

QUOTATIONS FROM SOME OF ROBERT E. LEE'S MAIN OPPONENTS

I prefer Lee to Johnston — the former is too cautious & weak under grave responsibility ... he is wanting in moral firmness when pressed by heavy responsibility & is likely to be timid and irresolute in action.

—General George B. McClellan, shortly before being defeated by Lee in the Seven Days' Battles

Let us understand each other. I have come to you from the West, where we have always seen the backs of our enemies; from an army ...whose policy has been attack, and not defence.... I presume that I have been called here to pursue the same system, and to lead you against the enemy. It is my purpose to do so, and that speedily.... I desire you to dismiss from your minds certain phrases which I am sorry to find much in vogue amongst you. I hear constantly of "taking strong positions and holding them," of "lines of retreat," and of "bases of supplies." Let us discard such ideas...Let us study the probable lines of retreat of our opponents, and leave our own to take care of themselves. ... Success and glory are in the advance. Disaster and shame lurk in the rear. Let us act on this understanding, and it is safe to predict that your banners shall be inscribed with many a glorious deed

—General John Pope, shortly before being defeated by Lee at the Second battle of Manassas

May God have mercy on General Lee, for I will have none.

—General Joseph Hooker, shortly before being defeated by Lee at the Battle of Chancellorsville

A DISCUSSION BETWEEN TWO CONFEDERATE OFFICERS JUST AFTER LEE ASSUMED COMMAND OF THE ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Major E. P. Alexander ... chanced to be riding with Colonel Joseph Ives, who had been Lee's engineer in South Carolina and was now on President Davis's staff. They fell to talking of Lee. "Ives," said Alexander, "tell me this. We are here fortifying our lines, but apparently leaving the enemy all the time he needs to accumulate his superior forces, and then to move on us in the way he thinks best. Has General Lee the *audacity* that is going to be required for our inferior force to meet the enemy's superior force — to take the aggressive and run risks and take chances?" Ives reined in his horse, stopped, and turned to his companion. "Alexander," he said, "if there is one man in either army, Confederate or Federal, head and shoulders above every other in *audacity*, it is General Lee! His name might be Audacity. He will take more desperate chances, and take them quicker than any other general in this country, North or South; and you will live to see it, too."