

A DOOR LEFT OPEN: THE FAILURE
OF THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT
TO ADEQUATELY DEFEND THE INLAND
RIVERS OF TENNESSEE

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GOVERNMENT TO ADEQUATELY DEFEND THE INLAND RIVERS OF TENNESSEE

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ABSTRACT

When Tennessee left the Union to join the Confederacy in June 1861, she quickly found that she had to secure her own northern border against invasion from the Union armies. One area which Tennessee had to fortify was the region which lay along the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers in Stewart County. These two rivers ran from their mouths at the Ohio River south into the heart of the Confederacy. Yet, to Confederate officials, these two waterways were considered of secondary importance and their defense was sadly neglected. I chose to write about the defense of the inland rivers and the battle of Fort Henry which resulted from that neglect because the reasons from the Southern attitude about the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers have never been fully explored and the significance of the battle of Fort Henry has not been adequately examined.

I began research for this project by reviewing several comprehensive Civil War histories which covered the entire war period in order to put the Fort Henry campaign into perspective. I then concentrated my research into the area of the Western campaign. Background and technical information was gathered from a variety of sources including journals, magazines, unpublished dissertations and biographies. The majority of material for this study came, however, from primary sources such as the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies and Navies, as well as from the National Archives, Washington, D. C. and the State Archives located in Nashville, Tennessee.

This study determined that Confederate civil and military officials were guilty of gross neglect in their attitude toward the

defense of the inland rivers. This neglect enabled the combined army and naval forces of General Ulysses Grant to seize Fort Henry on the Tennessee River with ease.

Even though the battle of Fort Henry was a minor engagement, the results of the Federal victory were of the utmost significance. The fall of Fort Henry gave the Federals possession of the Tennessee River all the way to Florence, Alabama. This opened the route for a Federal invasion of the deep South and forced the Confederates to evacuate their strongly fortified base at Bowling Green, Kentucky, leaving millions of dollars worth of supplies behind.

The Federal victory at Fort Henry gave Union soldiers renewed faith in their own ability to fight and more importantly, to win. It raised morale all over the North and greatly shored up the tottering Lincoln Administration. In the South, the defeat caused morale to ebb and brought about the first discernable cracks in the wall of support for President Davis. This campaign also showed the weakness of the command structure within the Confederate army in the West.

The capture of Fort Henry also had two major significances on the outcome of the Civil War. First, it kept the nations of Europe from seriously considering giving official recognition to the Confederate government. Without this recognition the Confederacy could not exist for an extended period of time. Secondly, the Fort Henry campaign laid the foundation for General Grant's fame as a national hero. This short battle in which the army took no active part caused the President of the United States to look favorably at Grant and set the stage for him to become commander of all the Federal armies.

The total losses in killed and wounded on both sides during

the battle of Fort Henry barely exceeded one hundred men. The battle lasted less than two hours but the outcome of the engagement changed the entire military situation within the Western theater. Grant moved into the public eye and the Federal Armies seized the initiative which carried them through an uninterrupted series of victories in Tennessee during the remainder of 1862.

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A THESIS

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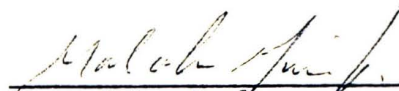
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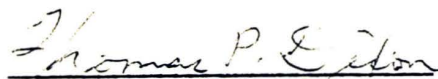
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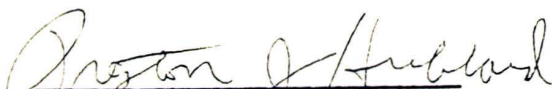
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Thesis written by Hal F. Sharpe entitled "A Door Left Open: The Failure of the Confederate Government to Adequately Defend the Inland Rivers of Tennessee." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in History.


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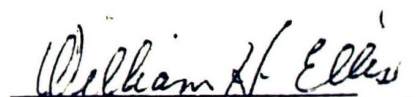

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INTRODUCTION

Practically hidden among the trees and undergrowth of the east bank of Kentucky Lake, about three miles south of the Kentucky State Line, stands a deserted row of rifle pits. Along a nearby pathway, gleaming metal signs tell hikers and tourists small bits of information about the history of the area. That's all that remains today of the once formidable Tennessee River bastion, Fort Henry. The fort itself was flooded some years ago by the Tennessee Valley Authority when the Tennessee River was blocked to form Kentucky Lake. Directly across the lake from the rifle pits, standing atop Stewarts' Hill, are the remains of Fort Heiman--the companion work to Fort Henry. Fort Heiman, little more than mounds of earth in the woods now, belongs to Mr. Albert Wynn Jackson. Mr. Jackson, for reasons of privacy, does not publicize the existence of the fort, and its exact location is not even known to most of the local residents.

About twelve miles east, on Highway 79, at the Visitor's Center of the Fort Donelson National Military Park, Park Rangers sell a small booklet which gives a brief glimpse of the history of Fort Henry. Little else remains to attest that Fort Henry ever existed or that anything of importance ever happened in the area around Kentucky Lake.

Yet during the cold rainy day of early February, 1862, General Ulysses Grant, along with the fleet of Flag Officer Andrew Foote, stormed up the swollen Tennessee River in a lightning move, and literally shattered Tennessee's main line of defense with the capture of Forts Henry and Heiman. The bold offensive move forced the Confederates to evacuate

their great base at Bowling Green, leaving millions of dollars in supplies behind. Further, it opened the way for the invasion of the heartland-- one of the South's main sources of food, forage, livestock and manpower-- and severed rail communications between the two halves of Johnston's Army. The capture also provided a staging area for the campaign against Fort Donelson and vaulted General Grant into the public eye.

In terms of significance, Fort Henry should be considered one of the more important campaigns during the Civil War, but that is not the case. Most Civil War history books dismiss the campaign in a few paragraphs, or simply fail to mention it at all. The fact is that not one significant work has ever been written about Forts Henry and Heiman. This area of Civil War history is interesting, has value to scholars, and does not deserve such neglect.

Fort Henry was not always neglected, however. For several weeks during February, 1862, the stories which came out of the Fort Henry Campaign were on the front pages of prominent newspapers throughout the country. As the war dragged on, however, the name of Fort Henry became buried amid the names of other more famous battles such as Fredricksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg and Cold Harbor. Today, when the name of Fort Henry is mentioned, the most often comments are "Where is that?", or, "Oh, that's in Maryland!", or still worse, "That's where the 'Star Spangled Banner' was written."

In fact, Fort Henry has only suffered to an extreme degree the anonymity which fell over the entire Army of Tennessee after the Civil War ended. With the exception of a few good books by Stanley Horn and Thomas Connelly, and some regimental histories and printed reminiscences, the history of the Army of Tennessee for the most part has gone unwritten.

There are at least three main reasons for the lack of good historical writing concerning the Army of Tennessee. First, the Virginia battlefields are located near major population centers in the East. These battlefields are well marked and easily accessible to visitors, and have been for many years. This is not the case with many of the western battlefields. Secondly, the Army of Northern Virginia had many soldiers within its ranks who came from the cream of Southern society. It has been called "an army of planters' sons." These men were of gentle nature and had knightly manners. They represented the best of what most Southerners like to see in themselves. The western army, on the other hand, was considered to be made up of rougher, coarser, tobacco-chewing farmers. Such men seldom attract much extreme attention. The third reason for the lack of interest in the Army of Tennessee lies in the fact that primary source material on the subject is widely dispersed and often inaccessible. Many of the records and diaries pertaining to the Army were either destroyed or captured and carried off to the North as trophies of war. Part of the problem lies also with the states of the old Second Department. Unlike Virginia, they failed to provide adequate financing in the post-war period for the collection and preservation of papers and records.

Given the limited availability of primary source material, this thesis is an attempt to document and analyze the history of the Confederate defense of the inland rivers of Tennessee with particular emphasis on Forts Henry and Heiman. The purpose is to determine why such a strategic location as Fort Henry was so poorly located and so sadly neglected. Since politics instead of practical military considerations shaped the building of the Tennessee Line in 1861, those political events will first be examined.

Next, a detailed account of the history of the forts themselves will be given. This account will include the construction and garrisoning of both forts, as well as the combat operations along the Tennessee River during 1861 and early 1862. The effectiveness of Confederate commanders and Confederate strategy will be evaluated and information included on the vital details such as weaponry, logistics, training and morale, which make up the very fabric of military operations. In this section, I hope to finally resolve the previously unanswered question about the origins of the heavy ordnance at Fort Henry. In conclusion, the significance of the battle and its aftermath will be examined. Here the military and political consequences of the Fort Henry Campaign will be evaluated in the light of their bearing on future Civil War operations.

Chapter 1

GOVERNOR ISHAM G. HARRIS AND THE POLITICS BEHIND THE BUILDING OF THE TENNESSEE LINE

The secession in the States of the deep South immediately after Abraham Lincoln's election caused political turmoil within Tennessee. The majority of the people of the state were opposed to any political extreme and were, for the most part, displeased when the secession movement was launched by South Carolina. Yet, Tennessee was bound to the other Southern states by strong cultural and economic ties, as well as by the question of states' rights. In January, 1861, Governor Isham G. Harris recommended that a convention be called to consider whether Tennessee should join the States of the deep South. The legislature, in special session, decided instead to hold a referendum to determine if the convention should be called. Accordingly, on February 9, 1861, the referendum was held, and the proposal was rejected by over 11,000 votes.¹ The results of the special election are even more interesting if viewed by section. In East Tennessee, the bid to call a secession convention was defeated by a majority of 25,532 out of a total vote of 41,066. In Middle Tennessee, the Unionists also scored a victory, but by a much narrower margin. Out of 55,066 votes cast, the margin was only 1,382. West Tennessee, on the other hand, favored a convention by a majority of 14,759 out of a total vote of 30,487. Clearly then, only West Tennessee favored the move to leave the Union in February. Yet, even this support was not unanimous. The counties of Carroll, Henderson, Decatur and

McNairy, all situated on or near the Tennessee River in Southwest Tennessee, voted against calling the secession convention. In Middle Tennessee, Davidson County, which included Nashville, also voted against the secession convention.²

For a time, the secession movement was quieted, but then, on April 15, 1861, following the attack on Fort Sumter, Lincoln issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion. Federal Secretary of War, Simon Cameron, followed Lincoln's appeal with a message asking Governor Harris to furnish two regiments of state militia for federal service. Harris was outraged, and in his reply to Lincoln, said, "In such an unholy crusade no gallant son of Tennessee will ever draw his sword." He followed with an even stronger message to Cameron, stating, "Tennessee will not furnish a single man for purposes of coercion, but 50,000, if necessary, for the defense of our rights and those of our Southern brothers."³

Lincoln's call for troops caused practically all of the Unionists of Middle and West Tennessee to switch allegiance and favor secession. B. W. Binkley, a Unionist leader from Middle Tennessee summed up the situation by his comment:

I was for Union so long as there was any hope of our remaining in it with peace and honor. When Lincoln issued his proclamation calling for 75,000 troops to whip in the Seceded States, I was satisfied that day had passed, and now--though not what you'd term a regular Secessionist--I am the most uncompromising rebel you ever knew....⁴

John Bell, former presidential candidate and acknowledged leader of the Unionists of the entire state, in a speech in Nashville on April 23, 1861, said that the "time for action in the South had arrived and he was for standing by the South...."⁵

On April 30, 1861, sensing Tennessee's change of attitude,

Governor Harris sent W. C. Whitthorne, Speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives, to confer with President Jefferson Davis in Montgomery. The purpose of Whitthorne's visit was to discuss common military objectives and set the machinery in motion for a Military League between Tennessee and the Confederate states.⁶

Since the people of Tennessee had shown in February that they were not ready to join the Confederacy, Governor Harris and the secession bloc, headed by such men as Felix Zollicoffer; editor of the Nashville Republican Banner, and Gustavus A. Henry, a prominent citizen of Clarksville, devised a clever plan designed to create an independent Tennessee. The secessionists reasoned that many people who opposed joining the Confederacy might not feel so strongly against an independent state. After an "Independent Tennessee" had been achieved, the next step in the plan called for convincing the population that the state faced the imminent danger of a Federal invasion, and their best hope for successful defense was to join the Confederate States.

In order to put the plan into effect, Harris called the legislature into special session on April 25, 1861. Since the Lincoln call for troops had disillusioned many of the Unionists, the timing seemed right. In a speech before the legislature, Harris called for a Declaration of Independence from the Union. In order to appease Constitutionlists in the group, Harris maintained that Lincoln had "so perverted the Constitution" that the Union, as originally conceived, no longer existed. Confederate Commissioner Henry W. Hilliard, who accompanied Speaker Whitthorne back from Montgomery, then spoke to the gathering and pledged the complete support of the Confederate Government. Harris and his associates strongly stressed the threat of a Federal move down the

Mississippi River and, in order to gain the support of Nashville, invented the myth that the Capital City was invincible. The tactics worked and, during a secret session of the General Assembly on May 6, 1861, the group passed the "Declaration of Independence and Ordinance" from the Union. This declaration was subject to ratification by the voters on June 8, 1861. The Secessionists were careful to separate, at least on the surface, the ideas of Tennessee independence and entrance into the Confederate States. Accordingly, they persuaded the legislature to authorize a second vote to be taken on the same date to determine whether, if independence were ratified, Tennessee should become a full member of the Confederate States. This provided voters three choices. They could choose to remain in the Union, become independent, or become independent and then join the Confederate States.⁷

Unfortunately, Harris' strategy in taking Tennessee out of the Union was to have a strongly adverse affect on future military affairs. First, the Secessionists played on the fear of an invasion down the Mississippi River in order to emphasize the isolated condition of Tennessee as a border state. The Tennessee House of Representatives reacted to the threat on April 29, 1861, by authorizing the Governor to send such aid as he deemed advisable to protect the city of Columbus, Kentucky, from a Federal invasion down the Mississippi. On May 3, 1861, the Senate succumbed to the fear of invasion by asking that a large force of troops be sent to Union City, because of the large number of Black Republican troops now in occupation of the city of Cairo, Illinois. On May 8, 1861, Harris capitalized on the seizure at Cairo of a boat owned by a Tennessee firm, and aroused the old fear of interference with free navigation of the Mississippi. Perhaps, in attempting to stress the weakness of the

Mississippi River line as a reason for joining the Confederacy, the legislature itself had become intrigued with the defense of that area. These fears of a Mississippi River invasion, which were planted by politicians in 1861, became a major source of propaganda for the Mississippi River Bloc. This group, made up of politicians, influential citizens and even senior military officers, was so completely dedicated to the total defense of the Mississippi River that they seriously damaged efforts to adequately fortify the rest of the Tennessee line. As a result of their political power, defenses along the Mississippi River were needlessly duplicated, while those on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers were practically nonexistent.

The next step, in the move for an Independent Tennessee, was the signing of a Military League between the State and the Confederacy. On May 7, 1861, Harris appointed Gustavus Henry, Archibald O. W. Trotten and Washington Barrow as "Commissioners on the part of Tennessee" and sent them to meet in Nashville with Commissioner Henry W. Hilliard. The purpose of the meeting was to sign the League Agreement. The agreement was ratified the same day by the state legislature and by the Confederate Congress on May 15, 1861.⁹ Harris' strategy in forming a league with the Confederacy seemed to have been to make it more difficult for the voters to say no to independence in the June referendum. By concluding the Military League, Harris was also paving the way for Tennessee's formal entrance into the Confederacy later.

Harris' strategy, in this case, may have been politically expedient, but militarily, it was very weak. Under the terms of the League Agreement, the military forces of Tennessee were to be controlled by the Confederate Government, and both the Confederate and State Governments

were to provide for Tennessee's common defense. The problem with the agreement arose from the fact that the Confederates were busily engaged elsewhere, and the Confederate command was not really established in Tennessee until July, when General Leonidas Polk arrived to assume temporary command of the Second Department. This situation was only symptomatic of the condition that was to exist between Tennessee and the Confederate authorities throughout the war. The responsibility then, for defending Tennessee, fell upon state authorities and, in May, the State was without an armed force. The Tennessee state Militia had been abolished in 1857. Fortunately, the legislature, on May 6, 1861, had enacted a bill which allowed the Governor "to raise, organize, and equip a provisional force of 55,000 volunteers for the defense of state."¹⁰

In the summer of 1861, Tennessee had little problem in recruiting volunteers. The real problem, however, was the lack of arms within the State.

Harris had been aware of the lack of arms within his State well before the League Agreement with the Confederate states was concluded. Tennessee, unlike several of the other Southern states, had no Federal arsenal from which to seize arms, and the few weapons available in the state arsenal were antiques. They consisted of approximately 8,000 flintlock muskets, of which more than half were damaged, 350 badly damaged Halls' carbines, 185 percussion muskets, and various other small arms. Field artillery was also almost nonexistent. In a telegram to Jefferson Davis on April 30, 1861, he stated that, "Unfortunately, we have delayed the important work of arming our State until it is difficult, if not impossible, to procure arms. If you have a surplus, we shall be happy to procure them."¹¹

Commissioner Hilliard had promised that, as soon as the Confederate Government ratified the League, Tennessee would be supplied with enough arms "to put the State on a war footing."

Volunteers began to flow into the training camps, but the Confederate Government failed to provide the promised arms. The state felt betrayed, and in late May, Harris complained to Secretary of War, Leroy P. Walker, that raising troops was no problem, but that the state could not arm even the token regiments which had volunteered.¹² In June, the Confederate Government sent 4,000 muskets to Tennessee, but stipulated that the arms were to be used only by regiments which were to be mustered into Confederate service. Harris complained bitterly to General Gideon Pillow that he felt, "much embarrassed with the unreasonable restrictions imposed." Harris asked Secretary Walker to relax the restrictions on the use of Confederate weapons, but Walker refused. Another problem which state authorities found themselves facing was the reluctance of regiments which volunteered for state service to enter the Confederate army. In fact, on May 28, 1861, Harris confessed to Walker that he could not induce a single regiment to go into Confederate service. Thus, troops had to be raised especially for Confederate service, the Confederate weapons lay idle, and state troops went unarmed.¹³

The situation regarding arms continued to worsen as Confederate authorities again intervened and created problems. Not only were the arms sent to Tennessee designated for Confederate troops only, but the regiments first armed were sent to the Virginia front. Some Tennessee companies not only refused to leave the state, but declined to serve unless provided with the same equipment as those going to Virginia. Tennessee regiments fretted at the delay in receiving arms, and as a result, the

general morale of the troops suffered greatly.

The only helpful suggestion received from Secretary Walker was that Harris should attempt to arm his troops with the country rifle, since "many of your citizens are habituated to the use of the rifle." Walker pointed out that it was the rifle which won victory for Tennessee at King's Mountain. Unfortunately, most of the country rifles in Tennessee were old enough to have been at the battle of King's Mountain. Also, the country rifles were made in many calibers, and were in need of repair. The state Arsenal in May, 1861 lacked the facilities needed to alter and repair these old "fireplace decorations."

The combination of failure of the Confederate Government to provide sufficient arms to equip Confederate regiments and to provide any arms at all for state regiments were key factors in explaining the weakness of the Tennessee defensive line in the Summer of 1861. The arms problem only foreshadowed a similar situation General Albert Sidney Johnston would face later. Harris' Provisional Army looked impressive on paper, but was almost totally unarmed.¹⁴

The special election of June 8, 1861, showed that the Lincoln proclamation had destroyed much of the Unionism in Tennessee, and that Harris had done his work well. The results were an overwhelming success for Harris' forces, who received 104,913 votes for "separation" from the Union, while foes of secession accumulated only 47,238. On the question of whether to join the Confederate states, 104,102 voted for the measure, while 47,364 voted against it. The majority of Davidson County residents voted for both measures, but again the residents of Lower Tennessee River joined most of East Tennessee, and voted against both secession and joining the Confederacy.¹⁵

While Harris' main interest throughout the spring and early summer of 1861 had been in persuading Tennessee's population to allow the state to join the Confederacy, he now turned to the task of being re-elected to a second term as Governor of the State. The Unionists, after fumbling about for a time, selected William H. Polk, brother of the former President, to be Harris' opponent.

Harris saw in the gubernatorial campaign the opportunity to use, once again, the disposition of troops and defenses as a political weapon. Drawing much of his support from the Mississippi Valley, Harris promised the population of West Tennessee a strong defense, and allowed officials in Memphis complete freedom in the expenditure of State funds to build fortifications.

Another area which Harris considered vital to his re-election was Nashville. Nashville and Davidson County had voted against calling a secession convention in February, and in May, when the legislature approved a bill to submit the independence measures to a popular referendum, both the Senator and the Representatives from Davidson County voted against the measure. Harris had originally secured the support of the area by creating the idea that Nashville was invulnerable to attack. He used the same tactics again in his re-election campaign to maintain the support of the city.¹⁶ Again, his tactics were successful and Governor Harris defeated Polk by a vote of 73,083 to 42,416. The re-election of Harris insured a vigorous war policy within the State, but his election tactics had a detrimental effect on the defenses of the State. Harris had committed the State to massive defenses on the Mississippi River, and convinced the people of Nashville that strong defenses were not needed.¹⁷

Harris was one of the most energetic war governors in the South.

He not only led his State out of the Union, but proceeded to build the Provisional Army of Tennessee, which was one of the best organized state forces in the South. This Army was to become the nucleus of Albert Sydney Johnston's Army of Tennessee.

Despite his energy and selfless devotion to the cause of secession, Harris exhibited several weaknesses which did harm to the defense of the Tennessee Line, and in particular, to the defenses of Middle Tennessee. Harris had no military experience, yet he devised a grand strategy for the state's defense without correlating his activities with the Confederate Government. He also possessed a naive trust in his own plans, as well as in the officers who did not merit his trust. One such officer was Gideon Pillow, who Harris commissioned a Major General and gave command of the Provisional Army.¹⁸ Pillow was a Democratic politician from Memphis, and had been influential in securing the Presidential nomination for James K. Polk in 1844. During the Mexican War, Polk had rewarded Pillow by making him a Major General of volunteers. Pillow was noted for insatiable egotism and insubordination. Possessing only mediocre military ability, he had nevertheless attempted in 1847 to cast himself as the hero of the campaign against Mexico City. Pillow's conduct incurred the disdain of most of the officers of the Regular Army. They considered Pillow to be incompetent, and a spy for President Polk. Pillow's conduct was erratic. He could be valorous, as in leading his division in a charge at Chapultepec, but he also was overly sensitive.¹⁹

Harris maintained for himself the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Provisional Army, and in this position, wielded strong influence concerning the disposition of defenses for the State. Both Harris and Pillow were personally committed to the defenses of the Mississippi River,

so the political promises made to the people of the Mississippi Valley earlier in the year were easy to keep. Harris' faith in Pillow caused him to give Pillow complete freedom to take such steps as he thought necessary in order to protect the territory of Tennessee from invasion.

The result of Harris and Pillow's commitment to the Mississippi Valley, along with political pressure from that area, was an unbalanced Tennessee Line with most of the forces concentrated along the western border. In May and June 1861, Harris placed 15,000 troops along the Mississippi River and began construction of Forts Harris, Wright, Pillow, and also defenses at Memphis itself. To hold the entire line in East Tennessee, General Zollicoffer was sent with only some poorly armed regiments, containing less than 4,000 men.²⁰

Nashville quickly became the main supply depot for the Provisional Army, and the factories of the city turned out clothing, harnesses, gunpowder, cannons, and most of the other necessities of the war, except for small arms. The city also contained a warehouse for the Confederate Army in Virginia. Food, blankets and clothing for the Virginia forces was gathered and stored in Nashville, because this city was centrally located and also was one of the largest in the South. Yet Nashville and all of Middle Tennessee was guarded by less than four thousand men. This area, which included the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers, suffered most from Harris' political tactics earlier during the year, and now that war had come, they were to suffer his neglect. Harris recognized the fact that these two rivers offered possible invasion routes, and in May, he had initiated surveys for defensive positions on both rivers, yet he did nothing to see that the works were completed. Failure to comprehend the extent of the threat to Middle Tennessee, and to oversee the completion

of the inland river forts, was probably Harris' most serious blunder as Commander of the State Army.²¹

The Governor's lack of interest in defenses for the inland rivers was due, in part, to his belief that the neutrality of Kentucky made such defenses unnecessary. Kentucky was a slave state, and closely akin in soil, climate and social system to the rest of the South. Her governor, Beriah Magoffin, was an avowed Secessionist, yet the State's geographical position placed her between the North and South. Both the Union and the Confederate states were anxious to gain a hold in Kentucky, because the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers both crossed the state. Magoffin, realizing that Union sentiment within Kentucky prevented her entrance into the Confederacy, steered a course of neutrality. On May 20, 1861, the two houses of the Kentucky state legislature agreed, and the State adopted an official position of neutrality. Magoffin then issued a warning to the warring governments that neither Federal nor Confederate troops were permitted to enter the State.²² Harris wrote to Pillow that he was satisfied that "the Federal Government will not attempt to quarter troops in Kentucky." He also warned Pillow to be extremely careful not to violate Kentucky's neutrality by sending troops into that State.²³

In relying on the neutrality of Kentucky as a buffer zone for the defense of the inland rivers and Middle Tennessee, Harris took a dangerous gamble. With no adequate defensive works, and with few men and still fewer weapons, there was nothing to prevent the complete Federal subjugation of all Middle Tennessee, if Kentucky neutrality evaporated.

Neutrality in Kentucky was short lived and began to come to an end with the Congressional election of June 20, 1861. The election was a struggle between Federal and Confederate factions, and resulted in a

resounding victory for pro-Union candidates. Unionists carried nine of the ten districts, and public opinion began to shift more and more in the Federal favor. Major General Simon B. Buckner, a Souther sympathizer, resigned as Inspector General of the pro-Southern Kentucky State Guard and moved to Tennessee. Shortly thereafter, the Guard was disbanded and many of its members followed Buckner. Lincoln, sensing that the State was leaning heavily toward the Union in August, sent U.S. Navy Lieutenant William Nelson into Kentucky to begin recruiting regiments for an operation into East Tennessee.²⁴ Harris, aware of Union activity within Kentucky, should have realized by this time that his plan to use Kentucky as a buffer was a failure, but still he took no action to increase the defenses of Middle Tennessee. During the entire period between May and September, no attempts were made to construct any defenses at Nashville, and no effort was put forth to complete other defenses in Middle Tennessee.²⁵

In defense of Harris, it should be stated that as of July 1861, the troops in Middle Tennessee fell under the tacit control of the Confederate Government, and Harris did not feel that he was authorized to give them orders. It was at this time, General Polk assumed command in Memphis. Harris contacted Confederate officials and unsuccessfully attempted to turn over military control of Middle Tennessee to General Polk.²⁶ Still, Harris was in charge of troops Middle and East Tennessee. His failure to act in an aggressive manner to provide adequate forces for these two areas cannot be explained.

Events throughout the summer and fall combined to draw attention away from the defense of the inland rivers. First, Harris' preoccupation with the defenses of the Mississippi River, and his confidence in Kentucky's neutrality, induced him to contemplate an offensive campaign into

Missouri. Harris correctly regarded the threat of a Federal invasion down the Mississippi River as real, but he believed they would by-pass Kentucky and come down the west bank of the river. Harris proposed to Pillow, in June, that the forces of Tennessee should themselves cross the Mississippi River, and move up the west bank to Birds Point, Missouri.²⁷ Birds Point was probably chosen as Harris' objective because it would help Southerners in Missouri, and it was also located almost directly across the river from Cairo, Illinois, where Union forces were gathering. In any event, the Provisional Army was in no condition to assume an offensive and such an ill conceived adventure only served to further draw attention away from the preparation of defenses along the inland rivers.

The need to put down the rebellion in East Tennessee during the fall also drew still more attention away from the inland forts. Before Harris' re-election in August, he had been tolerant in his attitude toward the Loyalists. After the election, however, he assumed a harsher attitude, and this helped to cause open rebellion. Quelling the rebellion required troops, equipment and arms, which were badly needed at the inland rivers and other defensive points along the Tennessee Line. Regiments had to be sent to East Tennessee to guard the single rail line which connected Tennessee with Virginia, and men who otherwise may have been persuaded eventually to join the Confederate Army became ardent Loyalists.²⁸

While Governor Harris must shoulder much of the blame for failure to adequately defend the inland rivers during the summer of 1861, part of the blame, at least where the Tennessee River is concerned, must be shared by the population living along its banks. The geography of the Tennessee River actually helped to create a state of apathy about the defense of the river. While the Tennessee River was navigable in places all the way from

its mouth on the Ohio River to Knoxville in East Tennessee, there were places where river conditions discouraged the use of large craft. West of Chattanooga, the Tennessee River ran through the gorge of the Cumberland Mountains, and here was a series of whirlpools, sucks, sandbars and shoals which even the best of boatmen feared. Further down the river, at Big Muscle Shoals, the river fell eighty-five feet within fifteen miles over a series of cascades and flint shoals. These locations effectively blocked the use of the river by an invading Army, thereby lessening the demand for strong river defenses.²⁹

In the areas where the Tennessee River flows through Southwest Tennessee, the topsoil is generally thin and sandy. It was unsuited to the production of cotton, and so discouraged the use of slaves. The majority of the people of this area were poor non-slaveholding farmers, and were strong Union supporters. The counties south of such river towns as Decatur became centers for guerrilla warfare against the slaveholding planters. These counties were also excellent areas for Union recruiting. Robert P. Blount wrote to the new Confederate Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin, in January 1862, that companies of Union men had been raised in Greene and the adjoining county, and there was fear that they would attempt to rescue prisoners of war at Tuscaloosa. Tory activity was of such concern to the river people that many of them were afraid to be outspoken in their support of the Confederate cause for fear of reprisals. Landlocked by the shoals and harassed by Unionist raiders, the Confederates of this area had little inclination to lobby for fortifications on the Tennessee.³⁰

It is not difficult to understand why the people who lived along the Tennessee above Muscle Shoals were not vocal in their desires for

strong fortifications along the Tennessee, but from Florence to the Ohio River, the Tennessee was navigable throughout the year and could easily be traveled by an invading Union river force. In several of the cities below Muscle Shoals, pro-Southern citizen groups were formed and at least two such groups, headed by Samuel D. Weakley and F. G. Norman, did advocate strong defenses for the Tennessee. On May 17, 1861, Norman wrote to Secretary of War Walker and decried the defenseless condition of the Tennessee River. In November of that same year, Weakley and his group offered assistance to General Polk, and Weakley was responsible for raising most of the troops and labor used to build the defenses along the west bank of the Tennessee opposite Fort Henry. Still, the majority of the people who lived in the river counties were not concerned with any Confederate defenses, for this region, like its Alabama neighbor, was strong Union country. The people of Carroll, Henderson, Decatur and McNairy Counties had supported Bell in the presidential election of 1860, and had opposed secession in February and again in June. Throughout the war, sporadic guerrilla activity took place in the swampy areas of the Tennessee Valley. Henderson, Hardin, Wayne and Decatur Counties were known as spawning grounds for guerrilla movements.³²

In summation, Governor Harris campaigned to bring Tennessee into the Confederacy, but in doing so he seriously undermined efforts to successfully defend the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers. First, he fostered the idea of an invasion down the Mississippi River until the idea became an obsession. Second, he created the illusion that Nashville, capital city of the State and storehouse for the Provisional Army, was invulnerable. After the State left the Union and Harris became the Commander-in-Chief of the State Army, he created an unbalanced line of

defense which greatly favored the Mississippi River interests and left the inland rivers practically defenseless.

Harris also relied on the naive conception that Kentucky's period of neutrality would prevent Federal troops from invading Middle Tennessee. He even considered offensive operations into Missouri instead of concentrating his efforts on building effective defenses throughout the Tennessee Line. Once Harris realized that Kentucky had sided with the Union, he still failed to see that the defenses along the two primary invasion routes into Middle Tennessee, the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers, were adequately defended. If one man can be said to be responsible for the defenseless conditions of the inland river forts during most of 1861, that man is certainly Isham G. Harris.

Chapter 2

EARLY PREPARATIONS FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE INLAND RIVERS

Despite the preoccupation of Governor Isham Harris with the defense of the Mississippi River, he still realized that the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers offered possible invasion routes into Middle Tennessee. He, therefore, determined that the building of forts along these two rivers was necessary.

In May, 1861, Harris selected Adna Anderson to conduct the initial surveys for the inland river fortifications. Anderson was one of the South's most noted and able civil engineers. Prior to 1861, he had already built several rail lines and had been the receiver of the Edgefield and Kentucky Railroad which, at the time of the Civil War, ran from Nashville to Guthrie, Kentucky. Thus, he was familiar with the topography of the area.

General Daniel S. Donelson, Adjutant-General of the State, was selected to oversee the entire project. Donelson encouraged the building of these forts in Kentucky as he considered the terrain superior, but Harris refused, not wanting to allow such a violation of Kentucky's neutrality. The ideal position for both works would have been at a point near the mouth of the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers, just south of Paducah and Smithland, Kentucky. There the two rivers came within three miles of each other and the two forts would have been close enough to render mutual support.

With instructions to place the inland river forts within the boundaries of Tennessee, Anderson recruited a survey crew in Nashville. In his team was Private Wilbur F. Foster, Company C, 1st Tennessee Infantry. Before the war, Foster was a trained surveyor and topographer.¹

The work on the Cumberland was called Ft. Donelson, after the general who superintended the project. The Tennessee River fort was named Fort Henry, after Gustavus A. Henry. Henry, it will be recalled, was a strong supporter of Governor Harris in the fight over secession in Tennessee. No record was found as to who selected the name for the forts.

On May 10, 1861, Anderson selected the location for Fort Donelson and completed the surveys for what later became the Water Battery. The site chosen for the fort lay on the west bank of the Cumberland, about one mile above Dover, Tennessee. The selection of this position proved to be very sound because, located forty feet above the normal water level, the fort's guns had complete command of the river.²

The survey party then proceeded west to the Tennessee River. The survey crew examined the entire area, made careful surveys, and decided upon a point just "below the mouth of Standing Stone Creek and nearly opposite the mouth of Sandy (River)." Foster noted that in their surveys, "great care was taken to ascertain true high water mark and note the conditions which would exist in time of flood."³

While both banks of the Tennessee River are within the boundaries at a site selected by Anderson, below that point, the river forms the boundary between the two states for a distance of about seven miles and then is entirely within the boundaries of Kentucky.

Meanwhile, in Nashville, Governor Harris had made Bushrod Rust Johnson a Major in the Provisional Army, and appointed him to the post of

State Chief Engineer. Johnson had attended West Point, and graduated in the Class of 1840. He had lived in Nashville for a number of years, and had been a teacher at the University of Nashville. Since he had seen service in the Mexican War, and the State was almost without military engineers, Johnson appeared to be a logical choice.

On May 28th, Johnson proceeded to the Tennessee River for the purpose of replacing Anderson. Johnson and Anderson inspected the proposed sites and Johnson received all the maps, plans and the results of the surveys conducted by Foster. At that point, Johnson assumed further responsibilities for direction of the works on the inland river defenses. Anderson and Foster departed for duties elsewhere.⁴

Not much is known concerning Johnson's engineering capabilities before the Civil War, but he was certainly responsible for a blunder of the first magnitude at Fort Henry. He began by making another examination of Anderson's proposed site, which was referred to in letters as Coleman's Landing. The newly appointed Major felt this site was unsuitable, because there were heights in back of the landing that would command any work that could be built there and a large force of infantry would be required to defend the area. Johnson then proceeded by steamer down river and found what he considered a superior site at Kirkman's Old Landing. Apparently this site had also been considered by Anderson, but rejected for some reason. The immediate problem with the Kirkman's Landing site was that the opposite bank was on Kentucky soil, whereas the opposite bank from the Coleman site was within the boundary of Tennessee. Still considering the Kirkman site superior, Johnson examined the Meigs and Cooper Code of State of Tennessee and found, on page 82, the Tennessee River was subject to the common use and concurrent jurisdiction of the two States so far

as it formed the common boundary. Johnson reasoned then, that the placing of the fort at Kirkman's Landing would not violate the neutrality of Kentucky.

Apparently the main reason Johnson favored the Kirkman site over Coleman's Landing was primarily on account of the rear defenses. In selecting the new site, Johnson failed to mention one good feature. The new site was located at a slight bend in the river which would give the guns almost complete command of the river for two miles.

When Governor Harris decided to build forts on the inland rivers, he also sent several militia companies from Nashville to the Tennessee River to build the works once a site was selected. Because of the confusion as to the location of the fort, most of the troops were at Coleman's Landing while the guards and provisions were at Kirkman's Landing. Johnson appealed to Harris for a final decision, stating that he thought:

Kirkman's Landing is much superior to it (Coleman's Landing) in a military point of view. However, if the mere moral effect of a battery, with troops, is all that will be needed, of course Coleman's Landing will do. But no one knows this. At present, I have no other alternatives, but to go on and fortify Coleman's Landing or wait for your orders to move the troops to Kirkman's Landing. Too much delay has already occurred.⁵

On June 14th, Harris sent a letter to Johnson telling him that he much preferred a location where both river banks were under the jurisdiction of Tennessee, but Johnson had the responsibility for selecting the best site. Once Johnson made his final selection, he was to erect fortifications.⁶

Major Johnson's decision to relocate Fort Henry was supported by General Donelson. Donelson was particularly impressed with the fact that the Tennessee River fort would be only twelve miles east of the Cumberland

River work and could be of mutual support in the event of attack.⁷

In order to properly understand the exact geographical position of Fort Henry, one needs only to refer to a letter written by Colonel Adolphus Heiman to General Polk on October 18, 1861. Excerpts from that letter are included here to describe that position:

Fort Henry is situated on the east bank of Tennessee River, about one mile north of the offset in the boundary line of the State on its western extension. It is 20 miles below Danville, where the Memphis, Louisville and Nashville Railroad crosses the Tennessee, and 60 miles above Paducah. The river at this point is 1,260 feet wide....

The head of the island is $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the fort. The island is 1 mile in length and about 350 feet in width, and is heavily timbered. The Channel is 700 feet in width. The chute between the island and the Kentucky shore is not navigable except when the river is very high.

The valley in which the fort is situated is parallel with the river, about 7 miles in length and from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles, where the valley is narrowed by projecting spurs to about 350 yards.

The hills on the east outlying this valley have a steep acclivity to a height of 80 to 100 feet in a horizontal distance of 300 feet. These hills are spurs from a dividing ridge distant from the bank of the river from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 miles. This ridge is about 350 feet above low water, and divides the waters of the Tennessee from the Cumberland River.

The hills of the greatest elevation fronting upon the river are south of the fort about 3 miles and distant from the river about a mile. Two hills within $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the fort attain the height of 220 feet above the crest of the parapet, but owing to the heaviness of the timber between them and the fort, they can be of little advantage to an enemy.

There is also a ridge northeast of the fort about 3,000 feet distant, with an elevation of 60 feet above the parapet, which furnishes an effective basis of operations if the fort should be attacked by land forces. From low-water mark to high-water mark is 44 feet.

At the high stage of the river the water backs up into Panther Creek on the north and Lost Creek on the south $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and at this stage the lower part of the fort is not free from overflow, being 7 feet 6 inches lower than the highest part. The leading roads begin to ascend the hills in about half a mile from the river, and are generally located on the summits of the ridges, are gravelly, and generally very good.

This is the topography around the fort on the east bank (Tennessee side) of the river.

On the west bank of the river (Kentucky side) the valley extends northwards to the mouth of Blood River, about 9 miles from the fort, and to the southward only about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles.

The hills outlying this valley are distant from the river

at the south only 80 yards, just opposite the fort only 700 yards, and thence recede to a general distance of $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 mile.

The hill abutting on the river on the south side of the fort and on the west bank is distant from the fort 1,500 yards and is 170 feet above the crest of the parapet. Across the summit of this hill runs the dividing line between Tennessee and Kentucky. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile north of this hill and about 1 mile from and immediately opposite the fort, is a hill 250 feet above the crest of the parapet, from which a spur projects to a distance of 3,000 feet from the fort, with an elevation of 80 feet, which, from its flanking position and the nature of the ground, may be easily fortified.

These hills I consider the really dangerous points, and proper batteries placed on them will certainly command the fort.

Should the enemy attempt an invasion of the State by ascending simultaneously the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers with a large force, these points, being within 20 miles of the railroad leading from Louisville and Nashville to Memphis, should be occupied by our troops in order to maintain our position here.⁸

The location of Fort Henry was later the subject of much criticism.

Brigadier-General Lloyd Tilghman, commander of Fort Henry at the time of its surrender, said in his official report, dated February 12, 1862:

To understand properly the difficulties of my position it is right that I should explain fully the unfortunate location of Fort Henry in reference to resistance by a small force against an attack by land co-operating with the gunboats, as well as its disadvantages in even an engagement with boats alone. The entire fort, together with the entrenched camp spoken of, is enfiladed from three or four points on the opposite shore, while three points on the eastern bank completely command them both, all at easy cannon range. At the same time the entrenched camp, arranged as it was in the best possible manner to meet the case, was two-thirds of it completely under the control of the fire of the gunboats. The history of military engineering records no parallel to this case. Points within a few miles of it, possessing great advantages and few disadvantages, were totally neglected, and a location fixed upon without one redeeming feature or filling one of the many requirements of a site for a work such as Fort Henry. The work itself was well built; it was completed long before I took command, but strengthened greatly by myself in building embrasures of sand bags. An enemy had but to use their most common sense in obtaining the advantage of high water, as was the case, to have complete and entire control of the position.

I am guilty of no set of injustice in this frank avowal of the opinion entertained by myself, as well as by all other officers who have become familiar with the location of Fort Henry; nor do I desire the defects of location to have an undue influence in directing public opinion in relation to the battle of the 6th

instant. The fort was built when I took charge, and I had no time to build anew.⁹

Milton A. Haynes, Lieutenant-Colonel of Artillery in an official report, dated March 22, 1862, said:

Fort Henry was of necessity compelled to surrender; if not to the gunboats, certainly to General Grant's investing army. The fault was in its location, not in its defenders.¹⁰

While flooding certainly caused great concern, the greatest problem was the hill and terrain around the fort. The hills on the west bank easily commanded the fort because they were within 1700 yards of the works, and were 250 feet higher than the crest of the fort's parapet. On the east bank, a line of hills lay to the north and west of the fort. These hills were within easy rifle range and necessitated the building of extensive breastworks.¹¹ Thus, the rear defenses at Kirkman's Landing required the employment of a large force of infantry just as would have been the case at Coleman's Landing.

Recent visits by the author to the site of Fort Henry and Fort Heiman confirm the vulnerability of Fort Henry's location. Standing atop the hills on the west bank of the river, one looks directly down upon the black river buoy which marks the northwest corner of Fort Henry. Not only is the entire main work now submerged, but most of the camp sites and the entire inner line of rifle pits are below the present water line. The only part of the works at Fort Henry that remains above the water level is the outer line of breastworks, which were built on top of the hills behind the fort. At present, the location of the main work is approximately 346 feet above sea level, and the outer works are more than 370 feet above sea level. Even the outer works are commanded on the east by a still higher, yet gently sloping hill.

Fort Heiman, on the other hand, is superbly situated from a strategic point of view. It is on the high ground, and the terrain leading away from the breastworks descends steeply on the northwest side. Visual examination also reveals that the fort provided an excellent vantage point for the river, which at the time of the Civil War was some 255 feet below the fort.

Reports of defeated officers should be viewed critically but the facts bear them out that Fort Henry was untenable both from the water and land sides. The desire to fortify a point on the Tennessee River as near the Kentucky line as possible directed the choosing of Henry's site.¹²

With the final location for Fort Henry decided, the task of building the earthworks began. The militia companies sent from Nashville were joined by other companies and re-organized into an infantry regiment. The new regiment was designated as the 10th Tennessee Infantry, and its organization took place on May 29th, at the new site for Fort Henry.

The regiment's first commander was Colonel Adolphus Heiman, an esteemed Nashville architect. Heiman had some military experience as he had fought as a member of the First Tennessee Infantry during the war with Mexico in 1846. This regiment earned the name "Bloody First" because of the enormous losses it sustained during the war. The regiment fought at Veracruz and the Puente Nacional and once, during the march on Tampico, Heiman actually commanded the entire regiment during a fierce attack even though he was only the assistant adjutant.¹³

This regiment, known as "the sons of Erin," was composed predominantly of Irishmen from Nashville and surrounding area. Eight of the companies were organized in Nashville while one was formed in Clarksville,

and the other at Pulaski.

Most of the other officers of the regiment were not professional military men. Lieutenant Colonel Randall W. MacGavock, another prominent citizen of Nashville, and a personal friend of Heiman, was the regiment's executive officer. Other leading officers of the unit were Major William Grace; Adjutant John Hardy; Father Henry Vincent Brown, Chaplain; Dr. Alfred Voorhies, Regimental Surgeon; and W. F. Beatty, Sergeant-Major.¹⁴

Equipment, arms and uniforms for the Tenth were extremely poor. Tents, knapsacks and leather goods were in short supply. The entire regiment was armed with Model 1812 flintlock muskets which had been issued in the war against England, almost fifty years earlier. Long, straight, double edged "bowie knives" were prevalent among the troops.

Uniforms were almost non-existent, and it was difficult to distinguish the officers from the privates, and equally difficult to tell soldiers from civilians. Most of the men were unkempt. There was a great deal of sickness in the camp. Still, according to a Belgian who traveled through Tennessee in late 1861, the Confederate soldier looked dangerous, for "their determination is truly extraordinary, and their hatred against the north terrible to look upon. There is something savage in it."¹⁵

Life in the camps of the 10th Tennessee Infantry should have been comparatively comfortable. The unit built good wooden shelters, and water was plentiful. Confederate soldiers were sociable people and their love of fun caused them to invent all sorts of escapes from the boredom of camp life. Perhaps the favorite recreation was music, and it is likely that these Irishmen found comfort in the sentimental melodies of the time.

Tennessee was the breadbasket for much of the Confederacy and,

despite the fact that most of Tennessee's food was sent to Virginia, rations at Fort Henry were plentiful. Even at the time of its capture in February 1862, the storehouses at Fort Henry were full of food. During the early days of the war though, Confederate soldiers were notoriously bad cooks. Newspapers attributed a considerable portion of the prevalent sickness to improper preparation of food. An investigation by the Confederate Congress in January, 1862, found that while rations were sound and wholesome, "the cooking, particularly of the bread, rendered it unsuitable for either sick or healthy men."¹⁶

In order to gain more information about the area on the west bank of the river adjacent to Fort Henry, Colonel Heiman requested that a survey of the surrounding country be made. Lieutenant F. R. R. Smith, an engineer of the State Provisional Army, was given the mission. He began his survey on September 14th, and filed his report on September 25th. His report provides a vivid picture of the country along the west bank of the Tennessee River:

I found that the river bottom extended from one-half to three-quarters of a mile from the river, and where not cultivated was very heavily timbered. The bottom is terminated by a system of hills, generally very steep, and varying from 80 to 100 feet in height. This system is not at all regular; that is, there is no summit of any extent parallel to the river. The hills have an oblong contour, the longest diameter pointing to the southwest and northeast.

The country immediately opposite the fort is much more hilly than any I passed, owing to the hills immediately on the Tennessee River meeting those which characterize the Blood River Valley.

The road to Bayley's Ferry is at the foot of the hills, and, though not a large one, with but little work could be made a very superior military road. The soil is compact, and has considerable gravel in it.

The hills recede from the river as you approach Bayley's; from Bayley's to Pine Bluff the road is very bad. Pine Bluff consists of two dwelling-houses and a store. There is a ferry at this point, and a large, fine road leading to Murray. Immediately opposite is a very steep, rocky, and large hill. A short

distance below is another hill, not so steep, nor does it appear to be so rough.

A mile below Pine Bluff is Bass' Ferry.

Three-quarters of a mile below Bass' is Blood River Island, in size and length very similar to Panther Creek Island. About 150 yards below the foot of this island is the mouth of Blood River.

This river is rather remarkable for its steep banks and muddy bottom. There is no ford below the point at which I crossed, and but two or three above, until you reach a considerable distance from its mouth. Below Concord there are but two bridges over this stream. Blood River has the appearance of the bayous in the southern countries. The fords are marked upon the map.

Newburg is the next shipping point below Blood River; at this place there is also a ferry. Callowaytown is next below Newburg. There is also a ferry at this point. There is a large public road from Murray to Callowaytown. Highland is then reached. A large road communicates from this place to the Murray road (see map). Highland evidently received its name from the height of the river bank, which is said to be ten feet above the highest water mark. A "tow-head", as it is called, or an island, commences at this point and extends down the river nearly a mile. At very low water the sand bar is visible considerably above this place, and therefore the river is very wide and shallow. The channel, you will see from the map, is almost against the shore at Highland, and boats are obliged to land low down stream when descending the river, on account of the channel being so narrow. The bank, is heavily timbered. This tow-head extends to Aurora.

The largest and most public road in the country reaches the river at Aurora, at which place there is a steam ferryboard, used to ferry a stage line under the employ of the United States Government, carrying the United States mail from Canton to Mayfield, etc. The crossing was formerly accomplished by means of buoy-boats, the buoys being held in their places by anchors and a cable chain. The chain has never been removed, and therefore is still in the water. The conductor of the ferry says it is over three-quarters of a mile long, and is situated on the west side of the island. This chain is sufficiently long to extend three times across the river.

In case a masked battery was desirable, I think there is no point on the river more suitable than between Highland and Aurora. The chain could be made very useful in impeding the progress of boats, or, if necessary, is long enough to span the narrow channel a great many times, and by cutting the timber above, which is mostly oak, could completely blockage the river. The hills are near enough to command the river and a small creek affords a fine traverse from the river bank.

There being no road near to and down the river from Aurora, I determined to take the main road to Mayfield, and learn the position of the enemy's pickets from General Cheatham. When I reached Wadesborough I learned that General Cheatham had moved his command from Mayfield westward towards Columbus. Therefore, I concluded to return to Fort Henry via Murray and Concord. There is considerable

sameness in the character of the country from the fort to Aurora. The country is undulating from the river to Wadesborough, and from Wadesborough to a point half way between Murray and Concord, where the hills of Blood River commence. Upon the map the large roads are indicated by two parallel lines and the space included colored yellow.

The party was very hospitably treated by every one with whom they stopped. I am indebted to Mr. Sam Coleman for a great deal of information in reference to the roads and the character of the country. He was formerly a surveyor of Calloway County, and could tell me by very little reflection the squares through which roads passed and in what squares all the roads intersected. Mr. William M. Smith is also well acquainted with the country and was of great service to me.¹⁷

No further mention of the chain found by Lieutenant Smith was found. The often swift current of the Tennessee River would have probably precluded its effective use anyway. At Columbus, a large chain was placed across the Mississippi River in order to impede river traffic; however, the strain created by the strong current caused the chain to break.

The 10th Tennessee Infantry began the actual construction of Fort Henry on Friday, June 14, 1861. About the same time, a "large working party" was sent from the Cumberland Rolling Mills to begin construction of Fort Donelson. Almost nothing was accomplished at Donelson, and the workers soon returned to their mill.

Dr. Roy Stonesifer, in his dissertation entitled "The Forts Henry-Heiman and Fort Donelson Campaigns: A Study of Confederate Command", blames the lack of progress at Fort Donelson on Heiman and MacGavock. According to Stonesifer, "Heiman and MacGavock were responsible for the laxity of effort. Neither officer was a professional soldier, or knew much about military discipline, or fortifications."¹⁸ In making his judgment, Stonesifer utterly failed to consider all the evidence. First, just one regiment was sent to build and garrison both forts and, as of July, it consisted of a total of only 720 men. Second, the regiment had been organized for less than one month. During that time the men had to

learn to be soldiers and at the same time, to build living quarters and construct fortifications on the Tennessee River. It is highly unlikely that any regiment under similar circumstances could have accomplished these tasks and, at the same time, have built a second fort twelve miles away from the first. Third, the main work at Fort Henry was substantially completed and the first gun (a 32-pounder) mounted and test fired by July 12th. These factors certainly do not point to a laxity of effort.

As to Stonesifer's charge that Heiman did not know much about military discipline or fortifications, Heiman, although not a professional soldier, had served with distinction during the Mexican War. Also, Senator Henry, reporting to Governor Harris after an inspection tour of Fort Henry, described the 10th Tennessee Infantry as one of the finest regiments in the entire army. Apparently the 10th Tennessee's performance was much better than their physical appearance. Finally, Colonel Heiman was a well known architect before the war and while the location of Fort Henry was severely critized, the works themselves were considered to be very strong.¹⁹ Apparently, Bushrod Johnson, now a Colonel, spent most of his time in other Nashville locations so he contributed little to the construction of the forts.

If blame for the unsatisfactory situation at the inland river forts can be placed during the summer of 1861, then that blame should rest with Governor Harris. One newly formed regiment simply did not provide sufficient manpower to perform the construction of two forts located twelve miles apart. Harris, as Commander-in-Chief of the Provisional Army had been responsible for placing most of the Army along the banks of the Mississippi River, and it was he who failed to provide the men needed to build and garrison the two forts. Colonel Heiman, sensing the utter

hopelessness of the situation, completely abandoned Fort Donelson in July and concentrated his meager force at Fort Henry.²⁰ Heiman probably chose to defend Fort Henry instead of Fort Donelson because the main works on the Tennessee River were closest to completion.

Hopes were high among the soldiers in Middle Tennessee for a change in attitude about the defense of the Tennessee Line in July, 1861. During that month, Confederate officers began mustering State troops into the Confederate Army and Major General Leonidas Polk arrived in Tennessee to assume temporary command of the Second Department. Unfortunately though, change was not to occur because Polk's jurisdiction only extended to the west bank of the Tennessee River. Primary responsibility for the defense of Middle and East Tennessee continued to rest with Governor Harris.

The Confederate takeover of the Provisional Army only served to further complicate the situation in Middle and East Tennessee. Governor Harris retained control of the forces in these two areas, yet he was a State Official and did not consider himself authorized to command Confederate troops. As a consequence, throughout July and August, there was no real supreme military authority in the area.²¹

Governor Harris' interest in the Tennessee River defenses was stimulated, at least for a time in late August when the river steamer Samuel Orr was seized on the Ohio River and brought down the Tennessee to Fort Henry. The whole affair began on August 21st, when Commander R.N. Stembel, Captain of the Federal gunboat Lexington, seized the small steamer W. B. Terry. The Terry was seized because it was apparently being used by Southern sympathizers to conduct illegal trade on the Ohio River. Examination of the steamer's papers by Colonel Richard Oglesby, Commander of Union forces at Cairo, verified that the boat was in the employ of the

the Confederate Government. The Terry's crew, however, managed to leave the boat before they were arrested.

Apparently illegal trade with the South was a common problem along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers during the early months of the war. In November, 1861, General Ulysses Grant reported that a line of steamers running between St. Louis and Cairo frequently landed on the Missouri shore and traded with the enemy. Grant said some of the officers on board these vessels were in the regular employ of the Confederate Government. He recommended that all trade on the river be carried on by the Federal Government and that all trade south of Cape Girardeau be cut off. Historian E. Merton Coulter states that even after the fall of Fort Sumter, large amounts of war material crossed the border into the South. Much of that material came through neutral Kentucky.²² The seizure of the W. B. Terry was accomplished in an attempt to curb part of this illegal trade. Still, the seizure of the boat within the boundaries of neutral Kentucky outraged many of the citizens of Paducah, and a mob of about forty to fifty people gathered at the city's wharf bent on revenge. Led by Captain Johnson, former Master of the W. B. Terry, White Fowler, and A. M. Winston, the group seized the Samuel Orr, a steamer owned by citizens of Evansville. Several shots were fired and two people were wounded before Captain W. H. McClurg and the crew were subdued and removed from the boat. Johnson then ran the boat up the Tennessee River under the protection of Fort Henry's unmanned guns.

The exchange of seized steamers greatly profited the Southerners. The W. B. Terry was old, and according to Colonel Oglesby, worth only about \$3,000. The Samuel Orr, on the other hand, was the regular mail packet boat between Evansville and Paducah. It was a new vessel and was

valued at about \$15,000. Its cargo listed only as "miscellaneous," was valued at another \$10,000.²³

After the Samuel Orr arrived at Fort Henry, Colonel Heiman took charge of the vessel and searched it. On board he found mail which he ordered sent to Governor Harris. Also on board were saddles which had been purchased in Evansville by H.C. Ramage of Hickman, Kentucky, for use by General Pillow's division.²⁴ This seems to indicate that this boat, too, was carrying on some trade with the Confederates. The remainder of the ship's cargo consisted of bacon, coffee, flour, and whiskey. Heiman reported to Harris that:

There are a swarm of men after her (Samuel Orr), some claiming her as their prize, while others report themselves as agents for General Polk. I drove them all off and placed the boat under a guard....until I have received your orders on the subject. I have no doubt several of these men will call on you in regard to the boat, and make their own statements. Captain Johnson, as well as Captain Fowler, claim to have captured her.²⁵

The problem of river steamers continued to plague Heiman and, by August 27th, at least three more steamers, the Eastport, Dunbar and the Kirkman, were anchored at Fort Henry. These boats had been stopped by Heiman as they prepared to go down the Tennessee River with contraband cargoes. In all probability, the boats were carrying either cotton, tobacco, wheat, sugar, coffee, rice or some other article of contraband, because otherwise, they would have been allowed to proceed down river. Governor Harris had previously issued orders that boats carrying such items were to be stopped. At this point, problems surfaced in the odd Confederate command arrangements. Both the Military Board at Memphis, and General Polk, tried to exercise jurisdiction over the steamers and issued orders to Colonel Heiman concerning the disposition of the craft.

Heiman wrote to Harris, "I take it that General Polk and the

Military Board at Memphis, consider my command under their jurisdiction and orders--as yet, none of these communication (referring to orders concerning the steamers) have required answers, nor have they been in conflict with orders from Headquarters at Nashville...But I should like to be informed as to the extent of General Polk's jurisdiction, and whether my command is at all subject to his orders."²⁶ Heiman allowed all the steamers, except the Samuel Orr, to be taken up to the railroad bridge at Danville, Tennessee, because, "By their removal we will avoid the trouble and annoyance, incident to their remaining here."²⁷ He issued orders that the boats were not to proceed below Fort Henry though.

Governor Harris was never able to supply a satisfactory answer to Colonel Heiman regarding the extent of Polk's influence. Harris had tried to give General Polk command of the Tennessee River, but Polk had declined. Harris had also attempted to obtain a Confederate military commander for the entire district of Middle Tennessee, but no action on the request had been taken by the Confederate Government. As for the Samuel Orr, Harris decided to hold it and its cargo in trust for Governor Magoffin of Kentucky. Harris made this move in order to avoid the appearance of violating Kentucky's neutrality. Before Magoffin could take possession of the steamer, Kentucky's neutrality vanished and the vessel was mustered into Confederate service. On September 25th, Colonel W. B. Richmond arrived at Fort Henry and took charge of the Samuel Orr. Most of the cargo went to the Confederate commissary, and the remainder was split among the prize crew. The boat was then delivered to Captain Fowler to be armed and used on the Tennessee River.²⁸

Largely in response to the illegal river traffic on the Tennessee

and the possibility of a Federal move to recapture the Samuel Orr, Harris recognized a need for experienced artillerists to man the newly mounted cannon at Fort Henry. Harris instructed Lieutenant Colonel Milton Haynes, Commander of the First Tennessee Artillery Regiment to find the needed personnel. About September, 1861, Haynes went to Camp Weakley, a "camp of artillery instruction" near Nashville to seek help from Captain Jesse Taylor. Taylor was a former gunner in the United States Navy, and now commanded a light battery. Haynes told Taylor about the steamer traffic and said that a Union expedition was expected to enter the Tennessee River at any time to capture the steamers. Harris then asked Taylor to take command of the guns at Fort Henry. Taylor believed that a Federal advance in the area was imminent and, since he wished to be of service, he accepted the assignment.

Captain Taylor's own words best describe the situation he found at the fort:

Arriving at the fort, I was convinced by a glance at this surroundings that extraordinarily bad judgement, or worse, had selected the site for its erection. I found it placed on the east bank of the river in a bottom commanded by high hills rising on either side of the river, and within good rifle range. This circumstance was at once reported to the proper military authorities of the State at Nashville, who replied that the selection had been made by competent engineers and with reference to mutual support with Fort Donelson on the Cumberland, twelve miles away; and knowing that the crude ideas of a sailor in the Navy concerning fortifications would receive but little consideration when conflicting with those entertained by a "West Pointer", I resolved quietly to acquiesce, but the accidental observation of a water-mark left on a tree caused me to look carefully for this sign above, below, and in the rear of the fort; and my investigation convinced me that we had a more dangerous force to contend with than the Federals, namely, the river itself. Inquiry among old residents confirmed my fears that the fort was not only subject to overflow, but that the highest point within it would be--in an ordinary February rise--at least two feet under water. This alarming fact was also communicated to the State authorities, only to evoke the curt notification that the State forces had been transferred to the Confederacy, and that I should apply to

General Polk, then in command at Columbus, KY. This suggestion was at once acted on,--not only once, but with a frequency and urgency commensurate with its seeming importance,--the result being that I was again referred, this time to General A. S. Johnston, who at once dispatched an engineer (Major Jeremy F. Gilmer) to investigate and remedy; but it was now too late to do so effectually, though an effort was made looking to that end, by beginning to fortify the height on the west bank (Fort Heiman).²⁹

Thus, Taylor had reported two serious flaws in the location of Fort Henry. Obviously, because of the possibility of flooding, the fort should have been relocated immediately. Had work on building another river battery begun, even as late as October or November, it could have been completed by the time the floods of January and February came. If the works were not to be abandoned and relocated, then some provision for defending the heights on the west bank should have been made immediately. As it was, Taylor began his warnings in early September and was referred first to one state official and then to another. By that time, General Albert Sidney Johnston had assumed command of the Second Department which was enlarged and redesignated as the Western Department.³⁰ Johnston added the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers to Polk's command.³¹ Accordingly, Taylor's complaints were referred to Polk's headquarters, but no action was taken. Colonel Heiman and Senator Henry joined Taylor's pleas for help, and finally on October 8, 1861, General Johnston ordered General Polk to send a competent engineer, First Lieutenant Joseph Dixon, to the inland river forts. In an attempt to avoid Johnston's directives, Polk maintained that he had only three military engineers within his district, and neither Dixon nor the other two officers could be spared. Johnston, again ordered that Dixon be sent, and again, Polk declined. Finally,, after the third order,³² Polk finally sent Dixon to Fort Donelson. MacGavock also received orders to assume command of Fort Donelson. Accompanying MacGavock to regarrison the post were three companies of the 10th

Tennessee Infantry. These men were mostly recruits who were poorly armed with whatever shotguns they could obtain.³¹ Heiman aptly summed up the situation at the inland river forts in his October 18th report to Polk:

I have at present for the defense of this fort my own regiment, with an aggregate of 820 men, Captain Taylor's company of artillery, with an aggregate of 50 men. I have repeatedly requested that the company of artillery be recruited to its full strength. In its present condition there are not men enough to work all the guns at the same time and to properly arm the fort. Four 12-pounders are necessary in addition to the guns now here, particularly if we have to defend it against a land force.

Whether a gunboat can pass Fort Henry depends greatly upon the skill and efficiency of our gunners. A boat coming within range of guns $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles below the fort will get out of their range as soon as it passes the fort, as none of our guns have a range up the river; their range, too, is unreasonably short for 32-pounders, which must be caused by inferiority of powder, and perhaps by the shells having too much windage.

If the enemy's gunboats should succeed in passing Fort Henry, two hours' run will take them to Danville, and there is nothing to prevent the destruction of the railroad bridge.

Again I beg leave to call the attention of the general to the indispensable necessity of having a company of cavalry at this post for the purpose of communicating with the railroad and telegraph at Danville, to act as pickets and scouts in every direction from Fort Henry, that we may be apprised of the enemy's approach either by land or water, and to communicate between this post and Fort Donelson.

The defenses of the Cumberland have so far been almost entirely overlooked. It is true a little fort was constructed 1 mile below Dover by my regiment, in which were placed two 32-pounder sea-coast howitzers, which have a very good range down the river, but from the hemmed-in position of this work it is entirely worthless.

To hold the place against even a small force would require a great deal of additional work on the crest of a ridge which immediately overlooks this work, called a fort.

This post was entirely abandoned until within the last few weeks, when it was occupied by three companies lately organized by Lieutenant-Colonel MacGavock, of my regiment, whom I detailed for that purpose. This force has not yet been armed, except with such guns as they could furnish themselves, mostly shot-guns. As I have learned within the last few days, other companies will be added to this command, to raise it, if possible, to a full regiment.

No artillery force whatsoever is there; but I have detached Lieutenant Watts, of Captain Taylor's company, to instruct such men of the companies there to serve the guns as may be best fitted for that purpose. I have since learned that two more 32-pounders are to be placed at that point.

Lieutenant-Colonel MacGavock is in command there at present, and requested me to send a detachment of artillery from Captain

Taylor's company, which is impossible, for reasons stated above, and because of the report lately received here that the gunboats are now in the Tennessee River; and believing that no enemy ascending the Cumberland would leave Fort Donelson in its rear, and nothing as yet having been done for land defenses at that point, I have no confidence in its efficiency. I was also informed by Captain Hayden, Corps of Engineers, that Captain Harrison, of Nashville, is at Fort Donelson with two steamers and six barges, loaded with wood and stone, to be sunk at Ingram's Shoals, 35 miles below Dover, for the purpose of obstructing the navigation of the river--by whose authority I know not; but, if I may express my opinion on the subject, I beg leave to state that this will be a fruitless operation in a river which rises from low-water mark at least 57 feet, and which I myself have often known to rise at least 10 feet in 24 hours. The general will perceive that the obstructions are of no value and it will cost an immense sum to remove them.

Dover is 105 miles below Nashville, 90 miles above Smithland, and 40 miles below Clarksville, where the Memphis, Louisville and Clarksville Railroad crosses the Cumberland; and, if the enemy passes Dover in gunboats, nothing prevents the destruction of the railroad bridge at Clarksville, and even the capital of the State is in immediate peril.

I have been informed that it is contemplated to build a fortification at Line Point, 15 miles below Dover, and above the most important iron works on the Cumberland River, and of course will afford no protection to them.³⁴

Late on the evening of October 12th, the routine within Fort Henry was interrupted by signal rockets fired by the pickets located about three miles below the fort. The rocket signified the approach of a single Federal gunboat, the Conestoga, under command of U.S. Navy Lieutenant S. Ledyard Phelps. Phelps had brought his old wooden gunboat up the Tennessee in order to observe the defenses at Fort Henry. Rumors running through the Union camps indicated that the Confederates were building three ironclad gunboats above Fort Henry, and Phelps wanted to determine the possibilities of passing the fort and capturing the boats before they could be completed. Snipers popped away at the Union gunboat, so Phelps decided to stop and wait for daylight to move closer to the Confederate fort.³⁵

Meanwhile, up river, Heiman readied the fort to resist attack. During the night, two men came to the fort in a skiff and reported that

two gunboats had been lying at the mouth of the Blood River about nine miles below the fort. Heiman sent Lieutenant Berrie, of Captain Ford's company, along with two mounted men from the neighborhood to investigate. Berrie returned the following day and reported that the gunboats had landed a few men, but they returned to the boats after a short time. Berrie also reported that one gunboat was approaching the fort. Heiman ordered the tents struck and brought the regiment into the fort.³⁶

About 11 o'clock, Phelps brought the Conestoga up the river and came within sight of Fort Henry. Reaching a point near the lower end of Panther Island, Phelps ordered his boat stopped once more. Because of the limited range of the fort's guns, Heiman ordered that none be fired. Phelps also decided not to fire at the fort, and for a brief time both the adversaries quietly observed each other. Phelps took careful note of the fort's defenses and then ordered the Conestoga to retire back down river.³⁷

The appearance of the Federal gunboats on the inland rivers caused great excitement among the Confederates. On October 16th, Senator Henry appealed directly to General Johnston to send a regiment from Hopkinsville to Fort Donelson. He stated his case quite clearly, "It seems to me there is no part of the whole West so exposed as the valley of the Cumberland. The river is in fine boating order and rising quite fast. If Paducah is not to be attacked, so as to hold the enemy in check, he can, unimpeded, destroy rolling-mills...the railroad bridge at Clarksville, and otherwise do incalculable mischief." Henry had already appealed to Polk for help, but without success.³⁸

As if right on cue, Federal gunboats entered the Cumberland River on October 16th, and came down as far as Eddyville, Kentucky. There they landed some cavalry and took temporary possession of the town. MacGavock,

at Fort Donelson, immediately appealed to Polk for infantry, cavalry and a company of trained artillery. MacGavock had good reason to be apprehensive, because he had only three companies of raw recruits and no artillerymen at Fort Donelson. Four 32-pounders not yet mounted, and 300 poorly armed men were all that stood between the Federal flotilla and Nashville.³⁹ Johnston, realizing the seriousness of the situation at Fort Donelson, ordered Polk to hasten the armament of the fort and to assist Dixon with the placement of obstructions in the Cumberland River. He also requested that Polk examine the experiments conducted with torpedoes at Memphis, and to "employ them to any extent necessary on the Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland Rivers."⁴⁰ The following day, October 18th, over four months after the works were laid out, the first two heavy guns (32-pounders) were finally emplaced by Dixon in the river battery at Fort Donelson. These guns, along with two others, had been obtained from Memphis by Senator Henry.⁴¹ Dixon then proceeded to the Tennessee where he examined the works at Fort Henry. He concluded that the location was exceptionally bad, but the work itself was strong. Dixon recommended that the fort be finished, but he suggested that another work should be built on the high hills of the west bank.⁴²

Even Polk began to react to the presence of gunboats on the inland rivers, and also the incessant appeals of concerned Rebels. On October 19th, he moved the 4th Mississippi Infantry, under Colonel Joseph Drake, from Columbus to Fort Henry. He also sent Major Stewart and four artillery officers to drill the artillery companies at the forts. Finally he sent several cavalry companies to the two locations.⁴³ Governor Harris ordered Captain Frank Maney's field battery of seven pieces from Nashville to Fort Donelson. The famous "Crittter Company"--the battalion of Lieutenant

Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest--also moved from Memphis to Dover. Major P. C. Kelley, a colorful exclergyman, led the van accompanied by a wagon train driver by Forrest's own slaves. Also during October, General J. L. Alcorn sent several detachments of men to Fort Donelson to aid in forming a regiment at that location. Other reinforcements continued to trickle into the inland river forts. Captain Bolling, assisted by Lieutenant Milton, recruited a company of Kentuckians consisting of about 40 men. They were able to arm themselves and Polk authorized their muster into Confederate service on October 30th.⁴⁴

After placing the guns in the river battery at Fort Donelson, Captain Dixon, along with strong escort led by Major Kelley, went down the Cumberland to begin placing the obstructions in the river at line point. The escort consisted of 115 cavalrymen, 170 infantrymen, 40 artillerymen, and four pieces of artillery. The presence of so many men was probably most felt to be necessary because of fear of a gunboat attack. At Line Island, and further down river at Igram's Shoals, barges filled with large stones were sunk in the river. Dixon was satisfied that the obstructions effectively blocked the river even if it should rise ten feet above its normal level.⁴⁵

Despite the improvements in the defenses of the Cumberland River and the reinforcements sent to both inland forts, Johnston was still concerned about the vulnerability of Fort Henry. On October 28th, Johnston sent a message to Polk urging him to "...keep a vigilant eye on the Tennessee River." Johnston also asked Polk, if possible, to fortify the west bank of Tennessee River.⁴⁶ As usual with instructions which he did not wish to follow, Polk disregarded these communications completely.

The governing considerations for the location of Fort Henry were

evidently political rather than strategic, and depended more on geography than topography.⁴⁷ More favorable locations for the building of defensive works in Kentucky were passed up in order to avoid violating the neutrality of that State. Still, Harris required that the forts be built as close to the state boundary as possible, and this prevented the selection of other sites further upriver. Given the limited choice of area, Major Johnson proceeded to disregard the recommendations of trained engineers and topographers, and selected a building site in the river bottoms. The selection of the site foretold the doom of Fort Henry. The area was subject to floods during the winter and spring rises of the river, and hills on both sides of the river completely commanded the main work. The facts concerning the problems with the location of Fort Henry were transmitted first to Governor Harris, and later to General Polk. Both men chose to ignore the warnings as they did many other warnings about the weaknesses of the inland river forts. Harris, because of his lack of interest in defending the inland rivers, provided only one poorly armed regiment to construct and garrison two separate sets of fortifications located twelve miles apart. Thus, by the middle of October, the gateway to the soft underbelly of the heartland, and the communication line between the western and central districts of the Western Department, were protected by an incomplete fort constructed below the high-water line and garrisoned by 870 men, whose artillery would fire only in one direction.⁴⁸

Chapter 3

THE WINTER OF 1861 - 1862, A SEASON OF NEGLECT

General Albert Sydney Johnston had been the commander of the Western Department for over a month when Colonel Heiman submitted his October report on the progress of the Henry and Donelson defenses. Johnston, like Polk and Harris before him, did not take appropriate action, so conditions at the inland river forts failed to improve all through the fall of 1861. Despite the urgent pleas of Colonel Heiman and others, Fort Henry was not relocated and little else was done to complete the defenses. This neglect during the fall was caused by Johnston's failure to solidify the command structure at the forts. A collapse of command responsibility was already evident by October 1861. This breakdown of the command structure occurred at three levels-- at the forts themselves, and at both the district and departmental levels.¹

On the department level, the failure rested with Polk. He knew the weak conditions at the inland forts, yet he chose not to strengthen them. Instead Polk followed Harris' example and became totally preoccupied with the defenses of the Mississippi River. Then, to make matters worse, in September Polk allowed General Pillow to violate Kentucky neutrality and seize Columbus, a strategic position located on the high bluffs of the east bank of the Mississippi. This move which initially appeared to be sound, turned out to be an incredible blunder, for it enabled the Unionists of Kentucky to push through the state legislature a

formal abandonment of neutrality and a declaration of support for the Union. The seizure of Columbus also provided General Grant with an excuse for the seizure of Paducah which he accomplished two days later. Columbus, which was located about thirty-five miles north of the other Confederate positions left the Confederates in a situation where they not only had an exterior line of communications but had to defend an area open to attack from the east as well as north.²

Polk quickly became involved with the defenses of Columbus and totally neglected the remainder of his district. He collected 140 pieces of artillery of various sizes for the defense of Columbus while at the time at Fort Donelson not one gun was mounted. Governor Harris, wishing to place the defense of Middle Tennessee under Confederate authority, offered the jurisdiction to Polk, but the General declined to accept. When Johnston arrived in September he extended Polk's district to include the inland forts, but still Polk refused to provide any meaningful support to the area.³

On the department command level, Johnston's chief failure resulted from the fact that he failed to adequately supervise his entire department. Johnston committed the same error in judgment as did Polk in that he became so obsessed with the defense of one area that he did not have the time to look after the affairs all along the Tennessee line.

Johnston's preoccupation was with the Bowling Green area. As soon as he arrived in Nashville he conferred with Governor Harris and Simon B. Buckner. Johnston had already arranged a commission as Brigadier General in the confederate Army for Buckner and at the meeting with Harris placed Buckner in charge of 4,000 Kentucky and

Tennessee volunteers in Camp Boone, located north of Clarksville, and Camp Trousdale, located near Nashville. Johnston saw that the Confederate line running from Mill Springs in the East through Nashville, Fort Donelson and then to Fort Henry, left his Army with yet another exterior line of communications. At the same time, this line failed to cover the important rail junctions at Clarksville and Bowling Green. Johnston determined to remedy this situation by a bold advance to Bowling Green, and Johnston selected Buckner to lead the march. On the evening of September 17th, the Confederate regiments at Boone and Trousdale boarded Louisville and Nashville Railroad cars to begin the trek north. By the morning of the 18th they had successfully occupied Bowling Green. As soon as this move was completed, Johnston called General Hardee with his command from Arkansas to Bowling Green to reinforce Buckner. Johnston toiled over such routine details as building fortification, managing troops, gathering rations, and conducting reconnaissance raids. He acted more as if he were only the commander at Bowling Green instead of being in charge of the entire Tennessee line.⁴

From Bowling Green, Johnston launched a series of cavalry raids as well as infantry marches and counter-marches. These forays were designed to mask the weakness of Johnston's force and they were very successful. In October, Brigadier General Robert Anderson, commander of Union forces at Louisville, had a nervous breakdown as a result of his attempts to repel the imagined Confederate advance. His successor, Brigadier General William T. Sherman, also believed that the Confederate bluff was the beginning of a grand offensive and drew up his forces into defensive positions on Muldraugh's Hills near Elizabethtown. Sherman's message to Secretary of War Cameron that he must have 200,000 reinforcements immediately to repel the expected attack resulted in his replacement

by Brigadier General Don Carlos Buell. Buell was not so quick to believe that the Confederates were about to attack, and he reorganized his force. Buell himself began to make offensive gestures and divided his Army, sending strong forces south to Nolin and Mumfordsville.⁵

Johnston, beset by problems ranging from poor reconnaissance, lack of manpower and inadequate transportation, to sickness and the weakness of his position at Bowling Green, was simply too involved in district affairs to see the dangers at the inland rivers. He considered Forts Henry and Donelson as a part of a secondary line in the event of the loss of Bowling Green. Johnston, in October 1861, decided to build four strong fortifications at Nashville and Clarksville.⁶

Johnston realized that in order to complete all these new fortifications, he needed experienced military engineers, which were in short supply. Johnston made repeated calls to Richmond for engineering help and finally in October Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin ordered Captain Jeremy F. Gilmer to Bowling Green.⁷ Gilmer had graduated from West Point in the Class of 1839 directly behind Henry W. Halleck and the two men remained friends until after the outbreak of the war. Gilmer served as an engineer on numerous projects, including Fort Pulaski, Georgia, and Fort Point, California.⁸

Johnston, elated to have an engineer of such vast experience on his staff quickly appointed Gilmer to the post of Chief Engineer for the entire department and promoted him to Major.⁹ Gilmer because of his position, and because he had the ear of the Commanding General, exerted a great deal of influence upon the inland river defenses. Johnston, with his usual manner of completely trusting an untried subordinate, assigned Gilmer the task of designing and building the secondary

line at Nashville and Clarksville, as well as the supervision of the works at Forts Henry and Donelson. Then Johnston, confident that the mission would be completed, turned back to affairs at Bowling Green. Gilmer proceeded to survey sites for the works requested by Johnston, but showed little interest in seeing that they were completed.¹⁰

A great many reasons may be found which explain the lack of progress which was made on the inland river defenses during the fall and winter of 1861-1862. First of all, both Gilmer and Johnston had been Regular Army Officers, and they were both used to delegating a great deal of authority to subordinates. This method of operation anachronism prevailed when the senior officer sketched out the broad plan for an operation and left the details of execution to the subordinate. This was standard practice in the Regular Army. Yet Johnston and Gilmer were no longer in an Army of regulars, but in an Army of volunteers which faced almost insurmountable shortages of untrained officers, labor, equipment, and transportation. In such a case Johnston and Gilmer should have spent more time conducting personal inspections of the defensive works throughout the Tennessee line.¹¹ After October Johnston had no real idea what the defenses at Columbus were like because he did not visit them. Polk, maybe purposely, did not report their true condition. A similar situation existed at the inland river defenses. Although Johnston had received copies of reports sent to Polk from these forts, again, he had never inspected them. Gilmer also had to share part of the blame, for he failed completely to keep Johnston informed on the state of his various projects.¹²

Many personal factors also account for Gilmer's lack of enthusiasm in completing the inland river fortifications. Gilmer's

family resided near the seacoast of Georgia, and Gilmer had helped to plan the defenses of Savannah when he was in the U.S. Army, before the war. He had hoped to get the position of superintendent of the defenses of Savannah. Instead, when ordered to the Western theater Gilmer was dejected because of his separation from his family to whom he was totally devoted. In a letter to his wife on November 4, 1861, Gilmer wrote:

Nothing but a strong sense of duty could induce me to live the life we now live--time is short and a great object is necessary to make me live away from you even for a month. But the object now is a great one and we must make the sacrifice as thousands of others are doing....¹³

When Gilmer left Savannah, he had a most unpleasant journey traveling first to Atlanta, then Chattanooga, Nashville, and finally Memphis. When he arrived in Memphis he found that General Johnston had already left Columbus. Gilmer was then forced to return to Nashville, and finally arrived at Bowling Green. During the journey, Gilmer complained he traveled all night in "common cars" and had to endure "miserable hotels."¹⁴ When Gilmer arrived at Bowling Green, his baggage was lost and the weather was damp and chilly. He caught a head cold to which he was very susceptible, and his rheumatism bothered him.¹⁵ Gilmer was also unhappy at being only a Major because it was such a "small rank" compared to a Brigadier General, which he felt he should have been. Gilmer's wife wanted to join him in Nashville, but Gilmer reluctantly told her to remain in Georgia.¹⁶

Gilmer's situation was further complicated because of the Federal advances along the Georgia coast near where his family was residing. He feared for his family's safety, and at the same time, spent a great deal of energy in studying and writing to his wife about what he would do if he were fortifying Savannah. He even had his wife

send him his maps of the Georgia coastline so he could review them.¹⁷ One of the greatest problems for Gilmer was the lack of communications from his wife, which made him believe that she was ill. He could not always be sure whether she was in Savannah, or Washington, Georgia, and frequently sent telegrams to friends trying to locate her. The lack of letters caused him to make such comments as, "I am almost crazy with disappointment...always out of sorts when my hopes for a letter are not realized." Gilmer's morale, already low, plummeted and he told his wife, "This is a mean life for us to live my dear wife, is it not? And worst is, this mean life may last a long time."¹⁸

Gilmer did not see any need for haste in preparing the defenses. He considered himself an expert on the time and manner of the expected Federal advance into Tennessee. He believed that Halleck's Army would move down the Mississippi against Polk at Columbus, but he did not believe this move could be made until spring. Gilmer knew Halleck well and believed, "He is too old a fox to reenter this fall." Reports indicated that Halleck's predecessor, John C. Fremont, had wrecked the organization of the Army, and Gilmer did not think Halleck would "venture on an exploration so hazardous as the descent of the Mississippi--with such a rabble for an Army." Later, he called Halleck's Army a "...complete mob, demoralized to such an extent, that it will not dare to start an exploration of the Mississippi."¹⁹

Gilmer did not believe that Buell would attack Middle Tennessee during the fall, or in the winter either. Confident that the muddy roads of Kentucky made the movement of an Army impossible, Gilmer believed that Buell would wait until April or May to attack. As early as December 1st, Gilmer commented that, "I consider the campaign in Kentucky

essentially closed." He felt the cessation of operations would be to Johnston's advantage since the Confederates would be better prepared by spring to resist invasion. Thus, Gilmer saw no urgency in bolstering the Henry and Donelson defenses.

Even as late as January 1862, after the Federal movements all along the Tennessee line had begun, Gilmer saw no need to rush the completion of the inland river defenses. Gilmer still believed that both armies would remain in a "status quo" until spring.²⁰ He interpreted the Federal presence in the Tennessee River as nothing more than an attempt to get in the rear of Polk at Columbus and he wrote to his wife on January 23, 1862, that the movement up the Tennessee presented "no impending danger."²¹ Gilmer was completely wrong for even had this been the case, such a move would have been serious. On January 31st, seven days before the actual fall of Fort Henry, Gilmer wrote to his wife that he was going to Forts Henry and Donelson, "to see what further preparations may be necessary for a good defense at those points." Yet in his letter, he said, "I feel much concern about the movements being made by our enemy through the channels leading to the city (Savannah)."²² Gilmer should have felt more concern about the movements of the enemy in his immediate front.

Gilmer also wasted a great deal of time sulking over Johnston's failure to take the offensive. When he first came to Bowling Green in the fall of 1861 Gilmer believed Johnston was about to advance, and he wrote to his wife that, "it is by no means impossible--nor improbable, that we will winter in Louisville--the place you love so much". He was upset to find out that such was not to be the case. When he tried to learn what Johnston's plans were, he found that the "General (is)

not very communicative," so he turned to his friend W. W. Machall, Johnston's adjutant, and discovered that even Machall did not know what the General's plans were. On October 19th, Gilmer bemoaned his situation saying, "I much fear our fall campaign will not be as active as I anticipated." Only by the end of November had he reconciled himself to the fact that there would be no offensive that year.²³

Even if Gilmer had exhibited a greater interest in working on the inland river defenses, it is doubtful that he could have successfully completed them. There were simply too many problems to be overcome in the short time available. Gilmer also had to divide his time between too many projects in disparate locations. His first priority, the Bowling Green-Nashville Line, required that he spend a great deal of time supervising the placement of infantry lines and gun emplacements at Bowling Green. Then, on October 26th, Johnston had ordered Gilmer to arrange "a plan of defensive works for Nashville, and urge them forward by all means."²⁴ On October 24th, Gilmer left Bowling Green to begin surveys for Johnston's second line. He went first to Clarksville, where he stayed for several days surveying sites for two works to be built at that area. Near the end of the month, Gilmer accompanied by Senator Henry, made an inspection tour of Forts Henry and Donelson. Henry felt that, "Fort Henry is in a fine condition for defense (and) the work admirably done."²⁵ It is hard to believe that Gilmer, a trained military engineer, could have believed Fort Henry was in fine condition when it was so vulnerable because of the undefended heights of the west bank. Henry also wrote to General Johnston that, "The Tenth Tennessee (is) the very best I have seen in the service. They are healthy, and in fine discipline. I now think, from personal inspection, it is one of the best regiments in the Tennessee line." The

two men then visited Fort Donelson and found it in "very bad condition." Little work had been done at that location, because Lieutenant Joseph Dixon had been engaged in placing obstructions in the river at Line Island and Ingram's Shoals. Gilmer and Dixon discussed the possibility of moving the batteries at Fort Donelson to Line Point, located fifteen miles down river. On November 1st, Dixon and Gilmer went to Line Point to examine the feasibility of moving the works.²⁶

After viewing the new site proposed by Dixon, Gilmer determined that Fort Donelson should be retained and the works should be designed so as to be the primary defensive position for resisting the advance of the Federal gunboats. Gilmer agreed with Dixon that Line Point, fifteen miles below Donelson, offered advantages for defending the river because of its position, but there were advantages at Donelson also. The works at Donelson were already partially completed and the ravines and gullies behind the place made for a good land defense.

Gilmer completed his review of possible defensive positions along the lower Cumberland and late on the evening of November 2nd arrived in Nashville. On November 3rd, Gilmer filed the report on his first surveys. Gilmer found that the point where the Red River emptied into the Cumberland offered the best line of defense for Clarksville as far as waterborne invasion was concerned. On a high bluff on the north bank of the Cumberland, Gilmer planned to build a water battery containing at least three heavy guns. Gilmer also decided to place obstructions in the Red River by felling trees. Gilmer determined to place encampments in the bend between the Hopkinsville Bridge and the Russellville Bridge, both of which ran over the Red River. He also planned an encampment near the vital railroad bridge which crossed the Cumberland River at Clarksville. This bridge

carried the rail traffic for the Memphis and Ohio Railroad which was the main line of communication between Polk and Johnston.²⁷

Both Gilmer and Dixon expected that these defenses would be greatly strengthened by the obstructions which Dixon had recently placed in the Cumberland at Line Island and Ingram's Shoals. These obstructions--old barges and flats filled with stones and sunk in the river--were supposed to make the river impassible for gunboats. Lieutenant Colonel MacGavock maintained that the obstructions would prevent the ascent of gunboats at a flood stage as high as twelve feet. Senator Henry valued the obstructions also, but he believed that they would be useful only so long as the river did not exceed a flood stage of ten feet.²⁸

Colonel Heiman quickly saw the folly of the obstructions. In expressing his opinion to Johnston, he commented, "I beg leave to state that this will be a fruitless operation in a river which rises from low-water mark at least 57 feet, and which I, myself, have often known to rise at least 10 feet in 24 hours. The General will perceive that these obstructions are no impediment to navigation in high water...."²⁹

Heiman was right. By the time the Federal gunboats began their ascent of the Cumberland in mid-February the river had risen to a point where the gunboats had no difficulty in moving over the obstructions. The problem with the obstructions was that a great deal of time and labor had been expended to put them in the river and they were ineffective. Gilmer and Dixon had simply underestimated the tremendous rise of the Cumberland during flood stage. As late as January 19, 1862, when the seasonal rains had already begun, Gilmer wrote that, "During the river season (floods), the river is navigable for boats drawing six to seven feet--making an easy approach, if left unobstructed." In defense of Gilmer and

Dixon, neither was from Tennessee, but had they consulted residents of the area, or searched for high water marks, conditions should have been obvious to them. Thus, both Gilmer and Dixon fell into the same error that Bushrod Johnson made earlier in regard to the flood level of the inland rivers.³⁰

On November 4th, Major Gilmer ordered additional heavy guns for the defenses along the Cumberland River. At the time Fort Donelson had only four 32-pounders and two naval guns. Gilmer recommended that the armament be increased by four additional 32-pounders and two heavier guns such as 8-inch Columbiads or long-range Parrott guns. Gilmer also requested twenty to twenty-five field pieces for the land defenses at Nashville and other places along the Cumberland.³¹

In November Gilmer busied himself with a series of projects. From the 9th through the 11th he decided upon the exact location for the river battery containing three 32-pounders and the field work at Clarksville. He hired G. L. Sayers, a civil engineer, to obtain labor and supervise the construction of the works at that location. While in Clarksville, he also hired T. J. Glenn to build timber obstructions in the Cumberland River within the range of the guns of Fort Donelson. He then went to Nashville where he, "chartered a steamer to go to Fort Donelson, to be employed in placing the obstructions in the river." He then began two days of surveys around Nashville to determine defensive points, especially against a water born invasion.³²

Gilmer was happy to be away from the dampness of the Bowling Green lines and throughout the fall he spent most of his time in Nashville.³³ After several surveys around Nashville, Gilmer finally laid out two works. For the river battery he selected a site on the south bank of the

Cumberland River a little below the city.³⁴ On the north bank of the river Gilmer laid out a series of breastworks along Cocksrill and Foster's Hills. These works commanded the land approaches to the city, but they had many disadvantages. The land defenses would have required less work to build and fewer troops to hold if Gilmer had laid them out on the steep bluffs on the south bank of the river. However, Gilmer wanted to make sure that the breastworks protected the village of Edgefield which lay on the north bank of the river opposite Nashville. The cream of Nashville society lived at Edgefield and the young, impressionable Gilmer was undoubtedly pressured to locate the defensive line north of the village.³⁵

While in Nashville, Gilmer became quite involved with the "upper crust" of the city's society. John Bell, the former Union Party Presidential candidate, became Gilmer's good friend and frequent companion. He met the influential citizens and popular entertainers of the time. Gilmer visited the fine plantations of the area such as General Giles Harding's Belle Meade, where he received royal treatment.³⁶ At the beginning of the Civil War Nashville was one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the South, and its affairs were tightly controlled by a small group of Nashville families. These people, described by Alfred L. Crabb as the "Nashville Gods," already lived in elegance, but many of them were increasing their wealth by way of Confederate contracts for war materials.

When Governor Harris and Major Gilmer tried to persuade the "Nashville Gods" to provide laborers to build the defenses, they quickly found a total lack of interest. The citizens of Nashville did not feel the same border complex that the Memphis citizens felt. The enormous prosperity of the city during the 1850's had wiped out all memory of the frontier, and had instilled a complacent, selfish attitude in the minds

of the city's leaders. Also, many of Nashville's leading citizens simply did not support the Confederate government.³⁷

There were still other reasons for the apathy of the Nashville populace. There was no pressure bloc which demanded strong defenses along the Cumberland. Most of the influential citizens, who would have been interested in strong defenses, such as Zollicoffer, Heiman, and MacGavock, were already away from the city with the Confederate Army. Another problem was the lack of manpower in general. Many of the white laboring class had either already joined the Confederate Army, or were in the militia and had been called up by Governor Harris. Most of the other available labor, both white and slave, was engaged in the factories having Confederate contracts. The result was that when Gilmer called for 300 slaves at Cockrill's Hill, seven arrived. Gilmer tried repeatedly to obtain the needed labor, but each time without success. The lack of labor eventually forced Gilmer to abandon all hope of building the Nashville defenses.³⁸

Gilmer failed to inform General Johnston of the problems concerning labor for the Nashville defenses. Johnston believed that the defenses were being built and reported to Secretary Benjamin that the Nashville entrenchments, "double the efficiency of my force for the defense of this line." Apparently, even up to the time Johnston began his retreat from Bowling Green, he believed that the construction of the Nashville defenses was being actively pursued.³⁹

At Donelson, Gilmer again delayed completion of the main works in November by stripping it of necessary labor in order to build still another timber obstruction in the Cumberland within range of the fort's guns. Such a task demanded not only Gilmer's time, but also a large force of laborers to handle the blocks and ropes used to hoist the obstructions into the

Gilmer's decision to build a second river battery located in Clarksville was also wasteful. He had already made the decision to use Fort Donelson as the main defense against gunboats; therefore, a second battery of lesser strength was of little value. The result of all the projects was that none of them were completed and the most vital works, Forts Henry and Donelson, were neglected.

Finally, on November 20th, General Pillow, who was in temporary command of Columbus because of an injury to Polk, ordered Dixon to go to Fort Henry and begin surveys for the long awaited fortification to be built on the west bank. Gilmer protested to Johnston that Dixon was needed on the Cumberland and volunteered instead to give the project to Mr. Hayden, a civilian engineer already at Fort Henry finishing the draw bridge at the main fort. Gilmer also attempted to avoid taking any further orders from the officers in charge of the area by asking Johnston to "establish a channel of communications through which all those engaged in the constructing defenses will receive their instructions." Gilmer believed that since he was the chief engineer, he should be the channel. Johnston overruled Gilmer, so Dixon was again ordered to the Tennessee River to lay out the works.⁴¹

The conditions at Fort Donelson itself were far from satisfactory. On November 7th, Senator Henry, a native of Clarksville and always vigilant toward the defense of the Cumberland River, commented that the condition at Fort Donelson demanded immediate attention. There were about 800 cavalry and 500 infantry at that location, but they were unorganized and undrilled. "The guns at Donelson are wholly unprotected...and will remain so till the regiment is organized, and someone is in command who will push

on the work to completion. Captain Dixon is ready and willing to work, but he is not sustained...⁴²

The situation at the inland rivers demanded an immediate change. On October 31st, Polk, wishing to rid himself of most of the responsibility for the inland river forts had recommended that they be placed under command of Colonel Lloyd Tilghman, whom Polk said, "is better informed as to the military aspects and capabilities of the country through which they (Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers) run than any other person of whom I know." He also recommended that Tilghman be made a Brigadier General. Johnston also desired another general officer in his Army, but he wanted the new general to command the works at Columbus, and he recommended Major A. P. Stewart for the position. On October 11th, Judah P. Benjamin acted upon Johnston's request and sent the following comment to Johnston:

I have your letter asking for the appointment of a brigadier to command at Columbus, Kentucky, in your absence. Your recommendation of Major A. P. Stewart has been considered with the respect due to your suggestions, but there is an officer under your command whom you must have overlooked; whose claims in point of rank and experience greatly outweigh those of Major Stewart, and whom we could not pass by, without injustice--I refer to Colonel Lloyd Tilghman, whose record shows longer and better service, and who is, besides, as a Kentuckian, specially appropriate to the command of Columbus. He has therefore, been appointed brigadier general, but of course you will exercise your own discretion whether to place him in command at Columbus or not.

General Johnston had no objection to Tilghman's promotion, but he accepted the Secretary's letter as a rebuke.⁴³ Tilghman received his promotion and was slated to take command of the works at Columbus when Johnston received Senator Henry's letter. Because of reports from Fort Donelson on November 17th Johnston ordered Tilghman to give up his command at Hopkinsville and repair to the Cumberland to assume command of Forts Henry and Donelson. Tilghman was also instructed to complete the works.

Tilghman's orders went on to read, "The utmost vigilance is enjoined. The general regrets to hear that there has been heretofore gross negligence in this respect--the Commander at Fort Donelson away from his post nightly, and the officer in charge of the field batteries frequently absent. This cannot be tolerated." Johnston told Tilghman he would ask Governor Harris for four additional companies to add to the six companies already at Fort Donelson in order to form a regiment. Once the regiment was formed and the officers elected, the colonel chosen was to take command of the fort and MacGavock was to be sent back to Fort Henry.⁴⁴

General Tilghman was forty-five years of age in 1861, and he graduated from West Point in the Class of 1836, number forty-six in a class of forty-nine. He was assigned to 1st Dragoons, but like most young officers of the time, quickly resigned to become a civil engineer. He worked as an engineer on various railroads until the outbreak of the War with Mexico. He entered the army as a volunteer aide to General Daniel Twiggs and fought in the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. He subsequently commanded a small volunteer partisan company, superintended the erection of defenses at Matamoros, and during the last year of the war, was made a captain of a company of light artillery. After the war, he became principal assistant engineer of the Panama division of the Isthmus Railroad. Tilghman returned to Paducah, Kentucky, in 1859, and in 1861 he formed a regiment in the 1st Kentucky Brigade. Tilghman later commanded the entire brigade after its first commander, General Simon B. Buckner, was promoted to the command of a division.

Polk had originally recommended Tilghman for the command of the inland river forts because Tilghman had expressed an interest in the area.

While in command of his brigade, which was stationed at Hopkinsville, Tilghman had travelled to the inland river forts to see their conditions for himself. Convinced by his visit of the weakness there, Tilghman began writing letters to Johnston warning him about the conditions on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers.⁴⁵

When Tilghman arrived at the inland river forts in mid-November, he made a careful reconnaissance of both installations. He decided to add an embrasure of sandbags to the wall around Fort Henry. This embrasure greatly enhanced protection for the gunners when the battle came, for without it they would have been almost totally exposed to murderous fire from the Federal gunboats.

Apparently Dixon had not yet arrived at Fort Henry, because Tilghman joined the appeal for proper fortifications on the west bank of the Tennessee River. On November 29th, Tilghman reported to Johnston that it was of "absolute necessity" to build a new work on the "eminence on the opposite side of the river from Fort Henry...." He recommended that it be a strong fort with "several heavy guns."⁴⁶

Dixon finally arrived at Fort Henry to survey the area and laid out breastworks along the top of Stewart's Hill directly across from Fort Henry. The new work was named Fort Heiman in honor of the first commander at Fort Henry. Disagreement arose between Tilghman and Major Gilmer over the armament for the new works. Gilmer believed that the only purpose of the new fort was to "prevent our enemy from occupying ground dangerous to Fort Henry. Of course, no guns designed for fire on the river will be placed so high. Field guns will probably be sufficient for the armament...."⁴⁷ Gilmer won the disagreement and no heavy artillery was placed at Fort Heiman.

The failure to place heavy guns at Fort Heiman was a serious error, and contributed greatly to the fall of both forts. Several heavy guns firing from the high ground, safe from flooding, would have greatly assisted the guns of Fort Henry. Various examples exist throughout the Civil War where works placed on high embankments proved superior to the fire from attacking vessels. Fort Darling, located on Drewry's Bluff two hundred feet above the James River near Richmond, Virginia, held out well and inflicted serious damage on attacking Union gunboats throughout the war.⁴⁸

The water battery at Fort Donelson held weapons similar to those at Fort Henry, yet the Donelson gunners disabled three of the attacking gunboats, whereas at Ft Henry, only one gunboat was seriously damaged. One of the principal reasons for the Donelson success was the fact that river battery was positioned about one hundred feet above the river. This location provided protection for the gunners, and more importantly, gave the gunners a better angle of fire against the most vulnerable parts of the ironclads. Toward the end of the battle on February 6th Tilghman had detected the weakness in the "roof" of the gunboats.⁴⁹ Guns located high on the west bank of the Tennessee River should certainly have been able to profit by such a weakness. Finally, guns located on the west bank would have placed the Federal gunboats in a cross-fire and would most likely have caused the gunboats to divide their own fire between two locations instead of being able to concentrate it solely on the east bank work.

Tilghman also clashed with Gilmer over the placing of obstacles in the Cumberland River. Tilghman, like Heiman before him, believed such barriers were a waste of valuable labor, and ordered Glenn to cease work on the Donelson obstacles. Gilmer again appealed to General Johnston

and the General ordered Tilghman not to interfere with engineer operations. Here again, Johnston revealed a bad habit of blindly supporting a subordinate even in the face of mounting evidence that he was wrong. Glenn then went back to work, sinking barges and felling trees near the water battery at Fort Donelson.⁵⁰

Labor was one of the most serious problems for Tilghman and the defenders of Middle Tennessee. Soldiers disliked working on the fortifications themselves as they were much more interested in building cabins for their winter quarters. The use of soldiers for fatigue duty also caused their training to suffer. Slaves were difficult to get and even more difficult to keep for as soon as they arrived, their owners demanded them back. The country around the inland forts was too poor for large scale farming, so the slave population was small. Many of the slaves who did live in the immediate area were "exempt" from duty at the forts because their masters had Confederate war material contracts.⁵¹

In November, some hope of relief from the labor problem was raised when Sam D. Weakley and James E. Sauders visited General Pillow at Columbus. These men headed a committee of public safety in North Alabama and Tishomingo County, Mississippi. Weakley was concerned about the vulnerability of the Tennessee River, and after hearing from Pillow that the river was not safe, offered the services of his committee. Pillow gratefully accepted the offer and requested that Weakley provide the labor to build Fort Heiman and supply troops to garrison the post.

The group then returned to Alabama and raised an appeal for 5,000 troops and as many Negro laborers as could be raised. Weakley was appointed aide-de-camp to the commanding officer at Columbus with the special duty of mustering the troops for Henry.

Weakley's group proposed to raise a regiment of middle aged men to serve during emergencies, but another regiment of younger men to be enrolled for twelve months. The entire force was to be armed with shot-guns and rifles. The group asked the Governor of Alabama for the purchase of arms and their confiscation if necessary. The governor was also asked to secure the impressment of Negro men for public works. Weakley was able to raise one infantry regiment designated as the 27th Alabama Infantry. Commanded by Colonel A. A. Hughes, seven companies of this regiment arrived at Fort Henry on January 1, 1862. The three remaining companies marched in a few days later escorting a Negro work force of several hundred.⁵²

Labor was only a part of the problem; the inland forts also needed adequate garrisons and General Tilghman made valiant efforts to obtain them. When he took command at Fort Donelson he found six unorganized infantry companies, known as MacGavock's Battalion, which he used as the nucleus for the 50th Tennessee Infantry. He filled the remainder of the regiment with five companies of recruits from Stewart County. This became the garrison regiment at Fort Donelson. Part of the 50th went to Fort Henry on January 19th, probably as a result of the gunboat attack that month, but returned to Fort Donelson about ten days later. Lieutenant Colonel C. A. Sugg commanded this regiment after the original commander, Colonel Stacker, resigned.⁵³ Also in November, pursuant to urgent appeals from Tilghman, Colonel John W. Head's 30th Tennessee Infantry arrived from Red (Boiling) Springs. This regiment, composed of some 975 men, had been organized since the summer and was in excellent condition. In December, the 49th Tennessee Infantry was organized at Fort Donelson, and James E. Bailey was elected Colonel. Two companies of this regiment were sent to Fort Henry but were ordered back to Donelson before the February attack

on Fort Henry. These regiments were used mainly for constructing fortifications and building huts.⁵⁴

Tilghman ended the lenient furlough policy which had been pursued by MacGavock. He hoped that Colonels Bailey and Stacker could restore discipline now that their election to Colonel had been accomplished. Obviously, Stacker had some problem as he shortly resigned and was replaced by Suggs. Suggs apparently had some success in organizing his regiment, as his was one of the regiments which Tilghman placed on standby for the relief of Fort Henry during the February attack.⁵⁵

On January 15th, Tilghman transferred his headquarters to Fort Henry, leaving Colonel Head in command at Fort Donelson. On January 16th, Colonel Milton Haynes arrived at Fort Donelson with orders from Polk to command the artillery at Forts Henry and Donelson, but Tilghman decided he would personally supervise the artillery at Fort Henry. At Fort Donelson, Haynes found two untrained infantry companies in charge of the 32-pounders. He quickly set about to drill them and along with Maney's light battery organized a provisional artillery battalion. Work also continued on the river batteries and the landward fortifications.⁵⁶

Federal gunboats reappeared in the Tennessee River in middle January. They came up the river, fired a few shots at Fort Henry, and briefly landed a few troops several miles north of the fort before retiring. Tilghman sent an urgent appeal for help to both Johnston and Polk.⁵⁸ This time both men reacted quickly, though certainly not with the support which was required. Johnston sent two regiments to Henderson Station to be used at Fort Henry if needed. On January 24th Polk ordered Captain Crain's field battery and Colonel Gee's 15th Arkansas regiment sent from Memphis to Fort Henry. The problem with the reinforcements was that only the

Arkansas regiment and the artillery battery were adequately armed, and none of the units were ready for combat as they were not well trained.⁵⁸

Despite the arrival of the new troops and laborers, work at Fort Heiman progressed slowly. As late as January 17th, Mr. James E. Saunders, a civilian contractor employed at Fort Henry and a member of the Alabama committee which raised the troops and laborers for Fort Heiman, wrote a startling letter to Colonel E. W. Munford of Johnston's Staff. In the letter, Saunders accused Tilghman of needlessly delaying the construction of Fort Heiman. He said that a courier was sent to General Tilghman on the 3rd or 4th of January telling him of the arrival of the laborers, yet Tilghman did not come to Fort Henry until January 15th. Hayden had not yet begun the work because Tilghman had not approved the plan. Because of the delay, the Negro force was inactive. When Tilghman arrived, he "debated whether it was not too late to throw up works on the west side." Saunders believed that to give up Fort Heiman was equivalent to abandoning Fort Henry. Saunders further commented that the Alabama troops were "raw and undisciplined," and that they were engaged in building one hundred winter huts instead of working on the forts.⁵⁹

In defending his position regarding construction at the inland forts, Tilghman maintained that he was "nearly broken down from incessant work from the middle of June..." and he was "...not in the best condition" because of his efforts to organize the First Kentucky Brigade. He also blamed inclement weather and "a total lack" of transportation for causing delays. Finally, Tilghman stated, "the failure of adequate support cast me upon my own resources, and compelled me to assume responsibilities which may have worked a partial evil." On January 18th Johnston immediately telegraphed Tilghman, "Occupy and intrench the heights opposite Fort Henry.

Do not lose a moment. Work all night." Johnston then ordered Gilmer to Fort Henry to assist with the defense.⁵⁹

When Gilmer arrived at the Tennessee River on January 31st, the earthworks at Fort Heiman were nearly finished. Evidently, at this point, Gilmer reversed himself concerning the placement of heavy guns at Fort Heiman because, he said in his report, "no guns had been received that could be put in these works except a few field pieces." He attempted to order guns from "Richmond, Memphis and other points," but it was too late.

If the guns had been ordered in November they would probably have arrived in time to be mounted at Fort Heiman. Lacking these, Gilmer could have ordered some pieces moved over from Fort Henry, but he probably hesitated to move guns already emplaced.⁶⁰

Fort Heiman, located high on a bluff, was the key to defense of the Tennessee River. The fate of Fort Henry had already been substantially sealed by its wretched position. Fort Heiman, however, was neutralized by Gilmer's decision in November not to mount heavy guns there. Still, if Tilghman, present at the fort, had overridden the engineer and placed the heavy ordnance on the high bluff, the entire situation with the river defenses may have been altered.

By the end of January, Tilghman had amassed 4,640 troops present for duty at the inland river forts. Of that number, 2,845 were at Forts Henry-Heiman and the rest at Fort Donelson. Yet, despite some limited success in accumulating men, most of these troops were in no condition to fight since 2,000 of them were unarmed and many were suffering from measles or some other ailments. Only three of the regiments were in good order, and the others were more a hindrance than a help.⁶¹

The fall and early winter of 1861 brought a great deal of activity

to the inland rivers. Fort Donelson finally became a reality instead of simply a name on a map, and the hills on the west bank of the Tennessee River opposite Fort Henry were fortified. At the same time, the troop strength within the inland river forts was tripled, and obstructions were placed at three locations on the Cumberland River. A general officer was sent to the area to improve the efficiency of the command there, and two seemingly competent military engineers arrived to supervise the completion of the defenses. On the surface at least, conditions of the inland river defenses seemed to have improved.

In reality, none of the underlying problems at the inland river forts was attacked. The wretched position of Fort Henry was well known to all who would listen; however, no attempt was ever made to move it to a more favorable location. The excellent position offered by Fort Heiman for the placement of a water battery was given up because Jeremy F. Gilmer simply failed to take the necessary time properly to inspect the site. Only at Fort Donelson did the defenses actually improve.

The apathetic attitude of the population of Middle Tennessee also continued to manifest itself in the failure of the people to provide laborers and troops necessary to defend the region. The fact that no defenses were built around Nashville--the center of wartime production for the State--clearly demonstrates a total lack of concern by the people for defense, and probably for the war as a whole. After the Federal capture of Nashville in March, 1862, many of the citizens of that city welcomed the presence of the Union soldiers.

The few resources available were not often used wisely, and a great deal of waste took place. Both Gilmer and Dixon began too many projects for the resources available to complete them. The placing of

obstacles in the Cumberland River required a great deal of manpower, and proved totally useless, because neither Gilmer nor Dixon were familiar with the tremendous rises of the rivers during the flood season. Questions can also be raised about the abilities of such men who failed to seek out the proper evidence such as high-water marks, or knowledge held by local residents. Johnston's decision to build a second line behind Bowling Green also drew more attention away from Forts Henry and Donelson. Gilmer spent over one month in Nashville alone surveying locations for the defenses of that city, and he spent other valuable time laying out a river battery for Clarksville. Of more importance is the fact that Johnston failed to adequately comprehend the real threats to the inland river forts because, if he had, he could not have considered them as part of a secondary line.

The most serious problems for the inland river forts rested with the command structure. The inability of Tilghman and Gilmer to work together, and the lack of discipline within the forts indicate a breakdown of command at the forts. Even Gilmer admitted that one man should have been in charge, but he believed that he should have been that man.

Polk's disinterest in the affairs of the eastern edge of his district, and Gilmer's neglect of his duties at Henry and Donelson, indicate a command failure at the department level. Throughout the fall and winter of 1861-1862, Johnston remained totally unaware of the defenseless conditions at the inland forts. Instead, his complete trust in Gilmer and his preoccupation with minor details at Bowling Green, led him to believe that the defenses within Middle Tennessee were being completed in a timely manner. Johnston's lack of knowledge concerning the state of defense within Middle Tennessee was not entirely his own fault, for neither

Polk nor Gilmer kept Johnston informed on the subject. Yet, the final blame for the situation must rest with Johnston. He was totally unable to communicate with his subordinates. He probably never knew that Gilmer believed the Federals would not attack during the winter. Johnston certainly did not hold that view. Stronger rapport with his staff and subordinates might have solved such serious differences in opinion. Less absorption with affairs in Bowling Green and a stronger hand with Polk might have forced Polk to meet his responsibilities at Henry and Donelson. Therefore, by the end of January, the complex of command failures had combined to make the inland river forts the most vulnerable spot on the Tennessee line.⁶²

Chapter 4

DESCRIPTION OF THE TENNESSEE DEFENSES

By the end of January, 1862, Fort Henry was finally finished, and its guns were in place. Across the river Fort Heiman was rapidly reaching its own completion after a very slow start. Almost nine months had passed since Anderson and Foster had made the first surveys to determine a location for Fort Henry and a great deal of neglect had taken place in the meantime. Still, except for the poor location of Fort Henry itself and the lack of heavy guns at Fort Heiman, the works were strong and capable of providing an effective defense if properly garrisoned.

The main position at Fort Henry was a five bastioned work which sat near the water's edge. The earthen walls of the fort were about thirteen feet thick at their base and tapered to eleven feet at the top.¹ The walls stood approximately seven feet high, with the heavy guns standing on well built platforms about three feet above the level of the ground. Embrasures made from coffee sacks filled with dirt were put atop the walls near the guns. The walls of the main work were about 2,700 feet in circumference and enclosed about three acres.² Five log huts and three frame buildings, described as "admirably built," housed the fort's garrison. A moat, nine to ten feet deep and twenty feet wide surrounded the fort. A drawbridge on the southwest bastion was stretched across the moat.³

An inner line of rifle pits or trenches was constructed on a ridge 300 feet east of the fort. This ridge was eighty to one hundred feet above the ground level of the fort. Log huts and tents were located behind the

works and provided shelter for the troops occupying these field fortifications. Southeast and south of the fort, west of the swamp, and on the same level as the fort, was another inner line of rifle pits. Log huts were also located behind these works and provided the quarters for the troops in this line. A total of about 250 log cabins were built at Fort Henry.⁴

An outer line of rifle pits covered the northern and eastern land approach. These works were located on another ridge rising eighty feet above the ground level of the fort and 3,000 feet from it. More swamp separated this ridge from the ridge crowned by the inner rifle pits. Tents were the only shelter provided for the defenders there, as these works were built later than the others. Only these works remain above water today, and they are still in reasonably good condition despite the fact that they have not been maintained in almost 120 years.⁵ All the rifle pits were well constructed. They were about four feet high and were four to six feet thick at their tops. A ditch six feet wide and over a foot deep was located behind the firing step to provide additional protection. Another ditch of about the same dimensions was built in front of the trench to provide an obstruction. The entire works at Fort Henry covered an area of ten acres. Abatis, which was made by cutting trees down and sharpening the ends of them, was prepared around the fort, the most extensive area of it being cut just north of the fort for a distance of two and a half miles to provide visibility as well as protection against infantry attack.⁶

Across the Tennessee River, which was about 1,260 feet wide at normal stage, stood Fort Heiman. It faced the southwest bastion of Fort Henry, and was situated on a hill rising ninety feet above the river level. It consisted of an earthwork of four bastions and covered about one acre.

The rear bastion was straight and the other three each formed a "V", rather than an indented line. The work was unfinished at the time of its capture, and its armament composed only two pieces of light artillery, comprising a section of Captain Crain's Tennessee Battery. These two pieces were one 12-pounder bronze gun and one 4-pounder iron rifle.⁷

Since Fort Henry was designed primarily to resist attack from the river, it had to be armed with a sufficient number of heavy weapons specifically to repel attack by enemy vessels. About the only weapons capable of performing such a mission at the time of the American Civil War were large muzzle loading pieces of artillery, mounted on carriages.

In the Confederacy, the first priority for such heavy artillery went to the east coast. The next priority was given to the defenses of the Mississippi River. By 1862 General Polk had accumulated a total of 140 pieces of field and heavy artillery at Columbus. As had been the case with everything else, Fort Henry was a "poor stepchild" when it came to heavy guns.⁸

Heavy artillery at the time of the Civil War was identified by either the size of the weapon's bore, or by the weight of the projectile it fired. For example, the 10-inch Columbiad had a bore ten inches in diameter, while the 32-pounder gun fired a ball which weighed thirty-two pounds. An exception to this rule was the rifled gun which, because of the design of its barrel, fired a projectile several times the weight of what would be fired by a similar smoothbore weapon. Therefore, the 24-pounder rifle actually fired a sixty-four pound elongated projectile.⁹ Heavy ordnance was also classified into three types: guns, howitzers, and mortars. It was further classified by its usage, such as for seige, field or seacoast defense.¹⁰

All of the heavy cannon at Fort Henry, with the exception of the

Columbiad, were classified as seacoast guns. This meant they were long barreled weapons designed to throw a solid shot with a heavy charge of powder at a long range using a low angle of elevation.¹¹ The Columbiad, too, used a heavy charge, and it also had a relatively long barrel, but it was designed to fire at a much higher angle of elevation. All these weapons were muzzle-loaders and were made entirely of iron. The 32-pounders, 42-pounders, and the Columbiad were all smoothbores and shared a similar smooth internal surface of the barrel. They were designed to fire a spherical projectile, but the Columbiad could also throw an elongated shell.

The 24-pounder, on the other hand, was classified as a rifle. This meant that the inside of the barrel was fitted with a system of "grooves", or indentations, and "lands"--raised portions. This rifling greatly increased the accuracy and range of the weapons.¹²

The number and description of the heavy ordnance of Fort Henry at the time of the battle with the Union flotilla in February, 1862, has been the subject of some controversy. Several of the senior Confederate Officers at Fort Henry made reports describing the heavy guns; however, there are some inconsistencies in those reports. After the battle was over and the Union Army took control of the fort, Lieutenant Colonel James B. McPherson, Grant's chief engineer, counted each weapon and classified it prior to placing its location on his map of Fort Henry. All these sources agree that there was one ten-inch Columbiad, one 24-pounder rifle and two 42-pounder guns at Fort Henry.¹³ Disagreement, however, arises with attempts to determine the number of 32-pounder guns at the fort. Major Gilmer and Captain Taylor both placed the number of 32-pounders at eight. Colonel Heiman reported that there were ten 32-pounders with the fort. This number agrees with the map made by McPherson. Major Mason Brayman, of General

John A. McClernand's staff, also inventoried the weapons after the battle, and he counted ten 32-pounders. Since the Union Officers could physically count the weapons and then report their findings, the correct number of 32-pounders is probably ten. McPherson, Heiman and Brayman also agree that there were two 12-pounders and one 24-pounder gun.¹⁴ This made a total of seventeen guns contained within the main work at Fort Henry.

These guns were arranged within the fort so as to provide protection to the entire work. In the cremaillere line facing north were five 32-pounders, the two 42-pounders, and the Columbiad. In the bastion facing northwest were the 24-pounder rifle and two 32-pounders. This made a total of eleven guns which were mounted in these two bastions, so as to face the river. No heavy artillery was mounted on the bastion facing southwest. Mounted on the bastion facing the northeast land approach were three 32-pounders and the 24-pounder. The two 12-pounders were mounted in the bastion covering the southeast land approach. There were two ammunition magazines: one in the right rear of the 24-pounder rifle, the other located behind the right 42-pounder facing north.¹⁵

At the beginning of the Civil War there were only two sources of heavy weapons available in the entire South. The first source was the capture of heavy weapons from the seacoast forts, which were seized at the start of hostilities. Most of these guns were retained in their former places, or installed at some other coastal fortification in the immediate area.¹⁶

The Gosport Navy Yard, in Norfolk, Virginia, provided the major source of heavy ordnance for the Confederacy at the beginning of the war. This yard was burned and abandoned on April 21, 1861, by retreating Union forces, because they erroneously believed they were about to be attacked

by superior Rebel forces. The confederates quickly occupied the yard, and among other valuable war material found over a thousand cannons ranging in size from 32-pounders to 11-inches. The guns had been ineffectively spiked and were easily repaired by the Southerners.¹⁷ Confederate authorities sent forty-two of the captured 32-pounders from Norfolk to Tennessee prior to June 10, 1861.¹⁸ Most of these weapons were sent to the Mississippi River; however, six were sent to Fort Henry.¹⁹ The Confederate government also sent ten 42-pounders from the Richmond Arsenal to Tennessee.²⁰ It is possible that two of these guns were eventually sent to Fort Henry. All the sources agree, though, that both the 32 and 42-pounder guns at Henry came from Virginia.²¹

Most publications dealing with Fort Henry never mention the origin of the 10-inch Columbiad at that location. I believe, after careful research, that the gun was produced at Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, Virginia, in late 1861. Prior to the fall of Fort Henry on February 6, 1862, a total of four such guns were shipped by Tredegar to General Johnston at Nashville. Two of these guns, serial numbers 1298 and 1306, were shipped on December 11, 1861, and then, in early January, 1862, the two others, serial numbers 1331 and 1338, were also shipped.²² Records of Nashville Ordnance Office, while incomplete, indicate that at an unknown date in December, Johnston requested that Columbiads be sent to both Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, then on January 6, 1862, Johnston again requested that a Columbiad be sent to Fort Henry. Since the Nashville Ordnance Office records show only two issues of 10-inch Columbiads--one to Henry and one to Donelson--it seems safe to conclude that these were the Tredegar guns. The other two Columbiads sent from Tredegar in January were diverted from Nashville and sent to Savannah after the fall of Fort Henry.²³

Further evidence indicates that the Columbiad at Fort Henry came from Tredegar. On November 16, 1861, Tredegar management issued a memorandum requiring that the pintle for the Columbiad carriage be long enough to enter the transom eight inches, instead of four inches as before. The memorandum also called for the gun carriage to be attached to the chassis rails. The purpose of the alteration was "...to prevent the chassis from being tripped up when the gun's carriage recoils."²⁴ The pintle is the vertical bolt which allows the barrel to be moved horizontally. The transom bar is one of several stout pieces of timber, which holds the parts of a gun carriage together.²⁵ This is significant, because both the 10-inch Columbiads at Henry and Donelson had problems very similar to those mentioned in the Tredegar memorandum. According to Colonel Heiman, when the Columbiad at Fort Henry was fired, the gun tube recoiled with such force that it "disarranged the pintle."²⁶ Colonel Haynes said of the Columbiad at Fort Donelson that when the gun was fired using a normal twenty-pound powder charge:

...the shock threw it back against the hurters and the recoil threw the chassis off the pintle, and the counter-shock threw the muzzle of the gun so violently against the transom bar as to injure the carriage...²⁷

A hurter is a square beam placed at the rear of the piece to help absorb the recoil.²⁸

Determining the origin of the 24-pounder rifle at Fort Henry was somewhat easier. In reports of the February battle at the location, both Major Gilmer and the Northern newspaper, the Cincinnati Gazette, related that the rifled gun came from Tredegar Iron Works. This information is verified by the fact that Tredegar records reveal that on December 2nd and 11th, 1861, 24-pounder rifled guns were shipped to Nashville.²⁹

Because of the lack of importance attached to Forts Henry and

Donelson by Confederate authorities, the inland river forts did not receive the most modern ordnance. In fact, except for the Columbiad and 24-pounder rifle, all the artillery was obsolete. The 32 and 42-pounder guns had been in the Army inventory for over forty years. The range of both weapons barely exceeded 1,900 yards. Because of the guns' small projectiles and short range, artillery experts considered them to be totally ineffective against ironclads.³⁰

The Columbiad and the rifled gun were much more powerful weapons. The range of both exceeded two miles, and both had individual characteristics which enhanced their usefulness. The Columbiad fired at an elevation as high as 39 degrees, and its round weighed one hundred twenty-eight pounds. This enabled the weapon to fire in a plunging pattern against the more vulnerable tops of the gunboats. The 24-pounder rifle was more accurate than the smoothbores because of the rotation of its projectile. The fact that it fired a sixty-four pound conical shaped projectile gave the rifled gun great penetrating power against ironclads. It was the 24-pounder rifle which disabled the gunboat Essex during the battle on February 6th.³¹

All the seacoast artillery at Fort Henry was mounted on barbette carriages which enabled them to be fired over a parapet. The carriage was then mounted on strong gun platforms about three feet above the floor of the fort.³²

All the ammunition for the artillery at Fort Henry came from the Nashville Ordnance Office. Captain Moses Wright, the chief of the office, had done an excellent job in obtaining contracts with local manufacturers for both ammunition and powder. By early 1862, Wright was able to supply most of the munitions needs of the entire Army of Tennessee.

On January 18th, W.W. Mackall, the Assistant Adjutant General at Bowling Green, forwarded a request to Captain Wright from General Tilghman for ammunition of all types. Mackall said Tilghman had on hand nine 32's and one 12-pounder; one rifled 24-pounder, and one 10-inch with no ammunition or loading fixtures. Mackall requested that Wright fill all Tilghman's requisitions. If Tilghman had not made any requisitions, Wright was instructed to take appropriate action and send whatever was necessary.³³ Strangely, Mackall made no mention of the two 42-pounders at Henry. As the original message from Tilghman was not found, it could not be determined whether it was Tilghman or Mackall who neglected to mention these weapons. This obvious mistake was to have serious effects within the coming days.

Wright replied to Mackall that a complete set of implements had been sent with the 10-inch Columbiad, and that 100 rounds of ammunition for the Columbiad had been sent on January 16th. Wright also reported that there were 782 rounds for the 32-pounders; 274 rounds for the 12-pounder; 300 rounds for the 6-pounder; 100 rounds for the 24-pounder rifled gun; 150,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, as well as lead, powder, and caps on hand at Fort Henry. Again, no mention of the 42-pounders was made.³⁴

Lieutenant W.O. Watts, Ordnance Officer at Fort Henry took steps to correct the deficiency in ammunition for the 42-pounder. Wright reacted by sending some 42-pounder solid shot; however, it failed to arrive at Fort Henry prior to the battle.³⁵

The gun powder used by the Rebels at Fort Henry was made entirely in Nashville. In fact, Nashville was the only source of gunpowder during the early war in the entire Western Department. This powder was mostly of such poor quality that it was necessary to adopt the dangerous expedient of adding to each charge a portion of quick-burning powder. Without the quick-burning powder, it was almost impossible to obtain a shot in excess of one

mile.³⁶ This quick-burning powder may well have contributed to the accidents which occurred with the big guns on February 6th.

The exact origins of the ammunition used by the Rebels at Fort Henry could not be learned; however, the probability exists that it was manufactured by either the firm of T.M. Brennan or Ellis Moore. The two Nashville businesses were the primary sources of ammunition supplies for the Nashville Ordnance Office, and review of contracts signed with the two companies revealed that both firms produced rounds for the 10-inch 32-pounder and the 24-pounder rifled gun.³⁷

By the end of January 1862, both Forts Henry and Heiman were substantially completed. All available guns had been mounted and with the exception of the 42-pounders, were ready for action. The forts were adequately supplied and the stage was set for the coming battle.

Chapter 5

THE BATTLE OF FORT HENRY

Throughout the fall and winter of 1861 the progress of the inland river forts was closely watched by Lieutenant Phelps and the gunboat Conestoga. Phelps was later joined by Lieutenant James W. Shirk, who on January 22nd sailed the gunboat Livingston within one mile and a quarter of Fort Henry. Phelps reached the southern point of Panther Island. Shirk had brought with him General C.F. Smith, commander of Grant's forces at Paducah, to inspect the conditions of the forts. The gunboat fired four shots at Fort Henry but caused no damage. The fort replied with a single shot which fell short. Smith noted that the heavy rains of the past week had raised the height of the river about fourteen feet. He believed that, "two iron-clad gunboats would make short work of Fort Henry." Smith, who had already marched his men to within twenty miles of Fort Heiman without a hint of opposition, believed that both works could easily be taken.¹

As early as September, 1861, Smith and Grant had realized the importance of the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers as an avenue of invasion. Other Federal officers too, saw the importance of the two rivers. On November 20th, Colonel Charles Whittlesey, Chief Engineer of the Department of the Ohio, wrote a letter to Halleck calling for a "great movement by land and water, up the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers." Whittlesey's letter also asked the following questions:

- (1) Would it not allow water transportation halfway to Nashville?
- (2) Would it not necessitate the evacuation of Columbus, by threatening (the Confederate's) valuable communications?
- (3) Would it not necessitate the retreat of General Buckner by threatening his railway lines?
- (4) Is it not the most feasible route into Tennessee?

Shortly thereafter, on December 5th, Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote suggested to Halleck that within two or three weeks, he could proceed up the Tennessee River with "two or three gunboats and a regiment of soldiers, for the purpose of destroying...Fort Henry...."²

On December 10th, General Buell offered a plan to Halleck whereby their two armies would move up both the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers simultaneously. Buell had even gone so far as to suggest the plan to Washington. Halleck rejected this plan, saying his Army was not ready for battle. McClellan inquired of Halleck when he might be able to move up the inland rivers in support of Buell. Halleck commented that if he received arms in time, he might be prepared for "ulterior operations" by the early part of February.³ By New Years Day, 1862, Halleck had become firmly convinced that an expedition up the Tennessee River was strategically sound and should be carried through. Unfortunately for the Union cause, the lack of cooperation between Halleck and Buell delayed the execution of such a plan.⁴

President Lincoln suspected that the two generals were not coordinating their movements. On December 31st, he suggested that Halleck move against Columbus and at the same time Buell move against Bowling Green. Lincoln believed that a simultaneous movement by both forces would prevent the Confederates from reinforcing either position. Both commanders blamed each other for the lack of cooperation, but neither man made any effort to remedy the situation.⁵ In early January Halleck began to plan a unilateral campaign which he hoped to begin in late February.

Grant also had been working on a plan to attack Fort Henry by using a combined army/gunboat force. On January 22d, Grant offered his plan to Halleck but Halleck refused to listen to him. Though Grant could not know it, Halleck did not believe that Grant was capable of commanding a large scale offensive. In fact, Halleck planned to call Ethan Allen Hitchcock, an old Army officer, out of retirement to lead the offensive.⁶

Events upset Halleck's plans, however, and forced him to move up the date for his attack on Fort Henry. McClellan wired Halleck on January 29th that Major General Pierre G.T. Beauregard had left Virginia with fifteen regiments and was enroute to Kentucky. In fact, Beauregard was traveling to Kentucky but with only a few staff officers.⁷

Halleck could not ignore the threat of the suspected Confederate reinforcements. If the blow at Henry were to be struck, it would have to be delivered immediately. About this same time Grant received Smith's report that Fort Henry could be taken with ease. Grant again asked Halleck for permission to attack Fort Henry. The following day, Foote also sent a telegram to Halleck reiterating Grant's plea. Under this pressure, Halleck on January 30th, gave Grant permission for an attack up the Tennessee River.⁸

Grant quickly assembled his men at Cairo, Paducah and Smithland. He had previously divided his forces into two divisions, but he learned that not enough steamboats were available to carry both divisions up river at one time.⁹ Grant decided to move McClellan's division on February 2nd and send the boats back to Smithland and Paducah to bring Smith's division south on February 3rd. Accordingly, McClellan's division and a brigade of Smith's division, were loaded onto the steamboats during the afternoon of February 2nd. Foote readied seven of the gunboats for the coming battle. Finally, at 5:00 p.m. on February 2nd, the gunboats led the transports away from the

docks at Cairo. The flotilla encountered strong currents in the Ohio River, and had to travel throughout that night, the next day, and into the morning of February 4th. It arrived at Itra Landing, on the east bank of the river eight miles below Fort Henry, at 4:30 a.m., February 4th.¹⁰

Observing the Federal landing, the Rebel pickets on duty along the river fired a signal rocket seen by sentinels in the fort. The fort answered with a signal rocket. The pickets fired three more rockets meaning that three gunboats had been spotted.

Heiman, who temporarily commanded the fort because Tilghman was inspecting Fort Donelson, ordered the 2,600 men garrison into motion. All the river guns were manned and loaded. Most of the steamers lying below Fort Henry were moved up river, out of the gunboat's range. The Dunbar and the Boyd were dispatched to Paris Landing to pick up the 48th and 51st Tennessee regiments which were on duty at that location. Heiman sent a courier to Fort Donelson to warn Tilghman of the impending assault.¹¹

During the month of February, the waters of the Tennessee normally rise considerably as a result of the rains which come at that time of the year. This year was no exception, and the rains came early, causing the river to rise rapidly. Several days before the battle water began to enter the fort and flooded the lower magazine built above ground. Many laborers were involved in placing sandbags around the new magazine, while other sandbags were used to shore up the walls of the fort just to keep the river out. The banks on both sides of the river were a sea of mud. Since the fort was located on low ground, it was almost completely surrounded by water.¹²

Shortly after daylight, the pickets on both sides of the river reported the presence of a large fleet anchored at Bailey's Landing. The smoke from their stacks was clearly visible at the fort. Heiman then

ordered Captain Ellis of the Tenth Tennessee to proceed down the east bank of the river with a small detachment of mounted men to ascertain whether the Federals were landing a force. Captain Milner was ordered to post his cavalry along the roads leading to the fort from Bailey's Landing. Colonel Joseph Drake of the 4th Mississippi Infantry was directed to send two companies of his regiment and a section of Culbertson's battery to the rifle pits about three-quarters of a mile from the fort in order to defend the Dover road. Captain C. W. Red was put in charge. Major Garvin occupied the rifle pits across the Bailey's Landing road. Twelve torpedoes were sunk in the chute of the river between the left bank and Panther Island. This island was located about one and one-half miles north of the fort.

About 9 o'clock, the gunboats began shelling the quarters of the Confederate soldiers. Captain Ellis quickly returned, reporting that he had seen eight gunboats and ten large transports in the river and that a Union cavalry was already beginning to land. The on-rushing water and its accompanying flotsam ripped the torpedoes in the chute from their moorings and rendered them useless.¹³

Ellis again returned and reported that he had seen barges carrying two light batteries near the opposite bank which indicated the Federals were landing on both shores. The gunboats edged closer to the fort. They threw a few shells at the fort, but spent most of their activity furiously shelling the woods on both sides of the river. This shelling, which last several hours, served two purposes. First of all, it covered the debarkation of the troops. Secondly, it proved that the Confederates had not placed any masked batteries along the banks. Meanwhile, below, the Federals continued their debarkation and sent forward pickets and

cavalry patrols. The Confederates also increased patrols and throughout the rest of that day minor skirmishes took place.¹⁴

On the 5th, Foote decided to test the range of the rebel guns, so he ordered three of the gunboats cautiously to proceed up the river to reconnoiter the fort.¹⁵ About 12 o'clock, the gunboats steamed up the main channel.

Colonel Heiman, sensing that the fort was about to be attacked, ordered that all the troops, except those necessary to man the heavy artillery, be marched out of range of the enemy guns. These big guns were manned by Company B, First Tennessee Artillery, Captain Jesse Taylor commanding. As the gunboats reached a distance of about two miles from the fort, they began throwing shells. Heiman ordered Taylor not to fire until the gunboats came within closer range. Taylor withheld fire until a well directed shot from one of the Federal guns killed one man and wounded three others. He then ordered the two most powerful pieces, the 24-pounder rifle and the 10-inch Columbiad, to return fire.¹⁶

Both Heiman and Taylor were concerned about the Columbiad because it had an iron carriage which sat on an iron chassis. In trial firings, using only a 20 pound charge, the recoil of the weapon caused too much force to be placed against the hurters. This, in almost every case, disarranged the pintle. The situation was remedied to an extent by clamping the carriage to the chassis. The weapon worked well for the first two shots; however, during the third shot, the clamp broke. Fearing that another shot would upset the gun, the Confederates did not fired it again.¹⁷

The 24-pounder performed better, and with its second shot scored a direct hit on the Cincinnati, causing damage to the officer's quarters and the captain's cabin. The Federals were astonished at the accuracy of

this shot because the Cincinnati was almost two miles from the fort when it was hit. After about a thirty minute bombardment, the gunboats withdrew, having accomplished their mission of testing the fort's guns.¹⁸

The Federal guns showed superior range by sending some shots as much as a quarter mile beyond the fort, yet they lacked accuracy. Most of the shells fell outside the fort and the few that did fall within the walls failed to explode.¹⁹

Before dark, Heiman reinforced the outposts on the Dover road with two companies of the 10th Tennessee under Captains Morgan and Ford. He also sent a 6-pounder rifled gun to support them. At this same time, Heiman sent another courier with an escort to General Tilghman. Heiman gave the courier a dispatch in which he recommended that Fort Heiman be abandoned. There were few troops, the works were not completed, and the Colonel felt it could not be held against a determined assault. Heiman also urged the General to come personally to Fort Henry. He cautioned him though, not to come without a strong escort as he believed the Federal cavalry was operating on the main road from Dover.²⁰

Back at Fort Donelson, Tilghman had heard the firing from Fort Henry and knew the crisis was at hand. After receiving the message from Heiman, he prepared to go immediately to the scene of the action. He requested that Major Gilmer accompany him, and he took three companies of LTC Gantt's cavalry for security. Before leaving, he ordered Colonel Head and Colonel Suggs to hold their infantry regiments, along with two pieces of artillery, in readiness to move at a moment's notice. They were instructed to cook three days rations and to be ready to move quickly without camp equipment or wagon train. If, by the morning of the 6th, they had not received a message from Tilghman indicating that the Federals

intended to attack Fort Donelson, the entire force, which consisted of about 750 men, was to move to Kirkman's Furnace and await further orders. Kirkman's Furnace was about halfway between Fort Donelson and Fort Henry.²¹

Tilghman and his party then left Fort Donelson and arrived at Fort Henry about 11:30 p.m. on the 5th.²² At daylight on the morning of the 6th, Tilghman discussed the deteriorating situation with Heiman and the others. After the meeting, he directed the removal of all the troops except cavalry, from Fort Heiman. The horse-soldiers, which consisted of the Alabama battalion and Captain Pagent's Spy Company, were left behind to harass the Federals and delay their advance.²³ In abandoning Fort Heiman, Tilghman felt he was losing little. While the heights on which Fort Heiman sat completely commanded Fort Henry, this ground would be of advantage to the Federals only if they could get artillery up onto the bluff. Since the incessant rains had turned the roads into rivers of mud, Tilghman believed this would be impossible.²⁴

With his forces, which amounted to about 2,600 men now concentrated on the east bank of the river, Tilghman divided the troops into two brigades. Heiman was given command of the first brigade, which comprised 1,444 men. These units were as follows: 10th Tennessee, LTC MacGavock, commanding; 48th Tennessee, LTC Voorhies, commanding; 51st Tennessee, LTC Browder, commanding; LTC Gantt's cavalry battalion, and Captain Culbertson's light battery consisting of four field pieces. The second brigade was given to Colonel Drake. Its 1,215 men were spread among several units also. The 4th Mississippi, Drake's old unit, was given to Major Adaire. The other units in the second brigade were the 27th Alabama, under LTC Hughes; the Alabama cavalry battalion, under Major Garvin; the 15th Arkansas, under LTC Gee; two separate cavalry companies under Captains Milner

and Milton; and a section of light battery, under Captain Crain. Since General Tilghman had left his staff back at Fort Donelson, he appointed Major McConnico as assistant adjutant-general and Lieutenant Phar as aide-de-camp.

Since Tilghman knew it would be impossible to defend the entire outer perimeter with such a small force, he decided to concentrate his forces in the rifle pits nearest the infantry camps. Exact instructions were given to each company as to the ground each would occupy.²⁵ During the morning a Confederate cavalry patrol encountered a group of Federal infantry and a skirmish ensued. Each side lost one man. Tilghman, upon hearing of the action, personally led reinforcements to the location where the skirmish had taken place, but by the time he arrived the Federals had retired. Fearing that the Federals would launch probing attacks, Tilghman then sent two additional companies of infantry to support Captain Red, who was still maintaining a forward position at the outerworks.²⁶

That night, General Tilghman called a council of his most trusted officers. Colonels Heiman, Forrest and Drake, Major Gilmer and Captains Hayden and Taylor were among the participants. The strength of the Federals was estimated to be at least 25,000 men. To oppose this force, the Confederates had fewer than 2,600 men, mostly raw recruits armed with shotguns and hunting rifles. In fact, the best equipped regiment in the command, the 10th Tennessee, was armed with old Tower of London flint-lock muskets first used in the War of 1812. The consensus was that successful resistance to such an overwhelming force was an impossibility and the army should fall back and unite with Pillow and Buckner at Donelson.²⁷

By removing the troops, General Tilghman would, of course, abandon Fort Henry. Tilghman reasoned, however, that Fort Donelson might possibly

be held if properly reenforced, even though Fort Henry should fall. Certainly the opposite was not true. The troops at Fort Henry would be necessary to aid Fort Donelson either in making a successful defense or in holding it long enough to allow the Confederate Army to escape from Bowling Green. Tilghman decided that the only course was to concentrate at Fort Donelson. The fate of the right wing at Bowling Green then depended upon the concentration at Fort Donelson and the holding of that place as long as possible.²⁸ Before the close of the meeting, Tilghman had one additional problem with which to deal--that of withdrawing undisciplined troops from the front in the face of a superior opponent. With this in mind, he turned to Captain Taylor, commander of the heavy artillery, and asked, "Can you hold out for one hour against a determined attack?" Taylor replied that he could. Tilghman then said, "Well then gentlemen, rejoin your commands and hold them in readiness for instant motion."²⁹ Thus, the success of the escape of Tilghman's army rested totally on the shoulders of 54 artillerymen and 11 overaged naval guns.

During the evening Confederate pickets from the west bank reported the landing of more Federal troops on that side of the river. Tilghman ordered Captain Hubbard to take 50 men and, if possible, surprise the outlying Union pickets. The torrential rains impeded Hubbard's progress and he was unable to make contact with the enemy.³⁰

Since Captain Taylor and Lieutenant Watts were the only two experienced artillery officers at Fort Henry, General Tilghman sent a message to Fort Donelson requesting that Colonel Milton A. Haynes, Chief of the Tennessee Corps of artillery, come to his assistance at Fort Henry. Haynes left immediately and arrived during the night, but had to remain outside the fort until daylight because the high backwater could not be

traversed in the dark. After examining the fort, Haynes quickly determined that the works were untenable and ought to be abandoned immediately.³¹

The preparations were over. All that Tilghman could do had been done. The gunners were at their places and the infantry was preparing to march away. Heavy volumes of black smoke rose over Panther Island indicating that the Union fleet would soon be on the move. Tilghman and Gilmer spent the night on board the Dunbar which was lying off Fort Heiman during the night. About 10:30 on the morning of February 6th, General Tilghman and Major Gilmer went ashore in a small boat. The Dunbar then moved up river in order to try to escape capture.

Near 11 o'clock the gunboats could be seen behind the cover of Panther Island. They formed a line abreast with two divisions. The Essex with four guns; the Cincinnati, the Carondelet and the St. Louis each with 13 guns formed the first line as they were all ironclad boats of a new design. The wooden gunboats Tyler, Conestoga and Lexington, with a total of 15 guns, formed the second line. Seeing this formation, Taylor assigned to each gun a particular vessel as target. Captain Hayden volunteered to assist with the defense so he was placed in charge of the Columbiad which had been repaired after the accident of the day before. Taylor took personal supervision of the rifle.

Tilghman ordered Heiman to move all the troops out of range of the Federal guns. Only the men who were serving the artillery and the officers who accompanied the general were to remain inside the fort. Sending so many men from the fort was to prove a mistake. With his staff, Tilghman took a position at the center battery so he could better observe the movements of the gunboats and direct the firing of the batteries.³²

Grant's plan of attack called for Foote's gunboats to move against

the water battery at Fort Henry while Smith's 6,000 troops marched up the west bank of the river and assaulted Fort Heiman. McClernand's division would move against Fort Henry via the Bailey's Ferry and Dover Telegraph Road. All movements were to begin at 11:00 a.m. McClernand was further ordered to prevent the reinforcement or escape of the fort's garrison and to be prepared to storm the fort when ordered. The gunboats covered the four miles easily in one hour, but it took McClernand's division two hours to march four of the eight circuitous miles from their camp to Fort Henry. As McClernand's forces reached the fork of Telegraph Road they paused to wait until the fort was reduced or the gunboats retired. They were well aware that they would be exposed to the fire from both the fort and the gunboats if they continued to advance.³³ This pause allowed the Confederates to make their escape.

As the Federals reached a range of 1,700 yards, the Cincinnati, Foote's flagship, fired a single shot which signaled the beginning of the general engagement. The shot fell short, but a few seconds later a 9-inch shell from the Essex found its mark in the forward wall of the earthworks. All the gunboats were firing as they came, but the guns of the fort remained silent.³⁴ As the gunboats reached a distance of about one mile from the fort, Taylor gave the command to fire. The engagement was lively and in the words of Captain Taylor, "for the next twenty or thirty minutes, was on both sides, as determined, rapid, and accurate as a heart could wish, and apparently inclined in favor of the fort." The Essex was disabled by a shot through her boiler and dropped out of line. This shot came from the rifled gun. The fleet seemed to hesitate, then a series of disasters took place within the fort. First, the rifled gun from which Taylor had just been called away burst and disabled not only its own crew, but the crew of

the gun nearest it. This had a terrible effect on the morale of the artillerymen; first, because it made them doubt the strength of their guns to resist the shock of full charges, and secondly, because much had been expected from the long range and accuracy of the rifled gun. Still, all the men stood firmly at their stations under the intense fire and fought well.

Many of the shells lodged in the parapet making deep penetrations, but in no case did any pass through unless they struck the cheek of an embrasure. As luck would have it, one of the 32-pounder guns was struck by a heavy shell passing through such an embrasure. All the gunners at the piece were disabled and the gun was destroyed.³⁵ About the same time, a premature discharge of one of the other guns caused it to explode, killing three men and wounding several others. The explosion probably occurred because too much quick burning powder was added to the charge.

The ironclads continued to move closer, reducing the range with each shot. They fired at the embrasures in an effort to disable other Rebel guns, while the wooden gunboats fired high angle shots in an effort to drop shells into the fort. Several of these shots started fires in the buildings inside the fort. The fires soon burned out of control as there was no one to fight the blaze.³⁶

As Captain Taylor was moving about the fort directing the efforts of his men he saw Tilghman for the first time since the battle began. Taylor had supposed that the general had left the fort with the retreating army. Taylor went over to discuss the deteriorating situation with the general when he heard a commotion over at the Columbiad. He rushed to the big gun and found that it had been spiked by its own priming wire. The wire was put into the primer hole too quickly and was caught by the final

thrust of the rammer. A blacksmith was called for, and he labored with great coolness for a long time even though by sitting atop the big gun he was exposed to the direct fire of the gunboats. Yet, in spite of his courage and earnest efforts, the broken wire remained in the hole and the gun was useless.³⁷

Gilmer approached Heiman and called his attention to the hopeless state of affairs. He requested that Heiman tell Tilghman that it was useless to hold out longer and that to keep up the struggle would cost the lives of many more men. Heiman agreed with Gilmer, but declined to bring the matter to the general's attention. Tilghman, when he was finally told of the state of affairs by Gilmer, said that he would not surrender yet as he had lost but few men. He then asked why some of the guns had ceased firing. He was told that several of the men had been killed; many others were wounded; and the rest were exhausted. Because everyone else had been sent out of the fort, there was no one to relieve the gunners. The general threw off his coat, sprang onto the chassis of a 32-pounder gun, and said that he would work the gun himself. He directed the gun toward the Cincinnati and fired, striking the ironclad with the first shot. Tilghman then ordered that 50 men from the 10th Tennessee be brought back to the fort to assist the gunners. Heiman could find no one to send, so he went himself.³⁸

The Federal commander, observing the silence of the two heavy guns, renewed his advance and increased the accuracy of his fire. Two of the 32-pounders were struck almost at the same instant, and the flying fragments of the shattered guns and bursting shells disabled every man at the two guns. Taylor said of the Federal guns, "His rifle-shot and shell, penetrated the earth-works as readily as a pistol-ball would a pine plank." Now only four guns were serviceable.³⁹

The moment had now arrived when General Tilghman should have joined the main body of troops retiring toward Fort Donelson. Still, it was equally plain to Tilghman that the gallant men working the batteries, most of whom were for the first time under fire, needed his presence. The situation was critical and after the appeal of several officers and men the general determined to stay, believing that to leave at that moment would be disastrous.

The general's decision gave the gunners new energy. The Confederate guns fired away with such deliberation that scarcely a shot missed. Despite the accuracy of the Southern fire, the ironclads were now within 600 yards of the fort and their guns were able to fire at point blank range. The heavy shot from the gunboats tore away more of the embrasures, throwing the sand bags upon the banquette and exposing the gunners to direct fire from the enemy.⁴⁰

Major Gilmer again approached Tilghman and suggested capitulation. The general, realizing the hopelessness of the situation, agreed and accordingly he raised a white flag on the parapet himself.⁴¹

Several officers persuaded Tilghman to get down off the wall though, because it was evident that in the dense smoke, the flag could not be seen. Tilghman now held a hasty conference with Gilmer, Lieutenant Watts and Captain Taylor. The four decided that continued resistance would only result in useless loss of life and that the object of the defense, the escape of the army, had been accomplished; therefore, the only sensible option was surrender. Tilghman then ordered Taylor to strike the colors. This proved to be as dangerous a task as it was a painful one. The huge flag pole was made like a ship's mast and was in two pieces--the top mast being connected to the main shaft by means of ropes. The flag staff had

been struck several times. The top mast hung so far out of the perpendicular that it seemed likely to come down at any moment. The flag halyards had been cut, but fortunately had fouled at the cross trees. Together, Captain Taylor and Sergeant Jones climbed the main shaft and, by manipulating the ropes, lowered the flag.⁴²

While Colonel Haynes was engaged working the upper battery someone gave the order "cease fire." Haynes immediately countermanded the order and kept firing. As he pointed a gun and was preparing to fire it, one of the gunners exclaimed, "Look, someone has raised the white flag!" Haynes ordered the gunner to go tear it down and shoot the man who had raised it. Haynes felt that his course of action was justified because he supposed the flag had been raised without authority. He felt that any order to surrender should have been given through him since he was the chief of artillery. The gunner came running back to Haynes and told him that General Tilghman had ordered the white flag to be raised. Haynes ordered the men to remain by their guns and he quickly went to General Tilghman. He asked the general if he was going to surrender. Tilghman's reply was, "Yes, we cannot hold out five minutes longer; our men are disabled, and we have not enough to man two guns." Haynes replied, "Then sir, I will not surrender and you have no right to include me in the capitulation as an officer of this garrison, I being here only for consultation with you." The two men shook hands and Colonel Haynes left the fort and walked down the river to a stable. There he found a horse without saddle or bridle. He mounted the horse and rode off up the river to join the retreating army. Gilmer also left the fort, but by order of Tilghman the other men remained.⁴³

Meanwhile, as Colonel Heiman was about to reach the retreating column, he heard the firing stop and saw the flag being hauled down. He

quickly returned to the fort for further orders. Tilghman told Heiman that he believed it was his duty to surrender, but Heiman was not included in the surrender as he had not been in the fort at the time the flag was hauled down. He directed Heiman to continue the retreat to Fort Donelson by way of the upper road. Heiman then rejoined the retreat.

A few minutes before 2:00 p.m., the gunboats ceased fire. Soon a small yawl left the fort carrying Major McConnico and either Captain Hayden or Captain Miller. The small boat made its way to the Cincinnati. Foote received the occupants and sent a small boat with Commander Richard Stembel and Lieutenant Phelps to the fort. The area south of the fort was flooded, and the boat made its way into the "sally port" or drawbridge of the southwest bastion. Stembel and Phelps raised the United States flag on the flagpole, and by Foote's order requested Tilghman to go aboard the Cincinnati.

Tilghman went out to Foote's flagship and requested that the Confederate officers be allowed to retain their side arms. Foote granted the request and invited the general to dinner.⁴⁴

Phelps remained alone in the fort to watch the prisoners. Grant and his staff galloped towards Fort Henry upon the cessation of fire and arrived at the main fort at about 3:00 p.m. Grant went aboard the Carondelet which had temporarily run aground on the shore near the fort and complimented the crew for their gallantry. McClelland's infantry arrived at the outer works about 3:30 p.m.

Shortly after 2:00 p.m., Smith's column approached Fort Heiman and, discovering that this post was empty, occupied it. Smith believed that "a stiff fight" could have been made by the Confederates if they had chosen to defend Fort Heiman.⁴⁵

As the Federals moved into Fort Henry, the main body of the Confederates continued their retreat towards Fort Donelson. Owing to the bad roads, the high water, and close pursuit of the Federal cavalry, the column was forced to abandon the light artillery. About three miles from Fort Henry the rear of the column was attacked by the Union cavalry. Colonel Gee and Major Garvin fought a delaying action, but Colonel Gee of the 15th Arkansas, and Captain Leach of the Alabama battalion were surrounded and captured.⁴⁶ Heiman and the rest of the troops, except for a few stragglers, made their way east and late on the evening of the 6th arrived at the outer works of Fort Donelson.

A combination of forces worked against the Confederates at Fort Henry. Even though the Rebels had seventeen large guns at the fort, only eleven faced the river. Only nine of these were serviceable as the two 42-pounders had no ammunition. The largest and best two pieces were silenced not by the Federals, but by other causes. The gunpowder was poor and dangerous. Captain Taylor, an experienced naval gunner, believed that with effective guns and ammunition his men could have defeated the Federal fleet; however, the river was another matter. Taylor believed that if the Federals had delayed their advance another 48 hours the battle would have been unnecessary, for the river would have flooded the fort and forced its abandonment.⁴⁷

The fight for Fort Henry was now over and the Federals were in possession of the shattered fort. The interior of the fort showed mute evidence of the tragedy of battle. Five horribly mangled bodies, bits of human flesh, blood, gore, and shattered pieces of exploded guns lay all about. Outside the walls all signs pointed to the haste with which the Confederates had departed. Clothing, books, papers, letters, watches,

daguerreotypes, and even money were scattered all over the Confederate camps. In some cabins, dishes with food still on them stood on the tables. The storehouses were full of flour, corn meal, rice, sugar, molasses, beef and bacon sides.⁴⁸

With Fort Henry silenced, the way was open for Union gunboats to steam all the way to Florence, Alabama. Lieutenant Phelps, acting on orders received prior to the battle, started up the Tennessee River accompanied by the other two wooden gunboats. The vessels stopped first at the railroad bridge at Danville, Tennessee. The Confederates had jammed the mechanism for raising the bridge; however, after some hard work, the Federals were able to raise it. The Tyler stayed behind so its crew could tear up the tracks.⁴⁹ The other two vessels continued upriver, but the Conestoga quickly outdistanced the slower Lexington. About five hours after leaving the railroad bridge the Conestoga came upon the Samuel Orr and two other Confederate steamers which had just been set ablaze by their crews. Phelps feared that an explosion from the burning boats would damage his craft so he ordered the Conestoga stopped about one thousand yards away from the blazing steamers. Suddenly, there was a violent explosion as the fire reached the submarine mines which were on board the Samuel Orr. The concussion from the blast shattered skylights and jammed doors on board the Conestoga. The river for half a mile was filled with flying missiles from the exploding steamer.⁵⁰

After the slower gunboats caught up, the three raiders continued their journey upriver. They stopped next at Cerro Gordo where they found the steamer Eastport. The Eastport was under conversion to an ironclad gunboat by Lieutenant J. N. Brown of the Confederate States Navy. Sailors from the Federal gunboats boarded the Eastport and found that she had been

partially scuttled. The leaks were quickly stopped, and she was somehow made bouyant again. Phelps again left the Tyler behind to guard this fine prize while the other boats proceeded up the river.⁵¹

On the 8th, the two Federal gunboats captured two more Confederate steamers and moved on toward Florence. As they approached the city, three Confederate steamers were burned before the Federals could reach them. The Federals entered Florence, remained there several hours, and then returned to the Eastport. In the meantime, Lieutenant Gewin, commander of the Tyler, had enlisted twenty-five Tennesseans into Federal service. The three Federal gunboats then returned to Fort Henry. The Tennessee River raid was a crowning success. The railroad bridge which was the main communications link between the two halves of Johnston's Army had been destroyed and the Confederate gunboat Eastport had been captured. More importantly, the Federals had now penetrated the Deep South and gave encouragement to the Unionists in North Alabama and South Central Tennessee.⁵²

The campaign against Fort Henry was thus a fine victory. The forts and the river were under Federal control; the loss of life had been minimal; and the ironclad gunboats had proven their worth. Phelps had captured the Eastport, thereby ending the threat which the Confederate ironclad had created. People in the North were elated while those in the South were correspondingly depressed.⁵³ Only the escape of most of the fort's garrison marked the Union victory.

Chapter 6

SIGNIFICANCES OF THE FORT HENRY CAMPAIGN

The defeat of the Confederates at Forts Henry and Heiman by the Federal Forces netted them a total of seventeen pieces of heavy ordnance, along with several field pieces. They also captured a Confederate general, eleven other officers, sixty-six men in the fort, and sixteen men in the hospital. Under Union control, Fort Henry served first as a staging area for the attack on Fort Donelson and later as a coaling station for Federal transports on the Tennessee River. Fort Heiman served for a time as a Union cavalry post, and was later abandoned.¹

The loss of Fort Henry opened the Tennessee River to navigation by Federal steamboats all the way to Muscle Shoals, Alabama. This allowed the Federals to penetrate deep into the Southern heartland and launch strikes in any direction using the Tennessee River as a supply line.

The destruction of the Tennessee River bridge at Danville cut the Memphis, Clarksville and Louisville Railroad, which was the main line of supply and communications between Johnston in the East, and Polk in the West. It also prevented the transfer of reinforcements between the two armies. Accordingly, Johnston ordered the evacuation of most of the troops from Columbus. These troops were moved further south to Humboldt to protect Memphis. Only a few troops were left at Columbus in order to defend the river against an advance of the Federal gunboats. Johnston also made provisions for a further retreat to Grenada even as far south as Jackson, Mississippi.²

The fight at Fort Henry was also important in that it was the first time ironclad gunboats were used in the Civil War against land fortifications. This battle, in essence, was a trial by fire for the newly designed craft. They quickly proved their worth because their protection allowed them to move much closer to the fort and thereby increase the accuracy of their own guns. Three of the ironclads were able to withstand the Confederate fire without serious damage. Only the Essex, which received a shot through the boiler, suffered appreciably.³ The tremendous success which the ironclads enjoyed at Fort Henry fastened the myth that they were invulnerable. When the Federal gunboats approached Fort Donelson several days later the Confederate Commander at Donelson, General John B. Floyd, commented that the fort could not hold out for twenty minutes. Johnston himself, said that, "the best open earthworks are not reliable to meet successfully a vigorous attack by ironclad gunboats." In the North, people came to believe that their new weapon was invincible.⁴

The strategic implications of the fall of Forts Henry and Heiman were tremendous. The day following the fall of the forts General Johnston held a meeting with Generals Beauregard and Hardee. At this meeting, the decision was made to abandon Bowling Green and move to Nashville, or possibly as far south as Stevenson, Alabama. This meant that all of central Kentucky was being surrendered with scarcely a shot fired. The evacuation of Bowling Green also meant the loss of supplies and munitions worth millions of dollars. It also meant the loss of the valuable rail junction which connected the Louisville and Nashville with the Memphis, Clarksville and Louisville Railroad.⁵ Thus, the fall of Fort Henry had forced Johnston to abandon all of

Kentucky and it set the stage for the abandonment of Middle Tennessee as well.

The psychological effects of the battle of Fort Henry were probably as great as were the physical changes which took place after the battle. As far as the Confederates were concerned, the psychological effects were all negative. After Manassas, most southerners had been elated. Now the defeats of Roanoake Island and Fort Henry changed their attitude. Southern opinion that the Union soldiers would not fight rapidly dissipated and Southern morale quickly declined.⁶

One result of the ebb in morale was increased criticism of Southern leaders. Throughout 1861 President Davis had enjoyed comparative popularity but the reverses of early 1862 produced rising hostility to his administration. This hostility was vented in the newspapers, the Congress, and the Army. The defeats also caused many old supporters of Davis such as Senator Louis T. Wigful of Texas and James L. Orr of South Carolina to abandon the administration.⁷

Secretary of War, Judah P. Benjamin, also suffered personally from the Rebel setback at Fort Henry. He was never a popular cabinet member but until the defeats at Roanoke Island and Fort Henry his critics had remained silent. Now they began to speak out and openly called for his resignation. Representative James W. Moore of Kentucky offered a resolution before the Legislature stating that "J.P. Benjamin, as Secretary of War, has not the confidence of the people... nor the army...and that we most respectfully suggest that his retirement from said office is a high military necessity." Davis stoutly defended his friend, but after the fall of Fort Donelson, the President was forced to remove Benjamin from office.⁸

The general population probably never realized the full gravity of the Confederate defeat at Fort Henry. While the leading newspapers such as the Richmond Daily Examiner, carried stories about the fall of Fort Henry, the incident was played down. Only in Tennessee, it seems, did newspapers appreciate the full extent of the disaster at Fort Henry.⁹

The effect of the capture of Fort Henry on the North was electric. The victory came so suddenly and so unexpectedly that the spirits of the Northern people were elated beyond measure. Northern newspapers reveled in the Union victory. Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper reported on February 22, 1862, that:

Altogether we regard the battle of Logan Cross Roads and the capture of Fort Henry as conjointly of more importance than all the other military operations of the war....While the gigantic army of the Potomac suffocated hopelessly in mud, and Burnside's heels stick fast in the sands of Hatteras; while Sherman dawdles at Port Royal, and Butler's forces yawn despairingly on the dreary waste of Ship Island; while, in a word, incompetence and inaction, not to say corruption and treason, rule in the East, the young West, the stalwart son of an effete sire, moves onward from triumph to triumph, and presses back the black rebellion with Sampsonian power. God speed the Armies of the West.¹⁰

Prospects looked so good to some that they could joke about it:

Having now obtained a Foot-hold in Tennessee we expect to send our Porter or our Butler with a message to our Southern friends and Grant them the privilege of paying their debts to the North as well as securing their 'rights,' of which they Bragg much--and may the Pillow under their leaders' heads be as adders and scorpions till they pay the Price of treason and their rebel carcasses be Polk'd into their tratours (sic) Toombs.¹¹

Foot was given the nickname, "the Stonewall Jackson of the Navy." Fort Henry was renamed in his honor, but only temporarily because the name did not become popular.

The Chicago Tribune called the battle of Fort Henry "the most glorious victory of the war." The New York Times wrote:

The rebels had ample notice of our intended attack, and General Beauregard, with 15,000 men was detached from Manassas to

strengthen General Polk. A day or two before the attack on Fort Henry an organ of the rebel government at Richmond announced that Confederates were in full force on the Tennessee River and that nothing could possibly be achieved by the United States troops. Yet a bombardment of an hour and a half by three or four gunboats settled the matter, and the 'Confederates,' who were in such force, were not to be found when Commodore Foote landed.¹²

The Daily Illinois State Journal reported a celebration at Springfield. "The State officers had the National emblem run up from the top of the Statehouse, and by order of the Governor a national salute was fired on Friday night from the Arsenal. Everybody was in high glee over Commodore Foote's splendid achievement."¹³

The psychological effect on morale within the Union Army was also very great. A comparison of the desertion rates for the last half of 1861 and the first part of 1862, shows a decline after the battle at Fort Henry. The Union Army now had faith in its own ability to fight and win.¹⁴ Here lies one of the greatest significances of the battle of Fort Henry. This small engagement conducted mainly by the Navy raised Union Army morale to a point which enabled it to achieve an uninterrupted series of victories throughout Tennessee in 1862. This victory also laid the foundation for Grant's fame as a national hero. The military chiefs in Washington were amazed that an unknown man such as Grant was able to do what they had not: achieve the first significant Union victory of the War. Grant quickly caught the public eye and admirers sent him gifts of cigars.

Lincoln also became intensely interested in Grant's career. In Grant, Lincoln seemed to have found the bold, aggressive commander he had been seeking for almost one year. Lincoln personally nominated Grant for promotion to major general. The President said of Grant, after the battle at Forts Henry and Donelson, "Here was a leader worth watching. Instead of asking for more troops, more equipment, and more time for preparation,

he made full use of the resources at hand and got results."¹⁵ Halleck too, materially benefited from the Federal victory at Fort Henry. Owing to this success and the victory at Fort Donelson, Halleck asked for command of the entire Western theater. McClellan preferred Buell, but the tide of victory was too much in the favor of Halleck. Halleck was given complete command of all the Union Armies in the West.¹⁶

The final significance of the battle for possession of Fort Henry lies in the field of foreign affairs. The South needed the recognition of other nations in order to achieve its independence. The South simply did not have the industrial base to resist the North indefinitely. The South had already achieved the status of a belligerent with many European nations and it seemed on the brink of achieving full recognition by England because of the uproar caused by the Trent affair of November 1861. Then came the Union victory at Fort Henry.¹⁷

The total defeat of the Confederate forces and the penetration by the Union flotilla into the Deep South was seen as a sign of Southern weakness by European nations. From Paris, John Slidell wrote on February 26, 1862, that:

The affairs of Somerset (Mill Springs), Fort Henry and Roanoke Island (the latter yet wanting confirmation) are subjects of great exultation among our enemies here, and produce among some of our friends corresponding depression, a feeling which I do not share, but which cannot fail to exercise for the time an unfavorable influence on public opinion.¹⁸

Both England and France continued for a time to listen to the appeals of Mason and Slidell, but the Southern position in relation to recognition from the European powers was seriously damaged by the loss of Fort Henry.¹⁹

The one remaining question regarding the Fort Henry campaign concerns whether or not, under existing circumstances, the battle of Fort Henry could have been a Confederate victory. As those circumstances existed in February,

1862, obviously it could not. But if those same circumstances had been altered to some degree, even as late as November, 1861, then the results could have been quite different. As previously stated, Fort Heiman was the key to defense of the Tennessee River. If heavy guns such as 10-inch Columbiads had been placed on the high bluffs they could have done severe damage to the ironclad gunboats and would have forced the timberclads to stand off beyond the effective range of their guns. Since Columbiads fire at an elevated trajectory they would have also been ideal for dropping shells onto the vulnerable "roofs" on the gunboats.²⁰ As seen from the results of the later battle between gunboats and water battery at Fort Donelson, guns placed at higher elevation could be very effective. During that engagement the Louisville Carondelet and St. Louis were all disabled by Confederate guns mounted on a hill. Also guns firing from both sides of the river could have had an adverse affect on the morale of the men on board the gunboats. The guns at Fort Heiman, because of their height, would also have been much more difficult to disable than the guns located at Fort Henry.²¹

Confederate chances of victory at Fort Henry would have been greatly increased had ammunition for the 42-pounder guns and increased manpower been available. If Captain Wright had been able to get the 42-pounder ammunition to Fort Henry prior to the battle, then the Confederates would have had two more usable weapons with which to defend the river. The presence of added manpower within the fort could have provided relief for fatigued gunners. This move would have also increased morale within the fort. Such a combination of changed circumstances would have rendered Fort Henry much more defensible, and could well have resulted in the repulse of the Union flotilla. Had the seacoast guns at Forts Henry and Heiman been able to repel the

gunboats, then the Confederates would have faced Grant's army of 18,000 men. The defeat of this formidable army would have required still other measures.

Fort Henry was almost completely surrounded by a system of rifle pits to provide cover for the fort's defenders. Outside the rifle pits, trees had been cut down to form abatis which served to help repel attacking enemy infantry.²² The rifle pits themselves were well situated, except in the case of those on the extreme northeast side of the fort. These works should have been reestablished at the top of the ridge about one hundred yards from where they were originally built.²³ This would have given the defending infantry a better field of fire and at the same time forced the Federals to attack an elevated position.

During the American Civil War it was generally assumed that in order to assault defended earthworks successfully a force three times more numerous than the defenders was necessary.²⁴ Given Grant's force of 18,000 men, Tilghman would have needed in excess of 5,000 well equipped and trained men to defend his perimeters and an adequate force of cavalry to scout enemy positions and keep open the supply route to Dover. At the time of the fall of the fort, Tilghman had about 2,200 men, though not all of them were by any means well equipped or trained.²⁵ Only the 10th Tennessee and the 4th Mississippi Regiments were in good condition, so in order to repel the invasion, he would have needed at least another 3,500 to 4,000 effective troops. These men were readily available at Clarksville, Hopkinsville, Russellville, and Humboldt. Since the Memphis, Clarksville, and Louisville Railroad ran near each of these points and crossed the Tennessee River only a few miles above Fort Henry, the needed troops could easily have arrived at Fort Henry in less than one full day.²⁶ Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest's

cavalry and Captain Maney's seven gun artillery battery from Fort Donelson could also have been moved to Fort Henry, thereby easing other needs at the fort. Such a formidable force within the defenses of Fort Henry should have been able to withstand the initial thrusts of Grant's infantry.

This is not to say that Tilghman's proposed command could have withstood a lengthy siege, because obviously it could not. The week following the battle on February 6th, the interior of Fort Henry was almost completely flooded. Also, supplies on hand at Fort Henry could not have sustained the increased forces indefinitely.²⁷ Still, if the improved river batteries could have forced Foote's gunboats to withdraw, and if the infantry could have withstood Grant's advances for even five days, there is an excellent chance the Federal forces would have been withdrawn. Halleck was a very cautious man and in deciding to attack Fort Henry he acted without authority from higher authorities. Halleck still believed that heavy Confederate reinforcements were on their way to Kentucky so if the Federal advances had been repelled Halleck might have become unnerved. Even after the victory at Fort Henry, Halleck still feared a Confederate counterattack. Halleck did not trust Grant to lead such a large operation anyway and his messages to Grant were full of caution and doubt.²⁸ With such a predisposition, it is unlikely that Halleck would have allowed Grant to continue this offensive if it were unsuccessful for several days. The withdrawal of Federal forces would have given the Confederates more time to prepare their defenses and at the same time, the Union initiative would have been stifled. The foregoing is, of course, only supposition, but it is based on the facts as they existed in February, 1862.

Thus, the fall of Forts Henry and Heiman was disastrous to the Confederate cause. The blundering of Tennessee and Confederate civil

Footnotes from Chapter One

¹ J. G. Randall and David Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction (Lexington, Mass: D. C. Heath & Co, 1969), pp. 184-86; Mary Emily Campbell, The Attitude of Tennesseans Toward the Union, 1847-1861 (New York: Vantage Press, 1961), p. 176.

² Campbell, pp. 176-77.

³ Randall and Donald, p. 185; Clarence L. Johnson, Lonnie G. Mc Pherson and Ronald G. Hayhoe, "The Significance of Forts Henry and Donelson in the Western Campaign of 1862" (MSS in Fort Donelson National Military Park, Dover, Tenn., 1934), p. 18.

⁴ Campbell, p. 191.

⁵ Campbell, p. 193.

⁶ Campbell, p. 194.

⁷ Thomas L. Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge: The Army of Tennessee, 1861-1862" (PhD dissertation, Rice University, 1963), pp. 65-66; Campbell, p. 193; Republican Banner (Nashville), May 7, 1861, p. 1, col 3.

⁸ Connelly, pp. 66-67.

⁹ Report of Isham G. Harris, U. S. War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1880-1892), Series VI, Volume 1, pp. 296-98; cited hereinafter as OR. In the place of the unwieldy official designations of series, volumes and parts, an arabic serial number will be used. Resolutions to ratify the agreement between Tennessee and the Confederate States of America, May 15, 1861, 4 OR, p. 320.

¹⁰ Connelly, pp. 68-69; Johnson, et al., p.18.

¹¹ Campbell, p. 195.

¹² Connelly, pp. 68-70; S. R. Anderson to L. P. Walker, May 12, 1861, 52 OR, p. 96; J. G. Shorter to J. P. Benjamin, March 8, 1862, 54 OR, pp. 281-82; Isham Harris to Gideon Pillow, May 25, 1861, in Governor Isham G. Harris Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, (cited hereinafter as Harris Papers, Tenn).

¹³ Walker to Harris, May 20, 1861, 52 OR, pp. 103-105; Harris to Walker and Walker to Pillow, May 25, 1861 in Harris Papers, Tenn.; Connelly, pp. 70-71.

¹⁴ Connelly, pp. 68-73; Harris to Pillow and Walker, May 25, 1861 J. W. Roberts to Harris, June 17, 1861, Anderson to Harris, June 29, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.

¹⁵ Campbell, p. 206.

- 16 Campbell, pp. 198-211; Connelly, pp. 63, 73-74.
- 17 Campbell, p. 211; Alfred L. Crabb, "Twilight of the Nashville Gods," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, 15 (1956), 291-94; Connelly, p. 74.
- 18 Connelly, p. 63-64.
- 19 Roy P. Stonesifer, "The Forts Henry-Heiman and Fort Donelson Campaign-A Study of Confederate Command" (PhD dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1965), p. 6.
- 20 Connelly, p. 106; Peter Franklin Walker, "Building a Tennessee Army: Autumn, 1861," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, 16 (1957), 101-05; Thomas L. Connelly, Army of the Heartland (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), p. 15; Harris to Pillow, May 24 and 28, 1861, Harris to Walker, May 25, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.; Frank E. Vandiver, Ploughshares Into Swords, Josian Gorgas and Confederate Ordnance (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1952), pp. 61-75.
- 21 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 111, 117; Connelly, Army of the Heartland, p. 15.
- 22 Randall and Donald, pp. 197, 227-231; Johnson, et al., p. 6.
- 23 Harris to Pillow, June 12 and 13, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.
- 24 Stonesifer, pp. 44-45; R. M. Kelley, "Holding Kentucky for the Union," Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, 1 eds., Clarence Buel and Robert Johnson (New York: Century, 1886), pp. 373-77.
- 25 Adolphus Heiman to R. C. Foster, August 27, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.; J. E. Bailey to Walker, September 6, 1861, 52 OR, pp. 40-41; Blanton Duncan to Walker, September 14, 1861, 52 OR, p. 42.
- 26 Harris to Leonidas Polk, August 11, 1861, 4 OR, pp. 384-85.
- 27 Harris to Pillow, June 21, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.
- 28 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 107-09.
- 29 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 44-45.
- 30 Report of Harris, May 15, 1861, 3 OR, p. 40; James L. Nichols, Confederate Engineers (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Confederate Publishing, 1957), p. 4; Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 43-45; Campbell, p. 198; Bruce Catton, Terrible Swift Sword (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1963), p. 147.
- 31 R. P. Norman to Walker, May 17, 1861, 110 OR, p. 101; Pillow to S. D. Waters, November 22, 1861, 7 OR, p. 887.
- 32 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 105-119; Walker to W. W. Mackall, February 16, 1862, 7 OR, pp. 887-88.

¹Wilber F. Foster, "The Building of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson," Battles and Sketches of the Army of Tennessee, ed. Broomfield Ridley (Mexico, Missouri: Missouri Printing and Publishing, 1906), p. 65; William P. Johnston, The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston (New York: D. Appleton, 1878), pp. 272-76, 408; Stonesifer, pp. 2-3.

²Foster, p. 66; Stonesifer, pp. 2-3; Johnston, pp. 407-08; Stanley Horn, The Army of Tennessee, A Military History (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1941), p. 76.

³Foster, p. 66; Standing Stone Creek mentioned by Foster is now called Standing Rock Creek. It is easily identified by a very large clump of high granite stones jutting out from the banks of the east side of Kentucky Lake just upriver from the bridge at Paris Landing.

⁴Foster, p. 65; Tracy M. Kegley, "Bushrod Rust Johnson," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, 7, (1948), pp. 249-51.

⁵Johnston to Harris, June 11, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.; Johnston, pp. 407-08; Stonesifer, p. 4.

⁶Harris to Albert S. Johnston, June 14, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.

⁷Johnston, pp. 407-08.

⁸Report of Heiman, October 16, 1861, 4 OR, p. 459.

⁹Report of Lloyd Tilghman, February 12, 1862, 7 OR, p. 139.

¹⁰Report of Milton Haynes, March 22, 1862, 7 OR, p. 147.

¹¹Tilghman to Mackall, January 23, 1862, in National Archives, Confederate Records, Office of the Adjutant General, Western Department, Telegrams Received, January to May, 1862, (Cited hereinafter as NA, West. Dept. T.R. 1862); Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" p. 47.

¹²Johnson et al., p. 20; Stewart County, Tennessee, quadrangle, Geological Survey, (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1950).

¹³John G. Frank, "Adolphus Heiman: Architect and Soldier," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, 5 (1946), pp. 50-51; Report of Heiman, July 31, 1861, 110 OR, p. 122.

¹⁴Bell I. Wiley, The Life of Johnny Reb (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970), pp. 90-91, 105; John Berrlin Lindsley, Military Annals of Tennessee (Nashville, Tennessee: J. M. Lindsley, 1886), p. 282.

¹⁵Catton, p. 148; Report of Heiman, 110 OR, p. 122; Heiman to Johnston, January 22, 1862, in NA, West. Dept. T. R. 1862.

¹⁷F. R. R. Smith to Heiman, September 25, 1861, 4 OR, pp. 427-28.

¹⁸G. A. Henry to Polk, October 17, 1861, 4 OR, p. 458; Johnson, et. al., p. 44; Stonesifer, p. 6; Foster, p. 66.

¹⁹Report of Heiman, 110 OR, p. 122; Foster, p. 65; Lindsley, p. 283; Frank, p. 50; Johnson to Johnston, September 24, 1861, 4 OR, p. 408.

²⁰Report of Heiman, 4 OR, p. 461; Henry to Polk, 4 OR, p. 458.

²¹John Blanton to Walker, September 14, 1861, 4 OR, p. 384; Henry to Polk, 4 OR, p. 458.

²²Report of R. J. Oglesby, August 23, 1861, 4 OR, p. 177; Report of J. C. Fremont, August 25, 1861, 4 OR, p. 176; U. S. Grant to Headquarters, Department of Missouri, November 22, 1861, 4 OR, p. 373.

²³Report of R. N. Stembel, August 22, 1861, 4 OR, p. 178; Report of R. J. Oglesby, 4 OR, p. 177; E. Merton Coulter, Confederate States of America, 1861-1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950), p. 41.

²⁴Heiman to Harris, August 24, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.

²⁵F. W. Fowler to Harris, August 23, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.

²⁶Heiman to R. C. Foster, August 27, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.

²⁷Harris to Polk, August 11, 1861, 4 OR, p. 384.

²⁸Heiman to Harris, September 20 and 25, 1861, Harris to B. Mogoffin, August 30, 1861, in Harris Papers, Tenn.

²⁹Jesse Taylor, "The Defense of Fort Henry," Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, I, eds. Clarence Buel and Robert Johnson, (New York: Century Company, 1886), p. 386.

³⁰Mackall to Polk, October 8, 1861, 4 OR, p. 440; Polk to Mackall, October 7, 1861, 4 OR, p. 441; Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge," p. 187.

³¹Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge," p. 187; Taylor, p. 369; Heiman to Polk, October 14, 1861.

³²Polk to Mackall, October 7, 1861, in National Archives, Confederate Records, Office of the Adjutant General, Western Department, Telegrams Received, September to December, 1861, (cited hereinafter as NA, West. Dept. T. R. 1861; Polk to Mackall, October 31, 1861, 4 OR, p. 491.

³³Report of Jacob Mac Gavock, October 7, 1861, 4 OR, p. 459; Mackall to Polk, 4 OR, p. 440.

- ³⁴Report of Heiman, 4 OR, pp. 459-61.
- ³⁵Virgil Jones. The Civil War At Sea, January 1861 to March 1862 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), pp. 350-51.
- ³⁶Heiman to Polk, 4 OR, p. 446.
- ³⁷Jones, p. 351.
- ³⁸Henry to Johnston, October 16, 1861, 4 OR, p. 453.
- ³⁹Mac Gavock to Polk, October 17, 1861, 4 OR, p. 459; Henry to Polk, October 17, 1861, 4 OR, p. 459.
- ⁴⁰Mackall to Polk, October 17, 1861, 4 OR, p. 456.
- ⁴¹Henry to Johnston, November 7, 1861, 4 OR, p. 526.
- ⁴²Johnston, p. 410.
- ⁴³Polk to Johnston, October 19, 1861, 4 OR, p. 463.
- ⁴⁴Stonesifer, p. 22; James Alcorn to Simon Buckner, October 19, 1861, 110 OR, p. 139; Polk to Heiman, October 30, 1861, 4 OR, p. 488.
- ⁴⁵Heiman to H. L. Blake, October 13, 1861, 4 OR, p. 440.
- ⁴⁶Polk to Mackall, October 28, 1861, 4 OR, p. 481.
- ⁴⁷Johnston, p. 408.
- ⁴⁸Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" p. 48.

Footnotes From Chapter Three

- 1 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" p. 184.
- 2 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 120, 133-34.
- 3 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 120-21; Harris to Heiman, October 19, 1861, 4 OR, p. 457.
- 4 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp.156-59; Johnston, p. 313.
- 5 NA. West. Dept. T. R. 1861; Johnston, p. 310; Stonesifer, p.50.
- 6 Johnston to Benjamin, December 25, 1861, 7 OR, p. 792; Connelly, Army of the Heartland p. 71.
- 7 Benjamin to Felix Zollicoffer, September 30, 1861, 4 OR, p. 436.
- 8 Stonesifer, p. 38.
- 9 Letter from Gilmer to his wife, October 17, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina (cited hereinafter as Gilmer Papers, UNC).
- 10 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" p. 188; Connelly, Army of the Heartland p. 80.
- 11 Stonesifer, pp. 55-56.
- 12 Johnston, pp. 410-14.
- 13 Gilmer to wife, November 4, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 14 Gilmer to wife, October 13 and 19, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 15 Gilmer to wife, October 19, November 28 and December 1, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 16 Gilmer to wife, November 4, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 17 Gilmer to wife, October 4; November 9, 13, and 24; December 1 and 4, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 18 Gilmer to wife, October 19; November 9 and 24; December 11, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 19 Gilmer to wife, November 24 and 26; December 1, 4, and 11, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 20 Gilmer to wife, December 1 and 4, 1861 and January 10, 1862, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.

- 21 Gilmer to wife, January 19 and 23, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 22 Gilmer to wife, January 31, 1862, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 23 Gilmer to wife, October 13, 15 and 17, 1861, in Gilmer Papers
UNC.
- 24 Gilmer to wife, November 3, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.
- 25 Henry to Johnston, November 1, 1861, 4 OR, p. 506; Gilmer to
Johnston, November 3, 1861, 4 OR, p. 506.
- 26 Henry to Johnston, November 1, 1861, 4 OR, p. 496.
- 27 Gilmer to Mackall, November, 3, 1861, 4 OR, p. 506.
- 28 Henry to Johnston, November 1, 1861, 4 OR, p. 506; Gilmer to
Johnston, November 2, 1861, 4 OR, p. 501.
- 29 Heiman to Polk, 4 OR, pp. 459-62.
- 30 Gilmer to wife, January 19, 1862, in Gilmer Papers, UNC;
Stonesifer, p. 15.
- 31 Gilmer to Mackall, November 4, 1861, 4 OR, p. 514.
- 32 Gilmer to Mackall, November 13, 1861, 4 OR, pp. 544-45; Gilmer
to Dixon, November 24, 1861, 7 OR, p. 700; Gilmer to Dixon, December 4,
1861, 7 OR, p. 735.
- 33 Connelly, Army of the Heartland, p. 72.
- 34 Gilmer to Harris, December 11, 1861, 7 OR, p. 757; letter from
Gilmer to Joseph Dixon, November 24, 1861, in Reports of Engineers, Western
Department, Chapter III, Volume 8, Confederate Records, National Archives,
(cited hereinafter as NA Ch. III, Vol. 8, Engineer); Stanley Horn,
"Nashville During the Civil War," Tennessee Historical Quarterly 4
(1945), p. 8.
- 35 Gilmer to wife, December 1, 4, and 11, 1861, in Gilmer Papers,
UNC.
- 36 Connelly, Army of the Heartland pp. 72-73; Crabb, pp. 291-92.
- 37 Gilmer to Dixon, December 6 and 9, 1861, in NA Ch. III, Vol. 8,
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Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 192-93; Henry to Johnston, 4 OR,
p. 501.
- 38 Gilmer to Dixon, November 24, 1861, 7 OR, p. 693.
- 39 Henry to Johnston, November 7, 1861, 4 OR, p. 526.
- 40 Polk to Mackall, October 31, 1861, 4 OR, p. 491; Johnston, p. 415.

41 Connelly "Metal, Fire and Forge" p. 84.

121

42 Polk to Mackall, 4 OR, p. 491.

43 Mackall to Tilghman, November 17, 1861, 4 OR, p. 560.

44 U.S. General Services School, Fort Henry and Fort Donelson Campaign Source Book, (Leavenworth, Kansas, 1923), p.1426, (cited herein after as Source book).

45 Polk to Mackall, 4 OR, pp. 491-92; Tilghman to Mackall, November 6, 1861, 4 OR, p. 523; Tilghman to Mackall, November 7, 1861, 4 OR, 527.

46 Tilghman to Johnston, November 29, 1861, 7 OR, p. 723.

47 Stonesifer, p. 19.

48 Tilghman to Johnston, 7 OR, p. 723; Stonesifer, p. 38.

49 Gilmer to Dixon, December 4, 1861, 7 OR, p. 735; Johnston, p. 416; Gilmer to wife, December 4, 1861, in Gilmer Papers, UNC.

50 Tilghman to Johnston, 7 OR, p. 723; Stonesifer, p. 21.

51 Pillow to Weakley, November 20, 1861, 7 OR, p.485; Weakley to Benjamin, November 23, 1861, 7 OR, pp. 684-85; Proclamation from Weakley to the citizens of Tuscumbia, Alabama, November 23, 1861, 7 OR, p. 696.

52 Report of Tilghman, January 2, 1862, 7 OR, pp. 817-18.

53 Source Book, pp. 669, 679-80; Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 817.

54 Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 817; Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 723.

55 Report of Haynes, March 24, 1862, 7 OR, pp. 409-10.

56 Report of Gilmer, March 17, 1862, 7 OR, p. 132.

57 Johnston to Benjamin, January 19, 1862, 7 OR, p. 839.

58 Mackall to Polk, January 17, 1862, 7 OR, P. 835; Polk to Mackall, January 24, 1862, 7 OR, p. 847.

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61 Stonesifer, p. 28.

63 Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 817; Abstract from the weekly report of the Fourth Division, January 31, 1862, 7 OR, p. 885.

64 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 196-98.

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20, p. 151; Report of Gilmer, 4 OR, p. 134;
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19.

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2 OR, p. 100.

2 OR, p. 100.

¹ U.S. Calvin D. Cowles, Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1902), Plate 11, Number 1, (cited hereinafter as OR Atlas).

² Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 406.

³ Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 144.

⁴ Report of Heiman, 4 OR, p. 460.

⁵ Stonesifer, p. 34; Observations by the author.

⁶ John L. Holcombe and Walter J. Buttgenbach, "Coast Defense in the Civil War: Fort Henry, Tennessee," Journal of U.S. Artillery 29 (1913), p.84.

⁷ Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, pp. 137-38; Stonesifer, p. 35.

⁸ Report of Captain Barron, June 10, 1861, in U.S. Calvin D. Cowles, et al., eds., Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1894-1914), Volume 5, p. 807, (cited hereinafter as NOR); Jack Coggins, "Civil War Ordnance-Part II," Civil War Times, Illustrated (November, 1975), p. 35.

⁹ Warren Ripley, Artillery and Ammunition of the Civil War (New York: Van Norstrand Reinhold, 1970), pp. 14-16, 18.

¹⁰ Ripley, pp. 9, 14-17, 45, 57, 255.

¹¹ Ripley, p. 17.

¹² Ripley, pp. 14-17.

¹³ Report of Heiman, 7 OR, p. 151; Report of Gilmer, 4 OR, p. 134; OR Atlas, Plate 11, Number 1.

¹⁴ Taylor, p. 369; Stonesifer, p. 31.

¹⁵ OR Atlas, Plate 11, Number 1.

¹⁶ Vandiver, Ploughshares Into Swords, p. 58.

¹⁷ John S. Long, "Gosport Affair," Journal of Southern History 23 (1957), p. 170.

¹⁸ Report of Captain Barron, 5 NOR, p. 802.

¹⁹ Report of Captain Barron, 5 NOR, p. 802.

20 Report of Captain Barron, 5 NOR, p. 802.

21 Report of Captain Barron, 5 NOR, p. 804; Johnston p. 410; H. Allen Gosnell, Guns on the Western Waters (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1949), p. 217; Joseph H. Parks, General Leonidas Polk, CSA (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 1962), p. 168.

22 Order Book, Volume XIV, August 13, 1861 to November 27, 1862, from the Records of the Tredegar Iron Works in the Virginia State Library and Archives, Richmond, Virginia, (cited hereinafter as Order Book, Tredegar).

23 National Archives, Confederate Records, Western Department, Chapter II, Volume 218, Telegrams Sent, pp. 273, 291, and 337, (cited hereinafter as NA, West Dept, T. S. Ch. II, Vol. 218)

24 Order Book, Tredegar.

25 Stonesifer, p. 36.

26 Report of Heiman, February 8, 1862, 7 OR, p. 149.

27 Haynes to Cooper, 7 OR, p. 410.

28 Stonesifer, p. 36.

29 Stonesifer, p. 34; Order Book, Tredegar.

30 Ripley, pp. 18, 35, 336-39; Report of Captain Barron, 5 NOR, p. 803.

31 Ripley, pp. 336-39; Taylor, p. 369.

32 OR Atlas, Plate 11, number 1.

33 Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" pp. 42, 46, 190-91; Mackall to Wright, January 18, 1862, 7 OR, p. 837.

34 Wright to Mackall, January 18, 1862, 7 OR, p. 838; National Archives, Confederate Records, Western Department, Chapter IV, Volume 8, Letters and Telegrams Sent, Ordnance Office, Nashville, Tennessee, p. 33, (cited hereinafter as NA, West Dept, T. S. Ordnance, Nashville).

35 National Archives, Confederate Records, Western Department, Chapter IV, Volume 105, Records of Ordnance and Ordnance Stores Received and Issued, Wright to Tilghman, February 4, 1862, (cited hereinafter as NA, West. Dept, Records of Ordnance); NA, West. Dept, T. S. Ordnance, Nashville. These records are very incomplete but serve as an excellent basis for research in the Confederate ordnance in the western part of the country. J. Johnston to Cooper, October 4, 1861, 4 OR, p. 436; Taylor, p. 369.

36 Taylor, p. 369.

37 NA, West Dept, T. S. Ordnance, Nashville.

Footnotes From Chapter Five

- 1 Report of C. F. Smith, January 22, 1862, 7 OR, p. 72.
- 2 Stonesifer, pp. 79-82; D. W. Wood, History of the Twentieth Ohio Veteran Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Columbus, Ohio: Paul and Thrall, 1876), p. 47; A. H. Foote to Gideon Welles, December 5, 1861, 22 NOR, p. 452.
- 3 George McClellan to Henry Halleck, December 10, 1861, 7 OR, p. 419; Halleck to McClellan, December 26, 1861, 7 OR, p. 463.
- 4 Stonesifer, p. 82.
- 5 Abraham Lincoln to Halleck and D. C. Buell, December 31, 1861, 7 OR, p. 524; Buell to Lincoln, January 1, 1862, 7 OR, p. 526; Halleck to Lincoln, January 1, 1862, 7 OR, p. 526.
- 6 Halleck to McClellan, January 20, 1862, 7 OR, p. 558, Halleck to Grant, January 22, 1862, 7 OR, pp. 561-62; John D. Milligan, Ed., "From The Fresh Water: 1861-64," Naval Letters Series (Annapolis, Maryland: United States Naval Institute, 1970), p. 132.
- 7 Letter from Halleck to McClellan, January 24, 1862, in Henry W. Halleck Papers, Manuscript Section, Library of Congress, (Washington, D.C.) (cited hereinafter as Halleck Papers); McClellan to Halleck and Buell, January 29, 1862, 7 OR, p. 571; Connelly, "Metal, Fire and Forge" p. 182.
- 8 Johnston, pp. 482-83; Grant to Halleck, January 28, 1862, 7 OR, p. 121; Foote to Halleck, January 28, 1862, 22 NOR, p. 524.
- 9 General Orders Number 5, Headquarters, District of Cairo, February 1, 1862, 7 OR, p. 126; Report of J.A. McClernand, February 2, 1862, 7 OR, p. 126; Johnston, pp. 483-484.
- 10 Report of Foote, February 8, 1862, 22 OR, pp. 534-35; Report of McClernand, 7 OR, p. 126; P. O. Avery, History of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry Regiment (Humboldt, Nebraska: The Enterprise, 1903), p. 41.
- 11 Heiman to Mackall, February 8, 1862, 7 OR, p. 148.
- 12 Heiman to Mackall, 7 OR, p. 148; Johnston, p. 410.
- 13 Heiman to Mackall, 7 OR, pp. 148-49; Taylor, p. 370.
- 14 Heiman to Mackall, 7 OR, p. 149; Stonesifer, p. 150.
- 15 Gosnell, p. 49.
- 16 Report of Tilghman, February 12, 1862, 7 OR, p. 137; Gosnell, p. 49; Taylor, p. 369; Haynes to Samuel Cooper, March 24, 1862, 7 OR p. 147. Taylor, p. 369.

17 Report of Heiman, 7 OR, p. 152; Taylor, p. 369; Gilmer to Mackall, 17 March 1862, 7 OR, p. 133. Gilmer disagrees with Taylor in the amount of powder which was used. Gilmer says that sixteen pounds of powder was used.

18 Gosnell, p. 49.

19 Report of Heiman, 7 OR, p. 152.

20 Report of Heiman, 7 OR, p. 152.

21 Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 137.

22 Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 137.

23 Report of Heiman, 7 OR, p. 154; Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 138.

24 Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 138.

25 Report of Heiman, 7 OR, p. 155; Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 138. Tilghman omitted the 15th Arkansas Regiment from his report. It was probably an oversight as Heiman said the unit was assigned to the second brigade.

26 Report of Heiman, 7 OR, p. 152; Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 138.

27 Taylor, p. 369; Haynes to Cooper, 7 OR, p. 145.

28 Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 138.

29 Taylor, p. 369.

30 Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 139.

31 Haynes to Cooper, 7 OR, pp. 145-46.

32 Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 139; Report of Gilmer, 7 OR, p. 370. Gilmer says the gunboats reached the head of the island at 11:30 A.M. Tilghman says the firing began at 11:45 A.M. which seems to verify Gilmer's times. Union reports from Foote and Grant indicate that the shooting began a few minutes later. They say the firing began about noon.

33 Stonesifer, p. 150-51.

34 Gosnell, p. 50.

35 Taylor, p. 370; Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 139; Haynes to Cooper, 7 OR, pp. 146-47. Haynes differs from Tilghman slightly in his estimate of the distance at which the fort's guns began firing. According to Haynes, the larger guns began firing when the gunboats were 1600 yards away. Gosnell, on page 50 of his book estimated the distance at about 1500 yards.

- 36 Report of Haynes, 7 OR, p. 148.
- 37 Taylor, p. 370; Report of Gilmer, 7 OR, p. 136.
- 38 Report of Gilmer, 7 OR, p. 136; Report of Heiman, 7 OR, p. 150.
- 39 Taylor, p. 371.
- 40 Report of Tilghman, 7 OR, p. 139.
- 41 Report of Haynes, 7 OR, p. 149.
- 42 Taylor, pp. 371-72.
- 43 Report of Haynes, 7 OR, pp. 148-49.
- 44 Taylor, p. 371; Alfred T. Mahan, The Gulf and Inland Waters, Vol. III (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883), p. 12; Stonesifer, pp. 161-64.
- 45 Henry Walke, "The Gunboats at Belmont and Fort Henry," Battles and Leaders of the Civil War 1 eds. Clarence Buel and Robert Johnson (New York; Century, 1883), p. 364; Stonesifer, pp. 161-64.
- 46 Report of Heiman, 7 OR, pp. 152-53.
- 47 Taylor, pp. 372-73.

Footnotes From Chapter Six

- 1 Holcombe and Buttegenbach, pp. 88-89; Republican Banner (Nashville), January 14, 1863. p.3, col. 1.
- 2 Memorandum of General Beauregard, February 7, 1862, 7 OR, p. 861.
- 3 Report of Foote, February 22, 1862, 22 NOR, p.413.
- 4 Stonesifer, p. 166.
- 5 Report of Buckner, March 19, 1862, 7 OR, pp. 883-84, Report of Johnston, February 8, 1862, 7 OR, p. 884.
- 6 Memorandum of Beauregard, 7 OR, pp. 861-863.
- 7 Johnson, et al., p. 14.
- 8 Frank E. Vandiver, Rebel Brass (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1956), p. 50.
- 9 M. F. Force, From Fort Henry to Corinth (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881), pp. 177-178.
- 10 Republican Banner (Nashville), February 9, 1862, p. 1, col. 3; Daily Examiner (Richmond), February 10, 1862, p. 1, col. 1; Appeal (Memphis), February 9, 1862, p. 2, col. 1; Johnson, et al., pp. 23-28; John Slep, Mirror of the War, The Washington Star Reports the Civil War (Washington: Castle Books, 1961), pp. 49-50.
- 11 James M. Merrill, Battle Flags South - The Story of the Civil War Navies on the Western Waters (Cranbury, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1977), p. 95; Johnson, et. al., p. 26.
- 12 Source Book, p. 421.
- 13 Times (New York), February 10, 1862, p. 1, Col. 3.
- 14 Source Book, p. 420.
- 15 Randall and Donald, pp. 329-331.
- 16 John S. Blay, The Civil War: A Pictorial Profile (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1958), p. 74; Kenneth P. Williams, Lincoln Finds a General, III (New York: The Macmillan Co, 1952), p. 82; Johnson, et. al., pp. 24-26.
- 17 Johnson, et. al., p. 27; Stonesifer, p. 58.
- 18 Randall and Donald, pp. 360-362.
- Mathew Forney Steele, America's Campaigns (Fort Leavenworth: General Service School, 1909), pp. ~~33-42~~.

- ¹⁹Johnson, et. al., p. 24.
- ²⁰Ripley, pp. 119-123, 174, 185, 319; Taylor, p. 369.
- ²¹Report of Gilmer, 7 OR, pp. 262-63.
- ²²OR Atlas, Plate 11, No. 1; Stonesifer, pp. 51-58.
- ²³Author's own observations
- ²⁴Steele, pp. 90-111.
- ²⁵Report of Tilghman, January 31, 1862, 7 OR, p. 852.
- ²⁶Abstract of the Army of Central Kentucky under General Hardee, 7 OR, p. 852; Abstract of the First Division under General Polk, January 31, 1862, 7 OR, p. 853.
- ²⁷Stonesifer, pp. 160-165.
- ²⁸Connelly, Army of the Heartland, pp. 76-77; Stonesifer, pp. 120-123; Stephen A. Ambrose, Halleck, Lincoln's Chief of Staff (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1962), pp. 41-45.
- ²⁹Stonesifer, p. 403.

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Permission to Quote

Several of the reports written by Colonel Adolphus Heiman were so complete and descriptive that I made the decision to quote from them in this thesis in order to provide the reader with a more detailed description of the area around Fort Henry. Accordingly, while at the National Archives, Washington, D.C., I requested and received permission to quote extensively from those reports. This permission was received from Dr. Nancy L. Tackett, research historian at the National Archives.