



15 March 2010
150th Anniversary of the US Army Signal Corps



Fellow Signaleers!

Our 150th Anniversary celebration is just around the corner and I know many of you are planning first class events during June. As you and your Soldiers embrace our great history, I wanted to share with you some thoughts about how the Signal Corps led the way in pursuing joint operations with our sister service, the US Navy. During the course of the Civil War, the US Army and Navy conducted joint operations along the US coasts and major rivers to enable transportation of troops and supplies; ship to shore fires capability; and command and control. The success of these war-time field associations inspired our founder, Albert J. Myer, to seek to institutionalize and standardize Signal training within the education systems of both services.

In his annual report for 1867, Myer enthusiastically reported about a project to incorporate instruction of visual signaling and telegraphy at the US Military Academy. In this regard, the Army was somewhat behind the US Navy, who had already adopted signaling instruction at the Naval Academy during the Civil War, which was based upon Myer's Wig-Wag System. Myer hoped during the coming years to synchronize Signal equipment, doctrine and training between the two institutions to ensure standardization during future joint operations. Myer stated, "It will be cause for congratulation when it shall be carried into effect, and it can be claimed for the Naval and Military Academies of the United States that they have been the first to secure...intelligent co-operation on which, in time of war, the fate of grand operations may depend." Referring to joint operations during the Civil War, Myer concluded that, "commands of the Army and the vessels or forces of the Navy can always be put in communications under any circumstances in which the use of aerial [visual flag] and electric telegraphy is practicable." This shows how Myer was not only a great Army Signal Officer, but one of the first joint warriors seeking to solve greater issues of interoperability even in his time.

The example I have provided clearly illustrates that the challenges of joint communications have been at the forefront of the Signal Corps since the 1860s. For over 150 years our soldiers have strived to make ourselves part of the joint team. These challenges are still with us today as we strive to attain joint communications interoperability within the Global Network Enterprise Construct.

I urge all of you, as we are doing at the US Army Signal Center of Excellence, to continue your planning for our upcoming birthday. Again, I recommend you and your Soldiers read *Getting the Message Through: A Branch History of the US Army Signal Corps* by Becky Raines, available through your publications account at no charge and at the US Army Center of Military history website at <http://www.history.army.mil/books/30-17/Front.htm>.

Learn about our history and the events celebrating it at <http://signal150.army.mil>.

Pro Patria Vigilans,



Jeffrey W. Foley
BG, USA
Chief of Signal