

THE BATTLE OF SHILOH

[Iowa has special interest in the battle of Shiloh for several reasons. It had more men in the battle, in proportion to population, than any other State. The Iowa regiments engaged (all infantry) were: Second, Third, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth—eleven in all. Besides these, there were three companies from Iowa (F, I, K) in the Twenty-fifth Missouri, which was the regiment that furnished the reconnoitering party sent out on Sunday morning, April 6th.

The Sixth Iowa Regiment claims the distinction of being the first regiment to disembark at Pittsburg Landing, and the Eighth claims the distinction of being the last regiment to retire from the line in the Hornets' Nest. Five Iowa regiments were in the Hornets' Nest and three of the number (Eighth, Twelfth, and Fourteenth) were captured. All of the other Iowa regiments were in the thick of the fight on Sunday, and each maintained the honor of the State.

Before the close of the war there were many promotions of both officers and men from among those engaged at Shiloh, and several attained civil distinction during and after the war. Major Wm. M. Stone (Third Regiment) and Lieutenant Buren R. Sherman (Thirteenth Regiment) served the State as Governors. Sherman served as Auditor of State three terms before becoming Governor. Major W. W. Belknap (Fifteenth Regiment) became Secretary of War, and Lieutenant David B. Henderson (Twelfth Regiment), after long service in the lower house of Congress, became Speaker. Many others engaged in the battle from Iowa served the State in the General Assembly, in Congress, and in other official stations of responsibility.—EDITOR.]

No apology is offered for the appearance of another paper on the Battle of Shiloh, for the reason that the last word to be said on the subject has not been said, and indeed will not have been said until the last serious misrepresentation, made through ignorance, prejudice, malice, or for any other reason, has been corrected. It is not in the thought of the writer that he will be able to contribute additional facts to the literature of the subject; but it is hoped that the facts may be so grouped and illustrated as to leave a clearer picture of the battle in the mind of the reader.

As far as the writer knows the movements of the battle on Sunday, April 6, 1862, have not heretofore been illus-

trated except by means of one general map, showing progressive movements of the battle lines throughout the day. Such a map can be little better than a puzzle-picture to the general reader.

The original map from which the tracings were made to illustrate the Battle of Shiloh was prepared under direction of the Shiloh National Military Park Commission, to accompany its account of the battle, entitled *The Battle of Shiloh and the Organizations Engaged*, compiled from official records by Major D. W. Reed, Historian and Secretary of the Commission. To insure accuracy in the original map, the field was carefully platted by the Commission's engineer, Mr. Atwell Thompson, and the camps and battle lines were located by Major D. W. Reed, after an exhaustive study of official documents, aided by the recollections of scores of officers and men engaged in the battle on the respective sides. The reader must remember, however, that the lines were never for a moment stationary, so that it would be a physical impossibility to represent them correctly at short intervals of time. The analysis here given of the general map published by the Commission, it is believed, will aid materially in understanding the battle.

Though not offering an apology for this paper, the writer is disposed to justify its appearance somewhat by referring briefly by way of introduction, to a few illustrative errors and misrepresentations sought to be corrected, pointing out some of the so-called histories and memoirs where they are to be found. Of course it is not to be presumed that these errors and misrepresentations were intentional: they are due mainly to two causes — to the "smart" newspaper correspondent, whose main object was sensation; and to the unreliable historian whose main weakness was indolence in searching for facts. Prejudice may in a few cases have contributed to the pollution of the historic stream.

Special acknowledgements are due from the writer to Major D. W. Reed, Secretary and Historian of the Shiloh National Military Park Commission, for valuable suggestions in the preparation of this paper. The writer is also under obligations to Lieutenant Wm. J. Hahn of Omaha, Nebraska, a member of the Twenty-fifth Missouri, who was of the Major Powell reconnoitering party, sent out by Colonel Peabody on Sunday morning, April 6th; and also to T. W. Holman of Rutledge, Missouri, who was a member of the Twenty-first Missouri Infantry and was with the regiment when it went out to reënforce the reconnoitering party and the pickets.

INTRODUCTION

One of the worst as it was one of the first of the sensational stories of the Battle of Shiloh put in historic form was the account by Horace Greeley in his *American Conflict*. The camp at Pittsburg Landing before the battle is likened to a Methodist campmeeting, and the Union army on Sunday morning is represented as a "bewildered, half-dressed, . . . helpless, coatless, musketless mob", upon which the enemy sprang "with the bayonet". This account has Prentiss's division "routed before it had time to form a line of battle;" and Sherman's division is "out of the fight by 8 o'clock".¹

J. S. C. Abbott in his story of the Battle of Shiloh as given in his two-volume *History of the Civil War*, gathered his material from the same sensational sources and he used it in the same sensational way as did Mr. Greeley.

A more pretentious work, which appeared much later, was Scribners' *History of the United States* in five volumes. This work appeared after original sources of information had become easily accessible; and yet in its account of the

¹ Greeley's *The American Conflict*, Vol. II, pp. 58-61.

Battle of Shiloh it is the sinner of sinners for untruthfulness. It is no exaggeration to say of the Scribners' account of the battle what General Beauregard is credited with having said of General Halleck's report to the Secretary of War at Washington as to the condition of the Confederate army after the evacuation of Corinth — "it contains more lies than lines".

Another of the sensational type, though of pretentious title, is Headley's *History of the Rebellion*. Headley represents the Union officers as still in bed, when the "inundation" came, and says that "the troops seizing their muskets as they could, fled like a herd of sheep". Unfortunately for the reputation of Mr. Headley as a historian, the facts are all against him — he allowed himself to be misled by the fiction-writers.

John Codman Ropes, who enjoys something of a reputation as a critical writer, in his recent *Story of the Civil War*, published by the Massachusetts Historical Society, shows plainly that he followed very closely the account as given by General Buell, in his *Shiloh Reviewed*; and he shows, also, a prejudiced judgment against Grant and in favor of Buell — whom he evidently admired. Mr. Ropes makes it appear that none of the divisions near the Landing were in line until after Sherman and Prentiss had fallen back from their first lines, about ten a. m. He leaves it to be inferred also that Buell had an entire division on the west side of the river and in the fight on Sunday night; and he figures that not more than five thousand of Grant's five divisions, which were engaged in the battle on Sunday, were in line at the close of the day.

John Fiske is another writer on Civil War subjects, and in his *Mississippi Valley in the Civil War* he describes the Battle of Shiloh, but not without some rather serious errors. For instance he attributes the "wait-for-Buell" policy to

Grant — it was due to his superior, General Halleck. He says that General McClellan was the ranking officer at Pittsburg Landing in General Grant's absence, which is not correct — General Sherman was the ranking officer. He makes no mention of the reconnoitering party that went out from Prentiss's division before daylight on Sunday morning, but says that "when the Confederates attacked in full force on Sunday morning, the Federals were in camp and not in line of battle." On the same page, however, he gives himself a flat contradiction by telling how Prentiss had formed line and advanced a quarter of a mile, where he received "the mighty rush of the Confederates"—and the time he fixes at about half past five o'clock, which is an error of fully two hours.

On one page he gives the strength of the Confederate army as 36,000, exclusive of cavalry, and on another page his "reckoning" is 30,000 on the same basis. He criticises General Johnston for giving so much attention to the divisions of Prentiss and Sherman, at the opening of the battle, when he should have massed heavily against Stuart, the extreme left of the Union line, forgetting, if he ever knew, that Prentiss and Sherman must be forced back before Stuart could be attacked. The plan suggested by Fiske would have exposed the Confederate flank to the two divisions of Prentiss and Sherman, which would have been a blunder. The corps organization of the Confederate army appears, by inference, to have been well maintained; whereas they began to commingle at the beginning of the battle, and the corps were practically broken up by ten o'clock.

Mr. Fiske is again in error in leaving the inference that an entire brigade of Nelson's division was in at the close of the fight on Sunday night. And still another error is the statement that three Confederate brigades participated in the last attack near the Landing. He gives the number of

guns in Grant's last line far below the facts, and then speculates upon what might have been if General Beauregard could have "put 6000 to 8000 fresh reserves into the fight against his weary antagonist", apparently never thinking of the converse of the speculation. Mr. Fiske appears to be particularly unfortunate in the handling of statistics. He makes it appear that Lew. Wallace brought 7000 men to Grant's right, and Nelson about the same number to his left, on Sunday night — an error of 4000 or more. If Mr. Fiske had trusted less to *Shiloh Reviewed* and more to official records, he would have made fewer mistakes.

Henry Villard, who was a newspaper correspondent with Buell's army, has written what he calls "Memoirs", and "in order to impart greater accuracy and perhaps some novelty", to his "sketch" of the Battle of Shiloh, he goes to Confederate reports for his information. His "sketch" abounds in errors, even to the misquoting of one of General Grant's dispatches, thus changing a negative to an affirmative statement.

As recently as 1895 a Brevet Brigadier General, U. S. V., Henry M. Cist, in his *Army of the Cumberland*, quotes approvingly from Comte de Paris's *History of the Civil War* as follows: "At the sight of the enemy's batteries advancing in good order, the soldiers that have been grouped together in haste, to give an air of support to Webster's batteries, became frightened, and scattered. It is about to be carried, when a new body of troops deploying in the rear of the guns received the Confederates with a fire that drives them back in disorder."² Mr. Cist quotes also from Whitelaw Reid's *Ohio in the War* as follows: "He [Buell] came into the action when, without him, all was lost. He redeemed the fortunes of the field, and justly won the title

² Cist's *The Army of the Cumberland*, pp. 74, 75.

of the "Hero of Pittsburg Landing".³ Of the second quotation it needs only to be said that its author was the newspaper correspondent who wrote the first sensational and untruthful account of the Battle of Shiloh. The other quotation may well pass for an Arabian Nights tale.

General Lew. Wallace, commanding the second division of Grant's army, having his camp at Crump's Landing six miles down the river from Pittsburg Landing, has left for us his *Autobiography*, which in many respects is an interesting work. But if it is to be judged by its account of the Battle of Shiloh, in which Wallace participated on the second day, the author's reputation as a writer of fiction will not suffer. General Wallace accepts the first stories as to the "complete surprise" of the camp and offers argument to prove the contention. Then he proceeds to upset his own argument by showing that Prentiss and Sherman had their divisions in line of battle before six o'clock, or before the Confederate lines began to move to the attack. He brings the advance of Buell's army on the field some three hours before it was actually there; has General W. H. L. Wallace mortally wounded about the same length of time before the incident occurred; has General Johnston killed in front of the Hornets' Nest. He credits the men in the Hornets' Nest with holding the position "for two or three hours", whereas it was "held" from about 9:30 a. m. to about 5:30 p. m. "against the choicest chivalry of the South, led by General Johnston himself", to quote General Wallace. In fact, General Johnston led no assault upon the Hornets' Nest, or upon any other position in the Union line. These are a few of many fictions in Wallace's *Autobiography*, where, of all places, the truth should be found.

Had it been true that the position at the Hornets' Nest

³ Cist's *The Army of the Cumberland*, p. 77.

was held "for two or three hours" only, Grant's center would have been broken while Nelson's division was still ten miles away, and about the hour when Wallace's division started on its fifteen mile march. In that event, the story of the Battle of Shiloh would have been a different story. Grant's army would, probably, have been defeated, and Buell's army then strung out over thirty miles of country road, might easily have suffered the same fate. Fortunately, General Wallace was writing fiction.

At the risk of tediousness one more writer on the Battle of Shiloh will be mentioned. General Buell, who participated in the battle of the second day, in a carefully prepared paper, entitled *Shiloh Reviewed*,⁴ takes the position of an advocate before a court and jury, stating what he expects to prove, then marshalling his facts — or fictions, as the case may be — to make good his contention. He opens his case with the following proposition: "At the moment near the close of the day when the remnant of the retrograding army was driven to refuge in the midst of its magazines, with the triumphant enemy at half-gun-shot distance, the advance division of a reënforcing army arrived . . . and took position under fire at the point of attack; the attacking force was checked, and the battle ceased for the day." The reader, not familiar with the facts, must necessarily draw two inferences from this statement: (1) that an entire division of Buell's army was "at the point of attack"; (2) that the presence of such a body of fresh troops decided the fate of the day. Both inferences are erroneous, as the facts will show.

On one point of some importance, General Buell flatly contradicts himself. In speaking of the attack near the Landing, Sunday night, he says, in *Shiloh Reviewed*, that

⁴ *The Century Magazine*, Vol. XXXI, p. 749.

the "fire of the gunboats was harmless". In his official report written just after the battle, he says that the "gunboats contributed very much to the result"—the repulse of the enemy.

Perhaps a perfectly fair and unprejudiced account of the Battle of Shiloh ought not to have been expected from the pen of General Buell. He had, or fancied that he had, grievances against both General Grant and General Halleck — and he was human.

THE BATTLE OF SHILOH NOT AN ISOLATED INCIDENT

The Battle of Shiloh was not an isolated incident: it was one of a series of incidents, more or less closely related, in which the Army of the Tennessee figured prominently and effectively, but with divided responsibilities. It is, therefore, proper to take into account conditions precedent to the battle before passing judgment upon the men and the commanders who happened to be present at the moment, and upon whom fell the immediate responsibilities, and who suffered for the shortcomings of others. The Army of the Tennessee was at Pittsburg Landing under the orders of an officer superior in rank to the officer in immediate command; and it was there for a definite purpose. If it did not accomplish the definite purpose, it may be answered, in extenuation at least, that it was not permitted to try — its hands were tied and it was ordered to "wait". It waited until compelled to fight for its own safety. It saved itself from defeat and, very probably, saved from destruction another army of equal strength.

It is of no consequence who first suggested the line of the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers as the weak point in the Confederate line between Columbus on the West and Bowling Green on the East. It would have been a reflection on military genius, if the suggestion had not come to several

persons at about the same time — so patent was the evidence. It is of some importance, however, to remember who made the first move to save the "weak point". Just seven months before the Battle of Shiloh (September 6, 1861), the first direct step was taken leading to that event.

On September 4, 1861, General Grant took command of the Cairo district with headquarters at Cairo, General Fremont being then department commander with headquarters at St. Louis. On the day after taking command of the district, General Grant learned of an expedition from Columbus to occupy Paducah at the mouth of the Tennessee. A force was at once prepared to anticipate the Confederate movement; a dispatch was then sent to headquarters that the force would move at a certain hour unless orders were received to the contrary. No order came back, and Paducah was occupied without firing a shot on the next morning much to the surprise of the inhabitants who were hourly expecting the Confederates then on the march. General Grant returned to Cairo on the same day, finding there the order permitting him to do what was already done. The same movement that saved the Tennessee saved also the Cumberland.

Except for this prompt action on the part of General Grant the mouths of these two rivers would surely have been strongly fortified; but, instead, the Confederate line was forced back a hundred miles, in its center, to Fort Henry on the Tennessee and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland (Map I).

Columbus, a few miles below Cairo, strongly fortified and garrisoned by the Confederates, was so situated that it might, unless threatened from Cairo and Paducah, throw troops either west into Missouri or east by rail to Bowling Green or to points within easy marching distance of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson as there might be need. As a

result of these conditions, there was activity in Grant's district, during the fall and winter months of 1861. The battle of Belmont (Nov. 7, 1861) was one of the "diversions" to keep the garrison at Columbus at home. In the following January, General Halleck having become department commander, expeditions were sent out from Cairo and Paducah to the rear of Columbus and up the west bank of the Tennessee — General C. F. Smith commanding the latter expedition. General Smith, having scouted as far toward Fort Henry as he thought advisable, went on board the gunboat Lexington "to have a look" at the Fort. The gunboat went within "about 2½ miles drawing a single shot from the enemy in response to four several shots fired at them." In his report (Jan. 22, 1862) to General Grant, General Smith said: "I think two iron-clad gunboats would make short work of Fort Henry."⁵

On the same day that General Smith reported on Fort Henry, General Grant was given "permission to visit headquarters" in response to a request made some time before — but he soon learned that advice and suggestions in regard to affairs in his district were not wanted, and he went back to his command. He ventured, however (Jan. 28th) to send the following to his superior: "With permission, I will take Fort Henry . . . and establish and hold a large camp there."⁶ Permission was granted on the 30th, and Grant was "off up the Tennessee" (February 2nd).

Except for this appeal for "permission" to take Fort Henry, backed by the advice of Flag-Officer Foote, commanding the gunboat flotilla, the expedition would have been delayed at least two weeks, giving that much more time for the Confederates to strengthen themselves. On

⁵ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, p. 561.

⁶ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, p. 121.

the day after the surrender of Fort Henry (February 6) Halleck telegraphed to Buell that he "had no idea of commencing the movement before the 15th or the 20th instant".⁷ And he was evidently very uneasy about the success of the movement, as appears from a dispatch sent to the General-in-Chief (McClellan), at Washington at the very moment when Foote's guns were pounding at the little mud fort. The dispatch was as follows: "If you can give me 10,000 more men, I will take Fort Henry, cut the enemy's line, and paralyze Columbus. Give me 25,000 and I will threaten Nashville so as to force the enemy to abandon Bowling Green without a battle."⁸ Before that dispatch was received in Washington the thing was accomplished by a gunboat bombardment of an hour and fifteen minutes at Fort Henry.

Notwithstanding the fact that the expedition against Fort Henry was undertaken before Halleck was ready for it and the fact that he had misgivings as to its success, he yet seems to have been jealous lest Buell might share in the honors in case of success. When Buell learned of the movement, which was undertaken without consultation with him, he telegraphed Halleck to know if "co-operation" on his part was "essential to success," to which Halleck replied: "Co-operation at present not essential."⁹ Buell was piqued at Halleck's reply, and telegraphed to the General-in-Chief: "I protest against such prompt proceedings, as though I had nothing to do but command 'Commence firing' when he starts off."¹⁰

This episode is mentioned only for the purpose of showing that there were personal complications between these

⁷ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, p. 593.

⁸ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, p. 587.

⁹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, pp. 574, 576.

¹⁰ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, p. 933.

three commanders that, possibly, had some bearing on the Battle of Shiloh. The affairs of the succeeding three weeks, after Fort Henry, did but complicate the complications, and upon General Grant fell the unfavorable results.

No person was more surprised than was General Halleck at the success of the expedition to Fort Henry, but he continued to appeal to the General-in-Chief for "more troops" while Grant was preparing to advance upon Fort Donelson and after the investment of that place: (February 8th) without more troops, "I cannot advance on Nashville"; (February 10th) "Do send me more troops. It is the crisis of the war in the West"; (February 14th) "Can't you spare some troops from the Potomac?"¹¹

Two days after the last appeal, Fort Donelson surrendered, and Clarksville and Nashville waited only to be "occupied". They were occupied, respectively, on the 21st and 25th, without opposition. Nashville was occupied by Nelson's division of Buell's army which was sent to reinforce Grant at Donelson; but, arriving too late, it was sent directly forward to Nashville by order of Grant, the latter following in person for the purpose of conferring with Buell — and this last move came near being the undoing of General Grant who mortally offended his superior by pushing the campaign too rapidly, arousing at the same time the jealousy of Buell by occupying Nashville just ahead of his [Buell's] army approaching from the North. General Grant was in "ahead of the hounds", at Nashville — that was his only offense.

FROM FORT DONELSON TO SHILOH

On the day that Nashville was occupied by the Union troops (February 25) the Confederates began the evacu-

¹¹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, pp. 594, 599, 612.

ation of Columbus, the last defense on the original line, and began at once to establish a new line along the Mobile and Ohio Railroad from Columbus southward to Corinth and from Memphis eastward through Corinth to Chattanooga on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, with General Beauregard in command, Corinth being the strategical point at the crossing of the two roads (Map I).

After the evacuation of Nashville the Confederates under General Johnston moved southward as rapidly as possible, striking the Memphis and Charleston road at Decatur, thence moving west to Corinth, the advance reaching that place March 18th. General Johnston reached Corinth on the 24th, assuming command of the combined Confederate forces on the 29th.

The commanders of the two Union armies, Halleck and Buell, after Nashville, did not fully agree as to the best plan of following up the advantages already gained. Buell thought, with the General-in-Chief (McClellan), that Chattanooga was of "next importance" after Nashville¹² and he prepared to follow Johnston south. Halleck thought that the line of the Tennessee River offered the opportunity to strike the enemy's center at or near Corinth¹³ and he urged Buell to join him in that movement, but without avail. A few days later, however, General Halleck secured what he had long desired, the consolidation of the two Departments with himself in command. Halleck urged his claims on two grounds: (1) that all of the armies of the West should be under one command, and (2) that the command should fall to him in recognition of the successful campaign against Fort Henry and Fort Donelson in his Department.¹⁴ The consolidation took place on March 11th, after which

¹² *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, p. 660.

¹³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 38.

¹⁴ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, p. 628.

date General Buell was subject to orders from St. Louis, as General Grant had been from the first. General Buell's advance southward from Nashville had reached Columbia on Duck River before the consolidation (March 10), but his headquarters were still at Nashville.

On the first of March it appears that General Halleck notified General Grant that his column would move "up the Tennessee", and that the main object would be "to destroy the railroad bridge over Bear Creek, near Eastport . . . and also the connections at Corinth, Jackson, and Humboldt." He was instructed to "Avoid any general engagement with strong forces . . . better . . . retreat than risk a general battle".¹⁵ Two days later, General Halleck sent to the General-in-Chief the complaint against General Grant, which resulted in the latter's practical suspension from active command, Halleck suggesting at the same time that General C. F. Smith command the expedition up the Tennessee. In response to Halleck's complaint, he was authorized to put General Grant under arrest, "if the good of the service requires it", to which Halleck replied: "I do not deem it advisable to arrest him at present".¹⁶ On the fourth of March, Halleck dispatched to Grant: "You will place Maj. Gen. C. F. Smith in command of expedition and remain yourself at Fort Henry." To this, Grant replied, on the next day: "Troops will be sent, under command of Major-General Smith, as directed. I had prepared a different plan, intending General Smith to command the forces which will go to Paris and Humboldt, while I would command the expedition upon Eastport, Corinth, and Jackson in person." He then assures General Halleck that instructions will be carried out "to the very best" of his ability.¹⁷

¹⁵ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, p. 674.

¹⁶ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. VII, pp. 680, 682.

¹⁷ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 3-5.

Under this order of his superior, General Grant remained at Fort Henry, acting in the capacity of a forwarding-officer, until the 17th of the month — the most important two weeks between the date of the order to proceed up the Tennessee and the 6th of April following, when the camp was attacked at Pittsburg Landing. The expedition was planned without consultation with General Grant, commander of the district, and it was directed, except in minor details, from headquarters in St. Louis both before and after March 17th — the date of General Grant's restoration to active command of the army in the field.

The expedition left Fort Henry on March 9th under command of General Smith, with full authority from the Department commander to select the place of landing.¹⁸ General Smith established headquarters at Savannah, on the east bank of the river, but sent one division (General Lew. Wallace) five miles farther up to Crump's Landing on the west bank of the river, where his division went into camp on the 12th. On the 13th Wallace sent an expedition west about fifteen miles to the Mobile and Ohio Railway near Bethel station, where about a half-mile of trestle work was destroyed.¹⁹ The damage to the road was slight, however, as repairs were soon made. (Map I.)

On the 14th General Smith reported that he had "not been able to get anything like the desired information as to the strength of the enemy, but it seems to be quoted at 50,000 to 60,000 from Jackson through Corinth and farther east." It was this information that induced General Smith "not to attempt to cut the communication at that place, [Corinth] as that would inevitably lead to a collision in numbers" that he was "ordered to avoid".²⁰ Immediately

¹⁸ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 21-26.

¹⁹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, pp. 9, 10.

²⁰ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 8.

after this report was made, General Sherman was ordered with his division to a point some distance above Pittsburg Landing, with instructions to cut the Memphis and Charleston road, if possible, at some point east of Corinth. The attempt failed on account of high water and Sherman dropped back to Pittsburg Landing, where he met Hurlbut's division sent up by General Smith as support in case of need. The two divisions left the boats at Pittsburg Landing and went into camp. General Sherman sent out a strong reconnoitering force toward Corinth, and on the 17th he reported to General Smith: "I am satisfied we cannot reach the Memphis and Charleston Road without a considerable engagement, which is prohibited by General Halleck's instructions, so that I will be governed by your orders of yesterday to occupy Pittsburg strongly."²¹

General Lew. Wallace, whose division was at Crump's Landing at this time, says in his *Autobiography* that if General Smith had received the order from Halleck that he expected, to move directly on Corinth, "there had been no battle of Shiloh." And again he says that by the time General Grant was restored to command, the opportunity of advancing on Corinth was "going, if not already gone."²²

General Grant was restored to active command on March 17th, and going at once to General Smith's headquarters at Savannah he reported on the 18th the distribution of troops as he found it—three divisions on the west side of the Tennessee, Sherman and Hurlbut at Pittsburg Landing, and Lew. Wallace at Crump's Landing; at Savannah, on the east side of the river was McClernand's division; and on transports on the river, waiting for orders, were several regiments which were ordered to Pittsburg Land-

²¹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 25.

²² Wallace's *Autobiography*, Vol. I, pp. 446, 451.

ing. It is important to remember this distribution of the army as General Grant found it, under the sanction if not the direct order of the Department commander. That General Halleck still believed it possible to cut the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, according to his original plan, is shown by a dispatch to General Grant (March 18th) based on a rumor to the effect that the enemy had moved from Corinth to attack the line of the Tennessee below Savannah, that is, to attack Grant's communications. "If so," says General Halleck, "General Smith should immediately destroy railroad connection at Corinth."²³ To this General Grant replied on the 19th: "Immediate preparations will be made to execute your order. I will go in person."²⁴ Again, on the next day in a lengthy dispatch to Halleck's Adjutant General, Grant repeated his intention to go "in person" with the expedition "should no orders received hereafter prevent it"—adding that he would "take no risk under the instructions" which he already had; that if a battle seemed to be inevitable, he could "make a movement upon some other point of the railroad and thus save the demoralizing effect of a retreat."²⁵

General Halleck evidently thought there was special significance in Grant's intention to "go in person" with the expedition toward Corinth—he knew something would be doing—so, on the 20th Halleck dispatched: "keep your forces together until you connect with General Buell Don't let the enemy draw you into an engagement now."²⁶

Before this last dispatch was received, orders were issued by General Grant to all division commanders to hold themselves ready to march at a moment's notice, with three days'

²³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 46.

²⁴ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 49.

²⁵ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 51.

²⁶ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 50-51.

rations in haversacks and seven days' rations in wagons. On receiving the "wait" order, Grant dispatched again (March 21): "Corinth cannot be taken without meeting a large force, say 30,000. A general engagement would be inevitable; therefore I will wait a few days for further instructions."²⁷ Evidently General Grant was restive and anxious, believing that precious time was going to waste, as appears from what he wrote to General Smith: "the sooner we attack the easier will be the task"²⁸

As far as the records show, no orders later than March 20th were received by General Grant; and so the army within striking distance of the enemy was in a state of suspended animation for nearly three weeks. The army was expected to cut the Memphis and Charleston road, but it was not permitted to fight for the purpose; it must do it without disturbing the enemy.

It is important to remember in this connection that the territory west of the Tennessee River, from near its mouth southward to Pittsburg Landing and west to the Mississippi, was the enemy's country both in sentiment and by strong military occupation, and so the expedition under General Smith up the Tennessee was moving fully two hundred miles from its base of supplies, wholly dependent upon the river. This territory was well supplied with railroads under control of the enemy, by means of which, if so disposed, he might throw a strong force on short notice against General Smith's communications. General Grant evidently had this danger in mind when replying to General Halleck's order sending the expedition up the river, as already quoted. But in this as in other things, General Grant's advice was not sought and his suggestions were not heeded. The conditions at Pittsburg Landing were

²⁷ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 55.

²⁸ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 62.

not of his making — they were accepted as they were found, even after three requests to be relieved of command in the Department, because of the strained relations between his superior and himself.²⁹

GENERAL BUELL'S MOVEMENTS

In pursuance of his plan after Nashville, to follow the enemy south, on March 10th, General Buell reported his advance at Columbia, Tennessee, at the crossing of Duck River.³⁰ The consolidation of the two Departments occurred on the 11th, and on the 13th, General Halleck, as if in some degree appreciating General Buell's embarrassment, wrote him as follows: "The new arrangement of departments will not interfere with your command. You will continue in command of the same army and district of country as heretofore, so far as I am concerned."³¹ Definite orders to General Buell soon followed the consolidation; March 16th: "Move your forces by land to the Tennessee Grant's army is concentrating at Savannah." Again on March 20th: "important that you communicate with General Smith as soon as possible." And again on March 29th: "You will concentrate all your available troops at Savannah, or Pittsburg, 12 miles above."³²

As already stated, General Buell had one division at Columbia — about forty miles on the road to Savannah — when the order came to join Grant. The remainder of the army moved promptly, but was detained at the crossing of Duck River in building a bridge until the 30th, though one division (Nelson's) waded the river on the 29th.

²⁹ The several requests to be relieved of command in Halleck's department bear date of March 7, 9, and 11.—*War of the Rebellion: Official Records, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 15, 21, 30.*

³⁰ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 25.*

³¹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 33.*

³² *War of the Rebellion: Official Records, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 42, 51, 77.*

Naturally General Grant, in front of a rapidly concentrating army under General Johnston and General Beauregard, was anxious to know of General Buell's movements, and so, two days after assuming active command, two couriers were started from Savannah for Buell's camp which was reached on the 23d with this dispatch from Grant: "I am massing troops at Pittsburg, Tennessee. There is every reason to suppose that the rebels have a large force at Corinth, Miss., and many at other points on the road toward Decatur."³³ Thus General Buell had positive knowledge both from General Halleck and General Grant that the latter was "massing troops" at Pittsburg Landing — and this information was in possession of General Buell a full week before his army was able to cross Duck River (about 90 miles away) and two weeks before the battle. This point is dwelt upon for the reason that certain writers have erroneously claimed that General Buell had not been informed of General Grant's position on the west bank of the Tennessee and hence did not press his march.

After wading Duck River as stated, General Nelson's division went into camp for the night, and took up the march next morning (the 30th) reaching Savannah about noon, April 5th, having marched an average of twelve miles a day.³⁴ General Buell arrived in Savannah "about sundown", on the same day, but he did not make his presence known, nor was his presence known to General Grant, when the latter, with his staff, took boat next morning for the battle field after an "early breakfast" left unfinished.

It need not be matter of surprise that General Buell

³³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 47.

³⁴ The following is the itinerary of General Nelson's march from Columbia, as given by Colonel Ammen, commanding the advance brigade: March 30, 4 miles; March 31, 10 miles; April 1, 14 miles; April 2, 16 miles; April 3, 15 miles; April 4, 10½ miles; April 5, 9½ miles.—Ammen's Diary in *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 330.

should be reluctant to join his army of about equal strength and independent in command with the army on the Tennessee. It was Buell's wish to strike the Tennessee higher up and conduct a campaign of his own. With this in mind he suggested to General Halleck that he [Buell] be permitted to halt and go into camp about thirty miles east of Savannah, at Waynesboro. To this suggestion General Halleck replied on the 5th: "You are right about concentrating at Waynesborough. Future movements must depend upon those of the enemy."³⁵ General Buell issued orders to "concentrate", but fortunately his advance had passed the point designated before the orders were delivered, and the march continued. Had it been otherwise the reënforcing army would have been forty miles away, instead of its advance division being within ten miles, when the battle began.

It may be asked: Why did not General Buell make his presence in Savannah known to General Grant promptly on arrival? Perhaps a perfectly just answer cannot be given in view of the fact that the former was not required to "report" to the latter as a subordinate to a superior — the one was to join the other and wait for orders from a higher source than either. There was but one contingency under which any part of General Buell's army could come under General Grant's orders — an attack upon the latter. General Halleck's instructions to General Grant were (April 5th): "You will act in concert, but he [Buell] will exercise his separate command, unless the enemy should attack you. In that case you are authorized to take the general command."³⁶ The contingency arose on the morning of the 6th.

³⁵ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 94, 95.

³⁶ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 94.

BEFORE THE BATTLE

From the date of General Halleck's "wait" order to the date of the battle — that is from March 20th to April 6th — there were fifteen full days, during which time this positive order was in force: "My instructions not to advance must be obeyed." Nothing, therefore, remained but to watch the enemy and dodge him in case he offered battle in any considerable force. There was scarcely a day in that waiting time in which there was not reconnoitering, resulting in several light encounters. Colonel Buckland, commanding the fourth brigade of General Sherman's division, has given a good account of the condition of things at the front during the three or four days before the battle in a paper read before the Society of the Army of the Tennessee in 1881 and published in the Proceedings of the Society.³⁷

On Thursday, April 3d, three days before the battle and the day on which the Confederates marched from Corinth and surrounding camps, Colonel Buckland under orders of the division commander reconnoitered four or five miles toward Corinth, finding the enemy in such force as to deter him from attack, in view of the order to "fall back" rather than risk bringing on a general engagement. The brigade marched back without an encounter. On the next day the picket line was attacked in front of Buckland's brigade, and a picket post was captured, consisting of a Lieutenant and seven men. Colonel Buckland went out with a regiment to investigate and had two of his companies surrounded by Confederate cavalry, which was in turn surprised and routed by the reinforcements sent to the relief of the two companies. Just as the enemy appeared to be forming for a counter attack on Buckland, the Fifth Ohio cavalry of Sherman's division came up, attacked and routed

³⁷ *Proceedings of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee*, Vol. XIV-XVI, p. 71.

the enemy, capturing several prisoners. This affair developed the presence of the enemy in considerable force — infantry, cavalry, and artillery. When Colonel Buckland reached the picket line, on his return to camp, he found General Sherman with several regiments awaiting him and wanting to know, with a show of displeasure, what he had been doing out in front. After hearing Colonel Buckland's account of the matter, he was ordered back to camp with his men, General Sherman accompanying the order with the remark that he might have brought on a general engagement, which is to be understood as a mild reprimand.

So particular was General Sherman to avoid censure that he required Colonel Buckland to make a written report of the incident which report was sent to General Grant.

Colonel Buckland further says that he was along the picket line several times on Saturday, the day before the battle, and saw the enemy at several points, and that the pickets reported activity near the lines. Other officers made similar observations. "It was the belief of all", says Colonel Buckland, "that the enemy intended to attack us, either during the night or early in the morning".³⁸ This feeling was so strong that regimental officers were instructed to have their commands in readiness for attack — the picket line was strengthened and a line of sentries was established from the picket line back to camp.

Similar evidence as to the activity of the enemy on Saturday the 5th is furnished by Captain I. P. Rumsey, a staff officer of General W. H. L. Wallace, who was riding outside the lines on that day. On returning to camp Captain Rumsey reported to Colonel Dickey, 4th Illinois cavalry, that he had seen a considerable body of Confederate cavalry. The two officers going to General Sherman's headquarters, re-

³⁸ *Proceedings of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee*, Vol. XIV-XVI, p. 77.

ported the facts, to which General Sherman replied: "I know they are out there, but our hands are tied; we can't do a thing." Colonel Dickey then asked permission to take his regiment out to investigate, receiving for reply: "Dickey, if you were to go out there with your regiment you would bring on a battle in less than an hour, and we have positive orders not to be drawn into a battle until Buell comes."³⁹

Colonel McPherson, Halleck's chief engineer, who was camping with the second division (W. H. L. Wallace) fully corroborates the above statements, by saying: "It was well known the enemy was approaching our lines".⁴⁰

Apprehension of an early attack upon the camp prevailed among the subordinate officers of General Prentiss's division, as well as among those of General Sherman's division, and similar orders were given to companies and regiments to be prepared for a night or an early morning attack. And it seems now to be well settled that the reconnoitering party sent out from Prentiss's division before daylight on Sunday morning was sent out by Colonel Peabody of the 25th Missouri, commanding the first brigade of the division, and without the knowledge of General Prentiss.

In the history of the 25th Missouri, edited and compiled by Dr. W. A. Neal, Assistant Surgeon of the regiment, and published in 1889, appears a detailed account of the action of Colonel Peabody on the eve of the battle, as related by Lieutenant James M. Newhard, at the time Orderly Sergeant of Company E, 25th Missouri, one of the companies in the reconnoitering party. It is related that Colonel Peabody urged upon General Prentiss on Saturday the 5th

³⁹ Quoted by Major D. W. Reed in a paper published in the *Proceedings of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 216.

⁴⁰ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 181.

that an attack was very probable and that preparation ought to be made accordingly. As nothing was done except to strengthen pickets and guards Colonel Peabody, under the influence of a premonition that an attack would be made early in the morning and that he would not survive the battle, decided to take upon himself the responsibility of sending out a party to reconnoiter. So Major Powell, an officer of the Regular Army and Field Officer of the Day was ordered to take three companies of the 25th Missouri, start at about 3 o'clock in the morning, and march until he found the enemy. The companies constituting the party were B, H, and E, of the 25th Missouri. How and where the enemy was found will be related farther on.

Some persons will have doubts, probably, in regard to the story of Colonel Peabody's premonitions of attack, and death in battle, but there can be no doubt about the attack, or about the death of Colonel Peabody, within a few minutes after the main battle began. Major Powell was also killed early in the battle, and so the two principal actors in the first scene of the drama passed quickly off the stage, but not until after the chief of the two was severely reprimanded, at the head of his brigade in line and waiting for orders. The following letter, to a nephew of Colonel Peabody, here given by permission, tells the story.

333 Highland Av.
SOMERVILLE, MASS. Feby. 27th 1902

MR. F. E. PEABODY,
Box 7 Boston.

Dear Sir:

Referring to our conversation concerning the Battle of Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, April 6 & 7, 1862, I have to state that: Everett Peabody, Colonel of the 25th Mo. Vol. Inft., was in command of the first Brigade 6th Division and I was senior Captain of the regiment.

At early morn before breakfast the line of Battle was formed,

with the right of Brigade resting on the right of our regimental color line. My company was on the right of Brigade. A few minutes after the line was formed, General Prentiss rode up near Colonel Peabody, who was mounted and in front of my company, about the center of the first platoon and said to him, "Colonel Peabody, I hold you responsible for bringing on this fight." Saluting, Colonel Peabody said: "If I brought on the fight I am able to lead the van." General Prentiss ordered him to take his best regiment the next words I heard were: "25th Missouri, forward."

Signed

Yours respectfully,

F. C. NICHOLS,

Captain U. S. Army, Retired;
formerly Major & Capt. 25th Mo.

Vol. Inf. War of '61 & 5.

This letter by Capt. Nichols makes clear and positive two important points: (1) that General Prentiss, like General Sherman, was impressed with the idea that, under General Halleck's orders the enemy was to be avoided rather than sought out, and he reprimanded his brigade commander for doing, irregularly, the very thing that saved the army from the "surprise" about which so many untruths have been told; (2) the letter makes it clear that Prentiss's division was neither in bed nor at breakfast, when the attack came — it was in line "before breakfast", and the enemy was received with a hot fire, as will appear.

Prentiss's reprimand of Colonel Peabody was, doubtless, prompted by the same sense of responsibility as was that administered by General Sherman to Colonel Buckland, already mentioned. It had been "ground into" each division commander, so to speak, that, "in no case" were they "to be drawn into an engagement."

There was another incident in the activities immediately preceding the battle, more important than anything yet mentioned, which, however, was not revealed, until forty

years later — an incident which, had it been known when and by whom it should have been known, the Battle of Shiloh would have had a different story to tell. We now know, though the knowledge is comparatively recent but entirely reliable, that General Lew. Wallace, commanding the second division of the army at Crump's Landing, had positive information of the movement of the Confederate army to attack Grant on the very day that the movement began — information brought directly to him by one trusted scout and confirmed by a second. During two full days and three nights ("for three days and nights," to quote his language) he "simmers" this all-important information in his mind, trying to determine how he could best reënforce the comrades beyond Snake Creek in case of need.

General Wallace tells in his *Autobiography* how and when the information came to him of the movement of the Confederate army from Corinth as follows:

"About as the sun set, Thursday, the 4th [3d], Bell the scout came into my tent, evidently the worse for a hard ride, and said, abruptly, 'I bring you news, sir. . . . The whole rebel army is on the way up from Corinth. . . . They set out this morning early. By this time they are all on the road . . . batteries and all.' This important information was confirmed by another scout (Carpenter): 'Johnston's cut loose and is making for Pittsburg.'"⁴¹

General Wallace says that he sent this information by his orderly, on the same evening to Pittsburg Landing, with instructions in case Grant was not found to leave the dispatch with the postmaster, to be delivered next morning. General Wallace's excuse for not sending a proper officer with positive orders to find Grant, seems almost too puerile to be credited — he did not want to appear "officious". The dispatch never reached its proper destination, and the

⁴¹ Wallace's *Autobiography*, Vol. I, pp. 454-456.

secret was in the keeping of General Wallace until he disclosed it in his *Autobiography*. For his own reputation, it might better have died with him. A dispatch boat was at all times at Wallace's headquarters, subject to his orders, and there should have been no difficulty in the way of finding General Grant within two hours, whether at the Landing above or Savannah below. It is worth remembering in this connection that the orderly sent with this dispatch went by the river road and over Snake Creek bridge which had been repaired on that very day under direction of Colonel McPherson, Halleck's chief engineer. General Wallace pleaded ignorance of this road, two days later, in excusing himself for marching his division over the wrong road.

THE UNION ARMY AND THE FIELD

To understand and properly appreciate the difficulties under which the Battle of Shiloh was fought on the Union side, the composition of the Army and the topography of the field must both be considered. The Army of the Tennessee as it was camped in the woods above Pittsburg Landing on Sunday morning, April 6, 1862, was never in a camp of organization and instruction, as an Army—it grew by accretion, beginning at Fort Donelson in the middle of February preceding. Some of the regiments that stormed the enemy's works at Donelson dropped into line for the first time under fire, and only a few hours before the assault was made. In like manner new and untrained regiments and batteries came, one by one, to swell the ranks at Shiloh, even after the roar of battle sounded through the woods, taking their assigned places under fire. The division (Prentiss's 6th) from which the reconnoitering party went out before daylight on Sunday morning to "surprise" the enemy was the newest of the new, having but

two organized brigades — though there was enough “raw material” assigned to the division for a third brigade, not all on the ground, however, when the battle began. Attention is called to these facts for the reason that they should be taken into account in passing judgment upon the Battle of Shiloh.

Besides the lack of organization and drill of the army the character of the field upon which the battle was fought should be considered. It has been said with much truth that a clear understanding of the Battle of Shiloh cannot be had without studying the movements on the ground. A written description can convey only a very general idea of the plateau upon which the battle was fought; hence a map showing the principal streams, roads, open fields, etc., is added to aid the study of the positions and movements. (Map II.)

The plateau, rising eighty to one hundred feet above the Tennessee on the east, was surrounded by almost impassable barriers on all sides — except an opening to the southwest, two and a half to three miles in width. The plateau sheds its waters west, north, and east — west and northwest into Owl Creek; north into Snake Creek; and east into the Tennessee. The creeks were effectually guarded by swampy margins and heavy timber, or by a combination of the three — timber, under-brush, and swamp. They admitted of no crossing except by bridges, of which there was one on each of the streams leading to and from the battle field. The Tennessee could be crossed only by boat, as the army had never been supplied with pontoons.

This plateau, bordered as described, was cut into numerous gullies and ravines by small spring-branches, running to all points of the compass in finding their tortuous ways to the larger streams. Most of these spring-branches ran through marshy ground — impassable in the early spring

except where bridged. Some of the ravines were deep, miry, and so densely choked with briars and brambles as to defy invasion by anything much larger than a rabbit. The hillsides and the ridges were covered with timber and underbrush, except where small farms were under cultivation. There was not an elevation anywhere on the three miles square from which a general view could be had. Wide flanking movements were impossible to either army, and cavalry was practically useless. The Landing itself was a mud bank at the foot of a steep bluff, a single road winding around the bluff and up the hillside to higher ground. At a distance of about a half-mile from the Landing the road forked and a little further on struck the Hamburg and Savannah road, running nearly parallel with the river. Still further on the Corinth road crossed the Hamburg and Purdy road and struck the Bark Road, one branch three miles out and the other branch four miles out. Besides these main roads shown on the map, there were numerous farm roads winding around on the ridges, and the needs of the army made many new roads — all were deep in mud made of the most tenacious clay, so that the unloading of boats and the hauling to camp was a slow and laborious process for both man and mule.

Had John Codman Ropes understood the topography and other conditions of the field of Shiloh, he would hardly have ventured to criticise General Johnston for making a front attack upon the commands of Hurlbut, Prentiss, and Wallace, and for failing to force his way along the Hamburg and Savannah road on the Union left at an earlier hour. General Johnston had no choice but to make a front attack and he did his best to force his way along the Hamburg and Savannah Road, toward the Landing at the earliest possible hour. Why and how he failed to accomplish his main object, before the close of the day, will appear

later. The ground between the Hamburg and Savannah Road and the river was much broken — so much so that there were but two or three cultivated fields on that part of the plateau.

THE CONFEDERATE ARMY AND ITS OBJECTIVE

As already stated, after the surrender of Fort Donelson and the evacuation of Nashville General Johnston's army fell back as rapidly as possible southward to the line of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad with a view to joining General Beauregard, who commanded the territory west of the Tennessee River with headquarters at Corinth. By the last week in March there had been concentrated at Corinth and in the vicinity an army of 40,000 effective men, and General Johnston took command on the 29th of March with General Beauregard second in command. The object to be accomplished by this army was to attack and defeat Grant's army before the arrival of Buell, then on the march from Nashville with 37,000 men, following up this anticipated success with the defeat of Buell, thus opening the way back to Nashville so recently evacuated. The movement from Corinth and surrounding camps to attack Grant began in the early morning of April 3d, with a view to making the attack early on the 5th. Bad weather and bad roads delayed the attack twenty-four hours — to Sunday morning, April 6th. How the expected "surprise" of Grant's army was anticipated will now be told.

THE BATTLE

It is not the purpose to describe in detail the movements of the battle throughout the two days, but only to touch upon salient features. One of the salient features, and not the least important, is that of the action of the reconnoitering party heretofore referred to as having been sent out

before daylight on Sunday morning from Prentiss's division. General Prentiss in his official report makes no mention of the Powell party, but he says that "at 3 o'clock Col. David Moore, Twenty-first Missouri, with five companies of his infantry regiment, proceeded to the front, and at break of day the advance pickets were driven in".⁴²

Colonel Moore, in his official report, says that he was ordered out by Colonel Peabody, commanding the First Brigade, "at about 6 o'clock", to support the picket guard which "had been attacked and driven in". It appears to be certain, therefore, that both the reconnoitering party under Major Powell and the support under Colonel Moore were ordered out by Colonel Peabody without consulting the division commander; hence the reprimand above quoted — heard and remembered by many others besides Captain Nichols. Colonel Moore's command was a reënforcing not a reconnoitering party.

The line of march of the Powell party may be traced on the map (No. II) along the road passing the camp of the 25th Missouri, past the southeast corner of Rhea Field and the north side of Seay Field, passing the picket line at the forks of the road and striking the corner of Fraley Field a few rods farther on. From this point the videttes of the Confederate picket, under Major Hardcastle of Hardee's corps were encountered. The videttes fired upon the advancing party and retired to the picket line at the southwest corner of Fraley Field. The fight between the picket post and Powell's party began at once, though it was still quite dark — "too dark to see, in the timber and underbrush", so the firing at first was at random. As there never was an official report made of the part taken by the Powell reconnoitering party, as both the officer ordering it out and

⁴² *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 278.

the officer commanding it were killed early in the main battle, we must rely upon the report of the officer commanding the Confederate picket at Fraley Field for the incidents of that encounter. Major Harcastle says the firing began "about dawn" (at 4:55 in fact), and he says: "We fought the enemy an hour or more without giving an inch". "At about 6:30" he saw the brigade formed behind him and "fell back". The casualties in Major Harcastle's command were four killed and nineteen wounded.⁴³ The casualties in the Powell party were never certainly known.

This stubborn picket fight seems to have been something of a "surprise" to at least one of the Confederate generals. General Bragg, commanding the second line of attack, says in his official report that "the enemy did not give us time to discuss the question of attack, for soon after dawn he commenced a rapid musketry fire on our pickets."⁴⁴ Major Harcastle, commanding this picket line, says: "The enemy opened a heavy fire on us at a distance of about two hundred yards".⁴⁵ That the Confederate line was not ready to move forward at once when the firing began appears from Major Harcastle's official report. He says: "At about 6:30 a. m. I saw the brigade formed in my rear and fell back."⁴⁶ So there was a full hour and a half elapsed between the beginning of the firing and the movement forward. The battle front, two and a half to three miles in extent with a curtain of skirmishers, advanced to the attack. Major Powell's party and the Union pickets that joined him fell slowly back, carrying their dead and wounded until they met Colonel Moore with five companies of his regiment (21st Missouri). Colonel Moore taking command, sent back for

⁴³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 603.

⁴⁴ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 464.

⁴⁵ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 603.

⁴⁶ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 603.

the other five companies of his regiment, under Lieutenant Colonel Woodyard. The force now consisted of the 21st Missouri, three companies of the 25th Missouri, four companies of the 16th Wisconsin, and two companies of the 12th Michigan — all infantry. This force formed in Seay Field and advanced to a point near the northwest corner of the field, where the Confederate skirmishers were encountered, the 8th and 9th Arkansas. (Map III.) There was a sharp fight at this point lasting about thirty minutes, in which Colonel Moore was severely wounded. Lieutenant Mann of the same regiment was wounded, and Captain Saxe (16th Wisconsin) was killed — the first Union officer killed in the battle of Shiloh.

As the Confederates advanced, the little Union force moved slowly back across Shiloh Branch, forming again at a point about two hundred yards from the southeast corner of Rhea Field, where the remainder of Peabody's brigade was in line. This position was held from a half hour to an hour against two brigades (Shaver's and Wood's). While falling back in line from this point Major King (21st Missouri) was mortally wounded. Meantime, General Prentiss had formed the remainder of his division (Miller's brigade) and had advanced about eighty rods from the front of his camp to the south side of Spain Field (Map III), where he was joined by Peabody's brigade, Powell's party, and the pickets. The division, now consisting of seven regiments and two batteries, was here attacked by four brigades — Wood, Shaver, Gladden, and Chalmers — comprising twenty regiments and three batteries. Against this tremendous odds the position was held for about thirty minutes, when the division fell back to the line of the camp where another stand of about thirty minutes was made, the division finally retiring at about nine o'clock — more than

five hours after the reconnoitering party marched out. Among the casualties on the Union side in front of Prentiss's division were Colonel Peabody and Major Powell, killed; and on the Confederate side General Gladden was mortally wounded.

There is ample testimony in the official reports of Confederate officers to show that the resistance met by their several commands in the slow advance from the picket line had none of the features of a sham battle. There were many casualties on both sides — how many was never certainly known. There was no bayoneting of Union men on their beds in their tents or elsewhere. Indeed there was never any foundation for such stories except in the imagination of sensational newspaper correspondents. And it is further to be stated that at the time when the lines came in collision at the front — about 8 o'clock — every regiment in the camp, three miles in extent, was in line waiting orders or was marching toward the sound of battle.

A word of explanation should here be made in regard to General Sherman's (5th) division. This division was the first to go into camp at Pittsburg Landing, and the necessities of the situation required it to cover three important approaches from the back country to the Landing; namely, the main Corinth road; a bridge on the Hamburg and Purdy road over Owl Creek; and a ford over Lick Creek near its mouth which accommodated travel from Hamburg both to Purdy and Savannah. The crossing of Owl Creek was about three miles west of the Landing, and the crossing of Lick Creek was about the same distance to the south of the Landing; while the Corinth road ran southwest nearly midway between the two crossings. General Sherman camped three brigades (1st, 3d, and 4th) to occupy the Corinth road at Shiloh meeting-house, thus covering Owl Creek bridge. The other brigade (Stuart's) camping

to cover Lick Creek crossing, was separated from the division by a little more than one mile, and it remained separated throughout the first day's battle, acting independently of the orders of the division commander. The space between the two parts of Sherman's division was later occupied by General Prentiss's (6th) division formed of new regiments as they arrived. When reference is hereafter made to Sherman's division, in the action of Sunday, it is to be understood that Stuart's brigade is not included for the reasons explained.

Still another explanation is needed. When General Sherman first went into camp special attention was paid to the selection of camping sites convenient to good water. By consulting the map it will be seen that three brigades of this division were camped somewhat irregularly, the left brigade being out of line with the other brigades and also out of line in itself. As a consequence when line of battle was formed on Sunday morning it was not a prolonged line, the left of Hildebrand's brigade being well forward and in an open field where it was peculiarly exposed to the force of the first onset to which it quickly yielded as will be seen.

At a little after seven o'clock, and after line of battle had been formed, General Sherman and staff rode to the left of his division in Rhea Field for a better view to the front; and while there in front of the 53d Ohio regiment (Col. Appler) the Confederate skirmishers opened fire from the brush across Shiloh Branch, killing the general's orderly. At about eight o'clock, looking off to the "left front", there were seen "the glistening bayonets of masses of infantry", and then, for the first time, General Sherman was convinced that "the enemy designed a determined attack."⁴⁷ A few minutes later the Confederate advance

⁴⁷ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 294.

struck Sherman's left under Colonel Hildebrand, and Prentiss's right under Colonel Peabody. How Prentiss's division met the attack has already been stated. How Sherman's division met it will now be shown.

The 53d Ohio, exposed as has been explained, and commanded, unfortunately, by an officer whose nerve deserted him at the critical moment, after firing two volleys, became demoralized and as an organization disappeared, though two companies were rallied by their officers, joined other organizations and staid on the firing line throughout the day. Colonel Appler disappeared from the field and was later cashiered for cowardice.

The attack on Sherman's left and center by Cleburne's brigade of Hardee's corps was furious and sustained — to be repulsed, however, with heavy loss, by Buckland's brigade and the two remaining regiments of Hildebrand's brigade. Cleburne, in his official report of this affair, says: "Everywhere his musketry and artillery at short range swept the open spaces . . . with an iron storm that threatened certain destruction to every living thing that would dare to cross them. . . . Under the terrible fire much confusion followed, and a quick and bloody repulse was the consequence."⁴⁸

One of Cleburne's regiments (6th Miss.) lost three hundred men, killed and wounded, out of 425, and his brigade soon went to pieces. A second assault was made by Anderson's brigade of Bragg's corps to meet a similar repulse. A third assault was made by two brigades of Polk's corps (Russell's and Johnson's) joined with the reorganized brigades of Cleburne and Anderson and assisted by Wood on their right. This assault was successful, forcing Sherman from his first line at about ten o'clock, and with him one brigade of McClernand's division that had come to his sup-

⁴⁸ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 581.

port on the left. Sherman's right brigade (McDowell's) was not involved in this engagement for the reason that the line of attack crossed its front diagonally without bringing it into action; but a little later Pond's brigade, from the extreme left of Bragg's corps, appeared in McDowell's front, overlapping his right and covering Owl Creek bridge. Orders were then given to fall back to the Purdy road, and McDowell's camp was abandoned without a fight. By this time Hildebrand's brigade had gone to pieces and Hildebrand himself being without a command, reported to General McClernand for staff duty. In fact this first assault on Sherman's line fell mainly upon a single brigade (Buckland's), and it was on the hillside in his front where, according to General Lew. Wallace, there was "a pavement of dead men", after the fight was over. This must be considered one of the conspicuous features of Sunday's battle. Time was of the utmost importance, to enable the proper formations in distant parts of the camp. The needed time was secured by the stubborn fight made by Sherman's division on its first line; and it was probably this that gained for General Sherman, in the minds of some, credit for saving the day.

It was in the Confederate plan to push its right east to the river, turn the Union left, seize the Landing, and force the army back on Owl Creek where it was expected surrender would necessarily follow. The stubbornness of the resistance to the Confederate left delayed the movement toward the river somewhat, though two brigades (Chalmers's and Jackson's) were in front of the Union left near the mouth of Lick Creek, very soon after the extreme right fell back from the first line. To meet these two brigades of nine regiments and two batteries, Colonel Stuart had a single brigade of three regiments without artillery — and one of these regiments (71st Ohio) was led off the field by

its colonel soon after the fight began to take no further part in the day's battle. Colonel Mason was later cashiered for his conduct at Shiloh.

The two remaining regiments of this brigade gave a good account of themselves (54th Illinois and 55th Ohio), making heroic resistance and suffering severely in casualties. There are those who believe that the fighting on the extreme left by this little band of about eight hundred men without artillery and against three or four times their number with artillery was not less important than was the fighting on the extreme right, though less conspicuous. This movement of the Confederate right was under the personal direction of General Johnston, and upon its quick success depended the success of the battle as planned. Before eleven o'clock the battle was raging from right to left, a distance of three to four miles.

As has been already stated, by the time that the battle was fairly on at the front every regiment in the most distant parts of the camp was in line. McClelland promptly supported Sherman, and Hurlbut also sent one of his brigades (Veach's) to that part of the field, leading his two remaining brigades to support Prentiss. Hurlbut, meeting Prentiss's division falling back in disorder, allowed the men to drift through his ranks, then formed line at the Peach Orchard, facing Lauman's brigade west and William's brigade south, where he met first the attack of Chalmers's and Jackson's brigades from the direction of Prentiss's abandoned camp. A little later this position was attacked by the brigades of Bowen, Statham, Stephens, and Gladden — the latter officer, however, having received a mortal wound in front of Prentiss's first line, as already stated.

C. F. Smith's (2nd) division, now commanded by W. H. L. Wallace, camped near the Landing and fully three miles from the point where the battle began, was in line by eight

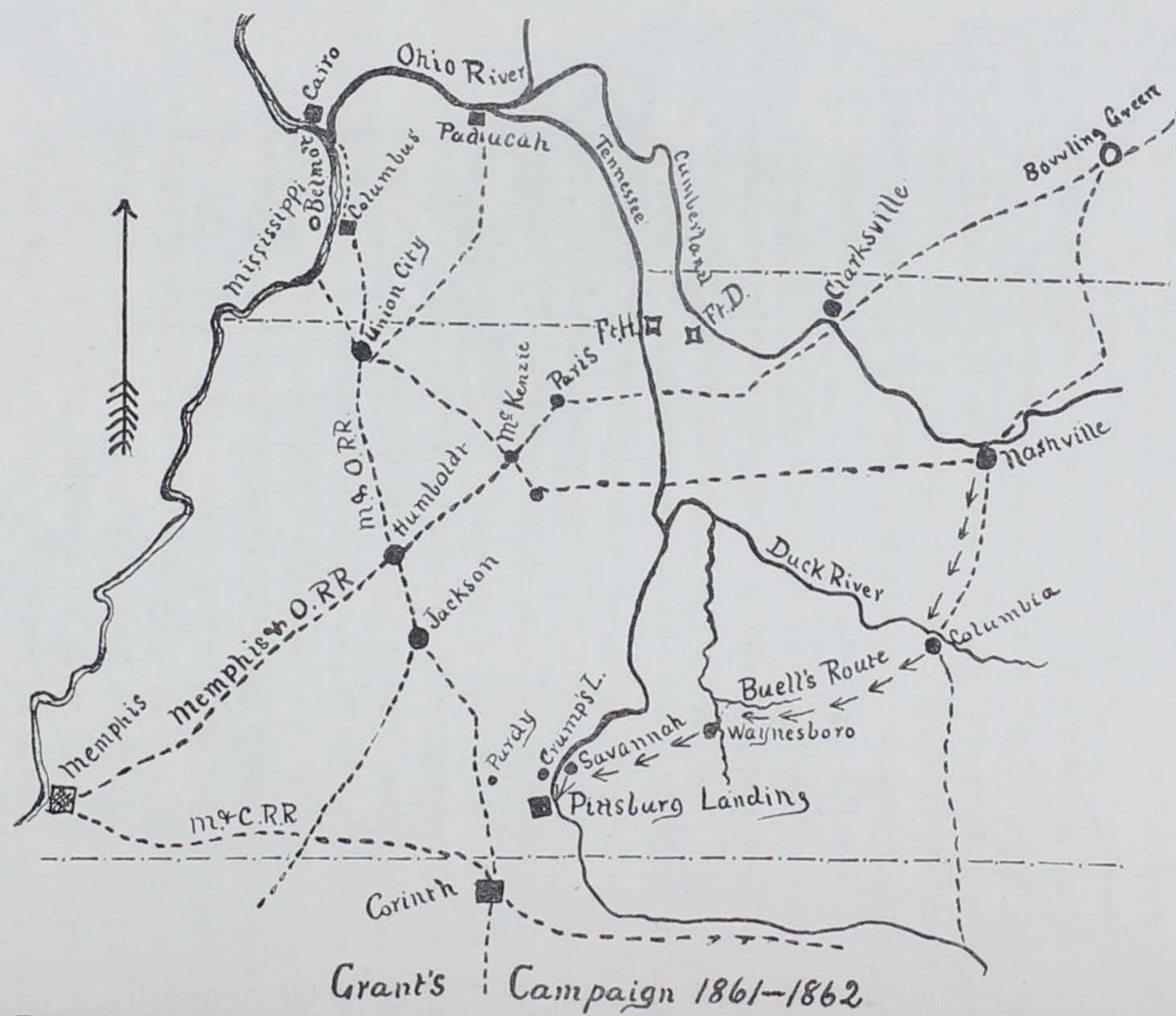
o'clock, and the first brigade of four regiments (Colonel Tuttle) advanced to Duncan Field and took position in the "sunken road"—long abandoned as useless, but which ere nightfall was destined to become famous for desperate fighting against odds. (Map III.) Of the second brigade (General McArthur's) one regiment was sent to the right; two were sent to cover Snake Creek bridge, over which General Lew. Wallace's division was expected at an early hour; and two marched under General McArthur himself, to the support of Stuart, on the extreme left. The third brigade (Sweeny's) moved south on the Corinth road to act as a reserve, though it was not permitted to wait upon opportunity. Two regiments of this brigade (7th and 58th Illinois) were sent at once to the right to prolong Tuttle's line to connect with McClernand, going into position at about nine-thirty o'clock. A third regiment (50th Illinois) was sent to McArthur on the left; and the remaining regiment of the brigade (8th Iowa), between eleven and twelve o'clock, took position at Tuttle's left in the "sunken road" connecting its left with Prentiss who, having rallied a part of his division, put them in at the right of Hurlbut. Prentiss was here joined under fire by the 23d Missouri, just landed from the boats, giving him about one thousand men in the "Hornets' Nest". Two other regiments (15th and 16th Iowa), assigned to Prentiss's division, landing too late to join him at his camp, were sent to McClernand, joining him at Jones's Field, one and a half miles west of the Landing.

Before noon the contending armies were in continuous and compact line from flank to flank. Welded in the furnace heat of four hours' battle without a moment's respite, it might be said with little exaggeration that the men stood foot to foot, contending for the mastery. The Union lines had steadily but slowly receded, shortening at the flanks,

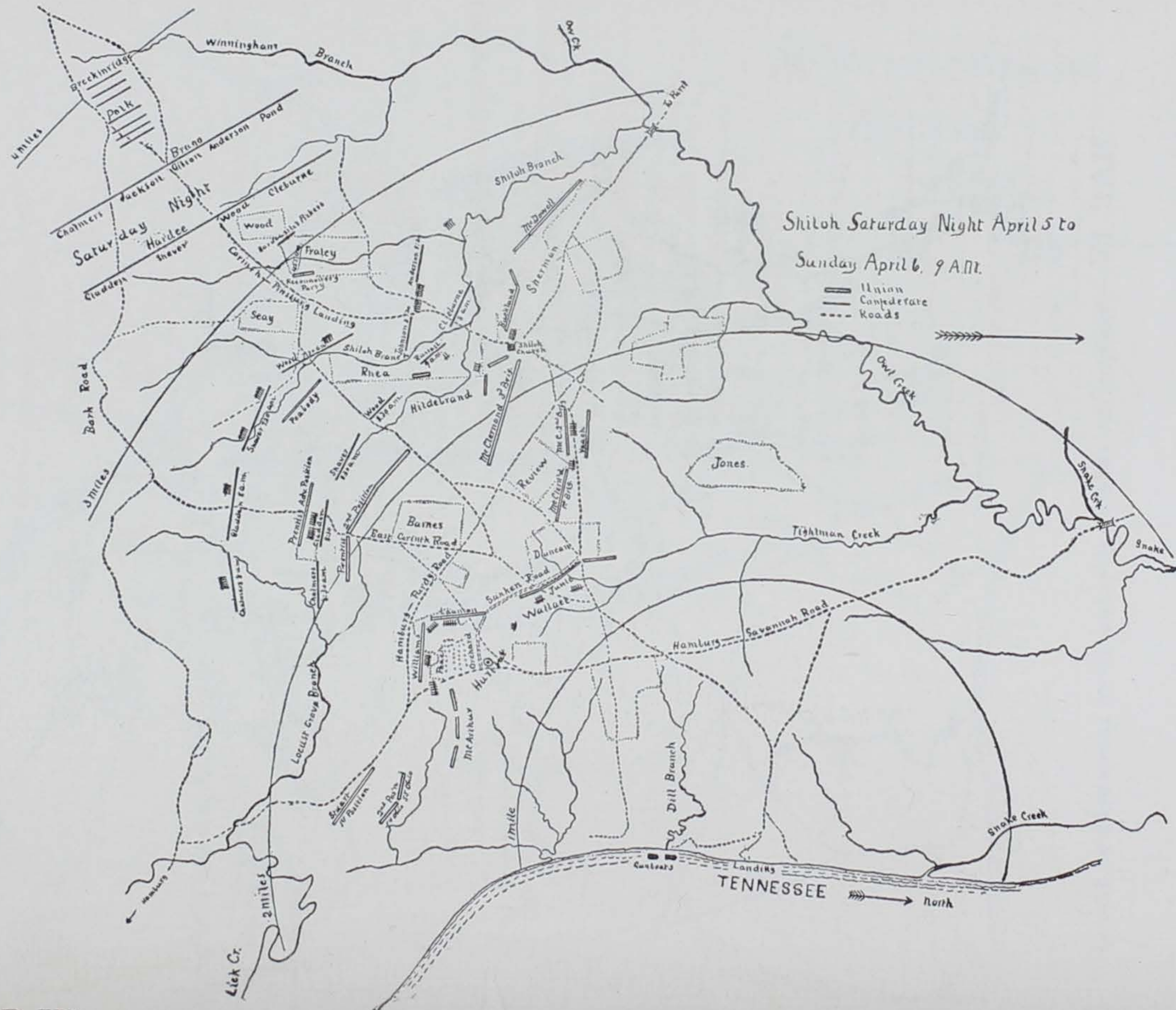
and the Confederates had as steadily advanced, extending their flanks but recoiling again and again from attacks made at the center, and with heavy loss.

The Confederate reserve under General Breckenridge, about 8,500 men, were all in action before noon, the first brigade (Trabue) going in on their extreme left at about the time that Sherman fell back from his first line. The other two brigades (Bowen and Statham) went into line on the right south of the Peach Orchard, between eleven and twelve o'clock in front of Hurlbut and near where General Johnston had his headquarters in the saddle. Though General Johnston personally directed the battle on the Confederate side, in this part of the field, he did not, as some writers have told the story, personally encourage an unwilling Tennessee regiment by riding along the line and tapping the bayonets of the men with a tin cup which he carried in his hand, then leading the line in a furious charge. No part of such an incident occurred there or elsewhere, on the authority of one of General Johnston's chief Aids, Governor Harris of Tennessee — the only person who was present at the death of General Johnston soon after and near the spot where the incident is said to have occurred.

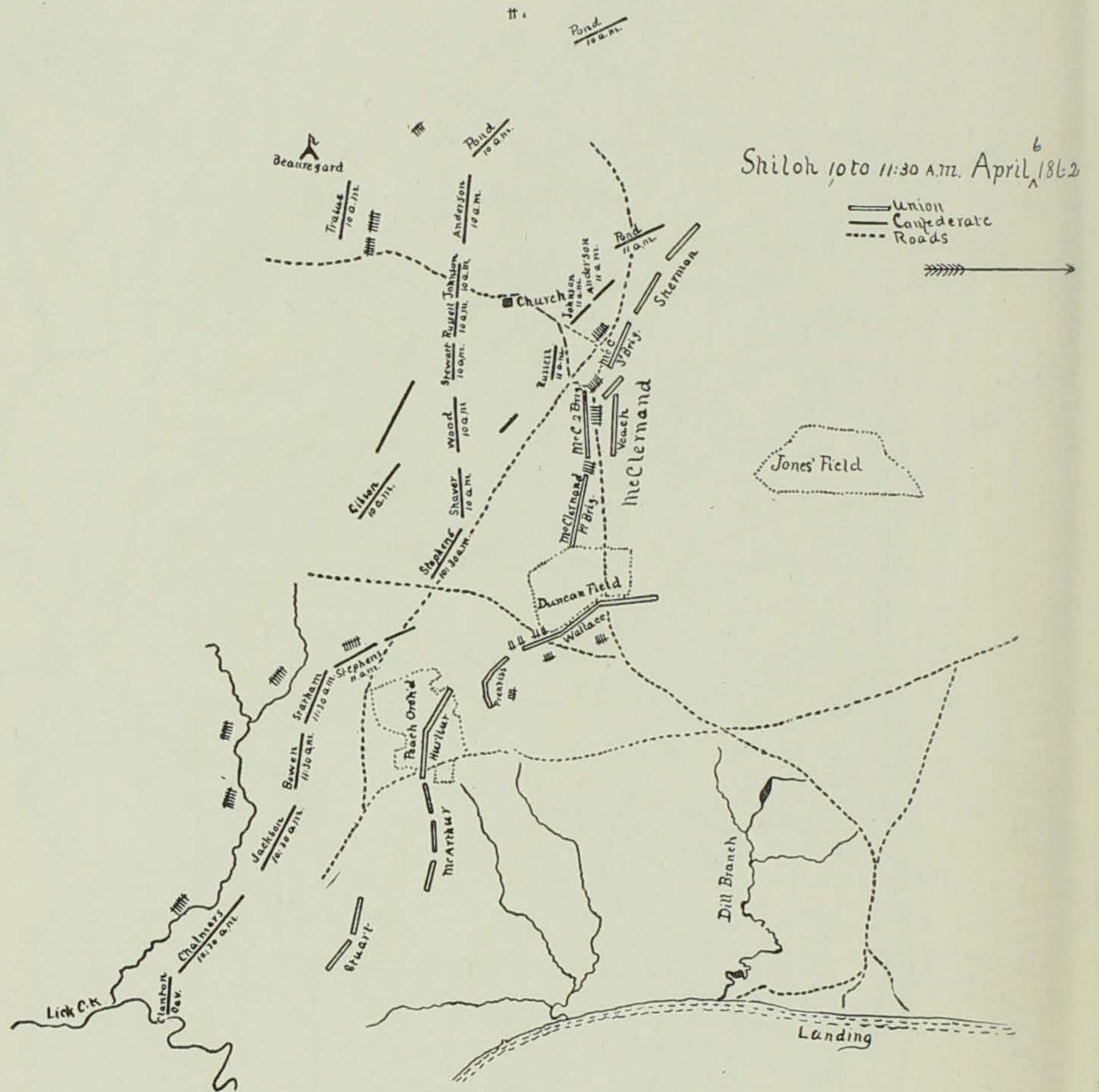
Stuart, McArthur, and Hurlbut having successfully repulsed several attacks, General Johnston was evidently convinced that the Union left was not to be easily turned; and so about noon under his personal direction, having put into his lines two brigades of the reserve under General Breckenridge, a forward movement was ordered, six brigades participating — Chalmers's, Jackson's, Bowen's, Statham's, Stephens's, and Gladden's. Threatened on his left by a cavalry flanking movement, Stuart was the first to slowly give ground; McArthur, on Stuart's right, necessarily followed, both changing front from south to south-



MAP I—SHOWING THE TERRITORY OVER WHICH GENERAL GRANT OPERATED, FROM SEPTEMBER 4, 1861, TO THE TIME OF THE BATTLE OF SHILOH, TOGETHER WITH THE LOCATION OF THE IMPORTANT PLACES MENTIONED IN THE TEXT. IT ALSO SHOWS THE ADVANCE OF BUELL'S ARMY FROM NASHVILLE TO SHILOH.

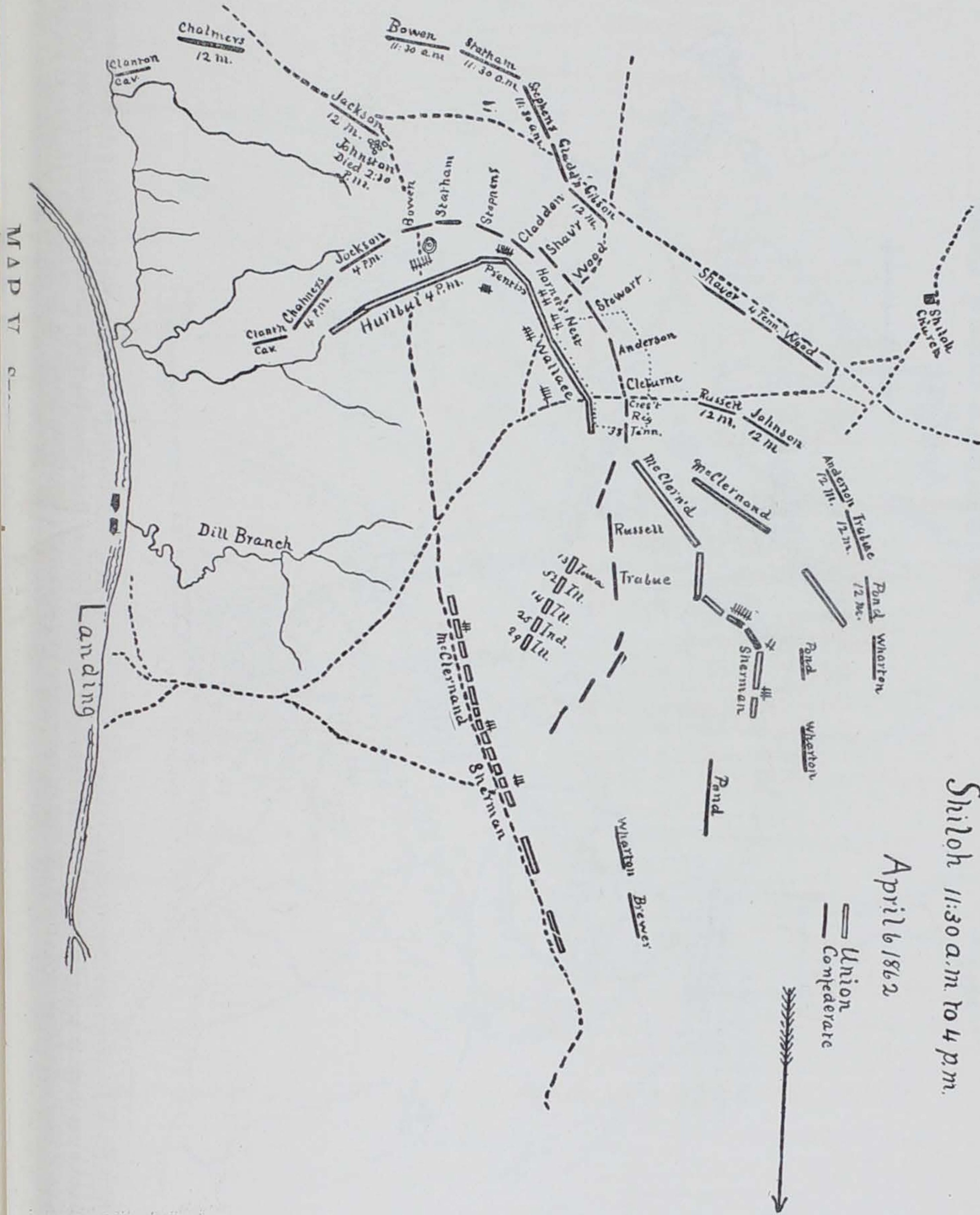


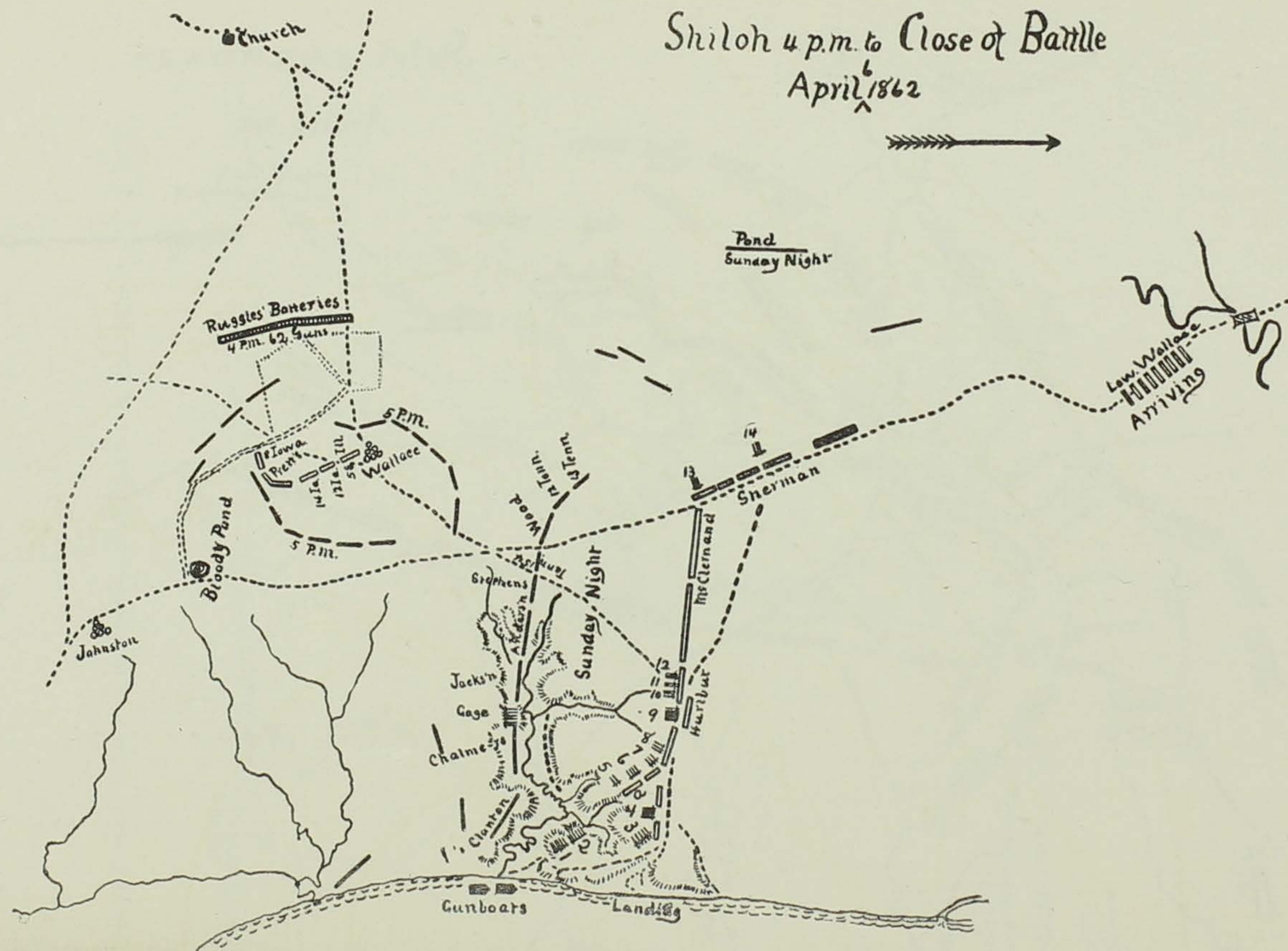
MAP III—SHOWING THE CONFEDERATE LINES AS THEY WERE ON SATURDAY NIGHT; FRALEY FIELD WHERE THE PICKET FIGHT OCCURRED ON SUNDAY MORNING, AND THE ADVANCE TO ATTACK. ON THE UNION SIDE THE MAP SHOWS FIRST AND SECOND



MAP IV—SHOWING THE GENERAL SITUATION UP TO ABOUT NOON ON SUNDAY.

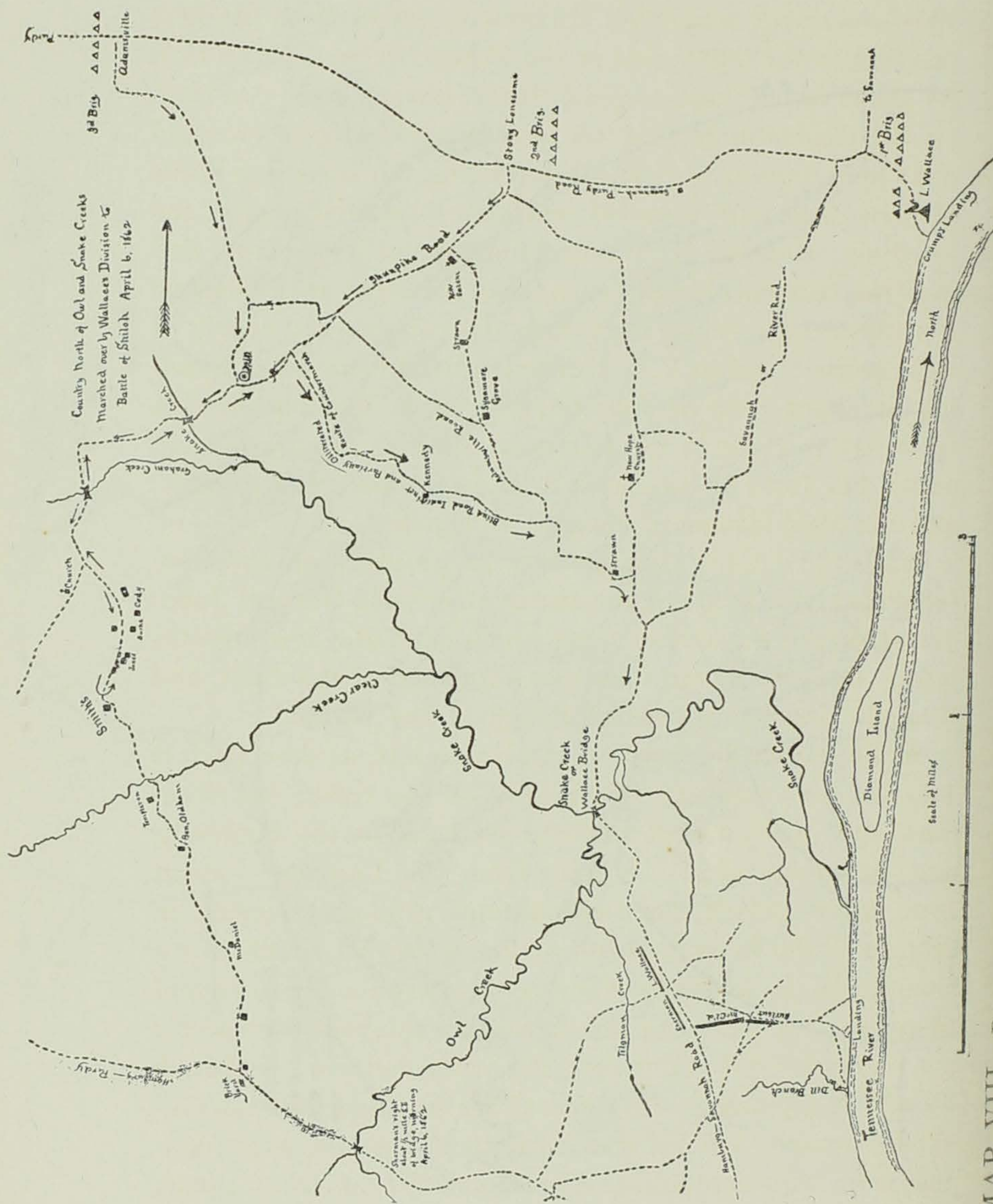
THE BATTLE OF SHILOH





MAP VI—SHOWING RUGGLES'S BATTERY (62 GUNS) BOMBARDING THE HORNETS' NEST, AND THE SITUATION AT THE TIME OF THE SURRENDER AT THAT POINT. THE LINES FACING EACH OTHER ACROSS DILL BRANCH WERE THE LAST LINES OF THE DAY, SUNDAY. THE BATTERIES IN GRANT'S LINE WERE ALL THERE AS REPRESENTED: (1) MARKGRAF 6; (2) MUNCH 5; (3) POWELL 5; (4) SILFVERSPARRE 4; (5) McALLISTER 2; (6) STONE 4; (7) DRESSER 2; (8) MANN 3; (9) SIEGE GUNS 6; (10) RICHARDSON 4; (11) NISPEL 2; (12) WELKER 3; (13) HICKENLOOPER 2; (14) ROETON 4 (2). TWO OTHER BATTERIES WERE COMING FROM THE

MAP VII—THE MOVEMENTS OF MONROE'S CORPS ON APRIL 6, 1862



MAP VIII—ROADS NORTH OF OWL AND SNAKE CREEKS SHOWING LEW. WALLACE'S ADVANCE FROM CRUMP'S LANDING, STONYLONESOME, AND ADAMSVILLE.

east, falling back and fighting for every foot of ground. This movement compelled Hurlbut to retire from his first position to the north side of the Peach Orchard (Map IV). At about two o'clock, Colonel Stuart having been wounded, his two regiments having lost heavily, and having exhausted their ammunition — even after robbing the cartridge-boxes of their dead and wounded comrades — retired toward the Landing. General McArthur followed not long after; and General Hurlbut, having connected his right with General Prentiss's left, swung back until their lines were nearly at right angles. (Map V.) Hurlbut retired toward the Landing at about four or four-thirty o'clock, leaving the line from left to right in the following order: Prentiss's command, 8th Iowa of Sweeny's brigade, Tuttle's full brigade, and the 58th Illinois of Sweeny's brigade.

While this fierce struggle was in progress on the Confederate right, at about two-thirty afternoon, General Johnston received the wound from which he died a few minutes later. General Bragg then took command of the right, and General Ruggles succeeded Bragg in the center.

While the battle raged on the Union left, as described, it was not less stubborn and bloody on the right; but Sherman and McClernand were forced back to the Hamburg and Savannah road — a mile from the Landing — about four-thirty o'clock, the Confederates gradually closing in from both flanks around the center. (Map VI.) Meantime General W. H. L. Wallace had sent orders for his command to retire; but for some reason never explained four of his six regiments did not receive the order and were captured, as will be explained. As General Wallace and General Tuttle, followed by the 2nd and 7th Iowa Regiments, were fighting their way through a severe crossfire at short range, General Wallace was mortally wounded, and was left on the

field to be recovered the next day, dying three or four days later without recovering consciousness.

THE HORNETS' NEST

This appellation owes its origin to the men who felt the sting of the hornets. William Preston Johnston in his history of his father (General A. S. Johnston) speaks of the term as a "mild metaphor", and says that "no figure of speech would be too strong to express the deadly peril of an assault upon this natural fortress whose inaccessible barriers blazed for six hours with sheets of flame, and whose infernal gates poured forth a murderous storm of shot and shell and musket-fire which no living thing could quell or withstand".⁴⁹

No more graphic description of the fight at the Hornets' Nest has been written than that of which the language quoted is a part — written from the view-point of the attacking forces, and, therefore, written with full knowledge of the results that followed from the "murderous storm of shot and shell and musket-fire." It is literally true that Duncan Field and the woods and thickets bordering it along the "sunken road" were thickly strewn with the dead and wounded. The same author tells us that "Hindman's brilliant brigades . . . were shivered into fragments and paralyzed"; that "Stewart's regiments . . . retired mangled from the field"; that "Gibson's splendid brigade . . . recoiled and fell back"—four several times, indeed. Colonel Gibson, in his official report says of his brigade: "Four times the position was charged and four times the assault proved unavailing."

The best informed writer, living or dead, on the details and incidents of the Battle of Shiloh — Major D. W. Reed, Secretary and Historian of the Shiloh National Military

⁴⁹ Johnston's *Life of General A. S. Johnston*, p. 620.

Park Commission and author of *Campaigns and Battles Twelfth Regiment Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry*, who was himself in the Nest during the entire day, says there were "twelve separate and distinct charges" made upon the line at the Hornets' Nest, with the result that three Confederate brigades were "entirely disorganized", and that "thirteen regiments lost their regimental organizations and were not brought into the fight again during the day."⁵⁰ General Ruggles, who commanded the Confederate lines in that part of the field after the death of General Johnston, designates this as "one of the controlling conflicts of that eventful day."⁵¹ The position was of such conspicuous importance that a brief description of the ground will not be out of place.

Moving out on the Corinth road from the Landing about three-fourths of a mile one crosses the Hamburg and Savannah road. A fourth of a mile further on the road forks, the left hand branch (Eastern Corinth) bearing south of southwest; and one-fourth of a mile still further on it crosses an old abandoned road near the southeast corner of Duncan Field, and near the center of the Hornets' Nest. The right-hand road from the fork runs nearly west, crossing the north end of Duncan Field, then bearing south passes the "Little Log Meeting-house". At the point where this road, going from the Landing, strikes the east line of Duncan Field the abandoned road leads off to the southeast about a half-mile, then bending east to the Hamburg and Savannah road near Bloody Pond — another significant local name. Along this abandoned road, beginning near the north end of Duncan Field, the line of battle from right to left, was as follows: 58th Illinois (Sweeny's brig-

⁵⁰ Reed's *Campaigns and Battles of the Twelfth Regiment Iowa Veteran Volunteer Infantry*, p. 50.

⁵¹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 475.

ade); second, seventh, twelfth, and fourteenth Iowa regiments (Tuttle's brigade); to the left of this brigade was the eighth Iowa, of Sweeny's brigade; to the left still was Prentiss's division, consisting of one entire regiment (23d Missouri), and parts of several other regiments — the entire line numbering not to exceed 2,500 men. The old road ran along a slight elevation and was so water-washed in places as to afford good shelter to men lying down to fire on an advancing enemy — a sort of natural rifle-pit, though rather shallow in places. About half of the distance, from right to left, there was open field extending to the front about 500 yards to the timber occupied by the Confederates. The left half of the line was well screened by timber and, for the most part, by a heavy growth of underbrush so that the advancing lines not able to see the men lying in the old road were received with a crushing fire at short range. In every instance the repulse was complete and bloody.

General Ruggles, becoming convinced that the position could not be taken by infantry, from the front, determined to concentrate his artillery and bombard the strong-hold. He tells us in his official report⁵² that he directed his staff officers "to bring forward all the field guns they could collect from the left toward the right". General Ruggles evidently believed that this was a crisis in the battle, admitting that "for a brief period the enemy apparently gained". Nor was he alone in the belief, for one of his artillery officers (Captain Sandidge) said officially: "I have no doubt that had they been seasonably reinforced when they checked our advancing troops, they could certainly have broken our lines". And he feared that result before the guns could be planted and infantry supports brought up. General Ruggles succeeded in bringing up sixty-two guns from the left,

⁵² *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 472.

which were planted on the west side of Duncan Field about five hundred yards away; and the bombardment began at about four-thirty afternoon. Of course there could be but one result. The Union batteries were forced to retire, leaving the way clear for the encircling Confederate lines to close in. Besides the Ruggles aggregation of artillery of sixty-two guns, there must have been several other batteries playing upon the Hornets' Nest from the right, as none of the guns from that part of the field were in the Ruggles aggregation. Probably not less than seventy-five guns were trained on that devoted spot, and fully three-fourths of the Confederate army was coiling around it. And for some time before the surrender took place, a few minutes before six o'clock, rifle-fire poured in from three directions, as the beleagured faced about and attempted to fight their way out. The number to surrender was about 2,000 men. The importance of this prolonged contest, from a little before ten forenoon to nearly six afternoon, upon the destinies of the day can hardly be estimated. It secured to General Grant's army the thing most needed — time to form the new line; time for Lew. Wallace, for Buell, and for Night to come. The Hornets' Nest was distinctly an altar of sacrifice. (Map VI.)

HOW BUELL SAVED THE DAY

By the time the Confederate officers had recovered from their "surprise" at the smallness of the capture at the Hornets' Nest, in view of the prolonged and effective resistance encountered, General Grant had formed his new line on the north side of Dill Branch, running from the mouth of the Branch on a curve back to the road leading from the Landing; thence west to the Hamburg and Savannah road; thence north to the swamp bordering Snake Creek. At the extreme left of the line, the two gunboats lay opposite the

mouth of the Branch. On the bluffs near the mouth of the Branch were two batteries, trained up-stream. Two other batteries were a little farther from the river and back nearer the road leading from the Landing; and two more were still farther west, but advanced toward the edge of the bluffs overlooking the Branch. Back on the road again and a little west were two more batteries before coming to the six big siege guns.

A glance at the map for Sunday night's position will show that the line from the mouth of Dill Branch west to the siege guns was a semi-circle with the gunboats at the extreme left, and that there were about fifty guns in the line east of the Hamburg and Savannah road, exclusive of the gunboats. Behind this array of artillery was ample infantry support, except on the extreme left where support was not needed, because of the nature of the ground in front. As General Nelson marched the head of his column up from the Landing at about five-thirty o'clock, he noted the absence of infantry along that part of the line, and in his official report he describes what he saw as a "semicircle of artillery, totally unsupported by infantry", which was not quite true; and he added another statement which was not at all true, namely; "the left of the artillery was completely turned by the enemy and the gunners fled from their pieces."⁵³ General Nelson evidently knew nothing of the batteries near the mouth of Dill Branch, for he struck the line at about the middle of the "semicircle" and the single regiment that he brought into action (36th Indiana) was sent to support the guns in front of the main line toward Dill Branch.

Opposed to this array of Union artillery a single Confederate battery took part in the last attack, and that was disabled.

⁵³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 323.

Any fair-minded person, having knowledge of the character of the ground between the lines of the two armies as the lines were on Sunday night — especially on the left of the Union lines — must admit that Grant's was a strong position and that his antagonist had serious obstacles to overcome before he could strike with effect.

With as little delay as possible after the surrender at the Hornets' Nest, General Bragg, still commanding the Confederate right, ordered his division commanders to "drive the enemy into the river", believing, doubtless, that the "drive" would be a brief and easy task. Accordingly the Confederate right uncoiled itself from around the Hornets' Nest and, led by Chalmers's and Jackson's brigades of Withers's division, advanced along the road toward the Landing; then, filing right, formed line on the south side of Dill Branch and near the margin of the deep ravine. This ravine, impassable at its mouth by reason of steep bluffs and back-water, was difficult to pass fully a half-mile from its mouth. Its steep sides were timbered and obstructed by underbrush, and at the bottom it was fairly choked with undergrowth.

The last attack made upon the Union lines was upon the extreme left in which only two small brigades and one battery participated. Chalmers's brigade had nominally five regiments, but one of the regiments (52nd Tennessee) "acted badly" in the early part of the day, and three hundred of its four hundred men are not to be counted. Jackson's brigade detached one regiment to guard the Hornets' Nest prisoners, so that it seems to be liberal, allowing for the losses of the day, to say that there were not to exceed 1800 men engaged in the last assault.

The two brigades made their way down the southern slope, through the tangled undergrowth at the bottom of the ravine and, quoting from their official reports, "strug-

gled" up the other slope, "which was very steep" encountering in "attempting to mount the last ridge" the "fire from a whole line of batteries protected by infantry and assisted by shells from the gunboats." General Chalmers says his men "were too much exhausted to storm the batteries".⁵⁴

General Jackson says his men were without ammunition, having "only their bayonets to rely on", and that when they "arrived near the crest of the opposite hill", they "could not be urged farther without support", the men "sheltering themselves against the precipitous sides of the ravine" where "they remained under fire for some time."⁵⁵ (The Confederate skirmish line is shown on Map VI, at the crest of the bluff, north of Dill Branch.)

This was the situation when eight companies of the 36th Indiana (Colonel Grose), about four hundred men, of Ammen's brigade, Nelson's division, Army of the Ohio, arrived on the scene. Colonel Grose was ordered to go to the support of Stone's battery, which was in position some distance in advance of Grant's main line and near the brow of the hill up which the assailants were climbing with great difficulty. There the 36th Indiana exchanged shots with the skirmishers of Chalmers's brigade, during fifteen to thirty minutes⁵⁶ having one man killed and one man wounded. In his history of the 36th Indiana, Colonel Grose says that "after three or four rounds the enemy fell back. It was then dark." And he says, further, that "no part of Buell's army, except the Thirty-sixth Indiana, took any part whatever in the Sunday evening fight at Shiloh." And he might have said with equal truth and without disparagement to his regiment that the presence of the Thirty-sixth Indiana

⁵⁴ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, pp. 550-551.

⁵⁵ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 555.

⁵⁶ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 334.

had no effect in determining the issues of the day. Had the four hundred men not been there the "enemy" would have retired just the same, for he could never have crossed the open space from the "last ridge" to the "line of batteries". The ground to be traversed was but gently rolling with little to obstruct the view — no sheltering ridge or friendly copse to admit of unobserved approach. It must have been a "rush" of two to four hundred yards, in the face of point-blank firing, to reach the batteries, behind which, as already stated, was ample infantry support. The battle of the day really came to an end at the Hornets' Nest. All that followed was mere skirmishing for the purpose of developing the new conditions.

THE LOST OPPORTUNITY

The "Lost Opportunity" is a phrase of Confederate origin and it refers to the last moments of Sunday's battle, briefly described above. Both the idea and the phrase seem to have been born of an afterthought, and a disposition to shift blame to the shoulders of General Beauregard, should blame be imputed, for failure to crush or capture Grant's army. The claim has been put forward with considerable persistency that the order of General Beauregard to withdraw from the contest was responsible for the escape of Grant's army. This absurd claim has been answered most effectively by General Thomas Jordan, Adjutant-General of the Confederate forces engaged at Shiloh.

In *Southern Historical Society Papers*,⁵⁷ General Jordan takes up the subject and refers to the official reports of several division, brigade, and regimental commanders for the purpose of showing the demoralized and exhausted condition of the Confederate army. In referring to the report of General Withers, two brigades of whose division made

⁵⁷ *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Vol. XVI, p. 297.

the last feeble assault, he says: "If there be significance in words, he makes it clear that such was the absolute lateness of the hour, that had the attempt been made to carry the Federal batteries with such troops as were there assembled, it would have resulted in an awful butchery and dispersion of all employed in so insensate, so preposterous an undertaking; and such must be the verdict of any military man who may studiously read the reports of the subordinate officers of Withers's three brigades, and bear in mind the formidable line of fifty-odd pieces of artillery which Webster had improvised".⁵⁸

Surgeon J. C. Nott of General Bragg's staff, who rode by his chief's side nearly all day, is quoted as saying that the "men were too much demoralized and indisposed to advance in the face of the shells bursting over us in every direction, and my impression was that our troops had done all that they would do, and had better be withdrawn."⁵⁹

Another officer of General Bragg's staff, Colonel Urquhart, writing in 1880 is quoted thus: "The plain truth must be told, that our troops at the front were a thin line of exhausted men, who were making no further headway. . . . Several years of subsequent service have impressed me that General Beauregard's order for withdrawing the troops was most timely".⁶⁰

The claim that there was a "Lost Opportunity" because of the order to retire, General Jordan says, "becomes simply shameful, under the light of the closely contemporaneous statements of every division commander, except one (Withers); of all the brigade and regimental commanders of each Confederate corps, including the reserve whose re-

⁵⁸ *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Vol. XVI, pp. 300, 301.

⁵⁹ *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Vol. XVI, p. 307.

⁶⁰ *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Vol. XVI, p. 316.

ports have reached the light; that is, of nearly all commanders present in the battle."⁶¹

This ought to be sufficient evidence to settle forever both propositions in the negative; namely, the claim that Buell "saved the day", and that there was a "Lost Opportunity".

The condition of Grant's army at the close of Sunday's battle as to strength has been greatly underrated by certain writers, and its disorganization has been greatly exaggerated by writers who have had an object in so representing it. It is true that both armies were badly battered as the result of about fourteen hours' continuous fighting with scarcely a moment's cessation. Careful study of the reports of Confederate officers shows that there was not a single point of attack on any part of the field at any hour of the day where there was not stubborn resistance with serious loss to the attacking forces. These reports also show that there was serious defection from their ranks, beginning early and continuing during the day, and that when night came on there was such disorganization that some of their commanders were entirely separated from their commands and remained so separated to the close of the battle, Monday night. These reports further show that instead of bivouacking in line of battle as did Grant's army the entire Confederate army, with the exception of a single brigade (Pond's brigade on the extreme left) withdrew a distance of two to four miles from the Landing. It is in evidence also from the same sources of information that General Beauregard was able to put in line on the morning of the second day substantially half the number of men that were in line on the morning of the first day. General Grant was able to put in line about the same proportion, exclusive of the reinforcements that came up during the night.

There are no means of determining the comparative

⁶¹ *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Vol. XVI, pp. 316-317.

casualties in the two armies on the first day, but there is no reason for doubting that they were substantially equal — exclusive of the capture at the Hornets' Nest. It is known, however, that the casualties among field officers, from the grade of colonel upward, were greater in the Union than in the Confederate army in Sunday's battle.

Much has been said about the "stragglers" from the Union lines crowding the Landing and "cowering" under the river bluffs — and with about the same degree of exaggeration as certain writers have indulged in their descriptions of the opening of the battle. There were "stragglers" from both armies, and there is no reason to doubt that the numbers were substantially equal. It is true, however, that the straggling was more in evidence on the Union side, for the very good reason that it was more concentrated — confined to a limited area about the Landing — while on the other side there was unlimited room for expansion and scattering over miles of territory. This remark applies with equal force to other features of the crowded condition near the Landing, late in the day. Hundreds of teamsters with their four-mule and six-mule teams were there because it was the only place of safety for one of the essential parts of the army's equipment; the sick from the regimental hospitals and company tents were there — several hundred of them — because there was no other place to go; and hundreds of wounded were there from the front, together with a force of hospital attendants. Add these together and you have several thousand without counting a single "straggler". These things are never considered by critics who have a cause to support. Every large army requires a small army to care for it, who are, necessarily, noncombatants.

BUELL COMES ON THE FIELD

By General Orders of March 31st, General Grant's headquarters were transferred from Savannah to Pittsburg Landing; but a headquarters' office was continued at the former place for convenience up to the day of the battle, and General Grant passed between the two places every day, or nearly every day, on the headquarters' boat, Tigress. On Sunday morning, at Savannah, an "early breakfast" had been ordered, as it was General Grant's purpose to ride out with his staff to meet General Buell, whose arrival the evening before was not known. While at breakfast, firing was heard in the direction of Pittsburg Landing — "the breakfast was left unfinished" and General Grant and staff went directly to the boat and steamed rapidly up the river, stopping at Crump's Landing to order General Lew. Wallace to hold his division in readiness for marching orders.

Before leaving Savannah General Grant sent to General Nelson of Buell's army, the following order: "An attack having been made on our forces, you will move your entire command to the river opposite Pittsburg".⁶² A similar order was sent to General Wood, commanding another division of Buell's army, not yet arrived at Savannah, to move "with the utmost dispatch to the river" at Savannah, where boats would meet him. The following note was left for General Buell whose presence in Savannah was not known to General Grant:

SAVANNAH, April 6, 1862

General D. C. BUELL:

Heavy firing is heard up the river, indicating plainly that an attack has been made on our most advanced positions. I have been looking for this, but did not believe that the attack could be made before Monday or Tuesday. This necessitates my joining the

⁶² *War of the Rebellion: Official Records, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 95.*

forces up the river instead of meeting you today, as I had contemplated. I have directed General Nelson to move to the river with his division. He can march to opposite Pittsburg.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

U. S. GRANT

Major-General Commanding.⁶³

This note clearly shows that General Grant, in common with his division commanders, was expecting an early attack.

As soon as General Grant, after arriving on the field, learned the true situation, he sent a staff officer with another order to General Nelson: “. . . . you will hurry up your command as fast as possible. All looks well but it is necessary for you to push forward as fast as possible”.⁶⁴ Later still, probably about noon though it may have been later, nothing having been heard either from Buell or Nelson, General Grant sent another hurry-up order addressed to the “Commanding Officer Advance Forces (Buell’s Army)”. This order was delivered to General Buell on the boat as he was going to the Landing. He arrived at the Landing, he tells us in *Shiloh Reviewed*, about 1 o’clock, though Villard, who claims to have been on the same boat, makes the time later, between 5 and 6 o’clock, about the time that Nelson’s advance crossed the river. And there are certain features of Buell’s official report which, in the absence of a definite statement on the point, make Villard’s claim as to the hour at least plausible.

General Grant’s first order to General Nelson must have been received as early at 7 o’clock — probably earlier, for Nelson had the order when General Buell, after hearing the firing, went to General Grant’s headquarters for information, where he learned that the latter had “just started for the Landing”.⁶⁵

⁶³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Vol. LII, Part I, p. 232.

⁶⁴ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Vol X, Part II, pp. 95-96.

⁶⁵ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 292.

General Nelson in his official report does not state the hour of receiving the order to march, but says that he "left Savannah, by order of General Grant, reiterated by General Buell in person, at 1.30 p. m."⁶⁶ The language is a little ambiguous, but it doubtless means that the order was "reiterated" about noon or later and that the march began at one-thirty, afternoon.⁶⁷ (Colonel Ammen says at one, afternoon.)

Villard, heretofore quoted, says that Nelson received Grant's order about noon, by which he probably means the "reiterated" order. In any event it appears that General Buell "held up" the order to Nelson fully five hours and then "reiterated" it. Why did General Buell do that? Why did General Nelson wait to have the order "reiterated"? Why did he not obey the original order regardless of any dilatory order from General Buell, since the contingency had arisen under which by General Halleck's instructions General Grant was "authorized to take the general command" of both armies; namely, an attack upon his own army? Had General Nelson marched under the original order, his division would have been on the field at about the time that it started on the ten-mile march. What might have been the effect of throwing 4,500 fresh men in the scale of battle, then hanging in doubtful poise, is, of course, conjectural—and it must be left to conjecture, though there is little room for doubt.

General Nelson's entire division was across the river soon after dark. Advancing a little to the front on the extreme left it bivouacked for the night. A little later General Lew. Wallace came up on the extreme right, his division numbering about 5,000 men; but having to counter-march the division in order to bring the regiments in proper position his

⁶⁶ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 323.

⁶⁷ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 323.

formation was not completed until after midnight when it went into bivouac.

During Sunday night Crittenden's division of Buell's army (two brigades) came up by boat, and in the morning two brigades of McCook's division arrived, to be joined about noon by another brigade. Wood's division, which was about thirty miles away when the battle began, arrived on the field at about two afternoon Monday, when the battle was about over. The total additions to the Union lines up to noon on Monday was approximately 20,000 men.

During Sunday's battle General Grant passed from point to point behind the firing line, meeting and consulting with his division commanders and carefully observing the movements of the contending forces, for, as has already been stated, there was no point on the field from which general observations could be made. On Monday he commanded his own army, giving no orders to General Buell, the latter exercising independent command. Why General Grant did not assume "general command" of both armies we might fairly conjecture (if conjecture were necessary) to be due to the attitude of General Buell toward Grant's order to Nelson on Sunday morning — treating it as invalid until "reiterated" by himself. There is no room for conjecture in the matter, however, for General Buell says in his *Shiloh Reviewed*⁶⁸: "I did not look upon him [Grant] as my commander". There is evidence also that Buell was disposed to treat the subject of Sunday's battle as something of a sham — that the resistance to the Confederate attacks was not particularly strenuous. General Tuttle of Grant's army, acted on Monday as reserve to General Buell, having under his command the two Iowa Regiments that cut their way out of the Hornets' Nest on Sunday, and one or two other regiments of Grant's army. General Tuttle relates

⁶⁸ *The Century Magazine*, Vol. XXXI, p. 771.

that "while passing over the field, April 7th", following up the advancing lines, "General Buell taunted me with not having done any fighting that amounted to anything [on Sunday]." When they came to the "clearing" in front of the Hornets' Nest and saw the ground strewn with dead, Buell "was compelled to confess that there must have been terrible fighting". Had General Buell passed over the ground at the Peach Orchard and over the slope in front of Sherman's first line, he would have found similar conditions to those in the "clearing" in front of the Hornets' Nest. His estimate of the vigor of the Confederate attacks on Sunday was probably based upon the feeble attack made by exhausted men which he himself saw near the Landing on Sunday night.

In Monday's battle General Buell's army constituted the left and General Grant's the right, with General Lew. Wallace's fresh division occupying the extreme right of the line — and it is worth mentioning here that at least two of Grant's regiments were sent before the battle was over to the extreme left, and one of them, under command of General Nelson, made a bayonet charge across an open field. Another of Grant's regiments, under Crittenden and near the center, charged and captured a battery. In neither case was it necessary for General Grant to "reiterate" the requisite orders.

As to the outcome of the contest on Monday there could be no doubt, with the large accession to the ranks of the Union army — a force nearly equal to the number of men that the Confederates were able to put in line. General Grant had instructed his division commanders on Sunday night to be ready to attack early in the morning, and General Buell ordered his divisions "to move forward as soon as it was light". Artillery fire began nearly at the same time — about five-thirty — on the extreme flanks of the Un-

ion army, though the lines were not in contact until about eight o'clock. It would not be correct to characterize the movements of the Union lines on Monday as General Beauregard characterized the movements of the Confederate lines on Sunday — the figure of the "Alpine avalanche" would not apply to the movements of either day. However, the Union lines moved forward without serious repulses at any point, though there were some reverses on the left. The Confederates held their ground with stubbornness, occupying the line of the Purdy road until about noon. By two o'clock the battle was practically over, and an hour later the Confederates were in full retreat. Map No. VII will give a good idea of the general movements, on Monday. There was no general pursuit of the defeated army — just enough to be sure that it was a retreat in fact. The lack of pursuit was not, however, because Grant lacked "the energy to order a pursuit", as John Codman Ropes alleges, but because Halleck's instructions did not permit pursuit;⁶⁹ hands were still "tied".

NUMBERS ENGAGED AND LOSSES

There are two methods of estimating the strength of an army — one method excludes all noncombatants, the other includes noncombatants as essential parts of the army. On the inclusive method, the Historian and Secretary of the Shiloh National Military Park Commission⁷⁰ gives the strength of Grant's five divisions on Sunday at 39,830, and that of Johnston's army at 43,968.⁷¹ In a note⁷² in which he excludes noncombatants, the estimate is 33,000 and 40,000 respectively. The figures last given correspond with the

⁶⁹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 97, 104.

⁷⁰ Reed's *The Battle of Shiloh*, p. 98.

⁷¹ Reed's *The Battle of Shiloh*, p. 110.

⁷² Reed's *The Battle of Shiloh*, p. 112.

estimates of the two commanders — Grant in his *Memoirs*, and Johnston in his dispatch from Corinth, when about to march. In artillery, Johnston had one hundred and twenty-eight guns and Grant one hundred and twelve. Had Wallace's division come upon the field early on Sunday the two armies would have been very evenly matched, both in men and guns. On the second day, including noncombatants and "stragglers", the figures given are: Union, 54,592; Confederate, 34,000.⁷³ The complete and accurate losses of the respective armies for the respective days have never been, and cannot be, stated. The losses of Grant's army by divisions, two days (except 3d division one day) were as follows:

	Killed	Wounded	Prisoners	Total
1st division, McClellan . . . . .	.285	1,372	85	1,742
2nd " W. H. L. Wallace . . . . .	.270	1,173	1,306	2,749
3d " Lew. Wallace	41	251	4	296
4th " Hurlbut . . . . .	.317	1,441	111	1,869
5th " Sherman . . . . .	.325	1,277	299	1,901
6th " Prentiss . . . . .	.236	928	1,008	2,172
Unassigned	39	159	17	215
<hr/>				
Total Army Tenn.	1,513	6,601	2,830	10,944 ⁷⁴
Army of the Ohio, Monday — ⁷⁵				
2nd division	88	823	7	918
4th "	93	603	20	716
5th "	60	377	28	465
6th " . . . . .	..	4	..	4
<hr/>				
Total	241	1,807	55	2,103
Grand total	1,754	8,408	2,885	13,047
Army of Miss. (Confederate)	1,728	8,012	959	10,699 ⁷⁶

⁷³ Reed's *The Battle of Shiloh*, p. 110.

⁷⁴ Reed's *The Battle of Shiloh*, p. 98.

⁷⁵ Reed's *The Battle of Shiloh*, p. 102.

⁷⁶ Reed's *The Battle of Shiloh*, p. 110.

The killed in the two days' battle are almost exactly equal; the wounded are in excess by nearly four hundred, in the Union army; and there was in the Union army an excess in prisoners, of 1,926. Eliminating the prisoners taken in the Hornets' Nest, it appears that more prisoners were taken in the open field by the Union army than by the Confederates. The loss in officers in Grant's army on Sunday from the grade of colonel up was much heavier than in the Confederate army — forty-five in the former to thirty in the latter.⁷⁷

THE LOST DIVISION

So much has been written and said about the failure of General Wallace to get his division on the field and into the fight on the first day of the battle that the subject deserves a separate paragraph and a map of the roads over which his division marched. By reference to the map (No. VIII) it will be seen that the division occupied three camps — one brigade at Crump's Landing; one at Stonylonesome, two to three miles west; and one at Adamsville, about five miles out from the Landing toward Purdy. There is no dispute about the fact that Grant on his way up the river on Sunday morning stopped at Crump's Landing to notify Wallace to be in readiness for marching orders, though Wallace makes no mention of the fact in his official report, leaving it to be inferred that he had no order from Grant in the morning. He says that from the "continuous cannonading" he "inferred a general battle"; that he was in "anticipation of an order"; and that he ordered his first and third brigades to "concentrate" on the second at Stonylonesome.⁷⁸ In his *Autobiography* General Wallace says that he was satisfied before six o'clock, from the firing "up

⁷⁷ Reed's *The Battle of Shiloh*, p. 23.

⁷⁸ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 170.

the river", that the battle was on; and he says that at about seven o'clock, his concentration of brigades began. The official records show that this order was not carried out, for the third brigade did not move from Adamsville until about two-thirty afternoon, when it fell in behind the first and second brigades on the march toward Snake Creek bridge, and did not join them at Stonylonesome.

About a year after the Battle of Shiloh, General Wallace had occasion to refer to the movements of his division, on that Sunday in explaining to the Department Commander the reasons for the lateness of his arrival on the field; and in his explanation he incidentally referred to Grant's call at Crump's Landing on Sunday morning, fixing the time at "about nine o'clock".⁷⁹ General Grant and members of his staff fixed the time at seven to seven-thirty o'clock.

No special importance is to be attached to this difference in time, however, for it had no important bearing on subsequent events—it is mentioned only because it may justify a doubt as to the recollection of General Wallace in fixing the time at which he received final marching orders; namely, "11:30 a. m." It was the belief of General Grant and members of his staff that the order must have been received from a half hour to an hour earlier; though General Wallace's statement is now generally accepted. The form of order sent to Wallace can never be definitely settled, as it is nowhere a matter of record, and the original was lost in the hands of General Wallace, or through the fault of his Adjutant General.

During the year after the Battle of Shiloh, there was much criticism of General Wallace, to which he, of course, made defence. And so General Grant requested his Assistant Adjutant General, Colonel Rawlins, Colonel McPherson, Halleck's chief engineer, and Captain Rowley of

⁷⁹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 175.

his staff, each of whom had knowledge of General Wallace's movements on Sunday, to write out in detail their recollections, to be submitted to the Department Commander. Each wrote quite fully about one year after the battle, Colonel Rawlins reproducing from memory the order dictated by him as he claims, to Captain Baxter, which order was carried by the latter to Wallace. Following is the order from memory:

MAJOR-GENERAL WALLACE:

You will move forward your division from Crump's Landing, leaving a sufficient force to protect the public property at that place, to Pittsburg Landing, on the road nearest to and parallel with the river, and form in line at right angles with the river, immediately in rear of the camp of Maj. Gen. C. F. Smith's division on our right, and there await further orders.⁸⁰

Captain Baxter started by boat to deliver the order "not later than nine o'clock", according to Colonel Rawlins, and reported back to Grant before "12 o'clock m."

In his official report, dated April 12, 1862, General Wallace says: "At 11.30 o'clock the anticipated order arrived, directing me to come up and take position on the right of the army and form my line of battle at a right angle with the river."⁸¹ Writing a year later to General Halleck, explaining the reasons for his late arrival on the field, he said: "At exactly 11:30 a. m., a quartermaster by the name of Baxter brought me an order in *writing unsigned by anybody*", the bearer of the order explaining that he received it verbally and put it in writing while on the boat.

In his *Autobiography*, General Wallace enlarges somewhat on the subject of this order, and says that it was written on paper discolored with tobacco stains and bore the imprint of boot-heels; and he says that Baxter told him that

⁸⁰ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 185.

⁸¹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 170.

the paper was picked up from the floor of the ladies' cabin, on the steamboat. The original order having been lost, Wallace gives the following from memory:

You will leave a sufficient force at Crump's Landing to guard the public property there: with the rest of the division march and form junction with the right of the army. Form line of battle at right angles with the river, and be governed by circumstances.⁸²

The Rawlins form of order was reproduced from memory within one year after the event; that of Wallace, many years after — possibly forty years. Aside from the precise road mentioned and the precise position on the field designated in the Rawlins order, the two are strikingly similar — sufficiently so to suggest that the former, which had long been in print, may have been consulted to refresh the memory in preparing the latter.

Referring again to the events of Sunday as related by Colonel Rawlins, it appears that about an hour after Captain Baxter started by boat with orders to General Wallace, Grant sent a cavalry officer, familiar with the road, with a verbal message to Wallace "to hurry forward with all possible dispatch." This officer reported back to Grant, between twelve and one o'clock, that Wallace declined to move without written orders. According to Rawlins, Captain Baxter reported back about 12 o'clock; that he delivered the orders to Wallace at about ten o'clock; that Wallace read the memorandum handed him by Captain Baxter and "appeared delighted".⁸³

Immediately after the report of the cavalry officer that Wallace declined to move without written orders (Baxter's written order had not yet been delivered), Captain Rowley of Grant's staff was ordered to take the cavalry officer and

⁸² Wallace's *Autobiography*, Vol. I, p. 463.

⁸³ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X. Part II, pp. 185-186.

two orderlies and carry instructions to Wallace, with authority to put the instructions in writing and sign them, if necessary.⁸⁴

Captain Rowley's account of this incident is more in detail than that of Colonel Rawlins. Rowley corroborates Rawlins as to the report of the cavalry officer and says that Grant, after hearing the report, turned to him (Rowley) and said: "Captain, you will proceed to Crump's Landing and say to General Wallace that it is my orders that he bring his division up *at once*, coming up by the River road, crossing Snake Creek on the bridge". Captain Rowley says he was authorized to put the orders in writing and properly sign the same, should General Wallace require it. He was instructed to take the cavalry officer and two orderlies with him with the further instruction: "see that you do not spare horse flesh."⁸⁵ Captain Rowley gives the time of his starting on this mission at about twelve-thirty o'clock. Colonel Rawlins fixes it at "not later than 1 o'clock p. m."

Captain Rowley's party rode directly to Wallace's headquarters at Crump's Landing, to find "no signs of a camp except one baggage wagon that was just leaving."⁸⁶ (The brigade had marched west to Stonylonesome in the morning.) Getting directions from the driver of the wagon, the party followed the road taken by Wallace and overtook the rear of the division some five or six miles out. The division was "at a rest, sitting on each side of the road". Riding forward to the head of the column, Wallace was found "sitting upon his horse, surrounded by his staff". Although it is not so stated, it is fair to assume that the division was at rest while the cavalry was scouting to the front, as Wal-

⁸⁴ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 185-186.

⁸⁵ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 179.

⁸⁶ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 179.

lace believed that he was approaching the crossing of Owl Creek, near the right of the army as it was in the morning, and where he might expect trouble.

Captain Rowley delivered his orders and stated that it had been reported to Grant that he (Wallace) had declined to march without written orders, which according to Rowley, Wallace denounced as a "damned lie!" Wallace claimed that he had taken the "only road he knew anything about,"⁸⁷ leading in the direction of the right of the army. On learning the real situation, Wallace ordered his division to counter-march for the purpose of reaching the river road by a short-cut if possible. Captain Rowley remained with the division, acting as guide.

When Captain Rowley left the field with orders to Wallace, it was supposed that the head of the column would be found only a short distance north of Snake Creek bridge, and that Wallace would soon be in the precise position where he was expected to be, and where his presence was most needed. Two o'clock came, but no information from Wallace. Grant then sent two of the principal members of his staff, Colonel Rawlins, Assistant Adjutant General, and Colonel McPherson, Chief Engineer, to find the lost division.

These officers rode directly to Crump's Landing, not knowing whether the division had left its camp. Following directions given them there, they came upon the division counter-marching on a cross-road to the river road, at about three-thirty afternoon. Colonel Rawlins repeated to Wallace the reported refusal to march without written orders, and Wallace repeated the denial. In regard to the road taken, Wallace said, according to Rawlins, that his guide had misled him.

Soon after Rawlins and McPherson came up with the

⁸⁷ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, p. 180.

head of the column it was halted, as Rawlins states it, "for a considerable length of time, to enable it to close up and rest". There was another delay when near Snake Creek bridge "for full half an hour" while changing the position of the artillery in the column.⁸⁸

The three officers, Rawlins, McPherson, and Rowley, agree in stating that the march of the column was very slow, and that no urging of the terms of Grant's order or the seriousness of the situation seemed to have any effect. According to Rawlins, the speed was less than "a mile and a half an hour" after he joined the column, though "the roads were in fine condition; he was marching light; his men were in buoyant spirits, . . . and eager to get forward."⁸⁹

Whatever the form of the order from General Grant to General Wallace, and however it may have been interpreted, Wallace's march began from Stonylonesome at twelve o'clock, noon, with two brigades, over the Shunpike road toward Owl Creek bridge, the third brigade falling in the rear where the road intersects from Adamsville. Captain Rowley came up to the head of the column "at rest," north of and overlooking Clear Creek valley, not Owl Creek as Wallace supposed — he was still more than three miles from Owl Creek, and the rear of the column was still at Adamsville. The counter-march began from the north side of Clear Creek, at a point marked "Smith's" (Map VIII). It was necessary for the head of the column to march back about two and a half miles to find a cross-road, then about the same distance on the cross-road, before the rear could move; so it was well along in the afternoon when the last files of the third brigade left Adamsville. Colonel Rawlins and Colonel McPherson came up with Wallace on the cross-

⁸⁸ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 187.

⁸⁹ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part II, p. 188.

road at about three-thirty afternoon, as heretofore stated.

From a glance at the map (VIII) showing the roads north of Snake Creek and the relation of the roads to the battle field, it appears that the shortest possible route from Wallace's camps to the right of the army (as it was even on Sunday morning) was by the river road and Snake Creek bridge (Wallace bridge on map). Not only was the road by Owl Creek bridge much longer, but the crossing was more hazardous in case the enemy succeeded in securing the crossing and planting a battery, for the approach from the North was through a swampy valley, heavily timbered and with dense undergrowth, along a narrow road where deployment was impossible and where the column would be exposed to direct artillery fire for a distance of nearly a mile.

Had General Wallace been familiar with the roads covering the territory which it was his special province to guard, no guide could have misled him, and he would not have said that he was on "the *only road* he knew anything about". His position at Crump's Landing was as much exposed to attack as was the camp at Pittsburg Landing, and he was as likely to need support as he was to be called on for support. It was of the utmost importance for the safety of his own command that he know the shortest and best road between the two camps.

Forty years after the event General Wallace was forced to confess that he had all that time been laboring under a mistake as to the position of the head of his column when the order was given to counter-march. He had all this time supposed that he was overlooking Owl Creek at the right of Sherman's lines when Captain Rowley came up and found his division "at rest", while his cavalry was scouting to the front. Instead of overlooking Owl Creek, he was overlooking the valley of Clear Creek three or four

miles to the north. Of these facts General Wallace was convinced, not long before his death, by a personal inspection of the territory and the roads over which his division marched, in company with the Secretary and Historian of the Shiloh National Military Park Commission, several of his own officers, with citizens living in the locality, and with a Confederate cavalry officer who was watching his movements on that Sunday.

Strangely, General Wallace allowed this confessed error to stand in his *Autobiography*, with only partial correction.

It seems not to be generally known, though it has been matter of official record since 1863, that General Wallace in view of General Grant's criticism of his (Wallace's) conduct at Shiloh, asked of the Secretary of War a court of inquiry. The date of the request was July 18th, 1863; but on September 16th following, the Secretary of War was asked to "suspend action in the matter", General Wallace stating that he might be able to "satisfy General Grant upon the points involved".⁹⁰ It was on the advice of General Sherman that the request for a court of inquiry was withdrawn, and the request was never renewed, though General Grant had found no reason to modify his original criticism, down to the time of writing the chapter on Shiloh, for his *Memoirs*.⁹¹ After the writing of that chapter, however, a letter came into General Grant's hands, written by General Lew. Wallace to General W. H. L. Wallace, dated April 5, 1862 (correct date April 4th). In this letter General Grant finds reasons for "materially" modifying the criticisms upon General Wallace, as they appear in the chapter itself, appending a foot-note thereto by way of explanation.⁹²

⁹⁰ *War of the Rebellion: Official Records*, Series I, Vol. X, Part I, pp. 188-190.

⁹¹ *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, Vol. I, pp. 337-338.

⁹² *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, Vol. I, p. 351.

The writer hereof is impressed with the idea that it was the promptings of General Grant's generous nature, rather than the contents of the letter that prompted the foot-note. It is not entirely clear, in view of the admissions made by General Wallace in his *Autobiography*, that the letter from General Lew. Wallace to General W. H. L. Wallace does not furnish additional ground for censure. At the moment of writing the letter the author of it must have been "simmering" in his mind the knowledge that the Confederate army was then on the march to attack Grant; and yet there was no mention in the letter of that important fact. The reader must draw his own conclusions.

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