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“TO BULL RUN” LECTURES ON D2L
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Cold Mountain, Charles Frazier

ESSAY QUESTION:
Compare wartime strategies in the North to those in the South.

Describe the strategy, flow, and results of battle in at least two of the following engagements.....
From Fort Sumter to First Bull run (Manassas)

General plans and tactics (North & South)

Blockade

The influence of Napoleonic Warfare

The Battle for Kentucky

The Battle for Missouri

First Bull Run

Results
BASIC STRATEGY

Global—Napoleon had conquered more territory than any European Army.

And armies in the 1860s (2 generations after Napoleon) copied the moves.

This strategy dictated that any larger army on higher ground that could capture the opposing army won the war—one big battle and it was over. The point was taking another’s army—not another’s country, cities, ports, or multiple armies.

SOUTH

The basic war aim of the Confederacy was to defend a new nation from conquest. The South could "win" the war by not losing; the North could win only by winning.
"... It is one thing to drive the rebels from the south bank of the Potomac, or even to occupy Richmond, but another to reduce and hold in permanent subjection a tract of country nearly as large as Russia in Europe. ... No war of independence ever terminated unsuccessfully except where the disparity of force was far greater than it is in this case. ... Just as England during the revolution had to give up conquering the colonies so the North will have to give up conquering the South. ..."
Southern response—

First, most Southerners demanded that the new Confederate armies “protect” them from the abolitionist “hordes” (fearful of more John Brown).

Secondly, Southerners also felt that they could easily defeat any “Yankees” and distained the hide and wait strategy of President Davis, and later of General Lee.

Davis called this strategy: "offensive-defensive“.

Defend the Confederate homeland by using interior lines and, if opportunity offered, to go over to the offensive, even to the extent of invading the North.
Northern forces used several strategies. One was the “border” strategy—to hold the northern border of the Confederacy (from Virginia to the Mississippi river) and hope Union sympathy would help.

Another was to “penetrate”; or later “invade”. The question was how?

As large as the South was, they had two strategic weaknesses. One the extensive, east coast. Two, the Mississippi River.

General in Chief, Winfield Scott, proposed the: “Boa-Constrictor” or “Anaconda Plan”—to envelop the South, run ships down the Mississippi and capture the South—demanding a diplomatic surrender. It was too simple, but some elements would work later.
French Emperor Napoleon expanded his French Republic across Europe. As he did so, he created grand military plans that became both legend, and teaching tools for military operations in the United States.

West Point employed two French professors acquainted with Napoleonic tactics, and they proceeded to impart these gems to students. Both CSA General Beauregard and USA General McClellan admired Napoleon and spoke and read French.

Basic Napoleonic tactics used in the American Civil War included:

CONCENTRATION—gathering large forces away from the battle field before attack.

TURNING THE ENEMY—attempting to flank or attack, and then wheeling one end of the attack force to disrupt the opponents plans.

MANEUVERABILITY—all things LIGHT, making the army able to move quickly. In 1850s McClellan visited Europe and designed his "McClellan Saddle"—a lightweight but durable saddle that cavalry would use until World War II.

LARGE OVERWELMING FORCES—sounds obvious but Napoleon insisted on large well trained armies.

LIVING OFF THE LAND—Lighten the load by ditching the Commissary, as Sherman did in Georgia.
Plans were made immediately for three amphibious operations--one at Roanoke Island, the other at Port Royal, just south of Charleston; the other expedition was directed at New Orleans itself.

Blockade orders were issued, and the growth of government in both areas was significant.

As navies deployed, and armies mobilized, the early war was centered around border states & Virginia.
On April 19, 1861 President Lincoln issued the blockade orders.

The next day, after long contemplation and declining command of Union forces, Robert E. Lee, former Superintendent of West Point, Lee resigns his commission and accepts appointment to lead the armies of Virginia....

"I cannot raise my hand against my birthplace, my home, my children."

Lincoln’s loss of Lee was partly compensated by building an effective blockade..
Whereas an insurrection against the Government of the United States has broken out in the States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas......

.... Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States......

.... blockade of the ports within the States aforesaid
To coordinate the blockade, Lincoln set up a “Blockade Strategy Board” to link Army and Navy efforts.

The board created a “Atlantic Blockading Squadron”

On November 7, 1861, USA Captains Samuel F. Du Pont and Thomas Sherman defeated CSA forces at Port Royal earning the Union a deep water port between Savannah and Charleston.

The port made Lincoln’s blockade work!
Photo # NH 59256 Fleet b. Bombarding of Port Royal, SC, November 1861

The Bombardment of Forts Walker and Beauregard, Port Royal Inlet, South Carolina, November 7, 1861 — Sketched by our Special Artist on Board the "Mercury"— [See Page 766]
Brother against brother!!

As the early war developed, one of the most sobering realities was that families split overt loyalties. Too often, as young men volunteered or were drafted, brother fought against brother.

At Port Royal the *USS Pocahontas* joined the battle commanded by Percival Drayton, and began enfilade cannon fire on Fort Walker.

Commander Drayton was ordering fire on his older brother, Thomas F. Drayton, the Confederate general who commanded the forces ashore.
Percival Drayton, USN. West Point grad. Served on several ships, earning a captain rank in 1862. He commanded an early ironclad, and was part of the forces re-taking Ft. Sumter.

Lt. Gen. Thomas F. Drayton. West Point grad. He was a SC legislator and survived battles at Stone Mountain, Second Bull Run, and Sharpsburg.

The Drayton family plantation, Magnolia Plantation, is a tourist site near Charleston.
Fighting the Border War

As Abraham Lincoln put it, "I hope to have God on my side, but I must have Kentucky."

Immediately following the attack, four more states broke away: Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

To retain the loyalty of the remaining border states -- Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri -- President Lincoln insisted that the war was not about slavery or black rights; it was a war to preserve the Union.
The Civil War divided few states as deeply as it did Kentucky. Some residents, citing the state's history of supporting compromise and nationalism, wanted to remain with the Union.

Others favored the Confederacy; they concentrated on the state's ties to the South through culture--most importantly, by slave-owning--and through family.

In an attempt to keep these divisions from widening further, the state legislature declared in May 1861, a month after the firing on Fort Sumter, that it had decided to "occupy a position of strict neutrality."
Gen. John C. Fremont was ordered to settle Missouri troubles during the early months. But he angered many by declared the slaves in Missouri free. Lincoln rescinded the Emancipation order to win Missouri support.

The state was then split between pro-South governments meeting in Neosho, and Pro-Union governments meeting in Jefferson City.

Missouri was key to Union transportation and communication. It was the terminus for western trails and the Pont Express. It also held three major waterways.
Battle for Missouri

For months attempts were made to reach a compromise. They all failed.

On June 14th Nathaniel Lyons’ troops entered Jefferson City and seized the seat of government. On June 16th Nathaniel Lyons’ forces attacked the states militia headquarters in **Booneville**. The militia was routed and the Unionist were in firm control of the state.
Minor battles were not routine along the border states and in the region of Northern Virginia.

Engagements at Sewell’s Point, Aquia Creek and many others crossroads all pointed to serious conflicts to come.

June 1861-- West Virginia breaks away from slave state Virginia. Residents of the western counties of Virginia did not wish to secede along with the rest of the state. This section of Virginia was admitted into the Union as the state of West Virginia on June 20, 1863.
Why Virginia? For the first year—all centered on the defense of Washington DC, and Richmond VA. But later, the war would be decided far away—in Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and Atlanta.
Washington DC was 25 miles from Manassas Junction (Bull Run)

And the Union Capitol was only 106 miles from the Confederate Capitol of Richmond.
THEN CAME BULL RUN

Washington and Richmond politicians were demanding blood. As mentioned both sides were unhappy with delaying tactics.

USA General Irvin McDowell, commented that is after all...

“July and time to end the war…”

Great crowds cheered the Union as they marched west to capture a railroad.

The troops were green inexperienced 90 day volunteers.

They had no idea what was to come.
Brig. Gen, Irvin McDowell marches 28,450 green 90-day volunteers to Centerville, VA to capture access to the Orange & Alexander R.R., its tracks leading to Richmond. Defending the Manassas Junction CSA Gen. Pierre G.T. Beauregard commands 22,000 rebels.
Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell (USA)

McDowell was removed from Command after the First Bull Run and served for 18 months as a Corps Commander with the primary duty of guarding Washington DC.

He was partially blamed for the Second Bull Run and never lived down the events there.

He served as a Reconstruction Commander retiring in 1882.
General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard

Calling himself “G.T.” Academy graduate

Survived battles at Ft. Sumter, Bull Run, Shiloh, Corinth.

Defended Petersburg foundries from capture.

Surrendered to Sherman after Atlanta.

After the war he became a wealthy railroad investor making money in the Louisiana Lottery.
McDowell’s forces meet Beauregard’s men at Stones Bridge.
McDowell orders an attempt to cross the local fords, but is stopped by CSA forces at Blackburn’s Ford.
CSA Gen. Joseph E. Johnston evades Union forces and leaves the Shenandoah Valley using the Manassas Gap R.R. to move 10,000 troops to aid Beauregard. McDowell refused to believe reports of reinforcements.
CSA Gen. Joseph E. Johnston

Veteran of Mexican War

Survived Bull Run,
Peninsular Campaign,
Vicksburg, and Atlanta.

Fought at Kennesaw Mountain.

Became a RR and Insurance Businessman, and eventually a Congressman.
In the dark morning hours of July 21, McDowell moved his main force north and west toward Sudley Springs; & sent a diversionary force straight ahead along the Warrengton Turnpike. CSA Colonel Nathan Evans, Commanding the CSA forces at the bridge soon recognized the fake attack and moved to help defend against McDowell.
During the morning McDowell’s forces were better organized since they used a straight-away attack. Several CSA reinforcements were needed to hold Union men back. By noon the CSA men were near a route when CSA Lt. Colonel Bernard Bee called for his men “There stands Jackson like a stonewall! Rally behind the Virginian.” As troops on both side re-grouped, the main battle moved south to Henry Hill. Bee was mortally wounded and died the next day; but he had given Jackson his battle-name.
Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson

West Point graduate & Veteran of Mexico

VMI Professor

Survived Bull Run, Valley Campaign, Peninsular, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg.

At Chancellorsville May 2, 1863 he was accidentally shot by his own men. Two shots in the left arm were aggravated when his stretcher was dropped due to incoming fire. He died May 10.
From approximately 1 to 4 PM both sides fought to take and keep Henry Hill and the Robinson House. Fresh CSA troops in the later afternoon finally forced McDowell from the field.
Robinson House, NE of Henry Hill
The battle tipping to the Confederates about 4pm
Union withdrawal soon became a turn-tail-and-run event. Eager to leave the battlefield, Union soldiers became bogged down by politicians from Washington who had come out with lunch to watch the rebels get whipped. Panic set in, Senators carriages were toppled, and soldiers ran for the cover of the federal capitol. President Jefferson Davis appeared on the battle scene; yet his encouragement was not enough to motivate the tired and disorganized Confederates to give chase.
A negro, belonging, he says, to Colonel Fontaine, of Virginia, came in last night from the other side, saying his master had been killed at the first cannonading. He reports great havoc among the enemy, but his imagination is evidently too active to trust to his statements.

There are rumors that Johnston has joined Beauregard.
Protracted Results: Losses: 4,700 total (USA 2,950; CSA 1,750)

Both sides disorganized and exhausted.

CSA unable to follow up (common theme on both sides).

Both sides realize the war will be long and difficult.

CSA victory enhances enlistment, and cheers around CSA states.

Lincoln critics begin to form.

Lincoln fires McDowell, in favor of young strategist & trainer, McClellan, Lincoln’s search for a General will continue.

CSA military experience seems an advantage.

Richmond and Washington DC remain key targets, but Sherman moves; USA Navy moves, and war also moves west.

Confederates fortify Manassas Junction
Losses staggering: 4,700 total (USA 2,950; CSA 1,750). The total number of casualties in the entire War with Mexico Had only been 13,000—one battle had seen 36% the loss of an entire war. It would only get worse.

From July - November -- To blockade the coast of the Confederacy effectively, the federal navy had to be improved. The South built small, fast ships that could outmaneuver Union vessels. But on November 7, 1861, Captain Samuel F. Dupont's warships silenced Confederate guns in Fort Walker and Fort Beauregard. This victory enabled General Thomas W. Sherman's troops to occupy first Port Royal and then all the famous Sea Islands of South Carolina.
Conclusions:

It would be a long war

The Union had kept some border states

But the Confederacy had grown to eleven states

A full naval and land efforts would take massive support

The South had early success with military engagements and leaders

The North had early success with blockades

And brother fought brother