

Union gunboats firing from the Tennessee River, creating havoc for Confederates attacking the Union left. The late Grady McWhiney's essay supports the long-held interpretation that Confederate General Beauregard would have won the battle had he not halted fighting to reorder his forces on the evening of the battle's first day. Charles Grear's well-presented chapter examines the battle from the personal perspective of ordinary Confederate participants and describes how the years following the battle changed perceptions. Brooks Simpson concludes the volume by evaluating how the battle influenced the relationship between Generals Grant and Sherman, two of the nineteenth century's most renowned leaders, in the subsequent years.

Despite the quality of the topics covered, this collection is not meant to offer comprehensive coverage of the battle. Those less familiar with what Grant regarded as one of the most complicated and misunderstood battles of the war may be better served to begin with works such as *Shiloh and the Western Campaign of 1862*, edited by Timothy Smith and Gary Joiner; *Shiloh: The Battle That Changed the Civil War*, by Larry Daniel; or *Shiloh — Bloody April*, by Wiley Sword. Those deeply versed in understanding the complex engagement, however, will find *The Shiloh Campaign* a well-presented complement to their understanding of the battle.

*Fields of Blood: The Prairie Grove Campaign*, by William L. Shea. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. x, 358 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00 cloth.

Reviewer Richard F. Kehrberg lives in Ames, Iowa. His research and writing have focused on U.S. military history.

On December 7, 1862, Union and Confederate forces fought a small but bloody battle on a wooded ridge in northwest Arkansas called Prairie Grove. The battle marked the culmination of a remarkable campaign, all the more remarkable since the Confederate cause in the Trans-Mississippi Theater seemed irrevocably lost in the spring of 1862. After the Battle of Pea Ridge in March, Union forces operated with impunity in the state's northern counties as the rest of Arkansas tottered on the brink of anarchy. Confederate fortunes rebounded dramatically, however, with the arrival of Thomas C. Hindman on May 31. Through a combination of administrative acumen, boundless energy, and ruthlessness, Hindman restored order in the troubled state and re-established a Confederate military presence north of the Arkansas River by August.

Hindman was anxious to do more than restore order and rebuild an army. He wanted to march into Missouri. Not only would a Confederate force in southwest Missouri gall the Federals and threaten Kansas, but it would also allow the Confederates to exploit the human and material resources of a new region and shield Arkansas and the Indian Territory from the Union Army. Hindman's Confederates marched north in early September, but after several frustrating weeks of marching, countermarching, and skirmishing, they found themselves back where they had started in early November. While sorting out the wreckage of his failed campaign, Hindman discerned an opportunity. The Union force facing Hindman consisted of three small divisions, one under Brigadier General James G. Blunt, a Kansas physician turned soldier, and two under Brigadier General Francis J. Herron, a former banker from Dubuque. Upon learning that the two Union forces were separated by some 120 miles, Hindman settled on an audacious plan to strike Blunt's exposed division. Hindman pushed his tired, ragged army north, but not fast enough. Blunt learned of Hindman's advance and called on Herron for aid. Herron responded by rapidly moving his men south, marching an average of 30 miles per day. Convinced that Hindman would strike Blunt first, Herron was surprised when his force stumbled onto the Confederates at Prairie Grove.

Hindman, who had planned to be the attacker, assumed a defensive position on the wooded slopes of Prairie Grove. Herron underestimated the force opposing him and launched an immediate attack. That action began a series of attacks and counterattacks that stretched over the course of the day without producing any lasting results. In the late afternoon, Blunt's division appeared on the field but could not dislodge the Confederates either. Neither side gained a significant advantage during the day's fighting, but after nightfall Hindman decided to retire his battered army and retreat. The Confederacy in the Trans-Mississippi Theater never recovered from Prairie Grove. Never again would the Confederacy seriously attempt to regain Missouri or threaten Kansas.

*Fields of Blood* presents a thoroughly researched and engagingly written narrative of the Prairie Grove campaign. William Shea's ability to illuminate the interconnections among strategy, logistics, and geography is especially noteworthy. Students of Iowa's Civil War contribution will find a good deal of interest in this volume. Both of Herron's divisions contained Iowa regiments, and their voices form an important part of Shea's story. They also performed important roles in the battle. The Nineteenth Iowa Infantry, for example, played a conspicuous part in Herron's first assault on Prairie Grove and suffered an ap-

pulling 55 percent casualty rate as a result — the highest of any regiment in the battle. *Fields of Blood* is an excellent study of an important but often overlooked campaign and is a welcome addition to the literature on the Trans-Mississippi Theater.

*The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783–1900*, by Robert Wooster. *Histories of the American Frontier*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009. xvi, 361 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer J. Thomas Murphy is associate professor of history at Bemidji State University. His dissertation (University of Illinois, 1993) was "Pistols Legacy: Sutlers, Post Traders, and the American Army, 1820–1895."

During congressional debates to determine army appropriations in 1878, Montana's territorial delegate, Martin Maginnis, spoke favorably of the U.S. Army's contribution in advancing the nation westward, while U.S. Representative Auburn L. Pridemore of Virginia thought otherwise. "It has been the tiller of the soil," countered the former Confederate soldier, "who stood with loaded gun in his own field who has made his way through the savage land" (274). Pridemore's argument bore the memory of a Yankee army ruling over the South during Reconstruction, but it reflected other long-standing values: the Revolutionary generation's discomfort with maintaining a large standing army, the Jacksonian desire for a limited government, and the American belief in self-reliance and individual opportunity. Such ideas minimized a federal role, and the dispute appeared time and again, yet as Robert Wooster makes clear, the army became the "government's most visible agent of empire" (xii). Militias and state-sponsored volunteers contributed to American expansion, fighting at Tippecanoe with William Henry Harrison in 1811 and following Alexander Doniphan into Mexico in 1847, but despite a parsimonious Congress and a tradition limiting the army's numbers, primary responsibility fell to regulars led by officers trained at West Point.

This imperial thesis is hardly new, having been established a generation ago by Robert G. Athearn, Francis Paul Prucha, and Robert Utley, but recent historians have continued to refine it, and this volume employs a remarkable depth of scholarship and primary sources to describe the army's role from the earliest days of the nation to the end of the nineteenth century. During that time, soldiers explored and mapped the West, built forts and roads, protected the borders and "participated in over eleven hundred combat operations against Indians" (273).