

SHILOH

*National
Military
Park*

T E N N E S S E E



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NATIONAL MILITARY PARK



*Shiloh—" . . . a case of Southern dash against Northern pluck and endurance . . .
The troops on both sides were Americans . . . united they need not fear any foreign foe."
—GEN. U. S. GRANT*

SHILOH WAS the first major battle in the western campaigns of the War Between the States. The courage and devotion shown here by the unseasoned soldiers of the North and of the South make the battlefield an inspiring memorial to American valor. The bitter struggle was grim proof that each side would fight to the last in defense of its principles. Out of the tragic confusion of Shiloh came lessons in warfare that commanders and men of the opposing armies never forgot. By opening the road to Union victory in the west, the battle struck a fatal blow to the dream of a Southern Confederacy. Northern forces won control of the Mississippi River in the following year and split the South with the capture of Vicksburg.

The Battle of Shiloh

The capture of Forts Henry and Donelson by Union forces in February 1862 forced Confederate Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston to withdraw from Kentucky and most of Tennessee. The Confederates retired southward and formed a new line of defense along the railroad which ran from Memphis to Chattanooga. Johnston concentrated 44,000 men at the important rail center of Corinth, Miss. While the Southern troops reorganized, Gen. U. S. Grant's Federal army of 40,000 troops steamed up the Tennessee River to Pittsburg Landing, 22 miles northeast of Corinth. Grant was ordered to wait at Pittsburg Land-

ing for the arrival from Nashville of Gen. D. C. Buell's army. The Northern armies planned to combine and then attack the Confederates at Corinth.

Warned that Buell would join Grant in a few days, Johnston determined to strike before his enemies could unite. He intended to force his way between Grant's army and the river, thereby cutting off the Northern forces from their base of supply at Pittsburg Landing. With Grant's army destroyed, Johnston would then turn on Buell.

After a strenuous march from Corinth, through spring rains that turned the roads into rivers of mud, the Confederates formed their battlelines near Shiloh late on the afternoon of Saturday, April 5, 1862. Shortly after daybreak the following morning, they stormed the Federal camp along the south and west fronts. During the morning, furious fighting swirled around Shiloh Church, a small log building for which the battlefield is named. The Union right flank fought desperately to hold the important crossroads near the church, but was forced to fall back about 10 a. m. The Federals were driven toward the river instead of away from it as Johnston had planned.

In the meantime, the Union center had withdrawn to positions in the Peach Orchard and in the Hornets' Nest, a natural fortress of dense woods and thickets. Here, as the day wore on, raged the deadliest fighting in

the battle. In the Hornets' Nest, the Union line stood fast, shattering wave after wave of attacking Confederates. Near the Peach Orchard, General Johnston, while directing a charge against the Federal left, was struck in the right leg by a rifle ball. The Confederate commander died from loss of blood about 2:30 p.m. Confederate Gen. Daniel Ruggles collected 62 cannon from scattered points on the field and concentrated a withering fire on the Federals in the Hornets' Nest. Late in this afternoon of April 6 the Confederates made their 12th charge upon the Union troops who had defended the Hornets' Nest and Sunken Road for 8 bitter hours. They forced Gen. Benjamin Prentiss and 2,200 men to surrender.

The Union Army continued to retreat, some units falling back as much as 3 miles. As darkness fell over smoke-filled woods and

clearings, Grant's weary men stood on the bluffs above Pittsburg Landing with their backs to the river. Here they rallied and, with the help of massed artillery and two gunboats, repulsed the last Confederate attempt to capture the landing.

During that rainy night, about 25,000 fresh Union troops, from General Buell's army and Gen. Lew Wallace's division, took position in Grant's line. At dawn on April 7, 37,000 Confederates faced Union forces of 55,000, and the thin Confederate line gave ground as the Northern counterattack gathered strength. At 2 p.m., Johnston's successor, Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard, ordered his outnumbered forces to withdraw from the field. A few days later the Confederates were again encamped at Corinth.

The 2-day battle cost the North 13,047 men killed, wounded, and missing. Total losses for the South were 10,699.

The Battle of Shiloh was a vital link in the chain of victories which won the Mississippi Valley for the Union. The Confederate base at Corinth was abandoned on May 30 to the Federals. The railroad from Memphis to Chattanooga was thereby lost to the Confederacy. By the end of June 1862, only those forts on the Mississippi River near Vicksburg remained in Southern hands. After a long siege, Vicksburg itself fell to the

North on July 4, 1863. The Confederacy was cut in two.

The Park and Cemetery

Shiloh National Military Park was established by an act of Congress in 1894. It contains about 3,600 acres of Federal lands, including the areas of heaviest fighting in the battle. The National Cemetery, established in 1866 and containing 10 acres, is near the visitor center on a bluff overlooking Pittsburg Landing and the Tennessee River. More than 3,700 Federal soldiers are buried here, two-thirds of whom are unidentified.

Location

The visitor center is located near the west bank of the Tennessee River approximately 22 miles north of Corinth, Miss., via Mississippi 2 and Tennessee 22. It is about 6 miles south of U.S. 64, the main route between Chattanooga and Memphis, via Tennessee 22.

About Your Visit

To acquaint yourself with the battle story before taking a tour of the park, we sug-

gest you visit the museum in the visitor center near Pittsburg Landing, which is open from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. in winter and until 5:30 p.m. in summer. Relics, exhibits, and maps relating to the battle and the war are displayed, and a historical film is shown throughout the day.

Those who plan to visit in a group may receive special service if advance arrangements are made with the superintendent.

Administration

Shiloh National Military Park and Cemetery are administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Pittsburg Landing, Tenn., is in immediate charge.

Mission 66

MISSION 66 is a program designed to be completed by 1966 which will assure the maximum protection of the scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources of the National Park System in such ways and by such means as will make them available for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Pittsburg Landing, Federal supply base and troop landing point



Bloody Pond



Graves of six Wisconsin colorbearers



