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STUDENT REPORT

A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS
THE BATTLE OF SHILOH APRIL 6-7, 1862
MAJOR F. JOHN SEMLEY 84-2340
"insights into tomorrow"

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Submitted to the faculty in partial fulfillment of
requirements for graduation.

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Presents a concise description of the two day Civil War Battle of Shiloh. The second section examines the principles of war as listed in AFM 1-1. After each principle, the actions of both Confederate and Union forces are analyzed as to how they either applied or violated each principle. The principles of Objective, Offensive, Surprise, Security, Mass and Economy of Force and Maneuver had the greatest impact on this battle. Section three is Seminar Chairperson material in a guided discussion format.		

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PREFACE

Great battles of history are studied for numerous reasons. First of all, they can become learning instruments for gaining a better understanding of and appreciation for our past. Studying battles can both resolve and stimulate our curiosity about these warriors and their struggles with their foes, the environment around them, and their efforts at mastering the tools of their trade. The most important reason for military men to study great battles, however, is to learn more about warfighting. The Civil War is a fascinating model of our history since it involved Americans fighting Americans on our own soil.

The Civil War Battle of Shiloh took place early in the war on April 6 and 7, 1862. It was fought at a place called Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River close to the southern border of Tennessee. The battle was named after a small log cabin Methodist chapel on the battlefield itself. The chapel was called "Shiloh" which ironically is a biblical word meaning "place of peace." The area around this log cabin was far from a "peaceful" place on those two days of 1862. Close to 100,000 men were involved with the fighting. The casualties at Shiloh totalled more than the combination of losses from all the battles of the Civil War up to that time. Confederate and Union forces killed, wounded, or missing totalled almost 24,000. This was a shock to both sides, and it shattered any notion of a short, glorious war.

This battle also involved some of the great generals of the Civil War. Commanding the Union forces was Major General Ulysses S. Grant. Under him was Brigadier General William Tecumseh Sherman. The Confederate side was commanded by Generals Albert Sidney Johnston and P. G. T. Beauregard. Major General Braxton Bragg commanded a corps at Shiloh and later became the commanding general of the Army of Tennessee. This battle came close to being an overwhelming success for the South, which could have changed the entire complexion of the war. As it ended, Grant was closer to splitting the Confederacy in half, and his reputation grew as one of the North's finest fighters.

This paper will present a concise synopsis of the Battle of Shiloh. I will then analyze the battle in relation to the principles of war in Air Force Manual 1-1. The principles of war are a set of guidelines to be considered in a conflict situation. Their adherence will not necessarily guarantee success, but their misapplication can lead to disaster. In section three, I will give a series of discussion questions to help understand the relationship of the principles of war to this battle. Requirements for this research paper limited the discussion of the battle itself. I highly recommend Shiloh-In Hell Before Night to those who wish to study the battle in greater detail.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Major F. John Semley graduated from the University of Georgia in 1970 with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Business Systems. He attended four years of Air Force ROTC and received his commission in June 1970. He remained at the University of Georgia on a one-year educational delay and received a Masters of Business Administration degree in General Business.

Major Semley entered the Air Force in 1971 at Mather AFB, CA for navigator training. He completed Combat Crew Training in the KC-135 air refueling tanker at Castle AFB, CA and was assigned to the 2nd Airborne Command Control Squadron in the EC-135 aircraft at Offutt AFB, NE. After two years in the Airborne Command Post, he then spent three years flying the strategic reconnaissance mission in the RC-135. Also at Offutt, he was assigned for three years as the Navigator, SAC Command Crew, transporting CINCSAC and the SAC Senior Staff. Major Semley then was assigned instructor navigator duty for Combat Crew Training at Castle AFB, CA and was the KC-135 Scheduling Officer before attending ACSC. His PME includes Squadron Officer School in residence and Air Command and Staff College by correspondence.

As can be seen from this brief, Major Semley brings no particular expertise to this project other than a personal interest in the subject material.

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SECTION ONE

THE BATTLE OF SHILOH

APRIL 6-7, 1862

To understand the significance of the Battle of Shiloh, you must understand the distribution of forces in the western region, the area west of the Appalachian Mountains. General Albert Sidney Johnston was the General Commanding the Western Department of the Army of the Confederate States of America. He was charged with defense of the West by means of a cordon defense strategy developed by President of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis. (10:43) The Confederate forces were spread thinly across the border states of Kentucky and Tennessee. Johnston had concentrations of men at Columbus, Kentucky, Forts Henry and Donelson and Bowling Green, Kentucky, his headquarters. Johnston's defensive strategy was to hold the entire Confederate state of Tennessee and as much as possible of the politically divided state of Kentucky. (16:118)

The opposing Union forces were commanded by Major General Henry W. Halleck, Commander of the Department of Missouri, headquartered at St. Louis, Missouri. Under him, Major General Ulysses S. Grant commanded the Army of Tennessee at Cairo, Illinois. Also, Major General Don Carlos Buell commanded the Army of the Ohio at Louisville, Kentucky.

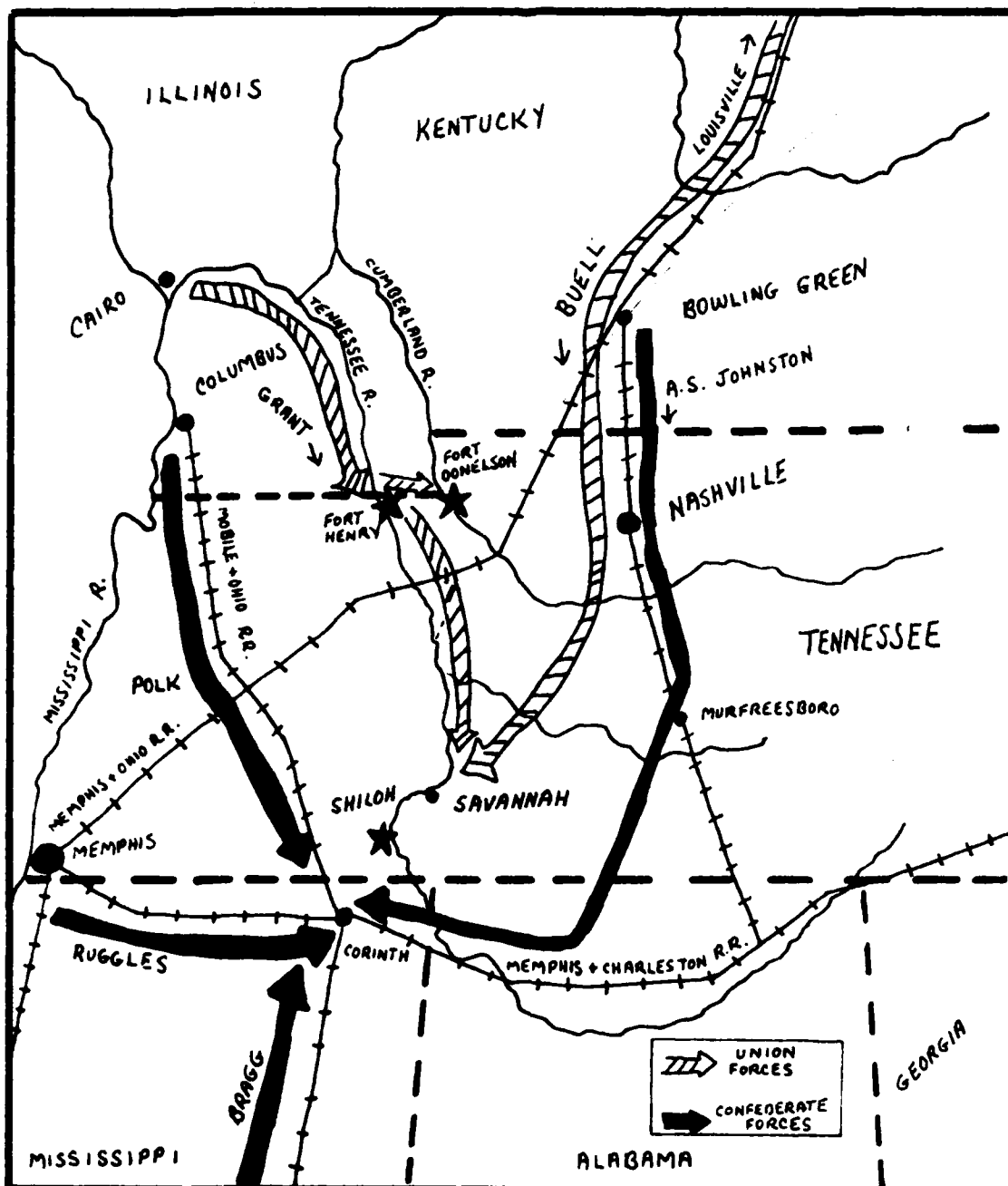
A series of moves by General Grant precipitated the confrontation at Shiloh. In February 1862, Grant transported his forces up the Tennessee River and captured the Confederate Fort Henry. (6:56) Encouraged by an easy

success, he then marched his army twelve miles overland and attacked Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River. On 16 February, Donelson also fell.

(10:44) The fall of these two forts was a strategic penetration of the South's defense line, and it exposed Confederate communication and supply lines. General Johnston was forced to withdraw to Nashville and then further south to Murfreesboro, Tennessee. (2:16) At the same time, he ordered Major General Leonidas Polk with 15,000 troops to withdraw from his now exposed position at Columbus, Kentucky, to Corinth, Mississippi. Grant's successes had exposed the frailty of the South's defensive plan in the west and caused a major pullback of Confederate forces. (1:77) (See Map 1)

The small railroad town of Corinth, Mississippi, occupied a crucial position. It formed the junction of the Memphis and Charleston RR, the main east-west transportation artery, and the Mobile and Ohio RR, a prime north-south rail line. These railroads were described as the "vertebrae of the Confederacy." (11:9) These strategic railroads provided the means by which the Confederates could concentrate their forces. Major General Braxton Bragg brought 10,000 troops from Pensacola, Florida, and Brigadier General Daniel Ruggles arrived with 5,000 men from New Orleans, Louisiana. (4:46) Also to assist with the defense of Tennessee, President Davis sent General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, the great victor at Manassas, from Virginia to be second in command to General Johnston. (2:16) The concentration of forces at Corinth was to stop Grant's drive into the South.

Grant continued to press his troops southward. He moved his 40,000 men up the Tennessee River (the river flows north) by means of an armada of 173 steamboats. (11:45) On March 16, Grant established headquarters at Savannah, Tennessee. (2:17) There he planned to join forces with General Buell and



MAP 1. The Strategic Situation (10:45)

his Army of the Ohio. Grant then sent Brigadier General William Tecumseh Sherman up the river to cut railroad lines east of Corinth. Sherman was unsuccessful due to swollen rivers, creek waters, and the mud from the spring rains. (11:45) He did find Pittsburg Landing, though, which was a docking spot at the terminus of a road leading 22 miles to Corinth. The bluff rose about 100 feet above the river and spread out into a hilly wooded plain between the Lick and Snake Creeks. Sherman recommended the landing to Grant and called it a "magnificent plain for camping and drilling and a military point of great strength." (7:321) (See Map 2)

Grant placed General Sherman in charge of the new 33,000-man encampment at Pittsburg Landing, and Sherman used Shiloh church as his headquarters. (2:27) Sherman positioned his division along with the division of Brigadier General Benjamin M. Prentiss farthest from the landing. Neither division had seen combat. The seasoned divisions of Major General John A. McClernand, Brigadier General W. H. L. Wallace, and Brigadier General Stephen A. Hurlbut were ironically positioned closer to the landing. Meanwhile, Grant kept Major General Lew Wallace with 7,500 men at Crumps Landing between Pittsburg Landing and Savannah. (6:100)

A major flaw with the Union encampment was that none of the positions were fortified at all. The Union forces had their backs to an unfordable Tennessee River with a known force of Confederates gathering only 22 miles away. Most of the troops were green, and the days were spent drilling and marching instead of fortifying their camps. (1:152) Halleck's orders to Grant were "Don't let the enemy draw you into an engagement now. Wait until you are properly fortified and receive orders." (4:47) Grant and his staff felt, however, that digging in would hurt morale. Sherman also did little to



provide adequate outposting and patrolling despite frequent skirmishes and Confederate cavalry sitings. (1:193)

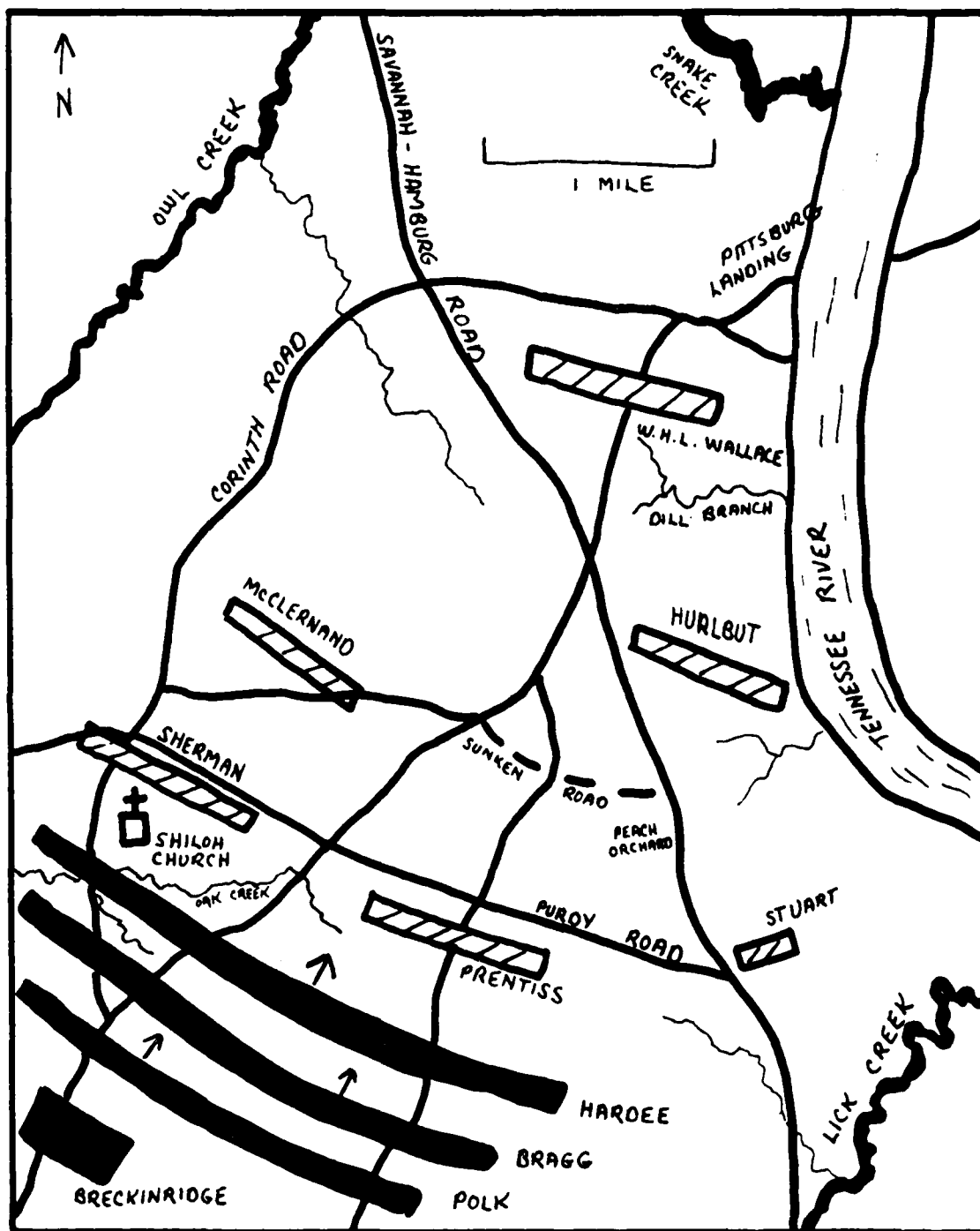
Both Sherman and Grant were totally unsuspecting of an attack on their positions. They felt the real battle would be fought at Corinth. (1:161) Sherman's report to Grant early the morning before the battle began said, "I have no doubt that nothing will occur today more than some picket firing." (1:195) Even Grant was oblivious to an attack as he telegraphed this message to his senior, General Halleck, "I have scarcely the faintest idea of an attack being made upon us, but will be prepared should such a thing take place." (3:9)

While the Federal troops at Shiloh were drilling, the Confederate forces continued to gather at Corinth. General Johnston arrived with his 17,000 men on March 24 bringing the total to over 44,000 men. (4:47) Except for Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest's cavalry troopers, however, few had fired a shot in anger. (7:324) Major General Braxton Bragg described the men as "a mob we have miscalled soldiers." (7:324) Beauregard decided that the time had arrived to take the offensive and had even drawn up plans for the march to Shiloh. (13:270) These plans were extremely complicated and called for using three different roads. General Johnston agreed to the plans and decided to move out from Corinth the morning of 3 April to attack Grant's forces on 5 April. Due to the inexperience of both the soldiers and staff and the complicated marching plans, it was after 3 p.m. on April 3 when movement actually began. (14:100) For green troops not used to marching, the movement toward Shiloh was chaos. Not the least of their troubles was the heavy rainfall which turned the roads into shin-deep mud. (7:327) The attack had to be delayed a full day as it took an extra day to get into position for the battle.

A major disagreement arose between Beauregard and Johnston concerning forming the battle line for attack. Johnston favored having his three corps attack side by side, and even telegraphed President Davis of this intention. (1:200) Beauregard's colossal ego, however, didn't prevent him from scrapping Johnston's plans and drawing up his own. (11:74) With a more forceful, dominant personality, Beauregard succeeded in changing the attack plans. (11:74) Beauregard was enamoured with the Napoleonic style of war. (11:60) His plan was to attack in three successive rows. Each row would be stretched over almost three miles. Major General William J. Hardee's corps consisted of 10,000 men in the first attacking row. Following Hardee by about one-half mile was a row made up of Major General Braxton Bragg's corps of 14,000. The third attacking row consisted of Major General Leonidas Polk's corps of 10,000. Brigadier General John C. Breckinridge's corps of 6,000 formed the reserves. (6:79) The total cavalry of 4,000 was not used as an integral unit. (See Map 3)

General Johnston's overall objective was to defeat Grant's forces before Buell arrived from Nashville. (17:348) Johnston's immediate objective or strategy was to push the left side of the Union army back away from Pittsburg Landing. This would force Grant's troops up against the swampy Snake Creek where they could be defeated or forced to surrender. (4:48) Here again, there is little evidence Beauregard agreed to this plan since his plan of attacking in rows allowed no concentration of forces to push back the Union left. (11:74)

An important council of war meeting was held the night before the battle. Beauregard insisted the element of surprise had surely been lost. The chaotic march from Corinth had taken an extra full day. Also, the overzealous and



MAP 3. Confederates Attack the Federal Positions, April 6, 1862 (11:89)

undisciplined Confederate soldiers continued to tune up their rebel yells and practice marksmanship on birds and rabbits within earshot of Federal camps.

(7:328) The other corps commanders felt that turning back to Corinth would ruin morale. After listening to their heated discussions, Johnston said, "Gentlemen, we shall attack at daylight tomorrow. I would fight them if they were a million." (7:329) Thus, the stage was set for this major battle. Over 44,000 Confederate troops camped only two miles away from 33,000 unsuspecting Union soldiers.

Early on the morning of Sunday, April 6, a nervous Union Colonel Everett Peabody from General Prentiss' division had a premonition of a battle. (14:139) He sent a reconnaissance force forward at about 3:30 a.m. headed by a Major Powell to check the nearby woods. (14:139) At Fraley's Field, this force clashed with the advance pickets of Hardee's lead corps. The battle began about 4:55 a.m. (3:10) Powell's troops fought for nearly an hour as Hardee's pickets first fell back, were reinforced by the main line of battle, and then pushed forward. (17:358) Sheer numbers forced the Union troops back, and Hardee's men advanced to attack Sherman's division on the Union right.

The divisions of Prentiss and Sherman had to either be awakened by the fighting or at least to give up a leisurely breakfast to fall into some line of defense. (1:218) Sherman had a strong defensive position on a hillcrest above Oak Creek. His position held under four brutal frontal assaults by Brigadier General Cleburne's brigade under Hardee's corps. (7:333) General Bragg's corps, the second attacking row, started intermingling with Hardee's men as the fierce fighting slowed the Confederate advance. (17:363) Sherman held for nearly two hours before his left flank collapsed. He was forced to fall back and form up next to General McClelland's division at about 10 a.m.

(2:21) In the center, Prentiss' division repeatedly held ground, then dropped back. (17:368) Part of the Confederate advance slowed as many men stopped to eat the breakfasts of the frightened Union soldiers who had fled their camps for the rear. (7:337)

Grant received news of the fighting while breakfasting at Savannah. He immediately boarded his command boat, "Tigress," to head upstream. The advance division from Buell's army under Brigadier General William Nelson had arrived at Savannah the night before, and Grant left word for him to prepare to march his division to opposite Pittsburg Landing. (6:90) As Grant passed General Lew Wallace at Crumps Landing, he told Wallace, "Be prepared for any order!" (3:5)

Grant arrived at the landing at about 9:00 a.m. (1:222) He had some staff officers start organizing the frightened troops who'd fled their positions into a final line of defense. (4:49) He sent an order to General Wallace at Crumps Landing to bring his men immediately. This order wasn't written down, and it was vague as to how Grant wanted him to move to the battlefield. (17:362) Grant also sent word to Savannah for General Nelson to "move his entire command to the river opposite Pittsburg Landing." (7:335) Then Grant went to the front to confer with his division commanders.

The divisions of Sherman and McClelland were fighting side by side. General Prentiss' division had yielded several times but had now settled into an excellent defensive position. It was along a slightly eroded wagon trace called the sunken road at the summit of a slope. (11:104) Prentiss' center was covered by a dense thicket of undergrowth and woods. Prentiss' right backed up against the woods and looked out over a broad, open Duncan's Field. At the eastern end of the sunken road, a small peach orchard was in full bloom.

Prentiss was supported by some of W. H. L. Wallace's division on his right and Hurlbut's division on his left. (6:83) Grant realized the necessity of holding the Confederate advance while he organized a final line of defense back at the landing. His orders to Prentiss were to "hold that position at all hazards." (17:369) This was to be a key decision for the battle that day.

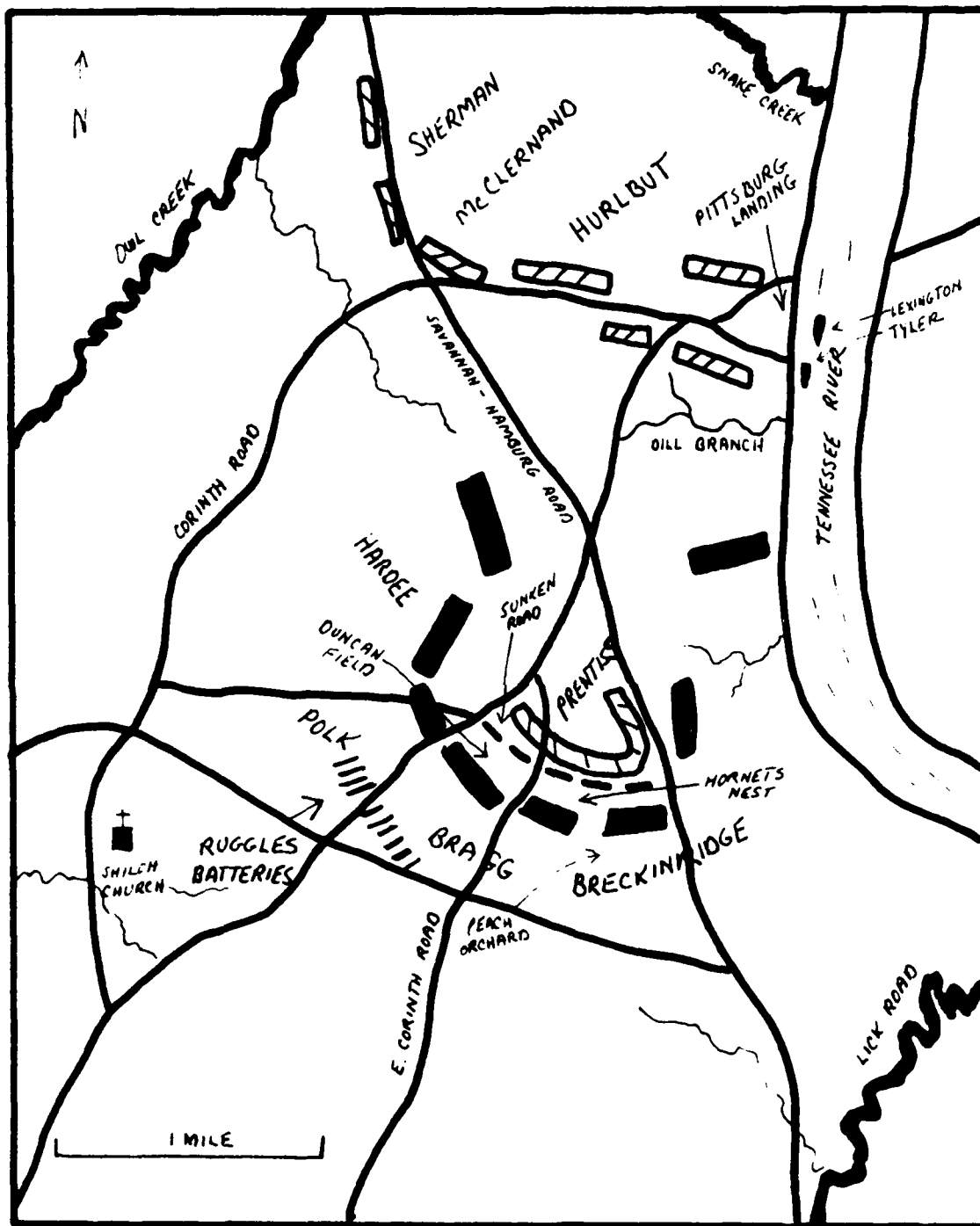
On the Confederate side, progress had slowed. Bragg's battle line was now completely intermingled with Hardee's corps, and Polk's third line was entering the battle. Brigades, regiments, and even companies were so intermingled that unit commanders were in charge of strangers who had never heard their voices. (7:338) Through their own initiative, the corps commanders started taking over sectors of the battle. (7:338) Polk and Hardee took the left side while Bragg attacked Prentiss' division at the sunken road. Beauregard set up headquarters at Shiloh church, and General Johnston went to the front playing the role of the gallant combat leader rather than acting as the supreme commander of an army. (11:99) By noon, Beauregard had even filtered Breckinridge's reserve corps into the fight on Bragg's right. The fighting formed almost a solid line nearly three miles long.

The fiercest battle was for the center of the Union line--Bragg versus Prentiss at the sunken road. General Bragg ordered charge after charge. (11:137) As the Confederates struggled through the wooded areas and underbrush, they were met by a barrage of fire from Prentiss' defenders. This area was called the "Hornet's Nest" because of the severity of firing and the sound of bullets, shot, and shell whizzing through the underbrush. (5:33) Ten different Confederate charges were made on this position. (11:136) The assaults, though, were unimaginative frontal assaults. All along the line

small groups would charge, then recoil. Some Union soldiers noted how the charging Confederate lines seemed to undulate when a volley cut through them, like tall grain waving in the wind. (11:143) The Confederates flung a total of 18,000 attackers on the Hornet's Nest which was never manned by greater than 4,300 Union troops. (11:143) The Federals, however, were never actually outnumbered by the piecemeal Confederate attacks. (11:143) (See Map 4)

In the early afternoon, General Johnston was at the front lines opposite the peach orchard rallying the men. He even led several charges of Breckinridge's Kentucky reserves. (14:270) He received one bullet wound which went unnoticed and soon proved to be fatal. The bullet had clipped the artery behind his knee, and Johnston was bleeding profusely into his boot. (14:272) Waivering in his saddle, he was led to a ravine where he bled to death at 2:30 that afternoon. (14:272) Johnston was the only four-star general to be killed in the Civil War. Command passed to General Beauregard at the rear.

As the Confederates met with continued stiff resistance around the Hornet's Nest, Brigadier General Ruggles chose a different course of action. He assembled a line of 62 cannons across from Duncan's Field. This was the largest concentration of field artillery yet seen on the North American continent. (14:291) At about 3:30 he started a barrage of Prentiss' position firing 180 rounds per minute. (11:162) Under this constant shelling, Prentiss was isolated from reinforcements, and his flanks fell back enabling the Confederates to surround the Union position. Prentiss, having never swerved from the position he was ordered to hold, surrendered his small remaining force of 2,200 men. (11:166) He had held from approximately 9:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.



MAP 4. Isolation and Collapse of the Hornet's Nest, April 6, 1862. (11:151, 165)

All that afternoon, Grant assembled a final line of defense along the Savannah-Hamburg Road. From the Union right to left were the divisional remains of Sherman, McClernand, and Hurlbut. Colonel Joseph A. Webster, Grant's chief of staff, assembled the First Illinois field artillery of about 50 guns along the ridge of a deep ravine called Dill's Branch to further bolster this line.

What was left of Bragg's corps finally circled past the Hornet's Nest to continue the attack. Approximately 2,000 men from the brigades of Brigadier General Chalmers and Brigadier General Jackson actually made it to the ridge opposite Grant's forces. (17:377) They were driven back by artillery fire. They had already fought six fights, and it was getting late in the day. (11:171) Many of Jackson's men had even run out of ammunition and were caught in Dill's Branch ravine, clinging to the steep sides of the ravine. (4:50)

With over one hour of daylight left, Beauregard ordered a stop to the fighting. (2:24) Bragg's evaluation in his official report was that "the men were greatly exhausted by 12 hours incessant fighting, without food . . . " and "the heavy battery in our front and gunboats on our right . . . seemed determined to dispute every inch." (11:169) On the afternoon of the battle, however, Bragg hotly disputed the attack being called off and even threatened not to obey the order. (11:169) Much has been written about this "lost opportunity" for a Confederate victory. (1:441)

Just as the final Confederate attack was called off, the first Union brigade of reinforcements from General Nelson's division was being ferried across the river. A colonel from Nelson's division remarked about the 6,000 to 12,000 men huddled around the landing, "Such looks of terror, such

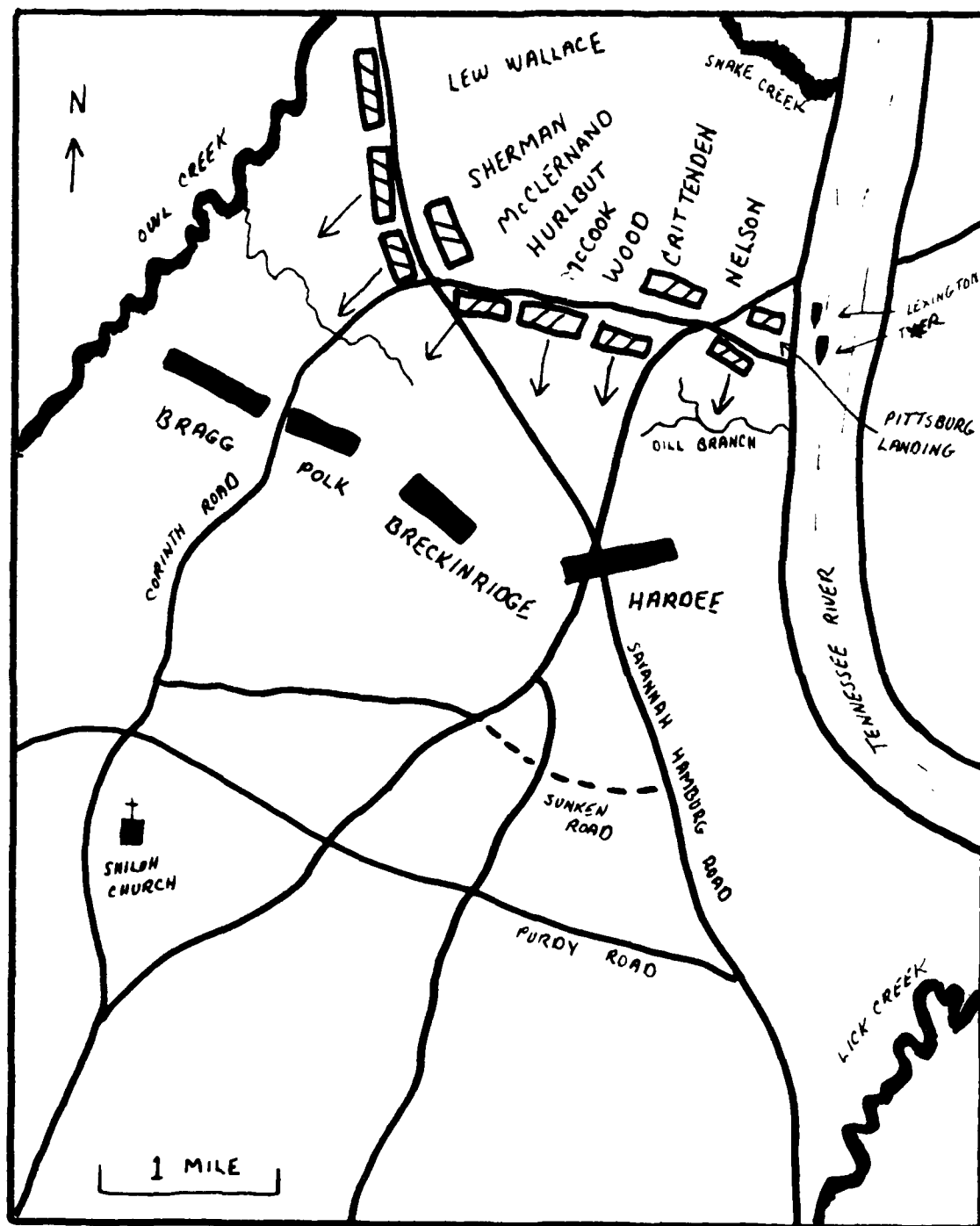
confusion, I never saw before, and do not wish to see again." (7:344) This was just the prelude for Grant's good fortunes. General Lew Wallace's "lost division" arrived at 7:00 p.m. (6:80) He had taken a different road from Crumps Landing than Grant had intended him to take. He was finally turned back by Grant's messengers and had to countermarch his troops back a different way. His 5-mile trip had taken 16 miles and an entire day. (14:349) Four of General Buell's divisions totalling about 18,000 arrived during the night to reinforce Grant. "I propose to attack at daylight and whip them," Grant told a staff officer. (11:182)

The Confederate troops pulled back out of range of the gunboat firing to sleep in the Union camps. Beauregard and Bragg slept in Sherman's tent. (14:377) The rain poured that night as Grant and his men slept in the mud. Under Grant's orders, every fifteen minutes throughout the night the gunboats "Lexington" and "Tyler" hurled 11-inch shells toward the Confederates. (7:345) The roar of the shelling blended with the thunder of the storm. Colonel Nathan Forrest with his cavalry saw the Union reinforcements unloading that evening but could not find Beauregard to tell him about it. He did find General Hardee and urged a night attack: "If the enemy comes on us in the morning, we'll be whipped like hell." (7:345) Hardee didn't even take Forrest's message to Beauregard. In fact, Beauregard sent a telegram to Richmond claiming "a complete victory, driving the enemy from every position." (7:345)

That was not to be the outcome on the second day though, for Grant now had 45,000 men against the 20,000 to 25,000 Confederates. (11:197) At day-break he ordered his division commanders to advance and recapture their original camps. (17:383) Grant had the divisions of Lew Wallace, Sherman,

McClelland, and Hurlbut from his right to left. Buell's divisions of McCook, Wood, Crittenden, and Nelson composed the Union left. (See Map 5) Nelson opened Monday's fighting by attacking and pushing back the remains of Hardee's corps. Fueled by fresh troops, all the Union forces pushed the Confederates back from one position to another. The Union troops were advancing over the same fields where they had fought the day before. Although Grant was apparently reluctant to exercise command over Buell's forces, there was excellent cooperation between the two men. (4:50) Some areas were bitterly contested, but overall the Confederates gave ground steadily. By noon, Beauregard started organizing for a retreat back to Corinth. Colonel Thomas Jordan, Beauregard's aide, summed up the situation: "General, do you not think our troops are very much in the condition of a lump of sugar thoroughly soaked with water, preserving its original shape, though ready to dissolve?" (14:413) Around 3:30, Beauregard ordered the retreat. He used 2,000 of Breckinridge's corps along with Forrest's cavalry as a covering force. Actually, the Confederates camped out that night in the same area they had used the night preceding the battle.

A major question arose as to why Grant didn't pursue the Confederates any farther than he did. General Bragg had termed that Confederate retreat as more of a route. (4:50) Grant explained his actions in that he didn't have the heart to press his fatigued men after what they had gone through. (1:501) Sherman said, "I assure you we have had enough of their kind over the past two days." (1:501) At the same time, though, Buell's forces along with Lew Wallace's division had fought less than a day and could have been used. Grant seemed content having driven the Confederates from the battlefield. (17:388) He had averted a disaster and had recovered his original camps.



MAP 5. Union Forces Begin the Attack, April 7, 1862. (6:87)

The final engagement of forces came the following day, April 8, as Grant did send 1,500 men under General Sherman toward Corinth to insure the Confederate retreat. (14:423) He was met at a cleared-out area called Fallen Timbers by Forrest's cavalry. Forrest charged Sherman's troops sending them fleeing. Forrest himself was actually the last man wounded at this skirmish as he got caught among the Federal infantry troops while slashing away with his sword. (14:425) He was shot in the side. As he galloped away, he pulled a Union soldier up on his horse behind him to act as a shield. (11:210) So the Battle of Shiloh ended with the disorganized Confederate retreat back to Corinth.

The Battle of Shiloh was a shock to both sides. Total casualties from the 65,085 Union side were 13,047. (1:510) The Confederates lost 10,699 of their 44,699 men. (1:509) The South had failed to defeat Grant and stop his penetration into the South. They had failed their objective of taking the initiative and regaining a hold on western Tennessee. The Confederates had lost any chance to mount a major offensive. Shiloh was symbolic of a huge floodgate unhinged. The rebels tried to slam it shut, but failed, and pressure of the Federal onslaught mounted steadily. (11:220) Never did the South have a better opportunity to reverse the trend and save the western Confederacy. (11:220) Although Grant was taken completely by surprise, he and his army had survived. This battle set the stage for Grant's attack on Vicksburg, his command in the West, and his eventual command of the Union army. On the other hand, a defeat at Shiloh might have changed the entire course of the war. General Sherman later wrote about the "victory" as being "one of the most important that has occurred on this continent." (11:219)

SECTION TWO

APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF WAR TO THE BATTLE OF SHILOH

This section presents an analysis of the Civil War Battle of Shiloh in terms of the principles of war. These principles are depicted in Air Force Manual 1-1, Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force. They represent a summation of factors a commander should consider when he plans an operation, deploys his resources, and then finally employs his forces. Serious consideration of each principle can lead to the most effective use of force. Conversely, disregard or misapplication of the principles could lead to disaster. By analyzing this historical battle, I hope the reader can gain a better understanding of these principles of war.

The first six principles of OBJECTIVE, OFFENSIVE, SURPRISE, SECURITY, MASS AND ECONOMY OF FORCE, and MANEUVER had the greatest impact on the Battle of Shiloh. I will concentrate most heavily on these principles and will show how both the Confederate and Union forces either applied or ignored these principles of war. Although the last five principles of war did not play a major role in this battle, I will also identify examples of their use and misuse.

The first principle of war detailed in AFM 1-1 is that of defining a clear, simple objective to the military operation.

OBJECTIVE

The most basic principle for success in any military operation is a clear and concise statement of a realistic **objective**. The objective defines what the military action intends to accomplish and normally describes the nature and scope of an operation. An objective may vary from the overall aim of a broad military operation to the desired outcome of a specific attack. The ultimate military objective of war is to neutralize or destroy the enemy's armed forces and his will to fight. However, the intimate bond which ties war to politics cannot be ignored. War is a means to achieving a political objective and must never be considered apart from the political end. Consequently, political imperatives shape and define military objectives. It follows that the objective of each military operation must contribute to the overall political objective. (15:2-4)

CONFEDERATE FORCES

The Confederates under Generals Albert Sidney Johnston and P.G.T. Beauregard definitely had a prime objective in mind. This objective was to attack and defeat Major General Ulysses S. Grant's army at Pittsburg Landing before he could be reinforced by Major General Don Carlos Buell's army.

The Confederates had suffered a major military and political setback with the loss of Forts Henry and Donelson. Johnston had to concentrate his forces at Corinth, Mississippi, in order to carry out this objective. By defeating Grant, he would stop the Union's drive into the South, regain pride and the vital area of resource-rich western Tennessee. The overall objective was clear and concise and a step in the direction of success.

Once past the primary objective, however, problems arose. Johnston's more specific objective was to turn back the left side of the Union line and cut the army off from Pittsburg Landing and reinforcements. This objective was doomed when Beauregard convinced Johnston to switch from attacking with corps side by side to Beauregard's scheme of attacking in three long, successive rows. It is doubtful that Beauregard even agreed to turning the Union left

as he talked during the battle of driving the Union forces "back into the Tennessee River." (11:75) The extreme Union left was not even attacked until nearly four hours into the battle. (11:126)

A second violation of the principle of objective was that Beauregard established no clear objective for the second day's battle. No meeting was held to reorganize the troops or plan a morning attack. (1:452) Beauregard had some information about Grant being reinforced and was aware of the difficulty of any attack on the Union left across the Dill's Branch ravine. Beauregard merely told several of his generals to organize their men in the morning. (1:453) The one-day delay in moving from Corinth to Shiloh cost Johnston his objective of defeating Grant before he was reinforced. The objective of turning the Union left was never accomplished.

UNION FORCES

Grant's overall objective or strategy was to drive deep into the South by means of the river systems and destroy the enemy. (1:32) He could also split the Confederacy in two. He had been successful, and at Pittsburg Landing he was awaiting Buell's arrival so he could continue the attack. The violation of this principle was he had no clear objective for his troops while awaiting Buell.

The best illustration of Grant applying the principle of objective was when he saw what a strategic defensive position General Prentiss occupied at the sunken road in the "Hornet's Nest." He ordered Prentiss to hold that position at all costs--a clear and decisive objective. Prentiss held from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with only about 4,400 men. This key decision gave Grant the essential time to set up a final defense line along the Savannah-Hamburg Road.

Initiating and maintaining OFFENSIVE action is the second major principle of war in AFM 1-1. The Battle of Shiloh had clear instances where the aggressor made the greatest impact on the battle.

OFFENSIVE

Unless **offensive** action is initiated, military victory is seldom possible. The principle of offensive is to act rather than react. The offensive enables commanders to select priorities of attack, as well as the time, place, and weaponry necessary to achieve objectives. Aerospace forces possess a capability to seize the offensive and can be employed rapidly and directly against enemy targets. Aerospace forces have the power to penetrate to the heart of an enemy's strength without first defeating defending forces in detail. Therefore, to take full advantage of the capabilities of aerospace power, it is imperative that air commanders seize the offensive at the very outset of hostilities. (15:2-5)

CONFEDERATE FORCES

Politically, the South was forced to take the offensive after Grant's successes in the West. The overall defensive strategy was not effective against aggressive action. Beauregard realized they must assume the offensive as he gathered troops at Corinth. Johnston was in agreement by the time he and his troops arrived. This time the South would be the aggressor. Even though Beauregard was convinced the element of surprise was lost with the delayed march to Shiloh, General Johnston insisted they attack. The Confederates maintained the offensive the entire first day pushing Grant's forces back over two miles toward the river. Two brigades from General Braxton Bragg's corps were even able to attack Grant's final defense line. A deep criticism of Beauregard was that he stopped the attack with over an hour of daylight remaining. Only General Prentiss was able to seriously slow the Confederate offensive the first day.

UNION FORCES

In contrast to the fierce Southern offensive drive the first day, Grant had to mount a stubborn defense constantly giving ground. Two of his messages to Buell that day illustrated his fear of being completely overrun. "You can still save the day" and "hurry at all haste to joint the battle" both showed his fear. (6:92; 1:225)

The second day was just the opposite. Grant's order to his staff at dawn was to advance and retake their camps. Grant had been reinforced during the night by four fresh divisions of Buell's army along with the "lost division" of General Lew Wallace. With over 25,000 fresh troops, it was Grant's turn to take the offensive and initiate his own plans. Buell's men advanced on the left, and Grant's men pressed the attack on the right. Thus, the second day, Grant dictated the action by attacking the Confederate forces. He drove them back over the same fields they had fought for the first day. By about 3:30 p.m., Union forces had recaptured all their camps and had forced Beauregard into a retreat to Corinth. In a later report, General Bragg said the retreat was all but a rout, with wagons and equipment left scattered along the roads. (4:50) Continued offensive action by Grant could have destroyed Beauregard's army. The South's adherence to the principle of offensive almost defeated Grant's army the first day. The second day, Grant maintained the offensive and drove the Confederates from the battlefield.

The third principle of war in AFM 1-1 is SURPRISE. Attack the enemy at a time, place, and manner for which he is neither prepared nor expecting an attack. (15:2-5) The Confederate surprise attack almost defeated Grant's army the first day of the battle. It was a situation which caused many people to question Grant's competency as a commander. (11:223)

SURPRISE

Surprise is the attack of an enemy at a time, place, and manner for which the enemy is neither prepared nor expecting an attack. The principle of surprise is achieved when an enemy is unable to react effectively to an attack. Surprise is achieved through security, deception, audacity, originality, and timely execution. Surprise can decisively shift the balance of power. Surprise gives attacking forces the advantage of seizing the initiative while forcing the enemy to react. When other factors influencing the conduct of war are unfavorable, surprise may be the key element in achieving the objective. The execution of surprise attacks can often reverse the military situation, generate opportunities for air and surface forces to seize the offensive, and disrupt the cohesion and fighting effectiveness of enemy forces. Surprise is a most powerful influence in aerospace operations, and commanders must make every effort to attain it. Surprise requires a commander to have adequate command, control, and communications to direct his forces, accurate intelligence information to exploit enemy weaknesses, effective deception to divert enemy attention, and sufficient security to deny an enemy sufficient warning and reaction to a surprise attack. (15:2-5)

CONFEDERATE FORCES

The Confederate army used this principle to its complete advantage at Shiloh. The gathering of forces at Corinth was known to Grant as he even estimated their strength at 80,000. (2:19) What he didn't know was the attack would be against him there at Shiloh. By taking the offensive, both Johnston and Beauregard hoped this element of surprise would be on their side. The Confederate commanders were furious over their men shooting at animals along the way and firing to check their powder. Beauregard certainly

felt that the element of surprise was lost and argued they should return to Corinth. Johnston prevailed, however, and the attack was a surprise. The Confederates were mentally prepared for the battle that morning. Surprise was achieved in spite of the small skirmishes fought on Saturday, April 5, and the fact that several Confederate cavalry men had been captured by Union soldiers. (17:350)

Attacking in the three-mile long rows did limit the effectiveness of Confederate command and control, however. The Union weaknesses could not be efficiently exploited. Also, after the initial surprise, there were no attempts at diversions. It was simply a Napoleonic method of attacking as sheer masses kept the forward momentum going. Surprise was attained in spite of the noisy actions the day before of an undisciplined Confederate army.

As to who actually surprised who that Sunday morning could partially be disputed. Union Colonel Everett Peabody secretly ordered a reconnaissance force to scout the woods at about 3:00 a.m. This band of 150 men probably did a great deal to blunt the surprise attack. They stumbled onto the advance guard of Hardee's corps about 5:00 a.m. and started the Battle of Shiloh at Fraley's Field. Surely this firing alerted Sherman's and Prentiss' forces who formed up for battle in front of their respective camps. (17:391)

Overall, the Union forces were mentally and physically unprepared for battle as they scrambled from their tents. (17:391) General Grant was at Savannah nine miles away from the field of battle.

UNION FORCES

General Grant was completely surprised by the rebel attack. His on-scene commander, General Sherman, was equally surprised. His message to Grant

early the morning of the battle was, "I have no doubt that nothing will occur today more than some picket firing." (4:9) Grant then forwarded a message to his superior, General Halleck, "I have scarcely the faintest idea of an attack being made upon us, but will be prepared should such a thing take place." (3:9) With the actual battle starting around 5 a.m., Grant did not even reach Pittsburg Landing until about 9:00 a.m. There he saw the hectic chaos of fear-stricken soldiers hiding along the bank of the river. Many of the troops ran from even the sound of battle. General Sherman had failed to put out patrols or picket posts or use a bit of cavalry to keep aware of the Confederate forces. So, dawn broke with yelling Confederates bursting through the woods into the Union camps.

In contrast, the second day's fighting was probably a surprise to the Confederates. Union reinforcements arrived at the landing the first evening; however, gunfire had caused the Confederates to withdraw out of range. The full extent of the Union reinforcements was unknown. The Union attack the second morning was a surprise to the unprepared Confederates.

Had General Lew Wallace been able to enter the fight early the first day by the Purdy Road, he may have been able to attack an unsuspecting and exposed Confederate left flank. His appearance during the first day's battle might possibly have held the Confederate advance at the sunken road position.

The fourth principle of war which played a major importance at Shiloh was the principle of SECURITY. For this battle, a lack of active and passive security measures coupled with the South's use of the element of surprise nearly led to a complete victory for Johnston and a disaster for Grant.

SECURITY

Security protects friendly military operations from enemy activities which could hamper or defeat aerospace forces. Security is taking continuous, positive measures to prevent surprise and preserve freedom of action. Security involves active and passive defensive measures and the denial of useful information to an enemy. To deny an enemy knowledge of friendly capabilities and actions requires a concerted effort in both peace and war. Security protects friendly forces from an effective enemy attack through defensive operations and by masking the location, strength, and intentions of friendly forces. In conducting these actions, air commanders at all levels are ultimately responsible for the security of their forces. Security in aerospace operations is achieved through a combination of factors such as secrecy, disguise, operational security, deception, dispersal, maneuver, timing, posturing, and the defense and hardening of forces. Security is enhanced by establishing an effective command, control, communications, and intelligence network. Intelligence efforts minimize the potential for enemy actions to achieve surprise or maintain an initiative, and effective command, control, and communications permit friendly forces to exploit enemy weaknesses and respond to enemy actions. (15:2-5, 2-6)

CONFEDERATE FORCES

The worst violation of the principle of security for the South happened after the first day's fighting. That night the Confederate forces had to pull back out of shelling range of the gunboats "Lexington" and "Tyler." There was no attempt to establish any kind of organized security net to include surveillance of the Union forces reported directly back to General Beauregard. As a result, the extent of the Union reinforcements was unknown. Surely a different set of circumstances might have taken place had this information been known. Either setting up defensive positions or ordering an

early attack could have been options if only this passive means of security had been employed. Confederate cavalry troops did keep track of General Lew Wallace's division in its marching and countermarching toward the fighting the first day. The Confederates capitalized on the Union lack of security the first day. They, in turn, were victimized by a lack of security the second day.

UNION FORCES

Grant had little regard for security his army's position at Pittsburg Landing. It had camped there since mid-March, yet no defenses were developed. Grant had defeated two Southern forts with relative ease, and his strategy was to attack and destroy the enemy. (7:322) He knew that the Southern forces were grouping at Corinth, the major rail center, where he felt the next battle would be. General C. F. Smith, commander of the Union forces until Grant arrived at Savannah, explained one reason for not fortifying: "We've come here to fight, and if we begin to spade it will make the men think we fear the enemy." (7:323) Many of the men were still raw recruits who had not yet seen fighting. Grant felt the time would be much better spent drilling and marching than "digging in." In picking the area around the old Shiloh church, General Sherman said, "It's a magnificent plain for camping and drilling and a military point of great strength." (7:321) But was the site a proper one to choose? The army was camped with its back to an unfordable river. On the same side of that river just 22 miles away, the Confederates were massing at Corinth. Sherman did make one calculation right, however, and that was that the Owl and Lick Creeks provided natural barriers on either side of the Union troops.

The layout of the Union forces is also questionable. In originally setting up camp, Sherman wanted no gaps between the different divisions, but this was not adhered to. (11:52) Sherman and Prentiss were separated by dense woods, and Sherman's Fourth Brigade under Colonel Stuart was widely separated to the extreme Union left guarding the Hamburg road. Also, the two most advanced divisions of Prentiss and Sherman had never been involved in actual fighting, while the divisions of McClellan, Hurlbut, and W. H. L. Wallace were situated back closer to the landing. They had all seen action at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson. So the positioning of the troops did not adhere to an order for security.

Other violations of the principle of security were not properly posting pickets or sending out reconnaissance parties. This was a keen error in judgment in light of increased sightings of Confederates in the nearby woods. Sherman chose to ignore indications of increased activity and failed to institute expanded security measures. It was almost in direct violation of orders that the nervous Colonel Peabody sent out the reconnaissance force early that morning of April 6th. An aggressive scouting and reconnaissance effort by Sherman could have revealed the Confederate march toward Shiloh and 40,000 Confederate soldiers camped out only two miles away the evening of April 5th. Proper security measures would have prevented the surprise attack, and certainly some sort of defense would have helped stem the Confederate advance during the first day's fighting.

The principle of MASS AND ECONOMY OF FORCE also was of major importance at Shiloh. This principle dictates the tactics in efficiently using available forces.

MASS AND ECONOMY OF FORCE

Success in achieving objectives with aerospace power requires a proper balance between the principles of **mass and economy of force**. Concentrated firepower can overwhelm enemy defenses and secure an objective at the right time and place. Because of their characteristics and capabilities, aerospace forces possess the ability to concentrate enormous decisive striking power upon selected targets when and where it is needed most. The impact of these attacks can break the enemy's defenses, disrupt his plan of attack, destroy the cohesion of his forces, produce the psychological shock that may thwart a critical enemy thrust, or create an opportunity for friendly forces to seize the offensive. Concurrently, using economy of force permits a commander to execute attacks with appropriate mass at the critical time and place without wasting resources on secondary objectives. War will always involve the determination of priorities. The difficulty in determining these priorities is directly proportional to the capabilities and actions of the enemy and the combat environment. Commanders, at all levels, must determine and continually refine priorities among competing demands for limited aerospace assets. This requires a balance between mass and economy of force, but the paramount consideration for commanders must always be the objective. Expending excessive efforts on secondary objectives would tend to dissipate the strength of aerospace forces and possibly render them incapable of achieving the primary objective. Economy of force helps to preserve the strength of aerospace forces and retain the capability to employ decisive firepower when and where it is needed most. (15:2-6)

CONFEDERATE FORCES

Beauregard's plan to attack in three long rows or waves in Napoleonic style set the stage for inefficient use of forces in a deeply wooded area. With a corps spread over a three-mile wide area, almost nothing could be done to mass the troops to use them effectively or economically. This is where the battle plan might have been doomed from the start. A classic example of the effects of this principle centered around the fight for the sunken road

or the Hornet's Nest. Here, the Confederate advance was effectively ground to a halt. In one respect, this area resembled a magnet drawing in the troops from each attacking corps plus the reserves. Beauregard directed his reserves towards the hottest area of battle. (11:99) Mass could have been used, but wasn't. Ten separate, disjointed attacks on the area were made by different groups along their entire front. The Confederates, however, never outnumbered Union defenders during any of these attacks. This area was not even a priority objective and should have been circumvented. A small Confederate force could have tied up Prentiss' division there at the sunken road.

What did finally cause Prentiss' surrender after losing half his men, though, was an excellent example of the use of mass. General Ruggles realized the futility of the frontal infantry assault on this position and actually did something about it. He drew together every cannon he could find, amassing 62 cannons in a line, and proceeded to lay down a barrage as never seen up to that time. In about two hours Prentiss surrendered. This was the proper use of mass to achieve an objective.

A fine example of economy of force occurred on the retreat to Corinth. Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest with about 350 cavalrymen was assigned to cover the rear of Breckinridge's retreating force. (1:506) General Sherman did pursue the following day with a brigade. Outnumbered five-to-one, Forrest attacked them at a place called Fallen Timbers, a half-mile wide clearing where a prewar logging project had been abandoned. (1:507) Using his small attacking force wisely, Forrest stopped the Federal pursuit of 1,500 men to end the overall confrontation.

UNION FORCES

Grant used this principle of economy of force to his advantage in two prime areas. First was where he told Prentiss to hold his position at all costs at the sunken road. By using a small force there, Grant gained time to mass his final line of defense along the ridge at Pittsburg Landing itself. A line of 50 cannons was set up, and the forces were mustered into a tight line of battle supported also by the two gunboats on the river. This proved to be a formidable line of defense, especially as reinforcements arrived that evening and through the night. It would have taken a tremendous, coordinated attack to overcome this final defensive position. The fighting had already gone on for nearly twelve hours that first day, and the Confederates could not mass an attack on Grant's final position.

The way in which the second day's attack by Grant and Buell quickly carried the Confederate positions is indicative of proper use of economy of force and mass. Constant pressure was kept on the front, reserves were used wisely, and Sherman even held his forces back awaiting movement from Buell's attackers. So this battle, as with many battles throughout history, illustrates this principle of mass and economy of force.

The principle of MANEUVER also can be an important influence in a battle. During the Battle of Shiloh, this principle was basically violated by Johnston's Confederate forces, while it played a large role in both the possible failure and ultimate success of Grant's forces.

MANEUVER

War is a complex interaction of moves and countermoves. **Maneuver** is the movement of friendly forces in relation to enemy forces. Commanders seek to maneuver their strengths selectively against an enemy's weakness while avoiding engagements with forces of superior strength. Effective use of maneuver can maintain the initiative, dictate the terms of engagement, retain security, and position forces at the right time and place to execute surprise attacks. Maneuver permits rapid massing of combat power and effective disengagement of forces. While maneuver is essential, it is not without risk. Moving large forces can lead to loss of cohesion and control. (15:2-6)

CONFEDERATE FORCES

Two dramatic instances highlighted violations of the principle of maneuver for the South. The first was where a combination of lack of order, organization, discipline, and heavy rainfall stifled progress in the march from Corinth to Shiloh. This order to move out from Corinth was given on April 3 with the intent being to attack at dawn on April 5 instead of April 6. The twenty-two mile march took a full day longer than planned. Beauregard was even insistent that the element of surprise had been lost and that they should countermarch back to Corinth. This extra day's delay in the attack meant that Buell was a day closer to joining forces with Grant.

A second critical violation of maneuver was the full-scale assaults on the Union's strongest line of defense along the sunken road. No attempts were made to tie up the Union forces there and maneuver around them toward the objective of cutting off Pittsburg Landing. Confederate forces were committed to attacking the Union strength from about 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

UNION FORCES

A blatant violation of effective maneuver concerned General Lew Wallace's "Lost Division." Deployed at Crumps Landing to protect the Purdy Road to the

west, General Wallace waited at the riverbank to get General Grant's orders as he sailed past enroute to the battle. "Be prepared for any order!" was Grant's instruction. As soon as Grant arrived at Pittsburg Landing and surveyed the situation, he sent word verbally to Wallace to proceed to the battle. This was approximately at 10:30 in the morning on April 6th.

(14:345) Wallace's division did not arrive at Pittsburg Landing until that evening. Wallace chose the wrong road and not the River Road which Grant intended him to use. Wallace got lost, had to countermarch, and was finally stopped by a second messenger from Grant who directed him to the battlefield.

(6:80) The four-mile march ended up taking all day. As a minimum, Wallace's absence caused Grant a great deal of anxiety as his forces were pushed back all day. In the worst case, Grant could have been defeated before Wallace ever arrived.

At the same time, maneuver saved the day for Grant. He was able to hurry Buell's advance division by message saying to leave all their heavy equipment along the road from Savannah to opposite Pittsburg Landing and hurry to the battle. (6:92) Buell's forces arrived just in time to reinforce Grant's final line of defense as Confederates attacked it at the end of the first day. Buell's main army also hurried to the battlefield that night in order to fight in the morning.

The Battle of Shiloh showed excellent examples of how these first six principles of war were both applied and violated. So many "if only's" occurred which might have caused the battle to proceed in different directions. Strange things happen in the "fog of war," but a commander still has a responsibility to apply his resources effectively and efficiently. Although the

next five principles of war did not have as great an impact on this battle as the first six, I will illustrate examples of their use or misuse.

TIMING AND TEMPO is the principle of executing military operations at a point in time and at a rate which optimizes the use of friendly forces and which inhibits or denies the effectiveness of enemy forces. (15:2-6) This principle did not play a large role in the battle of Shiloh.

The timing of the whole battle was a choice made by the Confederates. A rare opportunity existed at Shiloh for the Confederate forces to attack Grant's army before Buell arrived with reinforcements. This almost worked, but the advance divisions of Buell arrived in time to attack the second day.

During the actual battle, however, there was such a lack of effective control of the attacking forces that troops were used inefficiently. Beauregard seemed intent on funneling reserves early into the hot spots of the battle rather than keeping objectives in mind. There was very little use of mass, surprise, or maneuver to influence the actual battle tempo once the fighting had begun.

Another principle of war is **UNITY OF COMMAND**. This principle provides for the effective exercise of leadership and the power of decision over the assigned forces for the purpose of achieving a common objective. (15:2-6) While Grant was able to effectively manage his division commanders the first day of fighting, Buell's arrival set up a unique command situation. Grant only outranked Buell by two weeks. Therefore, there ended up being more of a cooperative effect between the two during the second day's fighting, rather than Grant taking firm control of both armies. One criticism of Grant was his choosing not to pursue a battered Southern army at the end of the

second day. Both Wallace and the divisions of Buell had only fought half a day; yet, Grant chose not to order Buell and his army to pursue. Grant failed to exercise his overall authority and exploit the Confederate retreat.

On the Confederate side, General Johnston's authority was diluted by Beauregard's more dominant and forceful personality. (11:74) Beauregard was able to implement his plan of marching to Shiloh and attacking with corps in successive rows. Also, there is no indication that Beauregard was concerned about pushing back the Union left side as Johnston had planned. (11:75) While Johnston, the commander, was at the front, Beauregard directed the overall battle effort from the rear.

The principle of SIMPLICITY refers to guidance being quick, clear, and concise. It can add to cohesion of forces and unity of effort toward a common objective. (15:2-7)

On the Union side, I can cite three examples of simplicity. Grant instructed Prentiss to hold his position at the Hornet's Nest at all costs. This command decision could have saved the day for Grant. A second situation was Grant sending messages to Buell to hurry his forces as quickly as possible. In doing that, Buell's division left much of their heavy equipment alongside the road enroute from Savannah to opposite Pittsburg Landing. The forces were united that night. A third instance was the simple order at the start of the second day to advance and recapture their original camps. Grant violated simplicity by not clearly ordering General Lew Wallace to use the River Road in maneuvering his division to Pittsburg Landing.

The biggest violation of the principle of simplicity occurred when the Confederates marched from Corinth to Shiloh. The plan was so complicated and

relied so heavily on perfect timing that it was doomed from the start. The battle was delayed an entire day because it took two and one-half days to get the troops to march 22 miles and form into battle positions.

LOGISTICS is the principle of sustaining both man and machine in combat by obtaining, moving, and maintaining warfighting potential. (15:2-7)

On the Union side, General Sherman's division illustrates a key logistical problem. Just supplying ammunition to the numerous cannons and weapons of six different calibers was a nightmare. (11:125) The weapons ranged from shotguns to old flintlocks and squirrel rifles, from smoothbore muskets to British Enfield rifles. (1:138) Sherman was forced to drop back from his first position due to lack of ammunition.

The order for the Confederates at Corinth was to carry enough food and forage for three days. (17:354) The battle didn't actually begin, however, until the fourth day. It's little wonder that the troops feasted on the breakfasts of the Union soldiers as their camps were overrun. Another instance of being out of ammunition was when Chalmer's brigade could charge Grant's final position with only fixed bayonets. A keen awareness of the necessity of an efficient logistics system was not clearly evident at Shiloh.

Finally, the principle of **COHESION** relates to establishing and maintaining the forces' warfighting spirit and effectiveness. (15:2-8) At Shiloh, two relatively green armies "saw the elephant," a term used for being in actual combat. Many units on both sides were led into battle by leaders who had never been there either. There were examples of units simply stopping their fighting when their commanders were killed. This occurred on both sides, so the element of cohesion did not play a significant role in this battle.

The principles of war offer interesting guidelines to studying the Battle of Shiloh. Both sides had instances of applying and disregarding these principles. The Confederates capitalized on the principles of objective, offensive, and surprise but did not follow up by using their troops wisely. The Union forces ignored the principle of security, but Grant salvaged the day by using economy of force to stop the Confederate advance. Then, his reinforcements allowed him to take the offensive the second day. The last five principles of war did not significantly impact one side more than the other.

SECTION THREE

NOTES FOR SEMINAR CHAIRMAN

Studying this material has a twofold purpose. First, I want the seminar to be exposed to another scene from our nation's history. Secondly, I hope that by relating this Battle of Shiloh to the study of the principles of war you can gain a better understanding of these principles. Illustrating the applications and violations of the principles of war can help us to project into possible future battlefields. Knowledge of warfighting principles leans toward a "science of war," but applying these principles is still an "art."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Lead-Off Question

Grant was the aggressor seeking to attack and destroy the Confederate armies. Did he really have a clear objective while waiting at Pittsburg Landing?

Discussion

Grant had penetrated the South's defensive line and driven almost through the state of Tennessee. Although he was thinking of attacking the Confederates at Corinth, he had no clear objective at Pittsburg Landing. He was only waiting there to be joined by Buell's army. General Halleck was intending to assume overall command once the armies were joined. The time at the landing was spent drilling and marching the "green" troops--not exactly Grant's idea of warfare.

a. Follow-Up Question

If Grant's objective at Pittsburg Landing was a bit cloudy, was the South's objective any clearer?

Discussion

The Confederate forces under General Johnston definitely had a clearer objective in mind. It was to attack and destroy Grant's army before it was reinforced. By doing this, they hoped to regain the vital western Tennessee area and also regain the prestige lost by Grant's victories at Forts Henry and Donelson. Both Johnston and Beauregard were in complete agreement here.

b. Follow-Up Question

Did either side really achieve their objective? Why not?

Discussion

Grant achieved his objective of joining up with Buell but certainly not in the way he anticipated. He was all but defeated and was more closely "saved" by Buell's arrival more than anything else. Johnston was unable to achieve his objective of defeating Grant because the strategy of how to achieve that objective was not developed. Johnston and Beauregard were not in agreement about turning the Union left away from the landing. The corps were established along the Napoleonic style frontal attacks. There was no way of massing troops against the Union left, and reserves were not used effectively. Beauregard said he would push them into the Tennessee river instead of Johnston's plan of forcing them into the swampy Snake Creek area.

2. Lead-Off Question

Utilizing the principle of offensive, Grant was able to drive deep into western Tennessee. How were the tables turned on him at Shiloh?

Discussion

Grant was fully anticipating attacking the Confederates at Corinth. Instead, Johnston and Beauregard decided it was time for the South to assume the offensive. It was the Confederates maintaining the offensive the entire first day. With slightly superior manpower (44,000 vs 33,000), the Confederates kept pushing the Union forces back toward the landing. The Confederates took the offensive and were highly successful the first day. Until that time, the South was trying to maintain a defensive posture all along her northern borders.

a. Follow-Up Question

The momentum of battle changed the second day. Did the principle of offensive play a major role here also?

Discussion

As Grant realized his final defensive line would hold at the end of the first day, his strategy changed. In the morning he ordered the attack to recapture his camps. He had fresh troops from Buell's army and Wallace's division to use against maybe 20,000 to 25,000 Confederate effectives. Grant struck first and maintained the offensive the entire second day. Against a Confederate army that was not dug in, Grant used the principle of offensive to his complete advantage.

b. Follow-Up Question

Why did the Confederate offensive run out of steam the first day?

Discussion

General Braxton Bragg bitterly argued over Beauregard's decision to stop the fighting the first day with over an hour of daylight remaining. He only had two brigades, however, to attack Grant's strong final line of defense. It is extremely doubtful a limited attack could have carried Grant's position. The fight had been going on for twelve hours, and too much time was wasted on piecemeal attacks against Prentiss in the Hornet's Nest. Prentiss blunted the entire Confederate offensive.

3. Lead-Off Question

Grant knew of the gathering forces at Corinth. How did his ignoring the principle of security almost lead to the defeat of his army?

Discussion

Grant chose to keep his headquarters at Savannah which was nine miles downstream from Pittsburg Landing. Being physically separated from his army both at Pittsburg Landing and Crumps Landing set the whole tone for his army. He in essence said that digging in would make the men think he feared the enemy. This is no excuse for not demanding adequate defenses for the camps at Shiloh. In positioning the divisions, General Sherman must also share the blame. He had experienced troops of W. H. L. Wallace, McClernand, and Hurlbut back by the landing while the untested divisions were closest to Corinth. There were gaps between camps also. Sherman failed to post adequate pickets or set up patrols. This was a flagrant violation of security. The Confederate forces were able by sheer mass to overrun each Federal position.

a. Follow-Up Question

Were there any other major reasons Grant didn't fortify his positions?

Discussion

Grant's strategy was basically to attack and destroy. He was not thinking of a defensive battle. He and Sherman both felt the real battle would be in Corinth. The Confederates retreated from Bowling Green, Nashville, Murfreesboro, and Columbus as a result of his advance into the interior. Grant was simply not expecting the Confederates to go on the offensive.

4. Lead-Off Question

Tied almost directly to the principle of security is the principle of surprise. How was General Johnston able to achieve almost total surprise of the Union forces?

Discussion

The surprise achieved by the Confederate forces was due almost entirely to the lack of preparedness of Sherman and his divisions at Shiloh. Johnston and Beauregard were indeed hoping for surprise, but they thought for sure the element of surprise had been lost. The march to Shiloh had been chaos and had taken an entire extra day. The undisciplined soldiers practiced marksmanship and their rebel yells enroute and at the camp only two miles from the Union camps. Still, they were able to achieve surprise just by attacking when Sherman and Grant were not suspecting an attack.

a. Follow-Up Question

What one event tended to blunt the surprise the morning of the attack?

Discussion

A nervous colonel from General Prentiss' divisions sent out a reconnaissance force about 3:30 a.m. to search the nearby woods. It was his forces that started the fight against General Hardee's advance skirmishers. This Colonel Peabody was able to send for reinforcements. The fighting must have at least alerted Prentiss' and Sherman's forces who were able to form battle lines in front of their camps.

b. Follow-Up Question

Speculate what might have happened if surprise would have been complete.

Discussion

Surely, Prentiss' and Sherman's divisions would have been quickly beaten back from their initial positions. I suspect the divisions of McClernand, W. H. L. Wallace and Hurlbut could have been attacked before being able to form adequate defenses. When Grant finally arrived at Pittsburg Landing, he might have found his entire army huddled against the river.

5. Lead-Off Question

By holding on to the Hornet's Nest with a small group of defenders, General Prentiss was able to demonstrate what principle of war?

Discussion

The primary illustration here would be the principle of economy of force. Starting out with 4,400 men, he settled into an ideal defense position along the sunken road. He stopped the entire offensive as Hurlbut supported him on his left and W. H. L. Wallace on his right. Ten separate Confederate attacks could not force him from that position from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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