prince de Joinville’s naval career. Unfortunately these Memoirs end in 1848.

12. A. Trognon [the Prince de Joinville], "Guerre d’Amérique campagne du Potomac Mars - Juillet 1862," Revue de deux mondes, V (October, 1862), 798-867. Apparently the French Government would allow no article to be published in France under the real name of one of the Orléans princes. De Flers, Le Comte de Paris,
Since he was an unofficial member of McClellan's headquarters, the Prince de Joinville was able to observe the shortcomings of the army organization. He noted that McClellan's army suffered from poor staffwork, an inadequate replacement system and an unwieldy supply service. "If their primitive organization had been better, the survivors of this rude campaign . . . might be regarded as the equals of the best soldiers in the world." When well led, the American soldier was brave, a good worker ("Nothing was so remarkable as to see a detail fall to work at making an abattis in the woods"), and admirably suited for campaigning. The real fault, the Prince concluded, lay in the

p. 96. However, even though such an article might not be free from political implications, Prince Napoleon felt that "If what they ['the Orléans princes'] write under pseudonyms is good, well composed, and in good spirit, and in favor of the good cause of the North . . . let . . . [the Revue de deux mondes] publish it." Jordan and Pratt, Europe and the American Civil War, p. 230. Published separately under the same title (Paris, 1863), the Prince de Joinville's article was translated and published in the United States under the title The Army of the Potomac: Its Organization, Its Commander and its Campaign (New York, 1862). All citations refer to this edition.

13. "In the United States there is no such thing as a corps of the General Staff. . . . There is no special branch of the service whose duty it is to regulate, centralize and direct the movements of the army. . . . The functions of the adjutant-general are limited to the transmission of the orders of the general. He [i.e. the adjutant-general] has nothing to do with seeing that they are executed. The general has no one to bear his orders but aides-de-camp, who have the best intentions in the world, and are excellent at repeating mechanically a verbal order, but to whom nobody pays much attention if they undertake to exercise any initiative whatever." Ibid., p. 52.

14. Ibid., p. 96. See also ibid., pp. 28, 79.

15. Ibid., p. 80.
volunteer system itself. French military leaders "unanimously averred that it took years to make a good soldier," and that the short-term conscript could not acquire "the requisite knowledge, discipline and spirit." The Prince de Joinville evidently was also of this view.

In Europe . . . we have learned to recognize the comparative value of the regular soldier, and of this costly and capricious amateur soldier, who is called a volunteer. . . . An army of sixty thousand regulars would have done more than double or triple the number of volunteers; but in America they do not know this, and besides, they do not wish to know it. It would involve a renunciation of the general and deeply rooted creed, that every American, when he wishes to do a thing, may find within himself, without any apprenticeship, the power to do it. . . .

The Prince de Joinville made few tactical observations. Cavalry did not play an important part in the Peninsular campaign, although he mentioned "one of those fights with the cold steel which have become so rare in these days," which was "all so much valor thrown away." He also commented that rifled artillery was "the rage of the hour, and fit only to be fired . . . at long range in an open country." For heavily wooded terrain he preferred the old smooth-bore artillery -- "real fighting guns." Despite occasional errors and a few shaky generalizations (delay is described as "a characteristic trait of the American

18. Ibid., pp. 50, 74.
people"), the Prince de Joinville was a discerning observer. He knew a great deal about military affairs, he had viewed a major Civil War campaign from the command level, and he wrote down his observations in a style that was, according to his translator, "equally free from the carelessness of the amateur, and the pedantry of the professional soldier." The same could be said of his nephew. The Comte de Paris and his brother had both enlisted in the Union Army, receiving the honorary rank of captain, and had accompanied McClellan during the Peninsular campaign as bona fide members of his staff. They left for England in the summer of 1862 because "the relations between the Government at Washington and the French Government had become very strained, owing to the determination of the latter to undertake that fatal expedition to Mexico." Until June

19. Ibid., p. 23.
20. William Henry Hurlbert, Preface to ibid., p. 3.
21. According to the Comte de Paris, he and the Duc de Chartres were both "regularly mustered into the U. S. Volunteer Service." The Comte de Paris to John Page Nicholson, August 24, 1887. Microfilm copy of a letter in a bound volume entitled "A Collection of Autograph letters from Philippe Comte de Paris to John P. Nicholson, relating to the Civil War" (Catalogue of Library of John Page Nicholson, p. 230), The Huntington Library. Cited hereafter as Nicholson Collection. Miss Lonn states that "The Princes laid down the condition that they were to receive no pay but should, on the other hand, be free to resign whenever they desired." Foreigners in the Union Army, p. 278.
22. De Flers, Le Comte de Paris, p. 81. On January 9, 1862, a "small French Army Corps" disembarked at Vera Cruz. In April this force moved inland, was defeated before La Pueblá, and substantial reinforcements were rushed from France. This was in direct defiance of the Monroe Doctrine, and raised anew the question of French recognition of the Confederacy. By the time the
1871, when the French National Assembly repealed the law which had sent his family into exile, the Comte de Paris spent much of his time in literary pursuits, and it was during this period that he began work on his massive *History of the Civil War in America*.\(^{23}\) In 1871 he returned to France; two years later he renounced his claim to the throne in favor of the Comte de Chambord, and in 1874 he completed the first volume of his *History*. From that date until his death twenty years later, the Comte de Paris devoted what free time he could salvage from politics and illness to what he described as his "great work."\(^{24}\) Although he had served with the Union Army for only one campaign, the Comte de Paris intended to cover every battle of the war. He described his work as "essentially a military history," and wrote it in the hope that his countrymen "would not reject without examination precious examples and dearly bought experiences, under the pretext that what has succeeded in America cannot be applied to Europe."\(^{25}\)

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\(^{25}\) *History of the Civil War*, I, 2.
Like Fletcher, the Comte de Paris was with the Army of the Potomac in 1862, and he reacted to the American volunteers in much the same way: "Good soldiers they were not -- indeed they were scarcely soldiers..." But as was the case with Fletcher, he detected a steady improvement in the armies as the war progressed, although he observed that it took the American soldiers --

a long time to learn that, upon ground where the fighting had to be done at short distances, it was almost always less dangerous to rush upon the enemy than to be decimated by his fire while standing still. For want of that mechanism which, in well-regulated armies, communicates the will of the directing power to each man... they were frequently to lose the opportunity of turning a first advantage into decisive victory.

After several campaigns the Civil War soldiers, though they "still bear the name of volunteers," had in fact become real veterans. The Comte de Paris pointedly remarked that it was not to the Civil War "that the partisans of levies en masse and improvised armies must look for confirmation of their theories." Manifestly, the French legislators and military leaders did not look to the Civil War "for confirmation" of their theories. Their eyes were glued to the Rhine, and not on the far side of the Atlantic, as they

26. Ibid., p. 176.

27. Ibid., I, 191. See also ibid., pp. 177, 365-366; II, 34, III, 451.

set about to repair the damage of the Franco-Prussian War.29

The Comte de Paris' comments on tactics parallel those of other observers, although his evaluations sometimes differed. Infantry seldom used the bayonet; "... everything was in favor of the party acting on the defensive."30 Like Scheibert, he credited Lee with inaugurating the system of improvised field works that played "such a conspicuous part" after 1864.31 He, too, noticed that Civil War generals often lost control over their commands in battle, although he tended to blame this on the unusually rugged terrain, "a circumstance which could never be lost sight of in the study of this war. On such ground the generals-in-chief cannot be expected to combine great concerted movements, and to handle their armies as on a drill-ground."32 He was more critical of Lee's system of command than Scheibert, claiming that at Gettysburg "The extreme independence which he encouraged among his corps commanders, and which the division and brigade generals imitated in their turn, rendered the best conceived plans ... fruitless."33

29. The defeat in 1870-1871 had caused France to abandon the long-term professional army in favor of the German short-service model, which was based on a rigorous system of conscription. The first conscription law was enacted in 1872. Cf. Challener, The French Theory of the Nation in Arms, pp. 32-48.

30. History of the Civil War, I, 192.

31. Ibid., III, 812.

32. Ibid., I, 556.

33. Ibid., III, 687.
The Comte de Paris made an important contribution to the interpretation of Civil War cavalry. His research on the pre-war organization of the United States Army revealed that most of the pre-war cavalry had been dragoons or mounted riflemen, and that the tactics used against the Indians on the western plains were similar to those later employed in the Civil War. Long range weapons had rendered all distinction between dragoons and regular cavalry "useless in a contest in which the dragoon should be the true types of all cavalrymen. . . ." Otherwise he accepted the prevailing view that unfavorable terrain, lack of training, and -- in the case of the Union cavalry -- poor horsemanship all tended to discourage the use of shock tactics. The Comte de

34. Another French writer, La Frustron, made the same observation in 1862 (see below, Chapter VII). Actually, three of the five regiments of cavalry in the pre-war army were dragoons and mounted rifles. "By the act of Congress of August 3, 1861, the first and second dragoons were designated respectively the first and second cavalry, the mounted rifles the third cavalry, and the first and second cavalry respectively the fourth and fifth cavalry." General J. A. Early, "Comments on the First Volume of Count of Paris' Civil War in America," S. H. S. P., III (1877), 140. Cited hereafter as Early, "Comments." As a matter of fact, the heavy cavalry of the European armies, "with their steel breastplates and helmets and their heavy horses, who depended on shock action with the sabre . . . never existed in the United States Army." Even the two pre-war regiments of regular cavalry were armed with percussion rifled-carbines and Colt's revolvers. Herr and Wallace, The Story of the U. S. Cavalry, pp. 63, 76, 78.

35. History of the Civil War, I, 24-25. In his critique of the first volume of this work, former Confederate General Jubal A. Early likewise stated: "The modern improvements in fire-arms, and especially the introduction of breech-loaders, have rendered useless the distinction between the different kinds of mounted troops. . . ." "Comments," p. 141.

Paris evidently preferred a combination of fire and shock tactics, for his pages abound with favorable descriptions of cavalry "fighting alternately on foot and on horseback." He was also of the opinion that "raids," so called, played a "novel" but "important" part during the war.

With regard to sieges and coast defense, the Comte de Paris merely seconded the views of Scheibert and von Schelihia, without mentioning either by name. The Civil War had demonstrated that uncovered batteries could not withstand heavy bombardment, that masonry works were largely rendered obsolete by the new rifled siege artillery, and -- here he disagreed with Scheibert -- that underwater mines or torpedoes were effective in harbor defense.

He seemed especially interested in the Vicksburg campaign: because the Union Army had had to invest a fortified city and at the same time ward off the parries of a relief force under Johnston, the Comte de Paris wondered "if the German officers, who have shown so much discernment in selecting in the American war all that was applicable to the European continent, have not derived some useful information from the siege of Vicksburg for the campaign of 1870."

Obviously what he had in mind was a similar situation before Paris in 1870, when a relieving French Army, the Army of

37. Ibid., II, 448, 480; III, 15-16, 243; IV, 130, 204.
38. Ibid., II, 83, 480.
39. Ibid., I, 447, 460; II, 232; IV, 361, 383.
40. Ibid., III, 363-364.
and desperate sorties by the besieged garrison had been unable to break the Prussian stranglehold on the city. But if the Prussians had actually benefited from studying this particular campaign, no written record of it has come to light. Scheibert had tried to get to Vicksburg during the siege, but without success, and no other Prussian military writer of note had stressed the importance of the Vicksburg campaign before 1870.

Because he had been in America for so short a time, the Comte de Paris was forced to depend upon printed sources and the testimony of friends for his weighty History. It is essentially a secondary work, an expert synthesis of the interpretations of many contemporary observers. In scope it resembles Fletcher's History of the American War, except that it is more detailed and probably more accurate. The Comte de Paris was meticulous in his research; in addition to studying the standard works on the war, he used many lesser-known pamphlets and even some manuscript material. Through the good offices of President Grant, he was furnished copies of original Confederate reports several years before these were published in the Official Records, and his American friends sent him many documents and personal recollections.

41. The Prince de Joinville, under an assumed name, belonged to the Army of the Loire.

42. A "Bibliographical Note" is given in ibid., I, 638-640.

pertaining to the war. In 1886 the Comte de Paris was again exiled for political reasons, and work on his History lagged appreciably thereafter. He died in 1894, having barely carried his narrative through the year 1863. Before his death, however, he returned to the United States for a brief visit, an event which he liked to regard as "a pilgrimage of a former member of the Army of the Potomac . . . ." 45

The Orleanist princes, of course, had not been official observers, and no French officers were sent to America in an official capacity during the first years of the war. In fact, on September 28, 1861, the French Minister of War, by order of the Emperor, decreed that henceforth no leave would be granted to any French officer intending to visit America. The French Government, anxious to avoid unnecessary diplomatic entanglement, did not absolutely prohibit departures, but no officer could leave and still retain his rank. 46 Since this was too high a price for an officer with a career to protect, there were no French counterparts to Fletcher, Fremantle and von Borcke.

44. The Comte de Paris to John Page Nicholson, April 22, 1881, Nicholson Collection. In this Collection there are many letters from the Comte de Paris thanking Nicholson for sending him material and mentioning similar favors from others in the United States. Since most of his American friends and correspondents were former Union officers, it is scarcely surprising that ex-Confederates should find fault with his work. Early, "Comments," S. H. S. P., III, 140-154. See also ibid., VI (1878), 10-36; XLIV (1923), 233-235.


46. Lonn, Foreigners in the Union Army, p. 280.
Because French soldiers were thus discouraged from visiting America during the first years of the war, the published report of the official Swiss observer, Major Ferdinand Lecomte, received wide attention in France. A staff officer in the Swiss Army, Lecomte was first inspired "to make a military excursion in America" from reading Ferri Pisani's *Letters on America* and in December 1861, he was officially authorized to make the trip. He was attached to McClellan's staff as a voluntary aide-de-camp, and saw service at Yorktown before returning to Switzerland. His official *Report* and a three-volume *History* he wrote after the war contain many cogent military observations. Lecomte had been an observer in the war between France and Austria in 1859. At the time of the Civil War he was an editor of the *Revue Militaire Suisse*, a well-known military publication.

Lecomte was the only official observer whose report was published while the Civil War was still in progress. Although he saw even less of the Peninsular campaign than the Prince de Joinville and the Comte de Paris, his analysis of the Army of the Po-

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tomac in 1862 testifies to his acumen as an observer. First, he noted that the Army of the Potomac suffered "from lack of authority in the generals..." He deplored the influence of politics in the selection of higher officers and governmental interference in strictly military matters. Second, he thought the mode of recruitment defective, particularly the practice in the North of giving bounties to volunteers, which often attracted undesirable elements. Lecomte favored the Swiss system of conscription. Third, he was against the election of officers by the rank and file, which in his opinion produced mediocre leadership. Fourth, the lack of a "really organized staff" further weakened army leadership. Fifth, the regiments were too numerous and as a result were too weak in effective force. This was partially because of unsound recruiting practices, but even more it was the result of a faulty replacement system whereby newly-raised troops were formed into additional regiments rather than being sent as replacements to veteran organizations. Lecomte thought it would be better to introduce new recruits into the regiments which al-

50. "If the army were recruited by conscription, or if each citizen, subject to service, were held to military duty, as in Switzerland, the various classes of society would be more equally and more directly identified with the war, and would better comprehend the necessity of the sacrifices which it demands." Ibid., p. 93. The Federal Government passed a national conscription law in 1863.

51. "... at the moment when the government made the greatest sacrifices for the army, the artillery, and armament in general, it almost completely neglected the formation of a good general staff. Guerre de la Sécession, I, 80.
ready had combat experience, but he realized why this was not done: it would necessitate the establishment of regimental depots, and "there would be fewer places for officers to bestow, fewer favors to be distributed, less . . . political intrigue. . . ."^\textsubscript{52}

Sixth, he noted that the Union Army was burdened by excessive baggage (a characteristic trait of most American armies, even in World War II and Korea). Seventh, there seemed to be a lack of adequate pensions, medals and other recognition "to boost morale of the soldier."^\textsubscript{53} And finally, he observed that the enforcement of discipline was "fundamentally defective." "Courts of inquiry and courts-martial . . . are multiplied to infinity, diverting, at every turn, a good number of soldiers from active service. . . ." Lecomte also thought that the Union soldiers possessed too strong a spirit of individual independence, "laudable in civil life but . . . fatal to military discipline."^\textsubscript{54}

This was certainly a fair appraisal of the Union Army in 1862. Like Fletcher and the Comte de Paris, both of whom were with the Army of the Potomac during the Peninsular campaign, Le- comte later stressed the fact that as the war progressed, many of these weaknesses were remedied. After the war he wrote that

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item 52. The War in the United States, p. 95. See also Guerre de la sécession, I, 143.
\item 53. The Congressional Medal of Honor was established by Congress in 1862.
\item 54. The War in the United States, pp. 93-99.
\end{itemize}}
the campaigns of 1864 and 1865 demonstrated "an infinitely superior degree of execution," concluding: "The result of this gigantic struggle will show us . . . that the entire American nation, civil and military, was able to profit from the lessons of experience." Even in his Report he had stated that the American armies "have shown military capacities equal to those of the best troops in the world."  

From his observations during the Peninsular campaign Le- comte submitted several recommendations. He liked the Union supply system: "The army of the United States asserts the principle, that the soldier ought to be able to subsist on his rations, without being obliged to disburse a fraction besides. I believe this a very good principle, and . . . it ought also to be practiced in our army." He recognized the revolution that had occurred in naval warfare: "If we should ever be under the necessity of arming our frontier lakes . . . or should we only have to fortify their banks, we ought not to forget that vessels of wood, and light walls, can no longer hold out against the heavy calibres and iron plates of the American system, which are already imitated

55. Guerre de la sécession, I, 228.

56. The War in the United States, pp. 53-54. "The general information of the men in all which concerns encampments, and the establishment of routes, bridges and abattis, their patience and their sang froid under disappointments, their force of will, and their persistence against obstacles, are truly remarkable. On the other hand, the etiquette of discipline, the respect for authority, and the good order of the internal service, fall short of what is desirable." Ibid., pp. 73-74.
by the European powers." He also urged the Swiss authorities "to renounce the bivouac, and to furnish the troops with a tent" as in America, and he recommended that the Swiss army adopt the McClellan saddle. 57 Even as early as the Peninsular campaign, Lecomte made an important discovery:

The late experience which I have had in America of the wants of the troops in the field, have confirmed me in the conviction which I had already, after the Italian war, that spades, axes, and mattocks are articles of the first necessity, and of daily use in all the corps. It would, then, be very desirable that means should be taken in advance, of having a sufficient provision of those articles, in case of our army being put into the field. 58

He also recommended that the Swiss experiment with the United States army revolver, which he anticipated "will certainly be of great advantage." 59

Although he could see "nothing particular to notice" in the strategy of the Civil War, Lecomte grasped the importance of two new developments destined to revolutionize strategy in the future. He was impressed by the "remarkable facility" of combined land-sea operations, and felt that the Union Navy would more than

57. So named after Captain (later General) George B. McClellan, who brought back from Europe in 1856 a saddle "used by the Prussians framed on a Hungarian tree." This saddle, with modifications, remained standard equipment for the United States cavalry until horse cavalry was abolished in 1942. Herr and Wallace, The Story of the U. S. Cavalry, p. 78.


59. Ibid., p. 104.
compensate "for the disappointments which the land army has experienced." After the war, recalling that much noise had been made in Europe when the allied armies had disembarked in the Crimea ("To believe the Paris and London papers, this was the eighth wonder of the world"), Lecomte remarked that "about fifty" similar disembarkments had taken place during the Civil War, and with greater skill and much less fanfare. He also recognized the strategic importance of railways. In 1863 he stated that "In no other army . . . are the railroads of a use so important and so frequent," and in his later work he cited a recent brochure written by the aged Jomini, the "dean" of strategists, in which it was stated that railroads would exercise an ever-increasing influence on future military operations. Lecomte suggested that the Civil War furnished all the "desirable material" for this new chapter on strategy.

In his Report, Lecomte hardly mentioned the Civil War cavalry, except to state that it was "excellent as light cavalry and for foraging." Like Fletcher and Wolseley, however, he later changed his mind: in his History, Lecomte asserted that cavalry had derived more benefit than any other arm from improved weapons. With increased firepower the Civil War cavalry had be-

60. Ibid., pp. 87-88.
61. Guerre de la sécession, III, 290.
62. The War in the United States, pp. 75-76.
63. Guerre de la sécession, III, 290-291.
come "also at the same time swift and powerful infantry." Lecomte marvelled at the results it attained with the breechloader, and he seems not to have regretted the gradual passing of shock tactics 64 -- but then, he was not a cavalryman by trade. He also thought that much could be learned from the Civil War cavalry with respect to skirmishing and out-post duties.

Of all the contemporary observers, none excelled and few approached Lecomte in his understanding of the Civil War and his appreciation for its many "lessons." He concluded that "In matters of organisation, discipline, maneuvers en masse, military uniform, and hierarchical spirit the war of Secession has furnished nothing," but he was aware of the increased firepower of the Civil War weapons and of the extensive use made of field entrenchments. 65 Like Scheibert, Lecomte saw much to be learned in the broad field of military technology. He cited breech-loading and repeating rifles, "enormous calibre" artillery, armored ships and Gatling guns as indicative of the impact of the industrial age upon war. The remarkable construction of railroads, bridges, roads, military canals; the "admirable use" of the field telegraph and signal system; improvements in camp equipment and medical services -- in all these important innovations Lecomte was "persuaded" that "Europe will bring back good

64. Ibid., III, 12, 259, 291.
65. See ibid., I, 53, 172; II, 93, 187-188; III, 45, 96, 123.
fruits from the experience of America."66

Trained French military observers were few. Le moniteur maintained a regular correspondent in America and articles on the war frequently appeared in periodicals such as the Revue des deux mondes, but these were written mostly by civilians for the general public. Finally in 1862 the leading French military journal, Le spectateur militaire, hired Ulrich de Fonvielle, a former French officer and soldier of fortune then serving in the Union Army, to write articles that would "give to our officers . . . a true picture of military life in the United States."67 De Fonvielle began with sketches of soldier life in western Virginia, where he was a member of General John C. Fremont's command. He wrote only of events at which he had been present, and although he often commented on the conduct of the war, his articles contain little technical military information. It is necessary only to state that, like many others with a first-hand knowledge of the Union Army, de Fonvielle admired the American soldier and deplored the replacement system. He seems to have distrusted improvised armies, and he attempted to draw no conclusions from this "strange war," which originally had been treated as child's


67. Editor's note in Ulrich de Fonvielle, "Guerre d'Amérique," Le spectateur militaire, XXXIX (July-September, 1862), 209; XLI (January, 1863), 99; XLII (June, 1863), 419. De Fonvielle previously had fought under Garibaldi in Italy and had published a history of that campaign.
play and which he thought could finish as "combats of giants." Similar information was contained in a book written by a French official who visited the Confederacy in 1863, presumably on an errand for the Emperor Napoleon III. Charles Girard wrote a brief report on the various governmental departments, the Confederate Army, guns and founderies, et cetera, but his observations were as general as those of de Fonvielle and concerned social and political conditions rather than military affairs.

It was not until 1864, when their government finally sent official observers to cover the Civil War, that the French undertook the serious study of American military practices and institutions. In March of that year, Colonel Francois DeChenal and Captain Gusman, both of the French Artillery Corps, arrived in New York. They had been sent to study American military techniques, "especially" the Civil War "innovations in artillery." Upon returning to France the following January, DeChenal submitted a detailed report "containing the answers to the many questions . . . which had been prescribed for me." Fortunately most of this report was later published, the greater part of it being incorporated in Vigo Roussillon's Puissance Militaire des

68. Ibid., LX (October, 1862), 40, 42-43, 50; LXI, 101-102.


70. Philippe Regis Denis comte de Trobriand, Four Years with the Army of the Potomac (Boston, 1889), p. 595.
Etats Unis d'Amérique, a work which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.\textsuperscript{71} In 1872 DeChenal himself published part two of his report, that concerning the organization and administration of "the American Army," which he brought up to date by reports, documents and books sent him by General George M. Meade, commander of the Army of the Potomac in 1864-1865.\textsuperscript{72}

DeChenal's original report had been concerned with four different problems, which he listed as --

"Causes and probable result of the war."

"The American [Union] Army."

"Description of the arms and munitions of war in use in the American Army."

"Construction and manufacture of arms and munitions of war. Arsenals and private factories."

Taken together, the answers to these questions would furnish a good evaluation of the military capacity of the Union Army.

His reactions were decidedly mixed. He felt that the Americans as a rule made good soldiers: "At the core, and in all that is essential, the discipline of the American is as good as, if not better than, that of the European armies; but it has not the

\textsuperscript{71} See below, pp. 182 ff.

\textsuperscript{72} General DeChenal, L'armée Americaine pendant la guerre de sécession (Paris, 1872); American edition, The American Army in the War of Secession (Fort Leavenworth, 1894), Preface. All citations refer to the American edition. "Will you see in France our mutual friend Deschanel [sic] -- he talked of writing for the benefit of the French public and I sent him all the reports, documents, and books I could collect about the war." George M. Meade to de Trobriand, August 28, 1867, reprinted in Marie Caroline Post, The Life and Mémoirs of Comte Régis de Trobriand (New York, 1910), p. 347. De Trobriand is discussed below, pp. 133-135.
external marks and an observer who merely passes through the American Army may thus be deceived." However, he did not think that patriotism, devotion and discipline could "entirely atone" for a lack of military knowledge which the Civil War soldiers had to acquire in battle, "sometimes at great cost." The Civil War armies were not as skilled in those "great movements of parade" as a regular army in Europe, and DeChenal detected "a certain unwieldiness" that he thought would handicap such an army fighting under European conditions. But "one would seek in vain in America for plains like that . . . at Chalons. . . ." Like many other observers, he also criticized the Union Army for its replacement system and lack of a general staff.

What the American lacked in formal drill and organization, however, DeChenal believed they made up in other ways. The Army Engineers, for example, were excellent. DeChenal described the forts protecting New York harbor as models of military construction. Like Scheibert, he was particularly impressed by the Union Railroad Construction Corps, and he thought highly of the Signal Corps and the services of supply and transportation. "It would be difficult for a commissariat service to work more smoothly . . .

73. The American Army, p. 228.
74. Ibid., p. 231.
75. Ibid., pp. 17, 224.
76. Ibid., pp. 190-197.
especially as that army is unable to live upon the country and must carry all its supplies." 77 DeChenal was so impressed by "the admirable sanitary condition" of the Union Army that he even brought back to France detailed instructions for digging a camp latrine. 78

DeChenal's report contained a wealth of statistical material and minute information about the organization, equipment and regulations of the Union Army. He reported that the infantry knapsack "was very awkward looking, yet it does not seem to fatigue its wearer and holds more than ours"; that the Springfield rifle was "an excellent arm, leaving nothing to be desired"; that the "weight and great liability to get out of order" made the Spencer carbine "unsuitable for cavalry" (a debatable statement); and that the Schenkl projectile was "the best" American artillery projectile, "its fire being accurate" but displaying a tendency to "subject the piece to great wear." Even the nosebag for horses "deserves notice." 79 DeChenal not only described the curriculum at West Point; he also included the dimensions of the main buildings. His report is replete with statistical tables and charts indicating monthly pay rates, subsistence allowances, ordnance stores, clothing allotments, and such useful parcels of informa-

77. Ibid., pp. 43-48, 181, 200.

78. Ibid., p. 171. "A trench, 10 feet long, 3 feet wide and 6 feet deep, is dug. . . ."

79. Ibid., pp. 23-36, passim.
tion as the following: "It has been found that the average length of service of a cavalry carbine is five years; of pistols, sabres and cavalry equipment, four years; of infantry equipment, six years; of the infantry musket, seven years."\(^{80}\)

DeChenal was more interested in the organization and administration of the Civil War armies than in tactics, but even here his observations were cogent and to the point. Recalling the superiority of the Confederate cavalry in the first years of the war, he reported that by the time he visited the Army of the Potomac (1864), "the original Confederate organizations have been exhausted and the Federal cavalry . . . always have the advantage in all encounters." DeChenal was with the Union Army at the time of Sheridan's great victories in the Shenandoah Valley, and he observed that --

There have been very few cavalry battles during the war. In most cases, the cavalry dismount and fight on foot like infantry. The American cavalry throw up intrenchments like the infantry, and with equal skill. One of the finest earthworks that we have seen was constructed by a regiment of cavalry.\(^{81}\)

He questioned the value of cavalry raids, believing that the damage resulting from such raids was usually more apparent than real and incurred an enormous waste of horseflesh. DeChenal was such a thorough observer that after one of Sheridan's long raids he actually inspected "one by one" all of the unserviceable and

\(^{80}\) Ibid., p. 152.

\(^{81}\) Ibid., p. 28.
broken-down horses which had been sent back to City Point. Finding that they "were all thin, mostly broken-down in front . . . some with broken knees," but that there was not a single instance of saddle rub, he took a McClellan saddle back with him to France and recommended it to the Minister of War for use in the French cavalry. 82

From his comments on infantry tactics it is obvious that DeChenal appreciated the new fire weapons used on the Civil War battlefields. The American soldiers, he reported, "understand the great necessity for cover . . . they throw up intrenchments without waiting for the order." 83

Hardly has the army halted . . . before it is intrenched without waiting for the engineer officer, and when the latter arrives he finds few things that need rectifying; the lines are defiladed, the traverses are well placed, abattis is prepared, the vedettes are placed in small trenches which furnish them perfect cover; the army is secure against surprise. . . . If the position has to be held, all these rough works are perfected and lines and redoubts are built which are quite as artistic as the best of military constructions. All arms are equally skillful and the cavalry rivals the sappers of the engineers.

DeChenal apparently grasped the significance of this development better than most contemporary European soldiers. He recognized that frontal attacks had become prohibitive and that only turning or outflanking movements were practicable. He considered Sherman's Atlanta campaign "a masterpiece of this kind of maneuver,"

82. Ibid., pp. 29-31, 234-235.
83. Ibid., p. 27.
presenting "a series of marches and countermarches which cannot be studied too much by any soldier who is interested in his profession." 84

DeChenal's report was not free from errors and inconsistencies. No historian of the Civil War would accept his categorical statement that "the habit of obedience to the law and of considering it a sufficient guaranty against the caprices of power has prevented among the [Union] generals any idea of insubordination," 85 and there are many who would question his opinion that alcoholic beverages and venereal disease were virtually unknown among Sherman's troops on their march through Georgia. 86 However, despite his habit of overworking superlatives, DeChenal's report made it abundantly clear that the Union Army in 1865 was a good army, schooled by four years of actual war. If Napoleon III seriously considered persevering in his Mexican venture over the active opposition of the United States, and if he was familiar with DeChenal's report that was submitted in 1865, this report surely exercised a sobering influence. DeChenal spent the longest tour of duty of all the official observers sent to America during the Civil War (March 1864-January, 1865). His observations were more thorough and detailed than those of any other foreign officer. Because he was here during the latter stages of the war,
he gained a sharper insight into the development of Civil War tactics.

DeChenal's estimate of the military capabilities of the Union Army was also supported by two prominent French civilians who visited the Army of the Potomac in January 1865. The first of these, Auguste Laugel, was a director of an important French railroad and a vigorous Union sympathizer. While with Grant's army in the trenches before Petersburg, Laugel became interested in "the composition of the American army, its habits, its spirit, and the way in which the mixture of the small regular army . . . with so many thousands of raw soldiers, had been accomplished. . . ." He departed convinced that four years of war had forged the "raw soldiers" of 1861 into an effective military organization. Laugel concluded: "There is nothing that might not have been undertaken with the troops under Grant's orders that were camped before Richmond and Petersburg." Another distinguished French visitor, Ernest Duvergier de Haurranne, was equally surprised to find that the discipline and organization of the Union Army before Petersburg were superior to anything the Europeans had expected of a volunteer army. He regarded the Army of the Potomac as equal to a long service, professional army. Union troops who had fled in panic at Bull Run had held their ground

87. Jordan and Pratt, Europe and the American Civil War, p. 229.

88. Auguste Laugel, The United States during the War (New York, 1866), pp. 204, 230.
at Gettysburg, and by 1865 were veteran soldiers. Their officers were surely better "than those of our garrison veterans who became generals without ever having been under fire." De Haurranne returned to France persuaded that he had seen a new kind of warfare, a war where it had become possible for armies to transform "an entire region into a citadel." 

One other French writer deserves mention. Régis de Trobriand, the son of a former French General and a well-known literary figure, had emigrated to America in 1847 at the age of thirty-one. In 1861 he was elected Colonel of the 55th New York Volunteers, and by the time the war ended he had reached the rank of brevet Major-General. He remained in the United States Army after the war and became well-known for his experiences in the Indian wars. De Trobriand had recorded his experiences in his journal. Soon after Appomattox he travelled to France to arrange for the publication of his Quatre ans de campagnes à l'Armée du Potomac, which he had written to acquaint the French public with "the cause, the object, and the spirit of our last war." Although French "in language ... [and] in spirit," 


90. Régis de Trobriand, Quatre ans de campagnes à l'Armée du Potomac (Paris, 1867); American edition, Four Years with the Army of the Potomac (Boston, 1889). All citations refer to the American edition.

91. Ibid., pp. v-vi; Post, Life and Memoirs of General de Trobriand, p. 334. See also Lonn, Foreigners in the Union Army, pp. 206-207.

De Trobriand's book was typical of the narratives written by most American veterans -- it took the military characteristics of the war for granted. De Trobriand mentioned at least a dozen times that the troops threw up entrenchments without ever commenting on the need for, or the significance of, their doing so.

De Trobriand's book seemed to bear out the testimony of other foreign observers. The Army of the Potomac had improved with age until by 1863 it could be considered on "the level of the regular armies of the old world." The American soldier "was not inferior to any other." He also remarked on the waste of ammunition and criticized the replacement system in the Union Army. If recruits --

... had even been sent to us by squads or companies to fill up our depleted ranks, we would have quickly made them serviceable soldiers. Intermingled with tried men, placed under the orders of experienced officers, they would have soon conformed to discipline and been efficient in drill. They would have quickly learned their trade, and marched under fire with the confidence which the example and support old soldiers give to newcomers.

De Trobriand favored the standardization of military uniforms and other equipment. Utility rather than pageantry was the determining factor. The splendor of the European armies was im-

93. After visiting the battlefield at Yorktown, de Trobriand wrote: "Not an exhilarating spectacle. And yet, to be sincere, I could not help feeling a little disappointed at finding only fifteen dead in the abattis behind which we had fought. Three hours of firing and sixteen thousand cartridges expended to kill fifteen men and put perhaps a hundred and fifty hors de combat. The Army of the Potomac, p. 204. See also ibid., pp. 82, 338, 414-415.

94. Ibid., p. 331.
pressive, but de Trobriand predicted that —

The time will come when the military authorities will free themselves from all that medley and economize on the expense. In the United States we have carried on an arduous war without shakos, without helmets, without bearskin hats, without breast plates, without lace, and it seems to me that we have nevertheless succeeded.95

Like Lecomte and DeChenal, de Trobriand did not stress tactics, although surely he was aware of the evolution that had taken place. He observed that infantry "can be quickly prepared for the field," but that cavalry "cannot be improvised. Our experiences . . . proved that." De Trobriand's account of the rise of the Union cavalry is much like those of Scheibert and DeChenal. He also testified to the diverse functions of the Civil War cavalry. The enemy cavalry —

. . . well mounted and equipped . . . were very useful. . . . They acted as advance parties and scouts, and gathered exact information as to our movements. They protected their convoys, and carried off our wagons. They covered their own lines and captured our pickets, appearing where they were least expected, disappearing before their retreat could be cut off, seldom returning without booty or without prisoners. It is well known what good service the enemy's cavalry rendered him in more important operations, in the bold raids which gave renown to the name of Stuart and others.96

The works of the Prince de Joinville, the Comte de Paris (even though some of his views were second-hand), Lecomte, De-Chenal and de Trobriand lead to one inescapable conclusion: that the Civil War armies, amateurish as they may have been in 1861, had by 1865 become strong and effective fighting forces. The evolution of these armies is apparent in their pages. It is also apparent that no one could read the accounts of these observers, and indeed of Scheibert and many English observers as well, without gaining the impression that despite -- or perhaps because of -- its deviations from accustomed modes of warfare, the Civil War was an event of military significance.
Interest in the Civil War was in no way limited to those who had actually visited America. Many other soldiers in England, Prussia and France had read about the American campaigns. In England, especially, a number of prominent military critics had studied the Civil War.

The best known as a Civil War historian was Captain Charles Cornwallis Chesney, Professor of Military History at the newly-formed Staff College and one of the most competent military writers of his day. Although best known in England for his *Waterloo Lectures*, published in 1874, Chesney first made his reputation through his writings and lectures on the Civil War.¹ He utilized

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¹ Stanley Lane-Poole, "Charles Cornwallis Chesney," *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1908), IV, 195; Porter, *History of the Corps of Royal Engineers*, II, 499. The "Chesney Memorial Gold Medal," an honor awarded for some eminent work con-
the Civil War campaigns to illustrate his lectures at the Staff College, and in 1864 he elaborated upon these lectures to write a two-volume history of the Campaigns in Virginia and Maryland, a work which he revised and published "in more complete form" the following year.² Described by a contemporary critic as "by far the clearest and most scientific view of the operations yet published in England,"³ this work was followed by additional articles and lectures before military groups, in which Chesney did much to dispel the prevalent notion that the Civil War was merely "a sort of chaos of butchery, a series of indecisive battles of which nothing could ever come..." Chesney attempted to show that in the Civil War certain established military principles remained constant, and that the war in America therefore ought not to be regarded, as it was by many, as being entirely barren of valuable lessons.⁴

Like those British officers who had visited America, Chesney was influenced by the recent Volunteer Movement in England. He

realized that in the event of war or sudden expansion the British Army would be composed of elements similar to those which had constituted the bulk of the Civil War armies. What impressed him most was the fact that even the worst soldiers (Chesney, like most English observers, regarded the Union Army in 1861 as "an armed and dangerous mob") could be forged into an effective fighting machine, given the necessary time and experience. He noted that raw recruits could fight effectively when acting on the defensive under cover and, like Fletcher, he detected a tendency among untried troops to waste ammunition in fruitless skirmishing. By 1863, however, the Union Army had improved to the extent that it was able to counterbalance the superior leadership of the Confederates and the individual excellence of the Southern soldier.

Chesney believed that the key to a successful volunteer army was to be found in good discipline and sound organization, and that the breakdown of organization in battle explained, at least in part, why no Civil War battle was really decisive. He was quick

6. Ibid., II, 98.
7. Ibid., II, 203-204. Like most Europeans, Chesney believed that the Southerner, because of his outdoor life and early familiarity with the rifle and horse, was naturally better suited to soldiering than the city-bred Northerner.
8. Chesney also attributed the lack of decisive battles in the Civil War to "the shortcomings in the most important duties of modern cavalry, the completing of the victory. . . ." Ibid., II, 106. He apparently did not know of the battle of Nashville (December 15-16, 1864), which resulted in the virtual destruction of the Confederate Army of Tennessee.
to point out, however, that the same had been true of Wellington's armies during the early years of the Peninsular War, and was by no means peculiar to the Civil War. Although he later wrote that "the vices were those of the system, whilst the virtues were inherent in the man," the Civil War gave heartening assurance that the volunteer system was not in itself a vice, and that the English recruit need never be inferior to the Continental soldier if England could avoid the administrative abuses which had impaired the effectiveness of the Civil War armies.

Chesney showed a high regard for Civil War generalship. He saw no reason for belittling the successes of the American generals because of peculiarities in the nature of the war or because they had non-professional armies under their command. Allowing for these differences, he maintained that the guiding principles were, or ought to have been, the same "which animated Caesar, Hannibal, and Napoleon. . . . At no time, save in exceptional cases, could generals deviate from those principles without meeting evil consequences." Sherman, "a man of original genius," was the possible exception to this rule, and even he had been forced to adhere closely to certain axioms of strategy."

9. Ibid., I, 14; II, 112. See also Chesney, Essays in Military Biography (New York, 1874), p. 212.

10. Chesney, "The Comte de Paris' Campaign on the Potomac," The Edinburgh Review, CXLIV (July-October, 1876), 80. This was the last article Chesney wrote before he died.

Significantly Chesney's interest in the Civil War survived the Germanization of British military thought that resulted from the Prussian victories over France in 1870-1871. Even after this conflict, soon to be regarded almost universally as the cornerstone in modern warfare, Chesney could still write that --

The military excellence displayed in . . . [the American Civil War] has been unduly depreciated by comparison with later events on the continent. There is a disposition to regard the American generals and the troops they led as altogether inferior to regular soldiers. . . . The conditions of war on a grand scale were illustrated to the full as much in the contest in America as those more recently waged on the continent. In all that relates to the care of feeding and supplying an army in the field, the Americans displayed quite as much ability as any continental power, while if the organisation and discipline of their impoverished troops were inferior, the actual fighting was in fact more stubborn, for no European forces have experienced the amount of resistance in combat which North and South opposed to each other.¹²

As an historian Chesney was often inaccurate, while as a military analyst he seems to have underestimated the effect of increased firepower upon Civil War tactics. This is particularly evident in his explanation for the development of field fortifications.

The tactics used in Europe [in 1870], where the commander of an army can sweep the battle-field with his glass, and direct the march and . . . each division, are evidently not to be applied to warfare conducted in the midst of forests, broken only by clearings too small in many cases for the free movement of a brigade. Combined movements can here be done by guesswork only; and the front of the army, instead of being at double its artillery range from the enemy . . . is often within earshot. Hence sprang up

the practice early in the war, of each corps entrenching slight¬
ly. . . . The facility with which that could be done . . . caused
the same system of breastworks to be applied extensively in the
midst of battle, so as to avoid the constant danger of being
taken in flank by sudden movements of the enemy through the wood. 13

Chesney's early views on cavalry resemble those of nearly
all the British observers. He felt that the Americans did not
understand the correct use of this arm, and that consequently
they relied too much upon infantry and artillery. Because the
cavalry leaders on both sides seemed reluctant to attack infantry
in the traditional manner, the Civil War cavalry resorted to dis¬
mounted tactics, which Chesney decried as being "most detrimental
to their usefulness, and likely to be confirmed into an evil tra¬
dition." He attributed this development to "the nature of the
country" and "defective discipline." 14 Chesney also questioned
the value of the Civil War cavalry raids, which, save in isolated
instances, had caused a tremendous waste of horseflesh for what
he considered meagre results.

The American commanders have ceased to count upon their horse for
any service in the shock of battle or the movements following
their general engagements. The tendency of the campaigns is more
and more to divide the operations of the army proper from those
of the cavalry, and to use the latter as an independent corps
acting at a distance from the others against the enemy's communi¬
cations and supplies. . . . Hence the constant deterioration of
the qualities of the trooper, whose value has become but that of
a party of mounted infantry and whose tactics are reduced to

13. Ibid., p. 55.
plunder and destruction.15

But Chesney could change his mind. If his earlier writings reflected what observers on the scene had reported, his later views were undoubtedly shaped by the arguments of Havelock and Denison. By 1874, after these officers had written in praise of the mounted infantry of the Civil War, Chesney modified his tone sufficiently to admit that the dismounted tactics of Sheridan's cavalry ("no general had mastered, like this young American Commander, the new art of using, amid infantry manoeuvres, his mounted riflemen") had "succeeded perfectly" in the final campaign of the war. In listing Chesney among the English "partisan's of mounted infantry," Scheibert probably had Chesney's later writings in mind.16

Still, Chesney's Campaigns in Virginia was the first detailed study of a Civil War campaign to reach the British public, and it enabled Englishmen for the first time to see the Civil War as one of their leading military critics described it. No longer were the names of remote places and hitherto unknown generals meaningless. Chesney had captured the essence of the American campaigns, and his books enabled an interested audience to understand the events that had recently occurred in the wilds of Virginia and in the border states.

15. Ibid., pp. 107-108.

16. Essays in Military Biography, p. 76; Scheibert, La Guerre Civile, p. 93. These books were both published in 1874.
The first Commandant at the Staff College, Colonel (later Sir) Patrick MacDougall, was also interested in the campaigns of the Civil War. As the son-in-law of Sir William Francis Napier, the famous historian of the Peninsular War, he drew heavily from the experiences of Wellington's Army for his theoretical work, but in *Modern Warfare as Influenced by Modern Artillery*, which he wrote in 1863-1864, he utilized what information he could gather about the war in progress across the Atlantic.

MacDougall cited the American campaigns to illustrate specific points in his text, and while he probably had done little research on the Civil War, he knew enough about it to interpret some of its main lessons. For example, MacDougall was impressed by the Prince de Joinville's statement that the Union Army in 1862 lacked anything remotely resembling a general staff. He cited this as ample proof of McClellan's "unfitness to lead an army to victory," and he thought it "inconceivable" that a general with a reputation as an organizer *par excellence* "should have entirely neglected the one measure which alone could have a practical value to the discipline and bravery of his troops, in the creation

17. MacDougall's best known work was *The Theory of War: Illustrated by Numerous Examples from Military History* (London, 1856). This book was translated into French and German and was used widely in England as a military text. The paper which MacDougall wrote in 1857 on "The Senior Department of the Royal Military College" probably led to his selection as the first Commandant of the newly formed Staff College, a post which he relinquished in late 1861. Robert Hamilton Vetch, "Sir Patrick Leonard MacDougall," *D. N. B.*, XXII, Supplement I, 993-994; Godwin-Austin, *The Staff and the Staff College*, p. 127.
of a staff which should give combination and coherence to their movements." 18

As indicated by the title, MacDougall's purpose in writing this book was to predict the effect of the new firearms, particularly artillery, on tactics. He believed that increased firepower would force infantry to adopt less rigid and more extended battle formations. 19

The experience of the present contest in America would seem to point to the conclusion that a position in an open country, which has been prepared for defence, cannot be carried by direct attack by troops moving in close order, exposed to the present field artillery. In nearly all the great battles of the Civil War, the assailants, except where a surprise was effected as at Corinth [Shiloh], or when operating in a wooded country as at Chancellorsville, have been defeated by artillery fire. 20

He stressed the point that in the Civil War "no open positions have yet been successfully attacked; the assailants have always been repulsed," even when superior in numbers. 21 He predicted that cavalry would play "but a secondary part" in the battles of the future, "for its only power lies in the offensive, and it cannot act at all unless in motion." He disapproved of the dismounted tactics of the American cavalry, believing that this turned the cavalryman into "a hybrid and inferior soldier." For

19. Ibid., p. 414.
20. Ibid., p. 424.
21. Ibid., p. 5.
close fighting he believed that the carbine "should be banished, and a good revolver substituted."22

Because of the destructive power of modern artillery, MacDougall suggested that infantry in future battles would probably be reduced to holding strong points and prepared defensive positions, and that these battles "will be decided principally by artillery. . . ." The general effect thus would be "to diminish the difference in value between volunteers and [regular army] troops of the line. . . ."23 In this instance MacDougall did not refer specifically to the Civil War, but since most of the British observers had noted that even hastily raised volunteers could fight respectably when behind cover, it is likely that he had the Civil War soldier in mind. MacDougall must have remembered these lessons as Adjutant General of the Canadian Militia in 1865, and in his work on the Cardwell Reforms of 1871.24 His was the first English military text to take the Civil War campaigns into account. Chesney's Campaigns in Virginia indicates that by 1863 British officers were beginning to take the Civil War seriously,

22. Ibid., pp. 15, 135.


and that there was sufficient information about the war available in England to enable them to become fairly well informed on the subject.

This is further illustrated by the writings of Chesney's more famous predecessor at the Staff College, Colonel (later General Sir Edward Bruce) Hamley. In 1859 Hamley, having served with distinction at military posts throughout the Empire and in the Crimea, had been appointed Professor of Military History at the Staff College, where his lectures laid the foundation for his monumental work, The Operations of War. In this book, which supplanted MacDougall's text in 1866, Hamley accomplished "more than any other Englishman to make known to English officers the value of a methodical treatment of the study of campaigns." Hamley wrote this book to fill a major gap in British military education. By providing pertinent historical illustrations, he hoped to induce young officers to read military history intelligently and to stimulate independent investigation into military problems. The Operations of War dealt with the whole progressive science of modern war, with historical examples used liberally to make accepted military principles pleasantly intelligible. "Hamley was the first to show . . . that success in war lay in the discovery of basic principles and their application to existing circumstances." Written with considerable literary skill (Hamley him-

self contributed numerous essays and literary pieces to Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine), this book was remarkably free from the usual professional pedantry. Probably no officer was more influential in the British Army in the 1860's than Hamley, and no military treatise more widely read for a generation after than his Operations of War.27

Hamley's reactions toward the Civil War are significant for two reasons: first, his interest in the Civil War developed in a manner typical of other British soldiers. Originally Hamley, too, had felt the common contempt of the professional strategist for the clumsy efforts of the improvised Civil War armies. Bull Run was "certainly the greatest joke in the world," and Hamley often expressed the hope that the proceedings in America would meet the derision he felt they deserved. He also made the common error of underestimating the potential power of the North. By 1862, however, when the first British observers reached the scene, Hamley began to view the war in a more respectable light, and he watched the later campaigns with growing interest. "Long before the termination of the war, he had come to the conclusion that the Northern American, like the Gascon, could plan and fight

27. Hamley worked hard in other ways to promote professional knowledge among British soldiers. In 1865 he was appointed to the Council of Military Education, a body which was entrusted with the military instructions of the army; and in 1870 he was named Commandant of the Staff College. For many years he also acted as judge for the Wellington Prize Essay contest, a contest held annually to determine the best essay written that year on a military subject. Shand, Life of General Hamley, I, 119, 179, 198, 210.
as well as swagger. . . .” During the war Hamley gave a series of lectures at the Staff College about the American campaigns and he contributed several articles on the subject to the magazine of his friend, John Blackwood. Like most British officers, Hamley was sympathetic to the South — so much so, in fact, that on one occasion Blackwood suggested that he give more credit to the North "for the energy which turns out such enormous armies operating over so vast a field." Hamley especially criticized Sherman for the "barbarous way" in which he made war in Georgia, but he did not let this feeling impair his military judgment and Sherman received fair treatment in the Operations of War.

Hamley's interpretation of the Civil War is significant for another reason. Like Chesney, Hamley looked upon the Civil War as one in a series of wars, neither to be ignored because of its irregularities nor to be heralded as the dawn of a revolution in

28. Ibid., I, 135-137.

29. Mrs. Gerald Porter, John Blackwood, vol. III of William Blackwood and his Sons, Their Magazine and Friends (London, 1898), p. 268. Unfortunately Hamley wrote these articles anonymously, and only one, "Books on the American War" (December, 1863), has been positively identified as coming from his pen.

30. Ibid., p. 269.

31. Ibid., p. 271. Upon reading Hamley's account of the Atlanta campaign in The Operations of War, Sherman sent Hamley copies of relevant orders to enable him to correct several errors. Hamley considered this "a very handsome way of meeting objections," and revised his account of the Atlanta campaign in later editions. Sherman pronounced the changes "more than satisfactory," and praised Hamley for the quality of his book. Shand, Life of General Hamley, I, 186-191.
warfare. In his Operations of War he drew freely upon the American campaigns to illustrate general principles in strategy, tactics, supply and logistics, just as he used the Napoleonic Wars, the campaign in Italy in 1859, and the Six Weeks War in 1866 for comparable examples.\textsuperscript{32} Hamley contributed nothing new to the interpretation of the Civil War, but, like Chesney, he did not discount the value of studying the American campaigns even after the Prussians had demonstrated the marvelous efficiency of their armies in 1870. In the editions that appeared after 1870, the Civil War did not suffer by comparison with the more impressive campaigns in France.\textsuperscript{33} This did much to keep alive some interest in the Civil War when by far the greatest attention was being paid to the methods of the German Army.

Hamley's Operations of War was a text, albeit an influential and brilliant one. Major (later Sir Henry) Havelock's Three Main Military Questions of the Day which appeared in 1867, the year after the first edition of Hamley's book, was a polemic based directly on the Civil War's lessons for European cavalry. The son of a prominent British general,\textsuperscript{34} Havelock's own career had been brief but brilliant. He had distinguished himself at the defense

\textsuperscript{32} Edward Bruce Hamley, The Operations of War explained and illustrated (London, 1866), passim.


\textsuperscript{34} Major-General Sir Henry Havelock, whose premature death in 1857 was caused by his exertions in the Indian Mutiny.
of Lucknow, and in the relief of Cawnpore he had been awarded the Victoria Cross. Although alleged to have seen some part of the operations in America, it is extremely unlikely that he did so. Neither his book nor the sketch in the *Dictionary of National Biography* mentions such a visit, and in 1863-1864 it is known that Havelock was busy fighting Maoris in New Zealand. In March 1867, he succeeded Wolseley as Assistant Quartermaster-general in Canada, in which capacity he served for two years. During this period he had occasion to learn something about the mounted infantry techniques developed during the Civil War.

Like most of his contemporaries, Havelock was interested in finding a way for cavalry to meet the challenge of the breech-loader. He had been an early advocate of mounted infantry, having experimented with such a body in India in 1858, and the experience of the Americans in the Civil War convinced him that here was struck "the first great blow given to the supremacy of what we may call a purely 'sabre cavalry.'"

37. Havelock had actually formed a tiny body of mounted infantry in India during the autumn of 1858, and had early demonstrated (to himself, at least) the value of such a force. In India, the advantage of mounted infantry was that it could substitute fire power for shock action in dealing with the elusive native bands. See Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, XIII, 397.
According to Havelock, cavalry at the beginning of the Civil War was simply a poor model of its European counterpart, and the first battle of Bull Run made it apparent that this type of cavalry was inadequate against improved firearms. Henceforth, in order for cavalry to be of much value, a new organization based on firepower would have to be developed. Havelock credited the Confederate cavalry leader, John Morgan, with devising what he called the "Mounted Rifle plan of fighting," a development which rapidly gained ground in both armies, and which, "improved upon by experience, and lavishly supplied by the almost boundless resources of the North . . . became, more than any one thing else, the weapon that gave the Confederacy its deathblow."  

The essence of this new doctrine was that cavalry was now mobile firepower, dependent upon the horse primarily as a means of locomotion. The Civil War cavalry fought most of the time on foot, using magazine rifles, shelter afforded by the terrain, and hastily constructed breastworks to enable it to fight -- often successfully -- with larger bodies of infantry. Mounted supports and reserves behind the lines were moved to a threatened position on short notice, where they could either charge if the opportunity presented itself, or dismount in an attempt to catch the enemy in a destructive cross-fire. Troops "thus armed, trained, and instructed were equal to any contingency, and could act upon any

39. Ibid., pp. 110-111.
sort of ground."

As a classic example of this revolutionary method of fighting, Havelock pointed to Sheridan's action at Five Forks in April 1865, and the ensuing pursuit of Lee's army to Appomattox. The defensive power of dismounted cavalry was evident in the fighting preceding the battle proper, when Sheridan's troops, entrenched and well-armed, had inflicted heavy casualties on the two infantry divisions assaulting them. The following day they had displayed their effectiveness in offensive action by skillfully cooperating with the Union infantry to defeat the Confederate forces. This action, according to Havelock, proved to be the lever that finally forced Lee out of his trenches around Petersburg, and Havelock considered the mobility of the Union cavalry to be the chief factor in bringing the remnants of Lee's army at bay near Appomattox. British cavalry, lacking the arms, training and equipment of Sheridan's mounted infantry, would have been totally unable "to play this part of independent ... action at a distance from the other two arms," and Havelock doubted seriously whether any European cavalry, armed with lance and saber and fighting by shock tactics alone, could have thus prevented Lee from making good his escape.

This was indeed a revolutionary doctrine. Unlike most of the foreign observers, Havelock denied that American cavalry was in-

40. Ibid., pp. 47-48.
41. Ibid., pp. 78, 99.
capable of charging in the most "dashing European manner." They simply had better sense. By 1864 --

. . . all idea of perpetrating the reckless ineffectual folly of a mounted charge . . . had been systematically eliminated from their practice. . . . As a general thing the Northern cavalry produced ten times greater good . . . by making a liberal use, dismounted, of their repeating fire. . . .

Thus Havelock refuted the arguments of Fletcher and Fremantle, whom he accused of judging American cavalry actions by obsolete European standards.42 In fairness to these critics, however, and to observers like Scheibert and von Borcke, it must again be emphasized that this revolutionary method of fighting was not perfected until after these officers had left the American scene.

Havelock's essay was a direct appeal to British officers to shake themselves loose from unsound Continental doctrines, and to reshape their own cavalry from "the jingling, brilliant, costly, but almost helpless unreality it is" into a force cut after Sheridan's pattern. Recalling his own experiments in 1858, he suggested that such cavalry would be particularly effective in India, where the country was no better suited than the wilds of Virginia and Tennessee for the employment of traditional European cavalry. "If Mounted Riflemen could achieve such great things against the steadfast stubborn veterans of Lee," he reasoned, ". . . there is practically no limit to what they could do for us in India against our contemptible, half-disciplined, ill-armed disunited Asiatic

42. Ibid., pp. 47-49.
Havelock was the first English soldier to see in the Civil War cavalry tactics --

... the one special lesson which, with its proffered reward of immediate economy in time, men, and money, the Great American war holds out to us English. If we neglect its teaching ... then indeed it may be said of us that contemporary military history is enacted before our eyes -- in vain.\(^44\)

In 1868, one year after the appearance of Havelock's provocative book, and prompted by Havelock's "advice and encouragement,"\(^45\) Lieutenant-Colonel George T. Denison produced his treatise on **Modern Cavalry**. A Canadian cavalry officer, Denison had served under Wolseley during the Fenian disturbances in 1866 and had greatly impressed Wolseley with his skill in the use of cavalry.\(^46\) He was also a close friend of Havelock, and shared his enthusiasm for the far-reaching possibilities open to mounted infantry in the breech-loader age.

Denison's theories, particularly those concerning the use of dismounted tactics, were derived almost entirely from his study of the Civil War. Much of the material presented in his **Modern**

\(^{43}\) Ibid., p. 112.

\(^{44}\) Ibid., p. 114.


\(^{46}\) Wolseley described Denison as "one of the ablest, and professionally one of the best read officers I ever knew," and declared him better fitted for high military command than ninety-five per cent of the officers in the British Army. Wolseley, *Story of a Soldier's Life*, II, 148-149.
Cavalry was obtained first-hand from conversations with ex-Confederates who, like the former General Jubal Early, had refused to accept the verdict of the war and were living at the time in Canada. He also corresponded with former Confederate cavalry officers, such as Major-Generals Fitzhugh Lee and Thomas L. Rosser, and he was familiar with the standard published sources.

In the main, Denison accepted Havelock's thesis that mounted infantry or light cavalry -- he used these terms interchangeably -- could accomplish more than regular cavalry under modern battle conditions. He did not go so far as Havelock in advocating complete abandonment of the old-style cavalry, believing that at least one-fourth of all cavalry should still consist of shock troops armed with the saber. Even here, however, he suggested modifications in the arme blanche: he preferred the revolver as the main weapon for close fighting.

If there is one principle which the works of cavalry lay down more positively than another, it is that cavalry using the sabre

47. Among those with whom Denison "was in the habit of frequently discussing military matters, thereby gathering a great amount of knowledge of the practical working of the military art under modern conditions," were Jefferson Davis, Generals Breckenridge, McCausland, Richard Taylor, John B. Hood, Harry Heth, W. S. Preston, "and many other officers of lower rank. . . ." Soldiers in Canada, pp. 58-59. Denison devotes an entire chapter in his autobiography to "Recollections of Confederate Officers" (pp. 58-82).

will always overcome cavalry using any description of fire-arms. This was undoubtedly correct formerly, when the old flint-lock horse-pistol was the weapon used. . . . But now, with revolvers, the whole features of the case are changed. . . . 49

Denison recommended the revolver, convinced that most of his "comrades in the cavalry . . . will be opposed to these ideas, repugnant as they are to the whole traditions of the force." Formerly "a warm supporter of the sabre," the Civil War had "shaken" his views "considerably." While he was not prepared to admit that improved fire-arms would do away with cavalry proper "for ever," it did seem clear that the "opportunities in which a charge in line can be made with effect will not be so numerous or so certain as formerly. . . .." 50

Like Havelock, Denison believed that in the future the main duties of cavalry would be performed by mounted infantry, although he suspected Havelock of over-emphasizing the effectiveness of the Union cavalry in the final campaign of the war. As a close friend of Jubal A. Early, Sheridan's unsuccessful opponent in the Shenandoah Valley in 1864, Denison did not share Havelock's admiration for "Fighting Phil" Sheridan. 51 But his study of the Confederate

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49. Ibid., pp. 30-31.

50. Ibid., pp. 62, 72-73.

51. In mentioning Havelock's analysis of the Appomattox campaign, Denison remarked that the South was "completely exhausted at that time, and overpowered by overwhelming numbers," and that it "would probably, although not so quickly, have surrendered from sheer inanition." Ibid., pp. 106-107.
operations led him to a similar, but more moderate doctrine than that of Havelock. In conversations with former Confederate officers, in the books he read and the letters he received about their campaigns, evidence of the effectiveness of the Civil War mounted infantry was irrefutable. Fitz Lee, nephew of Robert E. Lee and a former commander of the cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia, wrote --

I eschew heavy cavalry, the "cuirassier" sans peur, they can only be employed during actual conflict, and in this country . . . opportunities . . . occur for charging with large masses of cavalry . . . so seldom . . . that the expense does not justify keeping up with such organisations. . . . I participated in every battle fought between the two principal armies in Virginia . . . and cannot recall a single instance where cavalry en masse was employed on the battle-field, save in a few instances against cavalry itself.52

Former Lieutenant-General Stephen D. Lee was even more emphatic --

. . . the great improvement in fire-arms has made an essential change in the handling and using of cavalry, and the charge against infantry or cavalry as formerly, is less frequent and more dangerous . . . . Nearly all the cavalry used by . . . both sides, was nothing more than mounted riflemen. The sabre was done away with by the Confederate States cavalry pretty well, and rarely used in action by either party. . . .53

Former Major-General Thomas L. Rosser, who had led Confederate cavalry against Sheridan, likewise agreed that cavalry proper had not been employed "in the late war, it was all mounted rifles."

52. Fitzhugh Lee to Denison, April 30, 1868, quoted in Modern Cavalry, pp. 352-353.

Rosser recommended that in —

... wooded and mountainous country, mounted troops should consist of cavalry and mounted rifles, in the proportion of two of cavalry to one of mounted rifles. ... All picketing should be done by mounted rifles, and all escorts and guards for trains and the like should be composed of the same, and the cavalry always kept in mass and used in the charge alone.\(^{54}\)

This was essentially Denison's position, although he believed that the proportion of mounted infantry to regular cavalry should be higher than the one-half which Rosser recommended.

In 1874 Denison heard that the Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia was offering prizes for "the best work on cavalry and military operations on horseback in all ages and countries." After three years' hard work, in which he used an estimated 700 books pertaining to cavalry, Denison was informed that he had won first prize. His History of Cavalry has since come to be regarded as the definitive work on the subject.

In this book, fortified by the experiences of the Franco-Prussian War which seemed to justify his doubts in the general ineffectiveness of the arme blanche, Denison plugged the same theories that had gone unheeded in his earlier work.\(^ {55}\) He advocated the use of mounted infantry in reconnaissance, outpost duties and strategic raids, with "cavalry proper" being saved to exploit the

\(^{54}\) Thomas L. Rosser to Denison, January 27, 1868, reprinted in ibid., pp. 366-368.

\(^{55}\) Soldiering in Canada, pp. 189-201.
dwindling opportunities that modern battle offered. As late as 1913, however, Denison was forced to concede that "This idea rests on long-standing tradition which is difficult to overcome." Still, he wrote with the conviction of one who had seen his prophecies confirmed by the experiences of more recent wars. "Thirty-six years of consideration and study of modern wars" had not, as he expressed it, "varied my views, or modified them in any way."

Though Havelock was a professional reformer and had the reputation of being "eccentric," and Denison was not only a militia officer, but a militia officer from Canada, their writings attracted considerable attention. Fletcher, Wolseley and Chesney, all of whom had originally scoffed at the Civil War cavalry, became advocates of mounted infantry after the appearance of Havelock's and Denison's books. And although little was written about Civil War entrenchments, this lesson, too, did not escape notice. On the eve of the Franco-Prussian War, Colonel Gerald Graham stated in a lecture before the Royal United Service Institution:

This great American contest proved the advantage of cover in all field operations, and the later Bohemian campaigns of 1866, by displaying the startling effect of the breech-loading rifle, made it obvious that, in future warfare, troops will have to be kept


57. Ibid., p. xv.

under cover as much as possible, whether acting on the offensive or defensive. 59

Graham mentioned a "Shelter Trench Exercise" that had recently been introduced into the proposed new field exercise, which he stated would soon be submitted to the Duke of Cambridge, General-Commanding in Chief of the British Army. The Duke of Cambridge agreed on the importance of both mounted infantry and entrenchments. Even before Havelock and Denison, he had observed that "the day of cavalry has somewhat passed by," and that there was a definite need in the modern army for mounted infantry such as that developed in the Civil War. In the discussion following a lecture by Chesney on Sherman's Campaign in Georgia, the Duke remarked that in the Civil War, "and in all future wars, the spade must form a great element in campaigns." 60

Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the Civil War, though widely studied in England in the 1860's, had any direct influence upon official doctrine. Chesney and Hamley had recognized the value of the Civil War because it seemed to reveal the soundness of established principles. The advent of the breech-loader made some impression, but according to MacDougall it was the performance of this weapon in the Danish War of 1864 that had induced the Secretary of State for War to appoint a committee to study potential


60. Journal of the R. U. S. I., IX (1866), 220.
value to the British Army.\textsuperscript{61} No official mention was made of any new tactics evolved during the Civil War, and the war clouds then gathering in Europe soon overshadowed the battle fields of America. Even in organization the British saw little to be learned from the Civil War. The Cardwell Reforms were essentially English in origin and were concerned primarily with correcting evils peculiar to the British Army. If there was any foreign influence present, it was German, not American, for the Prussian military system was carefully studied and highly regarded in England after 1871.

\textsuperscript{61} MacDougall, \textit{Modern Warfare}, p. 427.
Chapter VI
AS SEEN IN PRUSSIA
1861-1871

Although most Prussian soldiers were preoccupied with the military reforms of 1860-1862 and the war with Denmark in 1864, thoughtful attention was paid to the progress of the American campaigns. Even when the war of 1866 and preparations for a possible clash with France presumably became favorite topics in barrack-room conversation and in the military journals, the Civil War was not entirely forgotten.

Most of the books and articles on the Civil War published in Germany during this period were written either to acquaint the public with the broad outlines of the war or to present essential facts of some particular campaign to military readers. The works of Captain Constantin Sander are the best of these summaries. His first book, published in 1863, was little more than a blow by blow account of the first two years of the war. He distrusted the militia and stressed the point that what was happening in
America underscored the need for preparedness, but this much would have been said by any regular army officer. In a second and more detailed history published in 1865, Sander showed a greater concern for technical developments. As an officer in the Royal Prussian Artillery, he was naturally interested in the Civil War artillery, particularly in the effect of rifled artillery on fortifications; and in his "description" of the operations at Charleston in 1863, he borrowed heavily from a professional paper he had contributed to a publication of the Prussian Artillery and Engineer Corps. But this work, too, must be considered a general history rather than a treatise or a technical monograph, even though it served as a storehouse of information for those with more specialized interests.

A similar general study by an anonymous army officer appeared serially in the Preussische Jahrbücher. Beyond commenting on the apparent lack of organization in the Civil War armies, the characteristic absence of decisive military victories, and the significant role of sea power, the author of these articles chose

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1. Constantin Sander, Der amerikanische Bürgerkrieg von seinem Beginn bis zum Schluss des Jahres 1862 (Frankfurt am Main, 1863), pp. 56, 121.

to describe rather than analyze the military events of the Civil War.\(^3\) The same was true of A. von Clausewitz, who wrote frequent articles for the *Allgemeine Militär Zeitung* and *Die Berliner Militärische Revue*. Although he stated that the battle of Murfreesboro (December 31, 1862-January 2, 1863) was instructive in matters of "preparation and execution of attacks, Volksheere and their leadership," and "the influence of railroad lines on war,"\(^4\) von Clausewitz showed none of the ability of the renowned author of *On War*, Karl von Clausewitz, to organize and interpret his material. As a matter of fact, most of the articles written by von Clausewitz were little more than translations of American works pieced together under one title,\(^5\) a tech-


5. This is evident in von Clausewitz's account of Fredericksburg, which was written in the first person and "nach den hinterlassenen Papieren eines conföderirten Generalstabsoffizier ... bearbeitet. ..." *Allgemeine Militär Zeitung* (1868), pp. 72-73. Soon after the war, von Clausewitz wrote to Lee seeking permission to translate the autobiography of the famed Confederate general, which he understood was soon to be published in the United States. To bolster his case, he stated that he had translated selections from E. A. Pollard's *Southern History of the War*, claiming that he was motivated by "L'enthousiasme le plus pure" rather than "une spéculacion de libraire." Lee, of course, never wrote his Memoirs. Von Clausewitz to Robert E. Lee, March 13, 1866. *Lee Papers*. Washington and Lee University. Lee's answer is reprinted in the Rev. J. William Jones, *Life and Letters of Robert Edward Lee, Soldier and Man* (New York and Washington, 1906), p. 249.
The writings of Colonel Albrecht von Stosch belong to a different category. A brilliant General Staff officer who later distinguished himself in the campaigns of 1866 and 1870-1871, and who ultimately became Chief of the Admiralty, Stosch in 1864 wrote a series of anonymous articles for the *Grenzboten*. His purpose was to interpret the "characteristic conditions" of modern warfare as well as to summarize the main campaigns of the Civil War. Stosch was aware of some of the "characteristic conditions" of the Civil War. He understood, for example, the influence of the American geography upon the Civil War campaigns: how the vast distances involved made it necessary to have separate theaters of operations, and how this in turn created special problems in matters relating to supply, communications and command. He could also see how this situation resulted in a growing dependence upon rivers and railroads by the Civil War armies. As an officer of the Prussian General Staff, Stosch deplored the lack of a comparable organization in the American armies; he also criticized the replacement system in the Union Army and he had a low opinion -- not unusual among professional soldiers -- of the American militia.


8. Ibid., 228, 250; XXIII, vol. IV, 327-333.
But it is doubtful whether Stosch really understood the basic cause for the changes in Civil War tactics. The American cavalry, he wrote, was really "mounted infantry," and even when it fought on horse it derived most of its punch from firearms "rather than the vehemence and force" of the arme blanche. Like most European soldiers, he had a higher regard for the Confederate cavalry. However, Stosch was inclined to blame the rough terrain rather than the modern rifle for the rise of mounted infantry on such a large scale, and he made the same error in explaining the changes that had taken place in infantry tactics. Stosch noticed that flank attacks and outflanking marches were more frequent and generally more successful than frontal assaults. This he attributed to "inexperienced troops" and the American terrain rather than to any significant increase in firepower. He disapproved Grant's strategy of attrition in 1864, claiming: "It is the same old story, that inferior Commanders prefer the conquest of fortifications to a decisive battle and thereby lose more time, men and money than in the bloodiest battle."

Colonel F. von Meerheimb was another Prussian General Staff officer who manifested an interest in the Civil War. He was certainly more thorough than Stosch, who had placed the Rocky Moun-

tains in Virginia. For the most part, von Meerheimb's interpretation of the Civil War did not differ substantially from that of Chesney, Hamley, Stosch, and most of the actual observers. He accepted the standard view of Civil War Cavalry, but recognized that the day had passed for the massing of cavalry in large bodies in battle. He noticed the role of the Union Navy in military operations and condemned the methods of recruitment and replacement in the Union Army. He, too, was impressed by the enormous distances involved and the predominant role of the railroad.

Von Meerheimb had a high regard for the accomplishments of the American armies. He was especially interested in the Eisenbahn-Abtheilungen of the Union Army. He also admired the Army Engineers ("... no European army would be able to rival Grant's...")

11. Ibid., XXIV, vol. I, 64.


13. [F. von Meerheimb], "Der Nordamerikanischen Krieg," Beiheftezum Militair-Wochenblatt (1867), part 5, p. 168. Cited hereafter as Beihefte. Although written anonymously, it is evident that von Meerheimb was the author of this article from his other writings on the Civil War, especially "Der amerikanische Bürgerkrieg." The views expressed in these articles are the same, and the language in many instances is identical.

14. Ibid., X, 444-445. Since von Meerheimb did not mention the Eisenbahn-Abtheilungen in his earlier article in the Beihefte, it is possible that this interest was the result of the official study of this organization. See below, pp. 173-174.
and Sherman's armies before Vicksburg and in Georgia in the building of roads, bridges, [and] canals")

15 and he showed a greater appreciation for the way in which the Americans had utilized mounted infantry than Stosch and most contemporaries. His most significant remarks concerned Sherman. While von Meerheimb admitted that Sherman's tactics might not have been "significant," he thought Sherman's use of maneuver to overcome obstacles "admirable." Von Meerheimb did not organize his observations, as Liddell Hart was to do seventy years later, but he recognized the keystone in Sherman's strategy as being what Liddell Hart was to term "alternative objectives." 16

Von Meerheimb did not discount the value of studying the Civil War because it was a war of amateurs. In a lecture delivered in 1868 before a military audience in Berlin, he stated why he believed that the American campaigns would repay further study.

The American war shows in heavy lines the picture of the war of the near future, and the campaign in Georgia clearly throws most of the characteristic features into bold relief. The extended use of the railroad and telegraph, the indirect strokes against enemy communications, the constant employment of field fortification, the adaptation of terrain for tactical purposes and the altered use of cavalry appear to be the essential points wherein the Civil War is distinguished from previous wars in Europe. The combination of modern long-ranged, rapid firing weapons and pre-

15. Ibid., IX, 233.
16. Ibid., XI (April-June, 1877), 243. See below, Chapter XIII.
pared positions give the defensive such a great superiority that frontal attacks will succeed only in rare instances. Flank movements, involving great marching ability [Marschfähigkeits] on the part of the troops, will therefore be used more frequently than before. 17

These views are of particular interest, not only because von Meerheimb correctly interpreted the military characteristics of the Civil War, but also because he was a Prussian General Staff officer who saw beyond the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 to predict accurately the general trends in warfare. And it is of even greater significance that he continued to hold these views after 1871, 18 when the entire military world was busy examining the German Army and its campaigns with a magnifying glass. Along with Chesney and Hamley, von Meerheimb believed that the Civil War was not completely outdated as a school for budding strategists and tacticians.

Few operations of the Civil War attracted greater interest than those involving coastal defense. Scheibert had been sent over specifically to learn the effect of rifled artillery on the works protecting Charleston; von Scheliha had prepared a detailed treatise on the defense of Confederate ports; Stosch had written a short article dealing with the problems of coastal defense in event of a war with France, in which he had stated that the Civil War constituted "a lesson for us," and von Meerheimb had remarked

17. Sherman's Feldzug in Georgien, p. 51.
to an audience of army officers that this subject constituted one of the major lessons of the war. Concern over this topic is reflected in still another study. Captain C. Jacobi based his study of rifled artillery at the siege of Charleston on the wealth of information contained in Gillmore's *Engineer and Artillery Operations against the Defences of Charleston Harbour*, which had been circulated in most of the major armies of Europe. Jacobi's book dealt mainly with technical information on the various types of rifled artillery in use at Charleston, materials, effective ranges, and other specialized subjects. He wrote primarily for those in the Prussian Artillery and Engineers, confident that the operations he described would furnish "rich and valuable material for the study of siege operations." 


20. Mention has already been made of Gillmore's influence in England. His official Report was also circulated in Prussia, Austria and France. In addition to Jacobi's study, it was summarized by Julius von Wieruth in the Austrian publication, *Mittheilungen Über Gegenstände der Ingenieur- und Kriegs Wissenschaften* (Vienna, 1865), pp. 753-792; and in the French *Journal des sciences militaire*. See "Explosion des canons Parrot," *ibid.*., XVII (1865), 396-450; and "Les deux expéditions contre le fort Fisher . . ." XVIII (1865), 161-240. Other portions of Gillmore's Report can be found in *ibid.*, XVI (1864), 420-422; XVII, 132-140, 223-267.

In his analysis of the siege operations at Charleston in 1863, Jacobi formulated several general principles. First, these operations convinced him — as they had Scheibert and von Scheliha — that a naval attack against land installations would seldom succeed without the aid of a cooperating land army. Second, the surest way to defend a harbor or river entrance was to block it with obstacles lying within range of the land batteries. Third, inasmuch as the range of siege artillery had increased substantially, it would be necessary to erect defensive fortifications much further away from the city, or installations they were designed to protect, than in the days of the smooth-bore cannon. Fourth, Jacobi agreed with Scheibert and von Scheliha that earthworks afforded far greater protection from rifled artillery than works built of brick and masonry: this was evident from the slight damage done Fort Wagner despite successive days of heavy bombardment. Finally, Jacobi praised the bomb-shelter which the Confederates had constructed at Fort Wagner. It had enabled the garrison to withstand the murderous bombardment of the Union fleet and land batteries, and Jacobi considered a similar arrangement on "indispensable" feature in modern coastal fortifications.22

Jacobi also commented on subjects such as the effectiveness of mortar fire against fortifications, the use of wire ("It is quick to erect and suffers but little from enemy fire . . .") and

22. Ibid., pp. 29, 36, 64-65.
sandbags, armored vessels versus shore batteries, and the practical difficulties of storming a prepared position. Although his book preceded von Scheliha's Treatise and Scheibert's published Report, Jacobi arrived at the same general conclusions. He, too, thought that the Prussians could profit from the experiences of the Americans during the siege of Charleston.

Most of all, however, the Prussians seemed interested in the use made of railroads during the Civil War. The Americans had been the first to wage war over great distances largely by means of the railroads, and the creation of a separate corps to operate trains and maintain the equipment, the use of armored trains and the evolution of the hospital car can all be traced directly to the Civil War. The Italian War of 1859 had first showed the importance of railroads in war, but the Civil War actually demonstrated how they could be used for military purposes.

The Prussians had commenced study of the military possibilities of railroads several years prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. As early as 1852 the Great General Staff had worked on schemes using the railroad for transport and concentration, but by 1861 nothing had been done to organize military transport by rail other than the issuing of "a series of Ordinances dealing with the movement of large bodies of troops. . . ." In 1864, how-

23. Ibid., pp. 17 n., 26, 67.

ever, "directly influenced by the developments of the Civil War," the Prussians added a Railway Section to the Great General Staff, in time for it to function in the war with Denmark that same year. In May 1866, on the eve of the war with Austria, Roon, the Prussian War Minister, created a "Field Railway Section" (Feldeisenbahnabtheilung) which was designed to perform duties similar to those done by the Construction Corps of the Union Army. A translation of the report of Brigadier-General D. C. McCallum, Military Director and Superintendent of Railroads in the Union Army, was published in Prussia, and was soon followed by "a long series of technical papers, pamphlets or books" on the use of railroads in war. Even the more theoretical works make it clear that the Civil War was commonly regarded in Prussia as a testing ground for the military application of railroads. Interestingly enough, Sherman is the general most often mentioned in connection with the strategical use of railroads.

25. Ibid., p. 104.
This is the only instance of any direct influence of the Civil War on the organization of the Prussian Army. The Prussians had been experimenting with breech-loading rifles since 1841; obviously the Civil War did not create an original interest in this subject. Even so, it is odd that no one studied the American battles for clues to the probable effect of this weapon upon tactics, especially since so much attention was being paid to rifled artillery and siege operations. But tactics seem to have been largely ignored by most Prussian soldiers who undertook to write about the Civil War campaigns.

The sole exception was the cavalry question. The two most influential German cavalry leaders after the Franco-Prussian War were Prince Frederich Karl and Karl von Schmidt, both avowed admirers of Jeb Stuart. Each of them had a private source of information on the Civil War cavalry. The Prince was a great friend of von Borcke, who had served at one time on his staff.\(^{29}\) He had undoubtedly heard much about the exploits of both von Borcke and Stuart, but whether he learned anything of military value is hard to determine. On the other hand, von Schmidt might well have profited from his knowledge of the Civil War. He probably knew, or had at least heard about von Borcke, and he had a nephew who had fought with the Union cavalry. Until his death

in December 1863, this nephew had written home regularly, describing "above all . . . the military events of the war of secession. . . ." 30 Certainly von Schmidt was an outspoken advocate of dismounted tactics whenever the arme blanche was impractical, and the men under his command fought on foot frequently during the campaign of 1870-1871. 31 As a member of the Cavalry Commission that drew up the official Cavalry regulations in 1873, von Schmidt did his utmost to see that appropriate attention was given to dismounted tactics. He was not entirely satisfied with the results of the Commission, however, believing that the regulations devoted to dismounted action were "entirely insufficient." 32 In his own writings, notably his Instructions for the Training, Employment, and Leading of Cavalry, von Schmidt insisted on first-rate firearms for cavalry and increased instruction in the Fuszgefecht. 33 He did not mention the Civil War in this work, although he considered Jeb Stuart "an ideal cavalry leader," and his "methods of fighting worthy of exhaustive study." 34 But even the experiences of the Franco-Prussian War convinced him "that it

is indispensably necessary [that] cavalry should . . . be able to fight on foot. . . ."

It cannot too often be repeated that the main thing to do is carry out the mission in hand at any price; if possible this should be done mounted and with the arme blanche, but should that not be feasible, then we must dismount and force a road with the carbine. . . . The object must be attained under any circumstances. . . . 35

Denison's Modern Cavalry was published in Germany early in 1870, and might also have had some influence upon the Prussian Cavalry. Certainly Denison thought so, for he claimed that "My views about throwing cavalry two or three days ahead of the Army, which I advocated and which the Germans did not use in 1866, were adopted and used with great effect in 1870. . . ." 36

It is unlikely that the Civil War had any direct influence upon official doctrine in Prussia. Prussian leaders knew about the war, certainly, 37 but there is no evidence to indicate that any high-ranking officials regarded the Civil War as particularly instructive in a military sense. On the contrary, Moltke is supposed to have at one time remarked that the Civil War was nothing

35. Instructions for Cavalry, pp. 186, 188.

36. Denison, Soldiering in Canada, p. 159.

37. See Theodor von Bernhardi, Aus dem Leben Theodor von Bernhardis (Leipzig, 1893-1906), V, 114-116, 182-183; VI, 136, 193-194. A prominent military writer who had the ear of many high-ranking officers, Theodor von Bernhardi's Memoirs show that he and his circle of friends were well informed about the chief military events in the United States. Bernhardi himself confessed to a soldaten-sympathie for the Confederates.
but a matter of "two armed mobs chasing each other around the
country, from which nothing could be learned." Conceivably he
did say something of this sort, although there is some evidence
to suggest otherwise; in any case, had he made such a statement,
say, in 1862 he would have found many competent soldiers -- among
them Hamley -- to agree with him. Although he did not refer
specifically to the Civil War (in his Selected Writings there is
a fleeting reference to the operations of Admiral Farragut in
1862 and 1864, and in the Danish War Moltke picked Scheibert for
some special task because he had heard of the latter's experience
at the siege of Charleston) Moltke was aware of the fundamental
tactical lessons it contained. In 1865, within three months
after the end of the war, Moltke wrote in the Militär Wochen-
blatt that "the fire of stationary troops was so much more ef-
fective than that of troops advancing that it would be well to
combine as far as possible a tactical defensive with a strategical
offensive." Moltke's views on cavalry were no less cognizant

38. Quoted in Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, War and Western

39. "... it is not true that Moltke ever referred to those
campaigns as 'the struggle between two armed mobs,' [although]
the expression does, however, fairly truthfully indicate the at-
titude of the average German military mind in the matter. . . ."
Captain [F. N.] Maude, Attack or Defence Seven Military Essays
(London, 1896), p. 9. No one, to the writer's knowledge, has
ever been able to document Moltke's alleged statement about the
Civil War.

40. Generalfeldmarschall Graf von Moltke Ausgewählte Werke,
444-446; Moltke's Militärische Werke, I, Militärischen Korrespon-
denz Krieg 1864 (Berlin, 1892), p. 125.

41. Militär Wochenblatt, July 8, 1865, quoted in Fuller
War and Western Civilization, p. 100.
of modern firepower. In the debates over the military laws of 1874, Moltke reminded the supporters of the proposed militia legislation that the Civil War offered good arguments against the use of militia (which he might have described as "armed mobs"). In all probability he was too concerned in 1863-1865 with the military situation in Europe to study a war as remote as the Civil War, and while he was a student of military history, what time he could spare for this subject was spent in the preparation of his History of the War against Denmark 1848-1849. Moltke's genius lay primarily in the fields of organization and strategy, and there was little that he could learn from the Civil War in either respect.

42. Carrias, La pensée militaire allemande, p. 245.

43. Gesammelte Schriften und Denkwürdigkeiten des General Feldmarschalls Grafen Helmuth von Moltke, VII, Reden (Berlin, 1892), 112.
The French observers had been primarily interested in the organization and administration of the Union Army; and those who studied the war from France shared this interest. La Frustron's Constitution et organisation de l'armée des Etats-Unis is a typical example. Written in 1862, this survey was designed to give French officers the historical background of the Union Army. It was based almost entirely on outdated sources and contained practically no information on the United States Army after 1861.¹ La Frustron was interested in topics such as the Articles of War, martial law, the office of the Secretary of War, the price of uniforms, the pay of officers, etc. He even described in detail the

¹ Fr. de la Frustron, Constitution et organisation de l'armée des Etats-Unis de l'Amerique septentrionale (Paris, 1863), passim. This work appeared originally in the Journal des sciences militaires, vols. VI-IX.
daily rations of the private soldier, including recipes for such dishes as "Soupe de campe," "Cocoa pour 80 hommes," and "Bouillon aux herbes francais (an "excellent" dish, "especially in the spring, for the sick"). Replete with elaborate tables and statistics, his work might have aided a French officer who wanted to understand the organization of the Civil War armies, but would have been of little value to anyone wishing to learn something about the war itself.

La Frustron was not concerned with the tactics and strategy of the Civil War. His description of cavalry, for instance, was devoted in large measure to the pre-war Indian campaigns and garrison life on some remote western military post. Yet La Frustron made one important discovery, which the Comte de Paris was to exploit in his History: he observed that the cavalry of the peace-time United States Army had consisted almost entirely of dragoons and "light cavalry."

The mounted rifles, which we call carabiniers à cheval, have no parallel in European cavalry. This regiment, according to the report of its armament and equipment, is especially organised according to the nature of the terrain in western United States, where it is called upon to operate after the manner of the enemy which it is sent to fight.

The mounted rifles fight only on foot and use their horses only to carry themselves in the neighborhood of the hiding places or assembly grounds of the Indians. When such places are discovered the mounted riflemen dismount and hand over their horses to the safekeeping of a few cavalrymen.

2. Ibid., pp. 79-115, passim.
3. Ibid., pp. 182-204, passim.
4. Ibid., pp. 164-165.
La Frustron's description of the Civil War cavalry tactics is similar to those of virtually every observer who spent some time in America. What he saw at a distance ought to have convinced contemporaries that the American had adopted these tactics, not only from necessity, as most of the observers would contend, but also from long-standing practice and tradition. La Frustron seemed to think well of the Civil War mounted infantry and he noted especially the advantages of the Sharp rifle and Colt revolver, the latter arm being, in his view, "the favorite and perhaps the most powerful arm of the cavalry." He paid little attention to infantry tactics, since these had been "faithfully copied" from the French regulations. La Frustron's other writings on the Civil War were of a general nature, and contained no additional information on the organization and tactics of the American armies.

In 1865 the French Minister of War requested Vigo Roussillon, then Professor of Military Administration at the Staff School, to prepare a study of the American army based upon the official re-

5. Ibid., pp. 165-166, 171, 189.

6. Ibid., pp. 163-164.

ports submitted by DeChenal and Captain Gusman. Writing with an eye to possible events in the future, Vigo Roussillon dutifully organized the vast amount of information contained in these reports, and in the writings of the Prince de Joinville, Lecomte, and Ferri Pisani. He also combed Congressional Reports, committee findings, and other sources published in America. The result of this painstaking research was a balanced and impressive study of virtually every gear in the American military machine. Vigo Roussillon wrote about army organization and administration, of problems in recruitment and discipline, and of the personnel and function of each major department of the United States Army. He discussed in detail topics such as clothing, encampments, soldiers’ pay, remounts, military transport, hospitals, ambulances, and army barracks -- anything, in fact, that would help to explain the successes or failures of the Union Army.

Of the major departments in the Union Army, Vigo Roussillon was the most favorably impressed by the Signal Corps, which had "rendered excellent service" in the use of the field telegraph, captive balloons and photography. He thought less well of the

9. Ibid., pp. 24-25.
10. Ibid., pp. 3-4, 161, 261-262, 286.
11. Ibid., pp. 68-72, 399.
Medical Corps than did most of his contemporaries, and he found fault with the organization of the Quartermaster Corps. He considered the Department of the Inspector General inferior to its French counterpart. Vigo Roussillon concluded that at least insofar as organization and military spirit was concerned, the French Army was superior to the American Army in every respect. The American system tended to be wasteful both in men and resources.

Still Vigo Roussillon thought that much could be gained from studying the Civil War. "The Americans have experimented on a large scale with many European inventions which were only in the theoretical stage. . . . They have also added other inventions of their own, such as revolving naval gun turrets . . . revolvers, special ambulances, etc. . . ." Vigo Roussillon thus regarded the Civil War as a useful testing ground, and he recommended

12. Ibid., pp. 87, 89.
13. Ibid., pp. 76-83.
14. Ibid., p. 75.
15. Ibid., pp. 384-385, 434.
16. Ibid., p. vi.
17. "Forced to create their entire military organization and their military and naval war materials all at once, both sides were able to make use of the most recently invented machinery and processes, to perfect them and to add their own inventions, and finally to apply them to portable firearms, artillery, armed warships, monitors, torpedoes, incendiaries . . . to the destruction and rapid repair of railroads, canals, bridges or viaducts; to the telegraph, signals, photography, land and water transports, [and] camp and ambulance materials. These applications, these experiences could have a positive interest for the European armies." Ibid., p. 24.
"some interesting accessories" such as the McClellan saddle, the camp latrine, and the Quartermaster's wagon, to the French Army. He also had some favorable things to say about the services of transport and supply, which he thought had functioned "in a most remarkable manner." He considered the transport system evolved in the Union Army superior to any comparable organization in Europe. The Americans had made good use of railroads and water routes in transporting armies and keeping them supplied, and Vigo Roussillon used Sherman's Atlanta campaign as an example of what could be accomplished with only one single-track railroad as a line of supply. He was also aware of the important services rendered by the Union fleet in provisioning as well as providing tactical support to the land forces.

Like most French soldiers of his generation, Vigo Roussillon was a proponent of the long-term, regular army, and as such he found fault with the American military system. He did not believe that a small regular army, supplemented by volunteers and an un-

18. Ibid., pp. 406-410. This Quartermaster's wagon had been used on a limited scale by the French Expeditionary Force in Mexico, and the reports from there were no less favorable. Ibid., pp. 190-195.


20. "One of the reasons why the French army hierarchy was shocked by the Prussian victory of 1866 was because the official French doctrine, as taught in the military schools, maintained that the German army, composed of short-term conscripts, was by definition, deficient in military spirit and, hence, in fighting ability." Challener, The French Theory of the Nation in Arms, p. 15.
trained militia, was adequate in times of emergency. The American militia was not an efficient military organization: it had had no real military instruction prior to the war and many units were organized only on paper. Consequently the Americans were forced to enter war without an adequate reserve system, and were dependent upon untrained volunteers to fill the ranks. The reports of the observers convinced Vigo Roussillon that by 1864 these once undisciplined mobs, despite poor recruiting practices, had become formidable fighting organizations. He conceded that the United States, isolated and having no powerful neighbors, perhaps could afford such a system, but he contended that it would not suit the needs of a Continental power, where time was an all-important factor. And even if the American army had become, to all intents and purposes, "professional" after several years of hard knocks in the practical school of war, Vigo Roussillon still considered it inferior to the French, who maintained permanent cadres and a trained reserve. The Americans, after all, had only each other to contend with: they had not run up against a regular army from the Continent.

Vigo Roussillon was interested primarily in organization, and even in his resumé of the principal Civil War campaigns he

21. Ibid., p. 66.
22. Ibid., pp. vii, 53-61.
showed a greater interest in the operation of various organizations of the Union Army than in strategy or tactics. Nevertheless, he did not altogether ignore these aspects of the war. He recognized that modern weapons had minimized the role of cavalry on the battlefield. Shock tactics against infantry were no longer practicable, save in exceptional circumstances. "The tactical role of cavalry therefore appears reduced to combat with other cavalry." However, if the tactical value of cavalry had diminished, the new importance of railroads and their vulnerability to destructive raids actually served to increase the strategical role of this arm. In this sense the Civil War was "a veritable school of construction and destruction," and since Vigo Roussillon believed that the next European war was likely to be fought under similar conditions, he felt that the experiences of the American cavalry "could lead ... to some useful applications." Specifically, he felt that the principles of the attack and defense of railroad lines ought to be incorporated into tactical doctrine, just as the means of repairing or destroying them ought to be provided for in the organization of an army. He also believed that cavalry could still perform valuable service in reconnaissance.

24. In describing the Peninsular Campaign of 1862, for example, Vigo Roussillon showed a greater interest in the administrative problems involved than in the overall strategy of the campaign. He described the way in which the Union Army was provisioned, the supporting role of the navy, the construction of and dependence upon railroads, special problems of logistics, and all other matters relative to the supply and administration of the Union Army, but said little about tactical problems and dealt with the strategy of the campaign only in general terms. Cf. ibid., pp. 242-281.
foraging and escort duties.\textsuperscript{25}

Like Lecomte, DeChenal and von Meerheimb, Vigo Roussillon thus grasped the real significance of the Civil War. It was not simply a contest between two amateur armies, but instead a war of almost unprecedented dimensions and fury, fought under conditions which -- though many were peculiar to America -- were bound to influence the character of future wars in Europe. He recognized the Civil War as the first of the modern wars insofar as equipment and military technology were concerned, and he concluded that the United States could become "a very formidable military and especially a naval power."\textsuperscript{26}

Vigo Roussillon's study was the most thorough and detailed of its kind undertaken by a European soldier. Not only did it enlarge upon and bring the earlier work by La Frustron up to date; it also demonstrated that the French were more interested in questions of administration and organization than tactics or strategy. One reason for this might have been that the French, in 1865 still regarded as having the best army in the world, felt themselves superior in purely military matters. Certainly Jomini's analysis of Napoleonic strategy was still without a rival (at this date

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., pp. 125, 139-140, 159, 316, 388, 400-401. Vigo Roussillon did state that cavalry "raids" were hard on horseflesh.

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p. 373.
the French had not even heard of Clausewitz), and since the American manuals were nothing but translations from the French, probably no one expected that the Civil War contained any tactical lessons either. Still, Vigo Roussillon regarded the Civil War battlegrounds as good proving grounds for equipment and weapons, and although he concluded that the French Army was superior in most respects to the American Army, he nonetheless had a high opinion of the military capabilities of the United States. As an intelligence report -- possibly it was undertaken in light of the crisis in 1865 over Mexico -- Vigo Roussillon's book was thorough and reasonably accurate; as a military study, it has remained the standard French work on the Civil War.

The first French history of the Civil War campaigns was Lieutenant-Colonel de Coynart's Précis de la guerre des États-Unis d'Amérique, which appeared originally in 1866 in Le spectateur militaire and was published in book form the following year. A retired officer and a frequent contributor to military journals, Coynart wrote what the title of his book indicated -- a summary of the Civil War campaigns, and as such it belongs in the same category as the writings of Chesney and Stosch.

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Coynart was another professional soldier who questioned the value of improvised armies. Such soldiers, he wrote, tended to shy away from the offensive, and were less likely to exploit a tactical success than regular troops. Thus the Civil War battles were indecisive and the war dragged on. Like Vigo Roussillon, Coynart was aware that the American armies eventually achieved some remarkable results, but he, too, considered the military system of the United States "too expensive" to be practical under European conditions. 29 Coynart appreciated the strategic value of railroads, but without analyzing the way in which they had been used or speculating about their application in the future. 30 This was true also of his comments on naval warfare and amphibious operations -- he recognized the value of the Civil War in respect to each, but he sought no specific lessons to be learned from the American campaigns. 31 He regarded the siege of Charleston as "one of the most memorable" in military history, but he showed no particular interest in rifled artillery and the comparative resistant qualities of fortifications constructed of earth and masonry. 32 Coynart recognized, as did most of his contemporaries, the changes that had occurred in cavalry tactics: he knew that

29. Ibid., pp. 5-6, 99, 180, 210, 344. This is inferred rather than stated specifically.

30. Ibid., pp. 13-14, 32, 100, 108.

31. Ibid., pp. 35-44, passim.

32. Ibid., p. 275.
the horse had been used primarily to shift mounted infantry "to a menaced point," and that the Americans had "invented dragoons in a new species." 33 Still, he offered no explanation for the development of these tactics, nor did he suggest that they should or should not be applied in Europe. The same is true of his remarks on entrenchments. 34

Coynart's later writings indicate that he was not unaware of some significant developments during the Civil War. In an article he wrote in 1869, he drew attention to the United States Construction Corps, stating that "In Europe, the organization of such a corps is the order of the day. . . ." He mentioned, rather ominously, that "it is all but achieved in Prussia. . . ."

If one bears in mind the nature of the operations executed by the American Federal troops before Richmond and Petersburg, in 1864 and 1865, he will attribute to the railroads an absolute preponderance on the actions of the war, because these operations have had for their principal object the conquest of railroads coming in from the south, in order to occupy or destroy them.

He also predicted that "the new railways will play a great part in the wars to come." 35 Still, when he wrote urging military re-

33. Ibid., p. 156.
34. Ibid., pp. 83, 101.
35. R. de Coynert, "Les places fortes et les chemins de fer," Le spectateur militaire, XVIII (October-December, 1869), 350-351. See also ibid., pp. 359, 363-364. Coynart's view was shared by another contributor to Le spectateur militaire. Pointing to the accomplishments of the Construction Corps, this writer likewise emphasized the fact that Prussia was benefiting from the experiences of the Americans. He endorsed a statement that had once
organization shortly after the fall of France in 1871, Coynart did not so much as mention the Civil War, which presumably he would have had he regarded any of its lessons as applicable.\textsuperscript{36}

Besides these administrative studies, not much was written in France in the 1860's on the technical or tactical sides of the Civil War, except for an occasional article. One series of articles on artillery at Charleston and selected translations from Gillmore's \textit{Reports} appeared in \textit{Le spectateur militaire}. Written specifically to add meat to Coynart's skeleton account of the Civil War, the anonymous author of these technical articles obtained most of his information from German sources -- Jacobi and Sander in particular.

This writer's opinions reflect his sources. He, too, remarked that earthworks held up better under heavy artillery bombardment than forts constructed of masonry.\textsuperscript{37} Rifled artillery had rendered obsolete most of the existing coastal defenses. "The old principle, that permanent works can not resist indefinitely a properly led attack by land, but that they can still hold their own against ships and even be superior, is still applicable to-

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{36} R. de Coynart, "Réorganisation militaire," \textit{Le spectateur militaire}, XXVII (April-June, 1871), 233-250.

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As for the controversial question of the value of armor in fortifications, this writer concluded that the Civil War was "already too old to still be of interest." Yet he believed that defenses would soon catch up with the power of modern weapons, for "In theory there is no limit, and in practice there is none other than the consideration of expense, to the strength of armor plate destined for forts and land batteries." On the other hand, he recognized that "the weight and the force of armored plates used on ships has a theoretical and practical limit that we have perhaps already reached today."

Most of the views in this series of articles, however, were borrowed in undiluted form from Gillmore's Report and Jacobi's study, and the general subject of coastal defense does not seem to have concerned the French as much as it had the Germans, perhaps because France possessed the stronger navy.

The French paid no particular attention to the Civil War cavalry, although this subject received some attention in articles of a more general nature. M. A. Brulin's excellent article, "Etude sur la cavalerie légère," which appeared early in 1863, mentioned that the revolution in warfare as evidenced by the results in America was due, above all, to three things: the long

38. Ibid., pp. 179-180.
39. Ibid., pp. 177-178.
40. Ibid., pp. 185-186.
range of firearms, railroads, and the telegraph. These had combined to alter the tactics of cavalry and at the same time to increase its strategical importance. While cavalry could no longer charge en masse and ride down opposing infantry, it was now able to perform even more valuable service by destroying enemy communications and lines of supply. Brulin wanted the creation of French cavalry similar to that led by Morgan and Stuart, and to that end he urged lighter equipment for cavalry and a greater dependence upon the revolver. "We must now have light cavalry, capable of fighting as well on foot as on horse, I would even say, better on foot than mounted."  

Brulin, however, was the exception. Most French authorities were more impressed by the strategical rather than the tactical employment of Civil War cavalry. This is seen in Erdnegle's series of articles on the role of cavalry in future wars. Erdnegle believed that European armies should follow the lead of their navies, which had shown no reluctance in adopting techniques evolved during the Civil War, despite the fact that that war had a "character of its own." Interpreting the recent war in Italy and "particularly the last war in America" to mean that armies would henceforth be increasingly dependent upon railroads, Erd-


42. E. Erdnegle, "Du rôle de la cavalerie dans les guerres futures," Le spectateur militaire, XII (April-June, 1866), 34.
negle assumed that cavalry in the future would fulfill "un grand rôle stratégique." He believed that heavy cavalry was still the best instrument to use against enemy cavalry, and that shock tactics were preferable to fire tactics in such encounters; but he also recognized the hard facts of modern firepower and the difficulties cavalry would encounter in charging infantry. Since the Civil War offered few illustrations of large bodies of cavalry meeting each other on the battlefield or riding against infantry in fixed positions, Erdnegle naturally had to look elsewhere for most of the wardrobe to clothe his ideas. But in his discussion on light cavalry and its importance in future wars, Erdnegle referred frequently to the American campaigns. He seemed to be especially interested in the cavalry "raids," and he suggested that French officers "read and ponder the works which discuss this matter, and especially what has been written on the war of Secession, in which the Americans have employed this kind of tactic on a very large scale, with much success."

This view was supported by Erdnegle's personal friend, L. Ade. Admitting that the tactical importance of cavalry might have diminished as a result of improved firearms, Ade felt that its strategical usefulness had probably increased. He cited the

43. Ibid., pp. 35-37.


45. Erdnegle, "La cavalerie en présence des nouvelles armes à feu," Le spectateur militaire, XIV (October-December, 1868), 6-7.
Civil War "raids" to show what could still be accomplished by way of seizing enemy convoys, destroying vital railroads and cutting telegraphic lines. Ade did not think that in Europe, "populated, cultivated and civilized as it is," it would be possible to imitate the raids executed by Stuart, Stoneman, Sheridan and Morgan, but he did believe that independent cavalry could perform many useful services in future wars.

It does not appear that the French took advantage of any of the lessons of the Civil War. In 1870 their infantry still fought according to the Infantry Regulations of 1862, which have been described as a "faithful reproduction" of the Regulations of 1831, and indeed varying little in spirit from the Ordinance of 1791. So it was with the cavalry: "No great progress in cavalry training seems to have been made in France up to the war of 1870, as during the forty years preceding this campaign the French cavalry were guided by the regulations of 1829."

46. L. Ade, "De l'emploi de la instruction de la cavalerie," Le spectateur militaire, XVI (April-June, 1869), 58.

47. Ibid., p. 374.

48. Commandant le Thiry, Histoire de la tactique de l'infanterie francaise de 1791 à 1905 (Paris, 1905), pp. 1-2, 12. Trochu claimed that these regulations were "imagined" by "enlightened men" who "have not fought war or who, having fought it, observed its needs poorly and profited poorly from its lessons." L'armes francaise en 1867, p. 41.

49. Major G. T. M. Bridges, "The French Cavalry School," The Cavalry Journal, III (July, 1908), 301. Dragoons were still being trained to fight dismounted according to regulations formulated in 1829. Colonel T. Bonie, Etude sur le combat à pied de la cavalerie (Paris, 1877), p. 150.
There was, moreover, no French soldier of the prominence of Chesney, Hamley or Stosch who wrote about the Civil War or even demonstrated an interest in it before 1870. The French produced no works that could compare with those of Havelock and Denison on cavalry, or with von Scheliha and Jacobi on coastal defense. Indeed, with the exception of La Frustron, DeChenal and Vigo Houssillon, the French study of the Civil War could hardly be described as professional at all. The Prussians had adopted the Eisenbahn-Abtheilung from the Union model; the French talked more about the McClellan saddle.

Why was it that the French, whose observers had provided what was possibly the best eyewitness coverage of the war, ignored those lessons that excited soldiers in other nations? There are probably several answers to this question. First, there can be no doubt that the French before 1866 tended to be complacent in military matters. The Prussian victory over the Austrians at Sadowa jolted many French military leaders and perhaps stimulated interest in other wars as well. At least most of the French writings on the Civil War appeared after that date. Second, it must be remembered that Vigo Roussillon, whose book was probably the most widely known and respected book in France on the Civil War -- had concluded that the French army was superior to that of the United States in most respects. While Vigo Roussillon

sillon appreciated many things about the Civil War, he had actually recommended very little for adoption in the French Army.

Finally, no prominent French military figure became interested in the Civil War during these years. Two Civil War generals, Lieutenant-General John M. Schofield and former Confederate General P. G. T. Beauregard are supposed to have convinced the French Emperor during their visit to France in 1866 of the importance of utilizing entrenchments, and the Emperor, "having a deep conviction of the utility of hasty intrenchments, ordered a trial of them to be made at the camp of Châlons" that same year. The Emperor Napoleon may have been interested in the Civil War -- his cousin had been in America in 1861 and Napoleon III had not viewed the war from a detached position -- but it is not likely that either Schofield or Beauregard were responsible. Schofield did visit France late in 1865, but he was never granted an interview with the Emperor. He did meet several times with Prince Napoleon and various high-ranking army officials, but he makes no mention in his autobiography of ever discussing military aspects of the Civil War with his host. The purpose of his visit was "to make known ... the views and purposes of the government and people of the United States in respect to Mexican affairs."


52. Lieutenant-General John M. Schofield, *Forty-Six Years in the Army* (New York, 1897), pp. 388, 392. Schofield's guide during his stay in France was the same Captain Gusman who had accompanied DeChenal to America in 1864-1865.
Beauregard was in France on business in 1866, and rumor had it that he sought an interview with Napoleon III "so that he could tell him about the latest advances in the use of naval mines and small arms," since the Emperor had sympathized with the Confederacy. There is nothing, however, to suggest that he actually discussed entrenchments with Louis Napoleon; he probably talked more about his desire to obtain a commission in the French army. 53

Marshal Bazaine, who had commanded the French Army in Mexico, and who, within a few years, was to surrender his army to the Germans at Metz, was also supposed to have been interested in the Civil War. He commanded the maneuvers at Châlon in 1869 and, according to a biographer, "did his best" to emphasize "the utility of shelter-trenches." Bazaine had, in fact, been closer to the Civil War than most French soldiers, and his biographer may be correct in stating that "he was evidently capable of learning its chief military lesson." 54 But this, too, is mostly supposition, and the fact remains that no tactical lessons of the Civil War were incorporated into official French doctrine.

Indeed, the teachings of the Civil War did not even creep into the more prominent unofficial treatises. In his essay on the French Army in 1867, General Trochu specifically stated that while the Civil War campaigns were doubtless "very striking,"

53. Williams, Beauregard, pp. 262-263.

they had nevertheless occurred "at a distance and in the midst of special circumstances, where the element of the unknown was too great to enable us to judge them well." And Ardant du Picq, a studious and promising officer who was killed in 1870, and whose Battle Studies was to serve later as a handbook for French strategists, looked upon the Civil War with obvious disdain. Du Picq believed in quality rather than quantity, and he wrote:

The Americans have shown us what happens in modern battle to large armies without cohesion. With them the lack of discipline and organisation has had the inevitable result. Battle has been between hidden skirmishers, at long distance, and has lasted for days, until some faulty movement, perhaps a moral exhaustion, has caused one or the other of the opposing forces to give way. . . . In this American War, the mêlées of Agincourt are said to have reappeared, which merely means a mêlée of fugitives. But less than ever has there been close combat.

Prussia's victory at Sadowa soon caused all eyes to turn nervously to the Rhine, and led directly to a series of reforms in the French Army in 1867. A breechloading rifle was adopted, new siege artillery added, the military transport system improved, and in 1868 legislation was enacted which, if implemented, would have brought about a drastic reorganization of the army itself.

55. L'armée française en 1867, pp. 6-7.


57. General Thoumas, Las transformations de l'armée française. Essais d'histoire et de critique sur l'état militaire de la France (Paris, 1887), I, 24; II, 98, 225, 230, 441. Thoumas does not mention the Civil War in connection with any of these reforms. See also Challener, The French Theory of the Nation in Arms, pp. 10-27.
If it were necessary for the French or any other European army to study recent campaigns, there were more convincing and better documented examples much nearer home than Virginia. Whether or not they were actually more instructive, however, would be a matter of some controversy for the next fifty years.
Chapter VIII
THE CIVIL WAR IN GERMAN MILITARY THOUGHT
1871-1914

Prussia's victories over Austria and France changed both the map of Europe and long-standing military precepts. Politically, these wars resulted in the unification of Germany and the foundation of the German Empire. In a military sense the army reforms of 1860-1862, a new weapon (the needle gun, which enabled infantry to fire rapidly and to reload in a prone position), and a well-conceived doctrine of war had all contributed to the Prussian victories. Thoroughly grounded in the theories of Clausewitz, the famous philosopher on war, Moltke had shaped his own doctrines to utilize the products of the industrial revolution. His strategical theories were geared to the recent improvements in communication -- a new and improved network of roads, the railroad, and the electric telegraph. They were implemented by the corporate brain known as the General Staff, while superior peace-time training and indoctrination further lubricated a mili-
tary machine that, after 1870, was universally regarded as the best in the world. ¹

The success of the Prussian armies inevitably gave rise to a wealth of new military literature, composed of memoirs, official histories, and tactical and strategical studies. ² In Germany, two trends became at once apparent. Moltke had been so successful that after 1870 there were few who criticized his strategy. His ideas were now the accepted doctrine.³ And, if the subjects treated in the military journals are a reliable indication, the recent campaigns stimulated interest in general military history as well. For a while, at least, German officers wrote frequently about the Civil War and made an attempt to evaluate its military lessons.

After 1870, most German writings on the Civil War appeared in the military journals, especially in the Jahrbücher für die Deutsche Armee und Marine, the most important German military periodical next to the Militär Wochenblatt. There were three

1. For a concise summary of German strategical thought during this period see Lieut.-General von Caemmerer, The Development of Strategical Science during the 19th Century (London, 1905), pp. 157-177. The emergence of Moltke and the General Staff as the controlling force in the Prussian Army is traced in Goerlitz, The German General Staff, chapter IV. See also Spenser Wilkinson, The Brain of an Army A Popular Account of the German General Staff (London, 18907, passim.

2. Within a year of the battle of Sadowa (July, 1866), 174 books had been written in Germany on the subject of the Seven Weeks War. "Die Literature des Krieges von 1866," Beihefte, 1867, part III, pp. 111-112.

approaches to the subject. The first can be described as a re-hash of American memoirs, such as Scheibert's transplanted bits of Confederate lore. As might be expected, these articles were usually rather sketchy and without historical or critical merit.  

The works of Major F. Mangold illustrate the second, a purely historical approach. An instructor in the Royal Academy of Artillerists and Engineers, Mangold revised a portion of Sander's History, making use of the latest available sources. He also wrote a history of the campaign of Second Bull Run, which impressed at least one American reviewer as a "most remarkable production, exhibiting the profoundest research [and] a wonderfully intimate knowledge of the topography of North Virginia. . . ."  

4. A typical example of this sort of review article is "Die Kriegführung am Mississippi 1862-63," Beilage, 1876, part V, pp. 241-268. This article lists but three sources, all of which had been published recently. Sherman's Memoirs (1875), Adam Badeau's Military History of U. S. Grant (1868-1881), and Joseph E. Johnston's Narrative (1874). Captain A. von Clausewitz translated a portion of chapter XV, volume II, of Sherman's Memoirs and published them under the title "Ein Eisenbahnkrieg im amerikanischen Sezessions-Krieg," Militär Wochenblatt, 1876, Nr. 32, pp. 571-581.  

5. See S. H. S. P., VI (July-December, 1878), 54.  


7. F. Mangold, Der Feldzug in Nord-Virginien im August 1862 (Hannover, 1881). See also Mangold, "Richmond and Washington. Eine strategische Studie aus dem amerikanischen Bürgerkrieg," Jahrbücher, XLV (October-December, 1882), which was a by-product of the above mentioned work.  

8. Army and Navy Journal, XXVII (November 2, 1859), 178. Mangold was very much in sympathy with Union General Fitz-John Porter, who in 1862 had been relieved from command and found guilty of disobeying orders at second Bull Run. Porter's case was re-
Mangold wrote to give his "German brother officers a reliable and impartial history of the great struggle," and his book was devoid of the didactic passages so often found in military literature of this type. Mangold was not the only German officer interested in the history of the Civil War: there were others who wrote primarily to describe a particular campaign or event without preaching a moral. However, like the majority of studies on the Civil War written by foreign soldiers, most of these were based on too scanty information to earn high historical rank. Only Mangold's monograph on the second Bull Run campaign and possibly Scheibert's and von Borcke's study of Brandy Station can stand on 

examined in 1879 and he was cleared of all charges. It was the proceedings of this hearing that prompted Mangold to write his monograph. See Kenneth P. Williams, Lincoln Finds a General, II, Appendix iv, pp. 785-789.

9. F. Mangold [sic] to Rev. Dr. J. William Jones, August 16, 1878, reprinted in S. H. S. P., VI, 190. This letter reveals Mangold's difficulties in locating Southern sources, which he states "have been flowing very scantily," and shows his desire for accuracy. "Nothing more will be printed before the manuscript of the whole is finished, and it seems to me now more than likely that I shall then suppress the first volume and write that over again also. . . ."

their historical merits.

The third and most common approach was the attempt to evaluate the Civil War from a purely military point of view. Curiously enough, German military writers were not entirely blinded by their own dazzling successes against Austria and France. Looking back after the turn of the century, a French critic observed that from 1866 until the Russo-Turkish war of 1878, the German officers appear to have been more interested in military studies than those of any other army. Moltke himself placed a high value on the study of military history, "especially after 1866, in order to test and enlarge his own experience by the facts..." Naturally the German Wars for unification received the greatest attention, for they were the most recent, the best documented, and by far the most convincing; but the Civil War was also studied, individually if not officially, for lessons that might still be applicable. Scheibert's best-known work, Der Bürgerkrieg in den nordamerikanischen Staaten provided the basis for information on the Civil War. It was first published in 1874, and was immediately followed by a series of studies aimed at evaluating the military significance of the war in the light of the campaigns of 1866 and 1870-1871.

The first of these, an anonymous study of the Vicksburg cam-


paign, appeared in 1875, one year after the publication of Scheibert's Report. This writer showed a high regard for the industrielle Erfindungsgeist of the Americans. In surveying the combined operations of the Union fleet and land forces in the Mississippi Valley, he was so impressed by the Union gunboats that he devoted nearly four pages to describing the technical properties of these river craft.13

This writer, however, was primarily interested in tactics. With regard to the infantry, he noted the advantages field fortifications gave to an army on the defensive and also that only flank movements succeeded against entrenched positions. This was especially the case with volunteer armies, where a lack of military training among the rank and file, and carelessness or ignorance on the part of the officers, often complicated maneuvers and led to useless loss of life. He maintained that improvised entrenchments had been a major factor in making the Civil War "so murderous, so obstinate, and so drawn out," by withstanding both mass infantry attacks and intense artillery bombardments.14

Vicksburg, with the exception of Grierson's Raid through Mississippi, was barren ground to anyone interested in cavalry tactics, and this writer's remarks on the subject smack of Scheibert and von Borcke. He noted that the American cavalry was really mounted infantry, even in the days when it had fought only Indians,


and that it had remained such because the volunteer armies had not had time in 1861 and 1862 to form and properly train "actual cavalry." He disapproved of the strategic cavalry raid, but wrote favorably of the development of "mounted divisions" which had been formed toward the end of the war and which, in his view, had performed efficiently in reconnaissance and protecting or extending the flank of an infantry position.15

As for the artillery, this writer voiced surprise at its "small effect" at Vicksburg, despite the extravagant use of ammunition by the Union forces. He attributed much of this to a lack of experienced and scientifically trained artillerists, the different kinds and calibre of guns, and the large proportion of defective ammunition; but he also blamed it on faulty tactics — a tendency to spread artillery over too wide a front and a general lack of maneuverability. He stressed the point that earthworks were seemingly invulnerable to artillery fire. Seldom did they offer suitable targets for shell and shrapnel. "The limited depth of the battle-array, [and] the direct cover of the front lines by trenches . . . limited the effect of artillery in this

15. Ibid., pp. 264-265. The reference to "mounted divisions" is interesting in view of the fact that it was commonly accepted in Germany at this time that the division was the most satisfactory unit of organization for cavalry. According to Prince Kraft, these Cavalry Divisions had rendered indispensable service in 1870 in reconnaissance and scouting duties, and also in relieving the infantry "from almost all outpost and patrol duty. . . ." Prince Kraft zu Hohenlohe Ingelfingen, Letters on Cavalry (2nd edition, London, 1893), pp. 13, 55-57; Denison, History of Cavalry, pp. 403, 406. It is possible that the experience of the German cavalry in 1870 had suggested to this writer a search for something comparable in 1861-1865.
war more than elsewhere." 16

In 1876 a similar analysis appeared in the same periodical. This writer, likewise anonymous, was impressed by the "original" or "peculiar" character of the Civil War, and for that reason he considered it "a source of the richest military studies and lessons." He did not think that "even today" it would "be out of place to sum up . . . the characteristics of this war as conveyed to us from the rich literature on the subject," especially if the result was "a clear picture . . . [of] every phenomenon deviating from our European conditions." 17

Like most Germans who analyzed the Civil War, this authority was struck by the tremendous logistical problem. The theater of war, he pointed out, had been the largest in modern military history. Because of the lengthy communications and the difficulties in supply, the American armies -- particularly those of the North, which seemed to require more than the bare essentials -- had been forced to rely on magazines or depots, in contrast to the European practice of requisitioning supplies as the armies moved. Thus the Civil War became largely a war to gain control of communication lines and strategically important locations. Fundamental to this interpretation is the belief that these con-

16. Ibid., p. 281.

siderations, rather than the proper goal (according to Clausewitz at least) of a decisive military victory, dictated the strategy of the Civil War. If a general surmounted these obstacles and won a tactical advantage, then unfavorable terrain and poor roads often prevented his exploiting this success. 18 But the author was not interested primarily in strategy, though he found Sherman's March to the Sea "not without interest. . . ." 19 His main concern was tactics, and he treated strategy only insofar as it was necessary for an understanding of this subject.

The picture he drew of infantry tactics was, quite correctly, one of "motley confusion." Civil War tactics "frequently were not adequate to the grandeur of the strategical plans." 20 Like Scheibert, he described the standard tactical formation for infantry, based on "old, recast" French and English regulations, as a line of two ranks, with fire by volleys and protected by weak groups of skirmishers. He, too, noted the ever-increasing use of entrenchments, but he did not underline the importance of this development. He concluded that the infantry was generally employed "in obsolete forms, with proportionately small maneuverability and independence on the battlefield. . . ." 21

Not so with the cavalry, which deviated from the European regulations in a "stimulating, interesting" fashion. He thought

18. Ibid., pp. 180-182.
19. Ibid., p. 184.
It remarkable that either army could raise a competent body of cavalry, considering the chaos of an improvised Volksheer and the difficulties of the terrain. Yet the Civil War cavalry had developed into an efficient arm, performing well the various duties involved in security and reconnaissance, and acting either in cooperation with the other armies or independently, whichever the situation called for. He took a brighter view of dismounted tactics than most German soldiers. He recognized that skirmishing zu Fusz had "played a prominent role," and that the rugged country had often prevented the handling of cavalry in large bodies. Morgan's cavalry offered perhaps the best example of what could be accomplished "not only [in] the destruction of enemy communications and military stores, but also [in] the capture of partly fortified places of strategical or tactical importance." While convinced that the conditions prevailing in Europe would require "genuine cavalry . . . in the saddle and with saber in hand," he appreciated the value of dismounted tactics particularly in defense, where through skilled use of firearms the American cavalry had attained a degree of steadiness that European cavalry "at least until now, found only in conjunction with the other arms." It was natural for a German of-

22. Ibid., pp. 248-250. His use of Morgan suggests that this writer might have been familiar with Denison's Modern Cavalry, which had been translated into German in 1870. Denison, it will be recalled, had credited Morgan with first introducing the mounted infantry that became characteristic of the Civil War.
ficer to be concerned with dismounted tactics at this particular time, for it was in 1876, the same year this article appeared in print, that the new drill regulations for cavalry had been issued; in formulating these regulations, dismounted tactics had been a bone of contention between von Schmidt and more conservative members of the Commission.  

As for artillery, this writer observed that the so-called war of positions had required heavy use of this arm, though the heavily wooded terrain had often limited its effect. The range and precision of rifled cannon could seldom be used to advantage in the thick forests; shrapnel and canister were far more effective under these conditions. In such circumstances the old smoothbore was still useful, an interesting observation in view of the fact that in 1870 "all the Prussian guns were rifled" and were, in the judgment of at least one competent critic, vastly superior to the old bronze smoothbore guns of the French artillery.  

Like the previous writer, this analyst also pointed out that the effect of artillery fire on enemy infantry "was small in proportion to the enormous expenditure of ammunition."  

The one lesson that the Civil War "taught" this German soldier was that improvised armies composed of militia and untrained

volunteers were inadequate for the exigencies of modern warfare. Without proper discipline and training, led by officers who in many cases were inept, and lacking an organization such as the German General Staff, the American armies themselves were responsible for the "unnatural" duration of the Civil War. Inability to maneuver had resulted in the "bloody sacrifice of troops." While admitting that after three years' campaigning the Civil War soldiers were proficient veterans, "examples of rare energy and bravery," there can be no doubt how this officer stood on the subject of professional armies.

In 1877, the same year von Borcke's Memoirs were first published in Germany, there appeared a comprehensive study on the Civil War cavalry by a Hussar lieutenant named von Bredow. Von Bredow, too, was skeptical of the value of improvised armies, but he nevertheless believed that the Civil War contained "many valuable experiences" in matters pertaining to strategy, the military

26. Some insight into the German system of command is offered by this writer's criticisms of American subordinate officers. Their limitations made combined movements hazardous and difficult. They often did not know or appreciate the "allgemein gültige Regel der gegenseitigen Verbindung und Unterstützung" -- to march to the sound of the cannon. Too often they showed a tendency to obey an order literally rather than to be guided by its spirit, which was the essence of the German theory of command. Cf. Wilkinson, The Brain of an Army, pp. 142-146.


28. Not to be confused with General Adalbert von Bredow, whose name is usually associated with the famous cavalry charge near Vionville on August 16, 1870.
use of railroads, and engineering and naval techniques. He thought that the Civil War "had great significance for us with reference to cavalry..." 29 He concentrated on the earlier phases of the war because the Spatenkrieg that was introduced in 1863 was "abnormal." "Instructive as it is from other points of view," the study of trench warfare was of little value for his purposes.

"In the battles of the American War the cavalry could of course play only a more or less subordinate role." Difficult terrain, made even more hazardous by fences and field fortifications, usually had prohibited the maneuvering of cavalry in bodies sufficiently large for the fulfillment of its traditional functions in battle -- the decisive charge and the pursuit of a defeated foe. Therefore the Civil War cavalry had resorted to dismounted tactics, with "numerous examples" of "great success." 30

Von Bredow approved. German cavalry "in the same situation... could scarcely act differently if they wanted to accomplish their object." Like the previous writer, von Bredow was particularly struck by the power of dismounted cavalry fighting on defense, and he cited the appropriate passages in the new Cavalry Regulations as a guide to the proper employment of such tactics. He concluded, however, that cavalry should use shock tactics whenever practicable -- a view which von Schmidt would have agreed


30. Ibid., pp. 204, 347-350.
Taking a page from Scheibert and von Borcke, von Bredow stated that the Confederates had actually preferred shock tactics and had resorted to dismounted action only when this offered the best chances for success. "There are many ways to solve a tactical assignment. One solves it; the "how" remains secondary."³¹

On the controversial subject of cavalry raids, von Bredow believed that the exploits of Stuart and other Civil War cavalrymen would not be duplicated in any future European war. Cavalry would continue to be "indispensable" in reconnaissance -- and here much could be learned from studying Stuart's methods -- but the far-reaching strategic cavalry raid was a thing of the past. No army in Europe was dependent upon such lengthy and sensitive lines of communication and supply as the American armies, and a railroad could be destroyed just as easily by small, specially-trained detachments as by a large body of cavalry. "The participation of a densely populated region in the defense of the fatherland, the varied means of communication in the civilized countries of Europe, which make a surprise appearance of larger cavalry bodies almost impossible, are further considerations against raids of the American model in the European theatre of war."³²

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31. Ibid., pp. 211-212, 217, 220, 350. Like both Scheibert and von Borcke, von Bredow regarded the Union cavalry as inferior to the Confederates, and far more dependent upon the rifle. He, too, claimed that the Confederates were so weakened by the process of attrition that the Union cavalry could eventually fight with them on more or less equal terms.

32. Ibid., pp. 204, 220, 356-357.
Von Bredow's analysis actually contained little that was original, but it was basically sound and in complete harmony with existing German doctrine. Like Scheibert, von Bredow tended to oversimplify. His account of the organization of the Confederate cavalry, for example, was taken almost word for word from Scheibert: both thought they could see four distinct types -- regular cavalry, partisans or irregulars, scouts, and couriers.33 No doubt the cavalry in both armies performed all these duties at one time or another, but the Confederate leaders would probably have been astonished at such a clear-cut and arbitrary distinction.

The next issue of the Jahrbücher contained von Wedell's study of Grant's Virginia campaign of 1864 and 1865. Basing his observations upon Scheibert's book and the Official Report of Lieutenant General U. S. Grant, von Wedell selected this campaign because to him it was "the most instructive and interesting" of the Civil War.34 His views reflect his sources. He endorsed Scheibert's opinion that trench warfare was largely the result of Lee's inability to replace his losses, and he shared to some extent Scheibert's estimation of Lee as a general. He was especially interested in Lee's system of command.35 Grant's Report made it apparent that whenever entrenchments were used on a broad scale,

33. Ibid., pp. 205-206; Scheibert, Le Guerre Civile, pp. 96-100.


35. Ibid., pp. 86, 296.
the protection of flanks "was of the greatest importance . . ."; Grant's account of Bloody Angle illustrated the difficulty of defeating an enemy entrenched in the field.36

Von Bredow's views likewise reflect his background. While he admitted that the American soldiers had become competent veterans after three years' campaigning, it is also apparent that he shared the distrust of the professional soldier for militia and untrained volunteers. He cited, quite correctly, the first Bull Run as offering "striking proof" of the weaknesses of armies composed of these elements.37

Two years later, in 1879, this same journal carried a study on the artillery of the Civil War that corresponded to von Bredow's treatment of the cavalry. The author, one E. W., did not anticipate that Germany would ever be in a position to conduct a war similar to the Civil War and to commit the same mistakes as the Americans, but he felt that it was nevertheless worthy of study. He wrote that the Civil War was a period of "great revolution" in artillery, a time when smoothbore cannon were gradually being replaced by rifled guns. Although there was no denying the fact that rifled artillery was more accurate, the smoothbore still had its admirers. E. W. studied artillery tactics along the lines of the three general tactical phases described by Scheibert: the column tactics of 1861, the linear tactics of 1862 and 1863, and

36. Ibid., pp. 297, 311.
37. Ibid., pp. 84-86.
the Spatenkrieg of 1864 and 1865.  

The initial period was characterized by the employment of infantry columns in attack and the use of artillery in very small units, sometimes only one, two or three guns. It soon became apparent "that the deep columns could no longer stand before rifled artillery," and by 1862 the column had given way to the line as the standard infantry formation. Scheibert, too, had been of the opinion that "the column was abandoned as the combat formation because the action of artillery proved to be too murderous against it." In the second period, Scheibert's period of linear tactics, entire divisions of infantry were formed in single line of battle, with a second and sometimes a third line several hundred feet to the rear. According to E. W., the artillery normally was attached to the infantry division and usually was deployed along the entire front, although he admitted numerous exceptions to this generalization. Still the losses were too high, and eventually both armies began to entrench themselves as a matter of self-preservation. The occasional breastwork of 1862 had become accepted practice by 1864: "... axe and spade played almost as significant a role as firearms. ..." In this period the artil-


lery was "for the most part employed in great batteries. . . ." 40

Although E. W. committed the error -- common to many military students of the Civil War -- of oversimplification and false distinctions, his analysis did correspond roughly to the facts. At the beginning of the war, artillery was dispersed and relatively ineffectual; by 1862 it was generally employed along the entire line of battle, and toward the end of the war "the batteries of each corps were united . . . and made a separate command. . . ." 41 E. W. made no attempt to deduct specific lessons from his study. The available sources were "so varied and . . . so inaccurately reported, that we cannot speak of definite principles." The Americans would mention, for example, "only that the artillery went into position, but not where, how, and why." 42 He concluded that, all things considered, "artillery during the war of Secession in general satisfied the demands placed upon this weapon, and that it was used quite correctly and effectively in a great

40. Ibid., pp. 67-68, 141-142.

41. Jennings Cropper Wise, The Long Arm of Lee (Lynchburg, Va., 1915), I, 155, 201; E. S. May, Achievements of Field Artillery (Woolwich, 1893), p. 60; and David Gregg McIntosh, "The Confederate Artillery -- Its Organization and Development," in Miller, Photographic History of the Civil War, V, 66. According to Henderson: "In the first year of the war we find . . . that in battle, whether on the defensive or offensive, their [artillery] action was entirely independent. In 1862, however, came a change. The first symptom was seen at the battle of Malvern Hill . . . . This principle of massing guns gradually worked its way to the front, and the last great charge of the Confederates at Gettysburg . . . . was preceded by an artillery duel for nearly two hours, with 137 guns on one side and about 90 on the other." Henderson, Science of War, pp. 258-259.

many cases." The Americans had shown "a striking capacity" for making use of entrenchments, but here again there was no detailed information available on the installation of such emplacements. Yet E. W. agreed with von Bredow that there was no substitute for professional armies. Despite the intrinsically good qualities of both Union and Confederate personnel, neither artillery could compare with a well-trained artillery, even though it had performed as well "as one had a . . . right to expect from such quickly formed Batteries. . . ." 43

In 1880 still another series of articles on the military significance of the Civil War appeared in the Jahrbücher. The anonymous writer of these articles, too, stressed the logistical factors which had distinguished the Civil War campaigns from contemporary wars in Europe.

The advancing armies remain continually dependent upon their magazines. While we disperse during marches in order to live and concentrate in order to fight . . . the armies in America . . . are forced to concentrate in order to live, for the distances from the depots and corresponding difficulties of supply grow with [the] greater extension [of armies] . . . .

This, more than any "natural configuration" of the terrain, determined that the Civil War would be "a protracted war of positions in which the defender usually had the advantage, because the attacking force dared not proceed in wide outflanking movements

43. Ibid., pp. 65, 147.
without abandoning his . . . base of operations. . . ." Such was not the case in Europe, where the armies could subsist while dispersed and where passable roads usually afforded an opportunity to outflank the best-chosen defensive position. 44

Whether dealing with cavalry, engineering developments, ordnance, or even the sanitary services, this writer reflected the views of Scheibert, Jacobi and other contemporary students of the Civil War. The development of the naval torpedo and the destructive power of modern siege artillery impressed him as it had the others. 45 He also accepted Scheibert's division of Civil War tactics into three distinct phases. After quoting Scheibert at length on the third period, the Spatenkrieg of 1864-1865, he concluded:

A carry-over of this method of fighting to our battlefields would imply a want of appreciation for the purposes of every battle -- the overthrow of the enemy -- although we, too, since the last war, are coming to recognize that with the enormously increasing effect of modern weapons, field fortifications [die künstlichen Deckungen im Terrain] . . . are becoming, especially to the defensive, a qualified factor in the conduct of modern war.

44. "Charakteristische momente der Kriegführung im nordamerikanischen Secessionskriege," Jahrbücher, XXXVIII (October-December, 1880), 264-266. Cited hereafter as "Charakteristische momente." This writer regarded the use of railroads in transporting troops and Lee's strategy of Interior Lines as being especially significant. Ibid., pp. 266, 271.

45. Ibid., pp. 154-156, 163-166. According to this writer, the "extraordinary effect" of the Prussian rifled artillery on the Düppel fortifications in 1864 had attracted "the undivided attention of the experts." Ibid., p. 163.
He believed that such use of entrenchments would especially benefit raw troops and hastily assembled Landwehr formations by giving these reserves a steadiness they often lacked on the offense.  

Like most German soldiers, he regarded the Civil War as proof of the inferiority of improvised armies, although the fact that both armies were "equally good and equally poor" sometimes made it difficult to determine the real effectiveness of the American volunteer soldier. And he agreed with most of his fellow officers that the lack of a General Staff constituted a basic weakness of the Civil War armies.

As for the cavalry, "the arm whose peculiar use in the Civil War always attracts the . . . greatest interest," this writer again had nothing original to contribute. Like Scheibert and von Borcke, he believed that the Confederate cavalry was composed of better elements than the Union cavalry, was superior to the latter until wasted away by attrition, and that it had preferred shock tactics even though it frequently fought on foot. While admitting the effectiveness of dismounted tactics under special conditions, he was not won over to this method of fighting: shock tactics remained the chief weapon for cavalry and any doubt on this fundamental point would lead only to mischief. Because cavalry rarely exercised a decisive influence in the battles of 1861-1865, this writer felt that the Civil War would not be of much guidance in

46. Ibid., pp. 158-159.
47. Ibid., pp. 40-45, 47, 50.
the solution of the problem that concerned cavalrymen everywhere — to what extent could cavalry in the days of precision weapons contribute to the decision in modern battle.⁴⁸

An analysis of the foregoing articles leads to some rather interesting conclusions. First, without exception they all reflect the views of Scheibert. It is hardly a coincidence that they were all written soon after the publication of Scheibert's Bürgerkrieg in den nordamerikanische Staaten. They accepted his analysis of Civil War tactics, particularly in regard to infantry and cavalry; they agreed with his observations on the power of rifled artillery against fortifications; they endorsed his opinion that the cavalry raid was not applicable in Europe; and they tended to share Scheibert's reservations about the importance of field fortifications.

Secondly, these articles reflected the background of their writers and the recent experiences of the German army. Without exception they were opposed to improvised armies: long years of peace-time training and preparation had paid off handsomely. (When a promising young staff officer named von der Goltz in 1877 suggested that the improvised armies Gambetta had raised in France during the last year of the Franco-Prussian War had introduced a new element, the levée en masse, into warfare and that the Germans had better take heed, such an outcry resulted that von der Goltz

⁴⁸. Ibid., pp. 161-162.
was quickly transferred from the General Staff to a line regiment.\textsuperscript{49} Similarly, they all tended to interpret Civil War strategy as one of attrition and struggle for the mastery of supply lines. Clausewitz had preached annihilation of the enemy; Sadowa and Sedan had shown this was possible, and these German officers could not help but remark that the Civil War was barren of any decisive military victories. They also pointed out the lack of any organization comparable to the German General Staff in the American armies, and regarded the Civil War as less instructive in the use of artillery than the more recent campaigns in Europe.

Finally, these studies suggest that the Germans themselves were more or less agreed on the lessons which could be learned from the Civil War. Whether this was because they were all influenced by Scheibert or because of their common background it is impossible to say. They were all favorably impressed by the war effort of the Americans, they found the war instructive in matters of material and technology, and for the study of coastal defense and joint army-navy operations. They did not anticipate the use of entrenchments in Europe to the extent that they had been used

\textsuperscript{49} Friedrich Freiherr von der Goltz and Wolfgang Foerster, Generalfeldmarschall Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz Denkwürdigkeiten (Berlin, 1929), pp. 84-88; Carrias, La pensée militaire allemande, pp. 296-297. The book that created this excitement was entitled Léon Gambetta und seine Armeen (Berlin, 1877). The burden of this book was that Germany, faced with the likelihood of a war on two fronts, might have to resort to improvised armies to supplement the regular army against an invasion by superior numbers. Therefore, the experiences of the French were not to be discounted, even though Germany had won the war.
in America. Though an occasional critic appreciated the advantages of dismounted tactics for cavalry, it was always with qualifications. No one went so far as Havelock or even Denison in suggesting the creation of a separate force of mounted infantry (according to both Scheibert and von Borcke, the Confederates themselves had preferred shock tactics). While an occasional writer admitted that cavalry raids had served a useful purpose in the Civil War, no one urged that they be attempted in Europe. In brief, while the Germans appreciated the achievements of the Americans and were aware of some fundamental changes that had taken place in strategy and tactics, they were also of the opinion that the Civil War had deviated from European wars because of unique political and geographical conditions. Because it was a unique war they felt it was worth studying.

Compared to the French and English writings on the Civil War after 1871, these German summaries hold up well. The Germans were the first in Europe to study the Civil War after the Franco-Prussian War. It was only logical that they should rate the lessons of 1866 and 1870-1871 higher than those of the Civil War: no one would have expected them to do otherwise. But British officers who wrote about the Civil War after the turn of the century were every bit as dependent upon Henderson as these writers were upon Scheibert, and, curiously enough, they often overlooked

50. See below, Chapter XI.
some basic elements such as the industrial power of the North, the importance of sea power, and of the western campaigns — all of which had been clearly understood by the Germans in the 1870's.

By the mid 1880's, most German soldiers had ceased to become interested in the Civil War; at least they had ceased to write about it. Scheibert, now dependent upon his pen for a living, continued to grind out articles for the Jahrbücher, but he was practically the only one. With the exception of a few isolated articles and books the Civil War no longer attracted much attention in Germany. This is scarcely surprising in view of the fact that none of the Germans who had made a study of the Civil War regarded the American campaigns as instructive in a practical sense as the campaigns of 1866 and 1870-1871. Nor had any prominent German officer, such as Wolseley in England, become interested in the Civil War and thus stimulated further study of that conflict. Perhaps this interest died also because during the 1880's the Historical Section of the German General Staff began work on a multi-volume history of the wars of Frederick the Great. This project, together with the General Staff studies of the

Franco-Prussian War, doubtless tended to attract those interested in writing military history, to the neglect of the other campaigns.

By the turn of the century, German interest in the Civil War experienced a slight revival, perhaps because of the publication of the *Official Records*. An anonymous article on the siege of Charleston appeared in 1893, Lieutenant Funke wrote a strategic study on the Peninsular Campaign which was published in the *Beihefte zum Militär Wochenblatt* in 1901, and R. von Golsler wrote a monograph on the tactics of Gettysburg which appeared in the same publication in 1913. The most formidable work on the Civil War written during this later period was Baron Freytag-Loringhoven's three-volume *Studien Über Kriegführung*, published in 1901. An officer on the General Staff and one of Germany's most prominent military writers, Freytag-Loringhoven originally compiled this material for a series of lectures (which he never gave) at the *Kriegsakademie*. In several respects this work

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54. Freytag-Loringhoven, *Menschen und Dinge*, pp. 109-110. According to Spenser Wilkinson, the lectures at the *Kriegsakademie* consisted during the first year's course "of one or more of the campaigns of Frederick the Great; in the second year's course,
may be likened to the well-known work of an English contemporary, G. F. R. Henderson. Both were sound historians, both taught in comparable military schools, Henderson at the Staff College and Freytag-Loringhoven at the Kriegsakademie, and both were greatly interested in the psychology of generalship. Both evaluated the Civil War in the light of their extensive knowledge of military history, and both made frequent references to other campaigns, principally those of the Napoleonic Wars and the German Wars for unification.

Like most German students of the Civil War, Freytag-Loringhoven was aware of the unique factors that had determined the nature of military operations in America. He appreciated the extraordinary difficulties of supplying the armies, the importance of the railroad and telegraph to strategy, and the indispensable role of the Union Navy. He also was familiar with the organization and training, or rather the lack of both, of the Civil War armies.

55. See below, Chapter X.

56. Cf. Freytag-Loringhoven, Die Macht der Persölichkeit im Kriege (Berlin, 1905). This was the central theme of Freytag-Loringhoven's writings, and, according to a recent survey, this book is considered a military classic. Generalmajor A. D. Heinrich Aschenbrandt, Brief Survey of German Military Literature (Reproduced by the Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1953), pp. 15-16.

57. Freytag-Loringhoven, Studien über Kriegführung auf Grundlage des nordamerikanischen Sezessionskrieges in Virginien (Berlin, 1901-1903), I, v, 97; III, 12, 139, 140; Krieg und Politik in der Neuzeit (Berlin, 1911), p. 211.
Freytag-Loringhoven was interested in the development of tactics during the Civil War. For example, he paid considerable attention to the development of field fortifications as used in the Virginia campaigns of 1864 and 1865. He attributed this development to the unwieldy improvised armies and the heavily wooded terrain rather than to any significant increase in fire power. The campaigns of 1864-1865 he considered "instructive" because they demonstrated that

... without thorough artillery preparation, without previous achievement of fire superiority over the defender, the attack against fortified field positions was already impracticable with the effect of weapons of that time. The attempt to overrun the weak Confederate battalions in their entrenchments with concentrated masses miscarried repeatedly, despite the tenacious energy of the high command and the commendable sacrificial courage of the troops.58

This subject was particularly timely, for the invention of smokeless powder and recent improvements in high explosives had rendered the future of fortifications highly uncertain.59 Freytag-Loringhoven apparently did not believe that fortress or siege warfare could be divorced from a regular campaign in the field, for the Civil War had convinced him that there was no basic difference between Feld and Festungskrieg. This was a lesson that

58. Studien Über Kriegführung, III, 60.

had remained "entirely disregarded." He also concluded that fortifications constructed in peace-time, such as the Danish works at Düppel, had a greater power of resistance than the improvised fortifications of the Civil War, a statement doubtless designed to refute the arguments of those who, like the Frenchman Auger, believed that earthworks were preferable to permanent fortifications both for military and financial reasons. Like Scheibert, Freytag-Loringhoven was impressed by Lee's defensive use of entrenchments, but he shared the opinion prevalent among German theorists that defensive battles alone would not win wars. Modern weapons could "offer much more" in the way of fire power to an attacking force than had been the case in the Wilderness, at Düppel, and even at Plevna (1877). "The tactical lessons of Spottsylvania and Cold Harbour," he concluded, "with the now completely changed range of fire [Feuergrenzen] are no longer of value in particular, but they bring clearly to view the nature of . . . position warfare, and considered in this light the study of these campaigns is not without value, even today."

60. Studien Über Kriegführung, III, 104-105.

61. See below, pp. 276-279.

62. For examples of several points of view on this question, see, General Pierron, Stratégie et grand tactique d'après l'expérience des dernières guerres (Paris, 1892), III, 425-433. Scheibert's views on entrenchments are also summarized here.

His remarks on cavalry further illustrate his belief that, useful as the Civil War might appear in illustrating fundamental principles, it contained no tactical lessons that could be applied directly to twentieth century warfare. Dismounted tactics, like entrenchments, had resulted directly from the nature of the terrain, and while Freytag-Loringhoven recognized the value of fighting on foot under appropriate conditions, he nevertheless maintained "that the lance is and remains the chief weapon" for cavalry. As for the much-publicized raids, Freytag-Loringhoven did not anticipate that they would ever be used on a large scale in Europe. Recognizing the fact that by 1900, armies had grown to such an extent that they were far more dependent upon railroads for supply and hence were far more sensitive in their rear areas than had been the case in 1870, he freely admitted that destruction of a major railroad could be "a real calamity." Nevertheless, given the numbers of cavalry in modern armies, he considered that this arm would do well to fulfill its proper functions of reconnaissance, security and pursuit after battle. Conditions in 1870-1871 had not encouraged the use of cavalry in

64. Ibid., II, 100.
65. Ibid., I, 130.
66. "The cavalry is the only branch of the German army which has not been increased since the Franco-German War ended." Lieutenant-Colonel Exner, "The German Army," in The Armies of Today. A Description of the Armies of the leading nations at the Present Time (London, 1893), pp. 121-122. Cited hereafter as Exner, "The German Army."
strategic raids, and while he admired "Jeb" Stuart as a dashing leader of cavalry, Freytag-Loringhoven never suggested that the Germans imitate his spectacular forays behind enemy lines. 67

Freytag-Loringhoven agreed with earlier German analysts of the Civil War in still another aspect — he distrusted improvised armies. The experience of the Americans appeared to him to illustrate the failure of the militia system. Even the Confederate army, which he regarded as the superior army, had been unable to capitalize upon the rout of the Union forces at Bull Run in 1861. While he admitted that both armies had improved through experience until they were the equal of long-standing armies, this realization did not conceal the fact that the militia and volunteers had not been equal to the emergency of 1861. 68

Freytag-Loringhoven blamed the shortcomings inherent in improvised armies for the lack of a decisive military victory during the Civil War. Even the gifted leadership of Lee, Jackson and Stuart had been unable to compensate for the poor discipline, inadequate staff work, and lack of training of the Civil War armies. In his view, armies composed largely of militia were by their very nature "completely inadequate." 69

68. Ibid., I, 28-32, 51, 59, 130; II, 21-23, 40, 68, 83; III, 58, 101, 106; Krieg und Politik, p. 211.
In reading what Freytag-Loringhoven and his contemporaries had to say about the Civil War, several facts at once become apparent. They generally accepted the tactical deductions of the generation who had analyzed the American campaigns in the 1870's: they tended to minimize the effect of entrenchments and dismounted cavalry tactics, they dismissed the idea of the cavalry raid, and they were convinced of the ineptness of improvised armies. They also tended to credit the developments in tactics to untrained troops and the irregular American terrain, and all agreed that the specific tactical lessons of the Civil War had long been outmoded. At the same time they had come to regard the war in a slightly different light than those who wrote in the wake of the Franco-Prussian war. These later writers showed a greater interest in fundamental principles, and in this sense they still regarded the Civil War as instructive. They were more inclined to regard it as a great industrial and economic struggle, and even as the "first truly modern war" in the sense that material and manpower resources had finally determined the outcome.

It is also evident that those in Germany who studied the Civil War after 1900 either ignored or were unaware of what was


71. This is Freytag-Loringhoven's position, which was fortified by the experience of World War I. Krieg und Politik, pp. 206-216; Deductions from the World War (New York and London, 1918), pp. 15-16; Politik und Kriegführung (Berlin, 1918), pp. 138-141.

being written about the war in other European countries. With one notable exception, these officers did not even mention G. F. R. Henderson's *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War*, although they used the *Official Records* and even occasionally cited an American source like the works of the novelist John Esten Cooke. In his study on Gettysburg, von Golsler consulted Captain Cecil Battine's *Crisis of the Confederacy*, and the works of the Frenchmen DeChenal and the Comte de Paris seem to have been known. But aside from these, most Germans appear to have been dependent upon the writings of Scheibert, von Borcke, Mangold, Sander, and a smattering of American sources. This was no less true of the English, who, despite their intense study of German military literature and their great interest after 1900 in the Civil War, almost never referred to the important works of Scheibert, Jacobi, and Freytag-Loringhoven.

It would be a mistake to assume, however, that the Civil War was studied or was even widely known in the German Army after the 1880's, for this was not the case. The Civil War was not taught at the *Kriegsakademie*, nor was it the subject of study by the Military History Section of the Great General Staff. The campaigns of Frederick the Great, Moltke, and Napoleon remained the favorite topics of study for German officers: these campaigns

73. See below, p. 245.

were exceedingly well documented and many of the battlefields were accessible for staff rides. Indeed, most military texts either gave the Civil War but slight treatment or failed to mention it altogether.75

The most fundamental explanation for this lack of interest in the Civil War on the part of most German soldiers after 1880 is that the Civil War did not seem to contain answers to the vital military questions of the day. No arbitrary date such as 1866 would have discouraged official study of the strategy of the Civil War, even though the tactics of a campaign conducted before the universal introduction of the breechloader were considered out of date. German theorists tended to be more concerned with general principles derived from a study of many wars than with the lessons of any single campaign. Certainly this was Schlieffen's76 attitude and explains both why he had reservations about the value of the experiences of the Russo-Japanese War, and why he still regarded Frederick the Great, Napoleon and Moltke as


76. Count von Schlieffen was the guiding spirit in the German Army from the time he became Chief of the General Staff in 1891 until his death nearly twenty years later.
"models." Since Schlieffen selected Hannibal's victory at Cannae, fought over two thousand years before, as the classic example of his Vernichtungsschlacht, or battle of annihilation, it seems likely that he would not have discounted the lessons of a similar battle fought in 1861-1865 -- had there been one. The battles of the Civil War simply were not suitable garb for his theories.

The Germans did not study the Civil War after the 1880's for precisely the same reason that the English studied it after 1900: each army had its own problems, and each turned to history as a guide for their solution. Much of the English interest in the Civil War was doubtless due to the influence of Henderson, but it can also be explained by the fact that British soldiers were becoming aware that, in the words of General Maurice, their

... military problems are like those of no other country. ... Much as Clausewitz and Foch have to teach us, we find that Clausewitz is thinking exclusively of war upon the Continent, and Foch evidently wrote with his eyes upon the eastern frontier of France. Neither mentions the sea.

Therefore the British were concerned primarily with the relationship of sea power to land warfare, the problems of augmenting a small volunteer army in times of emergency, and the most workable balance between soldier and statesman in a democracy. The over-


riding concern of the Germans, on the other hand, was how best to prepare for a possible war on two fronts against numerically superior forces. Beginning in 1879 (about the same time that German interest in the Civil War was beginning to wane), the General Staff formulated plans each year to meet the growing threat of a two-front war.\(^7^9\) Frederick the Great had at least faced similar problems: the Americans had not.

Whether the so-called principles of strategy were regarded as flexible, to be adapted to local situations,\(^8^0\) or whether such principles found expression in a set plan, such as the famous Schlieffen Plan,\(^8^1\) the German theorists of this period were agreed on two fundamental points. They were convinced that only an of-


\(^8^0\) Prince Kraft, for example, did not believe in "an absolute system of strategy," which he likened to "quack cure-alls." Letters on Strategy, I, 9. Bernhardi was another who believed that the "experience of war can never be applied directly to the future." On War of To-day, II, 98. General Sigismund von Schlichtung was perhaps the most outspoken advocate for flexibility in military thought. Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, p. 136.

\(^8^1\) The essence of the Schlieffen plan, which was crystallized in 1905 and revised periodically after that date, was that France had to be crushed before Russia could attain full strength. Schlieffen hoped to do this by sending the bulk of his forces through Belgium, crushing the French left wing and, by a wide encircling maneuver, pinning the remaining French forces against the pocket formed by the Lorraine fortresses and the Swiss Frontier. Schlieffen counted on the Masurian Lakes and the strategic railway system of East Prussia to help contain the Russian armies until a decision could be reached in the west. See Holborn, "Moltke and Schlieffen," pp. 189-200.
fensive would bring military victory, and they believed in the necessity -- from economic as well as military grounds -- of a short war. In preparing for a war on two fronts, German military leaders looked for some "encouraging precedent" such as the campaigns of Frederick the Great, and in searching history for decisive battles their gaze naturally fell on the victories of Napoleon and Moltke. To obtain such a victory, they concentrated on the study of "the mobilization and strategical concentration of armies," since, as von der Goltz aptly expressed it, "the difference between the great military powers is in these days almost reduced to one of hours." 82

Von der Goltz stated the problem well when he described the distinctive characteristics of modern war as peacetime preparation and training, mobilization, and "a ceaseless and untiring prosecution of the campaign until the organized resistance of the enemy is broken in decisive battles. . . ." 83 And, it is important to note, the Civil War contained no examples in these three essentials that the Germans -- or any other nation, for that matter -- would want to imitate. Having early rejected such tactical lessons as the Civil War might offer, and feeling no need to study the strategy of the American campaigns or the conduct of the war as a whole, the Germans turned elsewhere for guidance. The Civil War, with its naval blockade and the mobilization of industry and

83. Ibid., p. 21.
manpower for an all-out struggle, may have been the first of the modern wars of attrition: after the experiences of the first World War this much seemed obvious. Before 1914, and even as early as 1870, the Germans were aware of this aspect of the Civil War. But they were also dedicated to the idea, and therefore to the strategy, of a short war and a decisive victory. A war of attrition like the American Civil War was precisely what they were hoping to avoid.

This does not mean that the Civil War went unmentioned by German military writers, but whenever it was cited it was usually to fit an isolated battle or campaign to a theory or preconceived idea. Thus we find Lee trying to achieve a Cannae the second day of Gettysburg, and the experience of the Confederates in 1864 cited to demonstrate that an army "which is unable to exchange the defensive for the offensive towards the end of a campaign may in general be given up for lost." General Friedrich von Bernhardi, more than any other important theorist, give lip service to the lessons of the Civil War. Perhaps his theories on the dismounted use of cavalry and the value of the strategic raid were, in part, the outgrowth of his study of the Civil War — certainly Sheridan and Stuart provided admirable documentation for his ideas. But there can be no doubt that Bernhardi, like


85. Von der Goltz, The Conduct of War, p. 64.
many theorists and military writers, also selected those historical events that seemed to bolster his own arguments. For example, Bernhardi was one of the few Germans who still believed that a frontal attack was practicable: Schlieffen and most others maintained that only by envelopment could an attack succeed and the Schlieffen Plan was devised accordingly. As proof of his contention, Bernhardi pointed to the battle of Chattanooga (November 24-25, 1863), where Grant "by a frontal assault successfully pierced the centre of the hostile army. A splendid victory was the result of this ingeniously planned battle."\(^6\) The only trouble with this statement is that this battle was fought under unique conditions and that it was not conducted according to Grant's original plans at all! Grant had intended to attack on both flanks, and it was only after these attacks had been stalled that the Union troops comprising the center of Grant's line stormed the Confederate position "without any orders."\(^7\) Any theory that was influenced by this fluke of a battle rested upon a foundation of sand, and one is reminded of the comment of one of Germany's leading officers, Bronsart von Schellendorff, who had written many years before: "It is well known that military history, when superficially studied, will furnish arguments in

86. On War of To-day, II, 73-74.

support of any theory or opinion." 88

From the standpoint of tactics, it should again be emphasized that even those who had made a special study of the Civil War did not uncover any lessons that were not better taught by the wars of 1866 and 1870-1871: whether these writers were correct or not is beside the point. Furthermore, these writers had all emphasized the unique features of the Civil War -- difficult terrain, distances that were hard to comprehend, improvised armies, and the lack of a General Staff. Therefore they were inclined to dismiss the Civil War campaigns as interesting and perhaps even instructive in a general sense, but too remote and extreme to be of much practical value in the twentieth century. The same reasoning, it may be added, was often applied to the Boer War (1899-1902) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). Bernhardi doubtless spoke for most German soldiers when he wrote in 1911:

General principles of warfare we can certainly gather from the study of long-past events, but when it becomes a question of obtaining practical hints for our own action in strategy and tactics, it is advisable to select campaigns which to some extent are still directly connected with the present, and which therefore give . . . a certain clue as to the future. . . . If, therefore, we wish to study war in this sense to-day, we must not go farther back than 1866. . . . The introduction of the needle gun and Moltke's strategy very distinctly indicate the approach of a new period. In the war of 1870-71 those features appeared already in distinct outline -- and more distinctly than in some of

88. Quoted in Prince Kraft, Letters on Artillery, p. 108.
the more recent wars -- which in all probability will give the
stamp to the next European war. 89

So the tactical innovations of the Civil War also found no
place in the German manuals. The entrenchments constructed by
the Civil War soldiers as a matter of course were employed again
at Plevna in 1877-1878, during the Boer War at the turn of the
century, and in the Russo-Japanese War. Most German military
writers could appreciate the defensive value of entrenchments --
they were not blind -- but as the need for a quick decisive victory
in a war that would probably involve two fronts became apparent,
less was said about the use of entrenchments and fortifications
except as pivot-points for maneuver.

With regard to cavalry tactics, it may be stated that the
Regulations of 1873 show the influence of von Schmidt, who from
his own experience in 1870-1871 had become convinced of the need
for better training in dismounted fighting. But vom Schmidt died
in 1875, and within a few years there was a decided swing back to
shock tactics. An English officer wrote in 1882 that in the Ger-
man cavalry "the idea of shock action is now dominant, and hence
the tendency to discourage all dismounted action, and the intro-
duction of the lance as an offensive weapon." 90 By the end of
the century the lance had become uniform equipment for all German

89. On War of To-day, I, 49-50. Italics mine.

pp. 71-72.
cavalry, and according to one German writer, "its superiority over other weapons when used in pursuit or single combat is generally admitted." With one notable exception, German theorists did not regard the cavalry raid as practicable.

Bernhardi was the exception. An experienced cavalry officer with a wide knowledge of military history, he contradicted his own statement that one should not seek tactical lessons in wars waged before 1866 by referring to the Civil War as "the most interesting and instructive . . . for the service of modern cavalry." Bernhardi thought cavalry should be taught to fight on foot as well as mounted, after the "brilliant examples" of Stuart and Sheridan. He also placed much emphasis upon the strategic raid, arguing that if modern weapons had limited the action of cavalry on the battlefield, the strategical importance of cavalry had been increased. Departing from the official theories embodied in the conservative German Cavalry Regulations, he urged his fellow officers to "be neither dazzled nor spellbound by the glamor of a past which can never be recalled. Let us rather turn our eyes towards the dawn . . . [of] a new era of fresh demands, new resources, and wider spheres of action." But Bernhardi's was


92. Von Scherff stated that such a raid in Europe "is simply an impossibility." Quoted in "Charakteristische momente der Kriegführung im nordamerikanischen Secessionskriege," Jahrbücher, XXXVII, 162. Prince Kraft was also opposed to the cavalry raid. Cf. Letters on Cavalry, pp. 47, 113, 121.

a solitary voice, for by his own admission his views received wider attention abroad than in Germany, where they "remained all but unnoticed until the World War."  

M. Bloch, a Polish banker, has generally been credited with being the first to foresee that modern inventions would revolutionize war, and, curiously enough, it was another civilian who most accurately predicted the warfare of 1914-1918 from studying the Civil War. Karl Bleibtreu, son of a famous painter and a writer by profession, wrote a series of books on war, including *Das Volksheer im amerikanischen Bürgerkrieg.* Appearing the same year (1912) as his *Weltbrand,* "a vision of the next world war," this book portrayed the Civil War as the prototype of the wars of the future.

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95. J. Holland Rose, *The Indecisiveness of Modern War and other Essays* (London, 1927), p. 34. Bloch "pointed out that the effects of artillery and machine guns were so deadly that flesh and blood must evade them by some means, and would probably take to trenches. ..." See also Fuller, *War and Western Civilization,* pp. 161-164; Liddell Hart, *Thoughts on War* (London, 1944), pp. 26, 103; and Hoffman Nickerson, *The Armed Horde 1793-1939: A Study of the Rise, Survival and Decline of the Mass Army* (2nd edition, New York, 1942), pp. 231-236. Bloch's sixth and final volume has been translated into English and published under the title *The Future of War* (New York, 1899). It refers to the Civil War only occasionally, and it is evident that Bloch got his ideas from European sources.


97. Diedrich Diederichsen, "Bleibtreu," *Neu Deutsche Biographie* (Berlin, 1955), II, 298. This series of Schlächtenbüchern began in 1882 with the publication of *Dies irae.*

98. *Vor 50 Jahren,* pp. vii-ix.
Bleibtreu took issue with Freytag-Loringhoven specifically on the latter's view toward improvised armies. He thought it "inexpressibly funny" that a Staff Officer should regard the Civil War as a war of amateurs. "The old lesson that war is the only true Kriegsschule -- a truth which does not ring pleasantly to standing armies -- was manifested also . . . in the War of Secession. . . ." The American armies had "attained the highest grade of martial perfection"; in marching ability and the handling of weapons, as well as in many technical and engineering skills, they were superior to most regular armies of that day. No regular army, Bleibtreu asserted, could have withstood trial any better than Grant's soldiers of 1864, many of whom were comparative new-comers to the ranks.99 Unlike Freytag-Loringhoven, Bleibtreu was familiar with Henderson's Stonewall Jackson -- perhaps his appreciation for the American soldier originally came from this source -- and he shared the opinion of those British officers who interpreted the Civil War as proof that "besides the small professional army the English Volunteers and Territorials would suffice to ward off the strongest invasion." It was "only a question of time" before similar reserves would be required to supplement the regular armies of the Continental Powers as well.100

Not only would the war of the future be fought by armies numbering millions, but modern firepower would force these to

100. Ibid., p. 221.
disperse and entrench in order to survive. "Lee's trenches, running for many miles along the river banks or through the forests, anticipate . . . what can well make its appearance in the war of the future." The Civil War cavalry, "a true model for that arm under present conditions," had also learned to respect firepower. "Exemplary" in reconnaissance and screening, "extremely active" in the attack, the American mounted infantry had been able to fight on foot "without losing the true character of cavalry." Thus the Civil War appeared to foreshadow the character of the next European War. The unprecedented size of the armies, the duration and fierceness of the conflict, and the entrenchments that ran unbroken from the Swiss Alps to the English Channel must have given Bleibtreu moments of grim satisfaction. For according to the events of 1914-1918, he alone among those Germans who had studied the Civil War had learned the important lessons.

101. Ibid., pp. 210-212.
French military leaders reacted sharply to the defeats of 1870-1871. After this convincing proof that an army composed of short-term conscripts and large reserves need not sacrifice quality for quantity, France set about to create a new army, remodeled -- like every other major army in Europe save the British -- "along lines roughly paralleling the German system of compulsory military service,"¹ and schooled in the tactics of the recent battles. In 1872 legislation was passed creating an army based upon obligatory military service, while between 1873 and 1875 further laws were enacted dealing with organization and recruitment.² An intellectual movement within the army accompanied these


2. This legislation is discussed in ibid., pp. 33-45.
changes. In October 1871, less than six months after the signing of the treaty of Frankfort (May 10, 1871), the French War Ministry founded the Revue militaire de l'étranger, soon to become one of the most important of all European military journals.³ The Réunion des Officiers was formed to stimulate professional interest in military affairs, and many noteworthy papers, among them the notes of Ardant du Picq, were published in the Bulletin, the official organ of this society.⁴ The Ecole Militaire Supérieure was established in 1878, becoming the Ecole Supérieure de Guerre in 1880 -- the same year that the General Staff was overhauled. The tactical Regulations of 1875 and 1876, incorporating some of the lessons of 1870 for infantry and cavalry respectively, reflected a new respect for the firepower of modern weapons.⁵

In brief, the disasters of 1870-1871 stimulated nearly every phase of activity in the French Army:

Gone were the days when Ardant du Picq had to abandon the publication of his Studies on War, when Trochu aroused the angry as-

³ D'Esperey, "Du Directoire à 1914," p. 439; Maurice, War, p. 113.


tonishment of the High Command by the publication of some observations on military institutions, or when [General] MacMajon declared: "I shall remove from the promotion list any officer whose name I have read on the cover of a book.

Thanks to a new group of military writers, "the events of recent wars, technical and tactical problems were enthusiastically studied and discussed" both in the Army and without. 6

Most of this activity naturally was dedicated to an examination of the causes of the failures and successes of the late war. French officers refought the battles of 1870, analyzed Moltke's strategy and German tactics, and sought to familiarize themselves with the German philosophy of war. In the 1880's they became acquainted with the writings of Clausewitz; through them they began a re-examination of the Napoleonic Wars. 7 Because of the writings of Vigo Roussillon and DeChenal, most French officers probably had a rudimentary knowledge of the Civil War, yet during the decade following 1870 they were far less active than the Germans in writing about the American campaigns. They might have overlooked it altogether if the first volume of the Comte de Paris' History had not begun to appear, and to attract a large audience.

Publication of this work prompted what was probably the first serious look at the Civil War by a French officer after 1870. P. Poullet, a frequent contributor to Le spectateur militaire, re-


viewed the early volumes of the *History of the Civil War in America* and Edward Lee Childe's *Campaigns of General Lee*. Citing Vigo Roussillon, Lecomte and a Belgian treatise on field fortifications, Poullet used this opportunity to advance some thoughts of his own on the Civil War.

The Minister of War possesses all of the foreign documents relative to the War of Secession; nothing therefore stands in the way of the completion of a work which would be so very useful to the army in calling its attention to the immense progress accomplished by the Americans, especially in improvised fortification; which would destroy numerous legends still in vogue, even within the ranks of the army; and finally which would describe all of the machinery . . . that constitutes the mechanism of an army. Why doesn't the second bureau of the General Staff attempt this task?

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9. Captain Girard, *Fortification appliqué au champ de bataille*. Unfortunately no copy of this work, said to be based upon the experiences of the Civil War, can be located. Brialmont, the famous Belgian engineer who was responsible for the defenses of Antwerp, Liège and Namur, also showed an early interest in this aspect of the Civil War. Appreciating the fact that "at the present day [1872] . . . with the new arms, the defence has the advantage," Brialmont thought it "worthy of remark" that "in the disastrous campaign of 1859, the Austrians made no use of hasty entrenchments," while these had never been used "with greater success . . . than in the last war in America." He even interpreted the wars of 1866 and 1870-1871 as furnishing "a new argument in favor of hasty entrenchments." Alexis Henri Brialmont, *Hasty Entrenchments* (London, 1872), pp. 7, 13-15. However, it may be noted that even though Brialmont gave lip-service to the lessons of the Civil War with respect to entrenchments, he made no mention of Vicksburg, Spottsylvania or Petersburg in his chapter entitled " Instances of Fortified Fields of Battle." He chose instead Allerheim, Fontenoy, Caldeiro and Borodino, none of which had been fought in the last half-century, as his examples. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-65.

Like the Germans, Poullet admired Civil War logistics. He recognized the importance of the revolution in river transportation launched by the steamboat, and the full military value of the railroad. The Americans, he pointed out, had had four years in which to develop their special techniques. He reminded his readers that the Germans, for all their recent successes, were still studying the Civil War railroads in the school of engineers in Berlin.  

Like most European soldiers, Poullet also had a high regard for the quality of American military education. He was particularly struck by the "practical character" of the instruction at West Point, quoting a high-ranking French officer as saying: "The American officers are not instructed more than we, but they are better instructed." This was particularly apparent in the field of military engineering, where the Americans, according to Poullet, "had shown themselves to be our masters."  

Poullet regarded the widespread use of field fortifications and mounted infantry as the most significant tactical developments of the Civil War. He accepted Scheibert's thesis that Lee, in trying to compensate for inferiority in numbers, was largely responsible for introducing trench warfare. To those who maintained that the use of such cover would tend to damage the "natural elan" of the French soldier, Poullet argued that, on the contrary, the use of trenches could enable a general to withhold

11. Ibid., XLI (October-December, 1875), 83-89.
12. Ibid., XL (July-September, 1875), 387-393.
a substantial reserve until the time had arrived to deliver a counter-attack.  

He also thought that much could be learned from studying the American cavalry. Asserting that the French cavalry in 1870 had often been inept both in fighting and reconnaissance, particularly in wooded areas, he emphasized the success of the Civil War cavalry under similar conditions. To those who professed the belief that the importance of cavalry had decreased with the introduction of the quick-firing rifle, Poullet pointed out that whenever Lee had been without his cavalry, he had usually "found himself in the greatest difficulty. . . ." Obviously he had the battle of Gettysburg specifically in mind. Poullet concluded that cavalry in the future would have two primary functions: reconnaissance and independent action against enemy communications and supplies. Because of the repeating rifle, "the arm of the future," the Civil War cavalry had performed both tasks "very well," and Poullet urged the formation in France of cavalry fashioned after the "legendary dragoon" that had been "dreamed of but not realised" until the Civil War. The practical sense of the West Pointers (and, Poullet ought to have added, the emergency of the times) had eliminated all superfluous instruction and parade-ground drill. If the French were willing to do the same, it would be possible to produce what most cavalrymen regarded as a myth -- a dragoon who could fight equally well on foot and on

13. Ibid., XXXIX, 154-155; XL, 412.
horseback, equipped to perform whatever task necessary for the fulfillment of his mission.  

Poullet anticipated Bleibtreu by nearly forty years in regarding the Civil War as the prototype of the war of the future. As the French Revolution had resulted in a people's war, so the Civil War was more than a series of battles between two armies; it was "a formidable duel between two nations," with victory coming only after one of the belligerents had been completely exhausted.

The American War cannot be too closely studied; it is a fertile source, unique not only for the immensity of resources employed and the perseverance displayed by both sides, but also in the new use of cavalry, railroads, and in the progress which the American engineers were able to accomplish in improvised fortification applied to the defense of towns and on the battlefield.

Similar convictions were expressed a few years later by Lieutenant-Colonel Frederic Canonge, who wrote in his well-known survey of the chief military campaigns from 1854 to 1871 that the Civil War was a "fertile mine" of information, "disdained by some, unknown by most," but none the less deserving of study. So he allotted it an appropriate place in his general work, though his treatment was a bit shallow (he paid little attention to the war in the West or to Grant's campaign of 1864-1865) and his

15. Ibid., XL, 416-418.
sources were limited. Canonge thought that because of "the variety and extent of the resources employed . . . the special character of the battles fought; the new employment of cavalry and of railroads . . . [and] of improvised fortifications," the Civil War contained information "which can be neither ignored nor disregarded." Antietam, Fredericksburg and Gettysburg offered "all the striking marks of our modern battles," and because the Civil War had been fought under unique conditions, it afforded a fine opportunity to determine whether the general principles of war would remain valid under all circumstances.

Canonge was not primarily concerned about Civil War tactics: the campaigns of 1866 and 1870-1871 spoke in a more recent voice, and with greater authority. He detected nothing fundamentally new in the tactics of infantry or artillery except for the increasing use of entrenchments, which had enabled one "to render a position impregnable or to compensate for inferior numbers." In this regard Fredericksburg was "certainly one of the most remarkable defensive battles ever fought," for it illustrated the value of preparing the terrain and the impossibility of even good

17. Canonge relied heavily upon Scheibert, particularly in his remarks on field fortifications. He also cited the writings of DeChenal and de Fonvielle and the account of an Hungarian soldier of fortune, Eméric Szabad, "La campagne de Georgie et la fin de la guerre américaine," Revue des deux mondes, 1965, III, 998-1010.


infantry carrying a position thus strengthened. He paid more attention to cavalry, since this arm had been criticized for its actions both in the Crimea and in Italy.

According to Canonge, the Civil War had re-established the reputation of cavalry by illustrating what it could still accomplish in the new era of rapid-fire, precision weapons. He approved of dismounted tactics on occasion, but his preference was for the *arme blanche*. In America, he contended, unique terrain had placed a false premium on the rifle. But Canonge was realist enough to foresee that modern weapons would limit the tactical action of cavalry and he entertained no notions of the thundering cavalry charges of Frederick the Great or Napoleon. He expected cavalry to accomplish more than it had previously in other duties, such as reconnaissance, and because of the ever growing dependence of modern armies upon railroads he believed that the raids of Sheridan and Stuart provided "remarkable models to imitate." Canonge was thus one of the first to sense the possibilities of the strategic cavalry raid in Europe; if he failed to stress the importance of entrenchments and dismounted tactics for cavalry, he at least understood the meaning of firepower. In a day when French official doctrine was reacting against the Regu-


21. Referring to 1870-1871, Canonge wrote: "Every time that cavalry has been thrown against infantry, it has invariably failed." *Ibid.*, II, 488-489.

lations of 1875, which had stressed the effectiveness of rifle-fire, this in itself is a fact of some importance.

Canonge was particularly interested in the Civil War railroads and the railroad Construction Corps, even going so far as to state that the history of the war was to be found in this organization. The war had suggested several major principles for the military use of railroads. First, in defending a railroad it was essential that all important points along the line be fortified and occupied. Second, Canonge recommended the establishment of large, accessible depots of materials for the Construction Corps. Finally, he was convinced that raiding cavalry must destroy long stretches of track, otherwise the line would be no more than temporarily out of commission.

Except for the writings of the Comte de Paris and others who had been in America during the war, the first full-scale French study of the Civil War after 1870 was Ernest Grasset's purely descriptive La guerre de sécession. This work did, however, reflect a growing interest among French military writers in the

23. Colin writers that as the impressions of 1870 faded, "the heroism of military writers showed itself on paper in a firm determination to achieve the impossible. Some in order to obtain a heavier fire, others to provide more forcible shock action, contributed to rehabilitate close order formations. The Transformations of War, p. 42. This movement led to the revised Regulations of 1884, which stressed even closer battle formations and emphasized offensive action, which was held to be more in keeping with the "national temperament" of the French soldier. Thoumas, Les transformations de l'armée française, II, 461-465.

Civil War cavalry. While he made no effort to pass judgment on the merits of mounted infantry, Grasset, like Canonge, was favorably impressed by the American cavalry raids. He even accused the Germans of borrowing this feature from the Americans in 1870, as the Comte de Paris accused them of copying the tactics of Vicksburg in the siege of Paris, though in both instances the connection seems purely fortuitous.

Poullet, Canonge and Grasset were neither as didactic nor as methodical as the German soldiers who wrote on the Civil War in the 1870's. They were less critical of improvised armies, a fact which is probably explained by the popular legends left by the levies raised by Gambetta and Freycinet in 1871, and they were less likely to give automatic priority to the lessons of 1870-1871 than the Germans, particularly with regard to cavalry. (Here it is pertinent to note that General Fuller, in analyzing the French and German regulations of the post-1870 period, saw fit to remark: "The French learnt better than their victors," although both soon forgot the reality of the recent war.) Whereas the Germans unanimously decried the value of the so-called raid, these French writers considered it an important function of modern cavalry. In fact, interest in the Civil War might have


26. Challener states that Gambetta had organized these levies "with the example of Lincoln's armies in mind." *The French Theory of the Nation in Arms*, p. 29. See also *ibid.*, pp. 46-90.

died out altogether in France by the 1880's, as it did in Germany, if those concerned with the future of French cavalry had not found it a useful storehouse of information.

The reasons for this interest in Civil War cavalry are not altogether clear, but the inadequacies of the French cavalry in 1870 certainly provided a strong motive. Still trained according to regulations forty years old, to which had been added a few wrinkles suggested from experiences in Algeria, the French had been inferior to the Prussian cavalry in nearly every respect. Immediately following the war, a commission had been established to improve the French cavalry, a move which resulted in the Regulations of 1876. These regulations were revised every few years to the end of the century, because the fundamental tactical issue remained unsettled. Some maintained that the old-fashioned charge was still practicable, others that the arme blanche would have to yield to the rifle. The Regulations of 1876 prescribed shock tactics as "essential conditions for success," but there were many who believed in the future of dismounted tactics.

28. Denison, History of Cavalry, pp. 402-414. In 1870 the French cavalry, "in spite of its qualities, had acquired neither the moral and material force nor the practical experience of which it was going to have need." Le Commandant Gérôme, Essai historique sur la tactique de la cavalerie (Paris [1895]), p. 301. See also ibid., pp. 284, 296-361, passim.

Colonel Bonie was one of these. He maintained that cavalry was fighting a losing battle and must be able to use dismounted tactics to hold its place on the modern battlefield. "Cavalry that cannot fight on foot as well as on horse," he wrote in 1877, "is backward cavalry, unequal to its mission and fatally dedicated to defeat."  

Bonie did not base this conclusion on the experiences of the Civil War alone, for his study commenced with the Greeks and treated the American campaigns only as one phase in the evolution of cavalry. Still, these campaigns convinced Bonie of the need for further emphasis on dismounted tactics. Long range weapons, he wrote, "are affording infantry, artillery, engineers and even the navy an element of progress, the limit of which it is not possible to foresee. Must cavalry alone among all the arms consequently be overlooked by this evolution and remain content with the power possessed by the horse?"  

This idea was developed in greater detail in an anonymous article on Civil War cavalry raids that appeared in the *Revue militaire de l'étranger* in 1881. The writer was "absolutely convinced that in combat, cavalry acting as cavalry, that is to say on horse, is today without effect against infantry. . . ." Even in instances when cavalry was opposed to cavalry, the revolver  


31. Lecomte's books evidently served as Bonie's basic source of information.  

was certainly a more satisfactory weapon than the saber. As evi-
dence he mentioned the official statistics of the German Medical
Corps: of better than 65,000 Germans killed or wounded in 1870-
1871, the saber had accounted for only 212 wounded and 6 dead.
By contrast, he referred to a brief skirmish in 1864 between two
squadrons of cavalry in which one side alone lost 36 of its 100
effectives, most of the casualties resulting from small arms
fire. Better informed on the details of the Civil War campaigns
than Bonie, this writer concentrated on the tactics of mounted
infantry as applied to raids, particularly in the west. He
noted that the Civil War was the first of the modern wars in which
mounted infantry predominated, and while he did not necessarily
advocate a complete change to mounted infantry in Europe, he
nevertheless was of the opinion that —

33. F., "Les raids aux Etats-Unis," Revue militaire de
l'étranger, number 530 (July 1, 1881), 9-10. The skirmish re-
ferred to cannot be identified, but it might have been one of the
frequent fights in the Shenandoah Valley in the fall of 1864.
Cited hereafter as "Les raids aux Etats-Unis."

34. In addition to the works of Lecomte, the Comte de Paris
and Denison, F. cited such American books as Basil Duke, The His-
tory of Morgan's Cavalry, A. G. Brackett, History of the United
States Cavalry (New York, 1865), and a book entitled The Campaigns
of Forrest, which almost certainly was General Thomas Jordan and
J. P. Pryor, The Campaigns of Lieut.-Gen. N. B. Forrest (New York,
1868).

35. F. distinguished between the Confederate cavalry of Jeb
Stuart, a West Pointer, and the so-called mounted infantry of
Morgan and Forrest, an interpretation that can be traced to Deni-
son's History of Cavalry. He also made a somewhat similar dis-

tinction between Stuart's cavalry and that of Sheridan, which
possibly shows the influence of Scheibert and von Borcke. "Les
raids aux Etats-Unis," pp. 7, 10.
... if it is still impossible to agree with General Sheridan and other distinguished officers of the New World, that "the arme blanche has had its day," it is however necessary ... to issue to all cavalry a revolver along with a long-range carbine ... and to dress the cavalryman in such a fashion that he will be as free in his movements on foot as an infantryman and can at the very least perform the role of infantry when the occasion presents itself to him. ...

And this, he predicted, "will be often, perhaps, in the next war." 36

This article prompted another study of Confederate cavalry in the West, Pierre Lehautcourt's sketch of General Forrest. 37 Lehautcourt also stressed the fact that Forrest's cavalry had generally fought dismounted, and had preferred the revolver to the saber even when mounted, but he was less favorably impressed by these tactics than either Bonie or the anonymous contributor to the Revue militaire. Mounted infantry, he explained, was the natural offspring of rough terrain and improvised cavalry consisting of men who already knew how to ride and shoot. He regarded the tactical principles applied by Forrest as debatable:

The frequent use of dismounted fighting, the suppression of the arme blanche are today considered as heresies, doubtless with good reason. ... Raids such as the Americans put into practice would be difficult to execute in ... western Europe, where our cavalry will in all probability be called upon to operate in the future. 38

36. Ibid., p. 11.


Lehautcourt admired Forrest as a leader of cavalry, but he was no proponent of the mounted infantry doctrine.

Another who became interested in Civil War cavalry was General Jules Louis Lewal, chief of the historical-statistical bureau, the organizer of the Ecole Militaire Supérieure, and "one of the most brilliant staff officers in the French army. . . ." His Etudes de guerre had replaced the works of Jomini, except that Lewal was more concerned with the practical problems of modern war and was less of a systematizer than the famous Swiss pundit. Lewal, too, distinguished between Stuart's cavalry and the mounted infantry of Morgan and Forrest; he also admitted that the saber, a "cumbersome instrument," had been used only sparingly, and he believed that most Civil War cavalry had been mounted infantry, or to be more precise, "infantry mounted on horseback."

"The cream [of the cavalry] would remain on their mounts, ready to act as scouts or to charge as cavalry. The others, the great majority, would dismount and immediately deploy in infantry formations. . . ." Lewal's views on dismounted tactics resembled those of von Schmidt: he favored dismounted fighting whenever it was necessary for the fulfillment of a mission. As for the


42. Tactique des renseignements, II, 107.
raids, Lewal remarked that they had not originated in the Civil War but had in fact "existed previously and have been recommended by several military writers." He himself was lukewarm about them, feeling that the results attained were often purchased at too great a loss in horseflesh.43

Lewal's comments, like those of Canonge, were fragmentary and uneven. His distinctions between the composition and tactics of cavalry under Stuart and Sheridan on the one hand, and of Morgan and Forrest on the other, were not historically sound, and his claim that Stuart's cavalry was more capable of undertaking a raid than the "irregulars" in the west44 proves only that his knowledge of the operations in that theater was negligible. Since his interest in the Civil War was largely restricted to matters relating to cavalry, about all that Lewal's writings indicate is that the cavalry question was still a live issue in the French Army twenty years after the defeats of 1870, and that the Civil War was still regarded by some officers as instructive in at least one area.

Major Picard, another prominent and prolific military theorist, leaned more upon the Civil War campaigns than Lewal, though his knowledge of the war seems nearly as limited.45 Picard

43. Strategie de combat, II, 73.
44. Tactique des renseignement, II, 166, 169.
45. Picard cited as his sources the articles of de Fonvielle and the Prince de Joinville, a sterile review article by Captain E. D., entitled "La guerre d'amérique," (Journal des sciences militaires, XIII (1876), 57-94; XVI (1877), 269-292), Szabad's
at least understood the accomplishments of the American armies, the unique problems of logistics and their effect upon strategy, the ingenuity and energy of the American people, and the technical services that had exploited the military possibilities of the railroad and telegraph. Like Canonge, Picard cited Fredericksburg as "an example of the judicious use of fortification on the defensive," and, like most European officers, he criticized the Americans for their lack of anything resembling a General Staff. He regarded the Civil War as the best proof of the need for a nation to maintain an adequate standing army.  

As a professor at the cavalry school in Saumur, Picard, too, was concerned most of all with matters relating to cavalry. At first he had reservations about the American hybrid, believing, like Lehautcourt, that since cavalry was the most difficult of all arms to improvise, it was natural for the Americans -- particularly those in the North -- to resort to dismounted tactics. He also recognized, as had La Frustron and the Comte de Paris, that the regular army cavalry had consisted mostly of dragoons and light cavalry. Given this background and the "special conditions" that pertained in America, it was little wonder that the Civil War cavalry preferred dismounted tactics to the arme blanche.  


Picard did not disapprove of mounted infantry, but he thought that its importance had been overrated and that, with the conditions then prevailing in Europe, it "would be reduced to nothing. . . ." This was not necessarily true of the raid, which Picard thought could have succeeded in 1870 and might still be used on occasion even in Europe. But in the 1880's, Picard was not one of those "enthusiastic partisans" who advocated the suppression of cavalry in favor of mounted infantry.48 These views, and indeed the views of most French analysts of Civil War cavalry tactics, did not differ greatly from official doctrine. Though the cavalry Regulations of 1882 were revised again in 1899 "because of the progress realized in the construction of firearms," to place greater emphasis upon dismounted tactics, still the arme blanche was considered to be "the principle mode of action."49

But the Boer War caused many to change their views, and Picard's later writings on cavalry reflect the lessons of this war.50 In particulars he was prone to carry over his original


50. According to an English war correspondent, "the cavalryman in South Africa has been deprived of much of the brilliancy and picturesqueness which were invariably his on previous battle-grounds. He has not been able to rejoice in the tumult of the charge, to over-ride in close-knit masses the opposing squadrons of his enemy, to thunder with loose rein and bloody spur upon disorganised and shaken infantry, nor to descend like a thunder-bolt upon his foemans's guns, and sweep triumphantly through disordered ranks. The only part of the recognised duty of the
views, but his overall interpretation had changed. Picard now asserted that the mounted infantry of 1861-1865 should be considered cavalry because it had fulfilled all of the functions expected of cavalry proper. While admitting that the Americans had shown a decided preference for "le combat à pied," he pointed out that this applied usually "under circumstances... which are planned by our regulations for the use of dismounted fighting." The Civil War cavalry could also fight mounted, but with the revolver rather than saber, when the occasion demanded, and it was thoroughly capable of making long, rapid marches and of performing all of the duties required in reconnaissance and security.

This new view was not merely an exercise in semantics, for it signified that the "special conditions" of the Civil War were no longer universally regarded as unique. The more recent experience of the British in South Africa suggested to Picard and

horseman which has fallen to his lot has been... reconnaissance... the extended patrol... and the swift and hazardous flank movements... On the battle-field itself he has ordinarily fought on foot... We began to perceive that the mounted rifleman of the veldt, simple farmer though he might be, was in reality a formidable enemy, and that he could be met and defeated only by troops able to move with equal rapidity [and] to fire with equal accuracy..." Charles Sydney Goldmann, With General French and the Cavalry in South Africa (London, 1903), pp. viii-ix.

51. Picard's statement that the Northern Volunteers modeled themselves after the pre-war cavalry and showed a natural preference for dismounted action is a typical example. Cf. Commandant Picard, "Cavalerie ou infanterie montée, Journal des sciences militaires, IX (March, 1901), 425.

52. Ibid., p. 426; X (April, 1901), 118-119,125.
others that the mounted infantry of the Civil War might be the parent rather than a distant cousin of modern cavalry. Picard still retained his faith in shock tactics, although he was willing to grant priority to the rifle and machine gun. But the trend of his thought was that cavalry was in an evolutionary stage, headed in the direction of greater fire-power, employment "in large masses and . . . emancipation for independent operations."

One of the best books on the Civil War to appear in Europe before 1914 grew out of this French interest in Civil War cavalry. In his Les procédés d'exploration de l'armée de Nord Virginie, written in 1900, Captain Thomasson deplored the fact that most French soldiers had given a picturesque treatment of the American cavalry without organizing their material to present lessons applicable in Europe. He attempted to measure the French cavalry Regulations of 1895 and 1899 against the methods and accomplishments of Jeb Stuart. Thomasson selected the Civil War because he believed it to be the forerunner of the next European war; he limited his study to the eastern theater because it most nearly re-

53. This is the burden of Picard, L'armement de la cavalerie, as summarized in The Cavalry Journal, I (January, 1906), 80-81.

54. "Cavalerie ou infanterie montée," X, 118. Picard now believed in the practicality of the cavalry raid, which he stated "could have the greatest influence" on the result of a campaign. Ibid., IX, 427.

55. Capitaine de Thomasson, Les procédés d'exploration de l'armée de Nord Virginie dans la guerre de sécession américaine (Paris, 1901), pp. 3-4. This work originally appeared under the same title in the Revue de cavalerie, XXXI (April, 1900), 81-96, 145-177. All citations refer to the published volume.
sembled the terrain in western Europe, and he studied Stuart because that officer had performed for Lee "almost exactly what a commander-in-chief would demand of his cavalry in a European war." He concentrated upon four episodes: Stuart's raid around McClellan's army in June 1862, his reconnaissance against Pope in August, his raid in Pennsylvania after the battle of Antietam and his controversial movements during the Gettysburg campaign. This was a fresh approach, and because Thomasson was the first French military writer to dip into the Official Records his study far surpassed in thoroughness, originality and historical merit the writings of the majority of French officers before him.

Thomasson's analysis of the tactics of Stuart's cavalry did not differ substantially from the accepted interpretation, although he attributed to Stuart the same technique that Lehautcourt and others had associated with Forrest and Morgan -- a combination of dismounted tactics and shock action, with skirmishers being used to pin down an enemy force while mounted cavalry charged on one or both of the flanks. He approved such tactics, although he was willing to concede that the arguments against mounted in-

56. Ibid., pp. 4-5.

57. Thomasson also cited the works of von Borckë and the Comte de Paris.

fantry "are assuredly serious." Thomasson admitted that it was impractical to think that cavalry could be trained to compete with infantry as marksmen. This was not necessary. The most that could be expected of cavalry was that it force infantry to deploy and reveal its position. Special marksmanship was not essential to succeed in this task. The French were "still haunted ... by the exploits of the Napoleonic cavalry," and Thomasson suggested that the theory of the decisive and thundering charge of bygone days "is perhaps a little oversimplified, and has scarcely been sanctioned by the experience of the wars of the nineteenth century, in Europe as well as in America." 59

But Thomasson was not so much interested in the tactics of Stuart's cavalry as in the application of these tactics in the performance of other duties, especially reconnaissance. He noted that Stuart had rarely allowed himself to be distracted by enemy cavalry when information was his main goal, and that he had used dismounted tactics in order to develop the position of the enemy infantry. In Thomasson's view this made better sense than the French regulations, which stressed defeating the enemy cavalry before making contact with his army. To do this, he asserted, it would probably be necessary to resort to cuirassiers and lancers, which in itself would defeat the purpose of the reconnaissance force and would tend to divert the cavalry from fulfilling its

59. Les procédés d'exploration, pp. 66 n., 86, 89-90.
Thomasson's book was followed by an anonymous study entitled *La cavalerie américaine dans le guerre de la sécession*. This book is what the title implies -- a general study of the Civil War cavalry. It was based on half a dozen or so standard French sources, and included the major cavalry operations in both the western and eastern theaters. This writer contributed little that was new to the interpretation of Civil War cavalry, except that he did not detect any fundamental differences in the tactics of the two armies. He regarded Union and Confederate cavalry alike as the direct forerunner of the mounted infantry the British were employing in the Transvaal. But he had reservations about the

60. Ibid., pp. 77-94, passim.


63. Ibid., pp. 12-13, 41. Like Thomasson, this writer was impressed by the way in which the American cavalry had used cover in delaying the advance of enemy infantry, and he agreed with Thomasson that the first duty of cavalry was to locate and report on the enemy's main army rather than to seek out and destroy his cavalry. (Ibid., pp. 77, 99.) Like most French writers, he, too, thought that raids had succeeded in America, although he had doubts about their usefulness in Europe. He regarded the Civil War cavalry as superior to the French and German cavalry in 1870. (Ibid., pp. 2-3, 21, 36-45, 92-93, 123.)
value of such cavalry in Europe, and urged the adoption of no specific tactic or maneuver. "Let us keep our tactical science," he suggested, "and take the spirit of adventure and of initiative and the tenacity of the Americans." 64

These were by no means the only French military writers to take an interest in the Civil War cavalry. This subject was occasionally mentioned in lectures at the Ecole Superieure de Guerre, 65 and was discussed in other general works on cavalry. 66

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64. Ibid., p. 123.

65. Thomasson refers to a lecture given by Commandant Dubois at the Ecole Superieure de Guerre which concerned American cavalry operations. Les procedés d'exploration, p. 14. A United States Government publication on the battle of Brices Cross Roads mentions that Marshal Foch made this battle the subject of a lecture at the "general staff college" of France. United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield Site, Mississippi (Chicago, March, 1946). Although Foch ignored the Civil War in his theoretical writings, he may have delivered such a lecture. Forrest's successful tactics at Brices Cross Roads, "namely, the fierce onslaught from the front, with a charge upon both flanks and in the enemy's rear," corresponds to Foch's conception of the role of cavalry in battle. He spoke of modern battle being decided by squadrons of cavalry suddenly appearing "out of a cloud of dust or of smoke, on the flank or in the rear of the position." Cf. Wyeth, Life of Forrest, pp. 416-417; Marshal Foch, The Principles of War (London, 1918), pp. 348-349. This is, of course, mere speculation and is mentioned only because of the interest other French officers have shown in Forrest.

66. One writer who has not been discussed is Lieutenant-Colonel Gérôme, who devoted a separate chapter to the Civil War in his Essai historique sur la tactique de la cavalerie. Gérôme seems to have been most influenced by Scheibert, whom he quoted frequently. According to Gérôme (and Scheibert), the Confederates preferred shock tactics and fought on foot only in the presence of entrenched infantry, while the Union cavalry fought dismounted whenever possible and succeeded largely because of overwhelming numbers. Ibid., pp. 233-252, passim.
All of these writings suggest several interesting conclusions. The first is that the French were most concerned with the tactical and operational side of the American cavalry. They appeared genuinely interested in learning something from the Civil War, especially in matters pertaining to reconnaissance, where the French cavalry had been weakest in 1870. This was in contrast to the men who had written before 1870. Secure in the belief that their army was the finest fighting machine in the world, they had been interested chiefly in the organization and equipment of the American armies. The second is that there was no "party line" in the French interpretation of Civil War cavalry operations. Bonie emphasized the importance of dismounted tactics; Lehautcourt virtually repudiated the mounted infantry doctrine in his study of Forrest. Lewal regarded the bulk of American cavalry as "infantry on horseback," whereas Picard decided that the term "mounted infantry" was misleading. Thomasson recommended the application of specific principles in reconnaissance; the author of *La cavalerie américaine* was satisfied with the "tactical science" of the French cavalry. Some asserted that there was a fundamental difference in the tactics and organization of Stuart's cavalry and that of Morgan and Forrest; others professed to see a similar variance between Confederate and Union cavalry, while Thomasson claimed that they were all mounted infantry. These varying interpretations indicate that the French were not at all certain

how cavalry ought to be used, and that those who turned to the Civil War had done so in the hope of discovering some clues to the problem.

These differences also illustrate some of the practical difficulties involved in studying the Civil War from Europe. The sources that most of these writers used were usually very limited; only one, Thomasson, gives evidence of having actually used the Official Records. Moreover, there was a battle to suit every theorist; by selecting unrelated incidents it was possible to arrive at almost any conclusion.

Possibly the views of Thomasson, Picard and others of that school had some slight influence upon official doctrine, although the cavalryman's nightmare of being converted to mounted infantry prevailed in France as elsewhere. 68 The Regulations of 1904 did place a greater emphasis on firepower than earlier regulations, 69 but shock tactics remained the preferred mode of fighting. Most French cavalrmen after 1900 probably believed in a combination of the two: shock tactics whenever practicable, dismounted tactics whenever necessary. They differed over what was considered "practicable" for the arme blanche, and here Thomasson was in the minority. Looking back after the first World War, he was still critical of the French cavalry that had gone to war in


1914 dominated by "senseless ideas ... relative to its use."  

Aside from the question of cavalry, the French showed no general interest in the Civil War. For practical lessons they studied the war of 1870-1871; for fundamental principles they felt they could do no better than to study the campaigns of the national hero, Napoleon. As Major Colin explained:

Napoleon lays down the principles and shows us the models of modern war; in the war to come we shall assuredly have new weapons, larger masses, more efficient means of transport; it will not be possible to apply the procedure of Napoleonic war without modification. . . . Nevertheless . . . it will still be in the Napoleonic war that . . . [we] will find the models that should inspire, the subjects that should be meditated, and the ideas that should be applied in the 20th century. There are operations more recent than Napoleon's, but they were executed under conditions very remote from those in which we shall find ourselves in a future European war. . . .

French military thought prior to 1914 was dominated by what Thomasson described as "the passionate cult of the offensive."  
The Regulations of 1895 stated: "Only the offensive permits the obtaining of decisive results. The passive defense is doomed to certain defeat; it is to be rejected absolutely."  
Ferdinand Foch, "the most important and influential figure in molding the intellectual outlook of the French officer before the first World War," was even more emphatic: "... the offensive form alone,

72. Thomasson, Le revers de 1914, p. 47.  
73. Quoted in Irvine, "The French Discovery of Clausewitz," p. 35.
be it resorted to at once or only after the defensive, can lead to results, and must therefore always be adopted. . . ." 74 This doctrine was carried to extremes by Colonel Grandmaison and the so-called "Young Turks," who announced:

The French army, returning to its traditions, no longer knows any other law than the offensive. . . . All attacks are to be pushed to the extreme . . . to charge the enemy with the bayonet in order to destroy him. . . . This result can only be obtained at the price of bloody sacrifice. Any other conception ought to be rejected as contrary to the very nature of war. 75

Manifestly the Civil War, noted for battles that were both bloody and indecisive, did not fit into this theory any more than it suited Schlieffen's envelopment theories. Perhaps for this reason, certainly because of the emphasis upon the wars of Napoleon and Moltke, the Civil War was all but ignored in French military writings of the period. Colin is a typical example: a studious soldier with a broad background in military history, he devoted exactly three pages to the Civil War in his study of the evolution of war in the nineteenth century, and here he was primarily interested in the cavalry. 76 Only one French writer swam


75. Quoted in ibid., p. 137. For further confirmation see Challener, The French Theory of the Nation in Arms, pp. 81-82; Thomasson, Le revers de 1914, pp. 46-56; and Fuller, War and Western Civilization, pp. 151-164, passim.

76. The Transformations of War, pp. 136-137, 163.
against the current. He wrote an important book in the process. That writer was Captain L. Auger of the Engineers, whose *La guerre de sécession* was published in 1895. The title is somewhat misleading, for the greater portion of this book is devoted to an analysis of the organization, strategy and tactics of the American armies, with emphasis upon the role of entrenchments in the Civil War. Auger's comments on army organization and administration can be dismissed with the observation that he believed that the French could still profit from studying these subjects.  

As for strategy, he did not think that there was much to be gained from studying the American campaigns except in the use of railroads for military purposes. But on the subject of tactics Auger made a major -- though wholly unappreciated -- contribution to Civil War historiography. He was not only aware of the importance of entrenchments; he was among the first to understand the reasons for their importance.

Auger regarded the evolution of entrenchments as typical of Civil War tactics in general, "an affair of circumstances, experience and improvisation." Although he apparently accepted Scheibert's division of Civil War tactics into three phases -- column tactics (1861), linear tactics (1862-1863), and the tactical defensive (1863-1865) -- Auger did not credit Lee with initiating


78. Ibid., pp. 134-135.
the use of entrenchments on a large scale. His description of the Confederate works at Manassas in 1861 and on the Peninsula the following year, and his account of the battles in the west demonstrate the artificiality of Scheibert's organization. 79

Auger found several reasons for the development of entrenchments in the Civil War. He noted that the emphasis at West Point favored the artillery and engineers, that volunteers tended to resort to cover, and that rough terrain naturally encouraged defensive battles. But he did not permit these "exceptional conditions" to obscure the fact that this development was above all due to the increased rate of fire of modern weapons. The breech-loader had "profoundly modified the conditions of combat," and Auger predicted that "in order to withstand this fire, the density of which has increased more than tenfold [since the Civil War], the legendary charges . . . of former wars must yield to other means; there are two, no more: dispersed order and . . . protection. . . ." The facts of modern firepower, Auger insisted, made the defensive "the true mode of combat of the future," indeed, "the only one possible in the presence of the probable hetatomb of future war." Such a war would surely "approximate to a certain extent the battles fought before Richmond, and . . . the attack, instead of placing all confidence in numbers and élan,

79. Ibid., pp. 142, 173-188, 199-203.
80. Ibid., pp. 156-159.
will have to proceed with slowness, to gain ground gradually, and to consolidate each step."^{31}

The French infantry Regulations for 1895 provide a sharp contrast:

As soon as the battalion has arrived within 400 metres of the enemy, bayonets are fixed, and individual fire . . . of the greatest intensity delivered. The portions of the reserve that are available are advanced. . . . The battalion in second line, in the meantime, gradually advances closer. The advance is made by successive rushes followed by a quick fire of short duration. The fighting line reinforced by the reserves . . . gradually reaches to within 150 or 200 metres of the enemy. At this distance magazine fire is commenced, and all available reserves . . . close up for the assault. At a signal from the Colonel the drums beat, the bugles sound the advance, and the entire line charges forward with cries of "en avant, à la baïonette."^{82}

Auger held that this was all nonsense. Skilled use of entrenchments had enabled Lee to ward off repeated attacks by Grant's numerically superior army, and Auger maintained that they could serve a similar purpose in France in event of war with Germany. Earthworks held up well and were cheaper than permanent fortifications, and in the war that Auger envisaged, "a duel of nations rather than armies," entrenchments were bound to be a determining factor.^{83} Nor would the use of entrenchments rob the French soldier of his dash, for they could actually be used for offensive purposes. Sherman's troops at New Hope Church (May 25, 1864) had

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81. Ibid., pp. 146, 238-240.

82. Quoted in Fuller, War and Western Civilization, pp. 152-153.

83. La guerre de sécession, pp. 148, 247-248.
moved from behind breastworks to deliver a determined attack and had taken refuge behind these same lines after the attack had failed. Similar examples could be taken from Grant's battles in Virginia.84

Auger was not a prophet by trade; he was a French army officer. He was clearly out of step with official doctrine and accepted military theory, consequently his book never received the attention it deserved, in France or elsewhere. Yet it is one of the most remarkable books ever written about the Civil War, remarkable not only for its insight, but also because it was written at a time and place when such ideas were considered heresy. Even the post-1918 students of the Civil War did not state their case any better than Auger. According to Liddell Hart, if Foch "had examined the American Civil War he would have seen clear evidence of the growing power of defense over attack, and renewed evidence that fighting was not the only means to victory."85 Auger's book proves at least that it was possible to see this "evidence" before it was made conspicuous by the first World War.

One other book deserves brief mention, not so much for what it states as for the subject treated. Shortly before the outbreak of war in 1914, Captain Boucherie, an officer on the General Staff, prepared a study entitled Les rapports du haut commandement et du

84. Ibid., pp. 145, 239.
85. Liddell Hart, Foch, p. 31.
pouvoir civil dans un démocratie, dealing with the relationship between McClellan and Lincoln in 1862, and Lincoln and Grant in 1864-1865. As an historical work, Boucherie's book is superficial, and he arrived at no particular conclusions about the general problem of military-political relations. But he did understand that this had been, and doubtless would continue to be, a major problem in a democracy at war, and he sensed the value of studying this aspect of the Civil War.

"The North has given us a lesson. The South has left us an example."

86. Commandant M. Boucherie, Les rapports du haut commandement et du pouvoir civil dans une démocratie (Paris, 1915). This work originally appeared as a series of articles under the same title in Le spectateur militaire, XCIV (January-March, 1914), 372-400, 442-461; XCI (April-June, 1914), 59-80, 151-160, 230-240, 298-320, 374-400, 460-478; XCVI (July-September, 1914), 64-80. Boucherie was a captain when these articles were published.

87. Boucherie decided that McClellan had failed in 1862 because he had lacked the confidence of the Administration, and that Grant had succeeded because he enjoyed the trust and support of the Government. Ibid., pp. 81-181, passim.

88. Ibid., p. 182.
Chapter X

G. F. R. HENDERSON AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Prussia's convincing victory over France in 1870 captured the attention of military men throughout Europe, and nowhere more so than in England. To some extent the Cardwell Reforms of 1870-1872 reflected the German influence; short service, army maneuvers, and some features of the German General Staff system were adapted to suit English needs. The Prussian Pickelhaube even replaced the French képi as regulation headdress in most British regiments — another illustration of this "new look" in military thinking.¹ For a generation after 1871 British officers concentrated upon the German campaigns and methodically studied German military methods. English military literature stressed questions of tactical interest, and tended for the most part to

disregard campaigns conducted before 1866 "on the broad assumption that you can't draw any deductions from what occurred before the introduction of the breech-loader." 2

After the departure of Chesney, students at the Staff College were fed a regular diet of Moltke and his campaigns. The instructor in military history there in the 1880's was Lieutenant-Colonel Lonsdale Hale, a pedant who lacked both Hamley's ability to organize material and Chesney's stimulating and scholarly approach. Hale was not interested in the Civil War, but according to General Fuller, he had "so minutely studied" the campaigns of the Franco-Prussian War that "at any moment, he could inform an inquirer of the exact position of all the German and French units down to companies at any given time in any battle. . . ." 3 Neither of the official text books, Clery's *Minor Tactics* and Home's *Précis of Modern Tactics*, included much about the Civil War, 4 and practically no attention was paid to the American campaigns in the military journals. The Prussian triumph had been so convincing that the English ceased to study the Civil War for nearly a generation.


The inevitable reaction which set in against this exaggerated study of everything German was based on the feeling that other wars might offer more valuable lessons to a colonial power. Germany, these new voices argued, was a land power dependent upon a conscript army for protection, while Britain's first line of defense was still the Royal Navy, her small volunteer army having the double responsibility for home defense and policing the Empire. Colonel Frederick Maurice, a prominent military writer, was one of those who by 1890 had begun to look beyond the period of the German wars, pointing to lessons "which have in no wise been diminished in value by the changes which have come over the face of war." Lord Wolseley, who always wrote with the problems of England uppermost in his mind, now strongly advised his officers to "copy the Germans as regards work and leave their clothes and their methods alone." This was the background for a small volume entitled The Campaign of Fredericksburg, published by an anonymous "Line Officer" in 1886.

To the average reader this book was probably just another campaign history, better written than most tactical studies but


6. Maurice and Arthur, Wolseley, p. 222. Wolseley wrote these words in 1886. Miller T. Maguire, a popular military writer, was another who wanted to relegate the German campaigns to their proper position "as an interesting and very important incident of the past ... but not more instructive ... than the campaigns of ... Jackson and Lee. ..." "Our Art of War as Made in Germany," United Service Magazine, XIII (May-June, 1898), 128.
otherwise no different from many similar volumes in the regimental library. But to those concerned with the education of the British officer this book had a strong appeal. Written with intelligence and unusual insight and loaded with thoughtful observations on the military significance of the subject, it represented a skillful blending of personal knowledge of the terrain, careful study of the published sources, and a lively and readable style. Colonel (later Sir Frederick) Maurice, then professor of Military Art and History at the Staff College, reviewed the book enthusiastically, and, recalling that Wolseley, at that time Adjutant-General, had once visited the Confederate Army, he forwarded his copy to Wolseley. Wolseley read it, liked it, and made inquiries about the identity of the author. Wolseley was charged with the military education of British officers and could use an able instructor. 7

"Line Officer" proved to be Captain G. F. R. Henderson, York and Lancaster Regiment. Henderson, then thirty-two years of age, had at one time attended Oxford University on a History scholarship before entering the army in 1877. In 1882 he had distinguished himself by rushing an enemy redoubt at Tel-el-Kebir. Assigned to garrison duty in Bermuda the following year, Henderson had subsequently been transferred to Halifax, where he had spent his leave tramping over many of the battlefields in Virginia and

Maryland. Upon returning to England he had applied for and re¬ceived assignment to the Ordnance Department in order to have sufficient time and income to continue his study of the Civil War. Henderson so impressed Wolseley that he was appointed to the faculty of the Cadet School at Sandhurst. An elaborate tactical study of the battle of Spicheren, published in 1891, led to another advancement and in the following year Henderson was appointed Maurice's successor at the Staff College. Rarely has publication led to such rapid promotion, even in academic circles.

Henderson rapidly became an outstanding member of the new generation of military writers in the closing years of the nineteenth century. These writers took great pride in the accomplishments of the British Army, made new studies of its past campaigns and showed a growing concern over contemporary military problems.


9. England at this time was "peculiarly sensitive to the dangers of a foreign invasion and British soldiers, not caring to place absolute trust upon the fleet to ward off a sudden enemy attack, were forced to agitate for increased preparedness both at home and in the colonies. The Navy, too, had grown alarmed and in 1889 a Naval Defense Act was passed to provide for a substantial increase in the fleet. Marder, The Anatomy of British Sea Power, pp. 66 ff., Hirst, The Six Panics, pp. 41-58."
These were the years when Sir Charles Dilke and Spenser Wilkinson were writing their disturbing books about problems related to colonial defense, and when scholars such as Sir Charles Oman, Sir John Fortescue and Sir Charles Firth were beginning to re-examine many episodes in the history of the British Army. With the exception of Dilke, all of these men were born in the same decade as Henderson, whose book thus appeared on the eve of what was to become a Renaissance in British military thought.

Henderson had written *The Campaign of Fredericksburg* for officers of the English Volunteers. This organization, a sickly child of the Invasion scare in 1859, had been assigned an important role in existing plans for home defense. Unfortunately the Volunteer regiments varied considerably in training and quality, and "there was very little machinery" whereby they could be swiftly mobilized in event of war. Germany owed her success in 1870 "to the sound practical and theoretical training of her officers, and to the want of such training the disasters of the American armies were mainly due." Henderson did not want this lesson to be forgotten. Aware that they might well be pitted against a

10. Spenser Wilkinson, a young journalist who was making a name for himself as an authority on military subjects, was also agitating for a new look at the lessons of the Civil War. *War and Policy* (New York, 1900), pp. 3-58; "Introduction," to W. Birkbeck Wood and Major J. E. Edmonds, *A History of the Civil War in the United States, 1861-65* (New York, 1905).


Continental army superior both in manpower and in training, Henderson intended his book to serve as a tactical text for Volunteer officers. He believed that a sound knowledge of military history was the best substitute for actual battle experience, and he was satisfied that if Volunteer officers would study past campaigns with intelligence they would find themselves "instinctively doing the right thing." The battle of Fredericksburg was particularly good for this purpose, since both armies had been composed almost entirely of volunteers. "The lessons it teaches, the shortcomings it reveals, are likely, therefore, to be of exceptional interest and value to that class of officers to whose consideration I venture to recommend them." 

But unlike many officers who had studied the Prussian campaigns in elaborate detail, Henderson did not expect his study to yield very specific military lessons. While he frequently mentioned the "lessons" to be derived from the Civil War, he actually used this word more to mean illustration of general principles. For example, one of the "lessons" which this thoughtful English soldier tried to communicate in his account of Fredericksburg was his concept of the role of the officer in modern battle. Contemporary observers, it will be recalled, had noted that Civil War battles had tended to escape the effective control of the commanding general. Henderson also recognized this trend, and

13. Ibid., p. 126.
he emphasized the point that at Fredericksburg, Lee, having brought his troops to the selected positions, first notified his lieutenants of his general plan "and then gave frankly into their hands the conduct of the fight." Henderson concluded:

The lesson should be impressed upon all officers who may have the direction of any military operation. . . . Let your plan be as simple as possible . . . and, if your subordinates are qualified to command, leave them to themselves, and beware of unnecessary interference. Be determined at the same time . . . to enforce prompt cooperation towards the end in view.  

Henderson was also impressed by the increased importance of entrenchments. He believed that Fredericksburg furnished "another proof that good infantry, sufficiently covered . . . is, if unshaken by artillery and attacked in front alone, absolutely invincible." He recommended a well-directed fire by volleys as the best defense against frontal attacks, and he considered an attack against the enemy flank or rear as the most likely way to take fortified positions. These views harmonized with official British doctrine, for, in the years immediately preceding the Boer War, volley-firing was the "backbone of all musketry training."  

Though Henderson presented his book as an amplification of the chapters on Fredericksburg in Chesney's Campaigns in Virginia, it was, in fact, much more than that. It was the first serious British study of a Civil War campaign since 1871, a thorough synthesis of the facts enriched by an extensive knowledge of military


history and a close study of the battlefield. As such, it threw "a new and brilliant light on the importance of strategy, which came as a revelation to many a professional soldier."\(^1\) Still, The Campaign of Fredericksburg was essentially a study in tactics, for Henderson did not highlight strategy in this book as he did in his later writings, principally his Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War.

Henderson's occasional articles after his appointment to Sandhurst show both his increasing interest in the Civil War and a growing conviction that the "lessons" of the Franco-Prussian war had been grossly overrated. He still made periodic trips to the battlefields of 1870 with groups of British officers,\(^2\) but after the publication of his study of Spicheren in 1891,\(^3\) he became increasingly absorbed in the study of the Civil War campaigns. In the same year that Spicheren appeared, he wrote that despite the absolute ignorance of war and its requirements which existed amongst the mass of combatants, despite the lack of experience, the tactics of the American troops, at a very early period, were superior to those of the Prussians in 1866. . . . The success with which from the very first the cavalry was employed on the outpost line puts to shame the inactivity of the Prussian horsemen in Bohemia; and, whilst the tactics of the

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18. "I go off to-morrow to Germany with a class of officers to visit the battlefields of 1870, and shall be away a fortnight." G. F. R. Henderson to Jed Hotchkiss, May 9, 1895. Hotchkiss Papers.

Prussian artillery against the Austrians were feeble in the extreme, the very contrary was the case in the Secession War. . . . Nor were the larger tactical manoeuvres even of 1870 an improvement on those of the American campaigns. . . . Flank attacks and wide turning movements were as frequent in one case as in the other; and not only were the victors of Sedan anticipated in the method of attack by successive rushes, but the terrible confusion which followed a protracted struggle, and for which Prussian tacticians still despair of discovering a remedy, was speedily rectified by American ingenuity. . . . [The American] tactical formations were far better adapted to preserve cohesion than those of the Prussians.20

The laudatory assessment of "Stonewall Jackson's Place in History" which Henderson contributed to the second edition of Mary Jackson's biography of her famous husband, reveals a similar appreciation for the military accomplishments of the Civil War as well as Henderson's personal admiration of the great Confederate General.

In his employment of cavalry Jackson was in advance of his age. Such tactics had not been seen since the days of Napoleon. The Confederate horsemen in the Valley were far better handled than those of France or Austria in 1859, of Prussia and Austria in 1866, of France in 1870, of the Allies or the Russians in the Crimea. In Europe the teachings of Napoleon had been forgotten. . . . The great importance ascribed by the emperor to procuring early information of his enemy and hiding his own movements had been overlooked; and it was left to an American soldier to revive his methods.21


In August 1898, Henderson completed his major work, the biography of Stonewall Jackson. He had spent fifteen years gathering material for this book. He had studied the Official Records, corresponded with numerous former Confederates, and had checked the published sources against personal reminiscences. His most important source of private information was Jed Hotchkiss, Jackson's topographical engineer, who was of inestimable help in supplying maps and information not available to Henderson elsewhere. Hotchkiss also put Henderson in touch with other former Confederates, who were often able to add touches to the portrait of their esteemed leader. In the words of Douglas Freeman, "Never was a biographer better served than by these men." From these varied sources Henderson was able to capture the spirit of Jackson and his men as no foreign, and few American writers, have succeeded in doing before or since. "Stonewall" came to life and his campaigns acquired a new significance.

Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War is a classic in several respects. A prominent reviewer appropriately described it as a military biography, an authentic campaign history, and a

general treatise on the art of war, all in one. "As a biography it is a model, and as such it may be read with pleasure by those for whom the details of the campaign may not have any great interest." As a military history it has several weaknesses. Henderson dodged controversial questions at times and he so admired Jackson that he was reluctant to admit even Jackson's occasional errors. But these faults were more than offset by Henderson's grasp of the subject and his insight into the problems of the Confederacy. His treatment of the Shenandoah Valley campaign of 1862 served as a model for writers who followed.

To the military reader, however, Stonewall Jackson was probably of greatest value as a treatise on the art of war, for its pages contain Henderson's thoughts on virtually every phase of military activity. It is primarily a study of strategy. Henderson had written his first book when, as a company officer, he had been mainly concerned with what he termed "Minor Tactics," that

25. Freeman, The South to Posterity, pp. 160-164. Freeman mentions another weakness, an "uncertainty regarding some terrain," but he adds that with the evidence available at the time, Henderson could hardly be expected to have covered Jackson's operations more accurately.
26. "Better than any foreign critic of the war . . . Henderson understood the subtle military values that gave the North a crushing superiority over the South." Ibid., pp. 164-165. One wonders whether Freeman, had he been familiar with the writings of the Germans in the 1870's, would still have made this statement.
is, "the formation and disposition of the three arms for attack and defense. . . ." But after he became Professor of Military History at the Staff College his outlook had naturally broadened, and he grew more interested in the "higher art" of generalship known as strategy or "Grand Tactics," which he defined as "those strategems, manoeuvres, and devices by which the victories are won, and concern only those officers who may find themselves in independent command."27 In Henderson's view Hamley's Operations of War had grievous shortcomings as a military text. He felt that Hamley had "deliberately omitted all reference to the spirit of war, to moral influences, to the effect of rapidity, surprise and secrecy" -- those vital intangibles so essential to good leadership, and incidentally, so characteristic of Jackson. Speaking before the United Service Institution in 1894, Henderson exposed his views on the need for a new textbook in strategy.

The methods by which the great generals bound victory to their colours are scarcely mentioned in the tactical textbooks, and in Hamley's Operations of War the predominating influence of moral forces is alluded to only in a single paragraph. In short, the higher art of generalship, that section of Military Science to which formations, fire, and fortifications are subordinate, and which is called Grand Tactics, has neither manual nor textbook.28 Consequently Henderson, instead of outlining campaigns and expounding principles, wrote from the eye-level of Jackson, de-


28. Ibid., p. 189; Godwin-Austin, The Staff and the Staff College, p. 114.
scribing each situation as he thought Jackson himself would have viewed it, and focusing his attention upon the methods and psychological reactions of the commander. This enabled Henderson to inject his own philosophy of war so skillfully into the narrative that on occasions where the facts were not yet known -- or did not appear to reflect the usual credit on the Confederate general -- Jackson's actions are explained and justified by Henderson's own strategical concepts. While this practice occasionally may have led to minor distortions of fact, it does not necessarily detract from the value of the book as a military study. On the contrary, as Captain Liddell Hart has suggested, it probably even enriched it as a military treatise, since the genius of Jackson was supplemented by the theories of a profound student of war.

Henderson also devoted much attention to tactics. His interest in this subject is shown by his correspondence with Jed Hotchkiss in 1895. Hotchkiss was writing a book on the Civil

29. As a case in point, Dr. Freeman specified Jackson's decision to march to Middletown on the Valley Pike immediately after capturing Front Royal, Virginia, on the night of May 24, 1862. According to Dr. Freeman, this situation even today cannot be given the clear treatment that Henderson provided when he grafted his own thoughts to Jackson's action and thus probably credited Jackson with undue skill in this operation. Statement made by Dr. Freeman to the writer, March 28, 1950, in Richmond, Virginia. For Henderson's account see Stonewall Jackson, I, 328 ff.

War, and Henderson strongly advised him not to make it "too short." "Remember," he cautioned, what may seem trivial details to you will be exceedingly interesting to soldiers and also to our large army of enthusiastic volunteers. I am now going to be independent, and suggest what points we should like to hear about particularly.

1. The characters ... and appearance of your generals.
2. The character of the troops and of their fighting, and of their discipline.
3. The nature of the entrenchments and breastworks constructed.
4. The way in which the fighting in woods was carried out and the precaution taken to maintain order and direction.
5. The way intelligence of the enemy was obtained, and the country mapped.
6. The method of the Confederacy [sic] marksmen — the efficiency of their fire and the manner in which it was controlled by their officers — or otherwise.

The more military your book is the better it will go down over here, as, owing to our number of volunteers and our constant little wars, our people generally understand and enjoy all details connected with the grand art of killing one's fellow-man.31

In his book Henderson tackled these and many similar problems, devoting considerable attention to such matters as discipline, staff duties, transport, a system of command as well as strategy and tactics.

Stonewall Jackson was received with enthusiastic acclaim both in England and the United States. It was immediately endorsed by such prominent figures as Lord Wolseley and Field Marshal Earl Roberts (who later claimed that this book had pro-

31. "I can promise your book a royal reception over here. I shall see that it is reviewed in all our principal periodicals, and ... take care to let the soldiers in Germany, many of whom are conscientious students of the Civil War, know that they will find something worth reading in your pages." Henderson to Hotchkiss, October 13, 1895. Hotchkiss Papers.
vided him with inspiration and guidance in his campaigns against the Boers), and it would be no exaggeration to say that it served as a cornerstone upon which later strategical studies were to be built. The general impression created by its publication is illustrated by the comments of Sir Henry Brackenbury, a well-known officer, who wrote that "as an old Professor of Military History, I uncover my head to the author, and tender him my grateful thanks." 32

In 1899 war broke out in South Africa, and after a series of initial setbacks Lord Roberts was called to take over command. He had recently heard Henderson lecture before the Dublin Military Society, and by coincidence he had just finished reading Stonewall Jackson. Convinced that Henderson "would be able to turn his knowledge to practical account," Roberts in January 1900 appointed him to his newly formed staff as Director of Intelligence. On the long sea voyage out, the two spent hours together walking up and down the decks of the Dunottar Castle, discussing strategy and its applications to the coming campaign, and "during the days of preparation at Cape Town the fertile suggestions and sober criticisms of the author of Stonewall Jackson played no small part in confirming the native intuition and strengthening the resolution of his chief." 33 In South Africa Henderson per-


33. L. S. Amery, My Political Life (London, 1953), I, 126. Amery was chief war correspondent for The Times during the Boer War.
formed useful service in obtaining maps of the theater of operations and, doubtless guided by Jackson's dictum "always mystify and mislead" (a phrase which has become a catch-word in British military parlance), even took pains to plant misleading newspaper articles to camouflage Roberts' plan of campaign. Roberts himself has recorded that during the campaign former students at the Staff College would file into Henderson's tent at odd hours, "eager to discuss those actual problems which they had so often studied in theory, glad of the chance given them of referring their doubts and difficulties" to their one-time instructor.34

Ill health soon caused Henderson to give up active campaigning and return to England, where he was assigned the task of writing the official history of the war. In the fall of 1901 he again visited South Africa, this time to study the battlefields and gather additional material for his new book. But he suffered a relapse, and although continuing with his research for another year he never recovered. Henderson died in 1903 in Egypt, where he had been sent to avoid the strain of another English winter. He had not quite reached fifty.

In addition to his books, Henderson was a frequent contributor to the military journals. He also lectured before numerous military societies and for years served as the regular military correspondent for The Times in covering foreign military maneuvers. Many of Henderson's later writings were collected after

his death and published in a volume entitled *The Science of War*. In a military sense this was probably his most important work, although, like the published writings of Clausewitz and du Picq, it was left unfinished. In these articles Henderson made constant references to the Civil War, because, like Wolseley, he had written chiefly with one aim -- to stress lessons which would be of value to England. Even in dramatizing the life of Stonewall Jackson he had neglected no opportunity to press home particulars which might be of significance to the British Army. One of the chief military questions of his day -- and perhaps Henderson's first interest -- concerned the Auxiliary forces, the Volunteers and Militia. There was general and perhaps justifiable concern about the efficiency and capabilities of these organizations, and while much thought had been given to their assignment in war there were many in England who doubted that such untried soldiers could do well against a large army from the Continent.

Henderson's writings reflect this concern. Unlike Wolseley, who had merely stated that "the armies of raw levies" ought to be taken into consideration when criticizing the strategy and tactics of the Civil War, Henderson pleaded for a better understanding of the special problems of the American armies, seeing in these a guide to the improvement of the English Auxiliary Forces. He repeatedly stressed the fact that the Civil War had

been fought

... by a national militia leavened by a sprinkling of regular officers. The armies of both North and South differed little in constitution from an integral portion of our own army of defense. The soldiers were of our own stock. Their experience, therefore, will help us to anticipate the shortcomings likely to occur amongst our own volunteers would they be called upon to take the field, and may enlighten us as to the measures by which these shortcomings may be most readily corrected.36

Henderson admitted the American armies had at first suffered from lack of discipline, but he noted that both armies had steadily improved as the war progressed until by 1863 they were "equal to any European troops ... and in very many respects ... superior and more advanced in military knowledge than even the Germans in 1870."37 The Civil War convinced him that volunteer soldiers could be trained to the point where they were "fully equal to the troops of any possible invader."38 Like Bleibtreu, Henderson anticipated that the next great war would be fought by armies composed of such soldiers. His remarks to a military audience in 1894 seem almost prophetic:

36. Science of War, p. 190. By "army of defense" Henderson refers specifically to that small portion of the regular army which was stationed in the British Isles and which, in case of invasion, would have to be supplemented by Volunteer and Militia regiments. These words were written in 1891, three years after General Brackenbury's Memorandum on the subject of "French Invasion," two years after plans had actually been drawn up for the defense of London against such an invasion, and the same year that the Stanhope Memorandum, defining the role of the Volunteers and Militia in the defense of England, was issued. Dunlop, The Development of the British Army, pp. 12-14.


38. Science of War, pp. 229, 308.
If I see in the future an English general at the head of an army far larger than that which drained the life-blood of Napoleon's empire in the Peninsula, if I see our colours flying over even a wider area than in the year which preceded Waterloo, you may think that I am over-sanguine; but to my mind the possibility exists, and with it the probability that the forces which are employed . . . will be constituted, at least in part, as were the armies of the American Civil War. Our men . . . will come straight from civil life, and . . . the habits and prejudices of civil life will have to be considered in their discipline and instruction, and officers will have to recognize that troops without the training of regular soldiers require a handling different from that which they have been accustomed to employ. . . . This is one of the most important lessons to be learned from the American War by English soldiers.39

Another lesson British soldiers could learn from the Civil War concerned the cavalry. The controversy over the weapons and tactics best suited to this arm was still raging in the 1890's, and Henderson approached this issue with the objectivity and thoroughness he had applied to his examination of the qualities of the volunteer soldier. He neither condemned Civil War cavalry for its new tactics nor blindly accepted the arguments of those who shouted that the old cavalry was dead. At first he was inclined to believe that the development of dismounted tactics was due principally to the nature of the American terrain,40 but a more serious study -- documented by the experiences of the Boer War -- convinced him that this reliance upon mounted infantry was due more to the increase in firepower which, "in 1861, had already become the predominant factor in battle." Yet, though Henderson

39. Ibid., p. 310.
40. Ibid., p. 266. Henderson expressed this opinion in 1892, in a lecture before the Aldershot Military Society.
appreciated the value of mounted infantry, he refused to side with the extremists who asserted that regular cavalry had no place on the modern battlefield. As he interpreted it, the key to the success of the Civil War cavalry lay in the fact that it had been able to strike "a true balance between shock and dismounted tactics." And because the Civil War cavalry, although "they fought well on foot . . . were not equal to well-trained infantry" and "as cavalry . . . were deficient in manoeuvring power and in cohesion," Henderson urged the creation of a separate and permanent force of mounted infantry instead of the abandonment of shock tactics.  

41. Like Wolseley, Henderson did not place much faith in the "military Jack-of-all arms. . . ."  

42. Both Henderson and Wolseley hoped that a force of mounted infantry comparable to the troopers that rode under Stuart and Sheridan could be provided in England by the Volunteer cavalry, the Yeomanry.  

43. Such a force was needed, according to Henderson, because England was "a country which affords even fewer opportuni-
ties for purely cavalry combats than Virginia." However, such hopes for converting the Yeomanry into Mounted Infantry did not materialize. In 1888, two schools for the instruction of mounted infantry had been established for the training of regular army units, principally infantry, but as late as 1899 the Yeomanry were still trained as cavalry proper and retained the sword as an essential part of its armament. Henderson always regretted that English soldiers, in not realizing the potential of mounted infantry, "had overlooked at least one of the lessons of the American campaigns. . . ." 44

In the light of subsequent events it would have been better had British officers devoted less attention to Henderson's fascinating account of Jackson's campaigns and placed more emphasis upon his remarks on the significance of entrenchments, for here he was years ahead of his time. Like Auger, Henderson appreciated the advantages of entrenchments for the defensive. He had made this point in his Campaign of Fredericksburg, and as early as 1894 -- one year before the appearance of Auger's penetrating book -- he advised English soldiers to study Grant's 1864 campaign in the Wilderness for "a better clue to the fighting of the future than any other which history records." The following year he had solicited information from Hotchkiss on the subject, and

44. Science of War, p. 108. This was written in 1891. For further confirmation see A. J. Godley, "Mounted Infantry Training at Home," The Cavalry Journal, I, 52-55; Dunlop, The Development of the British Army, pp. 33-34.
in 1899 he wrote that "the importance of the spade is often overlooked in peace; and . . . entrenchments, as a tactical expedient and precaution, and especially as an essential adjunct to attack, do not receive, at field-days and maneuvers, the attention they deserve. . . ." The Boer War further confirmed Henderson in his belief that "entrenchments play as great a part in modern campaigns as in those of 1861-65 or 1877-78. . . ." Like Liddell Hart thirty-five years later, Henderson's studies convinced him that mobility often provided the lever whereby an enemy could be pried loose from his trenches. Grant had managed to maneuver Lee out of successive defensive positions in the Wilderness in 1864, and Sherman's campaign for Atlanta that same year proved that "against troops that can manoeuvre, earthworks are useless." There is no need to discuss in further detail Henderson's analysis of the Civil War. All that he had to say was enlightening, whether it dealt with problems of a purely technical nature, such as tactical formations for infantry, the position of artillery in attack, fire discipline, et. cetera., or was concerned with such general problems as the relationship between soldier


46. Ibid., I, 170; II, 199; Science of War, pp. 331-333. "... antidotes exist, such as surprise, the sudden seizure of tactical points which have been left unoccupied, outflanking manoeuvres, and movements against the line of retreat." Ibid., p. 68.
and statesman. With regard to the latter subject, it perhaps ought to be mentioned that Henderson shared Wolseley's -- and probably most soldiers' -- suspicion of all things political. He agreed that politics must necessarily exercise a supreme influence upon strategy, but stressed the dangers which often accompany the domination of the army by civilian leaders. "It is a significant fact," he wrote,

that for the three years the control of the armies of the North remained in the hands of the Cabinet, the balance of success lay with the Confederates. But in March, 1864, Grant was appointed Commander-in-Chief, Lincoln abdicated his military functions ... and ... for the first time, the enormous armies of the Union were manoeuvred in harmonious combination, and the superior force was exerted to its full effect. Nor is it less significant that during the most critical period of the 1862 campaign, the most glorious to the Confederacy, Lee was Commander-in-Chief of the Southern armies. But when Lee left Richmond for the Northern border, Davis once more assumed supreme control, retaining it until it was too late to stave off ruin.47

These are only half-truths and Henderson was least convincing in his treatment of the political-strategical aspects of the war. But it must be remembered that here he was primarily concerned with only one phase of the war, and that the least fortunate of Lincoln's administration.

Though an overly enthusiastic obituary claimed that Henderson commanded an influence in the British Army similar to that

47. Stonewall Jackson, I, 208. Actually Lee was more of an adviser to Davis and helped coordinate, not actually command, the Confederate armies. For similar comments by Henderson see ibid., I, 13-16, 205-216, passim; II, 289, 489; Science of War, pp. 240-261, passim.
of Moltke in Germany, Henderson did, in fact, have a wide following and his views on military subjects were well received. After his return to England in 1901 Lord Roberts ordered him to bring the old *Infantry Drill Book* up to date. Henderson died before completing this, but the chapters he finished were found to be so meaty in doctrine common to all the arms that the committee designated to complete the book issued it under a new title, *Combined Training*. This was "the forerunner of a new conception of military textbooks," and represented a definite break with the past. In his foreword Lord Roberts emphasized that "all works and regulations which have hitherto dealt with the subject contained in this manual either have been, or shortly will be, revised. Meanwhile this manual is to be regarded by the Army as authoritative on every subject with which it deals." 49

From the very nature of his writings, however, it seems probable that Henderson had his greatest effect, not upon tactical and material reforms, but upon subsequent military thought. The strategy of interior lines, which Lee and Jackson had employed with stunning results, was exceedingly popular in England in the years preceding the first World War, and Stonewall Jackson assuredly contributed to this popularity. 50 Certainly the envelop-


50. Lieutenant-Colonel Alfred H. Burne, the well-known British military historian and an authority on the Civil War, suggests that Henderson was in large measure responsible for what he describes as this "cult of interior lines." Lt. Col. Burne to the writer, September 2, 1950.
ment strategy of the German theorists had comparatively few ad
vocates in England, where more attention now was paid the Shenan
doah Valley than Sadowa or Sedan. And as one of the team which Wolseley had sent to the Staff College to help make the British officer a better student of his profession, Henderson was a posi
tive influence in elevating the reputation of the College. Since the days of Hamley and Chesney courses there had tended to be dull and formal. (Sir George Aston, who attended the Staff Col-
lege in 1889, records that one of the best students in his class, "a Royal Engineer who had earned great fame by his surveys of large areas on the North West Frontier of India," had had one of his maps returned to him with the comment "You should prac-
tise gravel-pits.") But with the arrival of this new regime pedantry went out the window. "We want officers to absorb, not to cram," insisted Colonel H. T. J. Hildyard, Commandant since 1893, and Henderson's teaching was in line with this policy. He broadened the course in military history to include study of the American campaigns (previously the wars of 1866 and 1870-1871 had been the chief objects of study) and he gave each student personal attention much like he might receive in a university seminar.

Henderson must have been an unusual teacher, and there is abundant evidence to indicate that he was an effective one. By "the charm of his personality and the inspiration of his teaching," he exerted an influence "almost unique" in the history of

the Staff College. He was entrusted with some of the best minds in the army — Haig, Allenby, Robertson and Wilson, to name only a few — and many of his pupils later rose to command armies in 1914-1918. These men, according to one of this group, "would readily admit that such successes as attended their leadership was largely due to the sound instruction and inspiring counsel which they received from their old tutor some twenty years or so before. . . ." The Times sounded the right note indeed when it predicted, in 1903, that Henderson's influence would be felt "in the next great war, if that should take place when those who have passed through the Staff College in the nineties are in positions of command." 52

Naturally Henderson's writings stimulated as well as influenced the subsequent study of the Civil War in England. From his death in 1903 until the outbreak of war in 1914, numerous books and articles were written by soldiers about the war. Many a hopeful young officer spent the midnight hours pondering over details of Jackson's campaigns in preparation for the Officer Promotion Examinations in Military History. The subjects set by the Army

Council for these examinations generally included one or more of the campaigns described in *Stonewall Jackson*. (One of the members of this council, Major General H. C. O. Plumer, had been a close personal friend of Henderson's and was himself convinced of the value of studying the Civil War.)

Each year that the subject selected for these examinations was on some phase of the Civil War, a flood of new literature covering that particular campaign would appear. Both the examinations themselves and the accompanying monographs were based to a large degree upon the facts and opinions recorded in *Stonewall Jackson*. The military views of these writers will be analyzed in the succeeding chapter, but here it is pertinent to demonstrate the close association of this new outcropping of Civil War literature with the Promotion examinations.

53. The Promotion Examinations were instituted in 1850, when it was decreed that ensigns and lieutenants should undergo an examination before being promoted to a higher rank. Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, XIII, 21-22. This was followed in 1871 by the development of a system of garrison classes to prepare officers for these examinations, and years later, when these classes were abolished, young officers "had to resort to the 'crammers.'" Verner, *Duke of Cambridge*, I, 143-144. Most of the Civil War campaign studies written during this period were designed to serve this purpose. After 1904, the questions for these promotion examinations — of which military history formed only one part — were selected by the Army Council and every candidate for advancement to any rank up to and including that of major was required to pass these examinations. The examination usually consisted of six subjects: (1) tactics, (2) military topography, (3) military engineering, (4) military law, (5) military administration, and (6) military history. R. J. Grewing, "Officers." *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (11th edition, New York, 1910), XX, 20.

54. *Journal of the U. S. I.*, LV (September, 1911), 1144.
In November 1904, for example, the questions for this examination were based upon Henderson's treatment of the Virginia campaigns, with special knowledge of Jackson's operations in the Shenandoah Valley being required. A similar examination for officers of the Militia and Yeomanry covered the operations leading up to and including the battle of Fredericksburg, Henderson's writings again being considered the chief text. 55 The questions for 1908-1909 were based upon Grant's campaign in Virginia of 1864, 56 but the following year candidates for promotion were again being

55. H. N. E. Brunker, Story of the Campaign in Eastern Virginia (London, 1904), was specifically designed to serve as a crammer to aid officers "in preparing for the above examinations." It was little more than a poor condensation of Stonewall Jackson and contained frequent errors, but doubtless it fulfilled its purpose. J. H. Anderson, Notes on the Life of Stonewall Jackson (London, 1905) was written for a like purpose and suffers from the same shortcomings. A third book, Edward Nash, Jackson's Strategy (London, 1904) is of a higher calibre. Nash showed an independence lacking in most of these campaign studies and he was among the few who were critical of Jackson. Ibid., pp. 10, 11, 16, 18, 26-27.

tested on their knowledge of the early Virginia campaigns and Jackson's Valley campaign as described by Henderson. In 1912 the emphasis was placed upon the Virginia campaign of 1862 and 1863, and two papers on the Shenandoah Valley campaign -- one general and the other covering in detail the events between May 16 and June 9, 1862 -- were required to pass the examination in 1913.

Thus Henderson, whose primary intent had been to develop an inquisitive attitude in the minds of his students and readers, ultimately became the agent of a dogmatic and opinionated study of the Civil War. Official reliance upon his writings and a heavy emphasis upon factual material naturally tended to discourage original thought, with the result that the overwhelming majority of these campaign studies were little more than abridged and often mutilated versions of Stonewall Jackson. By writing to


cram facts into the heads of eager young officers these later writers, with a few exceptions, distorted the lessons contained in Henderson's works. What had given life to Stonewall Jackson was the way in which Henderson had blended his philosophy of war into the narrative. Yet most of these later writers were so blinded by his brilliant descriptions that they ignored the very qualities which had made Stonewall Jackson a valuable military study. Significantly, the few good Civil War books that were written during this period dealt for the most part with campaigns which had not been included in Henderson's biography, and only in these are fresh views and interpretations -- the product of original research -- to be found. 60 The bulk of these campaign studies, however, were little better than the earlier histories of the German campaigns, and actually would compare unfavorably with some of the German writing on the Civil War that followed in the wake of Scheibert. As all armies were shortly to discover: "To be able to enumerate the blades of grass in the Shenandoah Valley and the yards marched by Stonewall Jackson's men is not an adequate foundation for leadership in a future war where conditions and armament have radically changed." 61

60. Such works include Captain Cecil Battine, The Crisis of the Confederacy (London, 1905), a tactical study of Gettysburg and the Wilderness that evidently was intended as a sequel to Stonewall Jackson; Atkinson, Grant's Campaigns of 1864; "Miles," Campaign of Gettysburg, as well as the writings of Edmonds and Redway.

61. Liddell Hart, The Remaking of Modern Armies (London, 1927), p. 171. Fuller recalls that "in 1913, I remember a Major recommending Henderson's Stonewall Jackson to a brother officer,
Henderson's portrayal of the colorful Jackson together with the sentimentalism of the dying Victorian era did much to produce that legendary atmosphere which in England was beginning to surround both Jackson and Lee. Jackson came to be regarded with an awe and admiration quite out of proportion to his military genius. One writer, who sensibly remained anonymous, rejoiced that the Confederate general should be placed upon a pedestal. . . . There may be another and perhaps seamier side to Jackson's career, but Colonel Henderson has done well to keep it from our sight. We want no blemishes or infirmities reproduced upon the statue as it was reared for our delight nor should we tolerate dirt to be flung at it in its glorious completeness.62

The interesting fact about this nonsense is that it appeared in a serious and respected military journal!

These remarks were directed against Major C. W. Redway, who had committed the crime of suggesting that perhaps too much attention was being paid to the Shenandoah Valley campaign, which was, after all, a subsidiary operation and not the decisive campaign of the war. Redway's article was denounced on the ground that it was "bald and dull, paradoxical and misleading, and subversive to one of the tenets of our military faith." Actually Redway was one of the better historians of the Civil War: he had visited many

and then, a few minutes later, when this book was being discussed, committing the error of supposing that [the battle of] "Cross Keys" was a public house in Odiham and Jackson the name of the man who ran it." The Army in My Time, pp. 53-54.

of the battlefields and he was one of the few who had consulted the Official Records. Redway can hardly be blamed for feeling indignant that his views had "disagreed with a section of the military world. . . . It seems that I had erred in venturing to descend upon a topic which involved reference to . . . Jackson without first consulting the work of . . . Henderson and squaring my views . . . with those of his disciples." There were others who criticized Jackson, but these managed to escape the abuse which had caused Redway to wonder, with some justice, if perhaps Jackson "has not been too fortunate in his biographer." 63

This was an extreme example, but it does illustrate the extent of Henderson's popularity during these years. These numerous "crammers" are now gathering dust on the book shelves, but Henderson's works survived the first World War and are still read today. 64 They are read today because the whole approach to the study of military history changed in England after 1918. No longer is it the practice to concentrate on one or two battles,

63. G. W. Redway, "The American Civil War -- a reply," United Service Magazine, XLII (March, 1911), 637-638. The article in question was Redway's "Shenandoah Valley Campaign." Apparently others also criticized this article, for Redway wrote: "I have been continually reminded by my critics of the debt we owe to . . . Henderson. One says, "The Life of Stonewall Jackson is a priceless legacy bequeathed to the British Army": another thinks that "there is nothing more remarkable than the way in which Colonel Henderson's work has been recommended to officers and set over and over again for examinations. . . ." Ibid., p. 638. Redway's Fredericksburg A Study in War (London, 1906), is one of the better campaign histories of this period, and compares favorably with Henderson's.

64. Both Stonewall Jackson and The Science of War have been published several times since the war.
memorizing the detailed maneuvers on each side. The post-war
writers were more content with fundamental problems of strategy
and the psychology of generalship, factors which had not been
outmoded with the advent of the tank, airplane and barbed wire.
Henderson's concept of military history, that it should be used
to stimulate independent thought rather than to be searched for
specific patterns or lessons, is more in line with military his-
tory as taught at the Staff College today than in the years pre-
ceding the war. Military history is now used as a guide "to ob-
tain a deeper understanding of the problems which will confront
commanders and staffs in the future," 65 which of course explains
why Stonewall Jackson has never been outdated as a military text.
English soldiers in the 1930's still felt it worthwhile to visit
the Civil War battlefields, particularly the Shenandoah Valley
and Chancellorsville, where, book in hand, they could recreate
Jackson's most exciting and successful maneuvers. 66

But Henderson's books are read today for another equally
valid reason: they are good history. The late Dr. Freeman, the
greatest authority on the Virginia campaigns, has described The
Campaign of Fredericksburg as "the best study" of that battle,

65. Lieutenant-Colonel F. W. Young, Librarian, The Staff
College, to the writer, December 4, 1950.

66. For an entertaining description of one of these tours,
see A. H. Burne, "How to Visit the Battlefields in America on
the Cheap," The Fighting Forces, XV (April, 1938), 52-60.
and half a century of scholarship and intensified interest in the Civil War has failed to produce a biography of Jackson which even approaches Henderson's. Although he was not a professional historian, Henderson was no amateur; his works bear evidence to his early historical training at Oxford. In the main Henderson's errors were not factual ones. He respected facts, and the completed portions of his history of the war in South Africa were scrapped because the facts in this case would have embarrassed the Government. Students of the Civil War both in England and the United States will always regret that Henderson was not spared long enough to write his projected sequel to *Stonewall Jackson* -- the life of the greatest of all Southern generals, Robert E. Lee.  

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67. Maurice, Sir Frederick Maurice, pp. 121-124; Robertson, *From Private to Field Marshal*, pp. 118-120.

68. This work was already past the planning stage when Henderson died. For several years members of the Lee family had been collecting materials for him to use in his projected biography. Holden, "Henderson," p. 381; S. H. S. P., II, New Series (September, 1915), 306.
Henderson died on the eve of the greatest changes in the British Army since the Napoleonic Wars. The Cardwell Reforms had altered army organization, but the changes that occurred in the decade before 1914 were more fundamental. They were sparked by the Boer War; much of the previous apathy toward the army had disappeared as a result of this conflict, and repeated efforts were made to correct the flaws that had contributed to the early military reverses.\(^1\) They were also closely related to the shift in British foreign policy signified by the Anglo-French Entente

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1. The Elgin Commission was established in August, 1902, to investigate the conduct of the Boer War. In April of the following year the Norfolk Commission was appointed to study the condition and function of the Auxiliary Forces, and in 1904 Lord Esher headed a committee which was charged with the task of reorganizing the War Office. Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army*, pp. 121 ff.; Omond, *Parliament and the Army*, pp. 148-170.
in 1904. This understanding meant not only the abandonment of a policy of isolation but, ultimately, commitment to France. In Henderson's day -- and in Henderson's view -- the army was designated to police the empire and protect the country against the old bogey of invasion. Now it had become necessary to raise, train and equip an expeditionary force for possible use on the Continent, and much of the ferment during these years, both within the army and without, concerned problems involving this new role.

While those who attempted to stir the country into action cannot rightly be called militarists, several organizations were formed to mobilize public opinion and to increase Everyman's knowledge of military affairs. Thus a National Service League, headed by Lord Roberts, demanded compulsory military service as the only means of national survival, while the Navy League, which had been founded in 1895, clamored for the support of all classes in maintaining the Fleet "at the requisite standard of strength" -- meaning, of course, to keep well ahead of Germany in the dreadnought race. One has but to scan the pages of any English periodical to appreciate the extent to which the public was kept informed on military matters. In 1905 The Times appointed Lieutenant-Colonel

Charles A'Court Repington as its first regular Military Correspondent in the expectation that his columns "would stimulate thought concerning the art of war." That same year Oxford established a Chair in Military History. If it was true that before the present century "the British people took an interest in war rather like a virtuous spinster takes an interest in wickedness," then such spinsterhood did not long survive Queen Victoria.

Within the army itself there were signs of "a great intellectual awakening." Military Societies such as the Manchester Tactical Society were used as sounding boards for discussion of proposed army reforms, and the writing of military history was encouraged by the appearance of inexpensive translations of the works of foreign theorists as well as many original studies by lesser known British officers. Doubtless the emphasis placed

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3. The Twentieth Century Test, vol. III of The History of the Times, 1884-1912 (New York, 1942), p. 462. The Times had always had on its staff someone who could write on military subjects, and, when the situation demanded, a temporary appointment was made to insure coverage of important military events. Mr. L. A. Amery, for example, was named Chief of The Times war correspondent service in South Africa in 1900. Amery, My Political Life, I, 115. Repington, however, was the first regular Military Correspondent. This same Amery relates how he managed "to persuade" his college, All Souls, to endow a readership in Military History in 1905, which was converted to a full professorship in 1909. Spenser Wilkinson, one of the founders of the Navy League, prominent journalist and a noted writer on military subjects, was appointed to this Chair, possibly at the instigation of Sir Charles Firth. Ibid., I, 221; Wilkinson, Thirty-five Years, pp. 312-315.


5. Typical of these are The Pall Mall Series (published by Hugh Rees, Ltd.), originating in 1903, and The Special Campaign Series (Swan Sonnenschein and Company the original publishers), the first volumes of which appeared in 1907. Five volumes, one-
upon military history in the Promotion Examinations also stimulated interest in the subject. In brief, in an age of rapidly changing concepts of warfare, and with every encouragement and facility placed at their disposal, more British officers began to write military history. And as already stated, the American Civil War was given a disproportionate position in this flood of military books.6

Some of the reasons for this enthusiasm for the Civil War have already been mentioned. Henderson's influence and the resulting over-emphasis on the American campaigns in the Promotion Examinations would go far to explain the popularity of the Civil War among English soldiers. But the strong resemblance between the Civil War and the recent war in South Africa also stimulated this interest, for many had noticed similarities in the two wars. Colonel F. N. Maude, one of the most prolific and best known writers in the Army, had pointed out while the Boer War was still in progress that the Civil War "deserves far closer and more at-

fourth the entire number published, of this latter series were on various of the Civil War campaigns. Another publishing firm, Gale and Polden, Ltd., advertised a stock of over half a million military books, and Messrs. Clowes and Sons helped at least one prominent writer to publish his books at extremely modest prices. See T. Miller Maguire, The Campaigns in Virginia (London, 1913), p. vi.

tentative study," since it approximated "very closely indeed" the conditions of the current struggle in Africa. "Miles," who later paid a visit to the American battlefields and wrote a respectable book on Gettysburg, was another who saw a resemblance between the campaigns of 1861-1865 and the Boer War. He thought it "worth considering"

... that the fact that Lord Roberts had appointed as one of the chief officers on his staff ... Colonel Henderson, who has devoted himself to the study of the American Civil War ... indicated an opinion on Lord Roberts' part that the particular study of the ... Civil War was the one that was most immediately applicable to the present Transvaal War.

Spenser Wilkinson and other writers saw similar parallels; no thinking soldier who read The Defence of Duffer's Drift, a classic indictment of the training of the British Army before the Boer War, and who was at the same time familiar with the American


8. "Miles," "Lessons of the War," ibid., pp. 156-157. "Miles" also believed the rumor that General Joubert, one of the Boer leaders, had fought under Lee and Jackson, so closely had he adopted Confederate tactics against the British.


campaigns could fail to see these similarities.

Under these conditions, Civil War books increased enormously. Crammed as they were with military technicalities and burdened by excessive detail, most of these campaign studies were mediocre and decidedly inferior to the Civil War literature of any other period. Lacking the perception and literary ability of Henderson's works, and written before the first World War threw new light on basic problems, these books provide ballast for a bibliography of foreign writings on the Civil War. They reflect the current trends in British military thinking, but with few exceptions are of little value from any other standpoint.

The majority of those who wrote on the Civil War during this period did so either to illustrate military principles or to develop concrete tactical lessons for the present. Contrary to Henderson's teaching, their method tended to be "one of excessive concentration in detail rather than an inquiry into broad principles."¹¹ Thus Jackson's Valley campaign illustrated the correct application of a strategy of interior lines, McClellan's Peninsula campaign was cited as a "capital" example of "skilful changes of base and flank movements in spite of an

under the pseudonym "Backsight Forethought," this book created an enormous stir when it appeared in 1904. Field Marshal Earl Wavell, who first became acquainted with this book as a young officer in India, persuaded Swinton in 1949 to bring out a new edition. Swinton was one of the pioneers in the development of the tank in the first World War.

alert enemy," while Sherman's moves against Atlanta were re¬
mended to British officers as showing how to dislodge a strongly
fortified enemy. Officer candidates for promotion were asked in
their examinations: "Justify from Jackson's campaigns the posi¬
tion 'that the inferior forces holding the interior positions be¬
tween its enemies must have the advantage if it strikes them in
detail while separated. . . .''\textsuperscript{12} Captain Wynter's articles
furnish a specific example of the use of Civil War battles to
illustrate principles, in this case those "preached by the \textit{Field
Artillery Training}.") Maintaining that more could be learned from
a detailed study of one battle than from a superficial knowledge
of several, Wynter culled the official reports for "incidents
. . . [which] are applicable to the conditions of modern warfare
and the principles of modern tactics."

The material of artillery has of course been revolutionized since
the year 1862, and there is little or nothing to be learnt by
studying the effect of fire in those days. But the co-operation
between guns and infantry is an unchanging principle of modern
war, and . . . no little advantage can be derived by studying the
successes and failures of the Americans in this respect.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12} The above examples, typical of many, were selected from
T. Miller Maguire, "The American War," \textit{The Illustrated Naval and
Military Magazine}, IV, New Series (February, 1890), 262-263. They
could have been selected from almost any of the numerous cam¬
paign studies cited in the previous chapter. The question which
is in reference to the 1913 Promotion Examinations, is quoted
from Maguire, \textit{Jackson's Campaigns in Virginia}, p. 42.

\textsuperscript{13} Captain H. W. Wynter, "Artillery at the Battle of
Specifically, Wynter was interested in the use of shrapnel by the Americans, "the moral and physical effect of artillery" (which he concluded was not very great during the Civil War), "concentration and centralized control over the guns," "the responsibility of artillery commanders" and their relations with brigade and divisional commanders, "the distribution of artillery in a large army," and the like. These were subjects covered in the Field Service Regulations, and Wynter selected Antietam and Gettysburg because in "many ways" they were "more modern" than the battles of the Franco-Prussian War, and because British officers could "expect the same circumstances to arise often in future fighting between large armies.14

The official texts, however, were slow to reflect this intensified interest in the Civil War. Even the latest editions of Clery's Minor Tactics and Home's Précis of Modern Tactics continued to emphasize European campaigns. This was also true of strategy, the one phase of the so-called "science of war" where fundamental principles were regarded as constant. Hamley, of course, continued to be looked upon as the "strategic pedagogue

14. Wynter, "Artillery at Gettysburg," p. 64. It may be noted that Wynter confirmed the tendency noted in 1879 by the anonymous author of "Ueber die Verwendung der Feld-Artillerie in nord-amerikanischen Seccessions-Krieg," that artillery by 1863 and 1864 was "for the most part employed in great batteries. . . ." (See above, pp. 217-220). According to Wynter, the placing of the Union Artillery at Antietam "shows that the need for concentration and centralized control over the guns was beginning to be appreciated. At Gettysburg less than a year later the efforts of General Hunt, the Federal chief of artillery, in this respect were conspicuously successful." "Artillery at Sharpsburg," p. 177.
of the British Army";\(^{15}\) a more recent treatise, Lieutenant-Colonel Walter James' *Modern Strategy*, cited the Civil War campaigns more sparingly than Hamley, even though Henderson's *Stonewall Jackson* was among the half-dozen books recommended to young officers for further study. James did not slight the Civil War because of any lack of knowledge on his part,\(^{16}\) but because he evidently thought that more could be learned from studying Napoleon and Moltke. Greater attention was given the Civil War by Colonel C. E. Callwell in documenting his treatise on *Military Operations and Maritime Preponderance.*\(^ {17}\)

The Civil War also provided fuel for the major issues of the day. One of the greatest controversies continued to be over the tactics and armament of cavalry. Technically the question was whether cavalry was to act solely as mounted infantry, as Havelock had urged years before; whether it was to be supplemented by a separately created force of mounted infantry, as Wolseley and Henderson had advocated; or whether it should be employed as a combination shock and missile weapon, trained in the use of both rifle and saber and capable of fighting mounted as well as on foot. Fundamentally it was a matter of emphasis: was the rifle

\(^{15}\) Falls, *A Hundred Years of War*, p. 29.


or the saber the chief weapon for cavalry?

Students of the Civil War were in every camp. The extreme advocates of mounted infantry found their spokesman in Erskine Childers, an author and politician who had served in the Boer War. Childers had written the volume in *The Times History of the War in South Africa* dealing with the guerrilla operations, and had become convinced of the inadequacy of the *arme blanche* in modern warfare. In his *War and the Arme Blanche and German Influence on British Cavalry*, Childers enlarged his study to include relevant experiences in other wars. Naturally a good many of his examples came from the American Civil War.

Childers wrote with conviction. Where had cavalry first "learnt reliance on the firearm, though their example passed unnoticed in Europe": The Civil War. "After that invention, what type do we find winning its way to success in South Africa: The Mounted rifleman. Which weapon succeeds in Manchuria? The firearm." England had erred in not heeding the lessons of the Civil War and the teachings of "its most brilliant English proponent, Col. Henderson," for in 1899 English cavalry "went to war equipped and trained like the present French Cavalry."

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The really great and stimulating . . . precedent, the American Civil War, had had scarcely any effect on Cavalry practice in this country, partly from inattention, partly perhaps from the same mistaken impression which pervaded the German and French schools, and was soon to be shattered to pieces by our own experience, that the methods of self-made volunteer troops afford little or no instruction to regulars.

Apparently Childers, whose main target was Bernhardi and his followers in England, was not familiar with Thomasson's excellent Les procédés d'exploration de l'armée de Nord-Virginia. 20

Denison, who brought out a new edition of his History of Cavalry in 1913, and Major General Sir Edward Hutton, an early advocate of mounted infantry, 21 were other outspoken if less extreme advocates of mounted infantry. 22 To a lesser extent Lord Roberts also belonged to this school, for he wrote a spirited


21. In 1885 Hutton, then a Staff Officer in Cairo, was "responsible for organising and maintaining" a battalion of Mounted Infantry, which was disbanded a few months later. In 1888 he had helped establish the schools for mounted infantry in England, and in South Africa he had commanded one of the mounted Infantry forces. General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, Memoirs of Forty-Eight Years' Service (London, 1925), pp. 53, 55; Evelyn Wood, From Midshipman to Field Marshal (5th edition, London, 1907), pp. 527-528; Goldman, With General French and the Cavalry in South Africa, pp. 220 ff.

22. Denison, History of Cavalry, pp. 360, 373, 380, 394; Major-General Hutton, "The Tactical and Strategical Power of Mounted troops in War, United Service Magazine, X (February, 1895), 431-434. Hutton, even before the Boer War, was impressed by the Americans who, "unfettered by traditions of the past, [had] armed their cavalry with a repeating rifle and developed their power of independent action in a manner which has not hitherto been equalled in modern times." Ibid., p. 438.
foreword to Childer's *War and the Arme Blanche* and, according to a German contemporary, he "was beyond doubt influenced by Colonel Henderson" in advocating mounted infantry. Lord Roberts, however, was careful not to repudiate officially the old doctrine, even though he did not think that "the *arme blanche* alone, will ever be able to bring about . . . [decisive] results against a highly trained enemy armed with magazine rifles."  

Most English soldiers who wrote on the Civil War preferred a combination of shock and dismounted action. Whereas Wolseley and Henderson had favored a balanced mounted arm composed of separate mounted infantry and regular cavalry regiments, these later writers "wanted to make their men equally efficient with both rifle and cold steel." They dismissed Childers because he had failed to mention that "although a rifle was added to the equipment of the U. S. Cavalry soldier shortly after the war commenced, the sword and revolver for use at short quarters were not discarded, and that this equipment, as a result of the experience gained in the American Civil War, has been retained ever since."  

Captain Cecil Battine, author of a tactical study of Gettysburg, was a typical spokesman for this group.

There is no campaign in which greater error has been taught, or more fallacious views on . . . cavalry expressed, than will be found as regards the . . . American Civil War. . . . It was not until 1864, when Sheridan first massed his cavalry [i.e. shock tactics] that the fruits of victory were duly secured. In 1862 and 1863 the American cavalry . . . was employed only as mounted infantry. . . .

Battine concluded that Sheridan, "taught by experience," made greater use of shock tactics and thus became a "worthy rival" of Stuart himself. 27 No decisive results can be attained "without combination of fire and shock action; the one is a consummation and necessary complement of the other." 28 Major Legard was likewise convinced that the "Americans struck the proper mean between shock tactics and dismounted work, and used both in close and effective co-operation." Contrary to what others had asserted, Civil War cavalry was not "merely mounted infantry; cavalry combats such as Brandy Station, cases of Cavalry charging Infantry such as Chancellorsville and Aldie, are far too numerous to admit of this view being taken by even the most bigoted and prejudiced advocate of Mounted Infantry." As Legard interpreted the American campaigns, they showed, first, the power gained by a


close combination of shock and fire tactics, and second, the weakness of employing cavalry in small bodies rather than concentrating for a decisive charge. This school, while attaching much importance to the power of the modern rifle, still considered "lance and sabre" cavalry good for something other than providing occasional splendor at military funerals and ceremonial escorts.

Significantly, there seems to have been some connection between these trends in cavalry thought and official doctrine. An order issued in 1903 stipulated that henceforth the carbine or rifle would be considered as the "principal weapon" for cavalry, and the Cavalry Manual that appeared under the auspices of Lord Roberts in 1904 stressed the importance of mounted infantry.

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30. James, Lord Roberts, pp. 430-440; Charles Sydney Goldman, "Cavalry: Its true functions in Modern War," The Cavalry Journal, I, 65. "After the Boer War, Lord Roberts embodied in a preface to the Cavalry Training Manual of 1904 the ripe experience of the recent war. He inculcated reliance on the rifle as the principle weapon for all purposes of the Cavalry soldier. Two years later, although Manchuria had confirmed his words in every particular, the injunction was forgotten and our Cavalry were sitting at the feet of a German writer [Bernhardl] who had nothing to tell them about the rifle which they had not already learnt by costly war experience. ..." Childers, War and the Arme Blanche, p. 353. This is essentially the burden of his second book, German Influence upon British Cavalry, in which he argues that British cavalry doctrine in 1911 stemmed largely from the Germans, despite the lessons of the Civil War and their own experiences in South Africa.
But this lesson of the Boer War was soon forgotten. In 1904 the office of Commander-in-Chief was abolished and Lord Roberts retired from the Army. He had scarcely departed before official enthusiasm for mounted infantry began to wane. Within two months Roberts felt constrained to write his former Chief of Staff, Lord Kitchener, soliciting support over the abolition of the lance, "since I understand that a great struggle will be made to get that weapon re-introduced now that I have left the War Office." 31

The new Drill Book that was issued in 1906 did "not regard mounted infantry with such importance" as the Cavalry Training Manual of 1904, and by 1907 two of the three existing schools for mounted infantry were abolished. A contemporary German observer recorded in 1907 that "the impression" in England "is once more gaining ground that even in these days, well trained, well mounted cavalry can still attack with the best results." 32 This view prevailed, and in the official Cavalry Training Manual for 1907 it was stated:

The essence of the cavalry spirit lies in holding the balance correctly between fire power and shock action. ... It must be accepted as a principle that the rifle, effective as it is, cannot replace the effect produced by the speed of the horse, the magnetism of the charge, and the terror or cold steel. 33


(A similar development, it will be recalled, had taken place in Germany after the death of von Schmidt some forty years previously.) Even the lessons of the recent Russo-Japanese War were misconstrued. Of all the European military powers Russia alone had developed a large force of mounted infantry, and while observers in Manchuria testified to the ineffectiveness of regular cavalry against modern weapons, in England the advocates of shock tactics arrived at the opposite conclusion. Russian cavalry was weak, they said, because of its habit of fighting on foot; genuine cavalry, "and plenty of it," was what was needed to correct the situation.

The anti-cavalry school will no doubt point to the contest between Russia and Japan as a proof that the mounted service has lost its influential position in modern war. I hold that it proves just the contrary. If we go below the surface and seek the reason why the Russian cavalry has played such a subordinate a part . . . we will find that it lies in the fact that for many years the Russians have been teaching their men to look on the rifle as the principal thing, the horse taking only second place as a useful means of conveyance. The result is . . . [that] the spirit of cavalry is dead, and therefore nothing useful and effective is achieved.

Thus the Civil War, which had convinced Havelock, Denison and Henderson of the need for mounted infantry, now was cited to illustrate the need for shock as well as dismounted tactics. Be-

34. "... all of the Russian cavalry soldiers have been transformed into dragoons. . . ." "The Russian Army," in The Armies of To-day, p. 236.


cause the campaign histories went hand in glove with the Promotion Examinations -- and therefore presumably with official doctrine -- they naturally reflected the views of this school of thought. The *Cavalry Journal*, founded in 1906, provided another excellent sounding board for those who adhered to more or less traditional cavalry tactics.\(^{38}\) Although Major-General Douglas Haig, who commanded the British forces in France in 1915-1918, was a professed admirer of Forrest and his cavalry operations,\(^{39}\) he did not derive any of his cavalry theories from the Civil War. During the Boer War, Haig had been an advocate of mounted infantry and had even submitted a Memorandum to show "the greatly increased power of action possessed by cavalry, now that it is armed with a good carbine."\(^{40}\) But Haig and his chief, Sir John French, retreated

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38. *The Cavalry Journal* was probably established to aid those who opposed the trend (until 1906) toward mounted infantry. One of the original promoters was Charles Sydner Goldman, who had been one of the first to contend that the Boer War did not signify the end of the *arme blanche*. He thought it "unwise to discard the sword or lance. . . ." With General French and the Cavalry in South Africa, p. 411. In 1908 the editorship passed to Colonel W. H. Birkbeck and the Staff of the Cavalry School and in 1911 the Army Council consented to make the editorship a part of the regular duties of the Commandant of the Cavalry school. Thus *The Cavalry Journal* came under the control of General Sir John French, the most prominent of the anti-mounted infantry school of thought. This information is derived from editorial notes in successive issues of *The Cavalry Journal*.


from this position once the war was over and became instead the outstanding advocates of modified shock tactics.\textsuperscript{41} Haig was convinced that Erskine Childers' theories led directly to the grave, and in his book, \textit{Cavalry Studies Strategical and Tactical}, written in 1907, he did not even mention the Civil War.\textsuperscript{42} Certainly if the official doctrine, as expounded by French and Haig and supported by numerous "studies" on Civil War cavalry, were in the least influenced by the Civil War, then the lessons of that conflict had been misread. It is impossible to conceive of Sheridan, Forrest and even Stuart relying heavily upon "the terror of cold steel." But the aroused proponents of the \textit{arme blanche}, while they did not go so far as the Continental armies in neglecting dismounted action, nevertheless ignored or even distorted the fundamental lesson of the Civil War, the Boer War, and the Russo-Japanese War -- that "cavalry, as a force fighting on

\textsuperscript{41} Amery, \textit{The Times} chief war correspondent in South Africa, offers this explanation for Haig's attitude. At one time during the war, "Roberts and Ian Hamilton both issued memoranda showing that under modern conditions the old cavalry tactics were dead, and that the true function of the horse in war was to convey the rifleman most swiftly to the tactically effective firing point or to enable him to ride rapidly through a zone of fire. These were exactly the tactics French and his Chief of Staff, Haig, had developed with such success at Colesberg and in the relief of Kimberley. But to be told this by a gunner and an infantryman was too much! French and Haig worked themselves into a mood of opposition and, in spite of all their South African experience, convinced themselves that only the old knee to knee cavalry charge with lance or sword would decide the wars of the future." \textit{My Political Life}, I, 132.

\textsuperscript{42} Major-General Douglas Haig, \textit{Cavalry Studies Strategical and Tactical} (London, 1907).
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horseback, died when the magazine rifle was born." It took the machine gun and trench of the first World War to prove conclusively that the emphasis had been placed upon the wrong weapon.

Curiously enough, the far more important problem of field fortifications attracted less attention. Those who studied the Civil War, even the early campaigns, were not blind to the value of entrenchments. They realized, for example, "that one good man behind an earthwork was equal to three good men outside it," and that "the length and intensity of these engagements" offered a clue to the war of the future. With one exception, they did not try to synthesize the American experiences as regards trench warfare or even to arrive at any fundamental principles. The writer of the most detailed study of the Wilderness campaign decided that the "one tactical lesson of all these battles was that attacking entrenchments was a matter not of principles, but of particular cases..." 46


44. Apparently the British Official History arrived at the same ratio from experiences in the World War: "... in a conflict between foes of the same standard of skill, determination and valour, numbers approaching three to one are required to turn the scale decisively." Quoted in Liddell Hart, Thoughts on War, p. 292.


The single exception was Lieutenant-Colonel J. E. Edmonds, who later supervised the writing of the British Official History of the World War. Edmonds belonged to the Corps of Royal Engineers; of all English writers on the Civil War, he perhaps came the closest to understanding what Henderson had meant when he said that the Wilderness campaign contained the best clue to the fighting of the future. He had Henderson's prediction in mind when he wrote in 1909:

It would almost seem that the Russo-Japanese war had proved the correctness of his forecast. For many of the main characteristics of the two campaigns are the same: -- There are the battles of many days duration; the continued use of night operations; the universal use of the spade both in the attack and in the defence, making the war one of what may be called siege operations in the field; and the employment of all available troops in the front line without retaining a general reserve.\(^7\)

Edmonds did not venture to predict whether a future war would resemble "the rapid movements of a Stonewall Jackson" or "the deliberate hammerings of a Grant," but he believed in preparing for either eventuality. While he felt that the use of entrenchments in America may have been overdone, and personally preferred offensive maneuver to a war of sieges,\(^8\) Edmonds nevertheless

\(^7\) Edmonds, "Campaign in Virginia," p. 545. This, and the companion article, "Lee and Grant," were written "for the assistance of a friend" in preparing for the Promotion Examination of November, 1909, and were published "to be of help to others preparing for the examination." \textit{Ibid.}, p. 5.

\(^8\) "Sedans are not brought about by attacking an enemy in an entrenched position, or by sitting down and entrenching opposite to him." "The Campaign in Virginia," p. 547.
recognized the instructive value of this phase of the Civil War. Specifically, it taught "the difficulty of reconnaissance in a close country," the value of "hasty fortifications constructed on the battlefield as opposed to positions prepared in advance," and the necessity to hold an enemy in front while outflanking him in his defensive positions. "Most of the attacks made in the Civil War failed because they were made over too great a distance, without proper reconnaissance, and . . . because the force making them was not sufficiently strong."

Edmonds learned other things as well. In the Civil War it was repeatedly proved that even when the night march had succeeded, it was difficult to get the troops into attacking formation unobserved, and the advantage gained was quickly lost. The records show that the troops were reported too tired to attack without rest and . . . a pause for food, and that those who went into action after a night march suffered more than usual from shock when they were wounded. The case is different when, as so often happened in Manchuria, troops already in position are led forward short distances in the darkness, or use the cover of darkness to advance a short distance to a fresh position.

As for the cavalry, Edmonds suggested that perhaps "now-a-days it is . . . more valuable for defensive purposes."

Significantly, Edmonds had something in common with Auger and Henderson, both of whom had grasped the importance of entrenchments in the Civil War. Like Auger, Edmonds was an Engi-

49. Ibid., pp. 541-543.
neer, and the Royal Engineers had always shown an interest in this aspect of the American campaigns: in fact, nearly all of the foreign observers in America in 1864 and 1865 had been officers of the Royal Engineers. And, next to Henderson, Edmonds probably knew more about the Civil War than any contemporary British soldier. In 1904 he had collaborated with W. Birkbeck Wood, an officer of the Volunteers, to write the best general history of the Civil War by any foreign soldier. Edmonds had come under "the stimulating influence" of Henderson at the Staff College and the early chapters of this work had been submitted to him "for advice and criticism."^2

Edmond's book, in fact, remedied the chief weaknesses of Henderson, who had concentrated on the campaigns in the east to the neglect of those in the west. Naturally the authors of the numerous campaign histories did likewise. This lopsided interest in the exploits of Lee and Jackson perhaps may be charged to Henderson, but it must be remembered that English soldiers had always manifested a greater interest in the eastern campaigns. Never before, however, had the campaigns in the west been so completely ignored. Fletcher had given them a proportionate share in his History, and Hamley, Chesney and Wolseley had all appreciated the genius of Sherman. Most of the English soldiers who wrote later were ignorant of the campaigns in the west. Had they studied the

war as a whole they might have become convinced, like Edmonds, that "the military genius . . . of Lee and Jackson, the unrivaled fighting capacity of the Army of Northern Virginia, and the close proximity of the rival capitals, have caused a disproportionate attention to be concentrated upon the Eastern theatre of War." Edmonds, therefore, advocated a re-appraisal of the western campaigns, where, in his view, "the decisive blows were struck."

Significantly, Major John Formby, author of another general history of the war, likewise regarded the western theater as "the most important in a military sense." 53

From Chesney to Henderson British officers had been interested in the performance of volunteer armies. In the decade preceding the first World War, this interest was intensified by the reorganization of the Volunteer and Reserve forces and by growing agitation in England for some form of conscription. 54

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53. Ibid., p. 527; Formby, The American Civil War, I, 72.

54. Compulsory service was "actively canvassed by a number of people. The pages of the reviews and the Service journals . . . were full of articles advocating various remedies for the military problems. Some saw the solution . . . in a great increase in the Volunteer movement. . . ." Others, such as Roberts, thought that only conscription would give England a large enough army to meet her commitments. Dunlop, The Development of the British Army, p. 151.
tinguished from the volunteer — was "usually of inferior quality," providing the army with "only the worst and most unsoldierly elements of the population." Few heard the dissenting voices of two military historians — T. Miller Maguire, whose investigations of this problem had convinced him that "conscripts and obligatory men are better than volunteers in war," and H. W. Wilson, who feared that England one day might repeat the mistake of the Union by "not resorting to conscript at once," thereby expending the cream of British youth in the first rush of volunteers to the colors.

Most of the Civil War literature written in England during this period was written in the shadow of Henderson. The new interest in the Civil War, the requirements of the Army Promotion Examinations, and the undue concentration upon the Virginia campaigns all attest to his influence. But it is also apparent that many of these writers saw what they wanted to see — and no more. Their vision was limited, not only by the one-sided interest in the Virginia campaigns, but by self-imposed blinders as well. Some, it is true, had no particular axe to grind, but sought merely to illustrate fundamental principles for the convenience of


studious officers. But despite much lip service on the lessons of the Civil War, only a few, -- Edmonds and Redway among them -- approached Henderson in objectivity and understanding. Their voices were not heard above the tumult.

These few men were to be vindicated only by a new turn of history, a new war which swept away all the old tactical questions that had cluttered the military literature of the pre-1914 era. Attention was now concentrated on war as a whole, on great questions of strategy and politics, and thus on the neglected aspects of the Civil War. The generation of British officers who studied the Civil War in the years following the first World War turned to the campaigns of 1864 and the decisive campaigns in the west for instruction. They studied Grant and Sherman as earlier classes had concentrated upon the great leaders of the eastern armies -- Lee, and Henderson's Jackson.
In August 1914, Europe was plunged into war. Successful in their initial moves, Schlieffen's successors were forced to abandon his plan when the German Right Wing was first contained, then shoved back, by the Anglo-French forces in the battle of the Marne (September 6-9, 1914). Following a scramble to reach the Channel seaports, the rival armies burrowed into the ground and for the next four years waged a sanguinary, suicidal war of attrition. Eventually whole populations were incorporated into the enormous land armies which grappled over a barren earth landscaped only by miles of twisting trench and tangled barbed wire, and pimpled by countless shell craters and ruined villages. New weapons, the tank, airplane and poison gas, were used by both sides in a fruitless effort to break the deadlock; they were still largely in the experimental stage when the war ended. All the theoretical study in the Kriegsakademie, the Ecole de Guerre and the Staff College had not prepared officers to expect a war such as this. The decisive battle that the Germans had meticulously
planned for failed to materialize; no theorist -- save possibly Bloch -- had expected a war of such duration. Even Bleibtreu and Auger had not anticipated the extent to which the first World War would confirm their ideas.

Naturally the years following this holocaust witnessed an enormous ferment of discussion and writing about military problems. "We live in a time," Liddell Hart wrote in 1933, "when 'war' is on everyone's lips, when everything contemporary is dated in relation to the last war. . . ."¹ In France, Germany and England much was written about the revolutionary changes in warfare, and many ideas were advanced to secure victory in a future war and to avoid the mistakes of the last. In each country there was an "agonizing re-appraisal" of military doctrine, with the result that, in many instances,

old shibboleths and methods have been demolished, serious and thoughtful attempts have been made to recast the foundations and to build upon them anew a structure capable of weathering the storms of another war. The same vigorous renovation has been applied to the larger matter of war policy, and the grand strategical combinations of military, naval, air, economic, and diplomatic action.²

These words were written with reference to England, but they apply just as well to the other countries of Europe. In short, it was an era of change and reformation, and the military world was desperately trying to keep in step with the restless, unpredict-

². Liddell Hart, British Way in Warfare, p. 93.
able march of the times.

The first World War provided new lenses through which the events of 1861-1865 were viewed, and the Civil War was brought into clearer focus in the light of the recent military operations. These new angles of vision opened up significant aspects of the war that hitherto had been slighted, while other phases of the Civil War no longer seemed of primary importance. Previous to 1914 when there had been much discussion, particularly in England and France, on the merits of existing cavalry doctrines, there had been good reason to study the American cavalry: after the war most military thinkers turned their thoughts to the tank. The question of entrenchments had likewise been answered, and the experiences of the first World War also furnished abundant evidence of what could be expected of regular soldiers, volunteers and conscripts. The post-war generation faced different problems; those who studied the Civil War looked for new lessons which might be of aid in preparing for the future.

Of the three nations the Germans were the least interested in the Civil War after 1918; the World War naturally dominated their military literature in these post-war years. According to General Gunther Blumentritt, a prominent German general in the Second World War and a noted student of military history, the

3. This statement is based upon a study of titles appearing under the heading "Kriegsgeschichte" in continuous volumes of the Bibliographie der deutschen Zeitschriften-Literature: mit Einschluss von Sammelwerken und Zeitungen (Leipzig, 1916-1930).
problem that most concerned the Germans during these years was
how to break the trench deadlock and restore mobility to war.
The ideas of Moltke remained "in the highest esteem" in Germany
"even after 1918," and Schlieffen's doctrines were still re-
garded as "essentially right." But the Germans paid practically
no attention to the Civil War. Individuals, the most prominent
of whom were Field Marshal von Hindenburg and General von Boet-
tischer, recognized the value of studying the Civil War but these
were in a distinct minority. The standard fare for officers study-
ing wars pre-dating 1914 remained the campaigns of Frederick the

4. General Gunther Blumentritt to the writer, December 8,
1955.

5. Carrias, La pensée militaire allemande, pp. 345, 350-351.

6. Hindenburg once told General von Boetticher that he had
"made the Civil War the foundation of all his teachings" when an
instructor at the Kriegsakademie between 1885 and 1889, and that
"when about 80 years old, he once discussed with me for more than
an hour the most important operations of General R. E. Lee. He
knew every detail, and, without having a map, he remembered the
names of every place where Lee had been operating and fighting." The Civil War, according to Hindenburg, was "the only war where
an officer can learn everything, strategy and tactics." General
Friedrich von Boettischer to the writer, March 4, 1955. This
"hour" long conversation is probably the same one referred to in
Freeman, The South to Posterity, pp. 166-167. But the Civil War
was not included in most lectures at the Kriegsakademie. Freytag-
Loringhoven, one of Hindenburg's pupils at the Kriegsakademie,
makes no mention of the Civil War in the course of instruction
there and was able to make only limited use of the Civil War when
he himself taught there near the turn of the century. Menchen und
Dinge, pp. 55, 109-110. General von Blumentritt writes that dur-
ing his entire military career, which included fifteen years in
the General Staff and several years teaching tactics at the Kriegs-
akademie, he heard "precious little" about the Civil War official-
ly, although he and several other officers studied it some on
their own. General Gunther von Blumentritt to the writer, October
6, 1954.
Great, Napoleon and Moltke. 7

It remained for two civilians, Emil Daniels and Otto Haintz, to write the only detailed German history of the Civil War after 1918. As former pupils of the well-known military historian, Hans Delbrück, these two had continued Delbrück's monumental Geschichte der Kriegskunst after his death, their account of the Civil War appearing in the seventh and final volume of this work. 8 Neither Daniels, who died before this volume was completed, nor Haintz followed Delbrück's original organization, which had been to trace the development of military institutions, technology, strategy and tactics using selected campaigns only to illustrate the changes in warfare. Their approach was factual and chronological; they wrote a history of campaigns rather than a history of the art of war.

This work is characteristic of the general post-war view of the Civil War in two respects. First, it was apparent to Daniels

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7. For example, in an official study by an officer of the General Staff entitled Die Vernichtungsschlacht in kriegsgeschichtlichen Beispielen, only one of twenty-four battles studied was not taken from the wars of Frederick, Napoleon and Moltke, -- and that one was Cannae. Gunther Frantz, Die Vernichtungsschlacht in kriegsgeschichtlichen Beispielen im Auftrage der Heeresinspektion des Erziehungs und Bildungswesens (Berlin, 1928). Similarly General Heinz Guderian, one of the best-known German generals of the Second World War, taught Napoleon's 1806 campaign and the German and French cavalry operations in 1914 to future staff officers. General Heinz Guderian, Panzer Leader (London, 1952), p. 21.

and Haintz, who wrote in 1935, that the Civil War had been a direct forerunner of the first World War. It, too, had been a war of attrition and entrenchments, particularly in the latter stages. It had witnessed the development of new tactical forms that were subsequently ignored in Europe and which did not reappear until 1914. Second, much as this work differed from previous studies in matters of interpretation, it still rested upon the same sources as many of the earlier studies. Daniels and Haintz on Civil War cavalry sound very much like Scheibert and von Borcke on the same subject: the Confederates had preferred shock tactics, although they could fight well on foot; the Union cavalry had resorted to dismounted tactics to compensate for its inferiority. They, too, credited Lee with being the first to grasp the value of field fortifications, and in the early stages of the war at least, they explained the evolution of tactics as being more the result of "the technical inferiority of the troops" and rough terrain than of armament. Evidently they did not do much original research from American sources, or they would not have made the mistake of stating that at Gettysburg "field fortifications formed an integral ingredient of the Union battle plan. . . ." They could scarcely have selected a less appropriate example.

9. Ibid., pp. 4, 168, 301, 348-349.
10. Ibid., pp. 122-123, 259.
11. Ibid., pp. 19, 114, 281.
12. Ibid., p. 257.
The French paid greater attention to the Civil War. In 1916, during the military stalemate on the western front, Gaston Roupnel wrote a pamphlet in which he depicted the Civil War as the first of the modern wars of attrition, with battles being indecisive and resulting only in the exhaustion of both sides.\(^{13}\) The comparison was obvious. After the war, Lieutenant-Colonel Daille carried this comparison a step further, by describing what seemed to him to be parallel developments in the two wars. In 1863 the Confederates, slowly being strangled by the Union blockade, had been forced to seek "l'offensive; la bataille décisive." Gettysburg had been "the only way out," "the inevitable reaction ... of a belligerent threatened by exhaustion before his adversary." So had the Germans in 1917-1918 been forced to seek a military decision before succumbing to the naval blockade.\(^{14}\) In a companion article Daille analyzed the strategy of the Wilderness campaign, which he regarded as a good example of a nation mobilizing and making effective use of its resources to win a war of attrition. Significantly, he credited Grant's victory to sea power, for the Union command of the sea and navigable inland waters had enabled Grant to supply his armies and change his base of operations.\(^{15}\) Like Henderson, whom he cited frequently, Daille was not

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15. Daille, "Une seconde leçon de la guerre de sécession," ibid., XVI (July-September, 1925), 326.
interested in finding some "rational system" in his study of Gettysburg and the Wilderness; he realized that no two wars were really alike. But he did recognize that the Civil War was not a struggle between armies but between peoples, and he believed that no war was more instructive than the Civil War in this respect.\(^\text{16}\)

The most elaborate comparison between 1861-1865 and 1914-1918 is found in René Sauliol, *Une autre guerre de nations*, published in 1929. Editor in chief of the *Revue d'études militaires* and a prolific military historian, Sauliol consulted almost every French work on the Civil War.\(^\text{17}\) He saw many characteristics common to both wars. Both were wars of attrition, in which "the elements of war are at once political, economic, moral and military." Both wars commenced with a general belief in a short war, yet had lasted four years. In both wars the "law of numbers" and the "law" of the dollar had prevailed. Both had ended suddenly, the result of prolonged attrition. The strategic role of the capitals was a major factor in both wars, as was the blockade and the problem of military-political relations in high command. The Civil War had even witnessed the use of torpedoes and submarine warfare. Inventions had played a major part in both wars.\(^\text{18}\) The operations before Richmond and Petersburg reminded Sauliol of the trench warfare of 1914-1918.\(^\text{19}\)

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Sauliol's book is an admirable synthesis of French views on the Civil War, but it represents no original research in American sources. Sauliol did not even mention the Official Records. He borrowed Auger's interpretation of trench warfare, Scheibert's division of the Civil War into three tactical phases, and the opinion of most of the pre-1914 writers that the Confederate cavalry had preferred shock tactics, the Union cavalry the rifle. Thus Sauliol's book, like the one written by Delbrück's understudies, was little more than a new look at the same Civil War.

A similar though more original book is Captain A. Lepotier's Mer contre Terre, an interpretative study of the strategy of the Civil War by a naval officer and well-known authority on naval matters. Lepotier, too, regarded the Civil War as the prototype of the first World War. He saw both as military stalemates in which sea power had proved the decisive factor. Command of the sea had enabled the North to avoid "irreparable defeat" in 1861-1862; while the Confederates were victorious on land, the Union forces had seized most of the Southern seaports. The Union Navy had made possible the blockade of the Confederacy and the eventual conquest of the Mississippi, both of which had been essential in a war of attrition. It had also furnished tactical as well as logistical support to the Union armies on the coast and on the inland waters. Thus "the sea had conquered the land." Lepotier

compared the Confederacy with the Central Powers in 1914-1918. Both had won initial victories on land, only to lose in the end because of the superior sea power of their adversaries. "We have seen in Antietam a battle of the Marne, and in Gettysburg a Verdun." In the Second World War, "Antietam and Gettysburg were played at El Alamein and Stalingrad," and the Allied air and naval forces reopened the Mediterranean much as the Federal naval forces had reopened the Mississippi. Writing at the close of the Second World War, Lepotier asserted that "Today more than ever before, the destiny of nations is ... inscribed in a great measure in the comparative tables of their air and naval power." Frenchmen could not afford to forget that liberation had come from the Sea.22

Like most of the other post-war studies, Lepotier's book contained new ideas stemming from the World War, but represented no original research.23 He depended upon the works of Lecomte, Grasset, the Prince de Joinville and the Comte de Paris for his information; his inspiration came from Admiral Raoul Castex, a prominent French naval strategist, whom Lepotier quoted liberally regarding principles of naval warfare. Indeed, the most inter-

22. Ibid., pp. 339, 357.

23. Pierre Belperron, La guerre de sécession (1861-1865) ses causes et ses suites (Paris, 1947), represents a considerable amount of original research and is not discussed here because it is more of a general history than a military study of the Civil War. General Boucherie, "Guerre de sécession. La poursuite de Nashville," Revue de cavalerie, Series 4, vol. XLIV (Paris, 1947), 1-11, is also very general and of historical interest only.
est fact about French studies of the Civil War after 1918 is the importance given to sea power. In 1913 Sir Henry Wilson, Director of Military Operations, had noted in his diary that whereas he did not think the British Navy "worth 500 bayonets" in a war with Germany, "Castelnau and Joffre did not value it at one bayonet! Except from the moral point." Those who wrote after 1918 had manifestly come to appreciate the fact that the British Navy had contributed a great deal more to the victory than "one bayonet" and moral support to the troops in the trenches.

The whole British approach to the study of the Civil War was likewise transformed by the first World War. After 1914 it was no longer the practice to concentrate on one or two of the Virginia campaigns, memorizing the detailed tactical maneuvers of individual battles. There was now greater interest in the campaigns of 1864-1865, which bore a close resemblance to the trench warfare of 1914-1918. More attention was also paid to the operations in the west, where it was generally believed that the decisive blows had been delivered.

24. Major-General Sir C. E. Callwell, Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson His Life and Diaries (London, 1927), I, 122. Joffre at this time was Chief of the General Staff of the French Army; Castelnau was his assistant. According to Wilson, Foch was "exactly of the same opinion . . . as are Castelnau and Joffre. . . ."

25. Eric William Sheppard, Military History for the Staff College Entrance Examination (Aldershot, 1933), p. 40. Cited hereafter as Sheppard, Military History. To understand the new importance attached to the western campaigns and Grant's campaign in Virginia, see Sheppard, The American Civil War, 1864-65 (Aldershot, 1938), and Lt.-Col. Alfred H. Burne, Lee, Grant and Sherman (New York, 1939). This new interest in the campaigns of 1864 and 1865 also induced Wood and Edmonds to revise their History, which
Henderson would have been pleased to observe that the post-war studies in England stressed strategy, in contrast to the heavy emphasis upon tactics in most of the earlier campaign histories. Even those books written especially to prepare students for examinations in military history were free of the professional pedantry and the excessive detail that typified similar studies before 1914. The outlook of these later writers, who were for the most part officers of high rank and distinction, was broader than that of the junior officers who had written the pre-war texts. These men, like Henderson after he went to the Staff College, were primarily concerned with problems of strategy and the psychology of generalship — factors which had not been outmoded by the recent revolution in warfare.

Henderson would likewise have derived satisfaction from the biographies of Civil War generals which were written in England in the years following the World War. This war had established

appeared in 1937. In the second edition all of the campaigns of the first two years of the war were telescoped into a 75 page introduction. W. Birkbeck Wood and Br.-General Sir James E. Edmonds, The Civil War in the United States with Special Reference to the Campaigns of 1864 and 1865 (London, 1937).


27. Included on the roll-call of the post-war British historians of the Civil War are two Major-Generals (Maurice and Fuller), two Brigadier-Generals (Ballard and Edmonds) and two Lieutenant-Colonels (Burne and Kearsey), plus military writers of such distinction as Captain E. W. Sheppard and Captain Liddell Hart.
new standards by which to judge generalship, and since many of the problems that had arisen in 1914-1918 resembled difficulties that the American commanders had faced some sixty years before, it was now easier to appreciate the accomplishments of the Civil War. With these new standards, military reputations changed. Jackson was still admired, but he had to share the stage with Lee, Grant and Sherman. Lee was now praised for his defensive campaign against Grant, the merits of which Scheibert had recognized half a century earlier. Similarly Sherman, who had been much admired by such writers as Chesney, von Meerheimb and Wolseley, now emerged as a model strategist who understood the value of mobility and who fully appreciated the moral factor in war. But it was Grant who really came into his own after 1918. He was now regarded as a strategist of the highest order who, as Commander-in-Chief of the Union armies, had skillfully combined all the resources of the North for the final destruction of the Confederacy. The post-war generation, remembering the frightful casualties of Passchendaele and the Somme, could look beyond the butchery of the Wilderness and see that Grant's campaign of attrition was more instructive in understanding modern warfare than

28. "Lee's handling of entrenchments in that campaign should, if it had been studied and appreciated at its true value, have marked an epoch in the history of tactics, but it was fifty years before the use which trenches might play in manoeuvre was understood as Lee understood it." Maurice, Lee the Soldier, p. 291.

any recital of Jackson's successes in the Shenandoah Valley.

Even after the World War, the Civil War had not outlived its usefulness as a subject for the Promotion and Staff College Examinations in Military History. Jackson's Valley campaign remained a popular theme, but more attention was paid to the operations in the west and Grant's final campaign against Lee. The Civil War continued to be taught at the Staff College until the Second World War, and as late as 1950 it constituted one of four historical periods assigned for individual study. Yet it should

30. This campaign was evidently the subject for the Promotion Examinations in 1931, since Kearsey's *Strategy and Tactics of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign* was written specifically for this examination.

31. Liddell Hart contributes this amusing recollection: "In or about 1935 ..., an Army Order was issued prescribing the study of the Western campaign of the American Civil War as the subject for the Military History paper of the Staff College Examination for the next three years, and nominating as the books to be studied my *Sherman* and *Fuller's Grant.* [See below, chapter XIII.] The Chief of the Imperial General Staff at that time, General Sir Archibald Montgomery-Massingberd, had a great antipathy to Fuller and almost as much to me. By some oversight he had not seen this Army Order before it was issued. When it came to his notice he 'blew up' -- but it was then, obviously, impossible to make a change in the books which the General Staff had adopted as the text books. So, on his insistence, a second Army Order was issued cancelling the study of the American Civil War as the subject for the Staff College examinations during the next three years. The Palestine campaign of 1918 was substituted as a safer subject." B. H. Liddell Hart to the writer, September 7, 1950. The Promotion Examination for 1938-1939 were on the subject of the campaigns of 1864-1865. See Burne, "Hints on Studying the 1864-1865 Campaign," *The Fighting Forces*, XV (June, 1938), 140-145.

32. Lt.-Col. F. W. Young, Librarian, the Staff College, to the writer, December 4, 1950. "The Civil War has been the topic of no theoretical or practical study in French Military Schools." Lt.-Colonel Pierre Evrard, Assistant Military Attachée, to the writer, June 15, 1955.
be emphasized that the post-war generation for the most part wrote independent of the Promotion and Staff College Examinations, and not always with a pragmatic end in view. There were many who shared the experience of Lord Tweedsmuir, who had read Henderson's Stonewall Jackson and had decided to become a student of the American Civil War. I cannot say what especially attracted me to that campaign: partly, no doubt, the romance of it, the chivalry and the supreme heroism; partly its extraordinary technical interest, both military and political; but chiefly, I think, because I fell in love with the protagonists. I had found the kind of man that I could whole-heartedly admire. 33

In 1925 Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, a prominent soldier and a prolific military historian and biographer, 34 wrote Robert E. Lee the Soldier. As an appreciation of the generalship of the great Confederate leader, this book naturally measured Lee against the standards of 1914-1918. In contrast to most French and German writers, Maurice made use of recently discovered source materials in reviewing Lee's campaigns. 35 He gave special atten-

33. John Buchan, Memory Hold-the-Door (Toronto, 1941), p. 261. John Buchan, or Lord Tweedsmuir, was no stranger to military history. He wrote several books on the first World War, the best known of which is A History of the Great War (London, 1921-1922).

34. The son of General Sir John Frederick Maurice (1841-1912), Henderson's predecessor at the Staff College and a well-known military writer, Maurice had served on the Imperial General Staff as Director of Military Operations from 1915 until 1918. After the war he turned to writing, and in 1927 was appointed Professor of Military Studies at London University.

35. Principally D. S. Freeman, ed., Lee's Confidential Dispatches to Davis (New York, 1915).
tion to the development of trench warfare in 1864-1865, believing that "many a blunder made in the Great War might have been avoided if the lessons of Spottsylvania had been learned." Lee had always been recognized as a master of maneuver, but Maurice also showed him to be years ahead of his time in the employment of trenches. Like most of the post-war generation, he was sympathetic to Grant, believing his campaign of attrition to be the best and perhaps the only way to defeat a determined people.

If we consider Grant's performance in the light of recent experience, we will... view it with more kindly eyes than have some of the critics who wrote before the Great War. Cold Harbor was a costly blunder... in execution as well as in conception.... Despite that blunder, Grant's campaign had brought the war appreciably nearer its end, and that justifies his policy of fighting hard and often.

Maurice confirmed Scheibert's observations on two fundamental points: he recognized -- and better appreciated -- Lee's use of entrenchments in maneuver, and he considered Lee's system of command as reported by Scheibert "sound to a point."

Maurice had deliberately limited the scope of his work when he learned that a more complete biography based upon the Lee papers was in process in the United States. However, as a result of his Lee biography he was invited to edit and publish the papers

36. Lee the Soldier, p. 232.
37. Ibid., pp. 234, 244, 291.
38. Ibid., p. 242.
39. Ibid., p. 144.
of Colonel Charles Marshall, one of Lee's staff officers. This book appeared in 1927 under the title *An Aide-de-Camp of Lee.*

Two years previously, in a series of lectures at Cambridge, Maurice had tackled the touchy problem of wartime relations between statesmen and soldiers in a democracy. As a member of the Imperial General Staff during the war he had been a close witness to the controversy between civilian and military heads, and he hoped by examining this neglected aspect of the Civil War to learn something of the interrelationship between policy and strategy. The result was a book entitled *Governments and War,* published in this country under the more appealing title *Statesmen and Soldiers of the Civil War.*

Maurice was not the first soldier to show an interest in High Command during the Civil War. In his *Military Policy of the United States,* the American General Emory Upton had explored the

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41. This struggle over the conduct of the war was personified by the sharp differences which existed between Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, and Field Marshal Robertson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Robertson was eventually forced to resign when the Lloyd George faction won out. See Robertson, *From Private to Field Marshal,* chapter XVI, passim.

overall conduct of the war as early as the 1870's. Upton, however, had been concerned about all the wars of the United States, and he died before completing his account beyond the year 1862. Boucherie had confined his study largely to the personal relationships between Lincoln and two of his generals. Maurice, therefore, was the first European soldier to examine systematically the functioning of the Union High Command, "the best example in existence of the coordination of political and military forces in a democracy." The achievement, by the North, of an effective unity of command Maurice regarded as the chief lesson of the Civil War.

Long dissatisfied with the judgments of Wolseley and Henderson upon Lincoln's conduct of the war, Maurice set out to reevaluate Lincoln's military administration in the light of British experiences in the World War. Too much emphasis had been placed upon Lincoln's earlier mistakes, he discovered, and not enough attention devoted to "the processes by which he evolved a system for the conduct of the war." He firmly believed that in a democracy the direction of a war should be in the hands of one man, the statesman, and that the successful conduct of that war depended upon the establishment of a proper balance between civilian heads and military commanders. Like Boucherie, Maurice recognized


44. Lee the Soldier, pp. 223-224; Statesmen and Soldiers, p. 151.
the important factor of personality. He was more critical of McClellan than Boucherie, claiming that McClellan "did not know how to treat his political chief." But they agreed in their estimate of Grant, whom Maurice described as "fitted by character and mentality to cooperate with the President." Grant might have lacked some of Lee's inherent qualities as a field commander, but he understood the system under which he was working, was aware of his responsibilities to the government, and planned his strategy accordingly. Therefore he had been able to receive almost unlimited cooperation from the same administration that had repudiated McClellan in 1862. Maurice regarded Lincoln as an ideal "model for the statesman in the direction of war." Lincoln had made mistakes, but he had been quick to learn and profit by them. "Modern war," he concluded, "demands . . . a partnership between the statesman and his military commanders," and for such a partnership to be effective "the statesman must have learned from the experience of others . . . what are the essentials of a good system for conducting war." In Maurice's view, no better instruction existed than the example of the partnership of Lincoln and Grant during the last year of the Civil War.45

45. Ibid., pp. 81-83, 96-100, 115, 121-122; Lee the Soldier, pp. 75-76.
Maurice was not alone in his admiration for Lincoln's war leadership. In 1926 Brigadier-General Colin R. Ballard wrote a book entitled *The Military Genius of Abraham Lincoln*, in which Lincoln emerges "a born strategist." Ballard contended that since the Civil War was actually a struggle between whole populations, only the national executive could coordinate national resources, finance, industry, commerce and politics -- "all big factors which add their weight in dictating the higher strategy." According to Ballard, Lincoln had exercised supreme authority in all these matters, and in the "interesting light that is thrown backwards by the Great War" it appeared "that Lincoln had a fine perception of the duties of the Higher Command." The late Field Marshal Earl Wavell was another who believed that Lincoln's relations with his generals "are well worth study." Thus, as the experiences of the World War had led to a re-evaluation of Grant's strategy of attrition, so the events on the political front caused a re-appraisal of Lincoln's statesmanship. Instead of criticizing Lincoln's interference with his generals, English soldiers after 1918 stressed the way in which he had supported Grant during the latter's slow, but sure, campaign of attrition.

The Civil War histories written in connection with the Promotion Examinations were of a more military nature. The first of


these, Lieutenant-Colonel Kearsey's *Study of the Strategy and Tactics of the Shenandoah Valley Campaign*, is little more than a pre-1914 campaign history brought up to date. Kearsey used Henderson's *Stonewall Jackson* to illustrate the Principles of War,\(^49\) giving special emphasis to the Principle of Mobility. He also reflected the new attitude toward problems of policy and strategy. McClellan did not take sufficient pains to explain military situations and allay Lincoln's fears, and Lincoln in 1862 did not understand strategy. "It was not until 1864 that the military commander was allowed to carry out his operations unfettered by political interference." Until Lincoln "had handed over control to General Grant, there could be no final victory for the Federals, in spite of their enormous resources in men, ships, supplies and money."\(^50\)

Lieutenant-Colonel Burne's study of *Lee, Grant and Sherman* is more profound. It represents an attempt to synthesize the post-war views of these three generals, particularly the views of Maurice, Fuller and Liddell Hart.\(^51\) Henderson's *Stonewall Jackson* had first kindled Burne's interest in the Civil War. He became familiar with the basic American sources, and he even tramped over some twenty-five Civil War battlefields, most of them in Vir-

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Like Maurice, therefore, Burne was able to make an original contribution to the interpretation of the battles and leaders of the Civil War.

_**Lee, Grant and Sherman**_ is essentially a study in generalship. Because Burne intended his book as a study aid for the Promotion Examinations, he naturally paid attention to all the military lessons that might be learned from studying the campaigns of 1864-1865. He apparently believed that even the tactics of these campaigns had not been entirely outdated by modern weapons. In the Wilderness, for example, the modification of tactics as a result of new weapons "would have been but slight."

Nowhere was the country really open. Apart from the vast woodlands it was intersected with rivers, swamps and creeks, which would have neutralised the effect of tanks, and, to a lesser degree, of armoured cars. Air work would also have been at a disadvantage, with one striking exception... the crossing of the James... Mechanical transport would have been inconmoded by the narrow, soft woodland tracks... Modern artillery would not be able to utilize its increased power and range to any great extent, and accurate survey work for the artillery would prove exceedingly difficult. Night marches -- such a feature of modern war -- were also a feature of this campaign; and it is noteworthy that an attack on top of a night march nearly always failed... We are led to the rather surprising conclusion that if another war were fought in Virginia the conditions and methods would not

52. Burne writes that his "visit to the battlefields did not change my views, but it amplified and confirmed [them] and made more vivid the operations." A. H. Burne to the writer, September 2, 1950. See also Burne's article "How to Visit the Battlefields in America on the Cheap," _The Fighting Forces_, XV (April, 1938), 52-60.

53. See _The Fighting Forces_, XV (December, 1938), 11. Many chapters in this book also appeared as articles in the 1938 and 1939 issues of _The Fighting Forces_.

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be so very different to what obtained in 1864.  

Burne's main purpose, however, was to evaluate the comparative merits of Lee, Grant and Sherman. It is not necessary to mention his specific criticisms of each general, but it is important to note that, like Henderson and most of the post-war writers, he emphasized the strategical and psychological aspects of generalship. Burne was one of the many who believed that although the airplane, tank and automatic weapons may have nullified some of the tactical lessons of the war, the principles of good leadership never change. He did not think that the experience of recent wars should affect the lessons taught by the Civil War so far as strategy is concerned. . . .

Major E. W. Sheppard, who before the World War had contributed a volume on the Civil War to The Special Campaign Series, also wrote a book on the campaigns of 1864-1865 to help officers who are taking the last period of the American Civil War as the Military History subject in the Army Promotion Examination.

54. Lee, Grant and Sherman, p. 69. Compare this paragraph with the views of Edmonds thirty years previously, particularly the reference to night marches and their effect upon the next day's operations. See above, pp. 335-337.

55. Burne's judgment of Lee, Grant and Sherman is found in ibid., pp. 198-207.

56. A. H. Burne to the writer, September 2, 1950.


Like Burne, Sheppard was interested in finding aspects of the Civil War which might still be instructive to English military students. Sheppard deemed the Civil War especially significant for two reasons: first, because the introduction of field fortifications gave the defense a tremendous superiority over the attack; and second, because it was "a true war of nations, in which for the first time in history the whole financial, material, and moral resources of both belligerents were whole-heartedly devoted to the task of ensuring victory in arms." Sheppard had long been aware of the preponderance of the defense over the attack in the Civil War. Before 1914, in keeping with the spirit of the times, he had stated that recent improvements in weapons, principally artillery, would render "the advantage of the assailant over the defender greater than at any time in the history of war." Now, however, remembering how the machine gun and trench had dominated the battlefields during the World War, Sheppard no longer placed such faith in more men and bigger guns. He found a remedy for the static trench warfare of 1914-1918 in a combination of the strategical offensive with the tactical defensive: Lee and Sherman had both "realized the advantages of either manoeuvring their adversary out of his chosen defensive positions, or inducing or forcing him to attack their own . . . . They, more often and more consistently than any of their comrades . . . found the right

60. The Campaign in Virginia and Maryland, pp. 24, 109.
answer to this primary problem." 61 As the first of the modern wars, the Civil War also illustrated the value of a judicious strategy of attrition, which Sheppard regarded as "the only really certain and effective weapon against a brave and determined people in arms." 62

Sheppard thus typifies the post-war view of the American Civil War. Like most of his contemporaries, his outlook was profoundly influenced by the recent war, an influence that is all the more apparent because he is the only British soldier to have written both in the shadow of Henderson and in the light of the World War. 63 He, too, viewed the Civil War as the prototype of modern warfare; he, too, endorsed a strategy of attrition. But Sheppard and the British differed from Continental writers in two important respects: they were more thorough in their research, and they tended to approach the Civil War more from a biographical point of view. They seem to have been primarily interested in problems of generalship and, like Lord Tweedsmuir, some of them

61. The American Civil War, pp. 18, 87-88. The World War had also changed Sheppard's views on cavalry. Before 1914 he had followed the party line by stressing Stuart's "combined fire and shock" tactics. The Campaigns in Virginia and Maryland, p. 43. After 1918 he maintained that Civil War cavalry "could rarely fight save dismounted, and found its best scope in strategical operations." The American Civil War, p. 18.

62. Ibid., pp. 152-155; Military History, pp. 37-38, 42.

63. J. E. Edmonds might also be considered common to both generations, if the second edition of his History of the Civil War in the United States is taken into consideration.
"fell in love with the protagonists." Sheppard was no exception, for he was the author of an impressionistic biography of General Forrest, in which he blended fact with fiction to give life to the characterization of the great Confederate cavalryman. His sole purpose was to present a realistic, life-like portrait of Forrest, not to use his subject's career "as a covert means for instruction in the military art." \(^6^4\)

This was not the case with two of the most prominent military writers of our times, Fuller and Liddell Hart -- particularly the latter -- whose respective studies on Grant and Sherman contained many fertile ideas "for instruction in the military art."

Without question the two greatest military theorists produced by the British Army in modern times are Major-General J. F. C. Fuller and Captain B. H. Liddell Hart. They deserve to rank alongside Hamley and Henderson. Both are lifelong students of war, and prolific, controversial and influential writers. Both have drawn many of their arguments from history, and, although occasionally accused of slanting history, they both produced good books on the Civil War. Their theories on armored warfare, largely ignored in Britain and in the United States, influenced the development of the German *Blitzkrieg* technique; their books,


2. Guderian, a German pioneer in armored warfare, writes that "it was principally the books and articles of the Englishmen, Fuller, Liddell Hart and Martel, that excited my interest and gave me food for thought. . . . I learned from them the concentration of armour. . . ." *Panzer Leader*, p. 20.
numerous and readable, have reached a vast civilian as well as military audience. No American soldier has written such stimulating books on the Civil War, and, just as no study of twentieth century warfare would be complete unless their writings are consulted, no interpretative history of the Civil War should be written without taking into account the basic ideas of Fuller and Liddell Hart.

Possessing what has been described as "the most brilliant and unorthodox speculative mind ... in the army," Fuller was one of the first exponents of armored warfare. In 1917 he had been instrumental in designing the successful tank assault at Cambrai (November 20), "a landmark in the history of war." After the war he wrote countless books and articles suggesting the great potentialities of the tank and urging mechanization of the British Army. Probably the most influential manual on mechanized warfare was Fuller's Lectures on Field Service Regulations III, published in 1932. While practically ignored in England, this book received wide attention in several foreign armies, and was studied with particular care both in Germany and Russia. In 1933 Fuller left the army, frustrated in his desire to play a more direct part in the mechanization of the army, and too much the "unconventional

4. Falls, A Hundred Years of War, p. 194.
5. Thirty thousand copies of the first edition were sold in Russia alone. Fuller, Armored Warfare. An Annotated Edition of Fifteen Lectures on Operations between Mechanized Forces (London, 1943), preface.
soldier" to avoid antagonizing his more orthodox superiors. 6

Like most British officers, Fuller "had been fed upon Hender¬
son's Stonewall Jackson": even before the war he had made a study
of the battle of Chancellorsville. 7 In the late 1920's, following
the trend in England, he became interested in the Civil War as
"the first of the modern wars," 8 and in Grant as an example of
modern generalship. Like Maurice, Fuller did not intend to write
a history of the Civil War or a detailed description of a partic¬
ular campaign. He believed that "the supreme value of military
history is to be sought in the personalities of the generals.
...
At base, seven-eighths of the history of war is psycholog¬
ical. Material conditions change, yet the heart of man changes
but little, if at all. . . . " 9 In The Generalship of Ulysses S.
Grant, first published in 1929, and Grant and Lee, which appeared
three years later, Fuller sought to examine the personality of a
general who, in his opinion, "had not received sufficient credit." 10

6. Fuller, Memoirs of an Unconventional Soldier (London,
1936), pp. 448-451. Additional information on the career and writ¬
ings of Fuller can be found in Lieut.-General Sir Giffard Martel,
An Outspoken Soldier His Views and Memoirs (London, 1949), passim; Walter H. Butler, "A Case in Preparedness," Armor (November-De-
cember, 1951), pp. 30-35.

7. Puller, Grant and Lee. A Study in Personality and Gen¬
eralship (London, 1932), p. 12; Memoirs of an Unconventional Sol¬
dier, p. 28.

8. "This war may be looked upon not only as the first of the
great rifle wars, for the Minié rifle dominated its tactics, but
the first of the modern wars; for though Federals and Confederates
started from a tactical zero line, before the war ended science
and industry dominated it. . . . " Fuller, The Dragon's Teeth. A
Study of War and Peace (London, 1932), p. 244.

9. Grant and Lee, p. 11.

10. Major-General J. F. C. Fuller to the writer, September 25,
It is not necessary to elaborate upon Fuller's evaluation of Grant and his comparison of that general with Lee. Considering the spirit which prompted him to write these books, it is scarcely surprising that Grant is compared most favorably with Lee and is described as "one of the greatest strategists of any age." Fuller believed that as the Civil War had generally been misunderstood, so had Grant as the Union Commander-in-Chief suffered injustice at the hands of historians. Like Henderson, Fuller stressed the psychological aspects of generalship, and in his zeal to correct the accepted impression of Grant as a general he, too, was guilty of overstating his case. Still, Fuller's books are as thought-provoking, as interestingly written, and as much alive as Stonewall Jackson. If, like Henderson, he occasionally insinuated himself into the narrative, it is no less true that no English officer since Henderson has displayed a keener insight into the general nature of the Civil War.

The most valuable military lesson of the Civil War, according to Fuller, was the strength of the rifle on the defensive.


12. As a result many of Fuller's conclusions are questioned by other students of the war. "Everything General Fuller writes is well worth reading, even if one disagrees with it. I am afraid I personally disagree with much of what he says. . . ." Sheppard, The American Civil War, pp. xv-xvi. Burne, also, cautions his readers that "criticisms" from such a source must receive close and careful attention." Lee, Grant and Sherman, p. 203. Freeman believed that Fuller had no understanding of many of the problems of the Confederacy, such as that of supply. Ibid., preface. Freeman also made a statement to the writer to this effect.

The rifle was the key to Civil War tactics.

It was the bullet which created the trench and rifle pit; which killed the bayonet; which rendered useless the sword, which chased away guns and horsemen . . . and which prevented the rapid decision of the battles of preceding centuries. In 1861-65 the rifle-bullet was the lord of the battlefield as was the machine gun bullet in 1914-18. 14

If neither Grant nor Lee had fully appreciated the significance of firepower, neither had Foch and his disciples fifty years later — a fact which Fuller regards as "the supreme tragedy of modern warfare." 15 Like Henderson and many writers before him, Fuller observed that only mobility could counteract the overwhelming superiority of the defensive. The Civil War had demonstrated the futility of frontal attacks; only assaults against an enemy's flank and rear had much prospect of success. "This does not mean that frontal attacks should be avoided, but that they should be mainly looked upon as holding attacks and not as decisive operations; as . . . tactical bases of operation upon which to pivot outflanking movements." 16

Fuller, as a military theorist, depended on the World War and his own experience with tanks for guidance in formulating his theory of mechanized warfare. He did not use the Civil War as a


soap box from which to project his own ideas about future warfare. Fuller, as a military historian, appreciated the Civil War as a revolutionary phase in the evolution of warfare, while his understanding of the military situation enabled him to see Grant in a different light. He was interested in the Civil War primarily for what it taught about generalship, which he considered "brilliant and instructive," and devoid of the usual professional pedantry. Sharply critical of British leadership in the World War and despairing the lack of imagination and foresight in rebuilding the army in the years that followed, he appreciated the resourcefulness and adaptability of the Civil War commanders, most of whom had managed to avoid the "professionalism" which "has so often proved itself to be the dry rot of armies." So Fuller looked to the Civil War, not for incidents to document his theories, but for kindred spirits who had been confronted with similar problems created by an earlier industrial revolution. The Civil War

17. This is evident in Fuller's more technical books, which include: The Reformation of War (London, 1923), The Foundations of the Science of War (London, 1925), On Future Warfare (London, 1928), and Armoured Warfare (London, 1943).


was a war born of steam-power, which changed not only the historical structure of nations, but the traditional structure of armies. Today we are faced by many similar changes; for it may be said . . . that we are now living in the throes of the second industrial revolution, a most powerful sequel which is daily adding to the might of coal and steam the might of oil and electricity.21

Thus Fuller regarded an appreciation of the Civil War as essential to an understanding of modern warfare; Liddell Hart, on the other hand, incorporated the teachings of the Civil War into his pet theory, "the strategy of the indirect approach," using the Civil War to illustrate points in practically all of his writings.

Liddell Hart was studying History at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, when the war broke out. Commissioned in 1914, he was wounded and gassed in the Somme offensive of 1916, and while recovering he wrote a book about this battle which was refused publication "on the ground that it gave too exact a picture." In 1918 he became known to General Sir Ivor Maxse, Inspector-General of Training of the British Armies in France, for his new "Battle Drill" system and other training methods. Through Maxse's influence Liddell Hart was asked to re-write the Infantry Training manual after the war -- he was then only twenty-four -- and his theories on infantry tactics, endorsed by Maxse,22 rapidly at-

21. Ibid., p. viii.

22. Liddell Hart's ideas "are not commonplace, and they deserve attention. . . . I hope this lecture will induce many battalion, and brigade commanders to make an effort to put this system into practice. . . ." Maxse, "Foreword," Liddell Hart, The Framework of a Science of Infantry Tactics (London, n. d.).
tracted attention. In 1924 he was invalided out of the army, and the following year, again because of the efforts of Maxse, a director of the Morning Post, he became a military correspondent, first for that paper, then (1925) for The Daily Telegraph and ultimately (1935) for The Times. As military correspondent, lecturer, military editor of the Encyclopedia Britannica, and author of many books and articles on a variety of military subjects, Liddell Hart soon became recognized "as the leading military writer in Britain." He had some influence in the creation of the first British Mechanized Force in 1927, and he was fre-


25. According to Martel, Liddell Hart's book entitled Paris -- or the Future of War (London, 1925), which stressed changing the army to a mechanized basis, so impressed Air Marshal Viscount Trenchard, that he sent a copy to General Sir George Milne, then Chief of the Imperial General Staff. "A little later Captain Liddell Hart spent two nights with General Milne . . . and discussed all these matters with him. After that Colonel Fuller was taken by General Milne as his Military Assistant. All was going well but things were moving slowly. We wanted to see our experimental mechanical force established but General Milne was being cautious even though the Secretary of State for War had announced in his Estimate speech that such a force was to be formed. Captain Liddell Hart then came out in the press with an article entitled 'Is there a mechanised force?' That article created a storm and the force was raised without further delay." An Outspoken Soldier, p. 52.
quently consulted in matters pertaining to the organization, training and equipment of the army. In the late 1930's, with the rearmament of Europe and ever-darkening war clouds threatening on the horizon, Liddell Hart was forced to concentrate more on matters of current interest, at the expense of military history and biography. During the Second World War he contributed regular war commentaries to the Daily Mail, and since the war has devoted himself to writing about recent military events and the awesome problems posed by the hydrogen bomb.

Through the years Liddell Hart has been motivated by two forces: the desire, almost a passion, to avoid a repetition of the useless slaughter of 1914-1918, and a belief in mobility as the key to future warfare. "Without mobility an army is but a corpse -- awaiting burial in a trench." As early as 1921, influenced partly by "discussions with ... Fuller," Liddell Hart had become "a convinced believer in mechanization." In the years that followed his main concern was to educate soldier and civilian alike on the future of armored warfare and the need for a "new model" army. At this time he gradually formulated his "strategy of the indirect approach," a theory which is woven into the fabric of all his writings.

26. Many of these are found in This Expanding War (London, 1942).
28. Information furnished by Liddell Hart.
The purpose of strategy, according to Liddell Hart, "is to diminish the possibility of resistance, and it seeks to fulfill this purpose by exploiting the elements of movement and surprise." "Movement" was made possible by mechanization, "surprise" by the indirect approach. Instead of the frontal attacks of 1914-1918, which had merely augmented the resistance of the defenders by pushing them back upon their own reserves and new defensive positions, Liddell Hart proposed striking the enemy's flank, or penetrating his lines with independent, armored columns, with the object of paralyzing "the opposing command, not the bodies of the actual soldiers." However, the indirect approach "by the very directness of its progress" might induce the enemy "to change his dispositions so that it soon becomes a direct approach to this new front." Hence he stressed the importance of "alternative objectives," threatening of two or more points simultaneously so as to force an opponent either to abandon one of them in order to defend the other, or place himself at a disadvantage by attempting to defend both -- a move very similar to the fork move in chess. To achieve flexibility in execution, Liddell Hart advocated what he called the "strategic net." An army should advance in wide, loosely grouped formations "like the

29. *Thoughts on War*, p. 231.
waving tentacles of an octopus," to distract the enemy and conceal the true objective of the campaign.

In advocating this "organized dispersion," Liddell Hart did not overlook the value of concentration. But, he pointed out, concentration against the enemy's main forces usually resulted in a frontal, direct attack with the advantage resting heavily on the side of the defensive. This would be a repetition of 1914-1918, which was exactly what Liddell Hart was anxious to avoid. To utilize the natural advantages of the defensive, Liddell Hart suggested the "baited gambit," the combination of offensive strategy with defensive tactics. "By rapidity of advance and mobility of manoeuvre, you may be able to seize points which the enemy, sensitive to the threat, will be constrained to attack." This, according to Liddell Hart, "throughout history . . . has proved one of the most effective of moves. . . ."33

Liddell Hart did not claim to have invented the strategy of the indirect approach. "Alternative objectives," "organized dispersion" and "the baited gambit" were his terms for strategems which had been used before in history. But he did organize these principles into a doctrine adaptable to mechanized war, and the

32. "Effective concentration can only be obtained when the opposing forces are dispersed; and usually, in order to ensure this, one's own forces must be widely distributed. Thus, by an outward paradox, true concentration is the fruit of dispersion." The British Way in Warfare, p. 107.

33. Thoughts on Warfare, p. 241.
theories which he has been expounding since the late 1920's sound very much like the Blitzkrieg of a later day.

This strategy of the indirect approach, with its many ramifications, had come from a searching examination of history for signposts to the revival of mobile warfare. Liddell Hart regarded history as a vital supplement to theory, and not merely as a quarry of examples to illustrate preconceived ideas. Like Henderson, his early books had tended to stress tactical questions. His interest in strategy developed as his knowledge of military history increased. In *Paris or the Future of War* (1925) Liddell Hart preached a doctrine of mobility. His biography of *Scipio Africanus* (1926) again stressed mobility "as an object-lesson to modern general staffs, shivering on the brink of mechanisation, fearful of the plunge despite the proved ineffectiveness of the older arms in their present form. . . ." Mobility is also the keynote of *Great Captains Unveiled* (1927) -- "the king pin of tactics, as of strategy." Substitute tanks for horses "and we might well regain the Mongol mobility and offensive power. . . ." But in none of these books, nor his Reputa-

34. "The practical value of history is to throw the film of the past through the material projector of the present on to the screen of the future." The Remaking of Modern Armies, p. 173.


tions which appeared in 1928, did Liddell Hart mention the "indirect approach" as such. The first clear-cut sign of this theory is found in a note of November 1927: "In exploring the field of military history certain deductions have emerged and are now sufficiently clear in my mind as to justify an attempt to formulate them. Among them is the theory of what may be termed 'the Strategy of Indirect Approach.'" 38

His further formulation of this theory seems to have coincided with his work on a biography of Sherman. First introduced to the Civil War through Henderson's Stonewall Jackson, "which was recommended to all young officers," 39 Liddell Hart saw that the American campaigns were rich in examples of surprise and mobility, of unexpected thrusts and skillful strategic combinations. 40

With the trench deadlock of 1914-1918 in mind, he became interested in "the ways in which a somewhat similar deadlock had been overcome, particularly in the West, and by Sherman." These campaigns "had a significant bearing on the problem of the revival of mobile warfare." It was at this point, in 1928, that an American publishing firm approached Liddell Hart about writing a book

38. Thoughts on War, p. 238. Throughout his life Liddell Hart has been a tidy keeper of files. It has been his practice to write down each reflection, date it, and file it for future reference. Thoughts on War is a collation of these, and it is possible to trace the development of Liddell Hart's theories by observing the date that accompanies each entry.


on one of the great leaders of the Civil War, "preferably Lee."
At the risk of some financial sacrifice, Liddell Hart wrote instead about Sherman. "The value of what I learnt from that piece of research," he wrote later, "was ample compensation."

Sherman particularly impressed Liddell Hart because he had been the only Civil War general who had followed consistently a strategy of indirect approach. Although Grant had used this approach in the campaign for Vicksburg, "the underlying lesson had not apparently impressed itself upon his mind," and he conducted his operations in Virginia the following year along the usual "direct overland approach" to Richmond. At first Sherman's strategy had also been orthodox, but the Vicksburg campaign had opened his eyes to the possibilities of a strategy which minimized fighting by upsetting -- mentally as well as physically -- the opponent, and by substituting mobility and deception for force. "Sherman had clearly grasped the truth that to roll the enemy along their communications means that their resistance will be solidified and expended by accretions like a snowball." In the Atlanta campaign Sherman, although committed to a direct line of approach because he was dependent upon a single railroad line for

41. Liddell Hart to the writer, September 7, 1950.

42. Liddell Hart qualified this generalization of Grant's strategy by explaining that the 1864 campaign was "in no sense a mere frontal push." Grant had used outflanking tactics, and had conducted his campaign according to "all the good military precepts." Liddell Hart, Sherman, Soldier, Realist, American (New York, 1929), pp. 272-273.

43. Ibid., p. 242.
supplies, had been able to maneuver his wary opponent, Johnston, out of successive defensive positions. Sherman's army had advanced "in a wide loose grouping or net," pliable yet at the same time sufficiently cohesive to prevent the Confederates from attacking an isolated section and defeating it in detail. In the subsequent march through Georgia and the Carolinas, Sherman had made further use of the "strategic net."

Moving on a wide and irregular front -- with four, five or six columns, each covered by a cloud of foragers -- if one was blocked, others would be pushing on. And the opposing forces in consequence became so "jumpy" that they repeatedly gave way to this moral pressure, and fell back before they felt any serious physical pressure, their minds so saturated with the impression of the uncanny manoeuvring power of Sherman and his men, that whenever they took up a position of resistance they were thinking about their way of retreat.

It was from the operations of Sherman that Liddell Hart first sensed the potentialities of the "baited gambit." In September 1928, while engaged in research on this book, he suggested the following principle:

It is advantageous for an armoured force to seek the enemy's rear before seeking battle. Thereby it may even draw the enemy into attacking it to gain relief -- and the power of an armoured force to crumple up such an attack, for which it has schemed, has potentialities not yet exploited. Sherman's Atlanta campaign of 1864, when, by manoeuvre, he repeatedly forced a reluctant enemy

44. Ibid., p. 253.
45. Ibid., p. 369.
to attack him, might well be studied by the armoured forces. 46

Six months later Liddell Hart developed this idea further:

A most striking example of the baited offensive was in the Atlanta campaign of 1864. Only once in all these weeks of manoeuvre did Sherman permit a frontal attack, at Kenesaw Mountain. . . . This, indeed, was the only occasion during the whole hundred miles advance through mountainous and river-intersected country that Sherman committed his troops to an offensive battle. Instead, he manoeuvred so skilfully as to lure the Confederates time after time into vain attacks, their repulse being ensured by the skill of his troops in rapid entrenching after gaining a vantage point. Thus to force an opponent acting on the strategic defensive, into a succession of costly tactical offensives, was a triumph of strategic artistry. 47

Sherman's march through Georgia also gave Liddell Hart his first clue to the use of "alternative objectives." In the Atlanta campaign Sherman had been forced to adhere to a single geographic objective -- Atlanta -- and to rely upon the so-called "strategic net" and "baited gambit" to keep his opponent off-balance. In his March to the Sea, however, he was able to advance along a line which threatened several geographic objectives at once, thus placing the Confederates repeatedly "on the horns of a dilemma." The Confederates were almost always in doubt as to Sherman's ultimate destination. He first kept them in doubt whether Macon or Augusta was his immediate objective, and then, passing north of Macon, whether he was headed for Augusta or Savannah. "And while Sherman


47. Ibid., p. 241. This "thought" is dated April 1929.
had his preference, he was ready to take the alternative objective if conditions favoured the change. The need did not arise, thanks to the uncertainty caused by his deceptive direction."

Following the march through Georgia, Sherman turned northward to the Carolinas. Once more he divided his opponents by compelling them to cover both Augusta and Charleston. Ignoring both cities, Sherman marched into Columbia, the center of Lee's best source of supply. Again the Confederates were uncertain as to whether Sherman intended to march upon Charlotte or Fayetteville. When he advanced from the latter place they did not know whether Raleigh or Goldsboro would be his next objective. "Sherman had sought and found a solution in variability, or elasticity -- the choice of a line leading to alternative objectives with the power to vary his course to gain whichever the enemy left open."\(^49\)

Sherman's significance in history was that "when he took over command he found a state of immobility prevailing and found a way to overcome it."\(^50\) Increased firepower, the consequent growth of entrenchments, and enormous logistic problems had been

\(^{48}\) Ibid., pp. 58-59, 242-243; Sherman, p. 315.

\(^{49}\) Ibid., p. 383. Sherman himself was aware that he was pursuing a strategy of alternative objectives. In the March to the Sea he had advanced on "divergent lines" in order "to threaten both Macon and Augusta at the same time. . . ." He also made a deliberate feint in the direction of Charlotte; "Of course, I had no purpose of going to Charlotte, for the right wing was already moving rapidly toward Fayetteville. . . ." Sherman, Memoirs, II, 177, 288.

\(^{50}\) The British Way in Warfare, p. 91; Thoughts on War, p. 191.
responsible for the deadlock of 1864, as in 1914-1918. The Civil War armies, like those of the World War, had grown "stagnant from their own bulk until Sherman showed the way back to mobility by a ruthless scrapping of transport and equipment." Both von Meerheimb and Henderson had been impressed by Sherman's gift for outflanking defensive positions: Liddell Hart stressed Sherman's offensive use of entrenchments. He explained how Sherman would extend his forces to cover a strategic position, rapidly entrench, and wait for the Confederates to attack him. He would then consolidate his position, use the entrenchments as a jumping-off point for his next maneuver, and repeat the process. Thus the technique of rapid entrenchment "can be developed to serve an offensive as well as a defensive purpose."

In formulating his theories on armored warfare, Liddell Hart considered the potentialities of mobile operations against the enemy's communications.

The very limited field of historical study which the British Army has cultivated in the past has given rise to a general impression, largely drawn from some reflections on "Jeb" Stuart's operations in Virginia, that raids on communications rarely repay the effort.

51. Liddell Hart consistently urged lightening the load carried by the English infantryman and the transport equipment of the armored forces. Something had to be "scrapped in the Sherman spirit" if modern armies were "to be capable of moving." Anxious to achieve greater mobility, the British Army in 1931 devoted its principle training exercises to what was called a "Sherman march," to see how far it was practicable to reduce military transport. Ibid., p. 193; The British Way in Warfare, pp. 239-241; Sherman, p. 331.

52. Thoughts on War, p. 273. According to Liddell Hart, Lee developed a similar technique.
or detachment of force. A more thorough knowledge, even of the American Civil War, especially in the main Western campaign, would serve as a useful corrective to such assumptions. Such raids frequently had a crippling effect on the opposing army's plans.53

In 1935, during a discussion with General Sir Archibald Wavell on the use of armored forces, the subject of Civil War cavalry entered the conversation. Wavell argued that the operations of Stuart's cavalry showed the error "of using mobile forces independently instead of confining them to co-operation in the main battle." Raids had achieved little, and the absence of the Union cavalry at Chancellorsville and the Confederate cavalry at Gettysburg had been a contributing factor in the outcome of both battles. Liddell Hart agreed with these examples, but contended that this had not been the case in the west, "where Forrest had often carried out such independent operations with great effect, hamstringing the opposing army" by "cutting its communications."

As a result of this conversation, Liddell Hart wrote a paper for Wavell on the cavalry operations in the west, "with special ref-

53. Ibid., p. 55. For the views of British military writers who had opposed the idea of the cavalry raid, see Battine, Crisis of the Confederacy, pp. 315, 370, 292-293; Chesney, Campaigns in Virginia, II, 107-108; Military Biography, p. 112; Fletcher, History of the American War, III, 355; Wolseley, "English View," CXLVIII, 538, CXLIX, 292. Those who approved the raid in principle but recognized that it was a "two edged weapon" which must be used carefully include Atkinson, Grant's Campaign of 1864, p. 370; "American Civil War," p. 528. Only Maguire, "The American War," The Illustrated Naval and Military Magazine, IV, New Series (February, 1890), 263; and Henderson, Science of War, pp. 56-57, had favored assigning such a strategic role to cavalry. The Germans, it will be remembered, had nearly all condemned the raid; the French, particularly after 1870, had nearly all favored it, with qualifications.
ference to raids on communications." In studying the cavalry operations of Grierson, Wheeler, Forrest and Kilpatrick, Liddell Hart noted that when acting in close cooperation with the army, the cavalry had "proved ineffective in its offensive action." It had been of greatest value "in seizing unoccupied points quickly, and holding them until relieved by infantry." But, when used independently, cavalry "was occasionally of great effect, if more often negligible."

Analysis of such operations ... shows that the effect of interrupting communications is much greater, and more quickly felt, if made against an army that is in motion and in course of carrying out an operation than against an army that is stationary. Analysis also suggests that the further back a mobile stroke is aimed, the greater is apt to be its effect, and the less the risk of the stroke itself being interrupted -- because the ratio of possible opposition will almost certainly be less. It is also worth weighing that, while a stroke close to the rear of the opposing army is apt to have more effect on the minds of the enemy's troops, a stroke farther back tends to have more effect on the mind of the enemy commander -- and it is in the minds of commanders that the issue of battles is really decided.


55. Thoughts on War, p. 53. Liddell Hart wrote this in 1928.

He saw no reason why these mobile raids could not be duplicated on a larger scale against "armies whose communications can be reached by aircraft, airborne engineers, or tanks."\textsuperscript{57} While this concept of "deep strategic penetration" was first developed in his study of the Mongol campaigns, Sherman and Forrest enabled Liddell Hart "to see more clearly its application against modern mass armies, dependent on railroads for supply. . . ."\textsuperscript{58}

Liddell Hart actually learned something from military history. Many of his theories were still embryonic when he commenced his biography of Sherman; within a year his "strategy of the indirect approach" emerged in its mature form, and the "baited gambit" and the principle of "alternative objectives" can be traced directly to this study.\textsuperscript{59} Sherman had also demonstrated that mobility was the key to the trench deadlock; his methods seemed to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{57} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 76.
\item \textsuperscript{58} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 131-132, 194, 267. Liddell Hart gave a copy of his "Analysis of Cavalry Operations in the American Civil War" to Brigadier-General (now Major-General Sir Percy) Hobart, then commanding the British tank forces. In 1935 and again the following year, the exercises of the First Tank Brigade under Hobart "were devoted to practising such deep drives into the enemy's back area, and against his communications." Information obtained in correspondence with Liddell Hart. German tank enthusiasts, particularly Guderian, copied "every move" of this demonstration in their own maneuvers. General von Thoma related to Liddell Hart after the war how the German tank officers had "followed with keen interest the pioneer activities of the original British tank brigade [Hobart's]." Quoted in Liddell Hart, \textit{The Other Side of the Hill} (revised and enlarged edition, London, 1951), pp. 66, 121.
\item \textsuperscript{59} For confirmation of this statement see \textit{Ibid.}, p. 36; \textit{Thoughts on War}, p. 244.
\end{itemize}
offer an alternative to the costly and futile attacks of the World War. The same year that Sherman was published Liddell Hart wrote The Decisive Wars of History, in which he examined other wars for confirmation of these theories. This study convinced him more than ever "that throughout the ages decisive results in war have only been reached when the approach has been indirect." 60 He now used his theories to measure other campaigns of the Civil War. The opening moves in Virginia, Pope's overland advance in 1862, and McClellan's Peninsular campaign (a case wherein an indirect approach became direct when the Confederates changed their dispositions to meet McClellan's advance) were cited to show the ineffectiveness of the direct approach, while Lee's maneuvers before second Bull Run and Grant's campaign for Vicksburg were examples of what could be accomplished by indirection. In his biography of Foch, perhaps his best historical work, Liddell Hart pointed out that Foch could have learned much from studying the Civil War, which he now regarded as "the signpost that was missed" by the majority of the pre-1914 theorists. 61

In 1935 Liddell Hart became Military Correspondent for The Times, and most of the books and articles he wrote after that date concerned England's defenses, recent military developments at home.


61. Liddell Hart, Foch The Man of Orléans (Boston, 1932); pp. 30-31; The British Way in Warfare, pp. 74-92.
and abroad, the wars in Abyssinia and Spain, and the course England should follow if war were to come. In 1937-1938, as an unofficial adviser to Mr. Hore-Belisha during the latter's first year as War Minister, Liddell Hart became involved in a series of army reforms. When these reforms were not being energetically pursued, he dissolved this "partnership" "so as to be free to apply the spur of public criticism to the inadequate efforts of the new military regime in the War Office." He also resigned from The Times over a difference in foreign policy. His most controversial book, The Defence of Britain, "an attempted last-hour warning against courses of action likely to lead to disaster" in the impending war, was thrown together "within a month" and published six weeks later.  

During these years Liddell Hart was severely criticized for urging limited liability on the continent and for what many thought to be an over-emphasis on a defensive type of warfare.  

It is not necessary to take sides in this dispute, but it is significant to note that Liddell Hart has been criticized primarily for specific recommendations he made with respect to England and the international situation before 1940, and not for his earlier and more detached views on mechanized warfare.

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62. "Outline of Memoirs." Copy furnished the writer by Liddell Hart. Liddell Hart "collapsed from exhaustion" while reading the proofs.

63. This controversy is briefly summarized in Gibson, "Maginot and Liddell Hart," pp. 381-385. See also Liddell Hart, The Current of War (London [1940]), pp. 180-194.
It is not within the scope of this work to ascertain the influence of Liddell Hart upon contemporary military thought. Certainly this influence has been considerable. If Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery was not actually influenced by Liddell Hart, he at least subscribed to the same general theories:

Under Montgomery's theory the old slogging match was out. Stealth and cunning were far more important than the massing of overwhelming numbers. One must never strike directly at important objectives, but go around them. The cutting edge of the Army must consist of strong highly trained and highly mobile columns, capable of making narrow but deep penetrations and then fanning out in the rear of the enemy line. 64

Major-General Eric Dorman-Smith, deputy Chief of the General Staff in the Middle East, 1942, wrote a foreword to the 1946 edition of The Strategy of the Indirect Approach in which he stated that Liddell Hart's ideas had influenced the course of events in Egypt in our favour at two crucial times between 1940 and 1942. For the plan of attack that led to the annihilation of Graziani's army at Sidi Barrani, and broke the first invasion of Egypt in 1940, was a perfect example of . . . [the] strategy of indirect approach, while the defensive strategy and tactics that foiled Rommel's invasion at El Alamein in July 1942 was more immediately inspired by it. 65

64. Alan Moorehead, Montgomery (New York, 1946), p. 64. There is possibly a connecting link between Liddell Hart and Montgomery in the person of Major-General Sir Francis de Guingand, Montgomery's Chief of Staff, who, like Liddell Hart, had been one of the group around Hore Belisha at the War Ministry in 1939. Liddell Hart and de Guingand were evidently on familiar terms. Major-General Sir Francis de Guingand, Operation Victory (New York, 1947), p. 235.

Rommel apparently was receptive to Liddell Hart's theories on "the tactical consequences of motorisation and armour"; Guderian was "deeply impressed" by Liddell Hart's theories on "the use of armoured forces for long-range strokes, operations against the opposing army's communications," and his proposed "type of armoured division combining panzer and panzer-infantry units." Many of Liddell Hart's books were translated into German before the war, and from his numerous conversations with captured German generals in 1945, it is apparent that these books had been read. "Sherman's methods also fired General Patton's imagination, particularly with regard to the way that they exploited the indirect approach and the value of cutting down impedimenta in order to gain mobility." Inasmuch as Guderian, who led the strategic drive that cut the communications of the Allied armies in 1940, referred to Liddell Hart as his "first teacher in tank tactics and strategy," and General Manteuffel, who engineered the Ardennes

66. Liddell Hart, ed., The Rommel Papers (New York, 1953), pp. 203, 299. According to a Publisher's Note, this explains why "the Rommel family was particularly anxious" that Liddell Hart edit the English edition of Krieg ohne Hass.


68. When Liddell Hart met Patton in 1944, Patton related "how he had earlier spent a long leave studying Sherman's campaigns on the ground" with Liddell Hart's Sherman "in hand." They discussed "the possibilities of applying such methods in modern warfare." "General Wood, who commanded ... the 4th Armoured Division, was another enthusiast for these ideas, and on reaching the Seine wrote to tell me how successful their application had proved. Liddell Hart, The Other Side of the Hill, p. 36.
break-through of December 1944, considers him "the creator of modern tank strategy," it would appear that Sherman's contribution to modern mechanized warfare did not end with the naming of an American tank.

69. These statements appear on the dust jacket of *Strategy: The Indirect Approach*. 
Chapter XIV

CONCLUSIONS

When seen by foreign eyes the Civil War appeared in various images. Often these reflected existing problems or conditions in one or another of the European armies. Before 1870 British soldiers, mindful of the recent Volunteer Movement in England, were especially interested in the volunteer soldier in America; German soldiers were struck by the poor organization and lack of training in the Civil War armies; while the French, conscious of the excellent reputation of their army, stressed details in army administration and equipment. It is probably not altogether a coincidence that the best balanced, though not the most detailed, analysis of a Civil War army by an official observer was by a Swiss officer, Ferdinand Lecomte -- and he was more conscious of the wartime problems of a Federal Republic than any other European soldier.  

The published official reports of Ferdinand Lecomte, Justus Scheibert and General DeChenal, together with the numerous articles written by official observers of the British Army, show that the European armies were interested in the technological rather than the military developments of the Civil War. They wished to learn about the strength of various metals, ballistics, the power of rifled artillery and developments in earthen fortifications. They were impressed by the McClellan saddle, railroad artillery, the observation balloon and other new inventions or developments in arms and equipment. They were interested, too, in matters of army organization and administration -- the most notable example being the Union Railroad Construction Corps. For quite understandable reasons they were only casually concerned with tactics and strategy. Most of the observers, official and otherwise, were in America during the first two years of the war, before the beginning of the trench warfare of 1864; many of them -- Lord Wolseley, Captain Hewett and Lord Hartington are obvious examples -- witnessed only an occasional minor skirmish. Most European soldiers were also inclined to dismiss or at least to minimize innovations in tactics and strategy because the Civil War was unlike any campaign which had been -- or was likely to be -- fought in Europe. Many of them undoubtedly felt that Civil War tactics represented simply a corruption of European and particularly French tactics: it was common knowledge that both Union and Confederate soldiers had been trained according to regulations adopted from the French. European soldiers did recognize the special importance of logistics in the American campaigns, and
all of them took notice of the role of railroads.

The Civil War was soon replaced as a testing ground for modern weapons. The Danish War of 1864 probably attracted more European attention in this respect than did the Civil War, especially in the case of rifled artillery. The campaigns of the Austro-Prussian (1866) and Franco-Prussian Wars (1870-1871) seemed to teach more valuable lessons in both tactics and strategy: they were more recent, they had been fought under European conditions, and -- more important -- they had been fought with breech-loading rifles.

After 1871 the Germans were the first to re-evaluate the lessons of the Civil War. This may indicate only a more active interest in military history than in France or England; but at least the Germans studied the Civil War intelligently and their writings document the importance of the official Prussian observer, Major Justus Scheibert. The French became interested in the Civil War a decade later, probably as a result of the cavalry controversy that continued until the eve of the first World War. After 1870 the English lost interest in the Civil War completely, until the appearance of G. F. R. Henderson's Campaign of Fredericksburg, which happened to coincide with the efforts of such prominent soldiers as Lord Wolseley and Colonel Frederick Maurice to get the British Army to study the campaigns and methods of other armies besides the German. Henderson's Stonewall Jackson became a military classic, and the Civil War became a favorite cramming subject for British officers studying to pass the Officer Promotion Examinations.
What European soldiers wrote about the Civil War after 1870 reveals as much about their own armies as about the war itself. The Germans, opposed on principle to improvised armies, continued to stress the lack of adequate training and a general staff in the American armies. Except for isolated individuals, their interest in the Civil War ceased as their military leaders searched for a strategy of quick military victory to avoid a war of attrition. Before 1870 French soldiers, wedded to the idea of a long-term, professional army, had also been critical of improvised armies: after that date, however, they were more receptive to the idea of short-term conscription and no longer discounted the tactical lessons of the Civil War. Their failure in the Franco-Prussian War, particularly in the handling of cavalry, also gave them a greater interest in Civil War tactics than before. The interests of England, after the German spell had been broken, were those of a nation dependent upon sea power and a small volunteer army. English soldiers could learn more about these matters from the Civil War than from the wars for German unification.

The World War revealed the lessons European soldiers might have learned from the campaigns of 1861-1865. It showed that lance and saber cavalry was dead, and that the best answer to the bullet was the trench. Contemporary observers of the Civil War campaigns as well as those who studied them before 1914 had been aware of these developments. But either they had not grasped the underlying reasons for them, or they had erred in emphasis; a few -- only a few -- had understood their full significance. These lessons, however clear after 1914, were obscured at the time of
the Civil War because most of the observers visited the wrong place at the wrong time, and because the war itself was regarded as unique. Dismounted tactics and entrenchments had not played as prominent a part on the battlefields of 1866 and 1870-1871, although both were in evidence in these campaigns as well, and from 1870 until the World War they were stressed by most writers only insofar as they harmonized with official doctrine.

Among the European soldiers who observed or studied the Civil War, several emerge as key figures. Certainly Scheibert, whose analysis of the military situation was for the most part sound, set the pattern for all subsequent study of the Civil War in Germany. He must have been to a great extent responsible for the flurry of Civil War studies that appeared in Germany in the 1870's, and no German soldier since has ever questioned his interpretations. DeChenal and F. P. Vigo Roussillon, who wrote one of the best of the contemporary analyses of the Civil War, were the standard French authorities on the Civil War, although their influence upon later writers was less. Sir Harry Havelock and Lieutenant-Colonel George T. Denison were the most influential English students of the Civil War before Henderson. Undoubtedly they were responsible for the conversion of Lord Wolseley and Charles Cornwallis Chesney to the idea of mounted infantry. Henderson's significance cannot be overstated: he re-introduced the study of the Civil War in England, he was in a position to influence a whole generation of British officers, and he understood why the American cavalry had fought on foot and the infantry behind breastworks. Unfortunately his observations on these two
points were lost upon most of his students. Of all these writers, however, only the modern theorist, Captain B. H. Liddell Hart, actually incorporated lessons from the Civil War into his theories. From the standpoint of the development of his own military thought, Sherman was probably the most important book that he wrote.

There were others who, less influential, were often more discerning in their analysis of the Civil War. Of these the French Captain Auger is the foremost example. From his study of the Civil War Auger foresaw the trench warfare of 1914-1918 twenty years beforehand, but his reasoning fell on deaf ears. Captain de Thomasson's study of Stuart's cavalry convinced him that those who saw the next war as beginning with a series of mounted combats between cavalry were overlooking the value of dismounted action and its importance in reconnaissance, but he, too, was out of step. The novelist Karl Bleibtreu is the only German student of the Civil War to qualify as a prophet, and of Henderson's pupils in England Major J. E. Edmonds alone was aware of the importance of entrenchments in modern war.

Of the many books and articles which European soldiers have written about the Civil War, only a few deserve recognition for their historical merits. The works of Major F. Mangold and Henderson, among the early writers, are still good history. The works of Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, Major-General J. F. C. Fuller and Captain Liddell Hart have been supplemented but not replaced by American scholars. The Comte de Paris made an honest attempt to write an objective account of the Civil War, but he was biased and many of the more basic sources, such as the Official
Records, were not available to him until his last volumes. Scheibert's early writings, which contain eyewitness accounts as well as his professional views on military topics, have been used by only a handful of historians, and the book Scheibert and Heros von Borcke wrote on Brandy Station is still "the most comprehensive narrative" of that battle. Both Auger and Thomasson did original research, yet their analyses of the development of trench warfare and dismounted cavalry tactics are all but forgotten. Of the generation of British officers that wrote in the shadow of Henderson, W. Birkbeck Wood and J. E. Edmonds' History of the Civil War is still by far the soundest and the most perceptive historical work, though the studies of Captain Battine, Major Redway and Captain Sheppard have not completely outlived their usefulness.

Seen through foreign eyes, some of the military developments in the Civil War take on an added significance for Americans. Few American students have been aware of the great importance of coastal defense in 1861-1865 or of the impact of Major-General Q. A. Gillmore's Engineer and Artillery Operations against the Defences of Charleston Harbor in every European army. Von Schelihat's Treatise on Coast-Defence is virtually unknown in this country. Similarly most Americans are unaware of the real significance of the Civil War cavalry and the extent of the controversy it set off

2. Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, III, 820.
both in the United States and in Europe. There seems to be room for a thorough study of cavalry operations in the Civil War to determine whether there actually was a difference in the tactics of Stuart, Sheridan and Forrest, and to evaluate the real effectiveness of the strategic cavalry raid. A similar study ought to be made on the evolution of artillery: the Civil War occurred during the transition from the smooth-bore to the rifled gun, and there were doubtless many problems which the American artillerists learned to solve in the course of four years' experience.

The tourist traveling abroad often learns more about his own country than about the places he has visited. These foreign writers more securely place the Civil War as a milestone in the history of man's efforts to destroy himself.
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The greatest bibliographical aid has been the service journals. Not only do these review important military books; many of them also list articles appearing concurrently in similar publications in other countries. They are a generally neglected gold mine of information, containing notes on developments in the various European armies, articles both technical and historical, and occasionally even minutes of the discussion following the presentation of a professional paper. The following military periodicals have been indispensable both in locating works of Civil War interest and in supplying information about the English, French and German armies. The dates given indicate the volumes which have actually been consulted.

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# Autobiographical Sketch

## Born

- **June 15, 1927.**
- Erie, Pennsylvania.

## Education

- Allegheny College
  - A. B. 1949
- Duke University
  - M. A. 1951
- Candidate for Ph. D., Duke University, 1956

## Personal

- U. S. Navy.
  - June 1945-August 1946
- Director, The George Washington Flowers Memorial Collection of Southern Americana
  - September 1952 --

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