



(U) Virginia: Reinforced Confederate Army in Shenandoah Valley to Conduct Limited Offensive into the North

(U) Scope Note

(U) June 7– July 12 marks the 150th anniversary of Confederate Lt. Gen. Jubal Early’s Shenandoah Valley offensive. Following Grants overland campaign in the Spring of 1864, resulting in the Union Army of the Potomac’s advance to within miles of the Confederate capital of Richmond, General Robert E. Lee faced the imminent threat to his front against a vastly superior force, and a threat from the West as a Union army captured the Shenandoah Valley. In a June gamble to retake the Shenandoah Valley, secure his rear, force Grant to shift forces away from Richmond, and to threaten the North, Lee detached nearly a third of his forces defending Richmond, under the command of Lt. Gen. Jubal Early, to conduct a daring attack against the Valley and follow-on raid against Washington, DC. This offensive culminated in the Confederate defeat of two Union armies, the successful re-acquisition of the Valley, and a raid on Washington, DC that nearly succeeded in capturing the capital and may have, if successful, changed the outcome of the Civil War.

One notable historian identified Early’s ability to threaten the capital so late in the war as a “monstrous intelligence failure”; other contemporary authors on the subject use similar language.¹ The following is an intelligence assessment using the actual all-source reporting from early June through 3 July 1864 written from the perspective of the Union’s Bureau of Military Information (BMI) – the first modern all-source intelligence unit in history – stationed with the Army of Potomac. The assessment assumes that Union commanders shared intelligence reporting with the BMI, which did not occur in 1864, and provides a fresh take on what constitutes an intelligence failure. Can Early’s raid be characterized as an intelligence failure since the BMI lacked intelligence reporting that civilian leaders and military commanders in Washington, the Army of the Potomac, and other Union elements in the Shenandoah Valley and capital region did not share? The product also provides an overview of the offensive (Appendix A) and a discussion on what went wrong in the Union command structure during the campaign (Appendix B).

(U) As of 3 July 1864, A Confederate Army composed of at least a corps and numbering between 15-20,000 men commanded by Lt. Gen. Jubal Early has marched north through the Shenandoah Valley, and is poised for a potential offensive into Maryland, Pennsylvania, or to threaten Washington, DC. Early’s Corps, which probably detached from the Army of Northern Virginia outside Richmond in the first week of June and combined forces with Confederate elements in the Valley District, defeated Maj. Gen. Dave Hunter’s Army of the Shenandoah at

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Lynchburg, VA on 18 June. Hunter's army retreated west, leaving the Valley without a Union force to halt Early's advance north. Early probably is now in the vicinity of Martinsburg, WV and could cross the Potomac River into Maryland in the next two days.

(U) Confederate Force 15-20,000 Strong

(U) Lt. Gen. Early almost certainly replaced Lt. Gen. Richard Ewell as commander of Second Corps, Army of Northern Virginia in late May following the Battle of Spotsylvania on 21 May. At the Battle of Cold Harbor beginning 1 June, Second Corps was composed of three divisions, all probably commanded now by Early in the Shenandoah Valley. Separately, Maj. Gen. Breckenridge's division, which conducted operations in the Valley until deploying to the Army of Northern Virginia in May, almost certainly returned to the Valley on 6-7 June and is now under Early's command. Early's combined strength of arms is probably 15-20,000 men, including cavalry and artillery.

- > (U) According to reporting following the Battle of Lynchburg from Maj. Gen. Dave Hunter and a Bureau of Military Information (BMI) liaison officer, Early commanded a force of 20,000.² Subsequent reporting from Maj. Gen. Sigel and Brig. Gen. Weber stationed in the Valley assess Early has a force of 10,000-20,000 men with infantry, cavalry, and artillery.³⁻⁴⁵
- > (U) According to 11 June reporting from an established clandestine source with second hand access to the information, Breckenridge's division left Richmond for the Valley.⁶ Separate reporting from 17 June from a foreign officer with direct access to the information based on his liaison position in the Army of Northern Virginia, Breckenridge's division of about 7,000 infantry, passed through Gordonsville to the Valley via rail on 6-7 June.⁷
- > (U) Multiple corroborating reports from the Valley since 18 June derived from prisoner interviews, refugees, and BMI liaison reporting identify Lt. Gen. Early as the commander of the Second Corps.⁸⁻⁹¹⁰ Separately, on 30 May three prisoners from Rode's division outside Richmond stated that Lt. Gen. Ewell was sick in Richmond, and that Lt. Gen. Early took command of the corps.¹¹

> (U) Force Structure Analysis Corroborates Enemy Strength Estimate of 15-20,000

(U) In the battles of Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna River, and Cold Harbor fought between 6 May and 3 June, the Army of the Potomac suffered 50,802 casualties, or 43% of the forces that began the campaign; thousands more were killed or wounded in daily skirmishing and smaller engagements. The Army of Northern Virginia probably suffered comparable casualties during this period with a smaller force and far less ability to replenish losses. Lt. Gen. Early's Second Corps, which had an estimated strength of 23,000 in the beginning of May based on BMI all-source analysis of Confederate force structure, was heavily engaged throughout this period. We have no reporting to indicate that the Second Corps received any substantive reinforcements, and probably was challenged to find replacements. In early May, Early's three divisions combined with Breckenridge's division at regular strength, would probably have approached 30,000 men. However, losses suffered since then, combined with illness in the ranks and

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desertions, probably depleted his force, now operating in the Valley, to 15-20,000.

(U) According to a foreign military officer from a 17 June report and information passed on 25 June to Brig. General B. F. Kelley near Cumberland, MD by Union citizens, Maj. Gen. Pickett's division is in the Valley and operating in concert with Breckenridge.^{12 13} However, Pickett's division was involved in several skirmishes throughout late June, and is almost certainly assigned to the First Corps on the Bermuda Hundred front near Petersburg. Information obtained from prisoners and deserters from 22 June in the vicinity of Petersburg account for all but one division in A. P. Hill's and Longstreet's corps' – including Pickett's – but cannot substantiate the location of Early's corps.¹⁴ We judge that Pickett and his roughly 6,000 men are not operating with Early.

(U) Early Probably Occupying Martinsburg, WV

(U) Early's forces probably have occupied Martinsburg, WV as of 3 July and can cross the Potomac River unopposed at several fords. Multiple sources since 28 June report that Confederate forces of a division or larger were moving north through the Valley; Maj. Gen. Sigel's reserve division at Martinsburg was involved in skirmishing with advancing Confederate forces and withdrew to defense positions at Harpers Ferry, WV.

- > (U) On 3 July the Martinsburg, WV telegraph operator wired Washington that a large body of enemy troops – allegedly the same that fought Maj. Gen. Hunter – was approaching. Shortly thereafter, the telegraph office fell silent.^{15 16 17}
- > (U) According to reporting from uniformed officers and soldiers with first hand access, on 1 July the Confederate 31st Georgia skirmished with Union cavalry north of Winchester, VA. The 31st GA, according to previous detainee reporting and BMI force structure analysis, is assigned to Gordon's division, Second Corps.¹⁸
- > (U) Reporting since 28 June from Maj. Gen. Sigel, Brig. Gen. Kelley, and Brig. Gen. Max Weber at Harpers Ferry, as well as refugees entering Union lines, and a business executive with an established reporting history corroborate a large Confederate force north of Winchester and approaching Martinsburg. Enemy elements identified include Lt. Gen. Early with Second Corps, Maj. Gen. Breckenridge's division, and Brig. Gen. Imboden's cavalry.¹⁹²⁰²¹²²
- > (U) On 29 June a large Confederate cavalry force attacked the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad above Martinsburg.²³ A business executive with an established reporting history specified that "Ewell" and Breckenridge were moving north in force, and that cavalry raid was a prelude to an infantry attack.²⁴

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(U) Detainee Reporting of Second Corps in Richmond Uncorroborated

(U) We judge the detainee reporting indicating the Second Corps returned to Richmond following the Battle of Lynchburg is false. Three Mississippi detainees from the Army of Northern Virginia on 1 July stated Ewell's corps arrived at Petersburg on June 30th and would take their place on the Confederate right.²⁵ Since 30 June, we have received no corroborating information from clandestine sources in Richmond, from detainees or deserters, or through reconnaissance operations. Conversely, we have received multiple reports on the location and activities of Lee's other two corps' (First and Third), as well as captured soldiers or processed deserters from most of their divisions.²⁶



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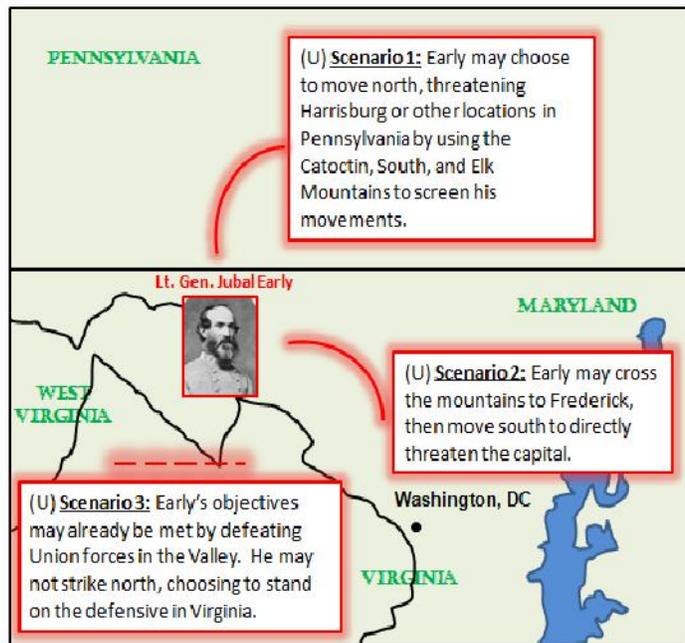
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(U) ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS: EARLY'S INTENTIONS

(U) We do not have information on why Lt. Gen. Early's moved his force north, although we know he wants to expell Union forces from the Shenandoah Valley. Confederate offensives originating in the Valley in September 1862 and August-July 1863 probably strived to achieve several strategic goals, including influencing northern sentiment against the war, gaining French and English recognition of the Confederacy, easing the wartime burden of Virginia, and winning a decisive battle in hope of ending the conflict. However, both these campaigns, culminating in the Battles of Antietam and Gettysburg, were conducted by the whole of the Army of Northern Virginia and led by General Lee. Early's force, probably consisting of no more than a reinforced corps, probably has more limited aims. We judge that the most likely objective for Early is to conduct a limited offensive into Maryland or Pennsylvania to force the Army of the Potomac to divide, thus alleviating some pressure against the Army of Northern Virginia defending Richmond. Early could retreat to the Valley and conduct defensive operations and still secure the Valley's summer harvest to supply Confederate forces, draw Union forces away from Richmond, and secure Lee's western flank. However, other objectives may include conducting no offensive north of the Potomac River, or more strategic initiatives like a rapid movement to take Harrisburg, PA, or a march across Catocin Mountain to Frederick, MD to threaten Washington, DC. Lt. Gen. Hunter's Army of the Shenandoah almost certainly retreated to the Kanahwa Valley, WV following its defeat at Lynchburg, and is too distant to deter Early's immediate operations; there are no other sizable Union forces in Maryland or Pennsylvania, and Washington, DC's defenses are currently manned by fewer than 10,000 men.

- > (U) Limited offensive into Maryland or Pennsylvania: We judge that Early's rapid movement so far north indicates he will conduct at least a limited offensive across the Potomac River, which will probably occur in the next two days. Early can use the Elk, South, and Catocin Mountain ranges to mask his movements north, and then strike further north or east as opportunities present themselves. Such an operation would probably be intended to draw Union forces away from the Army of the Potomac, cause fear, raise anti-war sentiment in the North, and potentially influence the



(U) Alternative Scenarios for Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's Future Movements

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November presidential and congressional elections.

- > (U) Threaten Washington, DC: Although less likely, Early may attempt to exploit the temporary opening afforded him by Maj. Gen. Hunter's retreat from the Valley and the limited forces in the capital region to threaten Washington. This objective would possibly signify an effort by the Confederates to alter the setbacks faced in 1864 in both the Eastern and Western Theaters by occupying the capital. More likely, Early would seek to force a rapid and large-scale movement of Union forces from the Army of the Potomac north to save the capital; disrupt government operations; and create panic in the North. In this scenario, Early will probably cross the Potomac River near Williamsport, advance to Frederick, MD, then march south toward Washington. At his current rate of march, and left unchecked, Early's forces could reach the capital by 8 July.
- > (U) Limited operations confined to the Valley: Early's advance may aim at nothing more than expelling our forces from the Valley, and to feign a move north to draw Union forces away from Richmond. In this scenario, Early's forces are likely to stop their march at or near Martinsburg, which can be confirmed in the next few days, then stand on the defensive. We believe this is the least likely scenario.

(U) Source Summary and Confidence Level Statement

(U) We base our analysis on information obtained from interviews of captured enemy troops and defectors, intercepts of Confederate communications, Richmond newspapers, refugees, clandestine HUMINT reporting*, a Bureau of Military Information (BMI) liaison, surveillance and reconnaissance, a foreign military liaison, and operational military reports. We have high confidence in this assessment based on the volume of corroborating all-source information, even though information from several sources may have been provided to influence or deceive. We lack insight on Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's objectives in the Shenandoah Valley, and whether he intends to advance north across the Potomac River.

(*NOTE: The BMI had access to reporting from a HUMINT network in Richmond with direct access to President Jefferson Davis and other senior Confederate officials. Reporting from this network was accorded the highest priority, and almost always provided timely, actionable information on Confederate force structure and movements. However, as almost all the reports provided by the network were destroyed after the war based on a request to then President Grant from the network's senior handler – Elizabeth Van Lew – it has not been substantially included in this assessment. Based on readings of all the relevant documents in the Official Record of the Civil War, surviving non-encrypted BMI reports, and other historical documents, the BMI was likely receiving some, albeit limited, reporting from the Van Lew network during the timeframe addressed in this assessment. Established courier routes that allowed for routine passing of information from Richmond to the Army of the Potomac or Union forces at Bermuda Hundred were in their infancy, limiting the frequency of reporting that would come later in 1864.)

(U) Prepared by: Gregory Elder

(U) APPENDIX A**(U) Overview of Lt. General Jubal Early's June-July 1864 Offensive**

(U) Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's raid on Washington, DC in July 1864, ordered by General Robert E. Lee, derived from a need to stem a series of Union successes under General Ulysses S. Grant. The offensive would be the Confederacy's final concerted invasion of Union territory, and succeeded in achieving its primary objectives, and likely prolonged the war by several months.

(U) General Grant initiated his overland campaign in May 1864, which was marred by tactical failures and operational success. The Army of the Potomac totaled 118,700 men and 316 guns against Lee's 64,000 men and 274 guns.²⁷ To bolster his forces, Grant substantially stripped the Washington defenses, leaving less than 10,000 men to defend the capital. In the battles of Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna River, and Cold Harbor fought between 6 May and 3 June Grant's forces suffered 50,802 casualties against 31,141. Lee held the field after each of the battles, but the Army of the Potomac conducted a series of flanking maneuvers resulting in an advance of forty miles, ending just ten miles from Richmond. Grant replaced most of his losses, while the Confederacy had little to offer Lee; Confederate manpower was stretched across all fronts. By maintaining a high operational tempo and threatening Richmond, Grant forced General Lee into an untenable position.

(U) Lee's troubles were not limited to Grant's overland campaign. After a Confederate success against Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel's Army of the Shenandoah at the Battle of New Market on 15 May—a defeat resulting in Sigel's replacement with Maj. Gen. David Hunter—Union forces threatened to take the Shenandoah Valley. Hunter defeated the Confederates at the Battle of Piedmont on 5-6 June then moved south to occupy Staunton, Virginia. A Confederate defeat in the Valley would allow Grant to move Hunter's 18,000 men to threaten Richmond from the West, and would also deprive the Lee of a breadbasket for his army.

(U) After consultation with President Jefferson Davis, Lee initiated a counteroffensive, dispatching nearly a third of his army – the Second Corps under Maj. Gen. Jubal Early – to the Valley on 13 June to stop Hunter's advance. If Hunter could be defeated, then Early could return to Richmond or advance down the Valley, cross the Potomac, and threaten Washington. Early's command would be augmented by Confederate forces already in the Valley, to include John C. Breckenridge's division and cavalry. Lee's strategy depended on a quick success by Early and a delay in operations by Grant against Richmond.

(U) In the first leg of Early's campaign, the Army of the Potomac's Bureau of Military Information (BMI) – the first modern all-source collection and analysis unit in history – failed to provide timely information to Grant and Hunter on Second Corps movements. However, this was based on a conscious, concerted effort by the Army of the Potomac to focus efforts on denial rather than collection. In a rapid offensive of his own, Grant forged a crossing at the James River outside Richmond and moved the preponderance of the Army of the Potomac south on a

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flanking movement aimed at capturing the Confederate rail junction at Petersburg. Union collection efforts went without cavalry, prisoners, deserters, or an organized staff for four critical days—enough time to allow the Second Corps, composed of Rodes', Ramseur's, and Gordon's divisions, to move away from Richmond and board a train for Lynchburg. Collection efforts were also hindered by better than usual Confederate operational security. That said, two pieces of intelligence were provided to Grant about Confederate movements to the Valley, neither of which were passed to Hunter to prepare him for potential Confederate operations on his front.²⁸²⁹

(U) The Battle of Lynchburg was fought on 17-18 June. Awaiting the arrival of several units in Early's Second Corps, the 17th was used by the Confederates to delay Hunter's advance. Using denial and deception, the rebels created the false impression that their forces were much larger than they were. On the 18th after two failed flanking attacks by Hunter, Early attacked and forced the retreat of Hunter's Army of the Shenandoah to its supply base in West Virginia, effectively taking it out of combat operations for nearly a month and leaving the Valley without any substantive Union forces. Lee's first goal was achieved. Early began his movement north with a force of roughly 15,000 men.³⁰

(U) While the Battle of Lynchburg raged on the 18th, the BMI reconstituted its collection capabilities after Grant's crossing of the James and mapped Lee's new positions. The BMI tracked the movements of the First and Third Corps under Lt. General Richard H. Anderson and Lt. Gen. A. P. Hill's, but reported that the Confederate Second Corps had not made its way to Petersburg.³¹ On 24 June the BMI, accounting for only two of Lee's corps to Grant's front, stated with some certainty that the Second Corps had moved from the Richmond/Petersburg front, probably to Lynchburg.³² However, due to rapid retreat of the Army of the Shenandoah out of the Valley after the Battle of Lynchburg, detailed information from Maj. Gen. Hunter and the BMI liaison on Early's force structure did not reach Grant until 28 June.

(U) In the meantime, other information from the Valley made its way to Union headquarters. News of the union defeat at Lynchburg from sources other than Hunter was in Grant's hands on the 19th. That same day, intelligence indicated that Confederates reoccupied Lexington and Staunton in the Valley.³³ While placing the Confederates too far North—Early did not reach Staunton until 27 June—this information was timely and accurate. On 25-26 June reports to General Halleck in Washington from Brig. General B. F. Kelley near Cumberland, MD specified that Union scouts found rebel forces of 1,500 holding Calf Pasture Valley, and 3,500 holding Buffalo Gap near Staunton—significantly larger than the normal cavalry forays in the region.³⁴ Local citizens correctly also identified forces under Breckinridge but mistakenly believed others were under Maj. Gen. Pickett. Information was flowing from other Union elements near the Valley specifying that a large force defeated Hunter, and that all, or at least parts of it, were moving north, although Confederate intentions remained unknown.

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(U) Though Early was only as far north as Harrisonburg, VA on the 28th, he sent a cavalry force north to destroy the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad above Martinsburg, some 90 miles further north. This cavalry raid provided an indication that he was advancing north. President of the B&O Railroad, John W. Garrett, alarmed at the threat to his railway and the secondary effects it would have on Union logistics, sent a telegraph to Secretary of War Stanton on the 29th warning that "Ewell" and Breckenridge were moving down the valley in force, and that cavalry had struck his line at Martinsburg.³⁵ Garrett maintained a network of his own sources utilizing the railroad for passage of information. Halleck delayed taking action and did not pass the information to Grant. Failing to get any action from Washington, Garrett went to Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace, commander of the Middle Atlantic Department, in Baltimore.³⁶ Wallace knew nothing of events in the Valley, including Hunter's defeat. Grant, Halleck, and Stanton, each of whom had information regarding Early's movements, failed to pass it to regional commands. Wallace immediately understood the implications of Early's advance.

(U) Events began to overtake Union forces. On 2 July additional reports of threats to garrisons filtered in to Union commands, and John Garrett chided Stanton for not taking the warnings seriously. Maj. Gen. Sigel who commanded a reserve division in Martinsburg, WV warned the War Department of a large invading force approaching Strasburg.³⁷ Refugees reported that Early, Breckenridge, and other forces were 20 miles north of Staunton, en route to Martinsburg.³⁸

(U) July 3rd brought a stream of reports on enemy forces threatening Union positions on the border of Virginia and West Virginia. Brig. Gen. Max Weber commanding the garrison at Harpers Ferry noted that Early's forces were reported at 10,000-20,000 with infantry, cavalry and artillery.³⁹ Later that day, Sigel and Weber sent a report stressing that three enemy divisions were moving north through the valley.⁴⁰ Sigel then reported that Early was moving on Winchester. A Virginian brigade with Early skirmished with Union forces near Martinsburg, corroborated by a Martinsburg telegraph operator who wired that a large body of enemy troops were approaching, and were "supposed to be the same that fought Hunter."^{41,42} Shortly thereafter, the telegraph office fell silent.

(U) While Early's intentions remained unclear, a vast body of reporting by this time made clear that the Second Corps with Breckenridge's division was in the northern Shenandoah Valley. Reporting was sent from Generals Kelley, Sigel, and Weber, as well as Garrett. But when Gen. Halleck informed Grant that Early and Breckenridge were reportedly moving down the Valley, Grant replied, "Early corps is now here. There are no troops that can now be threatening Hunter's department except remnants of smaller commands."⁴³ On July 1st, Maj. Gen. Hancock had notified the Commander of the Army of the Potomac, Gen. Meade, and Grant that three detainees alleged that Ewell's corps arrived at Petersburg on 30 June and would take their place on the Confederate right.⁴⁴ Grant believed that Hunter, Sigel, Weber, and Kelley were inflating the threat, and that enemy forces were much smaller than believed. In discussions with General Meade, Grant asked: "Is it not certain the Second Corps has returned to your front?" Meade responded, "Our only information is from the Mississippi deserters from 1 July that Early

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returned from Lynchburg. But...no prisoners have been taken from any division of the corps, and it was never reported as in our front." Grant then reported to Halleck: "Despite having no prisoners from 2nd corps, deserters from other commands state the corps returned five or six days ago."⁴⁵ Grant was being disingenuous by forwarding only information that supported Early's position with Lee. BMI's reports to senior Union leadership, including Grant, during this period do not reflect Grant's position. No fewer than four reports stressed that the Second Corps was not at Grant's front, and that there was a possibility that it was operating in the Valley. The 4th of July provided more information to bolster the BMI assessments when a deserter on the Petersburg front told of Early's forces moving down the Valley with the intention of going into Maryland and on to Washington.

(U) At the same time the deserter was being debriefed, Early took possession of Martinsburg. Early was then reported at Catoctin Switch south of Berlin (Brunswick), MD tearing up B&O Railroad.⁴⁶ At 3:30 P.M., Lew Wallace wired Adjutant-General Townsend that Confederate forces were in Hagerstown and moving down the valley. He then wired Halleck that Weber was attacked that morning and was falling back to Harpers Ferry.⁴⁷

(U) Early's advance by this point was alarming General Lew Wallace. Believing the capital or Baltimore were at risk, he traveled to Monocacy Junction south of Frederick, MD to begin defensive preparations. Sometime on the morning of 5 July Brig. Gen. E. B. Tyler, commanding a militia detachment sent by Wallace to Frederick, provided an operational intelligence report that noted a cavalry fight took place at Winchester, and the enemy was from 5,000 to 30,000 men, with Early, Gordon, Breckenridge, Ransom, and Bradley Johnson.⁴⁸

(U) Wallace received scant information about Early except through Sigel and Weber. Tyler's intelligence did little to clarify what force was moving in his direction or in what numbers, although a guess could be made based on the correct identification of Confederate officers. The multiple reports of the enemy being Jubal Early with 10-20,000 men were not passed to him by Stanton or Halleck—nor did Wallace appear to request information from Washington. To fill his intelligence gaps, Wallace acted independently and sent several citizen-scouts west to obtain information, but all were turned back by Confederate cavalry. The reports from citizens did confirm that the enemy was moving in his direction in large numbers, and that their objective was either Washington or Baltimore.

(U) On the evening of 4 July Grant was concerned enough about the whereabouts of Early and his corps that he made it a collection priority. As a result, on the 5th Grant received information from two deserters who said that Early with Breckenridge and other forces were invading Maryland with goal of capturing Washington.⁴⁹ Maj. Gen. Butler notified Grant that, per information obtained from prisoners, he believed that Early's Corps, with Imboden, Mosby and Breckenridge, were making a raid up the Valley near Harper's Ferry or Martinsburg.⁵⁰ By midnight Grant finally acknowledged the situation, conferring with Halleck that "there is no doubt that Ewell's corps is away from here."⁵¹ But his reaction did not result in the relief that was expected when Grant discussed strategy with Lincoln two months earlier. Grant ordered

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Meade to send only dismounted cavalry and one division to counter Early's four divisions. Early had crossed the Potomac that day and stood little more than fifty-miles from the capital.

(U) As dawn rose on 6 July, Lew Wallace sent citizen scouts west to obtain information, but Confederate forces again blocked their path. Meanwhile Sigel wired Wallace that the Confederates appeared to be moving toward Frederick in strong force, though in unknown strength. "Principal forces as reported this A.M. moves by Shephardtown, Sharpsburg, and Hagerstown...I am almost certain that his forces consist of one corps and three divisions, and three thousand cavalry. Early, B.T. Johnson, McCauseland, Maj. Gen. Ransom and Imboden are in command."⁵² Wallace passed this information to Halleck. Sigel later wired that the main enemy force was crossing Antietam Creek, and believed to be between 20,000 and 30,000 strong.⁵³ Prisoners confirmed they were with Early, formerly Ewell's corps. For his part, General Halleck wired Grant that there was little doubt about the invasion being "Ewell's" corps, probably combined with Breckinridge's, Imboden's, Jackson's, and Mosby's commands. If so, "the invasion is of a pretty formidable character."⁵⁴

(U) One-Hundred and Seventy miles south, Grant's intelligence network was providing him corroborating intelligence. Meade notified Grant that a deserter claimed he left a Richmond paper from 6 July at the picket-line that announced the capture of Harper's Ferry by Early.⁵⁵ Maj. Gen. Hancock sent Grant a prisoner from Anderson's division who claimed it was rumored that Early was at Harper's Ferry, though Early was officially heard from last at Winchester.⁵⁶ Grant concluded that Early was near the Potomac River, but did not know for sure "how large the force is nor to what extent Lee has diminished his force in Petersburg."⁵⁷

(U) On 7 July the Second Corps crossed over the Catoctin Mountains for the last leg of its journey. But, as a result of Wallace's efforts to establish a blocking force at Frederick and on the Monocacy River, Early would find his forces constantly engaged with the enemy. Though unknown at the time, these skirmishes and Wallace's tiny force were a significant factor in saving Washington. Before dawn Wallace sent cavalry west of Frederick toward Middletown and, just after 10:00 A.M., heard the return of cannon fire from that direction. Shortly thereafter he was informed that his cavalry was conducting a fighting withdrawal back east toward Frederick. Reports continued from his cavalry throughout the day. However, Wallace did not forward information of the threat to his front to Halleck until that evening, nor did his report provide estimates on enemy strength, intentions, or commands.

(U) By this time in Early's campaign intelligence began to lose its significance. Union commanders and leadership in Washington and Petersburg finally agreed with reporting that the force invading Maryland was the Second Corps, and while it was possible Early would strike toward Baltimore, Washington was the likely target. Estimates of Early's strength varied, but 10-20,000 was not unlikely. For his part, Wallace tried to flesh this out as best he could with his 5,800 men.

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(U) Wallace's scant forces were well placed at key river crossing on the Monocacy River two miles south and east of the city of Frederick. On the morning of the 9th, Ramseur's division struck Wallace's troops in the center along the Georgetown Pike while Maj. Gen. Robert E. Rodes' division moved against Wallace's right. After some brief and ineffective fighting, McCausland's cavalry arrived on Wallace's left having crossed a ford, enabling infantry to outflank the Union line. Following up McCausland's attacks, Gordon's division continued the attack on Wallace's left flank in the afternoon. Fighting lasted for several hours while the Federals delayed their inevitable retreat. By late afternoon Wallace's command was in retreat toward Baltimore having suffered more than 20% casualties. The Second Corps suffered fewer casualties, amounting to roughly 900.

(U) Just as Hunter's defeat laid open the Shenandoah Valley, Wallace's retreat to the east opened the roads to Washington. But unlike the Battle of Lynchburg, Monocacy came at a time when Early could not afford delay. He would later write, "Some of the Northern papers stated that, between Saturday and Monday, I could have entered the city; but on Saturday I was fighting at Monocacy, thirty-five miles from Washington, a force which I could not leave in my rear; and after disposing of that force and moving as rapidly as it was possible for me to move, I did not arrive in front of the fortifications until after noon on Monday, and then my troops were exhausted"⁵⁸ Additionally, Wallace's retreat did not alleviate the threat to Early's rear. Union cavalry began to hassle Early's rear-guard. The Second Corps was also operating in the North where citizens watched and reported its every move. Information on Early's movements could no longer be concealed. At 5:30 A.M. on the 10th, a Union signal officer reported that Early's forces departed Frederick and left only a small rear-guard at the Monocacy River.⁵⁹ As he approached the capital defenses, his army left a cloud of dust that made it visible for miles. But this mattered little. In the race against time, there was no longer any doubt where Early was advancing, and intelligence could no longer be effectively collected and disseminated quickly enough to matter. By midday on the 11th, the Confederates skirmished with Union forces at Fort Steven, allowing more time yet for reinforcements, which were finally on their way.

(U) On the evening of the 9th, Grant finally made arrangements to send a force large enough to protect the capital. At 11:00 A.M. on the 10th the 1st and 2nd Divisions of the VI Corps under General Horatio G. Wright and XIX Corps, which were diverted to Washington, were on transports moving to Washington. At noon on the 11th, while Early awaited the arrival of his straggling forces, exhausted from the heat and long march, the first troops of the VI Corps began disembarking at wharves in Washington. By 4:30 P.M. General Early, seeing signs of increased enemy activity between himself and the capital, gave up his plan to assault Washington that day. The morning of the 12th fared no better. In time to deter Early, however, Union reinforcements were unable in the course of the next two days to keep the Second Corps from an organized retreat from the capital and back to Virginia.

(U) APPENDIX B**(U) An Assessment of Union Intelligence During Early's Raid**

(U) That Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's force was able to advance to within seven miles of the capital of the United States so late in the Civil War is indicative of a failure. That Lew Wallace, who had not been notified of any threat by the official chain of command, and was forced to scrape together a patchwork force for a costly delaying action, reinforces that failure, but this was not due to a military intelligence failure. Throughout the critical period of the campaign—late June and early July—military, clandestine, and intelligence personnel produced timely, accurate intelligence on enemy movements or activities that bore on achieving victory, and passed the information to military and civilian decision-makers. Intelligence collection resulted in:

- > (U) More than two-dozen all-source reports that General Jubal Early was in command of the Second Corps, which had detached from the Army of Northern Virginia to conduct operations in the Valley;
- > (U) More than a dozen reports indicating that Early's force was composed of 10,000 or more men, and more than two-dozen reports alluding to a corps or more. Given that a corps was composed of no fewer than two divisions, these accounts were also representative of a large Confederate force;
- > (U) More than a dozen reports highlighting that a division under Breckenridge was with the Second Corps;
- > (U) Numerous accounts of the specific Division commanders that were operating under Early's command;
- > (U) By 28 June, new intelligence was available every day for the remainder of the campaign on the general location and activities of Early's force.

(U) Not only was there specific information throughout most of the campaign, but it was provided to senior operational commanders and officials throughout the military and civilian chains of command. None of the intelligence was withheld from senior decision makers, which would warrant consideration as an intelligence failure. Instead, due to the difficulty and limitations associated with the telegraph, each report was provided to a General and disseminated to either another General, the Chief of Staff, or Secretary of War.

(U) There were intelligence deficiencies during the campaign, but most of these can be accounted for by either insufficient focus on intelligence by operational commanders, such as with Maj. Gen. Hunter, or in reallocating intelligence assets for other purposes, as exemplified by the Army of the Potomac's use of cavalry for screening operations vice collection in mid-June. The case of BMI's thwarted efforts in the Valley is particularly telling. General Hunter took no provision upon taking command of the Army of the Shenandoah to establish an effective intelligence network. When BMI operatives attempted to do so, they were met with opposition from Hunter and his staff. No support was provided for protection of BMI operatives which, in

the Shenandoah Valley, meant death. This was, therefore, not an intelligence failure, but an unambiguous command failure.

(U) For its part, the BMI failed to provide solid evidence of where Early's corps vanished to, but this was not its primary objective. The BMI, particularly as it was under the command of Gen. Meade and the Army of the Potomac, was dedicated to collecting information on the Army of Northern Virginia. Once its staff completed their movement with the army across the James River, the BMI consistently provided accurate intelligence telling leadership that the Second Corps was not in their front. While only half the story, it was an important half. The other half, that Early was in the Shenandoah Valley and threatening an invasion of Maryland, came from Chief of Staff Halleck. The *Official Records of the Civil War* demonstrate that Halleck was not effective in providing Grant the full range of information coming to him, just as Grant did not pass information routinely suggesting Early was away. Meanwhile, Grant also received reports from Generals Hancock, Meade, and Butler on Early's activities in the North in early July, yet failed to definitively act until the 9th, when Early was a day's march from Washington.

(U) Failure to cut short the Confederate threat to the Valley and the capital rests squarely with Union leadership, first in poor use of intelligence and how it was shared. Throughout the campaign there were clear limitations on what commanders saw as a result of information hoarding, poor communications—intentionally or unintentionally—between several commanders, and an ineffective command and control chain. For Grant's strategy of focusing all available Union forces against Lee in the South, free information flow was critical. Yet five problems were apparent:

- > (U) The BMI was co-located with General Meade. As Meade maintained his headquarters away from Grant, and because Grant and Meade did not share a strong relationship, BMI intelligence did not always flow freely to Grant.
- > (U) Grant had a clear intelligence bias against information that put the Army of the Potomac in poor light, and, as is clear in reviewing Grant's communications during this period, showed little to no concern about operational activities in the Shenandoah Valley. This resulted in Grant communicating only information that appeared to corroborate that Early was in the Richmond area of operations. In early July, this sufficed to deflect concern from the President and Halleck that was warranted.
- > (U) Grant and Halleck demonstrated little faith in their subordinates as commanders or as sources of information. This clearly impacted how they viewed information they were receiving. General Sigel had a poor record as a commander, and was relieved from the Army of the Shenandoah. General Grant had a poor relationship with Lew Wallace, who had commanded a division under Grant at the Battle of Shiloh. Grant was a subordinate of Halleck, whom he had a stressful relationship with, and had commanded Hunter while in the

West. Conversations between Halleck and Grant during the crisis repeatedly allude to their lack of appreciation for the reporting coming from Sigel, Weber, Wallace, and Hunter. It was believed that reports on the enemy were greatly exaggerated, and that inflated enemy numbers were being used to compensate poor performance.

- > (U) Much of the reporting from Sigel and Weber was sent to Lew Wallace either as a warning to Wallace or with the expectation that Wallace would forward the information to Washington. However, Wallace proved himself to be a poor communicator, doing so infrequently and providing only limited information. As a result much of the intelligence garnered in the North stayed in the North.
- > (U) General Halleck, acting as the liaison between Grant in the South and subordinates in the North failed to transfer information, and allowed his bias to let Grant delay in fulfilling his obligation of sending troops to the defense of Washington. Wallace, as commander of the Baltimore District extending to the Monocacy River, was not informed of the possibility of a large enemy force moving North. Halleck failed to pass Grant's personal assessment of the situation to Wallace, Sigel, Weber, or Hunter. So poor were Halleck's communications that he often lost all visibility into the status of his subordinate commanders. For part of the campaign, Halleck had no idea where Hunter was located or the status of the Army of the Shenandoah.

(U) Communications roadblocks by senior commanders did much to impede the intelligence process and ensured the BMI never achieved a composite picture of the enemy and his movements. Even a perfect Union intelligence collection plan could not overcome the hurdles established by the operational commanders during Early's raid.

(U) The second and more significant command failure during Early's campaign was General Grant's miscalculation of Lee, which biased his every action with respect to the threat to the Valley and Washington.

(U) Grant's Miscalculation and Intelligence Bias

(U) General Grant was an offensive minded commander and was uniformly focused on how best he could defeat the enemy. His blindspot however, was his lack of consideration of what his enemy was planning against him. A famous quote by General William Tecumseh Sherman alludes this:

"I'm a darned sight smarter than Grant; I know a great deal more about war, military histories, strategy and grand tactics than he does; I know more about organization, supply, and administration and about everything else than he does; but I'll tell you

where he beats me and where he beats the world. He don't care a damn for what the enemy does out of his sight, but it scares me like hell."⁶⁰

(U) Grant demonstrated himself to be an audacious, confident, goal driven leader. He cared little for what victories Lee had won or what strategies he employed. When his staff repeatedly attempted to address what tactics Lee might use in coming engagements, Grant replied, "Oh, I am heartily tired of hearing about what Lee is going to do. Some of you always seem to think he is suddenly going to turn a double somersault, and land in our rear and on both of our flanks at the same time. Go back to your command, and try to think what are we going to do ourselves, instead of what Lee is going to do."⁶¹ In June through July 1864, a somersault in the Union rear is exactly what Lee aimed to achieve and nearly succeeded in doing. Grant was fixated on the enemy before him and, as he had at Belmont, Shiloh, and Fort Donelson, discounted that a desperate enemy will strike hardest when they are most desperate.

(U) Lee had three principle tactics throughout the war that he drew on for the 1864 Shenandoah campaign. First, when in a position where defense seems the likely and obvious tactic, switch to the offensive. At the campaign level, he had used this at the Seven Days, Second Bull Run, Antietam, and Gettysburg. In battles, too, this was a common tactic, such as at the Seven Day and Chancellorsville. Second, Lee used the Shenandoah Valley in 1861, 1862, and 1863 to stage offensives or shadow movement of forces. Of note, his support of General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson's Valley campaign of 1862 was designed, as in 1864, to draw Union forces away from operations against Richmond. It succeeded. Finally, Lee routinely redeployed his own forces elsewhere, at the peril of his own army, when it appeared that a strategic gain could be accomplished. Taking these factors into account, Lee introduced no new tactic or strategy when he released Early for an offensive in the Valley. That Grant did not anticipate such a bold move is not surprising, but that he refused to believe that Lee had detached Early after intelligence indicated otherwise is.

(U) Largely lost in the fog of events was that Grant was the General-in-Chief of all Union forces aimed at defeating the Confederates across all fronts, but also acknowledged a priority – clearly articulated by President Lincoln – to defend the capital. In stripping the capital's defense bare in 1864, and focusing his efforts on destroying Lee and capturing Richmond—the Confederate center's of gravity—Grant was all the more responsible for acting swiftly to any threat to his rear. The defeat of Hunter should have been a significant indicator that there was a risk. Rather than focusing intelligence collection only in early July, greater efforts were warranted much sooner.

(U) Conclusions

(U) The tardy Union effort to halt Lt. Gen. Early's offensive was indicative of several failures, but intelligence was not one of them. Prior to the war, West Point and other military institutions provided instruction on the collection and use of information in military operations. Intelligence was then, and is now, the collection and analysis of timely information to support decision

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makers. There can be little doubt that Union forces had at their disposal sufficient information on Early's activities at the end of June to avoid the catastrophe that nearly came to fruition. Intelligence was imperfect, but largely as a result of insufficient dedication by commanders to collection. Conversely, Union commanders failed throughout the campaign to effectively communicate and coordinate their efforts. Finally, General Grant miscalculated his adversary's skill as a commander, allowing for surprise where there should have been none.

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(U) SOURCE ENDNOTES

- ¹ William Feis first made the assertion of Early's raid as an intelligence failure in "A Military Intelligence Failure: Jubal Early' Raid, June 12-July 14, 1864." *Civil War History* 36 (September 1990): 209-25, where he describes the Union intelligence campaign during Early's raid as a "dramatic intelligence failure" (pg. 211). He followed up this assertion in his book *Grant's Secret Service: The Intelligence War From Belmont to Appomattox*. Lincoln, NE: Nebraska UP, 2002, where he describes the "failure of his (Grant's) intelligence system" and Union efforts as a "monumental intelligence failure." In *Monocacy: The Battle That Saved Washington*. Shippenburg, PA: White Mane Publishing Company, Inc., 2000, Franklin B. Cooling calls out "faulty Union intelligence" (pg. 15) and notes that the "primitive intelligence service broke down" (pg. 19). Marc Leepson states that Union efforts were plagued by several factors, including "just plain intelligence failures" (pg. 53) in *Desperate Engagement: How a Little-Known Civil War Battle Saved Washington, D.C., and Changed the Course of American History*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin, 2008.
- ² BMI, 28 June 1864, Telegraph from Charleston, WV from BMI liaison John McEntee to DR BMI COL George Sharpe.
- ³ The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies ("OR") Series I, Vol 37, Pt I, Pg. 694-5, 3 July 1864 Telegraph from Maj. Gen. Sigel to Chief of Staff Halleck.
- ⁴ 3 July 1864 Telegraph, Brig. Gen. Weber to Maj. Gen. Couch.
- ⁵ Cooling, *The Battle That Saved Washington*, Pg. 20. Telegraph from Brig. Gen. Weber to Chief of Staff Halleck.
- ⁶ Feis, *Grant's Secret Service*, Pg. 225.
- ⁷ 17 June 1864, Telegraph from Chief of Staff Halleck, Washington to General in Chief Grant
- ⁸ OR Series 1 - Volume 37 (Part I), Pg. 175
- ⁹ 3 July 1864, Telegraph, Brig. Gen. Weber to Maj. Gen. Couch
- ¹⁰ BMI clandestine source reporting
- ¹¹ OR Series I, Vol 36, Part 3, pg. 339
- ¹² 17 June 1864, Telegraph, Chief of Staff Halleck, Washington to General in Chief Grant
- ¹³ 25 June 1864, Telegraph, Brig. Gen. Kelly to Governor Boreman
- ¹⁴ 22 June 1864, Telegraph, Col. Sharpe to Maj. Gen. Humphries, OR Series 1, Vol 40, Part 2, Pg. 306
- ¹⁵ OR Series I, Vol 37, Part 2, pg. 17
- ¹⁶ OR Series I, Vol 37, Part I, pg. 174
- ¹⁷ OR Series I, Vol 37, Part I, pg. 175
- ¹⁸ Cooling, Franklin B. *Monocacy: The Battle That Saved Washington*. Shippenburg, PA: White Mane Publishing Company, Inc., 2000. Pg. 12.
- ¹⁹ Feis, *Grant's Secret Service*, Pg. 229.
- ²⁰ OR Series 1 - Volume 37 (Part I), Pg. 175
- ²¹ Worthington, Glenn H. *Fighting for Time: The Battle for Monocacy*. Shippenburg, PA: White Mane Publishing Company, 1985. Pg. 40.
- ²² *Ibid* Pg. 50.
- ²³ OR Series I, Vol 37, Part I, pg. 694-5, 29 June 1864, Telegraph, Garrett, President B&O Railroad to Secretary of War Stanton
- ²⁴ 2 July visit to Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace's headquarters by Garrett, President B&O Railroad
- ²⁵ Feis, *Grant's Secret Service*, Pg. 229.
- ²⁶ 22 June 1864, Telegraph, Col. Sharpe to Maj. Gen. Humphries, OR Series 1, Vol 40, Part 2, Pg. 306
- ²⁷ Eicher, David J., *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War*, Simon & Schuster, 2001. Pg. 660.
- ²⁸ OR Series I, Vol 36, Pt III, Pg. 746.
- ²⁹ Cooling, *Monocacy: The Battle That Saved Washington*. Pg. 225.
- ³⁰ The total number of troops under Early's command for the campaign is a matter of debate. The Confederate's failed to maintain the same level of administrative oversight as their Union counterparts.
- ³¹ Feis, *Grant's Secret Service*, Pg. 225.
- ³² *Ibid* Pg. 229.
- ³³ Cooling, Franklin B. *Monocacy: The Battle That Saved Washington*. Pg. 18.
- ³⁴ 25 June 1864, Telegraph, Brig. Gen. Kelly to Governor Boreman
- ³⁵ OR Series I, Vol 37, Part I, pg. 694-5, 29 June 1864, Telegraph, Garrett, President B&O Railroad to Secretary of War Stanton
- ³⁶ 2 July visit to Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace's headquarters by Garrett, President B&O Railroad
- ³⁷ OR, Series 1 - Volume 37 (Part I), Pg. 175
- ³⁸ Feis, *Grant's Secret Service*, Pg. 230.
- ³⁹ 3 July 1864 Telegraph, Brig. Gen. Weber to Maj. Gen. Couch
- ⁴⁰ OR Series I, Vol 37, Pt I, Pg. 694-5, 3 July 1864 Telegraph from Maj. Gen. Sigel to Adj. Gen. Halleck.
- ⁴¹ Cooling, Franklin B. *Monocacy: The Battle That Saved Washington*. Pg. 12
- ⁴² OR Series I, Vol 37, Part 2, pg. 17; OR Series I, Vol 37, Part I, pg. 174-75
- ⁴³ Feis, *Grant's Secret Service*, Pg. 230.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid*
- ⁴⁵ 22 June 1864, Telegraph, Col. Sharpe to Gen. Humphries, OR Series 1, Vol 40, Part 2, Pg. 306
- ⁴⁶ Worthington, *Fighting for Time: The Battle for Monocacy*. Pg. 42.

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⁴⁷ OR, Series 1 - Volume 37 (Part I), Pg. 644

⁴⁸ Worthington, Fighting for Time: The Battle for Monocacy. Pg. 53.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*

⁵⁰ OR, Series 1 - Volume 40 (Part 3), Pg. 18

⁵¹ Cooling, The Battle That Saved Washington, Pg. 49.

⁵² OR, Series 1 - Volume 40 (Part 3) Pg. 32

⁵³ OR Series 1 - Volume 37 (Part I), Pg. 177

⁵⁴ OR Series 1 - Volume 40 (Part 3) Pg. 32

⁵⁵ OR Series 1 - Volume 40 (Part 3) Pg. 34

⁵⁶ OR Series 1 - Volume 40 (Part 3) Pg. 41

⁵⁷ Feis, Grant's Secret Service, Pg. 232.

⁵⁸ Early, Jubal A. War Memoirs: Autobiographical Sketch and Narrative of the War Between the States. Edited by Frank E. Vandiver. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1960. Pg. 672

⁵⁹ Cooling, The Battle That Saved Washington, Pg. 181.

⁶⁰ See: The Ulysses S. Grant Information Center, <http://faculty.css.edu/mkelsey/usgrant/quotes.html>

⁶¹ *Ibid*