

# KUNHARDT **FILM** FOUNDATION

CAROLINE JANNEY  
*LINCOLN'S DILEMMA*  
KUNHARDT FILM FOUNDATION

**Caroline Janney**

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**Interviewed by Jackie Olive & Barak Goodman**

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CREW MEMBER:

Caroline Janney interview. Take one. Marker

Barak Goodman:

Janney, right?

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Yes, Janney.

## **The assault on Fort Sumter**

00:00:12:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Fort Sumter is an incredibly important symbol for the North and for the newly formed Confederacy. It's a relatively new fort. It's not quite finished. It sits in the middle of Charleston Harbor about three miles out from the battery, from the shore, and South Carolina says, "Hey, this is in Charleston Harbor, therefore it belongs to the Confederacy". And Lincoln says, "No, this is federal property." Now throughout the South, throughout what's now the Confederacy, this had been a common occurrence of federal forts being seized by State governments, but Fort Sumter in particular becomes incredibly symbolic. And Lincoln knows that he has to do something. Buchanan hadn't

done anything up to that point, and Lincoln says, "I have to send provisions." He gets a message the night after the inauguration, so March 5th, he gets a message from major Robert Anderson, who is the commander of a small garrison that had moved from the land side, from Fort Moultrie over to Fort Sumter in late December, fearing an attack by South Carolinians and Lincoln gets this message that the men are desperate for food. He has to send provisions. And so he makes a decision and he decides that he's going to send an unarmed ship with provisions to Anderson. His cabinet objects. Seward says, "You can't do this." General in Chief Winfield Scott says, "You cannot do this. You're only going to incite conflict." But Lincoln knows what an important symbol it is for him to hold this Fort. In fact, during his inaugural address on March 4th, he had said "We have to hold, occupy and possess all of our federal properties." And so that's precisely what he does. He sends a ship, he calls up, doesn't call, he informs the Governor of South Carolina that he is going to be sending the ship. He says, "It's unarmed. I'm sending provisions," and essentially he puts the ball in the court of the Confederacy.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lincoln has a couple of options when it comes to Fort Sumter. He can give up the Fort, as many of his advisors are telling him that he should do. He could send an armed vessel. He could launch an attack essentially on Charleston to reclaim the Fort. But instead he takes this middle pathway and says, "I'm going to provide for our federal soldiers there. I'm going to send them provisions. I'm not going to let them starve to death. On the other hand, I'm not trying to provoke a war." He said, "This is simply me providing for federal soldiers. This is a federal property, and this is what I'm going to do." So he's trying to find a middle ground here. And so when he informs Governor Pickens of South Carolina that he's sending a ship, he's very clear that he's not sending a ship in any sort of way to provoke conflict. He's going to put the ball

in the court of the Confederates. It's going to be up to the Confederacy if there's going to be an attack. Lincoln's not going to launch an attack against the so-called Confederacy.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lincoln is very savvy in reading public opinion, for one thing. As he will demonstrate throughout the war, he has a real sense that there's a connection between what goes on on the home front, on the political front, as well as on the military front. And he will learn over the course of the war, how increasingly important all of those intersections are. But we see that first glimmer of that here at Fort Sumter. We in fact see it in his inaugural address when he foreshadows what he's going to do. The crisis hasn't yet become a crisis when he gives his inaugural address on the fourth, but it quickly becomes so in the days after. And we see him really cognizant that public opinion matters. The North does not want him to give up this Fort. They know that this is important, that they have to claim this as federal property. And yet he is very conscious of not trying to provoke a conflict. He also is incredibly tied to a belief that there's a good deal of unionist sentiment in the South. And this is what's going to drive many of his decisions, especially during the first year of the war. He's convinced that it's the slaveholding oligarchy that has duped the mass of white Southerners into supporting the Confederacy. He's convinced that even after the secession of the first seven of the slave States, that those upper South slave States. And keep in mind that there are still eight slave States that have not left the Union by the time that he is inaugurated, he believes that they're going to support the Union. He does not think that they are going to secede. And so he's trying to find this middle course, this middle ground of not provoking, but at the same time, ensuring the protection of his federal soldiers.

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CAROLINE JANNEY:

I don't think Lincoln was naive about the situation. He's very cognizant of the various entities that he has to juggle. He is well aware that 45% of the white North did not vote for him. That there are Northern Democrats who do not want to provoke a war. He is very conscious of those border south states. So Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, that are slave holding States. He doesn't want to lose their support. He doesn't want to lose the support of Virginia or North Carolina at this point. So he's not being naive in sending a ship. He's being very pragmatic. And I think that's a word that we can use about Lincoln throughout the course of the war, that he is pragmatic in his approach.

### **Lincoln's estimation of Southern loyalties**

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CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lincoln does absolutely overestimate the extent of unionist sympathy in the South, but in some ways he had reason to believe in that. If we look at North Carolina, at Virginia, even at Kentucky in the months before Fort Sumter, they had all either decided not to hold secession conventions, or they had voted against secession. Virginia voted against secession twice before it ultimately decided to do so in the wake of Lincoln calling for 75,000 troops after Fort Sumter. So Lincoln's not naive. He is trying to straddle this middle road, he's trying to make his way and keep all of the various factions happy. And he does have a faith. He does have a belief and for good reason that there is unionist sympathy in the South. He will overestimate how much unionist sympathy there is once he has called for troops, but he's not naive in this belief.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lincoln believed that the war would be short. Many white Northerners believed that. Then again, many white Southerners believed this as well. They thought this would be one battle, one show of force and the war would be over. But we need to keep in mind the objectives that each side had. In many respects, the Confederacy's objectives are easier to achieve. They simply need to convince the United States to give them their independence, to convince them that it's not worth their time or money or men to fight the war, and just go home and let them be independent. Lincoln though, has a much more substantial problem. He needs to subdue the rebellion. He needs to convince first those seven States and eventually 11 States that have seceded that they can't do so, that they can't leave the Union. He needs to have his Union Army march into various points in the South and destroy the Confederate armies, or at least occupy important Confederate cities. He has to subdue a rebellion, which in many regards is an incredibly difficult prospect, especially when we consider how large the Confederacy was. It has 3,500 miles of coastline. This is a vast territory to be conquered.

### **The Union Army in 1861**

00:08:31:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Keep in mind that this country was founded on the belief of the citizen soldier, the volunteer soldier. And so there had been a great deal of pushback over the course of the first decades of the United States' existence about even establishing a professional army, a professional military. West Point isn't established until 1803 in Jefferson's presidency. So there's a long pushback against a professional army. And so at the start of the Civil War, there are only about 15,000 men in the US army, and most of those are west of the

Mississippi river. There are about 42 naval ships that are available. So the size of the Union Army, of the United States Army is absolutely tiny by comparison to what it will become over the course of the war. So if we think about the fact that there were 15,000 men in the United States Army in 1861, over the course of the war, approximately two million men will serve in the Union forces. So there's just no comparison. I think we have to stop and think about what a small fraction of men were available to him when Fort Sumpter erupted.

### **The mobilization of the Union Army**

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CAROLINE JANNEY:

So it's an incredibly fast mobilization of forces. And since he can't just call up forces to fight for the United States Army, he has to get individual states to do so. And on April 15th, just several days after Fort Sumter has fallen, he calls on the states that are still loyal to the Union to send 75,000 troops. Every state will have its quota, but keep in mind, this includes those slaveholding states of the upper South of Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas. All of those are also asked to send troops, but what will happen is that these troops will muster. There are many militias that had already been in existence, but they will go to various points within their respective States muster into service as volunteers for their state forces. And then their state forces will be turned over to the United States Volunteer Army. And over the course of the summer, somewhere around a hundred thousand men are mobilized. Many of these men for the Union army are mobilized just for six months. They believe that they are enlisting for a war that's going to be over and done with in one battle. And so six months is the limit of their enlistment, and it will become clear by the fall of 1861, that that's not going to be enough,

and future enlistments will be for three years. By the time we get to the spring of 1863, Lincoln and his army will be in such desperate straits that they will issue the first draft for the United States Army. The Confederacy had done so the spring before, but ultimately we're going to see the mobilization of upward of two million men in the Union ranks.

### **Enthusiasm of Northern v. Southern Troops**

00:11:37:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

I think there's a misunderstanding that there's a gap in enthusiasm because as soon as Lincoln calls for soldiers, calls for volunteers in the spring of 1861, men are rushing to volunteer. They're from Wisconsin and Maine, and every state that is still loyal to the Union. We find men rushing to be part of this effort to protect the Union. And I think we've lost a sense of what the Union meant to men in 1861 throughout the war. What the concept of Union meant. Union was something that was precarious. It was something that was fragile and it was a new experiment. They needed only look to Europe to the revolutions of 1848 and know that democracy wasn't something that necessarily would survive. And they really bought into this belief in American exceptionalism, that America was a special place, that the Union was in fact special and it had to be protected at all costs. So many of these young men and they're young boys, they're 18, 19, 21 year old kids that are signing up to go off and fight. They absolutely knew what they were fighting for. They knew that they were going to protect this country that Washington and others had created for them. So there's a tremendous enthusiasm. There's so much enthusiasm that as men pour into Washington, D.C. there's no place to put all of them. They're sleeping on the grounds of the Capitol. They're sleeping in

the Capitol building because there's such a rush of men coming to volunteer. So no, there's not an enthusiasm gap at first.

### **Union strategy in Spring 1861**

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CAROLINE JANNEY:

As war momentum builds in the spring of 1861, in April into May, we start to see a couple of different calls. One thing that we hear at first is that onto Richmond, when Virginia secedes, the Confederacy will move its capital from Montgomery, Alabama to Richmond, Virginia. And many in the North are saying, this is easy. All we need to do is go sack Richmond. And that will be the end of this rebellion. But there are people that are much more thoughtful who realized that this is going to take some patience, a significant army and perhaps a significant amount of time. And one of those is General Winfield Scott who's the general in chief of the United States Army. He's in his mid-seventies at this point. He is a great war hero. He had fought in the war of 1812, had been a hero in the Mexican-American war, and he is now in charge of all the United States armies. He tells Lincoln that this is going to take a lot longer, and the strategy that he ends up proposing has several prongs. One is that they need to divide the Confederacy. And the way to divide the Confederacy is to take control of the Mississippi river. If you can take control of the Mississippi river, moving down from St. Louis all the way to the most important port in the Confederacy, New Orleans, if you can capture that, then you can cut the Confederacy, maybe not in half, but you can divide it. You can cut off Texas and Arkansas and Louisiana, and then you can create a blockade. A blockade around the 3,500 mile coastline of the Confederacy, and you can prevent the Confederacy from shipping out their cotton for money. You can prevent them from shipping in goods from England and elsewhere,



war material that they desperately need if they're going to wage a war and he's calling for constricting the Confederacy, and because it calls for constricting the Confederacy or suffocating it to death, this comes to be known as the Anaconda Plan.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Confederates of course learn about this very quickly because it's published in Northern newspapers and they're still reading Northern newspapers. So they hear about this plan, but there's one more part of Scott's plan that could take a lot longer. And he says, "If that doesn't work, what we're going to have to do is to march into the heart of the Confederacy, going to have to march in with thousands and thousands of troops," he estimates that it may take as many as 300,000 troops.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Now he vastly underestimates how many men this is going to take, but the vision that he lays out in the summer of 1861 ends up being how the Union war effort plays out, that the Confederacy will be constricted. That blockade ultimately will prevent Confederates from getting the war material that they need. Even as early as July of 1861, people in Charleston are saying "We can't get ammunition anymore. Are we ever going to be able to survive this?" This is the summer of 1861 before there's ever been a major battle, but Scott's plan will ultimately play out. They will constrict the South and they will have to send armies into the heartland of the Confederacy in order to finally exhaust the will of the Confederates to fight.

## **The First Battle of Bull Run**

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CAROLINE JANNEY:

The Battle of Bull Run or the Battle of Manassas is going to occur on July 21st, 1861. This will be the first major confrontation between the Union and Confederate armies during the war. There'd been some other very small battles, but this will be the first real test. Because it was the first real test and because it was on the outskirts of Washington, about 30 miles away from Washington, so many people in D.C. had come out to watch it. Congressmen had driven out in their carriages, there were ladies with parasols, there were children playing games and picnics spread out along the banks of Bull Run Creek. They expected to see this one major clash, the war. People didn't want to miss what they presumed would be the only battle of the war. That battle, however, quickly turned into a major route for the Union forces. Keep in mind that many of those men are green, they are new recruits. They haven't learned anything about maneuvering on a battlefield yet. This is true for both Union and Confederate, but Union generals had worried about this and they had warned Lincoln that this might be the case. And after a battle that raged from the morning until about four o'clock in the afternoon, when Confederate forces push the Union forces off the Hill, off Henry House Hill and across the Creek, across Bull Run Creek, they are, the Union is absolutely routed. In the process of doing so, as they are scrambling to leave the field, they run into all of the civilians who have come out from Washington D.C. It's a madhouse. They slam into people that are picnicking. A Congressman is taken prisoner of war. It's absolute mayhem.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

The Union army manages to make its way back to Washington D.C. in a single evening. It had taken them days to march out and prepare for battle and they are absolutely routed. Probably what's most important about the Battle of

Manassas or the Battle of Bull Run is the lingering sentiment that comes out of it. It is seen as a major bloodletting in the summer of 1861, there are less than 6,000 casualties and by later standards, this is hardly a drip in the bucket, but this is seen as a huge cost. And the Union armies realized, the Northern loyal public realizes that this war isn't going to be over in one battle. This is going to be a hard-fought war, and they're going to have to buckle down. They're going to have to train their forces to fight efficiently. On the other hand, Confederate morale soars. And we start seeing things like Confederates saying that it takes one rebel to whip three yankees. And there's the sentiment that in fact, they are well on their way to convincing the United States to give them their independence. So, the battle is incredibly important for those reasons.

### **Lincoln's use of the telegraph**

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CAROLINE JANNEY:

The telegraph is a fairly new technology and it gives Lincoln a way to hear, in 19th century parlance, almost immediately, what's going on in the battlefield. And so he will spend his evenings down at the telegraph office, waiting for these messages to come in. He's pouring over the telegrams, pouring over any sort of messages, trying to discern what's going on. This is a pattern that we will see throughout the war.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

After the Battle of Manassas, Lincoln will realize that he needs to learn more about military strategy. And so he will go to the Library of Congress and check out Henry Halleck, who's one of his generals who's in command in the

West. Halleck had written a book about strategies and tactics, and Lincoln will go check it out and begin to read, pore over, trying to understand what is going on and what should be going on. He has very limited military experience, especially when compared to his opponent in Jefferson Davis, who had not only gone to West Point, fought in the Mexican American war and served as Secretary of War. Lincoln has pretty limited experience, but he very quickly becomes involved and is trying to educate himself to the extent that he can, by reading everything he can, including all of these messages coming in from the field.

### **Lincoln's growing confidence**

00:21:30:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

We do see Lincoln becoming much more confident, much more strident in his military beliefs, in his beliefs about what should be done. He begins to not only read about what is happening and what has happened in the past, but he begins to form his own strategies. He begins to lay out strategies for his commanders, and he does this with McClellan in particular. We see this when McClellan is refusing to move in the fall of 1861, who's hunkered down outside of Washington, D.C. and Lincoln will go to him in early December with a plan. He has a plan of attack for him and he urges McClellan to follow it.

We'll see this evolve. He also, though, will gain more confidence. Once he finally finds a general that is doing – is fighting for him, in Grant, then we see Lincoln pulling back a bit because he trusts Grant to do the things because Grant will fight. He had been so frustrated with every other general before him, at least in the Eastern theater with McClellan, with Burnside to a lesser extent, with Hooker, even with Meade in the wake of Gettysburg. Finally, in

Grant, he finds a general who will go and fight, and so we see him not having to pore over these questions as much.

### **George B. McClellan**

00:23:00:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

George B. McClellan was 34 years old in the summer of 1861, and he is tapped by none other than General Winfield Scott to come East after the debacle at Manassas and to lead what he will name the Army of the Potomac. McClellan was an obvious choice for this. He had had a very successful career at West Point, had graduated second in his class in 1846. Had gone on to have a distinguished career in the Mexican American war. In the 1850s, he had been sent to Europe to observe the Crimean War and to come back and report on what they are doing, what are the strategies and tactics going on in Europe. He's very respected. He's in the elite engineering Corps. He will retire from, or step down from the U.S. Army because he wanted to make money. And he becomes a railroad executive. He makes a lot of good money doing so, but when the war begins, he initially is asked by Ohio to lead a regimen. And he does, but he quickly rises through the ranks and he will fight some important battles in Western Virginia in the early summer of 1861. And then Scott brings him back to Washington and asks him to take control of McDowell's army.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So McClellan comes back to Virginia, back to Washington in late July of 1861. And it's his job to take these federal forces who had been absolutely smashed after the first battle at Manassas and to create a fighting army out of them.

And he does so, he produces the most well-organized, well-equipped, well-trained army the United States has ever seen. He has about a hundred thousand men by that fall, and they adore McClellan. They call him Little Mac. He was average height, but he seemed short to some people, so his soldiers dub him Little Mac. McClellan will come the closest of any Union general to having that devotion that Confederate soldiers will have for Lee.

McClellan's soldiers absolutely love him. Lincoln, on the other hand, will come to be increasingly frustrated with McClellan because despite the fact that McClellan has managed to produce this well-organized, formidable force, he just doesn't want to do anything with it. And he's had them since early August of 1861. He will not move them until March of 1862 and Lincoln will constantly, constantly be asking McClellan to move his army.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So more than any other field commander Lincoln is constantly having to push McClellan. He meets with him no less than 57 times between the time that McClellan arrives in Washington in late July of 1861 until he moves his forces on April 1st of 1862. And Lincoln becomes incredibly frustrated. He goes to him in early December and says, "Look, I have a plan. You have Confederate forces sitting in front of you with Joseph Johnston's troops. Here's what you need to do." And Lincoln plots out how McClellan should attack him and McClellan with his both bravado and his sense that he's Lincoln superior. Lincoln's not his superior, but McClellan has the sense that he knows better than Lincoln.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And so even though Lincoln's plan actually was not a bad plan, McClellan simply cannot follow it now because Lincoln has come up with it. And so

McClellan is not going to be in communication. He's not going to tell Lincoln what he's doing. He's going to constantly be asking for more troops. He's always overestimating how many troops the Confederates have. At one point, he thinks that they have as many as 200,000 troops. Never, during the entire war does any Confederate army come close to even 100,000 troops. So McClellan is constantly overestimating, constantly asking for more sources and Lincoln is frustrated. He's frustrated that he won't move.

### **McClellan's reluctance**

00:27:28:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

It's really hard to psychoanalyze McClellan, but I think there's a combination of factors. McClellan was pretty good on the defensive and Lincoln and others agreed that if you're worried about Washington being attacked, McClellan was your man. He would prevent any sort of attack. He'd be great on defense. But he, I'm not sure that it's cowardice, I think that McClellan wants to be well-equipped. He wants to know it's a sure thing. He wants to know that he's going to outnumber. He does have intelligence coming and the intelligence from Pinkerton and others isn't all that great. And certainly not necessarily reliable, but he always, he wants to come out on top. And I think that's what driving him. He wants to be right. And he wants to be the hero. McClellan had this vision for how the war would play out.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

He writes to General Winfield Scott in the summer of 1861. Well before he's in command of the Army of the Potomac and he tells the General in Chief how he thinks this war should play out. So there's this tremendous ego that he

has. And it's his ego that seems to trip him up time and time again, even when he knows that Lincoln is probably right, even when he knows that Lincoln is protecting him. In the early spring of 1862, when Republicans are calling for him to be dismissed from the Army of the Potomac, he knows Lincoln is protecting him and yet he just can't seem to make that move. He just can't seem to do it until he is forced to do so by Lincoln.

### **Lincoln & McClellan**

00:29:20:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

McClellan famously referred to Lincoln as a gorilla. He often has very dismissive comments in his letters to his wife Ellen, about meeting with Lincoln. He's upset that Lincoln has this habit of showing up at McClellan's home unannounced, inviting himself for dinner. And there's a famous episode where Lincoln shows up and McClellan refuses to see him, simply goes to bed. So there is a contempt. There is a notion that Lincoln is a backwoods pioneer that just simply doesn't quite reach the elite level that is worthy of someone such as McClellan. And it is, it borders on contempt.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And yet he has these moments when he realizes that Lincoln is protecting him. Or after the famous photograph that's taken at Antietam in October of 1862, he'll write to his wife and talk about what a pleasant meeting they had. So we see this back and forth. I think McClellan was incredibly complex. He was probably not as confident in himself as his bravado would suggest that he was, which might account for some of this back and forth. But he



absolutely thought that he was the superior mind when it came to Lincoln, he thought he was the superior mind when it came to Winfield Scott.

Lincoln is incredibly patient with McClellan, at least to McClellan. Behind the scenes he's often fuming. He is often beside himself after McClellan refuses to send troops to support Pope in the summer of 1862 at the Battle of Second Manassas. People report that Lincoln is unhinged, that he's madder than they've ever seen him before. But he knows how or he's trying his best to deal with McClellan. He knows of McClellan's ego and he is very patient and trying to abide. He wants to win the war and he believes that McClellan can do this. He is also, Lincoln is also very cognizant of two facts. One, that McClellan's men absolutely adore him and will do anything for him. And second, that McClellan is a Democrat and he has that support from that very strong Northern Democratic base. And Lincoln knows that if he sacks McClellan too soon, there could be political fallout from that.

## **The Peninsula Campaign of 1862**

00:32:02:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

March of 1862, McClellan will finally begin moving his forces. And rather than a direct attack on the Confederates in front of him, what he's decided to do is he's going to send his now 120,000 man army on approximately 400 ships down the Chesapeake Bay to the Peninsula of Virginia. And they will land at Fort Monroe and then they will march up the peninsula to Richmond. So they will get behind Confederate lines, be able to capture the Confederate Capitol. This is his plan. Finally gets them in motion. He will leave Washington on April 1st himself. He will encounter a terrain that is unfriendly at best. It's an incredibly wet spring. And if you can imagine 120,000 men plus all of the wagons and cannon and horses and mules moving up water clogged roads.

It's raining throughout April and May. It's going to rain again in late June, and it's a tremendous mud bath to try to move this army through.

So he's facing the obstacle of the weather first, but he will have some success at first. He will take Yorktown. Then he'll take Williamsburg. And the Army of the Potomac will move all the way up to the outskirts of Richmond by May 31st. And on May 31st, they engage in a battle called Seven Pines or Fair Oaks. It's another one of those battles with two names. And after two days of fighting, the armies will end up essentially in the same points that they had begun the battle, but something momentous will happen at Seven Pines. And that is that the Confederate commander, Joseph E. Johnston, will be wounded from cannon fire. He, there's some shrapnel that will hit him in the chest and he will be out of commission. And in his place, Davis will appoint Robert E. Lee to take command of the Confederate forces in Virginia. And this is going to be a game changer for McClellan.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

The next three weeks are again incredibly rainy. Means that McClellan can't move his troops. He can't move his large guns. He's right outside of Richmond. He could take Richmond, they can see the spires of the churches, and yet he can't move his guns. And, and during this time Lee starts training his army. He will rechristen his army, the Army of Northern Virginia. This will now be Lee's army. He will reorganize the army. And on June 25th, Lee will wage an attack. And he's going to begin with what will become known as the Seven Days Battles. It's a series of five battles in which Lee will push McClellan's army all the way back to the banks of the James river. So McClellan had come so close to capturing Richmond, and yet once Lee takes command, he will push him back and force McClellan to withdraw to the protection of the Union gun boats on the James river.

**Robert E. Lee**

00:35:17:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Robert E. Lee will become the most important Confederate leader during the war, much more important than any political leader, the most important symbol in the Confederacy. Lee had come from a very prominent Virginia family. His father Light Horse Harry Lee had been a hero during the revolution, had been a governor of Virginia. Lee would go on to West Point where he would graduate second in his class. He was an exceptionally strong student, would become an engineer, would go on to have a distinguished career in the army, especially during the war with Mexico. He would come back to West Point where he would serve as the superintendent at West Point. He was also married to Mary Custis, who was the step granddaughter of George Washington.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So Lee's very well-connected in Virginia, highly thought-of. And when it becomes apparent that there's going to be a war with the Confederacy, Winfield Scott will go to Lee and ask him to take command of the Union field army that's outside of Washington. This'll be the army that McDowell will ultimately have at Manassas. So it's not... There's a misunderstanding that Lee is asked to take control of all the Union armies. That's not the case. But Lee will decline. And he declines even before Virginia has seceded because he believes that Virginia will in fact leave the Union and he can't raise his sword against his state, he says. So he will resign from the United States Army on April 20th and offer his services to the state. And then ultimately to the Confederacy a few days later. When he takes command of what becomes the

army of Northern Virginia in the spring of 1862, people were not all that happy on the home front.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

In fact, Lee had a pretty bad reputation. He had all sorts of not very nice nicknames, such as King of Spades because they believed that he was too interested in throwing up breastworks and the battles he had fought in Western Virginia in the summer of 1861. And there were many, many diary entries who said, "Oh no, We've put, put Lee in command. We might as well give it all up right now." But quickly his army came to have faith in him. And he won battle after battle with this well-organized and devoted set of men who followed him.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lee has a gift not only of choosing, for the most part, good core commanders, good division commanders. He knows what personnel to choose. He also was exceptionally good at defensive war and knew how to wage that sort of defensive battle, but he also could take in the big picture. And he was often, like Lincoln, thinking about the connection between the homefront and the battlefield. So when he makes the decisions twice to take his army out of Virginia first into Maryland, and then into Pennsylvania, part of that is driven by logistical reasons that he knows he needs to relieve the pressure that has built up against Virginia farmers and against Richmond.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

But he also is very savvy and knows about Northern sentiment and about political sentiment in the North. So Lee is such a great commander because of the men that he surrounds himself with but also because he is inherently understanding the many vast connections. He knows that the military is

much more than just the army. He knows that he needs the support of the homefront, and he knows how waging a war can destroy morale and boost morale on the home front as well.

## **Ulysses S. Grant**

00:39:15:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Grant, when the war begins, is a 39 year old who had not been incredibly successful at many of the ventures in his life. He had gone to West Point where the only thing he seemed to excel at was horseback riding. And he had stayed in the army for many years after graduating from West Point. Had been out on the Pacific coast, but was incredibly lonely, missed his wife, Julia, very much. And there were of course, rumors that he had been drinking and he will resign from the army. He will come back, try his hand at a host of other tasks. He will try farming. He will end up working in his father's store as a clerk. So he had not been all that successful at the time that the war began. But when the war does begin, he's given the command, he's a brigadier general initially. He wins a series of battles in early 1861. And in the winter of 1862, when Henry Halleck, who's in charge of the Western theater, in charge of coming up with a plan of attack for the Union armies in the West, he decides that he's going to put Grant in command of a force of an army that will be in charge of attacking two forts, Fort Henry and Fort Donelson. One on the banks of the Tennessee river, the other on the bank of the Cumberland. And these forts are important because they're the center of the Confederate line in the Western theater. And if Grant can get hold of these two forts, he can gain control, he will gain control of the rivers. And if he gains control of the Cumberland river, that will mean control of Nashville. And if the Union army can get control of Nashville, then that will be one of the most important

ways of getting rid of so many resources that the Confederacy depends on. Nashville was incredibly important as a site of production, both food and industry for the Confederacy.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And so Grant comes to the stage, comes to... He had come to Lincoln's attention earlier in 1861 when he had won those small battles in Missouri. But he's tasked with going after Forts Henry and Donelson. With the help of a naval flotilla, he will attack Fort Henry and take command of that on February 6th. 10 days later, he will do so again at Fort Donelson.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

But this time he will compel the surrender of the entire Confederate army there – 15,000 men. And he doesn't just compel a surrender, he compels an unconditional surrender. He will not negotiate. There will be no terms that will be permitted. And this leads to all sorts of reports in newspapers. People say that his initials, US Grant stands for “unconditional surrender Grant.” And he is seen as this hero in the West. In the months that follow, he will follow up on these two really important victories in moving his army up the Tennessee river to a small landing called Pittsburgh Landing.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And at Pittsburgh Landing on April 6th and 7th, his army, which he's been training at this point has a lot of new recruits in the spring of 1862, will be surprised. Will be surprised by Confederate forces under Albert Sidney Johnston moving up from Mississippi. And they will slam into Grant's army, pushing them back on the first day to the banks of the Tennessee river. Grant's army is almost destroyed. It's only in the nick of time that Buell's

forces show up, cross the river and manage to push back Confederate forces, route the Confederate forces, force them all the way back into Mississippi. Grant has been the hero yet again, and yet rumors start to surface that he'd been drinking and because he'd been drinking, he had been surprised by Confederate forces. And this had led to the bloodletting that Shiloh was. Shiloh was the bloodiest battle that the nation had ever seen at 24,000 deaths over the course of two days. Keep in mind that Manassas had seen about 6,000 casualties. So 24,000 casualties over the course of two days. And people are wringing their hands, they're beside themselves. And one of the fingers that they can point is at Grant, that if he's been drinking, then he must be responsible for this. And so Halleck will temporarily remove him from command.

### **Lincoln's opinion of Grant**

00:43:56:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lincoln notices Grant fairly earlier on in 1861. But when he has the string of successes in February of '62 and then followed by Shiloh, Lincoln is very supportive. He says he fights unlike McClellan, unlike so many of the other commanders in the East, he fights and Lincoln's going to support Grant and we will see that support continue throughout the war. Things hadn't been going well for the Union army in the East, but they're going exceptionally well for the Union army in the West. By the spring of 1862, Grant along with the other Union commanders had not only gained control of Nashville, but most of western Tennessee. They had gained control of Corinth, Mississippi, which is a really important railroad site. By late April, they've gained control of New Orleans. So it means they have control of the upper and lower reaches of the Mississippi river. And so the Anaconda plan that Scott had put into place in

1861, a year later, is coming to be, and we're seeing a lot of success out West, and it's because of men like Grant that are fighting and Lincoln takes notice.

### **The Second Battle of Bull Run**

00:45:20:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

After the fighting around Richmond in June and in July of 1862, Lincoln is going to ask McClellan to bring his troops back North. He wants to bring them back to Washington D.C. and McClellan is just going to sit along the banks of the James river. And instead a new army will be created in Northern Virginia. It's a federal army called the Army of Virginia, and it's going to be under the command of John Pope— it's all the consolidated forces around Washington D.C. And when Lee realizes that McClellan is not going to pursue him, Lee is going to shift his forces North. And at the end of August, August 28th, he will again encounter Union forces on that old battlefield of Manassas, where they had fought just a year earlier. And after two days of fighting, August 28 through August 30th – so three days of fighting, Lee will once again, route the Union forces around Manassas, sending them once again, back into the fortifications around Washington D.C.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So, Lincoln is incredibly frustrated because he sees all of the success that Union armies are having in the West. And he just can't seem to find a commander in the East that will fight with the same tenacity as those Western commanders are doing. And so he brings, Pope actually comes from the West. He's brought to Washington DC, hoping that that maybe he will fight, but when he is routed so badly, Lincoln is beside himself. And he knows that he's going to have to turn to McClellan again, he's not sure that he wants



to. He has demoted McClellan from General in Chief in March, and he left that position open for a good period of time. Finally, he's going to tap Halleck to be his General in Chief.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And so in late August, early September, Lincoln says to Halleck, "I don't know what to do. Do we bring McClellan back on the scene?" And Lincoln feels like he has no other choice because he knows that the men that have been routed under Pope's command aren't going to follow Pope anymore. They're not going to follow McDowell. They love McClellan. And so reluctantly, he will bring McClellan back and lean on him again, because he knows that Lee has crossed the Potomac and Lee is heading into Maryland into loyal territory. And he's going to have to ask McClellan once again, to lead the Army of the Potomac against Lee's army.

### **The military situation & emancipation**

00:48:00:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lincoln is so frustrated with McClellan's inability to capture Richmond, with his inability to crush the Confederate army and yet we see what's going on in the West. And so in the days after the Seven Days Battle, Lincoln is going to go to his cabinet and say, "I'm going to emancipate the slaves. I'm going to issue a proclamation, an executive order freeing the slaves." And his cabinet says, "Yes, but not yet, because it's going to look like a desperate measure. We are not winning these battles in the East." And keep in mind that the newspapers, the prominent newspapers in New York and Washington, they're all focused on McClellan and his army. They're focused on those losses in the East and Lincoln realizes that he needs to use emancipation. He needs to use this as a

war against slavery. And so he's going to wait until he, at the advice of his cabinet, he's going to wait until he has another victory in the East in order to issue this proclamation that will free the slaves that are still in rebel territory. So he's incredibly frustrated. He's wringing his hands in the summer of 1862. And the Seven Days Battles are so important because they're really a turning point in the war. They're a turning point in the war for several reasons. One of those is if McClellan had managed to capture Richmond, and the Confederacy had fallen in the summer of 1862, the Confederacy would have fallen with slavery still intact. Now that's not to say that slavery might not have been ended in some other capacity, but it would not have been ended by the war in the summer of 1862.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So in some ways we might praise McClellan for not winning because this drives not only Lincoln, but also Congress. Congress will pass the Second Confiscation Act in the immediate aftermath of the Seven Days Battles. Senator Charles Sumner will say that it is directly related to McClellan's inability to capture the Confederate capital, which will lead Congress to pass this act. So we see that the military, the political, the drive for emancipation, all tied up in McClellan's inability to capture Richmond that summer.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So the failure of McClellan who had come so very close to capturing the Confederate Capital and ending the war in the summer of 1862 drives Lincoln, drives Congress to push for emancipation. So there is a direct link between McClellan's failure on the battlefield and this push for emancipation. Emancipation is going to weaken the Confederacy. The Confederacy is incredibly reliant upon slave labor. They're reliant upon enslaved labor to do things for the army, from building fortifications, building roads, cooking food,

nursing wounded soldiers, to on the home front of producing foodstuffs and producing cotton and keeping the home front running. The fact that there are so many enslaved laborers in the Confederacy means that the Confederacy can put more white men into the military. And so in every respect, slavery is undergirding the Confederate war effort. And Lincoln and congressmen come to realize, as do generals in the field, that if they can undermine slavery, that they will undermine the Confederate war effort. Without slavery, the Confederacy can not continue to fight the way that they are fighting.

### **The Battle of Antietam**

00:51:49:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Well, for the first time in the war, we see McClellan moving with some speed and we see him moving with speed because he has information. The Confederate army had been encamped in Frederick, Maryland. And when they moved out, McClellan's army moved in right behind them. And at some point during the evening, a soldier is kicking his way through some ashes in a campfire. And he finds some cigars that are rolled up in Lee's orders, orders that say exactly what his army is going to do.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lee's going to be breaking his army into several different parts and, number one, that this makes him vulnerable. But number, two McClellan now knows exactly what Lee's plans are. And so he's going to be moving with a pace that we've never seen before from him. And he's going to be high on the tail of Lee. In fact, Lee says, "What's going on here? This isn't like McClellan. Why does he seem to know where we're going and what we're going to do?" So if it had not been for the lost orders, then perhaps McClellan never would have made

it to the banks of the Antietam Creek. And we might not have had that battle there. He might've sat stalled in Frederick for another month before he moved again.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So Antietam will come to be the bloodiest day in American history. There will be upward of 23,000 casualties on one single day. And part of that is because of the nature of the fighting. The fighting will begin that morning on the Confederate left flank. And there will be absolutely horrific fighting that rolls across Miller's cornfield, back and forth. So much so that the men are essentially laying in their ranks where they've fallen. And during the middle part of the battle, the force will come to concentrate on a place that becomes known as the sunken road. And this at first, is a great strategic position for the Confederates because they can hunker down in this road bed and shoot at incoming Union forces. But once the Union forces gain control of a small knoll, they can shoot down into those Confederate lines and, "It's like shooting fish in a barrel," one soldier says. And it was so devastating. The fighting in that section of the battlefield was so devastating that a day after the battle, one Union officer said that he could walk from body to body for hundreds of yards without ever touching the ground.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

There's fierce fighting on the far right side of the Confederate Army when Burnside tries to bring his entire corps across a small stone bridge over Antietam Creek. And again, we have Confederates that are up on the high ground above them, simply shooting down at these Union forces. And it's almost, it's almost a victory for McClellan. Burnside has managed to finally get across that bridge and roll up the Confederate right. But just at the last moment, A.P. Hill's corps will come marching in from Harpers Ferry and

manage to push the Union Army back to the edge of the creek. And McClellan will stop that night.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

He won't reinitiate the fighting. He actually has Lee in a perfect position. Lee's back is against the Potomac River. If McClellan had kept pushing either that evening or the next morning, he could have forced the capitulation of Lee's entire army. And I think this is one battle that we can imagine an entirely different outcome had McClellan simply pushed more. We would have seen the end of Lee's army in September 1862, but we don't.

### **Lincoln's frustration when McClellan allows Lee's escape**

00:55:44:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lincoln is beside himself that McClellan could have done this. And not only does McClellan not go after Lee, Lee manages to cross the Potomac River in one night. And there's a little bit of skirmishing that will take place there, but McClellan doesn't pursue at all. Instead, he hunkers down in Shepherdstown. And Lee will... Instead, he remains near the battlefield. Two weeks later, two weeks after the battle, after Lincoln has already issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, McClellan is still sitting there. And Lincoln decides to go out and see him. So on October 1st, he goes out to survey the field. McClellan tries to take him out and show him the battlefield, show him what happens and Lincoln is really disgusted by this and leaves abruptly, walks away.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And there's the famous line where Lincoln is overlooking the entire army of the Potomac and he asks, "What is that, that I see before me?" And someone replies, "That's the army of the Potomac," and he said, "No, that's McClellan's bodyguard." Because it's apparent that McClellan's not using his army to do anything. He's simply sitting there. So Lincoln has gone out not only to review the troops, but to urge McClellan once more, to move his troops.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And there's the famous photograph, actually several photographs, of them taken on Friday, October 3rd, 1862 and Lincoln wrote to his wife, Mary, before the photograph, something to the effect of, "McClellan and I are to have our photograph taken, if we can only sit still. Of course, McClellan shouldn't have any problem doing so." And so he knows... He jokes about McClellan's inability to move, but this is it. This is the last straw. When Lincoln leaves McClellan, he believes that he's convinced him to pursue Lee's army once more, but as soon as he gets back to Washington, he starts getting letters from McClellan, where McClellan is, is once again, refusing to move.

And this is going to be the last straw. There's at one point in late October where McClellan will say, "I can't move because of my horses," and Lincoln will famously quip back to him, "What is the Army of the Potomac done that fatigues your horses whatsoever?" And so Lincoln, again, very conscious of the political repercussions. He knows that, that McClellan is a beloved Democrat and there are important congressional and gubernatorial elections that are getting ready to happen on November 4th. And Lincoln knows he cannot fire McClellan before those elections, but on the day after the elections, November 5th, McClellan is gone. So those famous pictures of McClellan and Lincoln at Antietam. It's the last time the two men will ever see each other.

**The Battle of Fredericksburg**

00:58:44:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Fredericksburg in December 1862 is going to be the first test for the new commander of the Army of the Potomac. Now it's going to be General Ambrose Burnside who's leading Lincoln's army and it's going to be a disaster. Burnside is going to send troop after troop, regiment after regiment, up the hill at Marye's Heights. And it's an absolute slaughter. Men are not only dying by the thousands, but many of them are wounded in this incredibly cold night in Virginia. Many of them will freeze to death. There are harrowing stories about what the sounds on the battlefield were like that night, as men were crying out for help. Some men were finding the bodies of dead comrades and nestling themselves in beside them trying to find some sort of warmth and protection.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

But this is another disaster for the Union Army. They didn't follow up at Antietam. They had been routed at Richmond the spring before. So things just aren't going well for the Army of the Potomac. And the problem for Lincoln is that right after Fredericksburg, he has to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. This is what he has promised to do, goes into effect January 1st. And so even though his cabinet had urged him back in July to wait for a Union victory to issue the preliminary proclamation, and he does that after Antietam, it couldn't have come at a worst moment to have to issue the official proclamation after the Battle of Fredericksburg.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Again, it looks like a desperate situation. Morale in the loyal North is incredibly low. It looks like this war that they had started fighting for Union has now been turned into something that many of them had never gone to war for in the first place, a war for emancipation. And there's a real sense that, that men aren't going to fight anymore. There's a draft that's on its way. The first Union draft is coming and Lincoln realizes that he is not going to have all that much support perhaps from the North if he can't find a commander that can win in the East.

### **Lincoln & public opinion**

01:01:04:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So Lincoln is well aware that there is a substantial portion of the North that doesn't support him. Not only is there the Democratic faction, but there are members of the Republican Party who think that he's simply not radical enough. He's not moving fast enough on emancipation. And he has addressed this to a substantial extent with the Emancipation Proclamation, but there are still plenty of people in the Republican Party who feel like he's not doing all that he can to punish Confederates, to win the war and that the war should be wrapping up sooner than it is. And things are only going to get worse during the spring and summer of 1863. We're going to have the resistance to the draft.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

There's also an increasing faction of so-called War Democrats, or Copperheads, people in the North that do not support the war effort. And as the armies in the East in particular, continue to lose, or at least not to crush their Confederate counterparts. There's a good portion of Northern



Democrats who start to say, "Maybe this war isn't worth fighting. Maybe we should let the Confederacy have their independence and that should be the end. Let's negotiate a settlement and let's call it that." Lincoln is never willing to do that. Never willing to negotiate. Never willing to pull back once he has taken a step forward, but he knows he has to find a winning commander in the East.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

I don't think that Lincoln's decision to suspend habeas corpus or to crack down on Northern newspapers when Democratic newspapers that were Copperhead leaning, I don't think that's an act of desperation. I think that is him still trying to find that middle ground. He knows that he is straddling things that are perhaps unconstitutional. He knows that certain measures such as emancipation are part of the War Powers Act and that they're only as good as long as the war is still going on. He's not desperate. He's trying to be pragmatic and trying to be realistic

## **Hard War**

01:03:25:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Lincoln had begun the war with a policy of conciliation. Again, that firm belief that there is a substantial Union sentiment in the South. He had warned his commanders not to breach the Constitution that the Constitution was still in place and that they couldn't take slave property. That's why we see him remanding the orders of Frémont who tries to emancipate slaves in Missouri. Lincoln is very clear that if we're going to bring this Union back together, we need to also win the hearts and minds of those that might be against us right now. So the first year of the war we see it's really a policy of conciliation, of

making sure that Southern citizens, that Southern civilians, aren't going to feel the impact of the war. But by the time we get to the summer of 1862, things have started to change.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

We can see Lincoln and his commanders recognizing not only the ways in which enslaved labor is supporting the Confederacy, but increasingly recognizing that Confederate morale is not only tied to what Confederate armies are doing, but their existence, their lives, whether or not the blockade is preventing them from getting necessities or even luxuries like sugar and coffee. And so by the summer of '62, things have started to change. And emancipation itself is a rejection of the policy of conciliation. By the time we get to 1863 with Grant, who is trying to capture Vicksburg, that last stronghold on the Mississippi river, we see Grant instituting what he describes as a strategy of exhaustion. Let's exhaust the Confederacy. Let's attack their infrastructure. Let's tear up their railroads. Let's destroy their mills. Let's destroy their foodstuffs. Let's destroy Confederate morale. And if we can destroy Confederate morale, then we can end this war.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And it doesn't mean occupying every Confederate city. It doesn't mean destroying every Confederate army, but if we can make them want this war to stop, then they will lay down their guns and they will stop fighting. And Lincoln comes to agree with this. He sees how well it works for Grant during the Vicksburg campaign. He absolutely endorses it with Sherman in Georgia. He endorses it with Sheridan in the Valley in 1864. And so this notion that you're not going to attack Southern civilians, you're not going to kill and maim Southern civilians, but you're going to make them desperately want this war to end by starving them, by taking away all of their resources, that's

hard war. That is making life so miserable that they will want the war to be over.

### **The Battle of Chancellorsville**

01:06:33:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So Lincoln has yet another commander of the Army of the Potomac. This time it's Joseph Hooker who he puts in command in spite of Hooker's bravado. Again, we have another person that looks a little bit like McClellan in his belief in his own superiority but yet again, this is going to be Lee's most brilliant strategic battle of the war. He's going to divide his army not once, not twice, but three times. And again, crush the much larger Army of Potomac. So after the battle of Chancellorsville in May 1863, morale in the North is at an extreme low point. We've had Fredericksburg followed by Chancellorsville. Now we have a draft that's going into place. And many people in the North are wondering whether it's worth fighting this war anymore.

### **Lee's 1863 northern advance**

01:07:34:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So after the battle of Chancellorsville, Lee decides that he needs to take his army North once more. And he does so for several reasons. One is, again, to relieve the farmers and people of Virginia. They have encountered not just one army, but two major armies. Armies that are larger than most Confederate cities at this time, larger than most United States cities at this time, which takes a toll on the land, on the resources. So Lee wants to move his army North to relieve the pressure on Virginians. But he also is keenly

aware that sentiment in the North is pushing against Lincoln. He knows that there is a strong anti-war position. He knows that there are many Northern Democrats calling for some sort of peace negotiation. And he believes that if he can take the war North, that he can convince the United States to give up their quest to subdue the rebellion, that he can convince them to let the Confederacy have their independence.

### **The Battle of Gettysburg - Day 1**

01:08:44:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So Gettysburg is a small hamlet that has several roads coming in from different directions, and there was never any intention in fighting at Gettysburg. Lee actually had his army spread out some of them to the far North, closer to Harrisburg. And on July 1st, when A.P. Hill's men come into the town from the west, they're actually marching across South Mountain coming into Gettysburg from the west, they stumble into some Union cavalry. Now, part of the problem at Gettysburg is that Lee's cavalry under Jeb Stuart was nowhere to be seen. And the cavalry was the eyes and ears of the army. They are supposed to be doing the reconnaissance and Lee doesn't know where the Union Army is. In fact, he doesn't even know that it's no longer Hooker that's in charge of the army. It's now George Meade who is in charge, newly tapped days before the battle to be in charge of the Army of the Potomac.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And so in many ways, there was never a plan to fight at Gettysburg, but Lee's men will come in from the west, stumble into these cavalry, but very quickly, the Army of the Potomac will move into the small town. There'll be fighting

on the first day that goes in Lee's favor. He's able to push Union forces back through the town. There's street fighting that day, push them back up onto Cemetery Ridge.

## **The Battle of Gettysburg - Day 2**

01:10:14:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And the next day, when all the forces are finally aligned, and this will be one of the largest battles of the war, nearly 90,000 Union forces and somewhere around 75,000 Confederates. I mean, if you can imagine how many men that would have been in that small, small town. And on the second day, Lee's forces are managing to push back the Union forces. They almost get them. They're coming around and attacking on both the left and right flanks.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And if you can imagine it's shaped like a fish hook. And so the right end of the line is on Culp's Hill. And the left line will extend down along Cemetery Ridge down to two smaller ridges that will later become known as Little and Big Round Top. And so you have the Union forces there. They're going to have what are called tactical interior lines, meaning that they can move forces from one end of their lines to the others very quickly. Lee's forces are spread out along Seminary Ridge opposing looking across from Cemetery Ridge. He is in a long arc of battle there. And so Lee's going to have a much tougher time moving his troops around because he doesn't have those interior lines. So this is a real advantage. Not only is Meade's army up on the high ground of Cemetery Hill, but they also are able to move their troops much more quickly to reinforce different parts of the field.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Chamberlain and the 20th Maine will hold the far left side of the field. Equally as important was the far right of the Union line. And what Lee wants to do on the second day is to simultaneously attack both ends of the Union line. There will be fighting that occurs on Little Round Top. There will be Georgians and Texans that are going to try to storm the hill there. And it will be fierce fighting that that is going to, in the end, that the Union is going to hold that end of the line just as they hold the far right of the line.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So Lee has a series of problems on the second day. One is that Longstreet is to move his corps and he is to step off an echelon. His troops are to, one after another, step off and go to attack that left side of the Union line, but Longstreet, for a variety of reasons, doesn't have his men in place when they are supposed to be in place. And so the battle gets started much later in the day than it should have. Longstreet is also constantly telling Lee to stop and to pull back from the battle and try to get behind Meade, to get between Meade and Washington and cut him off. He doesn't want to continue this fight. And Lee of course insists that, in fact, they are going to fight.

### **The Battle of Gettysburg - Day 3**

01:13:22:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And finally, on the third day of the battle, Lee will decide that he needs to have a head-on assault. He's going to send the Pickett-Pettigrew division straight- a Pickett's division, along with Pettigrew's division, straight up at the center of the Union lines, trying to pierce what he believes will be the weakest point of Meade's lines, when in fact Meade has reinforced that

position and knows exactly what Lee is planning to do. This is where we have Pickett's Charge.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

I will say that that Lee won the first day's battle, put up a valiant effort on the second day. But on the third day, it's clear that the Union Army has won. And it's a clear victory for the very first time in the war for the Army of the Potomac. But, but, Lincoln is very upset with Meade. Meade believes that he has saved the Union, but he doesn't pursue Lee. Yet again, just like McClellan at Antietam, Meade hasn't followed up after Lee. He hasn't crushed the rebel army.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

I think Lee really believed that he could pierce the center of the Union line. The second corps is dead ahead of him, right in front. And he thought that that was the weakest point of the line because he knew the previous two days he'd been attacking the two flanks. He didn't count on Meade knowing that that's what he would do. He thought, "Meade will never think that I'm going to attack right in the middle because that in some ways seems very silly to do." So it's a calculation on both of their parts. But in fact, Meade had reinforced the center of the Union line. And, and so it was... It seemed like a good plan. And in fact, if you go out to Gettysburg, if you walk the terrain there, you can see where there were moments when it might've seemed possible. When you are just beneath a small hill and it seems that if you come up over that rise, you will have dead aim at the Union Army in front of you, it seems possible.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So from our vantage point today, it seems absurd that he would have tried this head on assault. After all, that's not... It didn't succeed at Fredericksburg. And as Pickett's men... As Pickett's and Pettigrew's men are attacking the center of the Union line, the Army of the Potomac is chanting, "Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg, remember Fredericksburg," because this is the same thing that they had done there that led to a slaughter. Lee will lose a third of his Army at Gettysburg. It's absolutely devastating.

### **Lincoln's disappointment at General Meade**

01:16:13:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

10 days after the battle, Lincoln gets a message in D.C. And he learns that, in fact, Meade has not pursued. And when his son Robert shows up, Mary had had an accident and Lincoln had asked Robert to come home from Harvard, and when he comes in, he finds his father in tears. And he says it's the first time he'd ever seen his father in tears. And Lincoln is absolutely distraught that Meade hasn't crushed Lee. And even though Meade will see it as a complete victory, a complete for the Army of the Potomac. And he says, "We have cast the rebels out of our land. We have protected our land," and Lincoln is beside himself. He said, "When will my generals realize this is all our land? It's not just the Northern states." And he can't seem to get people to buy into that.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And so where the Army of the Potomac sees Gettysburg, and will for the remainder of this century, veterans will come back to Gettysburg more than



any other place to celebrate their triumph there, Lincoln simply didn't see it as such.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So several days after the battle, Lincoln pens a letter to Meade and essentially tells him how disappointed he is that he hasn't pursued and that this is the worst possible thing that could have happened. But rather than send it to Meade, Lincoln tucks it away in a drawer, doesn't send it to him. So it speaks volumes about Lincoln. It's also telling that Lincoln doesn't get rid of Meade. Meade will be with the Army of the Potomac until the very end. But Lincoln is crushed yet again, that he has another field commander that can't quite seem to get the job done with the Army of the Potomac.

### **The Siege of Vicksburg**

01:18:10:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

Vicksburg is the one point on the Mississippi River that the Confederacy still controls. And in order to open up the river, Grant has to capture Vicksburg. The problem is, it is a citadel, it's situated on a high bluff above a sharp bend in the Mississippi River. It's nearly impossible to get at. Grant had been trying for months to get at it. He will finally have to take his Army and cross the river below Vicksburg and come up on the other side, come from the east rather than the west, to attack Vicksburg. It will end up in a siege, a short siege by later standards in the war, but a siege that will leave the citizens of Vicksburg so desperate, that reports had that they were even eating rats and mule meat in the streets. They are absolutely starving to death. And Vicksburg will be not the first, but the second time that Grant has compelled

the surrender of an entire Confederate Army. Not just a portion, but he will absolutely destroy yet another Confederate Army.

### **Grant becomes Lieutenant General of the Union Army**

01:19:25:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So, knowing that Grant is a man who will fight, in the spring of 1864, Lincoln is going to tap him as General-in-Chief. He will be given the rank of Lieutenant General, the first three-star General in the United States Army. This rank hadn't been used since Washington. So they're going to revive the rank of Lieutenant General for Grant, which shows just how important, just how highly he was regarded.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And Grant really would have preferred to stay in the west. He liked the western theater. He liked his Commanders there. He was wary of politicians. He knew that part of the Army of the Potomac's problem was that there were so many politicians that always had their nose in what the army was doing. And he really wanted to stay in the west, but he knows he has to go east. He knows that public opinion demands that he not only come east, not that he come to Washington, but that he travel with the Army of the Potomac.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So Meade will stay as the Commander of the Army of the Potomac. But once Grant is traveling with the Army, it essentially becomes Lee versus Grant. And we see that first showdown in the Wilderness, back on the old battlefield of Chancellorsville, in early May of 1864. And the Wilderness will begin what becomes known as the Overland Campaign. And what's especially important

after the two day battle at the Wilderness, there's a moment after the battle, when the Union troops, when the Army of the Potomac is on the march again. And they're so used to retreating after a battle, they're so used to returning to their camps, to bivouacking once more. And that night, as they're marching down the road, they get to a fork in the road, and Grant is sitting there on his horse. And when they realize that they are turning right, that they're turning towards Spotsylvania Courthouse onto Richmond, there is a huzzah that goes up among the troops, that is absolutely palpable. They know that they have a Commander who's going to fight. They're not going to withdraw again. They're going to keep pressing it.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And that's precisely what Grant is going to do over the next few months. Wilderness will be followed by the Battle at Spotsylvania Courthouse – incredibly bloody battle. Then at North Anna, then at Cold Harbor, that is another tremendous bloodletting for Grant. People will describe it as not war, but murder, in the aftermath. But the point is that Grant is going to continue to push the Army of the Potomac. He's not going to relent. And, unlike McClellan, unlike Hooker, even Burnside, who were always trying to get to Richmond, Grant knows that he has to go after Lee. It's not enough to get the Confederate capital. Because it's Lee and his Army that are the centerpiece of Confederate nationalism. If they can be forced to capitulate, then the Confederacy will likely crumble around them.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So, there's a variety of things that Grant puts in place when he becomes General in Chief. One, is he's going to continue that strategy of exhaustion that he had implemented in the West. He's going to encourage Sherman to march from Chattanooga and take Atlanta, which was an important rail

center. And along the way, he tells him to forage, live off the land, destroy the resources. He has a five pronged attack that he's implementing, that includes Sherman in Georgia, includes Nathaniel Banks marching from Louisiana into Mobile, taking the port at Mobile. It also means that along the coast of Virginia, that Butler is supposed to attack up the peninsula, just as McClellan had tried to do in '62 and capture Richmond. There will be a campaign in the Valley, under Franz Sigel, to destroy the Shenandoah Valley. And Grant will be with Meade and the Army of the Potomac going after Lee. And then once they have Lee, they will go after Richmond. So, it's this combination of going after Lee, of not letting your foot off the gas, but also of hard war. Of destroying resources of the Confederacy. Destroy the Shenandoah Valley, the breadbasket of the Confederacy. It means that people are going to be starving in the South. And that's going to really test their commitment to the Confederacy. If you can destroy the resources and the will to fight, and you can destroy the principal Confederate Army, that's the key Grant knows to ending the war.

## **The election of 1864**

01:24:15:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

The summer of '64 is a moment of incredibly depressed morale in the north. There've been lots of those moments during the course of the war, but things are especially bad in the summer of '64. Grant and Meade have made it to the outskirts of Richmond and Petersburg, but they're in a siege. They haven't been able to force those two Virginia cities to capitulate. They haven't been able to force Lee to capitulate. And Sherman has made it to the outskirts of Atlanta, but he's still not in Atlanta. Everything seems to be in a stalemate. And it's an election year. And running against Lincoln is none other than

McClellan. And things are so bad that Lincoln is pretty convinced, in August, that he's not going to win reelection.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

He famously writes, what's now called the blind memo, he writes a statement that says essentially that he doesn't believe that he's going to win reelection. And that if that's the case, that his cabinet will agree along with him, that they will work with the president-elect to make sure that they bring the war to an end, because the platform for the Democrats is in fact, peace. And Lincoln will famously fold it. He won't let his cabinet read it. He will have them all sign it. I still don't understand why all of the lawyers in his cabinet would sign something that they didn't know what they were signing. But the point of the matter is that Lincoln did not believe he was going to win the reelection. What changes that, is in fact, the battlefield. We see Sherman finally capturing Atlanta on September 2nd. And Philip Sheridan – is in the Shenandoah Valley – has a series of successful battles; Third Winchester, Cedar Creek, and there's also the Burning of the Valley, where he too, is applying those hard war policies, where they're burning gristmills, destroying barns, and all of the foodstuffs in the Valley. And as much as Sherman is important in capturing Atlanta, Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley, that place that had been so important and not all that far from Washington, was central in boosting Northern morale. And so in fact, Lincoln does win reelection, much to his surprise, but it's because of what happens on the battlefield.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

It's really important to remember that we can look to the past and see that things played out in a certain way, but it was not at all certain that Lincoln was going to win reelection. And had he not won reelection, McClellan, running as the Democrat, had run as a War Democrat. So he wasn't promising

to pull everything off the table, but things were certainly up in the air. Would he negotiate a peace? And the real question surrounded Emancipation. Emancipation thus far, had been a wartime measure. And although there had been a 13th Amendment that had been approved by the Senate, the House still had refused to approve it.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And so, whether or not enslaved people remained enslaved was very much up in the air and very much dependent on that election. We can imagine the election going another way. If McClellan, who again, had been so popular with his troops and had managed to pull off a win, we can imagine the Confederacy becoming an independent state. Now McClellan vowed that that would not happen, but we can imagine pressure, to that extent. So we shouldn't see it as a foregone conclusion. Also keep in mind, there had never been an election in the midst of a war before, let alone a Civil War. And so the fact that an election happens at all, shows this faith that Lincoln and others have in democracy.

### **Sherman's March to the Sea**

01:28:11:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So, Sherman will leave Atlanta and head first towards Savannah. Initially, people think that he's going to head to Charleston, which had been the hotbed of secession. But along the way, his men make a 60 mile swath of destruction, destroying barns and gristmills, and everything along the way. They did use restraint. They were ordered not to attack civilians, although we do know of at least some instances of enslaved women being raped along the way. But this is absolute destruction of the landscape. They take the railroad

ties and they tie them into, what become known as Sherman Bow Ties. They heat them and twist them so that they can't be reused. So this taking the hard war to Savannah, even more importantly, when Sherman's men turn north, when they turn north and go into South Carolina, this is when we really start to see them let loose.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

They knew that South Carolina had been the first to secede. They blamed South Carolinians, the soldiers blame South Carolinians for starting the war. And so, we see a great deal more destruction in the state of South Carolina. Columbia famously is burned. Lots of debate over who set the fires, whether it was retreating Confederates or Union troops, but nevertheless, it's devastated. And tellingly, when they march into North Carolina, when they reached the border of North Carolina, they pull back and we don't see nearly as much destruction. They are very conscious, they're writing in their diaries that they know those South Carolinians have started the war and they're going to pay for what they started. But we see a bit of restraint once they reach North Carolina.

### **Appomattox Court House**

01:30:07:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So, Appomattox Court House, on April 9th, 1865, after a week of pursuit by Union forces and Grant writing to Lee on several occasions, starting on April 7th, asking him to surrender his Army and Lee putting him off for several times, finally agreeing that, in fact, the time has come to surrender his forces. Lee will show up first. He will bring one aid with him. Lee is dressed in his best uniform with his best sword. He assumes that he will be taken prisoner.

He assumes that he will have to hand over his sword. Grant, who's been struggling with a migraine throughout much of the retreat of the Army of Northern Virginia, shows up in mud splattered pants. He is wearing the blouse with only his insignia on his shoulders. So, there's been much made of the fact that he is not dressed nearly as professionally as Lee was. But in fact, it was because Grant was in pursuit, and his wagons hadn't been able to keep up with him.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And when they come into the room, Grant has many of his men with him, which I think is emblematic of this Union victory. They all stand very quietly, Grant and Lee will shake hands, the first time that they have met during the course of the war. Grant will say something about their time in Mexico, and Lee doesn't quite remember that. There'll be some idle chat about the weather. And finally, Lee will turn to him and ask him to tell him what the terms are, and Grant says, "They're exactly the terms that I wrote to you about. That your men will be surrendered and will be free to go home on parole."

CAROLINE JANNEY:

And Grant will sit down, he will take his manifold order book, which will create three copies. And as he will say later in his memoirs, he didn't know what he was going to write until he sat down to do so. And it just flowed from his pen. He was incredibly magnanimous. He didn't ask for an unconditional surrender. In fact, many of Lee's men had asked Lee not to surrender. They asked him to keep fighting, because they were worried that Grant was going to force an unconditional surrender on him. In diaries and letters, the days before Appomattox, many of Lee's men are worried they're going to be taken prisoner and hauled to Washington and marched through the streets of Washington as prisoners on display. And Grant, of course, asks for none of



that. He simply asked that the men put down their arms and go home on parole.

CAROLINE JANNEY:

What Grant is doing is precisely in line with what Lincoln had asked him to do. Lincoln had told him that he was to be magnanimous, that he was to be just. Remember, this is a war for the Union, and if you want these rebels to come back into the Union, then you want them to want to come back. You don't want to give them any further reason to continue the fight. And Grant is also well aware of the fact that he can only deal with military issues. He is not to touch on political issues. He doesn't say anything about emancipation. He doesn't say anything about the state of governments, about state governments or the Confederate government. This is simply the surrender of the most important Confederate Army. And Grant believes that if he can compel that, then the war will be over. The war isn't quite over yet, but it's incredibly symbolic, and it is a step in the direction to convincing every other Confederate to put down his gun.

### **Lincoln's visit to Richmond after its fall**

01:34:15:00

CAROLINE JANNEY:

So Richmond falls on April 3rd, 1865, and importantly enough, it's United States colored troops that are the first to march into Richmond. Think of that. The capital of the Confederacy, a nation founded as a slaveholding Republic, and the first people to liberate that city are none other than African-American soldiers. And Lincoln will arrive a few days later, he'll bring his son with him and they will walk through the streets. There's all sorts of

reports. Lincoln doesn't leave any report, any account of his time in Richmond, but we have many accounts from African-Americans in the city. And they talk about crowding the streets, going out to see this man that they attribute to freeing them, to ending slavery once and for all. And so the great throngs of people in the streets of Richmond. The Confederates that haven't fled the city are hiding in their homes; there are accounts from many Confederate women about how they can't leave their home, they can't even look out the window. But here's Lincoln walking through the streets of the Confederate capital, surrounded by African-Americans who are rejoicing in the fact that not only does it seem like this war might be over, but so might slavery.

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