

Hunter's Raid on VMI, June 1864
Union Operations Report, June – July 1864

This text is from the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (O.R.)-- SERIES I--VOLUME XXXVII/1 [S# 70] MAY 26- JUNE 29, 1864--The Lynchburg Campaign. No. 1.--Reports of Maj. Gen. David Hunter, U.S. Army, commanding Department of West Virginia, including operations June 2-July 14.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF WEST VIRGINIA,
Camp near Staunton, Va., June 8, 1864.

GENERAL: I have the honor to report that on my arrival at Harrisonburg, on the afternoon of the 2d instant, I found the enemy occupying a strong intrenched position at Mount Crawford, on the North River, where it is crossed by the Valley turnpike, his right at Rockland Mills, and his left at Bridgewater.

I spent the following day in ascertaining the enemy's force and position, and early on the morning of the 4th, after sending a force of cavalry to amuse him, I moved my column by a side road and crossed the Shenandoah at Port Republic. This movement was so little expected that we found a large supply train of the enemy at this place, and our advance cavalry captured a part of it, with supplies and horses.

I encamped about one mile south of Port Republic, and on the morning of the 5th, at an early hour, advanced on the Staunton road. At 6 a.m. my advanced cavalry met that of the enemy, and after a sharp skirmish drove them, with a loss of 75 men killed, wounded, and missing. At the village of Piedmont, seven miles southwest of Port Republic, I found the enemy in force advantageously posted.

The battle opened with artillery at 9 a.m., the enemy using several guns of long range and heavy caliber. At 10 o'clock the First Brigade of Infantry, under Colonel Moor, advanced on our right and drove the enemy from his advanced position in a wood behind his line of defenses constructed of fallen timber and fence rails. Colonel Thoburn, with the Second Brigade of Infantry, took position on elevated ground on our left, supporting the batteries and ready for action where most needed. At 11.30 the fine practice of our artillery had silenced the enemy's batteries, and the cavalry, under Major-General Stahel, was massed in rear of the infantry on our right.

At 1 o'clock the First Brigade attacked the enemy's line in front, but failed to carry it, and fell back after a spirited contest. At 1.30 the enemy was observed to be massing his force on our right, opposite the first Brigade, and orders were immediately sent to Colonel Thoburn to move his brigade across the open valley between, and attack the enemy's position in flank. At 2 p.m. the enemy made a determined attack on the First Brigade, which gallantly sustained itself, assisted by Von Kleiser's battery and a cross-fire from Morton's and Carlin's batteries on our left. Meanwhile Thoburn's brigade, having crossed the valley, fell upon the enemy's exposed flank with decisive effect, crushing his whole line and driving a portion of his force over the steep bank into the river, which covered his left. Simultaneously Colonel Moor's brigade rushed over the works in front, and a brigade of cavalry, under Colonel Wynkoop, charged upon his right flank and rear. The enemy fled in confusion, leaving over 1,000 prisoners in our hands, including 60 officers.

The killed and wounded are estimated at 600 men. Brig. Gen. William E. Jones, commanding forces, was killed on the field and his body fell into our hands. From papers found upon his person it is ascertained that the enemy's force was between 6,000 and 7,000 men, and 16 guns, among them two 20-pounder Parrotts, and one 24-pounder howitzer. In addition to his loss upon the field, the enemy in his

precipitate retreat lost an equal number at least by straggling and desertion. General Vaughn, upon whom the command devolved, fell back upon Waynesborough with the wreck of his army.

On the next day, June 6, I occupied Staunton without opposition, capturing 400 sick and wounded, who were paroled, and large quantities of commissary and ordnance stores, which were destroyed or distributed among the troops. All the railroad bridges and depots, and public workshops and factories in the town and vicinity, were also destroyed. A rebel force under General McCausland and Col. William L. Jackson, stationed at Buffalo Gap, to oppose the advance of General Crook, on hearing of our occupation of Staunton, fell back precipitately and escaped southward. General Crook, with his whole command, in fine condition, joined me to-day, having brushed away the enemy's corps of observation and destroyed the Virginia Central Railroad west of this place.

These results have been accomplished with a loss to this command of less than 500 men in killed and wounded. On the march and in action the troops have behaved admirably. The combined force, now in fine spirits and condition, will move day after to-morrow to the accomplishment of its mission.

I am, general, very respectfully, your most obedient servant.

D. HUNTER,
Major-General.
ADJUTANT-GENERAL U.S. ARMY.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF WEST VIRGINIA,
Harper's Ferry, August 8, 1864.

GENERAL: I have the honor to submit the following report of operations in this department since my last, of date June 8, forwarded from Staunton, Va.:

On the day after the defeat of Jones at Piedmont, I marched on Staunton (June 6) and occupied the town without opposition, the enemy, with the shattered remnant of his army, having retreated to Waynesboro and Rockfish Gap, in the Blue Ridge, ready to fall back on Charlottesville and Gordonsville if pursued. At Staunton I destroyed a large amount of public stores, consisting of shoes, saddles, harness, and clothing, 3 cannon and about 1,000 stand of small-arms, also several extensive establishments for the manufacture of army clothing and equipments. I also had the Virginia Central Railroad entirely destroyed for several miles east and west of the town, burning all the depot buildings, shops, and warehouses belonging to the road. About 500 prisoners (for the most part wounded and invalids) fell into our hands here.

On the 8th I was joined by the forces under Generals Crook and Averell, about 10,000 men, with two batteries. This command, returning from a successful raid on the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad and moving to join me at Staunton, had struck the line of the Virginia Central at Goshen and had totally destroyed this road as they marched to the point of junction, making in all a total destruction of the road for a distance of fifty miles. From this point I sent back by way of Buffalo Gap and Beverly a convoy of wagons, prisoners, and refugees, guarded by 800 men whose term of enlistment had expired, the whole under the command of Col. A. Moor, of the Twenty-eighth Ohio Volunteer Infantry.

Having rested and reorganized the combined forces under my command I started on the 10th toward Lexington, moving up the Valley in four columns by roads nearly parallel. The infantry division under General Crook, and the cavalry division under General Averell, moving on the right-hand road, were opposed by McCausland, with about 2,000 mounted men and a battery.

He was easily driven, however, and on the 11th took refuge in the town of Lexington, behind the North River, a tributary of the James. Generals Crook and Averell arriving about midday on the 11th, found the bridge across this stream burnt, and the crossing disputed by sharpshooters and artillery. The infantry division under General Sullivan, which moved on the road to the left, and which I accompanied in person, had met with no enemy thus far, but at the sound of Crook's guns moved rapidly forward and took position in front of the town. I found the enemy's sharpshooters posted among the rocks and thickets of the opposite cliffs and in some store-houses at the bridge, and also occupying the buildings of the Virginia Military Institute, which stood near the river. Their artillery was screened behind the buildings of the town, and on some heights just beyond it the whole position was completely commanded by my artillery (thirty guns).

This unsoldierly and inhuman attempt of General McCausland to defend an indefensible position against an overwhelming force by screening himself behind the private dwellings of women and children, might have brought justifiable destruction upon the whole town, but as this was not rendered imperative by any military necessity, I preferred to spare private property and an unarmed population. Instead of crushing the place with my artillery, I sent General Averell with a brigade of cavalry to cross the river some distance, and fall upon the enemy's flank and rear. Before this movement was completed, the enemy perceived it and hastily retired on the road toward Buchanan. The battalion of Cadets, about 250 muskets, took part in the defense and retired by the Balcony Falls road toward Lynchburg. I was told that Colonel Smith, principal of the Institute, and commanding the Cadets, protested against the attempted defense as entirely futile, purposeless, and unnecessarily exposing the town and its helpless inhabitants to danger and destruction. In occupying this place a few prisoners were taken, 5 pieces of cannon, with numerous caissons and gun carriages, some small-arms, and a quantity of ammunition fell into our hands and were destroyed; 6 barges laden with commissary stores, artillery ammunition, and 6 pieces of cannon were captured and destroyed on the James River Canal near the town. A number of extensive iron-works in the vicinity were burned.

On the 12th I also burned the Virginia Military Institute and all the buildings connected with it. I found here a violent and inflammatory proclamation from John Letcher, lately Governor of Virginia, inciting the population of the country to rise and wage a guerrilla warfare on my troops, and ascertaining that after having advised his fellow-citizens to this course the ex-Governor had himself ignominiously taken to flight, I ordered his property to be burned under my order, published May 24, against persons practicing or abetting such unlawful and uncivilized warfare. Having had information that a train of 200 wagons, loaded with supplies and guarded by two regiments of infantry, was en route following our march, I delayed one day in Lexington to allow it time to overtake us. I had also begun to feel anxious in regard to Duffié, from whom I had not definitely heard for two days.

While awaiting news from Duffié, on the 13th I sent Averell forward to Buchanan with orders to drive McCausland out of the way and, if possible, secure the bridge over the James River at that place. Before starting General Averell detached a party of 200 picked men, with orders to ride around Lynchburg, cutting the railroad communication and obtaining all possible information of the enemy.

On the afternoon of the 13th General Duffié arrived and made a report of his operations in person. On the 10th he had moved from Staunton simultaneously with the other columns. A regiment sent to demonstrate toward Waynesboro drove the enemy through that place and then followed the division by the road running southward along the western base of the Blue Ridge. Driving a small force from White's Gap, General Duffié crossed the ridge and came upon the Charlottesville and Lynchburg railroad, menacing Lynchburg from the vicinity of Amherst Court-House, and breaking the road at Arrington Station. He was followed from Waynesboro by a large mounted force under Imboden, who, however, never hazarded a general attack, and who was signally defeated in every attempt to harass or impede the movements of our troops. In addition to the damage done to the railroad, General Duffié captured 100 prisoners, about 500 horses, and destroyed large quantities of stores and a considerable portion of Imboden's train. He returned by Tye River Gap, without serious loss.

On this day I received positive information from a scout that Breckinridge was in command of the rebel forces at Rockfish Gap, while from prisoners and others we had rumors that a formidable rebel force was hastening toward the Valley from Richmond, and that Sheridan had met with a reverse near Louisa Court-House. At the same time I had assurance that there was no considerable force of the enemy in or near Lynchburg.

On the morning of the 14th I moved with my whole command toward Buchanan, and on arriving there found it occupied by Averell. He had driven McCausland sharply from the place, capturing some prisoners and a number of canal barges laden with stores, but had not succeeded in saving the bridge. As there was a convenient and accessible ford at hand the advance of the army was not retarded by its loss. In view of this fact and of the danger incurred to private property the inhabitants of the village protested against the burning of the bridge, but McCausland, with his characteristic recklessness, persisted in the needless destruction, involving eleven private dwellings in the conflagration. The farther progress of this needless devastation was stopped by the friendly efforts of our troops, who extinguished the flames.

On the 15th I moved from Buchanan, crossing the Blue Ridge by the Peaks of Otter road. This road was blockaded by felled trees, and our advance feebly contested by some light parties of the enemy. It was, however, easily cleared, and on the evening of the same day my cavalry occupied Liberty, the county town of Bedford, on the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, twenty-four miles from Lynchburg. At this point the detachment of picked men (200), which had been sent out by General Averell from Lexington to make the circuit of Lynchburg, reported, having accomplished their perilous undertaking with trifling loss. Moving eastward from Lexington they crossed the Blue Ridge and struck the Charlottesville railroad near Amherst Court-House, tearing up the track for a short distance. Thence moving southeastward they crossed the James River below Lynchburg, destroying the South Side Railroad for a short distance, and burning two trains at Concordia Station; from thence making a circuit within a few miles of Lynchburg they turned westward, meeting the advance of the main army at Liberty.

Neither from this scouting party nor from other sources could we obtain any clear or reliable information in regard to the enemy. Through rebel channels we had exaggerated rumors of disasters to our armies both under Sherman and Grant. Some reported that Sheridan had been defeated near Louisa Court-House, while others said that he was already in Lynchburg. Negro refugees just from the town represented that it was occupied only by a few thousand armed invalids and militia, and that its inhabitants in the greatest panic were fleeing with their movable property by every available route. At the same time, from other sources equally worthy of respect, we were assured that all the rebel forces

of West Virginia were concentrated there under Breckinridge, and that Ewell's corps of veteran troops, 20,000 strong, had already re-enforced them.

To develop the truth I determined to advance on Lynchburg immediately. Early on the 16th General Duffié moved with his cavalry on the Forestville road, sending a strong reconnaissance toward Balcony Falls to ascertain the truth of a report which located a considerable force of the enemy at that point. General Crook's division of infantry moved by the railroad, destroying it effectually as they marched.

General Averell led the advance on the Bedford turnpike, followed by Sullivan's infantry, the reserve artillery, and the baggage train. General Averell continued to drive McCausland before him, but in the afternoon reported that the enemy had been re-enforced, and was becoming stubborn. Encamped at night near the Bedford turnpike, seven miles east of Liberty, my cavalry advance near the Great Otter River. From this point I sent back the supply train of 200 wagons which had overtaken us at Lexington. Colonel Putnam, with his regiment of Ohio 100-days' volunteers, was detailed to guard it, and the train put under the direction of Captain McCann, assistant quartermaster. This train was accompanied by a large number of loyal refugees, both whites and negroes, and the route proposed for its return to our lines was by way of New Castle, Sweet Springs, Lewisburg, and Charleston, Kanawha. During the night received information from General Averell that he had had a sharp contest with the enemy at New London and had driven him, but that he had evidently been re-enforced and was becoming aggressive.

Early in the morning of the 17th orders were given for the troops to move, but the march was delayed for several hours at the Great Otter River, owing to the difficulty in crossing the artillery, and in consequence we did not overtake the enemy until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. At that hour Averell's advance came upon the enemy, strongly posted and entrenched at Diamond Hill, five miles from Lynchburg. He immediately attacked, and a sharp contest ensued. Crook's infantry arriving at the same time, made a brilliant advance upon the enemy, drove him from his works back upon the town, killing and wounding a number and capturing 70 men and 1 gun. It being too late to follow up this success, we encamped upon the battle-field. The best information to be obtained at this point of the enemy's forces and plans indicated that all the rebel forces heretofore operating in the Valley and West Virginia were concentrated in Lynchburg, under the command of General Breckinridge. This force was variously estimated at from 10,000 to 15,000 men, well supplied with artillery, and protected by strong works.

During the night the trains on the different railroads were heard running without intermission, while repeated cheers and the beating of drums indicated the arrival of large bodies of troops in the town, yet up to the morning of the 18th I had no positive information as to whether General Lee had detached any considerable force for the relief of Lynchburg. To settle the question on this morning, I advanced my skirmishers as far as the toll-gate on the Bedford road, two miles from the town, and a brisk fire was opened between them and the enemy behind their works. This skirmishing with musketry, occasionally assisted by the artillery, was kept up during the whole of the forenoon.

Their works consisted of strong redoubts on each of the main roads entering the town about three miles apart, flanked on either side by rifle-pits protected by abatis. On these lines the enemy could be seen working diligently as if to extend and strengthen them. I massed my two divisions of infantry in front of the works on the Bedford road ready to move to the right or left as required, the artillery in commanding positions, and Averell's cavalry division in reserve. Duffié was ordered to attack resolutely on the Forestville road, our extreme left, while Averell sent two squadrons of cavalry to demonstrate against the Campbell Court-House road on our extreme right. This detachment was subsequently strengthened by a brigade.

Meanwhile I reconnoitered the lines, hoping to find a weak interval through which I might push with my infantry, passing between the main redoubts, which appeared too strong for a direct assault. While the guns were sounding on the two flanks, the enemy, no doubt, supposing my center weakened by too great extension of my lines, and hoping to cut us in two, suddenly advanced in great force from his works, and commenced a most determined attack on my position on the Bedford turnpike. Although his movement was so unexpected and rapid as almost to amount to a surprise, yet it was promptly and gallantly met by Sullivan's division, which held the enemy in check until Crook was enabled to get his troops up.

After a fierce contest of half an hour's duration, the enemy's direct attack was repulsed, but he persistently renewed the fight, making repeated attempts to flank us on the left and to push between my main body and Duffié's division. In this effort he was completely foiled, and at the end of an hour and twenty minutes was routed and driven back into his works in disorder and with heavy loss. In the eagerness of pursuit, one regiment (One hundred and sixteenth Ohio) entered the works on the heels of the flying enemy, but being unsupported, fell back with trifling loss. Our whole loss in this action was comparatively light. The infantry behaved with the greatest steadiness, and the artillery, which materially assisted in repelling the attack, was served with remarkable rapidity and efficiency. This affair closed about 2 p.m.

From prisoners captured we obtained positive information that a portion of Ewell's corps was engaged in the action, and that the whole corps, 20,000 strong, under the command of Lieutenant-General Early, was either already in Lynchburg or near a hand. The detachment sent by General Averell to operate on our right had returned, reporting that they had encountered a large body of rebel cavalry in that quarter, while Duffié, although holding his position, sent word that he was pressed by a superior force. It had now become sufficiently evident that the enemy had concentrated a force of at least double the numerical strength of mine, and what added to the gravity of the situation was the fact that my troops had scarcely enough of ammunition left to sustain another well contested battle.

I immediately ordered all the baggage and supply trains to retire by the Bedford turnpike, and made preparations to withdraw the army as soon as it should become sufficiently dark to conceal the movement from the enemy. Meanwhile, as there still remained five hours of daylight, they were ordered to maintain a firm front, and with skirmishers to press the enemy's lines at all points. I have since learned that Early's whole force was up in time to have made a general attack on the same afternoon (18th)--an attack which under the circumstances would probably have been fatal to us but rendered cautious by the bloody repulse of Breckinridge, and deceived by the firm attitude of my command, he devoted the afternoon to refreshment and repose, expecting to strike a decisive blow on the following morning. As soon as it became dark I quietly withdrew my whole force, leaving a line of pickets close to the enemy, with orders to remain until 12 o'clock (midnight), and then follow the main body. This was successfully accomplished without loss of men or material, excepting only a few wounded who were left in a temporary hospital by mistake.

We bivouacked that night at a point seven miles east of Liberty, and the following day, 19th, at our leisure, moved toward Buford's Gap, occupying the town of Liberty until late in the afternoon unmolested by the enemy, who in all probability had not suspected the movement until daylight. About 4 p.m. the rear guard under Averell was attacked by the enemy's advance of cavalry and mounted men and driven, after a spirited action, through the town and back on my main body. The infantry prepared to receive the enemy in position about one mile west of Liberty, but no attack was made.

About midnight we resumed, our march and next morning, 20th, entered Buford's Gap. General Duffié, who had gone forward to take possession of this passage through the Blue Ridge, found it disputed by a small body of the enemy, which he swept out of his way with little difficulty. The march was continued to Bonsack's Station, on the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, destroying bridges, water-tanks, and depot buildings on that road as we moved. The enemy coming up to our rear guard on the afternoon of this day made some feeble demonstration, but was easily repulsed.

During the night our march was continued to Salem, destroying all the bridges, contents, and depot buildings on the railroad. We arrived at Salem about sunrise on the 21st. About 9 a.m. the enemy made a demonstration against our rear guard. While opposing his advance in that direction our baggage train and reserve artillery were sent off by the New Castle road, and through some inadvertence the proper guard did not accompany the artillery. While our attention was directed to the rear of the column a detachment of the enemy's cavalry fell upon the artillery en route and got possession of two batteries, spiking the guns, disabling the carriages, and carrying off the horses. They were presently driven off by our cavalry, losing some 30 men, killed, wounded, and prisoners, and the guns were recaptured. Owing to the loss of horses and the breaking of the carriages we were obliged to abandon 8 pieces with their limbers and caissons, after burning all their carriages. From Salem the enemy's cavalry followed us to Catawba Valley, where we rested that night.

On the following morning his advance was ambuscaded and roughly handled, and from that date the army pursued its course unmolested. On the night of the 22d we rested at New Castle. At this place I was informed that Early was concentrating his forces at Salem. Our scouts also brought reports that the enemy in large force was moving between us and the White Sulphur Springs. Cavalry reconnaissances toward Fincastle, Covington, and Sweet Springs failed to discover any trace of an enemy in force or any grounds for the report.

On the 23d moved from New Castle to the Sweet Springs. On account of the difficulties of the road and the intense heat of the day we lost a good many horses on this march. At the Sweet Springs I ascertained that the supply train and convoy under Colonel Putnam had been attacked by guerrillas, led by one Thurmond, and that it had turned aside from the Lewisburg route and had taken the road to Beverly. From this point it was suggested that we should move northward by the Warm Springs and the Valley of the South Branch of Potomac, a route lying west of and running parallel to the Valley of the Shenandoah. By this route the army would have reached the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at New Creek and Cumberland. It was objected that by this road the troops would find it impossible to collect necessary supplies and run risks of being cut off by the enemy coming in by way of Staunton and Harrisonburg.

In favor of the route via Lewisburg to Charleston, Kanawha, it was urged that the road was clear and practicable, and that while the country would furnish little or nothing in the way of supplies, yet we had ample stores at Meadow Bluff and Gauley River. As the question of supplies was one that involved the existence of the army the Kanawha route was decided upon, and messengers immediately sent forward to have supplies sent out from these points to meet the troops. On the night of the 24th we rested at the Greenbrier White Sulphur Springs. From this point I ordered a regiment of cavalry to follow the supply train going toward Beverly, and assist Colonel Putnam in its defense if necessary.

On the 25th passed through Lewisburg and halted in the evening near Meadow Bluff. I ascertained that the officer left in command at this post with 400 men had become alarmed at some demonstrations by guerrillas, and had, with baggage and supplies, fallen back to Gauley Bridge.

On the 27th, between Meadow Bluff and Gauley, met the supply train with 70,000 rations for the troops; they arrived in good time to prevent suffering, and their appearance was greeted by hearty cheers. Halted for the night near Gauley Bridge. Remained here on the 28th and 29th, allowing time for stragglers to come up and to refresh and organize the command.

Arrived at Charleston, Kanawha, on the 30th June, and remained until July 3, reorganizing and refitting the troops, and gathering up steamers to transport the army by water to Parkersburg. Feeling assured that the enemy would take advantage of the absence of these troops to make some demonstrations in the Valley, every nerve was strained to hasten their movement. But the obstacles were for a time insurmountable. After their recent fatigues neither men nor animals were in any condition for a farther march, and the excessive heat of the weather would have rendered such an attempt ruinous to the army. Transportation by water, if practicable, would save time, and rest the men and horses. Yet, on account of the long drought, the Ohio River was reported to be so low as to be impassable to the smallest boats; nevertheless, all the light-draught boats that could be found were seized and the troops embarked.

Arriving at Parkersburg on the afternoon of July 4, I received information that the enemy had appeared in force in the Valley, had driven Sigel out of Martinsburg, and were demonstrating against our railroad guards at several points west. The movement of the troops by the river route was pressed forward with the utmost diligence and zeal, yet the difficulties were even greater than at first appeared. The men had to be disembarked at the Shallows and marched around; at other points the boats could not pass, even when thus lightened, and small boats above the bars received and transported the men to other points, where they were in their turn obliged to stop. In this way the troops got in slowly, but withal sooner and in better condition than if they had attempted to march by land. The baggage trains and cavalry came to Parkersburg by the land route. At this place I remained until July 8 superintending and hastening the transportation of the troops by rail to New Creek and Cumberland.

On the night of the 8th took the cars for Cumberland and arrived there on the morning of the 9th at 10 a.m. Reports from various sources indicated that the enemy was in Maryland with the greater part of his force moving toward the Monocacy. Imboden's attempts on the railroad at Sir John's and at South Branch and Patterson's Creek had been repulsed, and Sullivan, occupying Hedgesville with infantry and cavalry, reported no enemy visible in the Shenandoah Valley. On the 10th Sullivan occupied Martinsburg with his cavalry. Remained in Cumberland until the 14th of July pressing forward the troops, who continued to arrive slowly from the West.

On the 14th took cars on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, reaching Martinsburg about midday. At this place General Sigel reported in person with a detailed account of his operations and the military situation. Reached Harper's Ferry on horseback the same night. I have the honor to be, very respectfully,
your most obedient servant,

D. HUNTER,
Major-General.
ADJUTANT-GENERAL U.S. ARMY.

ADDENDA.
WAR DEPARTMENT,

June 14, 1864--10 a.m.Major-General HUNTER,

Comdg. the Army of the Shenandoah, via Beverly, Va.: This Department has received with great satisfaction your official dispatch announcing the recent brilliant victory won by your army, and their occupation of the city of Staunton. These brilliant achievements wipe out the antecedent disasters to our arms in former campaigns in the Shenandoah Valley, and induce strong hope that, led on by the courage and guided by the experienced skill of its commander, the army of the Shenandoah will rival our other gallant armies in the successful blows against the rebels. To yourself, and the brave officers and soldiers of your command, the thanks of the President and of this Department are tendered.

EDWIN M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.