Law in War, Law as War: Brigadier General Joseph Holt and the Judge Advocate General’s Department in the Civil War and Early Reconstruction, 1861-1865

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## Contents

Preface .................................................. vii

Abbreviations ......................................... ix

1. Introduction ........................................ 3
   I ...................................................... 4
   II ................................................... 11

2. Joseph Holt: Judge Advocate General, 1862–1875 .. 13
   I ...................................................... 15
   II ................................................... 26
   III ............................................... 30
   IV .................................................. 41

3. The Literature and Law of Courts-Martial and Commissions in the Army of the Early Republic and Civil War .. 43
   I ...................................................... 44
   II ................................................... 54
   III ............................................... 74

4. Opening Salvoes: The Military Trials of Fitz-John Porter, Don Carlos Buell, and Clement Vallandigham .... 77
   I ...................................................... 78
   II ................................................... 94
   III ............................................... 102
   IV .................................................. 115

   I ...................................................... 118
   II ................................................... 126
   III ............................................... 135
   IV .................................................. 152
   V .................................................... 157

6. Generals and Judge Advocates: Relationships between Command and the Law .................................. 159
   I ...................................................... 162
   II ................................................... 169
   III ............................................... 179
   IV .................................................. 181
   V .................................................... 185
   VI .................................................. 191
7. Judge Advocates in the Field: Courts Martial, Commissions, and Other Duties
   193
   I 194
   II 197
   III 206
   IV 216
   V 219
   VI 228

8. Developing, Enforcing, and Prosecuting the Laws of War
   229
   I 231
   II 243
   III 247
   IV 255
   V 272

   275
   I 277
   II 281
   III 294
   IV 302
   V 307
   VI 312

10. Political Activity: The Judge Advocate General’s Department and the Election of 1864
    315
    I 318
    II 320
    III 332
    IV 338
    V 343
    VI 348
    VII 354

11. Trial of a Conspiracy, and the Impeachment of a President
    357
    I 358
    II 362
    III 371
    IV 374
    V 378
    VI 383
    VII 389

Epilogue
Bibliography
Index

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Bibliography
Index
Preface

Few authors successfully conclude a project without substantial help from their friends and this author is no exception. Cheryl Chasin, a student of the Civil War par excellence, and two of my judge advocate brethren, Eric Merriam and Robert Preston provided their encouragement, insight, and proof-reading skills over a period of several years. In the aftermath of the attacks on September 11, 2001 the Civil War experiences of the Judge Advocate General’s Department—now in the United States Air Force called the Judge Advocate General’s Corps—were studied not for trivial interest or merely to capture heritage, but rather because many of the arguments in Congress and in the federal courts were made with the idea that much of what was lawful in the Civil War should be lawful today. Seldom, however, did those arguments detail or analyze what actually occurred, or did the people doing the debating and advising conduct significant historic research. Some diligent attorneys and scholars succeeded in doing this, but most did not. To the extent time permitted, several career judge advocates and civil service attorneys did try to uncover the historic record beyond the generalities often presented by political appointees. This book benefitted from hundreds of those discussions, as it did from my discussions with the then Deputy Judge Advocate General of the United States Air Force Judge Advocate General’s Corps, Major General Charles Dunlap. It also could not have been completed without the extraordinary help of the staff at the Manuscripts Reading Room of the Library of Congress.

I have been lucky in my military career to have served alongside of conscientious professional officers and non-commissioned officers in each of the service Judge Advocate General’s Corps, and in particular those who answered the call and deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. I am thinking of six captains and non-commissioned officer paralegals in particular, who spent part of a year with me in Iraq. Each of them in their own way inspired me to complete this book. That said, the mistakes in this book are mine, and mine alone. And while I truly thank them, I dedicate this book to my daughter Elinor, who is now nearing three, for the simple reason that I love her.
Abbreviations

JSMP  John McAlister Schofield
MDHS  Maryland Historical Society
MoHS  Missouri Historical Society
OR    The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies
PAL   Papers of Abraham Lincoln
PDWL  Papers of Daniel Webster Whittle
PEB   Papers of Edward Bates
PES   Papers of Edwin Stanton
PFJP  Papers of Fitz John Porter
PJH   Papers of Joseph Holt
PNPB  Papers of Nathaniel Prentiss Banks
PRJ   Papers of Reverdy Johnson
PWHS  Papers of William Henry Seward
PWTS  Papers of William T. Sherman