

Following his successes in the West, Ulysses S. Grant received his commission as lieutenant general on March 9. He was the first American to hold that rank since George Washington.

*While my headquarters were at Culpeper, from the 26th of March to the 4th of May, I generally visited Washington once a week to confer with the Secretary of War and President. On the last occasion, a few days before moving . . . I had my last interview with the President before reaching the James River. He had of course become acquainted with the fact that a general movement had been ordered all along the line, and seemed to think it a new feature in war. I explained to him that it was necessary to have a great number of troops to guard and hold the territory we had captured, and to prevent incursions into the Northern States. These troops could perform this service just as well by advancing as by remaining still; and by advancing they would compel the enemy to keep detachments to hold them back, or else lay his own territory open to invasion. His answer was: "Oh, yes! I see that. As we say out West, if a man can't skin he must hold a leg while somebody else does." -- From U.S. Grant Memoirs*



President Lincoln And His Cabinet. With General Grant in the Council Chamber of the Whitehouse .  
New York: Thomas Kelly, 1866.. Lithograph by Anton Hohenstein. Printed by Spohny, Philadelphia.



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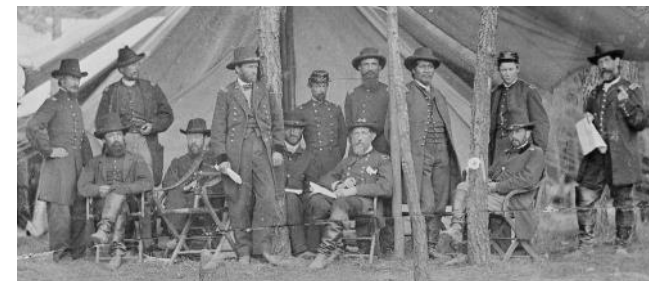
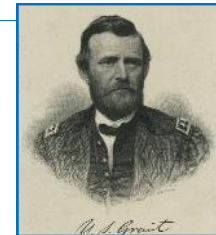


# THE 1864 CAMPAIGN PLAN

*Origins of the end of the  
American Civil War*



**Headquarters of  
Lieutenant General  
Ulysses S. Grant  
General-in-Chief**



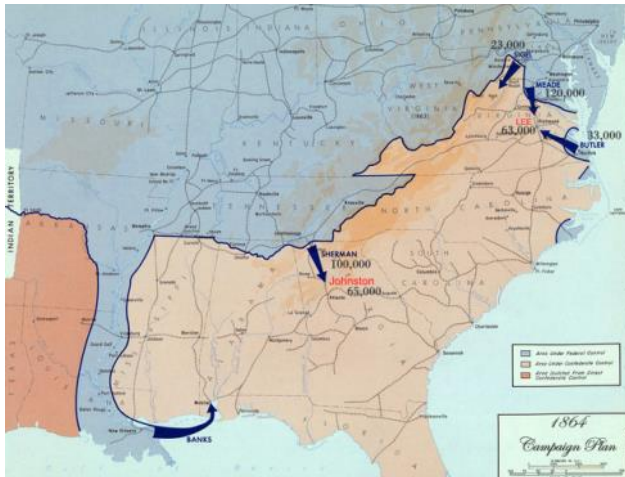
## 1864 Grand Strategy

Grant laid plans for the major features of what he called “sanguinary war.” He and General Sherman pored over maps and planned simultaneous attacks with Richmond and Atlanta -- the armies of Lee and Johnston -- as targets. The new strategy was reducible to two points: unity of command and “attrition to powder of the Confederate armies by a continuous series of battles.”

By mid-April 1864 Grant had issued specific orders to each commander of the Federal armies that were to execute the grand strategy. In round numbers the Union armies were sending 300,000 combat troops against 150,000 Confederates defending the invasion paths.

The objectives:

1. Meade's Army of the Potomac and Burnside's independent IX Corps, a combined force of 120,000 men, constituted the major attack under Grant's over-all direction. The enemy had 63,000 troops facing them along the Rapidan.
2. Commanding a force of 33,000 men, Butler with his Army of the James was to skirt the south bank of the James, menace Richmond, take it if possible, and destroy railroads below Petersburg.
3. Acting as a right guard in the Shenandoah Valley, Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel's 23,000 Federals were to advance on Lee's rail hub at Lynchburg.
4. In the continental center of the line Sherman's 100,000 men were to march on Atlanta, annihilating Joseph E. Johnston's 65,000 soldiers, and devastating the resources of central Georgia.
5. On the continental right of the line, Banks was to disengage along the Red River and with Rear Adm. David C. Farragut's blockading squadron in the Gulf of Mexico make a limited amphibious landing against Mobile, Alabama.



## Union Order of Battle on Eve of Virginia Overland Campaign

**General in Chief - LTG Ulysses S. Grant  
(HQ Culpeper)**

**IX Corps - MG Ambrose Burnside (Corps  
includes USCT Units)**

**Army of the Potomac - MG George G. Meade  
(HQ Brandy Station)**

**II Corps - MG Winfield S. Hancock**

**V Corps - MG Gouverneur K. Warren**

**VI Corps - MG John Sedgwick**

**Cavalry Corps - MG Philip H. Sheridan**

**Grant explained that he wanted all his commanders to focus on enemy armies rather than enemy cities. He previewed and invited full staff participation:**

*I want you to discuss with me freely from time to time the details of the orders given for the conduct of the battle, and learn my views a fully as possible as to what course should be pursued in all the contingencies which may arise. I expect to send you to the critical points of the lines to keep me promptly advised of what is taking place, and in cases of great emergency, when new dispositions have to be made on the instant, or it becomes suddenly necessary to reinforce one command by sending to its aid troops from another, and there is not time to communicate with headquarters, I want you to explain my views to commanders, and urge immediate action, looking to cooperation, without waiting for specific orders from me.*



Army of the Potomac website  
[www.armyofthepotomac.us](http://www.armyofthepotomac.us)

## General Ulysses S. Grant Reality vs. Public Notion?

Described at the time of his arrival in Washington, Perley Poore wrote: In person and temperament, Grant was “different.” He lacked style, made an undistinguished appearance, showed carelessness of dress, and appeared bored by unusual attention. “He generally stood or walked with his left hand in his trousers pocket, and had in his mouth an unlighted cigar, the end of which he chewed relentlessly.” Poore then proceeded to points of personality and character: “His square-cut features, when at rest, appeared as if carved from mahogany, and his firmly set under-jaw indicated the unyielding tenacity of a bull-dog, while the kind glances of his grey eyes showed that he possessed the softer traits.” It also seemed to Poore that the general “seemed always preoccupied.” He “would gaze at any one who approached him with an inquiring air, followed by a glance of recollection and a grave nod of recognition.”

For many, Grant was an enigma. Morris Schaff, who served as Meade's chief of ordnance later wrote that he could never solve “the fascinating mystery in his greatness.” He had expected to encounter a dominating warrior; instead he discovered that the new general in chief was a “medium-sized, mild, unobtrusive, inconspicuously dressed, modest and naturally silent man. He had a low, gently vibrant voice and steady, thoughtful, softly blue eyes. Not a hint of self-consciousness, impatience, or restlessness, either of mind or body; on the contrary, the center of a pervasive quiet which seemed to be conveyed to everyone around him.”

Another observed: “He is rather under middle height, of a spare, strong build; light-brown hair, and short light-brown beard. His eyes of a clear blue; forehead high; nose aquiline; jaw squarely set, but not sensual. His face has three expressions: deep thought; extreme determination; and great simplicity and calmness... He is an odd combination; there is one good thing, at any rate--he is the concentration of all that is American. He talks bad grammar, but talks it naturally, as much as to say, ‘I was so brought up and, if I try fine phrases, I shall only appear silly.’”