STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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THE VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN OF 1863: A JOINT OPERATION

BY

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ABSTRACT

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The Vicksburg Campaign of 1863 was conducted as a joint operation that involved forces of the United States Army, the United States Navy, and the United States Marine Corps. Additionally, during the Vicksburg Campaign military forces from both the active and reserve components, of that time, were utilized to conduct combat operations against the Confederate Army. The Vicksburg Campaign of 1863 can serve as a historical case study of early Joint Operations with relevant lessons for today.

The Vicksburg Campaign of 1863 is justified in being called a Joint Operation for several reasons. The campaign, and the series of battles of which it consisted, was planned and executed by forces of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. Many of these forces conducted combat operations while under the command of a single Joint Force Commander. Additionally, a simplified version of the Joint Operations Planning Process was used by the commanders of the Land Force Component and the Maritime Component. During the campaign Joint Fires, Joint Intelligence, Joint Communication, and Joint Logistics were conducted in support of combat operations. Finally, both the Army and Navy commanders were given Coordinating Authority to conduct Joint Operations by their respective chains of command.

The campaign to capture Vicksburg is one of the most daring in American military history. The commanders of both the Army and Naval forces were convinced that only by acting jointly could the campaign succeed. Today, the military forces of the United States are committed by law and by doctrine to operating jointly, with an integrated force of both active and reserve components. We can learn much from General Grant and Admiral Porter about embracing the spirit of cooperation and teamwork that is needed to fight and win with such a joint force.

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THE VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN OF 1863: A JOINT OPERATION

THE STRATEGIC SITUATION

The American Civil War was a defining event in our nation's history. This tragic clash between the North and the South decided whether slavery would continue to exist in the country, or if America would live up to the idea boldly expressed in the Declaration of Independence; that all men are created equal. The war also decided whether the United States would exist as a federalist, united republic, or fragment into a land of many bickering states. The campaign to capture Vicksburg, Mississippi was one of the strategically most important events of the Civil War and central to deciding the future of the United States as a nation. The fact that the Vicksburg Campaign was fought as a joint operation makes the events of 1863 especially relevant today.

The Vicksburg Campaign of 1863 was conducted as a joint operation that involved forces of the United States Army, the United States Navy, and the United States Marine Corps. Additionally, during the Vicksburg Campaign, and throughout the war, military forces from both the active and reserve components were utilized to conduct combat operations against the Confederate Army. The Vicksburg Campaign of 1863 can serve as a historical case study of early Joint Operations with relevant lessons for today.

The Vicksburg Campaign of 1863 is justified in being called a Joint Operation for several reasons. The campaign, and the series of battles of which it consisted, was planned and executed by forces of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. Many of these forces conducted combat operations while under the command of a single Joint Force Commander. Additionally, a simplified version of the Joint Operations Planning Process was used by the commanders of the Land Force Component and the Maritime Component. During the campaign Joint Fires, Joint Intelligence, Joint Communication, and Joint Logistics were conducted in support of combat operations. Finally, both the Army and Navy commanders were given Coordinating Authority to conduct Joint Operations by their respective chains of command.[1]

The campaign to capture Vicksburg is one of the most daring in American military history. The commanders of both the Army and Naval forces were convinced that only by acting jointly could the campaign succeed. Today, the military forces of the United States are committed by law and by doctrine to operate jointly, with an integrated force of both active and reserve components. We can learn much from the commanders of 1863 about embracing the spirit of cooperation and teamwork that is needed to fight and win with such a joint force.

The strategic situation in late1862 was quite favorable for the Confederates. The Confederate leadership realized that they needed only to fight the Union to a draw. They did not need to conquer and occupy Union territory in order to gain a successful conclusion to the war. President Jefferson Davis and his Generals correctly identified public support for the Union's war effort as the center of gravity for the North. The Confederate strategy was to inflict casualties and damage on the Union until the public grew tired and demanded an end to the conflict.

In August of 1862 Robert E. Lee had led his Army of Northern Virginia to victory over John Pope and the Federal Army of Virginia at the Second Battle of Bull Run. Lee then threatened Washington D.C. and invaded Maryland. After fighting to a costly tactical draw at Antietam, on 17 September he moved back into Virginia. His army had inflicted over 12,000 casualties on the Union forces at the Battle of Antietam, the bloodiest day in American military history, and the people of the Union were showing signs of war weariness.

The Confederate leadership was acutely aware of the fact that the vast majority of the manufacturing base of the continent was in the North. They were also aware of the necessity of keeping the flow of war supplies moving from Texas and the Gulf of Mexico, up the Mississippi River, through the railhead of Vicksburg, and out to Confederate cities in the East and South. The Confederate strategy appeared to be working in 1863.

The strategic situation of the Union was much more complicated than that of the Confederates. The Union leadership under President Abraham Lincoln desired to stop the war as quickly as possible. President Lincoln did not want to inflict great numbers of casualties on the South because he thought that this would so embitter the Southern public as to make reconciliation impossible. The desire to limit casualties and damage to the South led, in part, to hesitation among Union Generals. More time was spent in maneuvering and preparation than in offensive campaigns. The Union leadership also realized that the North had a tremendous advantage in both population size and industrial base capacity. The Union desired to bring these advantages to bear in a decisive engagement with the Confederate Army while depriving the South of war supplies and manufactured goods.

Further complicating the strategic situation for the North, it appeared that Great Britain might recognize the legitimacy of the Confederacy. Britain needed the cotton grown in the South for its textile manufacturing industry. The South had imposed an embargo on cotton shipments, in part, to place economic pressure on the British to recognize the Confederacy. President Lincoln was concerned that the Royal Navy would easily be able to defeat the Union blockade of the southern ports if Britain chose to do so.[2] President Lincoln addressed this concern by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863. This directive proclaimed freedom for all slaves in Confederate controlled territory and knocked the moral props out from under recognition advocates in Great Britain.

By 1863 the Union strategy of decisive engagement and blockade did not appear to be working. Confederate forces had not been decisively engaged and supplies still flowed up the Mississippi River and then to the east and south by rail to the Rebel Army.

General Ulysses S. Grant, the commander of the Army of the Tennessee, realized that Vicksburg was the key to defeating the Confederates. Grant understood that Vicksburg was the key to the Confederate lines of communication. He also saw the Mississippi River as the natural, geographic feature that if controlled would split the Confederacy in half.

> Vicksburg was important to the enemy because it occupied the first high ground coming close to the river below Memphis. From there a railroad runs east, connecting with other roads leading to all points of the Southern states. A railroad also starts from the opposite

> side of the river, extending west as far as Shreveport, Louisiana. Vicksburg was the only channel connecting parts of the Confederacy divided by the Mississippi. So long as it was held by the enemy, the free navigation of the river was prevented. Hence its importance. Points on the river between Vicksburg and Port Hudson were held as dependencies; but their fall was sure to follow the capture of the former place. [3]

This view was also shared by his Commander in Chief, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln had grown up living in Kentucky and Illinois and had a thorough understanding of the importance of the Mississippi River. "Vicksburg is the key, the war can never be brought to a close until that key is in our pocket."[4]

Both Union leaders saw that by controlling Vicksburg, and thereby the Mississippi River, the Union would split the Confederacy in two. More importantly, the North would deny the Confederates the flow of supplies that ran from Texas and the Gulf of Mexico to Vicksburg and then to the east. Since the Union had captured Memphis and New Orleans, Vicksburg remained as the only link between the food and supplies of the west and the Confederate armies in the east.

Unfortunately for the Union, Vicksburg was very heavily fortified and set high on the bluffs over the Mississippi River. The bluffs were part of the Walnut Hills; a long uprising of land that began at Memphis. These hills provided a barrier that enclosed a vast patchwork quilt of land laced by streams, bayous, and swamps. It was a place that was heaven for vegetation and hell for man.[5] The clear line of sight from the bluffs gave the artillery of Vicksburg command of the Mississippi River. Situated at a hairpin bend in the river known as Vicksburg Point, the city ran a mile and a half from the waterline to bluffs, which rose some 250 feet above the river. Its fortifications were scattered over 28 square miles, with guns emplaced in groups and concealed from view. In addition, batteries and trenchlines covered the bluffs for almost 20 miles north to Chickasaw and Haines' bluffs, and 14 miles south to the city of Grand Gulf. The only possible landing site was on the Yazoo River in front of either Chickasaw or Haines' Bluffs.[6] The escarpments to the North of Vicksburg, combined with the swampy terrain below them, made an attack from the North seem impossible. Vicksburg was a veritable fortress in 1863.

An earlier attempt to capture Vicksburg had pointed out the need for properly conducted joint operations. In June of 1862, after Union forces captured New Orleans, Admiral David Farragut was ordered to attack Vicksburg in keeping with President Lincoln's desire to secure the Mississippi River. The attack should have been a joint operation conducted by the naval forces of Admiral Farragut and the soldiers of General Butler, commander of Army forces in New Orleans. The original plan of sending an Army of ten thousand men to take possession of Vicksburg, under the cover of Farragut's squadron, was never carried out. Three thousand troops only (under command of General Thomas Williams) were landed opposite Vicksburg, but, as they attempted nothing important, their presence was perfectly useless. General Benjamin Butler at New Orleans retained the ten thousand men who could have been sent to Vicksburg. Had this Army been pushed up the river directly after the fall of New Orleans, Vicksburg could have fallen into the hands of Federal forces. This failure to act promptly cost the Government many lives and millions of dollars.[7] This early attempt at joint operations to secure Vicksburg met with operational failure and added to the environment of mistrust between the Army and the Navy.

The mistrust between the Army and the Navy went all the way to the top of the services. Secretary of War Henry Stanton and Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles did not see eye to eye concerning joint operations between the two services.

> When Mr. Stanton came into the War Department, for several months he assumed that the Navy was secondary and subject to the control and direction of the military branch of the Government. These pretensions, which had agitated each branch of the service, I never recognized, but stated that we were equal and would be ready at all times to cooperate with the armies in any demonstration, but it must not be under orders...Stanton claimed that, instead of consulting and asking, the military could order naval assistance, and that it was the duty of the Secretary of the Navy and of naval officers to render it. President Lincoln would not, however, lend himself to this view of the subject.[8]

Meanwhile, the Confederates took advantage of the situation and further fortified Vicksburg. A maximum effort was set in motion to save this Gibraltar of the Mississippi, the railroads poured in troops and guns without stint, enabling it to defy Farragut's ships.[9] General Butler's reluctance to cooperate with the Navy gave the Confederates time to further strengthen their defenses at Vicksburg. But Farragut's attempt to neutralize Vicksburg by naval forces alone also clearly pointed out the need for a joint effort. Admiral Farragut relayed this finding to the Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles. On June 28, 1862 Farragut wrote, "I am satisfied it is not possible for us to take Vicksburg without an army force of 12,000 to 15,000 men."[10] In July he wrote to Major General H. W. Halleck, General in Chief of the Army, requesting cooperation in the Vicksburg operation. Halleck wrote back and said, "The scattered and weakened condition of my forces renders it impossible, at the present time, to detach any troops to cooperate with you on Vicksburg."[11] This unfortunate inability of the Army to mount a joint operation with the Navy did not dissuade Farragut from his desire to cooperate with the Army. He wrote again to Secretary Welles on July 7, "We hope soon to have the pleasure of recording the combined attack by Army and Navy, for which we all so ardently long."[12] In November of 1862 the much anticipated joint campaign would begin.

Ulysses S. Grant was authorized by General Henry Halleck, the General in Chief, to ask the Navy to cooperate with him in prosecuting a campaign against Vicksburg. General Grant was clearly the Army Commander. However, he did not have command over the naval forces in the theater. Up to this time the gunboats had, strictly speaking, been under the control of the Army. But now all this was changed, and the Mississippi Squadron, like all the other naval forces, was brought directly under the supervision of the Secretary of the Navy. The Commander-in Chief of the squadron had no longer to receive orders from General Halleck or Army headquarters, but was left to manage his command to the best of his ability, and to cooperate with the Army whenever he could do so.[13]

Acting Rear Admiral David D. Porter, the commander of the Mississippi Squadron, was encouraged by Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, to cooperate with General Grant. The Secretary wrote to Admiral Porter in 1863 and said, "It is expected that the Mississippi Squadron will cooperate with the army on every occasion in which it's cooperation is required..." [14] This encouragement would today be referred to as Coordinating Authority and was the basis for joint operations in 1863.

Attempts at conducting joint operations prior to the Vicksburg Campaign had not gone well. As previously discussed, General Butler did not accompany Admiral Farragut on the first attack on Vicksburg and the result was failure. In the Cumberland Valley of Tennessee, relations between General Rosecrans, Commander of the Army of the Ohio, and the Navy were strained. At the heart of those strained relationships was the issue of command authority versus coordinating authority. General Rosecrans wrote to President Lincoln in February of 1863 seeking command authority over the Navy's gunboats.

> The enemy will direct all its operations to interrupt our connection. To prevent this it is absolutely necessary to patrol the rivers. Information in the possession of the commanding general and post commanders must be promptly acted upon. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to have the gunboats which cooperate in that work directed to report and receive instructions from the general commanding, or, in his absence, the commanders along the river districts. The officers commanding gunboats express a willingness to cooperate with the department, but in order to make their aid effective and prompt, such arrangements should be made.[15]

President Lincoln was acutely aware of the tension between the Army and Navy and did not want to complicate matters. The President had already spent quite a bit of time trying to get the Army and the Navy to cooperate with each other. He responded to General Rosecrans in February of 1863.

> Your dispatch about "river patrolling" received. I have called the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of War, and General -in –Chief together and submitted it to them, who promise to do their very best in the case. I can not take it into my own hand without producing inextricable confusion.[16]

The Secretary of the Navy was called upon by the President to help resolve the matter. Word of the problem as framed by General Rosecrans then made its way back down to the commander of the Mississippi Squadron, Admiral Porter, by way of Captain Pennock, the commander of the Naval supply operations in Cairo, Illinois. Admiral Porter was less than pleased by the controversy. Porter wrote to Secretary Welles in late February of 1863 to give his side of the issue.

> Captain Pennock sent me an extract from a letter of the Department, mentioning that General Rosecrans complained that naval vessels did not cooperate on the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers. This is very unjust to the Navy, and I feel it my duty to protect the officers under my command from such aspersions. General Rosecrans is very exacting, and at times imperious, forgetting what is due to the Navy Department, which is straining every nerve to carry out the wishes of the War Department.... With an army of 29,000 men on this river doing nothing, I have to protect the whole line of river against guerillas, and am called on to send a gunboat to convoy 10,000 troops, with abundance of artillery. I don't complain of this. I am ready at a moment's notice to convoy them, and glad to keep them under the sheltering wing of the Navy. I only mention it to show how unjust these army generals are in their complaints.[17]

Clearly, Admiral Porter did not think too highly of General Rosecrans. In fact, Admiral Porter was growing increasingly displeased with the Army, especially regular army generals who had graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point.

Fortunately, and in stark contrast, Grant and Porter got along together famously. They immediately took a liking to each other and over the year of 1863 developed a deep mutual respect and trust. This

attitude of respect and trust was conveyed to both the Army and Navy forces under their commands and became the foundation for joint operations based on cooperation. General Grant, General William T. Sherman, and Admiral Porter met numerous times in late 1862 and throughout 1863 to plan the attack on Vicksburg. These three leaders functioned as an effective team, discussing alternative courses of action and explaining the capabilities of both Army and Navy forces. "General Grant, with the Thirteenth Army Corps, of which we compose the right wing, is moving southward. The naval squadron (Admiral Porter) is operating with his gunboat fleet by water, each in perfect harmony with each other." [18]The Joint Operation Planning Process is defined today as a coordinated Joint Staff procedure used by a commander to determine the best method of accomplishing assigned tasks and to direct the action necessary to accomplish the mission.[19] Certainly, there was not a Joint Staff, as we know it today at work in 1863. But Grant, Porter and Sherman did plan operations in a joint manner.

During December of 1862 and January of 1863 the forces that were to fight the campaign were assembled. Grant's Army of the Tennessee consisted of three corps with a total of 43,000 men. (Figure 1) In addition, the Army had a Marine Brigade, under the command of Army Brigadier General Alfred W. Ellett, that had numerous Army barges and steamers for operating on the rivers of the Vicksburg area of operations. This Marine Brigade consisted of Army personnel and river -boats, primarily transports and rams. The Army's Marine Brigade should not be confused with the United States Marine Corps, which also had forces in the theater.

The XIII Army Corps was commanded by Major General John A. McClernand. Major General William T. Sherman commanded the XV Army Corps. Major General James B. McPherson commanded the XVII Army Corps. McPherson also had an unattached Cavalry Brigade. The Army of the Tennessee would grow in size to a force of 75,000 by the end of the campaign. The additional troops would come as reinforcements once the siege of Vicksburg was initiated.

Rear Admiral David Dixon Porter commanded the Mississippi Squadron for the United States Navy which consisted of a total of fifty-nine riverboats carrying over three hundred and seventy naval guns. (Table 1) Of the fifty- nine riverboats, twelve were heavily armed ironclad boats. Admiral Porter also had a small number of U.S. Marines assigned to the squadron.

The Confederate forces were divided into two commands. Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton commanded the forces in the vicinity of Vicksburg. (Figure 3) Pemberton's forces numbered just over forty thousand in the early spring of 1863 and would dwindle to 28,000 by the end of the Vicksburg campaign.

General Joseph E. Johnston was the overall theater commander for the Confederate forces fighting in the west. However, he only had two Brigades, with a total of 24,000 troops, directly under his operational control. (Figure 3.)

FIGURE 1 UNION FORCES

Union Forces

ARMY OF THE TENNESSEE

MG Ulysses S. Grant

XIII ARMY CORPS

MG John A. McClernand
MG Edward O.C. Ord
(18 June, 1863)

9th Division

BG Peter J. Osterhaus
1st BDE: 118th Illinois, 49th Indiana, 69th Indiana, 7th Kentucky, 120th Ohio
2nd BDE: 54th Indiana, 22nd Kentucky, 16th Ohio, 42nd Ohio, 114th Ohio
Cavalry: 2nd Illinois, 3rd Illinois, 6th Missouri

10th Division

BG Andrew J. Smith
1st BDE: 16th Indiana, 60th Indiana, 67th Indiana, 83rd Ohio, 96th Ohio, 23rd Wisconsin
2nd BDE: 77th Illinois, 97th Illinois, 130th Illinois, 19th Kentucky, 48th Ohio

12th Division

BG Alvin P. Hovey
1st BDE: 11th Indiana, 24th Indiana, 34th Indiana, 46th Indiana, 29th Wisconsin
2nd BDE: 87th Illinois, 47th Indiana, 24th Iowa, 28th Iowa, 56th Ohio

14th Division

BG Eugene A. Carr
1st BDE: 33rd Illinois, 99th Illinois, 8th Indiana, 18th Indiana, 1st US (siege guns)
2nd BDE: 21st Iowa, 22nd Iowa, 23rd Iowa, 11th Wisconsin

XV ARMY CORPS

MG William T. Sherman

1st Division

MG Frederick Steele
1st BDE: 13th Illinois, 27th Missouri, 29th Missouri, 30th Missouri, 31st Missouri, 32nd Missouri
2nd BDE: 25th Iowa, 31st Iowa, 3rd Missouri, 12th Missouri, 17th Missouri, 76th Ohio
3rd BDE: 4th Iowa, 9th Iowa, 26th Iowa, 30th Iowa

2nd Division

MG Frank P. Blair
1st BDE: 113th Illinois, 116th Illinois, 6th Missouri, 8th Missouri, 13th US
2nd BDE: 55th Illinois, 127th Illinois, 83rd Indiana, 54th Ohio, 57th Ohio
3rd BDE: 30th Ohio, 37th Ohio, 47th Ohio, 4th West Virginia

3rd Division

BG James M. Tuttle
1st BDE: 114th Illinois, 93rd Indiana, 72nd Ohio, 95th Ohio
2nd BDE: 47th Illinois, 5th Minnesota, 11th Missouri, 8th Wisconsin
3rd BDE: 8th Iowa, 12th Iowa, 35th Iowa

XVII ARMY CORPS

MG James B. McPherson

3rd Division

MG John A. Logan
1st BDE: 20th Illinois, 31st Illinois, 45th Illinois, 124th Illinois, 23rd Indiana
2nd BDE: 30th Illinois, 20th Ohio, 68th Ohio, 78th Ohio
3rd BDE: 8th Illinois, 17th Illinois, 81st Illinois, 7th Missouri, 32nd Ohio

6th Division
BG John McArthur
1st BDE: 1st Kansas, 16th Wisconsin
2nd BDE: 11th Illinois, 72nd Illinois, 95th Illinois, 14th Wisconsin, 17th Wisconsin
3rd BDE: 11th Iowa, 13th Iowa, 15th Iowa, 16th Iowa

7th Division

BG Marcellus M. Crocker
1st BDE: 48th Indiana, 59th Indiana, 4th Minnesota, 18th Wisconsin
2nd BDE: 56th Illinois, 17th Iowa, 10th Missouri, 24th Missouri, 80th Ohio
3rd BDE: 93rd Illinois, 5th Iowa, 10th Iowa, 26th Missouri

Herron's Division

MG Francis J. Herron
1st BDE: 37th Illinois, 26th Indiana, 20th Iowa, 34th Iowa, 38th Iowa
2nd BDE: 94th Illinois, 19th Iowa, 20th Wisconsin

Corps Cavalry

COL Cyrus Bussey
5th Illinois, 3rd Iowa, 2nd Wisconsin

Alan Hankinson, Vicksburg 1863, (London: Osprey, 1993), 16

TABLE 1 MISSISSIPPI SQUADRON

Mississippi Squadron

NAME	TONS	CLASS	GUNS
Barron De Kalb	512	Ironclad	14
Benton	1,000	Ironclad	14
Carondelet	512	Ironclad	14
Chillicothe	395	Ironclad	2
Cincinnati	512	Ironclad	14
Eastport	700	Ironclad	10
Indianola	511	Ironclad	2
Lexington	488	Ironclad	8
Louisville	326	Ironclad	14
Mound City	512	Ironclad	14
Pittsburg	512	Ironclad	14
Tuscumbia	565	Ironclad	5
General Bragg	700	Side-wheel Ram	3
General Pillow	50	Side-wheel Ram	2
General Price	633	Side-wheel Ram	4
Little Rebel	400	Screw Ram	3
Black Hawk	902	Side-wheel steamer	8
Choctaw	1,000	Side-wheel steamer	4
Clara Dolsen	1,200	Side-wheel steamer	1
Conestoga	512	Side-wheel steamer	5
Fairplay	800	Side-wheel steamer	4
Great Western	800	Side-wheel steamer	3
Judge Torrence	600	Side-wheel steamer	1
Red Rover	786	Side-wheel steamer	1
Tyler	575	Side-wheel steamer	10
Alfred Robb	75	Stern-wheel steamer	4
Brilliant	226	Stern-wheel steamer	4
Forest Rose	260	Stern-wheel steamer	6
Glide	127	Stern-wheel steamer	6
Juliet	157	Stern-wheel steamer	6
Mamora	207	Stern-wheel steamer	8
Romeo	175	Stern-wheel steamer	6
St. Clair	203	Stern-wheel steamer	4

Signal	190	Stern-wheel steamer	6
Silver Lake	236	Stern-wheel steamer	6
Abraham	800	Paddle-wheel steamer	0
Argosy	219	Paddle-wheel steamer	8
Champion No. 4	115	Paddle-wheel steamer	4
Covington	224	Paddle-wheel steamer	8
Cricket	156	Paddle-wheel steamer	6
Curlew/Florence	196	Paddle-wheel steamer	8
Dahlia	50	Paddle-wheel steamer	0
Gnrl Lyon/Desoto	1,200	Paddle-wheel steamer	1
Hastings	293	Paddle-wheel steamer	8
Ivy	50	Paddle-wheel steamer	0
Kenwood	232	Paddle-wheel steamer	6
Lafayette	1,000	Paddle-wheel steamer	12
Linden	177	Paddle-wheel steamer	6
Naumkeag	250	Paddle-wheel steamer	6
Petrel/Duchess	266	Paddle-wheel steamer	8
Prarie Bird	171	Paddle-wheel steamer	8
Queen City	212	Paddle-wheel steamer	9
Rattler	165	Paddle-wheel steamer	6
Silver Cloud	236	Paddle-wheel steamer	6
Sovereign	800	Paddle-wheel steamer	0
Springfield	146	Paddle-wheel steamer	6
Thistle	50	Paddle-wheel steamer	0
William H. Brown	800	Paddle-wheel steamer	1
Lilly	50	Tug	0

Department of the Navy, Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, Series I, Volume 24, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1911), vx.

FIGURE 2 CONFEDERATE FORCES

Confederate Forces

Vicksburg Forces

LTG John C. Pemberton

1st Division

MG W.W. Loring

1st BDE: 6th Mississippi, 15th Mississippi, 20th Mississippi, 23rd Mississippi, 26th Mississippi

2nd BDE: 3rd Mississippi, 22nd Mississippi, 31st Mississippi, 33rd Mississippi, 1st Mississippi

3rd BDE: 27th Alabama, 35th Alabama, 54th Alabama, 55th Alabama, 9th Arkansas, 3rd Kentucky, 7th Kentucky, 12th Louisiana

Stevenson's Division

MG Carter L. Stevenson

1st BDE: 40th Georgia, 41st Georgia, 42nd Georgia, 43rd Georgia, 52nd Georgia

2nd BDE: 20th Alabama, 23rd Alabama, 30th Alabama, 31st Alabama, 46th Alabama

3rd BDE: 34th Georgia, 36th Georgia, 39th Georgia, 56th Georgia, 57th Georgia

4th BDE: 3rd Tennessee, 31st Tennessee, 43rd Tennessee, 59th Tennessee

Texas Legion

Forney's Division

MG John H. Forney

Herbert's BDE: 3rd Louisiana, 21st Louisiana, 36th Mississippi, 37th Mississippi, 38th Mississippi, 43rd Mississippi, 7th Mississippi, 2nd Alabama

Moore's BDE: 37th Alabama, 40th Alabama, 42nd Alabama, 1st Mississippi, 35th Mississippi, 40th Mississippi, 2nd Texas

Smith's Division

MG Martin L. Smith

1st BDE: 17th Louisiana, 31st Louisiana, 4th Mississippi, 46th Mississippi

Vaughn's BDE: 60th Tennessee, 61st Tennessee, 62nd Tennessee,

3rd BDE: 26th Louisiana, 27th Louisiana, 28th Louisiana

Mississippi State Troops

Bowen's Division

MG John S. Bowen

1st (Missouri) BDE: 1st Missouri, 2nd Missouri, 3rd Missouri, 4th Missouri, 5th Missouri, 6th Missouri

2nd BDE: 15th Arkansas, 19th Arkansas, 20th Arkansas, 21st Arkansas, 1st Arkansas, 12th Arkansas, 3rd Missouri Cavalry

Jackson Area Forces

GEN Joseph E. Johnston

Gregg's BDE: 3rd Tennessee, 10th Tennessee, 30th Tennessee, 41st Tennessee, 50th Tennessee, 7th Texas

Gist's BDE: 46th Georgia, 14th Mississippi, 24th South Carolina

Walker's BDE

Alan Hankinson, Vicksburg 1863, (London: Osprey, 1993), 17.

DIRECT ATTACK

In November of 1862, Grant planned to attack Vicksburg from the most direct route. He planned to march into Mississippi with 30,000 soldiers with intermediate objectives of Holly Springs, Grenada, Oxford, and Jackson. He then hoped to turn to the west and drive on Vicksburg. (Maps 1 & 2)

> My moving force at that time was about 30,000 men, and I estimated the enemy confronting me, under Pemberton, at about the same number. General McPherson commanded my left wing and General C.S. Hamilton the center, while Sherman was at Memphis with the right wing. [20]

The campaign against Vicksburg commenced on the 2nd of November as indicated in a dispatch to the general-in-chief in the following words: "I have commenced a movement on Grand Junction, with three divisions from Corinth (Mississippi) and two from Bolivar (Tennessee). Will leave here (Jackson, Tennessee) to-morrow, and take command in person. If found practicable, I will go to Holly Springs, and may be, Grenada, completing railroad and telegraph as I go."[21]

Grant selected Holly Springs as his base for logistics and relied on rail transportation coming from Columbus, Kentucky to move the vast quantities of munitions and supplies for his thirty thousand soldiers. The base was established and supplies stockpiled.

Around this time, Grant became concerned by reports in the newspapers concerning Major General John McClernand. McClernand was a politically connected officer who had not graduated from West Point. It was believed that he had political ambitions and was interested in using military adventures to bolster his political career. McClernand was well known for his vocal dislike and strong criticism of Regular Army Generals who had not yet delivered victory to the Union. General Grant became even more concerned after Admiral Porter, who apparently shared Grant's low opinion of McClernand's ability, warned him that Lincoln had given him command of the Vicksburg effort.

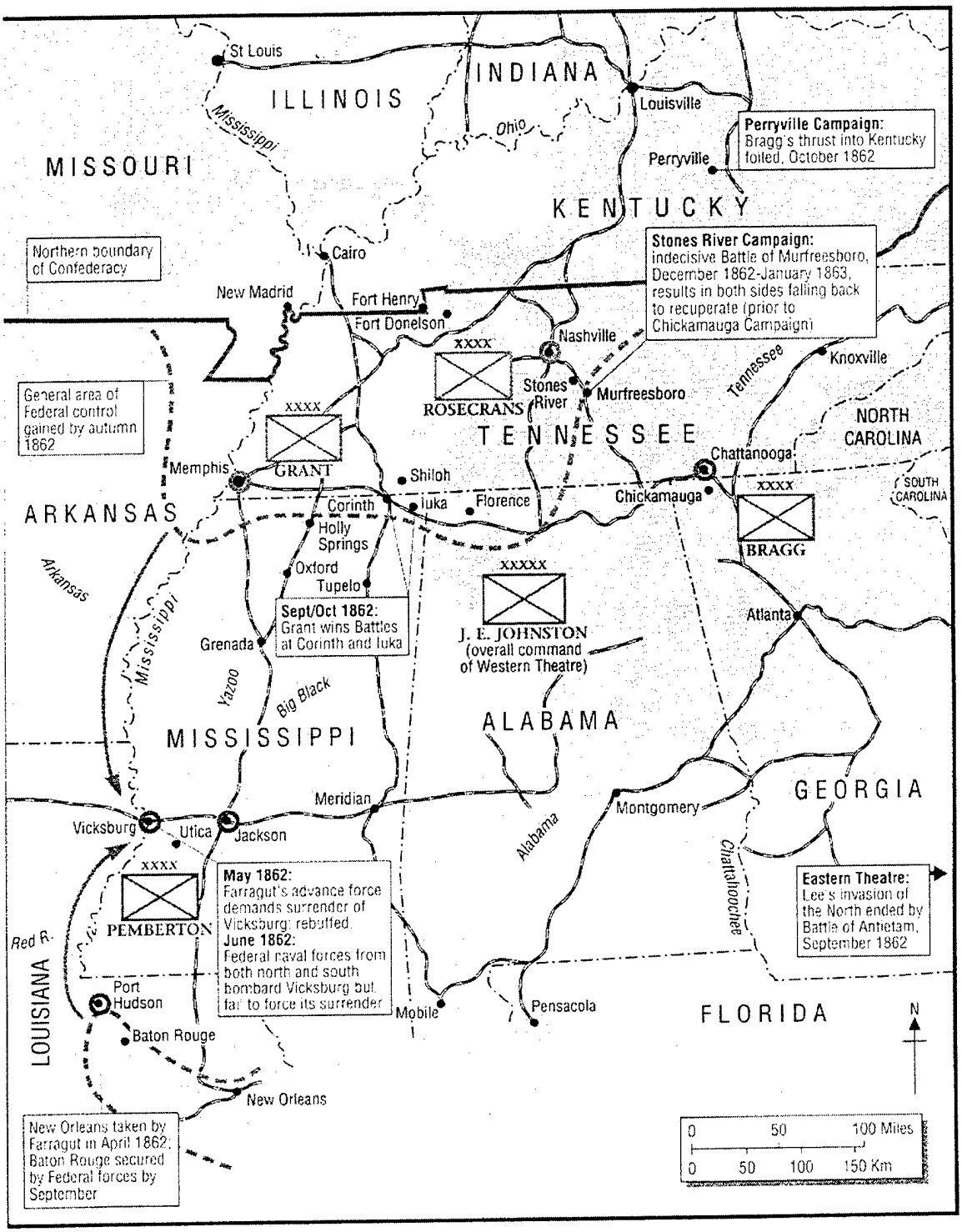
> At this stage of the campaign against Vicksburg I was very much disturbed by newspaper rumors that General McClernand was to have a separate and independent command within mine, to operate against Vicksburg by way of the Mississippi River. Two commanders on the same field are always one too many, and in this case I did not think the general selected had either the experience or the qualifications to fit him for so important a position. I feared for the safety of the troops entrusted to him, especially as he was to raise new levies, raw troops, to execute so important a trust. But on the 12th I received a dispatch from General Halleck saying that I had command of all the troops sent to my department and authorizing me to fight the enemy where I pleased.[22]

However, General Grant was given the authority to do whatever he felt necessary to achieve success. According to Secretary of War, Henry Stanton:

> General Grant has full power and absolute to remove any person who, through ignorance, inaction, or any cause, interferes with or delays his operations. He has the full confidence of the Government, is expected to enforce his authority, and will be firmly and heartily supported; but he will be responsible for any failure to exert his powers.[23]

Even though the vast majority of troops who would fight the battles in the Vicksburg campaign were United States Volunteers, and were hailed by their leaders as heroes, the campaign would be characterized by tension between the senior leaders along regular-reserve lines.

FIGURE 3 MAP 1



On November 15th Grant ordered Sherman to meet with him to discuss the drive toward Vicksburg. By the 29th of November Sherman had moved two divisions to the vicinity of Oxford to join with

Grant in the attack. Just as everything appeared ready for a sweeping assault on Vicksburg, politics intervened and forced a change in plans.

Major General John McClernand was preparing to lead an expedition down the Mississippi River from Memphis to attack Vicksburg from the North. Grant knew that he had to change his plan and send Sherman, who he trusted implicitly, back to Memphis to take charge of that expedition.

> ...My action in sending Sherman back was expedited by a desire to get him in command of the forces separated from my direct supervision. I feared delay might bring McClernand, who was his senior and who had authority from the president and the Secretary of War to exercise that particular command, and independently. I doubted McClernand's fitness; and I had good reason to believe that in forestalling him I was by no means giving offence to those whose authority to command was above both him and me.[24]

Grant had reason to believe that McClernand, a political appointee, was attempting to undermine him and seize political fame by capturing Vicksburg. On December 8th Grant wrote the following order to Sherman:

> You will proceed, with as little delay as possible, to Memphis, Tennessee, taking with you one division of your present command. On your arrival at Memphis you will assume command of all the troops there, and that portion of General Curtis's forces at present east of the Mississippi River, and organize them into brigades and divisions of your own army. As soon as possible move with them down the river to the vicinity of Vicksburg, and with the cooperation of the gun-boat fleet under command of Flag-officer Porter proceed to the reduction of that place in such manner as circumstances, and your own judgement, may dictate.[25]

Sherman was to plan and act jointly with Porter. Grant hoped to keep Pemberton fixed on countering his attack from the east while Sherman attacked down the Mississippi from the north to seize Vicksburg. Grant wrote to General Halleck on December 8th: "General Sherman will command the expedition down the Mississippi. He will have a force of about 40,000 men. Will land above Vicksburg, up the Yazoo, if practicable, and cut the Mississippi Central Railroad and the railroad running east from Vicksburg where they cross Black River."[26]

The first battle of the campaign was an attempt to land Sherman and 32,000 troops on the Chickasaw Bluffs to the North of Vicksburg while Grant attacked over land into Northern Mississippi. (Maps 2 & 3) This was truly a joint effort that involved direct coordination between Generals Grant and

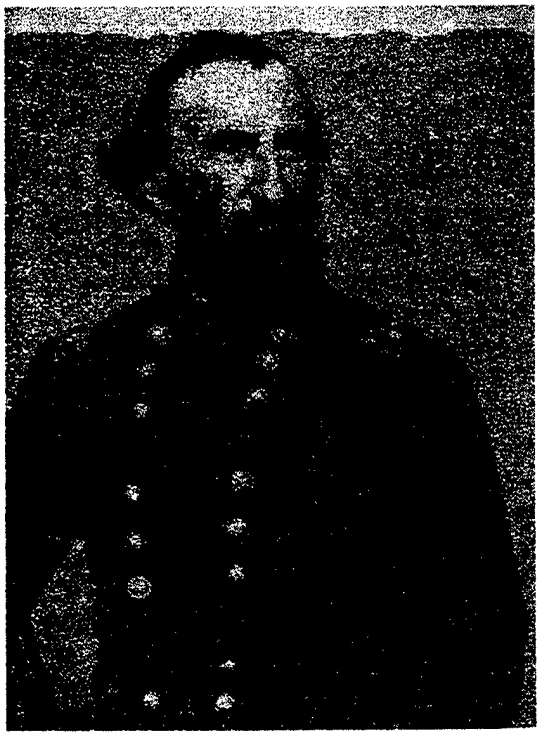


FIGURE 4 MG JOHN MCCLERNAND
(US Army Military History Institute)

Sherman and Admiral Porter. Grant had gone to Cairo, Illinois to meet with Porter in November and was told that the Mississippi Squadron "was ready to cooperate with the Army on every occasion where the services of the Navy could be useful."[27]

> General Grant arrived at Cairo and proposed an expedition against Vicksburg, and asking the rear admiral if he could furnish a sufficient force of gun-boats to accompany it...This interview between Grant and Porter lasted just half an hour, and thus was started the expedition against Vicksburg...[28]

General Sherman was brought into the planning process early in December. Sherman continued to plan jointly with the navy and published his operations order on Christmas day in 1862.

> The fleet will start at 8 a.m. tomorrow under convoy of the gunboats, keeping well closed up and prepared for any event. Two companies on each boat will be fully equipped with loaded muskets, ready to return fire should our progress be opposed.[29]

Joint communications were conducted throughout the Vicksburg campaign as evidenced by Sherman's movement order for the expedition going up the Yazoo River.

> In case any men reach or are sent to the river at any point where they may encounter a gunboat, they must be carefully instructed to show the United States flag and two white handkerchiefs or cloths, one on each side of the flag. This is the signal agreed on by myself and the Admiral, by which our troops can be distinguished from the rebels, who sometimes display our flag and wear our clothes.[30]

Additionally, Army Signal Corps soldiers were permanently attached to Admiral Porter's flagship and to the Army's Marine Brigade of General Ellet.[31]

The expedition from Memphis commenced early in December, 1862, Commander Walke, in the "Carondelet", being sent ahead with the Cairo, Baron DeKalb, and Pittsburg, (iron-clads,) and the Signal and Marmora (tin-clads), to clear the Yazoo River of torpedoes (mines) and cover the landing of Sherman's Army when it arrived.[32] The Navy gunboats advanced to Haines' Bluff to clear the river of torpedoes. In the process of doing this, the ironclad gunboat Cairo struck a mine and was sunk. The Navy engaged the Confederate batteries on Haines' Bluff to provide cover while General Sherman moved his transports to a point on the river called Chickasaw Bayou without the loss of a man from torpedoes or sharpshooters, his landing being covered in every direction by the gunboats.[33] Naval gunfire was used in support of the landing and to interdict enemy lines of communication. Additionally, Navy gunboats were used for an amphibious demonstration at Haines' Bluff as Sherman feinted there, only to land at Chickasaw Bayou. Today we define Joint as a word that connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc, in which elements of two or more Military Departments participate.[34] The assault on Chickasaw Bluffs clearly was a joint effort. Sherman and Porter had jointly planned the operation and jointly executed it. As Admiral Porter wrote, "Throughout these operations the Navy did everything that could be done to ensure the success of General Sherman's movement."[35] It was impossible for gunboats alone to capture the works at Haines' Bluff, as but one vessel at a time could operate against them. Their reduction required a combined Army and Navy attack.[36] Sherman and Porter had both realized that a joint effort was required

and Sherman ordered General Fredrick Steele's First Division to conduct the assault. "General Steele's Division, with two batteries, and without Cavalry, and the Infantry brigade of the 2d Division will constitute the force designated to cooperate with the fleet of gunboats in the assault on the battery at Haines' Bluff. General Frederick Steele will command the whole, and will receive special instructions."[37] Unfortunately, the attack failed despite the fact that it was a jointly conducted.

The Confederate resistance at Chickasaw Bayou and Haines' Bluff was much stronger than Sherman and Porter had anticipated. They expected the bulk of Pemberton's forces to be fighting Grant at Grenada and slowly falling back toward Vicksburg from the east. What Sherman and Porter did not know was that Grant had been forced to withdraw before he was able to fix Pemberton's forces.

Confederate Major General Earl Van Dorn wrote to Pemberton on December 20, 1862: "I surprised the enemy at this place (Holly Springs) at daylight this morning; burned up all the quartermaster's stores, cotton, etc. – an immense amount; burned up many trains; took a great many arms and about 1,500 prisoners. I presume the value of stores would amount to $1,500,000..."[38] Grant's version of the event was similar:

> On the 20th General Van Dorn appeared at Holly Springs, my secondary base of supplies, captured the garrison of 1,500 men commanded by Colonel Murphy, of the 8th Wisconsin regiment, and destroyed all our munitions of war, food and forage...At the same time Forest (Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forest) got on our line of railroad between Jackson, Tennessee and Columbus, Kentucky, doing much damage to it. This cut me off from all communication to the north for more than a week, and it was more than two weeks before we could be issued stores obtained in the regular way.[39]

In addition to destroying Grant's supplies, the Confederate forces cut the telegraph lines that allowed Grant to communicate with Sherman and Porter. This loss of communication would have a profound affect on the first attack on Vicksburg by Sherman and Porter.

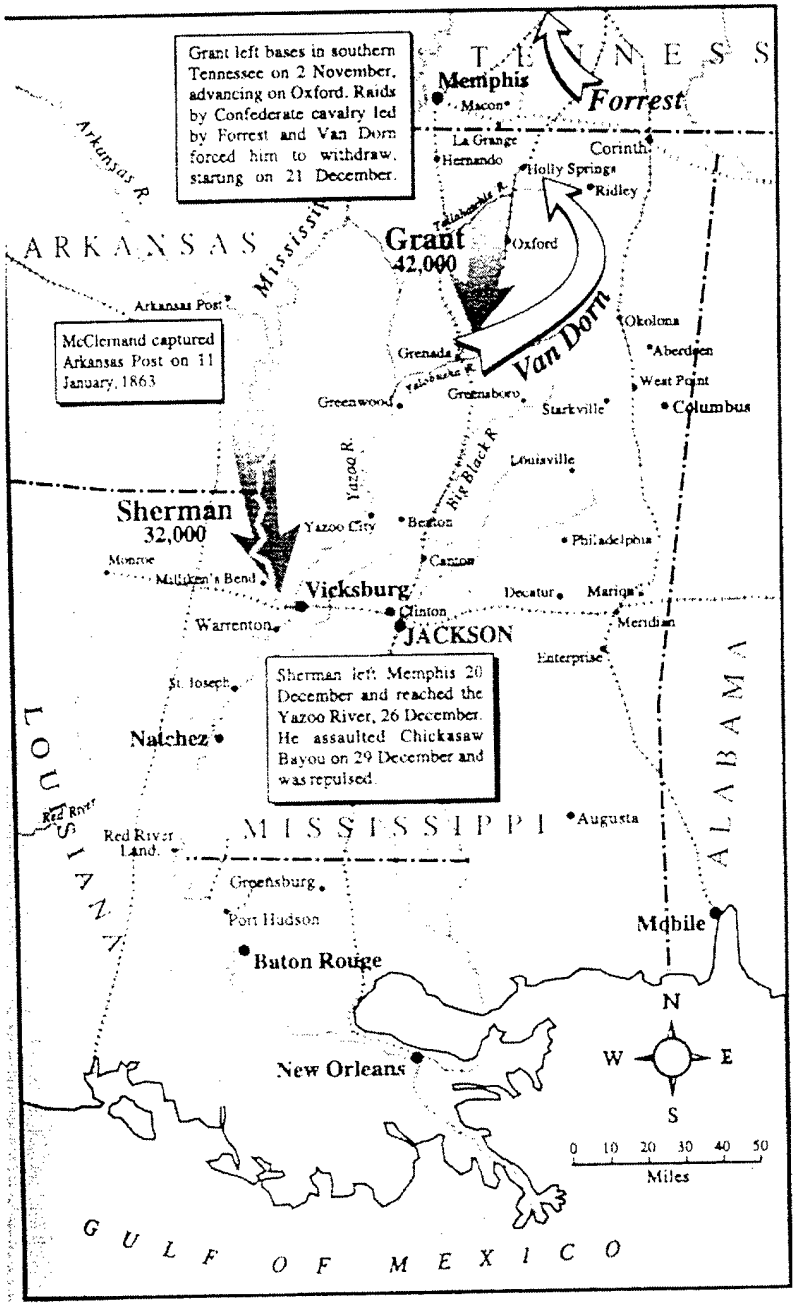
> This interruption in my communication north – I was really cut off from communication with a great part of my command during this time – resulted in Sherman's moving from Memphis before McClernand could arrive, for my dispatch of the 18th did not reach McClernand. Pemberton got back to Vicksburg before Sherman got there...Sherman's attack was very unfortunate, but I had no opportunity of communicating with him after the destruction of the road and telegraph to my rear on the 20th. He did not know but what I was in the rear of the enemy and depending on him...[40]

Sherman recalled, "I was more than convinced that heavy reinforcements were coming to Vicksburg...Up to that moment I had not heard from Grant since leaving Memphis; and most assuredly I had listened for days for the sound of his guns in the direction of Yazoo City."[41] The joint effort to seize Chickasaw Bayou and Vicksburg had failed because Grant was forced to let Pemberton move the majority of his forces back to Vicksburg. Grant could not keep Pemberton engaged without munitions and supplies and moved his headquarters to Memphis on January 10, 1863.

Meanwhile, Sherman and Porter had pulled back to Milliken's Bend on the West Bank of the Mississippi River, twenty miles north of Vicksburg. After discussing the option of attacking Vicksburg jointly by landing Sherman at Haines' Bluff while Porter assaulted Vicksburg at night with naval gunfire,

the commanders decided to sail north up the Arkansas River and jointly attack the Confederate stronghold of Fort Hindman instead. Sherman had decided that his troops needed a victory to boost their confidence and both he and Porter agreed that Fort Hindman would provide that opportunity.

FIGURE 5 MAP 2



Leonard Fullenkamp, Stephen Bowman, Jay Luvaas, Guide to the Vicksburg Campaign, (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 31.

The following morning General Sherman learned that Major General McClernand had arrived at the mouth of the Yazoo to take command of Sherman's Army. This was a surprise to everyone. It was known that McClernand had received orders to proceed to Illinois and raise troops for the purpose of undertaking the siege of Vicksburg. However, it was never supposed that he would take command of 40,000 men of Grant's Army, without even paying Grant the compliment of informing him of his intention. However, General McClernand came with such orders from Washington that Sherman unhesitatingly agreed to turn over command to him.[42]

Admiral Porter clearly did not appear to like General McClernand. As General Sherman recalled the meeting between Porter, himself and McClernand aboard the Admiral's Flagship:

> Porter's manner toward McClernand was so curt that I invited him out into a forward cabin where he had his charts, and asked him what he meant by it. He said that he did not like him; that in Washington, before coming west, he had been introduced to him by President Lincoln, and had taken a strong prejudice against him. I begged him, for the sake of harmony, to waive that, which he promised to do.[43]

The professional relationship between Porter and Sherman was such that Porter fully understood Sherman's

dismay at relinquishing command to a General Officer that both felt was unqualified to lead troops into combat. According to Porter, he decided to use the lack of command authority between the Army and the Navy to resolve the issue.

> As Admiral Porter did not come under Army rule and knew exactly the terms on which General McClernand had received his orders, he declined to have anything to do with the proposed expedition to Arkansas Post, unless General Sherman should go in command of the troops.[44]

However, Sherman does not record this version of events in his memoirs. Sherman recalled, "At this time I supposed General McClernand would send me on this business, but he concluded to go himself, and to take his whole force."[45] Porter recalled that after a brief discussion, McClernand agreed to leave Sherman in command of the troops and only accompany the expedition as the senior General. Sherman makes no mention of such an agreement. In fact, on the 4th of January Sherman issued the following order to his soldiers.

> A new commander is now here to lead you. He is chosen by the President of the United States, who is charged by our Constitution to maintain and defend it, and he has the undoubted right to select his own agent. I know that all good officers and soldiers will give him the same hearty support and cheerful obedience they have hitherto given me...All officers and General Staff, not attached to my person, will hereafter report in person and by letter to Major General McClernand, commanding Army of the Mississippi, on board the Steamer Tigress, at our rendezvous at Gaines' Landing and Montgomery Point.[46]

One could conclude that either Sherman declined to write about the alleged agreement with McClernand, or that Porter's dislike of McClernand was so great that it influenced his recollection of the event.

Porter's recollections concerning McClernand are all negative, while his statements about both Grant and Sherman are glowing and ring with unending praise. Yet Admiral Porter had a secret concerning the Generals. Porter's secret is revealed by the Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles.

> In conformity with his (Porter's) special request, General McClernand is to command the army with which the Navy cooperates. This gratifies him (Porter), for he dreads and protests against association with any West Point general; says they are too self sufficient, pedantic, and unpractical.[47]

According to the Secretary of the Navy, McClernand was given command in order to foster better cooperation between the Army and the Navy, at the request of Admiral Porter.

> As early as last September, it was understood that McClernand was to have command of the army which was to go down the river and cooperate with our naval commander, Porter. The President had confidence in him, and designated the appointment, which was acceptable to Porter, who had a particular dislike of West-Pointers...partly, I think, because he did not know them, and feared he should be compelled to play a subordinate part with them, while with a civilian general he would have superiority.[48]

It is not known whether or not Grant and Sherman knew of Porter's preconceived notions concerning West Point General Officers or of his request to have a "civilian general" command the Army of the Tennessee. Given the excellent relations between the three leaders and their dislike of McClernand

throughout the campaign, one could assume that Grant and Sherman did not know that McClernand was sent to them at the request of Porter.

The expedition up the Arkansas River was again jointly planned and executed by Sherman and Porter. An interesting aspect of joint operations in this campaign was the relationship between the Army's Marine Brigade, consisting of rams and transports, and the Navy. Admiral Porter had operational control over parts of the Army's fleet throughout the campaign. As Gideon Welles remarked, "Congress wisely ordered a transfer of all war vessels on the Mississippi to the Navy. It was not by my suggestion or procurement that this law was passed, but it was proper."[49] In the expedition up the Arkansas River, Porter had operational control over Army riverboat squadron commander Colonel Charles Ellet. The cousin of the Army Marine Brigade's commander, Brigadier General Alfred W. Ellet, was given the following order by Admiral Porter: "Colonel: You will join me with the Monarch at the mouth of the Arkansas River. Leave the rest of the rams under the charge of Lieutenant Commander Prichett, of the U.S.S. Tyler, who will give them instructions."[50] Admiral Porter had command authority over the Army's Marine Brigade, but this would be a thorny relationship throughout the Vicksburg campaign.

President Lincoln had directed the Army to submit the Marine Brigade to the command of the Navy. This concluded a bitter argument between the Army and the Navy over which service should control marine operations, primarily gunboat operations, on the rivers. Brigadier General Alfred W. Ellet retained command of the Army's Marine Brigade, under the command of Admiral Porter. Admiral Porter was not always pleased with the level of cooperation that he received from General Ellet and sought to relieve him of command during the campaign. Porter also sought to disband the Marine Brigade, absorb the vessels into the Navy's Mississippi squadron, and place the soldiers of the Marine Brigade under the command of General Grant for service with the infantry.

> I recommend that the Marine Brigade be merged into the army under General Grant, as no longer being needed on this river. It can not exist as a separate command, and I am convinced that it is for the entire interests of the nation that the brigade be abolished and attached to the army, where it can be made useful and kept under military rule.[51]

Evidently Admiral Porter changed his mind as General Ellet remained in command of the Marine Brigade, and the Brigade remained under the command authority of the Navy during the Vicksburg campaign. There was some friction between the Army and the Navy during the joint operations of the campaign, but fortunately, there was much more cooperation, trust, and mutual respect.

Another example of joint work on the expedition up the Arkansas River had to do with conserving coal onboard the ironclad gunboats. Army transport boats were ordered to tow the Navy gunboats so that the latter could conserve the coal needed for power during the coming battle. This can be seen in Admiral Porter's orders to the commander of the U.S.S. Cincinnati to proceed to the mouth of the Arkansas River. "Sir: You will proceed to the mouth of the Arkansas River; if I am not there before you, anchor and take in coal if there is any. Transports are appropriated to tow up the ironclads. Take the first that offers. A red flag means, I want towage. Save all the coal you can while being towed."[52] Sherman likewise ordered the transports to cooperate with the Navy. "Colonel Parsons will forthwith detail eight good strong transport

boats, best supplied with fuel, to proceed to the mouth of the Yazoo, and report to Admiral Porter by 10 a.m. today for the purpose of towing slow gunboats up stream..."[53]

Joint intelligence was conducted throughout the Vicksburg campaign and in preparation for the expedition up the Arkansas River. Both the Army and the Navy collected intelligence from a variety of sources including prisoners, captured documents, reconnaissance patrols, and civilians. The information gained was routinely shared between the services in order to improve fighting effectiveness. On January 7th, Admiral Porter sent the following report to General McClernand: "I beg leave to send you some charts of the Arkansas River and a list of distances. Also an account of the post, collected from a refugee picked up in a boat on the river in a starving condition."[54] The intelligence enclosure that was sent to McClernand was a very detailed description of the defenses that were going to be encountered at Fort Hindman and were very valuable for planning the coming battle. It is interesting to note that Porter sent the same letter and enclosures directly to General Sherman.

Other examples of joint intelligence conducted during the Vicksburg campaign included reconnaissance and surveillance photography. Since a majority of the enemy positions were near the water, most of the Army's reconnaissance was done while onboard Navy vessels. The gunboats Taylor, Lexington, and Conestoga were constantly employed by General Grant in conducting reconnaissance missions, during which they came frequently under fire of the enemy's batteries.[55]. Additionally, the Navy provided maps and charts to the Army.[56] The Navy also used photography to locate enemy batteries around Vicksburg and shared that information with the Army.

> The guns at Vicksburg were so scattered about and cunningly concealed that it was almost impossible to detect them. A clever plan was adopted by a naval photographer to bring the guns to light. A large photograph of the city was taken, and that again enlarged, when by means of magnifying glasses, every gun was revealed.[57]

Joint intelligence was important throughout the campaign and certainly on the expedition up the Arkansas River. On January 8th, General McClernand wrote to Admiral Porter and suggested that they depart for the Arkansas River on January 9th.

> In view of your suggestion of the unsafeness of running at night, and of the necessity of delaying longer for some of my transports, I propose to start in the morning at 8 o'clock, and have accordingly so ordered in regard to my command. You leading off in the morning at the hour named, I will follow.[58]

The movement to the Arkansas River was a joint action with Navy gunboats escorting Army transports, followed by Army transports towing Navy gunboats up the Arkansas River.

It is interesting to note that in the above correspondence between McClernand and Porter, General McClernand refers to ordering his command to move out at 8 o'clock. In fact, throughout the entirety of the official record of the Arkansas River expedition General McClernand and Admiral Porter sound as though McClernand is clearly in charge of the operation. The official record stands in stark contrast to the version given by Porter in his later writings.

On January 10th, 1863, The Arkansas River expedition reached Fort Hindman. Sherman disembarked his forces at 10 o'clock in the morning and began a fifteen-mile forced march to assault the fort from the rear. It would take Sherman most of the day and the night of the 10th to get into position. Meanwhile, Admiral Porter directed the efforts of his gunboats to support the Army. "The division of General Sherman will be in a line with our fire, a mile the other side of the Post. It is desirable to drop our shells in or near the fort, that we may not trouble him as he advances."[59] Porter's gunboats also fired in support of the Army's landing and suppressed enemy artillery and infantry in rifle pits to ensure that the soldiers got underway without difficulty.

Difficulty with General McClernand occurred again. "General McClernand had accompanied the expedition, it was supposed merely as a spectator, but about 3 o'clock, he rode up to the bank near which the gunboats laid and informed Admiral Porter that Sherman was in position in the rear of the work, and waiting for the gunboats to begin the attack on the fort. This could not very well be the case..."[60] Despite Porter's belief that Sherman was not yet in position, he ordered his gunboats to move within 400 yards of the fort and began firing to destroy the enemy batteries at about 5:30 P.M. "The superiority of our fire was soon manifest; the batteries were silenced and we ceased firing, but no assault took place, and it being too dark to do anything all the vessels dropped down and tied up to the bank for the night."[61]

Sherman, in fact, was not in position at 3 o'clock as reported by General McClernand. The source of this error is unclear, but the result could have been serious for the Union forces. General McClernand's report that General Sherman had arrived in the rear of the works with his troops might have led to problems. The Confederate forces might have escaped that night across the river by ferry. Fortunately for the Union forces, General Churchill, the Confederate commander, was five miles away from the fort anticipating Sherman's advance and hoping to attack him at a disadvantage. Churchill did not know how seriously the forts were being shelled by the gunboats.[62] Despite the premature attack on the fort by the Navy, the Confederates remained at their posts. The next morning Sherman was actually in position and the battle was renewed. As General Sherman recalled:

> There was a general understanding with Admiral Porter that he was to attack the fort with his three ironclad gunboats directly by its water front, while we assaulted by land in the rear. About 10 a.m. I got a message from General McClernand, telling me where he could be found and asking me what we were waiting for. I answered that we were then in close contact with the enemy, viz., about five or six hundred yards off; that the next movement must be a direct assault; that this should be simultaneous along the whole line; and that I was waiting to hear from the gunboats; asking him to notify Admiral Porter that we were all ready.[63]

The Navy was very effective at destroying the Confederate artillery, but as the Army assault began, they could not fire on the Confederate infantry without hitting Union soldiers. Despite a withering Confederate fire from 450 rifles, Sherman's troops, with the assistance of an assault by U.S. Marines, were successful in capturing the fort. The objective of destroying a Confederate post while giving the Union forces a morale boosting victory was achieved. More importantly, a successful joint battle conducted with esprit and teamwork by the Army, Navy, and Marines was finally accomplished.

General McClernand assumed all the direction of affairs on the surrender of the fort and the Confederate troops, and wrote the report of this affair, in which he gave fair credit to the Navy; but he actually had nothing to do with the management of the Army, and was four miles below the forts during all the operations. Sherman was actually the military commander.[64] Sherman recalled going to see General McClernand after the capture of the fort because he did not understand the orders he had received from him.

> I found General McClernand aboard the Tigress, in high spirits. He said repeatedly: Glorious! Glorious! My star is ever in the ascendant! He spoke complimentarily of the troops but was extremely jealous of the Navy...I was very hungry and tired, and fear I did not appreciate the honors in reserve for us...[65]

It seems that General McClernand was anxious to claim the credit for this victory, but he did acknowledge that it was a joint operation. He wrote to General Grant regarding the battle at Arkansas Post.

> I have the honor to report that the forces under my command attacked the Post of Arkansas today at 1 o'clock P.M., and at 4:30 o'clock, having stormed the enemy's works, took a large number of prisoners, variously estimated at from 7,000 to 10,000, together with all his stores, animals, and munitions of war. Rear Admiral David D. Porter, commanding the Mississippi Squadron, efficiently and brilliantly cooperated in accomplishing this complete success.[66]

FIGURE 6 MG WILLIAM T. SHERMAN

Army Military History Institute

One of Grant's strengths as a strategic leader was his ability to remain focused on the objective despite setbacks and difficult challenges. Grant saw the Arkansas River expedition as an unnecessary action that did not contribute to the capture of Vicksburg. He wrote to General Halleck, "General McClernand has fallen back to White River and gone on a wild goose chase to the Post of Arkansas."[67] Grant later wrote, "I was at first disposed to disapprove of this move as an unnecessary side movement having no especial bearing upon the work before us; but when the result was understood I regarded it as very important. Five thousand Confederate troops left in the rear might have caused us much trouble and loss of property while navigating the Mississippi."[68] Grant's change of opinion regarding the Arkansas action occurred at the same time that he learned that the operation had been Sherman's idea, not McClernand's.

The tension between General McClernand and the rest of the command continued to fester after the Arkansas River expedition. After the troops were settled in their tents opposite Vicksburg, it became apparent that there could be no harmonious cooperation while McClernand remained in command of all military forces. His peculiarities

unfitted him for such a command, and these peculiarities became so offensive to Generals Sherman and McPherson, and to Admiral Porter, that they urged General Grant to take command himself.[69] Grant heard their pleas for help.

> On the 17th I visited McClernand and his command at Napoleon. It was here made evident to me that both the army and the navy were so distrustful of McClernand's fitness to command that, while they would do all they could to insure success, this distrust was an element of weakness. It would have been criminal to send troops under these circumstances into such danger. By this time I had received authority to relieve McClernand, or to assume command in person. I felt great embarrassment about McClernand. He was the senior major general after myself within the department. It would not do, with his rank and ambition, to assign a junior over him. Nothing was left, therefore, but to assume command myself.[70]

McClernand was not aware that Grant had been given the authority to relieve him. On January 30th he wrote to Grant.

> I understand that orders are being issued directly from your headquarters directly to army corps commanders, and not through me. As I am invested, by order of the Secretary of war, indorsed by the President, and by order of the President communicated to you by the General-in-Chief, with the command of all the forces operating on the Mississippi River, I claim that all orders affecting the condition or operations of those forces should pass through this headquarters; otherwise I must lose knowledge of current business and dangerous confusion ensue. If different views are entertained by you, then the question should be immediately referred to Washington, and one or the other, or both of us, relieved. One thing is certain, two generals cannot command this army...[71]

On the 30th of January Grant personally assumed command. McClernand again became a subordinate Corps commander.

While the tension and distrust that surrounded the issue of General McClernand represents one failure of the campaign to successfully integrate the reserve components, there are lessons to be learned here. McClernand, who had been a Democratic member of Congress, had poisoned the well before he ever arrived in the theater. His well-known denigration of West Point generals preceded him and predisposed the Generals and Admiral Porter to distrust him. McClernand made matters worse by lacking the military skills required of a senior leader. In 1863, just as today, reserve officers must be willing to be a

FIGURE 7 MG ULYSSES S. GRANT

Sarah Brash, War Between Brothers, (Richmond, VA: Time Life Inc., 1996), 132.

supportive member of the joint team, and they must be technically and tactically proficient. One can only suppose that Grant did not relieve McClernand and send him out of the theater because of the political connections that McClernand had at his disposal. As Gideon Welles recorded on January 5, 1863, "McClernand...is not of the Regular Army, and is no favorite, I perceive, with Halleck, though the President entertains a good opinion of him." [72]The nation does owe a certain debt to General McClernand though. He forced Ulysses S. Grant to assume command of the campaign that would provide the Union with a great victory, shorten the war, and project Grant into the national spotlight that would eventually land him in the position of commander of the entire Union Army.

INDIRECT EXPERIMENTS

During the winter of 1863 Grant decided to put his 40,000 soldiers to work in order to improve their morale and to keep Pemberton wondering as to what the Union forces were up to.

> The problem became, how to secure a landing on the high ground east of the Mississippi without an apparent threat. Then commenced a series of experiments to consume time, and to divert the attention of the enemy, of my troops, and of the public generally. I, myself, never felt great confidence that any of the experiments resorted to would prove successful. Nevertheless I was always prepared to take advantage of them in case they did.[73]

Grant had ruled out a direct attack on Vicksburg as impractical due to the geography of the area and the flooded conditions of the land surrounding Vicksburg. Porter had likewise ruled out the possibility of gaining Vicksburg from the river. "A naval contingent could not do more than give protection to the Army, which was very important; but as to the vessels alone possessing the power to knock down these inaccessible forts, it was not to be thought of."[74]

The first experiment that Grant decided to try was to cut a canal across the Peninsula of Milliken's Bend at Young's Point, (Map 3) near a previous attempt made in 1862 by General Thomas Williams from New Orleans.

> I propose running a canal through, starting far enough above the old one commenced last summer to receive the stream where it impinges against the shore with the greatest velocity. The old canal left the river in an eddy, and in a line perpendicular to the stream, and also to the crest of the hills opposite, with a battery directed against the outlet. This new canal will debouch below the bluffs on the opposite side of the river, and give our gunboats a fair chance against any fortifications that may be placed to oppose them.[75]

If the canal was successfully completed the Navy and Army boats would be able to move past Vicksburg without being subjected to the awesome firepower of the Vicksburg batteries. Unfortunately, once dredges were moved into place the Confederates correctly understood Grant's intent. "The enemy mounted heavy guns opposite the mouth of the canal and prevented any work on it. "[76] Thus ended the first of Grant's experiments to find a route to the East Bank of the Mississippi River.

Undaunted by the failure of the canal, Grant started his next experiment. "On the 30th of January...I ordered General McPherson, stationed with his corps at Lake Providence (Map 3), to cut a levee at that point. If successful in opening a channel for navigation by this route, it would carry us to the Mississippi River through the mouth of the Red River, just above Port Hudson and four hundred miles below Vicksburg by the river."[77] Lake Providence was approximately fifty miles above Vicksburg on the western side of the Mississippi. Only a narrow levee separated the lake from the river. Grant thought that if this levee could be breached, the river would flow into the lake and make it possible to carve a navigable channel through the swamps, rivers, and streams to the south. The idea was to raise the water level and send transports and gunboats south of Vicksburg while avoiding the Confederate batteries. But the engineers were not successful. Several transports tried to navigate the passage, but there were miles of forest to work through and trees to be cut down. The swift current drove the steamers against the trees and damaged them so much that this plan had to be abandoned.[78]

Still undaunted, and with a determined focus to gain dry land on the East Bank of the Mississippi River, Grant sent Lieutenant Colonel J.H. Wilson of his staff to Delta, located near Helena, to assess the feasibility of opening the Yazoo Pass. This used to be the main way to Yazoo City and to the Tallahatchie and Yallabusha Rivers, before the Southern Railroad was built, and it had been closed up to reclaim some millions of acres of land.[79] The idea was to breach the levee, reopen the old channel, and sail Union forces to the rear of Vicksburg via the Tallahatchie River. On February 3rd a mine was exploded in the embankment opening the levee, and the water rushed through the opening with great force, sweeping everything before it and cutting a channel 200 yards wide at the mouth.[80] Thus began another joint expedition, this time through the Yazoo Pass. (Map 3)

A joint task force was organized for the expedition. General Leonard F. Ross had command of a brigade of 4,500 men and thirteen transport boats to move them. On February 7th General Grant issued this order to General Ross;

> You will proceed without delay to Helena, Arkansas, and there take in tow a barge of coal, applying to General Gorman for the same, and return to Delta, Mississippi with it. At Delta you will remain until the arrival of four gunboats that have been designated by the admiral, when you will divide your force and send them aboard of the gunboats, the number on each to be determined by the Navy Department. As soon as the expidition proceeds, you will discharge the transport on which you ascend the river, and direct her to return the empty coal barge to Helena, and then return to this fleet herself. Full directions have been given to the Navy Department for their guidance on this expedition. The infantry will go to act as marines for the occasion. The troops will be under the immediate command of their own officers, but in no instance are they to exercise control over the vessel, or dictate when they are to go or what to do. The troops are designed to give protection to the vessels on which they are, and to operate on land if the necessity arises.[81]

Lieutenant Commander Watson Smith of the Navy was placed in command of the maritime force that consisted of three ironclad gunboats, one tinclad gunboat, one ram, and two light draft vessels. These forces were task organized so that the soldiers could work in support of the gunboats' movement

through the overgrown Yazoo Pass. Admiral Porter ordered Lieutenant Commander Smith to move up the Yazoo Pass on the 24th of February.

> Proceed carefully, and only in daytime; 600 or 800 soldiers will be detached to accompany you, and you will take 100 on board of each light draft. See the army send a very small steamer, with stores from Helena. Get all the pilots you can who are acquainted with the different branches of the rivers. You may find them at Helena. You will keep perfect order among the troops while on board your vessels or under your orders. Subject them to strict military rules, and see that every order you give is promptly obeyed.[82]

Once again the Army and the Navy would be working together jointly. Task organization was required in order to move the boats through the many over hanging trees that could easily damage them if not cleared away by the soldiers. Soldiers were also attached to the Navy to fill vacancies among the crew. General Sherman ordered General Steele to provide soldiers for the purpose of serving as crewmembers and for general support of the Navy.

> General Steele will detail the 58th Ohio to report to General Grant on board the Magnolia at 10 a.m., February 7, 1863, for service on the gunboats. They will be organized into companies, with one officer to take charge of each company...General Steele will also detail one or two regiments, amounting in the aggregate to about 600 men for duty, to go up the river on the Yazoo Cut Off expedition in the gunboats...[83]

In General Order 34, dated 8 February 1863, Admiral Porter laid out the policy regarding the use of soldiers as crew:

> The general commanding the army has furnished me with soldiers to fill vacancies. Great discretion will be required in the management of these men, who have hitherto led an irregular life and had but few examples of well disciplined people before their eyes. The officers and men come under strict naval rules as long as they are on shipboard...The men will be immediately stationed at the great guns and drilled for one hour once a day...They will perform all the duties of marines on shipboard...treat them kindly but let them feel that they must conform to naval laws.[84]

Porter was glad to have the help form the Army, but could not help but betraying a parochial attitude at the thought of having soldiers serve as sailors. Unfortunately, his fears were not totally unfounded. On February 8th he returned Company C to General Grant because he could not order a legal court-martial on Army personnel. The soldiers had refused duty that morning. "They are pretty drunk now and insensible to reason, and I thought the shortest way was to put them out of sight. Some one gave them a half barrel of whisky amongst their rations, with which they filled their canteens and regaled the crew of the Benton, who are somewhat in a like condition, but more tractable."[85] Evidently the spirit of jointness had limitations.

The Yazoo expedition was jointly planned. On the 6th of February, General Grant wrote to Admiral Porter, "I respectfully advise the following program to be followed as near as practicable by the expedition through Yazoo Pass."[86] Grant then went on to describe the route to the Yazoo as he saw it; the Yazoo Pass to the Coldwater River, the Tallahatchie, the junction with the Yalobusha, and into the Yazoo River. Grant also shared intelligence gathered from the area and pointed out that the Confederates were likely

to be building gunboats at Yazoo City and have transports up the Sunflower River.[87] Admiral Porter also shared naval intelligence with General Grant and the Army. On the 13th of February Porter wrote to Grant, "I have reliable information that two regiments of rebels (about 800 men) have been sent up the Sunflower with artillery to annoy vessels passing Greenville and that neighborhood. Would it not be a good plan to try and clean out that country? Three or four hundred cavalry, with some light fieldpieces, would do it. They think we will not molest them. There is also a battery at Cypress Bend, which can be taken by 200 men. I have a gunboat there."[88] Grant and Porter were clearly working closely to give the joint expedition an increased chance for success.

Joint logistics of a sort were practiced during the campaign, and certainly during the Yazoo expedition. All of the steamers, both Army and Navy, ran on coal or wood. These important resources were often shared. As Lieutenant Commander Smith reported to Admiral Porter on the 13th of February, "I have detained the towboat S. Bayard and three small barges of coal, about 33,000 bushels, there not being much navy coal here; the Bayard I may take in the pass with me. The general spoke of 30,000 or 40,000 bushels of coal being here in army, for the use of this expedition..."[89] Later in March the gunboat Chillicothe ran low on ammunition and provisions. Lieutenant Commander Foster reported this to General Quinby of the Army. He then reported to Admiral Porter, "The latter (provisions) General (Issac F.) Quinby promises to furnish for the present."[90] Joint logistics were just the natural extension of the cooperation that characterized the interaction between Army and Navy forces in the Mississippi area of operations.

The sharing of coal, which was paid for independently by the Army and the Navy, was not completely free from conflict. As General Grant wrote to General Gorman, the Commander of the District of Eastern Arkansas:

> If the navy have any coal at Helena, take that; if not, send a barge belonging to the quartermaster's department. Admiral Porter has called my attention to the fact that army transports have been in the habit of taking coal belonging to the Navy Department. This should not be allowed, except in case of great emergency, and then any coal taken should be returned as soon as possible. The two branches of service are supplied out of different appropriations; hence the necessity of being particular in this matter.[91]

This was a matter of concern more at the national level than at the theater level. Gideon Welles, the Secretary of the Navy, wrote to Edward M. Stanton, Secretary of War, in early February to subtly protest the consumption of Navy coal by Army boats:

> This Department instructed its officers not to permit the operations of the Army to be delayed or embarrassed when we could furnish supplies, but it was not anticipated that this prudential order would lead to a dependence upon us for coal supplies for the transports. We shall be under the necessity of checking such erroneous issues lest the naval service be crippled thereby.[92]

Despite the grumbling in Washington and occasionally in the field, there was a high level of cooperation regarding logistics between the Army and the Navy during the Vicksburg campaign.

The expedition to the Yazoo was delayed at the start while army transports were loaded and everyone waited for the river level to stabilize through the newly opened pass. The first day through the

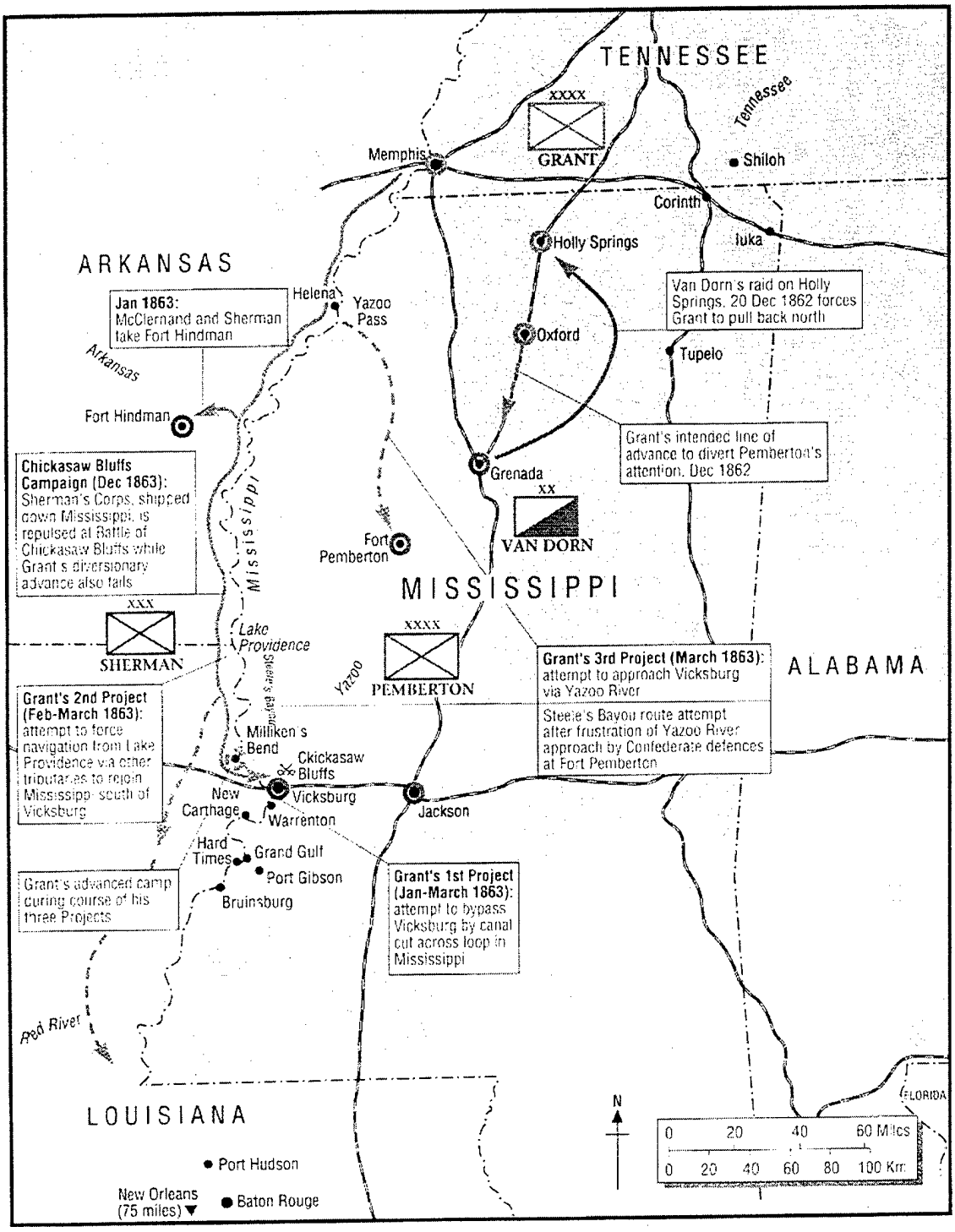
pass the expedition was only able to travel six miles. The pass was choked by twenty -five years of growth with trees that had to be cut and removed by teams of soldiers and sailors before the boats could pass. The men were rewarded after four days of hard labor with forty miles on their journey through such obstructions as they had never dreamed of. At last they reached the Tallahatchie (a clear and swift running river), and with the gunboats leading, hastened on.[93] Just when it looked as though the plan was going to work, the joint expedition was surprised to find a newly built Confederate fort on the Tallahatchie. The ironclad gunboats engaged the fort, known as Fort Pemberton, for several days and suffered casualties in the process. The De Kalb was finally able to silence the Confederate battery. The only way this fort could be taken was by siege guns brought up close to the works; but this was not done. The general commanding the military contingent did not consider himself strong enough to attempt anything of consequence, and after a delay of thirteen days, in which neither side did anything, the Federal forces withdrew.[94] As General Ross withdrew back toward the Mississippi, he encountered General Isaac F. Quimby who, being senior, assumed command and directed that the Union forces return to Fort Pemberton. Upon seeing Fort Pemberton, Quimby agreed with Ross that it was not possible to seize the fort with the troops on hand. All Union forces then withdrew to the Mississippi River. This ended the Yazoo Pass expedition, but not Grant's determination to get to Vicksburg. "I determined to get into the Yazoo below Fort Pemberton."[95]

Steele's Bayou empties into the Yazoo River between Haines' Bluff and its mouth. It is narrow, very torturous, and fringed with a very heavy growth of timber, but it is deep. It approaches to within one mile of the Mississippi at Eagle bend, thirty miles above Young's Point.[96] (Map 3) The deepness of the bayou appealed to Grant, who thought that he might be able to get gunboats and transports down the waterway. This was to be another joint expedition in the campaign to seize Vicksburg. The route was examined by General Grant and Admiral Porter, and being found apparently practicable for the purpose intended, it was determined between the Army and Naval leaders that an attempt should be made to get to the rear of Vicksburg in this way.[97] This was a joint decision and the following attempt at Steele's Bayou was to be a joint operation similar to the Yazoo Pass expedition. This time, Admiral Porter would lead the maritime component and General Sherman would lead Stuart's division of the XV Army Corps. Throughout the operations attacking toward Vicksburg from the North, joint effort was the rule. Sherman had his subordinate, Colonel Giles A. Smith, commander of the First Brigade of the Eighth Missouri, report to Admiral Porter for joint operations. Porter then gave operational control of his U.S. Marines to Colonel Smith for conducting operations against enemy sharpshooters and tree fallers, in support of naval operations.

> In pursuance of orders from General Sherman, I reported to Admiral Porter for orders, who turned over to me all the land forces in his fleet (about one hundred and fifty men), together with two howitzers, and I was instructed by him to retain a sufficient force to clear out sharp-shooters, and to distribute the remainder along the creek for six or seven miles below, to prevent any more obstructions being placed in it during the night.[98]

This level of joint interaction is enviable, even by the standards of today.

FIGURE 8 MAP 3



Alan Hankinson, Vicksburg 1863, (London: Osprey, 1993), 30.

On the 14th of March the task force set out with five gunboats and two mortar floats. The first ten miles went smoothly as the big gunboats sailed easily through a channel one hundred and seventy feet wide, surrounded by forest. But after those first few miles, the forest closed in on the big gunboats. Just as on the Yazoo Pass expedition, trees broke off smokestacks and damaged boats while slowing their

progress to just one half mile per hour. As Porter neared the Rolling Fork River, Steele's Bayou became choked with willow trees to such an extent that the flagship Cincinnati became stuck. The situation then deteriorated further as the Confederates, who had learned of the attempt from local residents, landed artillery and 800 sharpshooters from transports on the Rolling Fork River. Unfortunately, Sherman and his troops had been delayed and were nearly twenty miles away. As Porter came under fire he sent word back to Sherman to hurry forward. For six days the gunboats exchanged fire with the Confederates and moved through the difficult waterway as best as they could to escape enemy fire. The Confederates continued to pour men into the area and fall trees both in front and behind the gunboats to trap them.

Sherman went back, at the request of Admiral Porter, to clear out Black Bayou and to hurry up reinforcements, which were far behind. On the night of the 19th he received notice from the Admiral that he was in imminent peril. Sherman at once returned through Black Bayou in a canoe, and passed on until he met a steamer with the last of the reinforcements he had coming up. They tried to force their way through Black Bayou with their steamer, but finding it slow and tedious work, debarked and pushed forward on foot. It was night when they landed, and intensely dark. There was but a narrow strip of land above water, and that was grown up with underbrush or cane. The troops lighted their way through this with candles carried in their hands for a mile and a half, when they came to an open plantation. Here the troops rested until morning. They made twenty-one miles from this resting -place by noon the next day, and were in time to rescue the fleet.[99] Porter said, " I do not know when I felt more pleased to see that gallant officer, for without the assistance of the troops we could not, without great loss, have performed the arduous work of clearing the obstacles."[100] Sherman drove off the Confederate forces and his troops helped remove the trees that the Rebels felled to trap the boats. The Confederates were surprised by Sherman because they thought that the gunboats constituted a naval raid only for the purpose of capturing bales of cotton. If it had been just a naval force, the fleet would have been lost. Porter had fully made up his mind to blow up the gunboats rather than have them fall into the hands of the enemy.[101] The fact that this was a joint operation allowed both the Army and Navy to extricate themselves without further loss.

That was the end of the Steele's Bayou expedition; the impossibility of going on again in the face of all the difficulties was conceded by all parties, and it was decided to get out of that ditch before the enemy blocked up the entrance in the rear and left the force in the mud.[102] The failed expeditions up Steele's Bayou and the Yazoo Pass were still beneficial to the Union forces. Many bales of Confederate cotton were destroyed and many slaves left their plantations to return with the Union forces. Also, there was a boost to the morale of the men of both the Army and the Navy. They were involved in several exciting expeditions and experiments instead of just spending a cold, wet winter looking up at the warm lights of fortress Vicksburg. Most importantly, the attempts to reach Vicksburg had cemented the good relations between the forces of Grant and Porter. They were now used to operating as a joint force. The experience of conducting joint operations would be important for the next phase of the Vicksburg campaign, for Grant and Porter were determined to go on.

THE DARING PLAN

When Grant saw that attempts to capture Vicksburg from the north were failing, he began to formulate a daring plan. He knew that he could not attack Vicksburg directly from the Mississippi River because of the high bluffs and the heavily fortified nature of the defenses.

> A front attack was therefore impossible, and was never contemplated; certainly not by me. The problem then became, how to secure a landing on high ground east of the Mississippi without an apparent retreat.[103]

Grant also felt that he was on the right track in his efforts to maneuver around the batteries to attack Vicksburg from the rear.

> I had in contemplation the whole winter the movement by land to a point below Vicksburg from which to operate, subject only to the possible but not expected success of some one of the experiments resorted to for the purpose of giving us a different base. This could not be undertaken until the waters receded. I did not therefore communicate this plan, even to an officer of my staff, until it was necessary to make preparations for the start. My recollection is that Admiral Porter was the first one to whom I mentioned it. The cooperation of the Navy was absolutely essential to the success (even the contemplation) of such an enterprise. I had no authority to command Porter than he had to command me.[104]

As usual, Grant planned the operation with the input of Admiral Porter. The audacity of Grant's plan was exceptional, especially considering the fact that he did not have command authority over the naval forces of Admiral Porter. Grant had command authority over the Army, but he had to convince Admiral Porter as to the merits of the plan. On March 29th Grant wrote to Porter:

> I am about occupying New Carthage with troops, and opening the bayous from here to that place sufficiently for the passage of flats, a number of which I have ordered from St. Louis. With this passage open I can run the blockade with steamers sufficient to land troops, with the aid of flats, either at Grand Gulf or Warrenton, whichever seems the most promising. Under these circumstances is it not absolutely essential that Warrenton and Grand Gulf should be so controlled by gunboats as to prevent further fortifications? It looks to me, admiral, as a matter of vast importance that one or two vessels should be put below Vicksburg, both to cut off the enemy's intercourse with the West Bank of the river entirely and to insure a landing on the East Bank for our forces if wanted. Will you be good enough to give this your early consideration, and let me know your determination. Without the aid of gunboats it will hardly be worth while to send troops to New Carthage or to open the passage from here there; preparatory surveys for doing this are now being made.[105]

Admiral Porter replied back to Grant,

> I am ready to cooperate with you in the matter of landing troops on the other side, but you must recollect that when these gunboats once go below we give up all hopes of ever getting them up again. If it is your intention to occupy Grand Gulf in force it will be necessary to have vessels there to protect the troops or quiet the fortifications now there...I will come over and see you.[106]

Porter was convinced that the benefits outweighed the risks and felt confident that he could move the convoy of boats safely past the Vicksburg batteries at night. Porter knew this because he had already

successfully sent three boats past Vicksburg. The rams, Queen of the West, Switzerland, and the gunboat, Indianola, had previously run the gauntlet at Vicksburg.

On February 1st Porter had ordered Colonel Charles Ellett, of the Army's Marine Brigade, to pass the batteries of Vicksburg at night.

> You will proceed with the ram Queen of the West to Vicksburg and destroy the steamer Vicksburg, lying off that place; after which you will proceed down the river as far as our batteries below the canal and report to me.[107]

The Queen of the West was delayed and actually did not pass the batteries of Vicksburg until daylight. Even though the boat was hit several times by Confederate artillery, she made it past the batteries. The Army Colonel, sailing under the orders of the Navy Admiral, became the first man to take a boat past Vicksburg.

The Queen of the West had been so successful it was determined to send down an ironclad, and the Indianola, with a low battery of two 11-inch guns, was ordered to pass the batteries at night. She passed the batteries in safety.[108]

The movement down river of the Indianola also involved another example of joint communications. Porter wrote to Grant, "I shall send the Indianola down tonight to run the batteries at Vicksburg. She will show two red lights when she gets near your pickets below. If you would let your people at the canal show a light, I would be much obliged. I want Captain Brown to send me a report. Will you please order it sent over?"[109]

The Switzerland, another of Porter's ships, was also sent past Vicksburg. Damaged by Confederate shells, she still joined Admiral Farragut's forces below Port Hudson. Unfortunately, both the Queen of the West and the Indianola were captured later by the Confederates before they could sail south to join Admiral Farragut. The Indianola was eventually blown up and sunk by the Confederates while the Queen of the West was pressed into service for the South. However, the fact that these boats had been able to successfully pass Vicksburg was a lesson not lost on Admiral Porter.

Porter warned Grant that the move past Vicksburg would be a one-way journey. The heavy gunboats could easily move past Vicksburg with the current in a relatively short period of time, but they could not return back up river. They could not go against the current of the Mississippi and past the guns of Vicksburg at the same time since the reduced speed of the boats, as they struggled against the current, would have made them easy targets. This expedition could not be viewed as an experiment like the Yazoo and Steele's Bayou attempts. This would be an all or nothing effort.

In March Grant ordered McClernand, the commander of XIII corps, to conduct a reconnaissance of the West Bank of the Mississippi River south of Milliken's Bend and Young's point. The purpose of the reconnaissance was to explore the woods and bayous on the West Side of the Mississippi to determine if an avenue of approach moving south existed. Grant hoped to march his Army down the West Side of the Mississippi River, hidden from the view of the Confederates, to a point well to the South of Vicksburg, and then cross to the East Bank. (Map 4)

McClernand sent the 69th Indiana Regiment, supported by an artillery battery, cavalry, and engineers with bridging equipment, to conduct the reconnaissance. The 69th moved south through mud and water to the vicinity of New Carthage on the West Bank of the Mississippi. This location was well to the south of Vicksburg and thought to be a feasible crossing point. However, the mighty Mississippi River was much too large for the Army engineers to consider bridging. Grant needed transport boats and ironclad gunboats to protect them during the crossing. When asked how he would get the transports past the Vicksburg batteries, Grant replied, "that is the Admirals affair."[110] The movement would have to be conducted as a joint operation in order to succeed.

Grant's generals were not immediately receptive to the plan. Concern about the risks posed by the plan was considerable. Sherman told Grant that, in going into the enemy's country with a large river behind him and an enemy holding strongly fortified points above and below, he was voluntarily assuming a position for the attainment of which the enemy would be glad to spend a year of maneuver. He then urged that the army be sent back to Memphis to attack Vicksburg from the north. Grant told him that the country was discouraged by the lack of military success and that voluntary enlistments had ceased throughout most of the North. Grant explained that a withdrawal to Memphis would greatly discourage the public and that the immediate problem was to achieve a decisive victory. It was obvious that no progress was being made in any other theater and that his army must go on.[111]

On the 29th of March McClernand marched his entire corps south along the route reconnoitered by the 69th Indiana Regiment. The going was difficult. As one Union soldier wrote:

> We marched six miles one day, and those six miles by evening were strewn with wrecks of wagons and their loads, and half buried guns. At a halt of some hours, the men stood in deep mud, for want of any means of sitting.[112]

McClernand's lead division arrived at the vicinity of New Carthage on April 6th. As McClernand's units began arriving, they made improvements to the trail and built additional bridges to make the journey easier for the other two corps of Grant's Army which were soon to follow them.

Meanwhile, Admiral Porter was readying his fleet for the daring convoy past Vicksburg. He wrote to the Secretary Welles in April to update him on the emerging campaign strategy. "I am preparing to pass the batteries of Vicksburg with most of the fleet. General Grant is marching his army below, and we are going to endeavor to turn Vicksburg and get to Jackson by a very practicable route." [113] This brief letter to the Secretary of the Navy clearly demonstrates the joint nature of the campaign. Admiral Porter is not only concerned about naval operations on the Mississippi River, he is concerned about the Union forces getting to Jackson.

Each boat would travel with a full barge of coal lashed to the side away from the Confederate guns. There would be no coming back up river for a re-supply of coal until Vicksburg fell. By lashing the barge to the starboard side, the guns on the port side were kept cleared for action against the Vicksburg batteries. Additionally, large logs were lashed to the exterior of the boats to protect vulnerable areas from Confederate shells.

Fire was a consistent danger onboard the steamers. To help mitigate the risk of fire, water-soaked bales of confiscated Confederate cotton surrounded the boilers and key areas of the boat. Cotton was also used to plug any holes created by Confederate shells. The sailors hoped that this would not be necessary, but were aware of the awesome firepower that they were going to encounter. All of them had heard of the ill-fated transport boat Lancaster which had been blown up by direct hits from the Vicksburg artillery as it tried to run the gauntlet.

Porter directed the captain of each boat to steer slightly to the left and fifty yards behind the boat ahead of him so that a disabled comrade would not slow the following boats. "You will prepare your vessel for passing the batteries at Vicksburg, taking every precaution possible to protect the hull and machinery against any accidental shot ... No vessel must run directly astern of the other, so that in case of the headmost vessel stopping the sternmost one won't run into her." [114] Porter also ordered that each boat would steam on low power, leave noisy pets and poultry behind, and run without lights. Surprise and the darkness were their best allies.

On the night of April 16th Porter, in the lead boat, ran the gauntlet past Vicksburg with three steamers, six transports, and eight gunboats. Only one transport, was lost to enemy fire.

> I passed the batteries at Vicksburg on the night of the 16th of April, with a large force for operations below. Three Army transports were prepared to resist shot and accompanied the squadron. I led in the Benton, and having drifted down on the batteries, got up with the first one without being discovered. At 11:16 p.m. the batteries opened on us, we immediately responded with a rapid fire; the vessels of the squadron all in line following our example. The enemy lighted up the river on both sides, and we were fair targets for them, still we received but little damage. The squadron was under fire for two hours and thirty minutes. No one was killed and only 8 wounded; the greatest number on board this ship, which, being ahead, received a concentrated fire. An army transport, the Henry Clay, was sunk by a heavy shot. The Forest Queen (transport) became temporarily disabled and was turned into safe quarters by the Tuscumbia. [115]

The boats were all now confined to the Mississippi River below Vicksburg. As Admiral Porter had warned, the gunboats could not survive going upstream at slow speeds past the Vicksburg batteries.

It is interesting to note that the passing of the batteries at Vicksburg was a joint operation, conducted under the command of the Navy. Army and Navy boats jointly ran the gauntlet. Additionally, Army soldiers served as crewmembers on some of the Navy boats. In the damage report submitted by Lieutenant Commander James Greer, commander of the gunboat Benton, he lists a soldier who was wounded during the passing. "Charles Hillyer, Private, Company F, Fifty-eighth Ohio Volunteers, contused wound from splinter; slight."[116] On the U.S.S. Mound City, the wounded included, "Isenberger, Private, Company B, Fifty-eighth Regiment Ohio Volunteers, slightly wounded." [117] This is another example of the joint effort that characterized virtually every part of the Vicksburg Campaign.

General Pemberton and the Confederates were surprised by the convoy's movement south on April 16th. Since December of 1862 he had defeated Sherman at Chickasaw Bluff, seen Grant driven back from Holly Springs, stopped construction of a Union canal, and driven Porter out of the Yazoo Pass and Steele's Bayou. He knew that Grant was imaginative and that his Army was active. But he really did not

have much of an idea as to what Grant and Porter were up to. His intelligence reports caused him to believe that Grant was pulling out of Milliken's Bend and heading north for a new campaign in Tennessee. He was puzzled by new reports of Union soldiers near New Carthage building bridges and roads through the swamps on the West Side of the Mississippi. Now came this strange movement south by eleven boats. Grant anticipated Pemberton's confusion and planned to keep him guessing.

To keep Pemberton off balance, Grant turned to Sherman. Sherman conducted a feint along the Yazoo River, as a joint operation with the Navy, to make Pemberton think that attacks from the north had resumed. "In compliance with instructions from Major General Grant, a combined gunboat and army expedition will be made up the Yazoo for the purpose of diverting the attention of the enemy from the movements now in progress below Vicksburg."[118]

Grant also ordered Colonel Benjamin Grierson to lead three cavalry regiments on a 600 -mile raid from Memphis to Baton Rouge. These deception operations managed to keep Pemberton focused on his northern and eastern flanks while Grant put his plan into action.

After visiting General McClernand and his corps near New Carthage, Grant decided upon his next move. He would move his entire Army further south to a point opposite Grand Gulf. From there he would cross the Mississippi River and attack the Confederate fort at Grand Gulf. Once Grand Gulf was taken, Grant would move inland on the East Side of the Mississippi and begin to drive on Vicksburg. (Map 4)

Grant was going to need more transport boats than what he currently had south of Vicksburg. This situation was remedied on the night of April 22nd. A second convoy of six steamers ran past the gauntlet of Vicksburg on that night. The steamers were civilian boats and most of their civilian crews had refused to make the risky run past the smoldering ruins of the steamer Henry Clay. Grant asked his Army for volunteers to crew the steamers and was gratified by the large numbers of men from Logan's Division of McPherson's Corps who stepped forward. Many of the soldiers in McPherson's Corps came from Illinois, Missouri, and Ohio. They had grown up on the rivers of the Mid-West and many had extensive experience as crewmembers onboard river steamers before the war. Soldiers, mainly from Logan's Division, volunteered to serve as deckhands, firemen, engineers, pilots and captains. Six steamboats, towing twelve barges, were so manned and started on through the gauntlet of fire on the night of the 22nd. Bonfires along the shore lighted up the river. Confederate artillery thundered at the helpless vessels. But only one was sunk – the rest passed through.[119]

The steamers were stuffed with as many supplies as they could hold, and each boat towed two heavily loaded barges. These supplies were crucial to the initial stages of the operation. Grant knew that the biggest challenge before him involved logistics. Vicksburg lay between his Army and the supply depots to the north, and any steamer that successfully ran past Vicksburg became stuck in the south. However, Grant also remembered how he was able to have his forces subsist on food and forage gathered from the countryside when his supplies were destroyed at Holly Springs. He felt confident that with the ammunition and supplies brought down river by the second convoy, combined with forage, that his Army would be able to travel lightly and subsist in enemy territory.

Grant's initial objective was to secure Grand Gulf as a landing point on the East Bank of the Mississippi River. Admiral Porter had conducted a reconnaissance of the fortifications at Grand Gulf and found that the Confederates were relatively weak, but busily reinforcing and improving their works.

> The Admiral having satisfied himself that the works could be easily carried by assault under cover of fire of the gunboats, hastened back to Perkins landing (opposite Grand Gulf), and stated the case to General McClernand, urging the cooperation of the two thousand soldiers to enable him to occupy Grand Gulf, but no heed was given to the application; for McClernand, wrapped in his dignity, scorned all advice.[120]

Porter then wrote to General Sherman and asked him to get a message to General Grant to come South as soon as possible to take command. It took two days for Grant to get to Perkin's Landing where he assumed command of the advance in spite of McClernand's objections, "which were manifested in such an insubordinate way that most Commanding Generals would have at once relieved him of duty."[121] Once again, McClernand was the source of much frustration for Admiral Porter. Porter believed that an opportunity to quickly seize Grand Gulf had been squandered by hesitation on McClernand's part. In Porter's view, McClernands hesitancy to cooperate with the Navy in a quick raid on Grand Gulf caused a delay that allowed the Confederates to greatly strengthen their position. It would now be much more difficult to capture Grand Gulf. Grant ordered McClernand to:

> Commence immediately the embarkation of your corps, or so much of it as there is transportation for...The plan of attack will be for the navy to attack and silence all the batteries commanding the river. Your corps will be on the river, ready to run to and debark on the nearest eligible land...[122]

On April 29 the forces of XIII Corps boarded transports on the West Bank of the Mississippi and steamed toward the East Bank near the town of Grand Gulf for a joint attack on the Confederate fort located there. Meanwhile, the eight gunboats under the command of Admiral Porter pounded the Confederate fort with naval gunfire for nearly six hours. The batteries of Grand Gulf were damaged, but not destroyed.

The fighting was fierce and Porter lost eighteen sailors killed and fifty-six wounded. Among the dead was First Lieutenant Samuel Bagsley, of the Twenty-ninth Regiment of Illinois Volunteers, who commanded a detachment of his company (Company D), on duty on board the U.S.S. Gunboat Tuscumbia.[123] Once again, Army soldiers served under the command of naval officers onboard the gunboats. The Army was heavily involved in the action at Grand Gulf, as reported by Major E.P. Jackson, commander of the 58th Ohio Infantry:

> I have the honor to report to you that the following companies of this command were in action in the bombardment of Grand Gulf, Mississippi, April 29, 1863: Companies A, B, D, F, G, H, and K, being at present detached to service on the gunboat fleet under command of Acting rear Admiral D. D. Porter, as follows: Companies A and B, on the U.S. gunboat Mound City; Company D, on the U.S. gunboat Carondelet; Companies F and G, on the U.S. gunboat Benton; Company H, on the U.S. gunboat Pittsburg, and Company K, on the U.S. gunboat Louisville.[124]

From planning the strategy for the campaign, down to manning the guns of the gunboats, the Vicksburg campaign was a joint operation.

The gun battle between the Navy and the Confederate batteries at Grand Gulf was brutal. The Tuscumbia was hit a total of 81 times, while the Lafayette alone fired over five hundred rounds. The Sterling Price reported:

> An 8-inch shell, after passing through one of the transports, killing five horses, entered our port side abreast the boilers, carried away the hog frame, passed under the furnace through the fire brick, and dropped into the ash pan. Fortunately it did not explode, the fuse being extinguished in passing through the horses.[125]

When the battle had lasted more than five hours, General Grant, who from a tug up the river, was looking on, made a signal to the Admiral that he wished to communicate, and the Benton joined him two miles above the forts. When General Grant went on board the flag-ship, he decided that it would be too hazardous to attempt to land troops, as it did not appear that the guns in the enemy's works were dismounted and the gunners would therefore jump to their batteries again, open on the unprotected transports and destroy many of the troops.[126] The attack was called off. While this attack had failed to achieve the objective, it was planned and executed in a joint manner. Grant and Porter discussed the tactical situation and the decision to call off the assault.

> I therefore requested Porter to run the batteries with his fleet that night, and to take charge of the transports, all of which would be wanted below....Porter, as was always the case with him, not only acquiesced in the plan, but volunteered to use his entire fleet as transports.[127]

McClernand and his troops were put back on the western shore and began to march further south through the night. Word was passed to the lead elements ofMcPherson's XVII Corps, still marching toward Grand Gulf, to continue marching south. Another crossing point would have to be found.

While the attempt to take Grand Gulf was underway, Sherman and the remaining naval forces conducted another feint along the Yazoo. This feint was meant to convince Pemberton that the attack on Grand Gulf was a diversionary move while the real attack was coming from the north. Grant wrote to Sherman on April 27th.

> If you think it advisable you may make a reconnaissance of Haines' Bluff, taking as much force and as many steamers as you like. Admiral Porter told me that he would instruct Captain Breese to do as you asked him with his fleet. The effect of a heavy demonstration in that direction would be good, so far as the enemy are concerned, but I am loth to order it, because it would be so hard to make our own troops understand that only a demonstration was intended, and our people at home would characterize it as a repulse. I therefore leave it to you to publish your order beforehand, stating that a reconnaissance in force was to be made for the purpose of calling the enemy's attention from movements south of Vicksburg, and not with any intention of attacking. I shall probably move on Grand Gulf tomorrow.[128]

Grant and Porter clearly wished to see a jointly conducted feint. Lieutenant Commander Breese of the Navy wrote to Admiral Porter on the 28th in reference to the feint:

> General Sherman came over just now, 9 a.m. Says Grant has ordered him to make a reconnaissance in force toward Haines' Bluff, and that you would order me to cooperate. ..I told General Sherman that I would be ready at any time...[129]

The feint was conducted, as a joint operation, without loss and had the desired affect on Pemberton. As Sherman recalled in his memoirs; "This diversion, made with so much pomp and display, therefore completely fulfilled its purpose, by leaving General Grant to contend with a minor force, on landing at Bruinsburg, and afterward at Port Gibson and Grand Gulf."[130]

Lieutenant Commander Breese explained the impact of the feint to Gideon Welles on May 3rd:

> I have the honor to report that a feigned attack by the portion of the squadron lying here, cooperating with Major General F.P. Blair's division, under General Sherman, was made upon Drumgould's Bluff and adjacent works on 30th ultimo and 1st instant...It is considered that the demonstration up the Yazoo was a success, as large bodies of troops were seen to move in that direction from Vicksburg, thereby engaging the rebels' attention from Grand Gulf and vicinity.[131]

On the night of April 29th two important developments occurred near Grand Gulf. First, Porter was able to move his entire fleet past the guns at the Confederate fort under the cover of darkness. Second, a reconnaissance patrol rowed a boat across the Mississippi River and captured a slave who knew the local area. This slave was brought to General Grant, who had only poor maps of the area south of Grand Gulf. Grant questioned the man and ascertained that the best crossing point south of Grand Gulf was at the area known as Bruinsburg. This area was not occupied by the Confederates and had a good road that led inland toward Port Gibson. Grant decided to attempt the crossing at Bruinsburg.

In the pre-dawn darkness on the morning of April 30th, the XIII Corps and the lead brigades of XVII Corps boarded transports and quietly steamed toward Bruinsburg. The information gained from the captured slave was accurate. The Union forces were unopposed as they landed on the East Bank of the Mississippi at Bruinsburg. Grant was very pleased.

> When this was effected I felt a degree of relief scarcely ever equaled since. Vicksburg was not yet taken it is true, nor were its defenders demoralized by any of our previous moves. I was now in the enemy's country, with a vast river and the stronghold of Vicksburg between me and my base of supplies. But I was on dry ground on the same side of the river as the enemy. All the campaigns, labors, hardships and exposures from the month of December previous to this time had been made and endured, were for the accomplishment of this one object.[132]

By daybreak Grant had 20,000 soldiers on shore with the remainder of McPherson's Corps closing on the West Side opposite of Bruinsburg and preparing to load the transports. Grant had sent orders to Sherman telling him to leave the Yazoo and move south as quickly as possible. Grant knew that he was in a precarious position. Pemberton outnumbered him and the Union forces would be in danger if Pemberton figured out what was going on and marched all of his forces to Grand Gulf. Grant knew that he must act quickly before that happened. He ordered McClernand to march northeast toward Port Gibson during the night. Despite the fact that these men were tired after the previous night's march, they quickly moved out and engaged 6,000 Confederate troops just outside of Port Gibson just before

daybreak on May 1st. Grant rode ahead and organized the battle. The Confederate Commander, Brigadier General J.S. Bowen led a valiant defense, but realizing that he was outnumbered, ordered a withdrawal by nightfall. Grant then ordered his troops to move ahead two more miles toward Port Gibson before the exhausted soldiers were allowed to sleep.

The next morning McClernand's corps entered Port Gibson. The retreating Confederates had destroyed the bridges across the Bayou Pierre. The engineers quickly constructed a new bridge and the Union forces moved toward the northeast again. The XIII Corps was steadily moving toward the rear of Grand Gulf and this information was relayed by retreating Rebels to the Confederate forces stationed there. Meanwhile, Porter was shelling Grand Gulf from his gunboats. Fear of being cut off by the advancing Union forces convinced the Confederates to pull out of Grand Gulf and retreat north toward Vicksburg. Once this happened, Admiral Porter occupied Grand Gulf. On the third of May Porter reported:

> I have the honor to report that I got underway this morning with the Lafayette, Carondelet, Mound City, and Pittsburg, and proceeded up to the forts at Grand Gulf for the purpose of attacking them again, if they had not retreated. The enemy had left before we got up, blowing up their ammunition, spiking the large guns, and burying or taking the lighter ones.[133]

During this time General Grant was with Logan's Division of McPherson's Corps.

"About noon, we began to pick up stragglers of the enemy and learned that Grand Gulf had been evacuated...Grant and Rawlins pushed on to Grand Gulf, to communicate with the fleet and establish a shorter line to his base."[134]

On May 3rd a triumphant General Grant rode into Grand Gulf. His headquarters was now established here along with Admiral Porter's. Grant conducted a personal round of joint logistics.

"The first thing I did was to get a bath, borrow some fresh underclothing from one of the naval officers and get a good meal on the flag-ship."[135]

He then learned that he had to change his plans again. He had originally hoped to link up with the forces of General Butler, Commander of New Orleans, under the command of General Nathaniel Banks, and conduct a combined attack to the South against the Confederate stronghold of Port Hudson. Once Port Hudson fell, the way would be open to re-supply his forces from New Orleans. Unfortunately, General Banks was still far up the Red River in Louisiana pursuing Confederate forces and would only be able to move 15,000 troops to Port Hudson by May 10th.

Grant decided that he could not simply wait around for an entire week in the hope that General Banks would show up while the Confederates recovered from the shock of his invasion and counterattacked, He had the initiative and was determined to keep it.

"I therefore determined to move independently of Banks, cut loose from my base, destroy the rebel force in rear of Vicksburg and invest or capture the city." [136]

This was to be the most important, and risk inherent, decision of the Vicksburg campaign.

THE OVERLAND APPROACH

Grant knew that his decision to break free from his lines of communication and strike deep into enemy territory was contrary to all established military convention. He also knew that the General in Chief, General Halleck, would not approve. However, Grant was aware that to get a message from his present location to Washington, D.C. would take a considerable amount of time. He knew that he could move into the interior before orders forbidding him to do so could arrive at Grand Gulf.

Grant also knew that his trusted friend and subordinate corps commander, General Sherman, would disapprove of his daring plan. Sherman wrote to Grant, "Stop all troops till your army is partially supplied with wagons..."[137] Even though Sherman was a gifted officer and a trusted friend, Grant was the commander. His Army would go on without supplies.

By May 3rd Grant had more than 20,000 Union soldiers on the East Bank of the Mississippi River and the remaining 10,000 men of his army, under the command of General Sherman, was quickly moving south to join him. The Confederates had approximately 25,000 troops in the vicinity of Vicksburg and several thousand more in the area around Jackson under the command of General Joseph Johnston. Until Sherman could join him, Grant was outnumbered. He certainly did not have the three to one ratio desired to conduct an attack. Grant knew that he had to keep the Confederate units in Jackson from joining forces with those around Vicksburg. He needed to retain the initiative and keep the Confederates guessing as to his intentions.

An additional challenge faced by the Union forces was the fact that they were cut off from their logistics. Soldiers were sent into the countryside to collect whatever food, transportation, and supplies were needed. Grant's forces had been able to live off the land after their supply depot at Holly Springs was captured, and he now hoped to repeat that experience. While there were shortages of some supplies, the army was successful in gaining sustenance from the farms and plantations of Mississippi.

In order to deceive Pemberton, Grant ordered McPherson and McClernand to conduct reconnaissance in force missions across the Big Black River at Hankinson's ferry. This convinced Pemberton that Grant was going to move directly on Vicksburg. However, Grant knew that if he actually did move on Vicksburg, he would be outnumbered by a massed Confederate force in prepared defensive positions. Instead, Grant intended to quickly march to the east and attack the smaller Confederate force at Jackson while destroying the railroad link between Pemberton and Johnston. The Union forces would divide and conquer the Confederates.

On May 7th Sherman marched through Grand Gulf and on to Hankinson' Ferry. Grant now had all three of his corps on the east -side of the river. While Sherman closed on Hankinson's ferry, McClernand, with McPherson's Corps in trace, moved on toward Utica. Then to further puzzle Pemberton, Grant sent the two corps of Sherman and McClernand to the North while McPherson continued to move toward Jackson.

Just outside of the small town of Raymond, McPherson's lead division came under attack by a Confederate Brigade. Major General John A. Logan, the commander of the 3rd Division, quickly sized up the situation and attacked with his lead brigade while sending orders to his remaining two brigades to do likewise. The fighting was intense.

> I remember noticing the forest leaves, cut by rifle balls, falling in thick eddies, still as snow flakes. At one time the enemy in our front advanced...and rifles of opposing lines crossed while firing. Men who were shot were burned by the powder of the rifles that sped the balls.[138]

General Logan's Division was successful and the Confederates withdrew. Logan was not a regular officer and his troops were all volunteers. This reserve component type of division was continually successful during the Vicksburg campaign.

Grant was greatly pleased with the progress of his troops and determined to capitalize on the momentum that they had built.

> When the news reached me of McPherson's victory at Raymond about sundown my position was with Sherman. I decided at once to turn the whole column towards Jackson and capture that place without delay.[139]

After the Battle of Raymond, Grant decided to cut loose from his lines of communication back to Grand Gulf. His soldiers were able to gather enough supplies from the countryside that he felt confident in his ability to continue toward Jackson without being held back by a logistics tail that needed protection. There was to be no communication with either his base at Grand Gulf or Admiral Porter. The Navy was continuing to conduct operations on the Mississippi River, the White River, and the Red River to reduce the ability of the Confederates to effectively defend Vicksburg. Porter was waiting in anticipation of Grant's arrival at the rear of Vicksburg when joint operations would again commence.

On the 13th of May, Confederate General Joseph Johnston arrived in Jackson after being ordered by Jefferson Davis to assume operational command of the area. Unfortunately for Johnston, who was in poor health at the time, he arrived on the very day that Grant's troops cut the railroad link between Vicksburg and Jackson. This left Johnston with only 6,000 Confederate troops to fend off Grant's three Union Corps. Johnston sent orders to Pemberton and told him to march toward Jackson with as many troops as he could gather.

General Pemberton was now between the proverbial rock and hard place. He had been personally ordered by Jefferson Davis to hold Vicksburg at all costs. Now Johnston wanted him to move his forces out of Vicksburg to meet the attack of Grant. Pemberton did not have a good picture of the situation at all. He had no cavalry to conduct reconnaissance, he could not locate Grant's lines of communication, and he was not very sure about the Union Army's location or intentions. Pemberton was afraid that if he vacated Vicksburg and went to join Johnston, Grant would maneuver around him and occupy Vicksburg in his absence. Pemberton decided that the best he could do was to split his forces and leave a robust garrison in Vicksburg while he took the remainder out to intercept Grant. Unfortunately for General Johnston,

Pemberton's forces would stop on the north side of the Big Black River and be too far away from Jackson to be of any use in the forthcoming battle.

Sherman and McPherson communicated with each other during the night and arranged to reach Jackson at about the same hour. It rained torrents during the night of the 13th and the early part of the day on the 14th. The roads were nearly impassable and in some places on Sherman's line, where the land was low, they were covered more than a foot deep with water.[140] After a sleepless night in the pouring rain, Sherman's Corps moved out of Raymond on the 14th and marched toward Jackson on the muddy, water covered road. At the same time McPherson's Corps moved out from Clinton while McClernand's Corps covered the rear and acted as Grant's reserve. By 11 a.m. Grant's Army was deployed and the attack on Jackson began.

The battle for Jackson was brief. Sherman attacked on the right while McPherson attacked on the left. The initial assaults were turned back by stubborn Confederate resistance, so Grant suggested to Sherman that he should attack further to the right. Sherman found the exposed left flank of Johnston's forces and rolled it up. Johnston immediately ordered a retreat and the Confederates hastily withdrew. Jackson was now in Union hands. Grant ordered Sherman to burn any buildings in the town that contributed to supplying the Confederate Army. Sherman did so with vigor.

"I was ordered to remain one day to break up railroads, to destroy the arsenal, a foundry, the cotton factory...etc., and then to follow McPherson." [141]

After the Union forces marched out of Jackson, the Confederates returned. Grant then sent Sherman back to Jackson where he chased the remaining Confederates out and then burned the rest of the town to the ground. The destruction was so complete that Jackson became known as Chimneyville because chimneys were all that remained of the city. The burning of Jackson set the stage for Sherman's later destructive march to the sea.

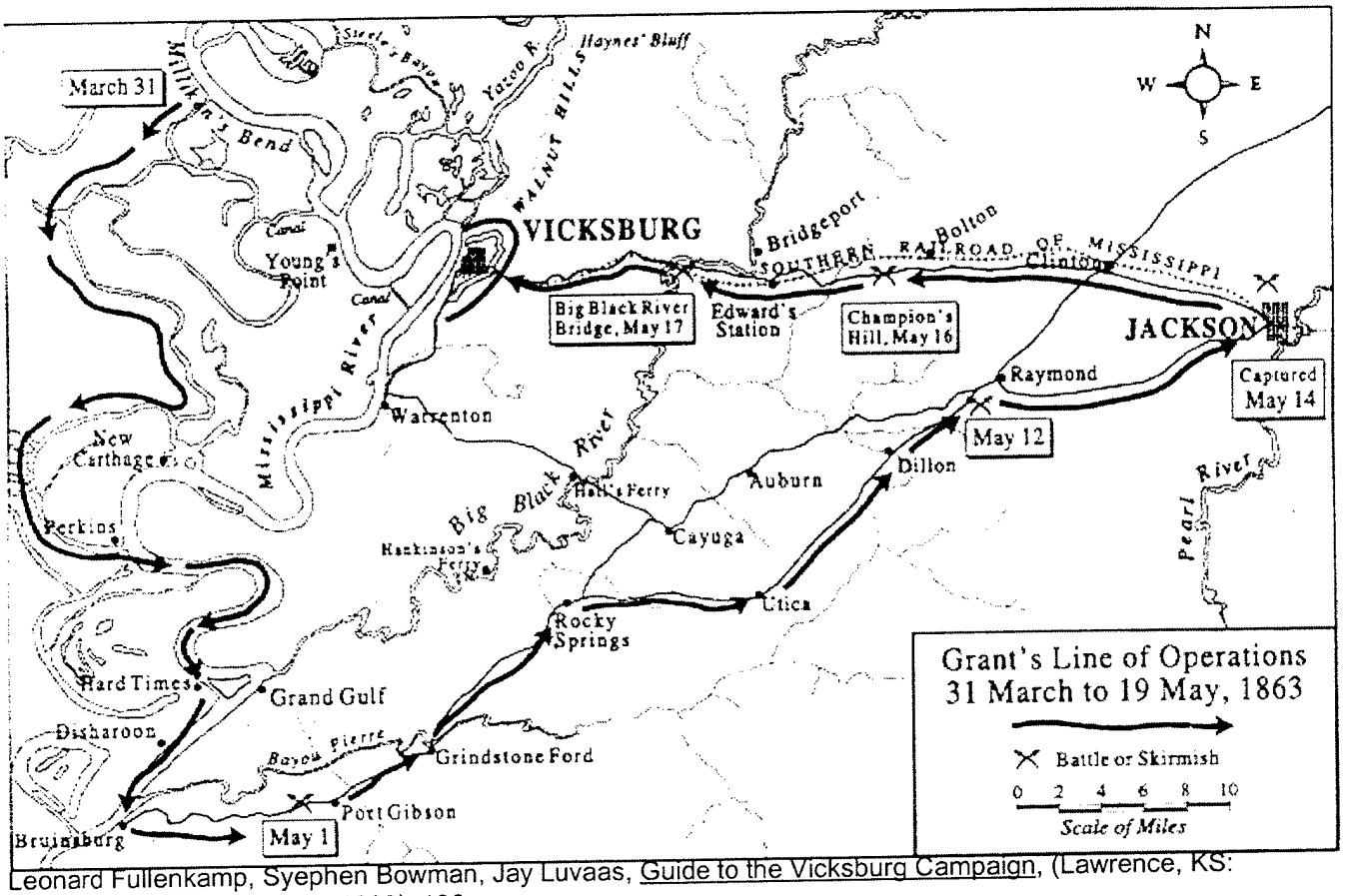
As Sherman burned Jackson, Grant learned from a Union spy that Pemberton was planning to join forces with the remaining troops under Johnston on the railroad line between Jackson and Vicksburg. Grant figured that he was going this direction on the way to Vicksburg anyway, so he might as well move quickly and engage Pemberton before his link-up with Johnston. Grant ordered McPherson and McClernand to march their Corps to the west, just south of the railroad line. Sherman received orders telling him to move west as soon as possible. Sherman issued his movement order to his corps:

> The occasion calls for the utmost energy of all the troops. One determined effort and the opportunity for which we have all labored so hard and patiently will not be lost. Our destination is now the Black River, thirteen miles distant, beyond which lies Vicksburg.[142]

Grant advanced to the west with McClernand on the left, McPherson on the right, and Sherman bringing up the rear.

On the morning of May 16th Grant's leading units came into contact with Pemberton's forces at Champion's Hill, a piece of wooded high ground between Bolton Depot and Edward's Depot. The terrain, as described by a Union Regimental Commander, was difficult.

FIGURE 9 MAP 4



Leonard Fullenkamp, Syephen Bowman, Jay Luvaas, Guide to the Vicksburg Campaign, (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1998), 196.

> Champion's Hill is a considerable eminence about a mile across... from east to west. It is steep, its sides are roughened by knobs, gullied by ravines, and covered with forest. Low flat land encircles the north and west faces.[143]

Grant had 29,000 battle-hardened troops while Pemberton had only about 22,000 because he had left over 10,000 soldiers to guard Vicksburg. Grant deployed his Army and the battle of Champion's Hill was joined. The 12th Division of McClernand's Corps, commanded by Brigadier General Alvin P. Hovey, was the first Union unit to engage Pemberton's forces. The fighting was brutal and included bayonet charges on both sides as Hovey gained ground only to yield to the Confederate counterattack. McPherson deployed Logan's 3rd Division and Crocker's 7th Division to assist Hovey. Soon all of McPherson's XVII Army Corps was engaged in heavy fighting.

> The firing was very heavy...When our ammunition was about exhausted, a heavy force appeared to our front. The line gave evidence of a readiness to recoil; symptoms of wavering began to appear in one company of the 20th Ohio; but an order to fix bayonets steadied the men, and the regiment stood at support arms, with a line of steel bristling above the edge of the ravine.[144]

However, McClernand only had one division in the fight, much to the dismay of General Grant. "I sent word by a staff officer to push forward and attack. These orders were repeated several times without apparently expediting McClernand's advance."[145]

The fighting raged on Champion's Hill until after 4 p.m. when the Confederates broke in a panic and retreated toward Vicksburg with two divisions of McClernand's corps in hot pursuit. Grant was disappointed that he had allowed Pemberton's forces to escape for he knew that he would have to face them again at Vicksburg. "Had McClernand come up with reasonable promptness, or had I known the ground as I did afterwards, I cannot see how Pemberton could have escaped with any organized force."[146]

During the Battle of Champion's Hill the Volunteer infantry units, which today would be considered as reserve component forces, fought very effectively. In fact, the Volunteer units were still tied to the Governors of their States during the Civil War, as official order number seventy-nine from General Sherman makes clear.

> All commanders of Volunteer regiments should keep the Governors of their respective States advised of all vacancies, present or prospective, in their commands, and also supply them with a list of names from among their meritorious soldiers, with recommendations that they be promoted to fill such present and prospective vacancies.[147]

Today National Guard units that are called to active duty are completely federalized and sever all ties with the Governors upon mobilization. While the structure of the reserve component has changed significantly since the Civil War, there is no doubt that the Volunteer units were composed of citizen-soldiers, and that they were proud of that fact as stated by one Volunteer:

"Yes, we have good reason to be proud of our Colonel, for upon all occasions we are treated by him as volunteers enlisted in war from pure love of country, and not regulars, drawn into service from various other motives, in time of peace."[148]

The leadership of these Volunteer units earned the respect of General Grant, especially the 3rd and 7th Divisions of the XVII Army Corps commanded by Major General John A. Logan and Brigadier General Marcellus M. Crocker, respectively. Grant thought highly of both of them: "I regarded Logan and Crocker as being competent division commanders as could be found in or out of the army and both equal to a much higher command."[149]

This level of trust between Grant and his volunteer officers appears to be the rule during the Vicksburg Campaign. The exception appears to be the mistrust between Grant and Porter, with McClernand.

At Champion's Hill, McClernand failed to deploy his Corps. The 12th Division, under the command of Brigadier General Alvin P. Hovey, bore the brunt of the fighting and suffered severe losses. McClernand ignored orders from Grant to deploy his other Divisions and actually tried to pull Hovey's Division out of the battle. Fortunately, Grant was able to communicate directly with General Hovey and was able to keep him in the fight. McClernand's reluctance to take part in the fighting was yet another

mark against him. However, given the success of other reserve commanders and units, McClernand's difficulties must be considered to be an individual problem and not reflective of the overall integration of the reserve component during the campaign.

FIGURE 10 MG JAMES B. MCPHERSON

US Army Military History Institute

By nightfall on the 16th, the 14th Division of McClernand's Corps had pursued the retreating Confederates for seven miles beyond Champion's Hill and near the Big Black River. Early the next morning Grant ordered McClernand to attack the Confederate forces that were conducting a rear guard operation on the East Bank of the Big Black River. Pemberton had left a small force, armed with eighteen artillery pieces, on the defensible terrain east of the Big Black River to delay the Union pursuit while the main body of his forces retreated to the fortifications of Vicksburg. McClernand attacked with the 14th, 9th, and 10th Divisions. The superior numbers of the Union troops forced a hasty retreat by the Confederates, but they first destroyed the bridges across the river.

> Carr's Division of McClernand's Corps, by a splendid charge, carried the fortified bridge-head at the crossing of the Big Black River, and captured 1,751 men and fifteen guns. The bridges, saturated with combustibles were burned...[150]

The engineers worked through the day and by nightfall new bridges were ready. By the light of large fires Grant's entire army crossed the Big Black River.

> After dark, the whole scene was lit up with fires of pitch-pine. General Grant joined me there, and we sat on a log, looking at the passage of the troops by the light of those fires; the bridge swayed to and fro under the passing feet, and made a fine war-picture.[151]

Nothing but the fortifications of Vicksburg now lay between the Union forces and their ultimate objective. However, those fortifications were a significant obstacle.

On the 18th of May Grant's Army marched on Vicksburg. Sherman moved to the north with his Corps and easily secured the high ground that he had earlier tried to capture in a joint operation with the Navy. This time Sherman occupied the ground virtually unopposed because Porter had preceded him.

> I dispatched Colonel Swan, of the Fourth Iowa Cavalry, to Haines' Bluff, to capture the battery from the rear, and he afterward reported that he found it abandoned...Colonel

> Swan saw one of our gunboats lying about two miles below in the Yazoo, to which he signaled.[152]

Joint operations were about to begin again in earnest. As Porter reported:

> On the morning of the 15th I came over to the Yazoo River to be ready to cooperate with General Grant...On the 18th, at meridian, firing was heard in the rear of Vicksburg, which assured me that General Grant was approaching the city. The cannonading was kept up furiously for some time, when, by the aid of glasses, I discovered a company of our artillery advancing, taking position, and driving the rebels before them. I immediately dispatched the De Kalb,...Choctaw,...Linden, Romeo, Petrel, and Forest Rose,...up the Yazoo, to open communication in that way with Generals Grant and Sherman. This I succeeded in doing and in three hours received letters from Generals Grant, Sherman, and Steele, informing me of their vast successes and asking me to send up provisions, which was at once done. In the meantime Lieutenant Commander walker, in the De Kalb pushed on to Haines' Bluff, which the enemy commenced evacuating the day before, and a party remained behind in hopes of taking away or destroying the large amount of ammunition on hand. When they saw the gunboats they ran and left everything in good order – guns, forts, tents, and equipage of all kinds, which fell into our hands.[153]

Incidentally, Army troops were still serving onboard the gunboats and several on the U.S.S. Linden were injured during the action. "We had two captains of guns, soldiers belonging to the Fifty-eighth Ohio Regiment, dangerously wounded."[154]

McPherson and McClernand marched their two Corps directly west to the eastern fortifications of Vicksburg. By the end of the day on the 18th Grant had his Army poised for an assault on Vicksburg, reestablished his lines of communication to the north, and once again was connected with the Naval forces of Admiral Porter. Joint operations had resumed.

On the 19th, Grant ordered a hasty attack against the fortifications of Vicksburg. He had hoped that the Confederates would be worn out from being pursued across the country and that they would quickly collapse. This was not to be. The Confederate resistance was spirited and the attack failed.

After two days of planning a coordinated, joint assault, Grant attacked again on the 22nd. The assault was to be conducted as a joint effort by the Army and Navy. Grant wrote to Porter in the above mentioned letter of the 19th,

> My forces are now investing Vicksburg. Sherman's forces run from the Mississippi River, above the city, 2 miles east. McPherson is to his left and McClernand to the left of McPherson. If you can run down and throw shell in just back of the city it will aid us and demoralize an already badly beaten enemy.[155]

Grant then communicated further with Admiral Porter in order to coordinate the joint assault on Vicksburg the next day.

> I expect to assault the city at 10 a.m. tomorrow. I would request, and earnestly request it, that you send up the gunboats below the city and shell the rebel intrenchments until that hour and for thirty minutes after.[156]

Porter, as well as Grant, was optimistic:

> In a very short time a general assault will take place, when I hope to announce that Vicksburg has fallen, after a series of the most brilliant successes that ever attended any

army. There never has been a case during the war where the rebels have been so successfully beaten at all points, and the patience and endurance shown by our army and navy for so many months is about to be rewarded.[157]

All three corps supported by massive artillery and naval gunfire barrages attacked the fortifications with vigor. The combined fires of both the Army and Navy were not enough to force the Confederates to capitulate.

During the assault McClernand led Grant to believe that his forces had broken through and requested reinforcement. Grant did not believe that his forces had not broken through and the renewed assault was very costly. As Sherman recalled in his memoirs:

> While he (Grant) was with me, a staff officer came and handed him a piece of paper. I think the writing was in pencil, on a loose piece of paper, and was in General McClernand's hand writing, to the effect that "his troops had captured the rebel parapet in his front," that "the flag of the Union waved over the stronghold of Vicksburg," and asking him (General Grant) to give renewed orders to McPherson and Sherman to press their attacks on their respective fronts, lest the enemy should concentrate on him McClernand). Sherman was with General Grant who said, "I don't believe a word of it;" but I reasoned with him...[158]

Captain C.A. Dana who was assigned to Grant's headquarters, wrote to Secretary of War Stanton about the incident.

> McClernand's report was false, as he held not a single fort, and the result was disastrous...The loss of the day in killed and wounded will probably not fall short of 1,500 through McClernand's mistake, which would otherwise have been inconsiderable.[159]

This constituted another failure for McClernand and is recorded as such in the Official Record. However, there is another side to the story.

On September 8, 1863 Colonel W. M. Stone, commander of the 22nd Iowa, wrote to General McClernand.

> I state the following facts, which occurred under my observation, connected with the assault of the Thirteenth Army Corps upon the enemy's works at Vicksburg on May 22nd last: I was in command of the 22nd Iowa, which regiment was in the Second Brigade, Fourteenth Division of said corps. On the evening of May 21st, I was served with a copy of the circular or order, directing the assault to be made the next day at 10 a. m. At a little before 10 o'clock, by my time, I received the order from General Lawler's assistant adjutant general to advance, and I did so immediately, supported by the Twenty-first Iowa. I advanced as I intended, directly against the fort, but passing over the crest of the hill, the enemy's fire was so terrific that the left wing of my regiment was driven into the hollow on the left of the fort, but the right wing advanced steadily toward the fort, and within ten minutes from the time we started, my men entered it, and held it, to my knowledge, for over an hour. The fort was small, and the open space inside very limited, and but few men could find room in it. When the enemy were driven from the fort, they also retired from the rifle pits on the right (our right), between that and the railroad. The Eleventh Wisconsin had also advanced against the second fort, some three hundred yards from the first one, and I saw the enemy leave that one. They also retired from the pits between the two forts, and went down the hill into the ravine or hollow beyond toward the city, leaving only a few struggling sharpshooters behind. I stood with Lieutenant Colonel Dunlap, of the Twenty-first Iowa on the crest, and most exposed point near the fort. We saw them leave and conversed about it. I sent word back to General Carr to

> send me a brigade and I would hold the works. I regarded the thing as easily done. I do not know that the word reached the General. I regarded the door of Vicksburg as opened, and so did Colonel Dunlap, and we were congratulating ourselves upon our success, when I was shot in the arm by a sharpshooter from the woods beyond their rifle pits, and he was killed. I ordered the color-bearer of the Seventy-seventh Illinois to bring up his colors, as mine were down in the hollow on the left, and my own men planted them on top of the fort. Soon after this my own colors were brought up and placed beside them. They remained there, to my certain knowledge, till 6 o'clock in the evening. Had we been reinforced at any time before 12 M., by fresh brigades, I have no doubt that the whole army could have gone into Vicksburg.[160]

This version of the events surrounding the assault of May 22, by a Regiment Commander on the scene, is contrary to the Official Record and clearly supports McClernand's request for reinforcements and a renewed assault. Furthermore, this version of events is corroborated by the writings of a Confederate chaplain who was in Vicksburg during the assault of May 22nd.

William Lovelace Foster was a Confederate chaplain assigned to Vicksburg. He wrote his wife a letter throughout the siege of Vicksburg using notes that he jotted down during the fighting. In his letter he writes about the assault of May 22nd:

> Another charge is made. In solid columns the persevering foe presses upon our right, endeavoring once more to force our lines. Our men as before reserve their fire until they approach near and then pour forth a perfect storm of Buck and Ball, so that the enemy fall by the hundreds. They fill up the broken ranks and press on-but they stagger before the deadly fire. Their men will not advance and turn and fly from certain death. But on one point they concentrate a powerful force. They press with great fury and an Alabama Regiment is driven out of the ditches. The Yankees plant their flag upon our works and send back for reinforcements. They take possession of our works and for two hours hold their position.[161]

The fog of battle often obscures the truth, but it appears that McClernand's forces did in fact breach the Confederate defenses. Perhaps previous encounters with McClernand had so fouled his credibility that Grant would not believe him. Perhaps this lack of trust was related to the fact that McClernand was a very senior ranking reserve officer who had poisoned the well with his anti-Regular Army tirades and his political scheming. A cynical person would note that McClernand appears to be a perfect scapegoat for the losses that invariably had to be reported to Halleck and Stanton.

General McClernand did manage to foil a well-planned joint attack on the western defenses of Vicksburg by Brigadier General John McArthur and his Sixth Division of McPherson's XVII Army Corps, in concert with the gunboats of Admiral Porter. The Navy was tasked with suppressing the lower batteries while McArthur's troops crossed the river and assaulted Vicksburg from the west.

Unfortunately the assault from the river was not executed as planned. Porter wrote to Grant to provide him with intelligence information and explained that the assault had not happened.

"It is a pity they did not assault, for they would have taken the place without any trouble, as there were not twenty men in it. " [162]

McArthur wrote to Porter regarding why he had not taken advantage of the Naval gunfire and pressed on with the assault as planned: "I would have taken advantage of the results then gained by your

vessels, and had given the necessary orders to do so, when I received peremptory orders from Major General McClernand to move my command around to the right of my position, to support a portion of his troops who had gained lodgment in the enemy's works."[163]

Grant was not at all pleased with McClernand. He wrote to Admiral Porter to request that joint communications be used to reach McArthur to order him back into action according to the original plan:

> McArthur has been ordered to join McClernand, but I wish to countermand the order, if it has not already been executed. I have no means of communicating with General McArthur, except by way of Young's Point. Will you do me the favor to forward to him the accompanying?[164]

One can only wonder as to why Grant did not relieve McClernand of command after this costly mistake. A possible explanation is that McClernand wasn't relieved because his forces had breached the Confederate defenses and he was simply trying to exploit that success.

The failed assault attempts convinced Grant that the only way left to capture Vicksburg was through a siege. "I now find the position of the enemy so strong that I shall be compelled to regularly besiege the city."[165]

Grant had tried to capture Vicksburg by two assaults, but it was clear to him that the defenses were so formidable that further attacks would only result in more casualties.

> There is no doubt of the fall of this place ultimately, but how long it will take is a matter of doubt. I intend to lose no more men, but to force the enemy from one position to another without exposing my troops.[166]

He deployed Sherman to the east to protect against an attack from Johnston, coordinated with Admiral Porter to control the Mississippi River, and used his remaining two corps to surround Vicksburg. By early June reinforcements and supplies were flowing into the theater from the North while the Confederates were forced to dig in and go hungry. As general Sherman recalled: "Thereafter our proceedings were all in the nature of a siege. General Grant drew more troops from Memphis, to prolong our general line to the left, so as completely to invest the place on its land side, while the navy held the river both above and below."[167]

THE SEIGE

During the siege joint operations with the Navy continued to be conducted. As Grant wrote to Porter:

> A force is collecting at Yazoo City which numbers now about 2,000 men. Does this expose your boats now up the Yazoo? If so, I will send (Brigadier General) Lauman to disperse them...[168]

In addition to securing the western sector of Vicksburg, Navy guns were sent on shore to be used as siege guns. Admiral Porter not only sent his guns, but also the sailors to man them. "Admiral Porter

...supplied us with a battery of navy guns of large caliber..."[169] "General Grant can always get all the guns he wants from this squadron, and already has six of our 8 and 9 inch in battery, some of them worked by sailors."[170]The sailors were placed under the operational control of Army artillery officers, just as Army soldiers served as gunners on Naval gunboats throughout the campaign. The gunboats and mortar barges shelled Vicksburg in coordination with the Army's artillery barrages. "I would request, therefore, that you give me all the assistance you can with the mortars and gunboats."[171] Joint operational fires were kept up for the duration of the siege, and as recorded by a Union Sergeant, was very effective:

> Last night I sat on top of a hill awhile, watching the mortar shells flying into the city from the river. High into the air they leaped, and, like falling stars, dropped, exploding among the houses and shaking the very hills...the destruction being thus wrought in the city must be very great. We learn from prisoners that the inhabitants are now living in caves dug out of the sides of the hills.[172]

FIGURE 11 REAR ADMIRAL DAVID D. PORTER

US Army Military History Institute

While the siege was being conducted at Vicksburg, Grant's Army was constantly being re-supplied and reinforced. Admiral Porter had his gunboats provide convoy cover to protect supply ships.[173] The gunboats also protected the troop transport ships bringing reinforcements down the Mississippi River from Memphis.[174]

Joint operations were not always perfectly executed. Friendly fire was at times a problem. As General Grant tactfully let Admiral Porter know, "General Lauman, on our left, informs me that your firing today did good execution, but several shots were too far to the left, your right, going into his camp."[175]

The Navy also suffered some losses as the result of mistakes by the Army. Admiral Porter was forced to write to the Secretary of the Navy to explain the loss of the gunboat Cincinnati:

> Amidst our success regret to report any reverses, but we cannot expect to conquer such a place like this without some loss. At the urgent request of Generals Grant and Sherman I sent the Cincinnati to enfilade some rifle pits

> which barred the progress of the left wing of the army. General Sherman supposed that the enemy had removed his heavy guns to the rear of the city. On the contrary, he seemed to have placed more on the water- side than usual. The Cincinnati was sunk and went down in shoal water with her flag flying.[176]

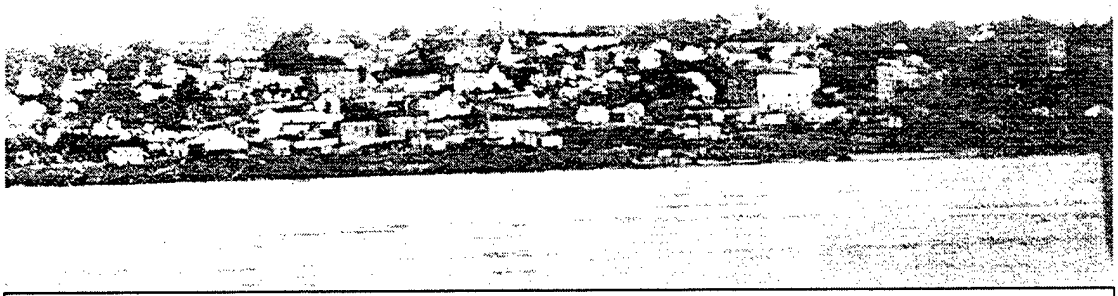
Despite the occasional problems and miscommunications, the spirit of cooperation between the forces of the Army and the Navy continued throughout the campaign. The only exception to the spirit of teamwork seemed to be General McClernand. As General Grant recalled; "On the 17th I received a letter from General Sherman and one on the 18th from General McPherson, saying that their respective commands had complained to them of a fulsome, congratulatory order published by General McClernand to the 13th Corps, which did great injustice to the other troops engaged in the campaign."[177]

Ever the thorn in the side, McClernand wrote a congratulatory letter to his troops for their efforts during the assault of the 22nd of May. Of course the real target audience for the letter was the northern press, who promptly published it in Illinois. In the letter McClernand made himself out to be the hero who had been wronged by Grant and not given the requested support to ensure that the assault of the 22nd would succeed. This was the final straw for Grant. He relieved McClernand of command, ordered him out of the theater, and replaced him with Major General E.O.C. Ord.

The Army of the Tennessee settled into the siege routine as recorded by a Union soldier:

> The siege went on. Hundreds of cannon ceaselessly roared. Small arms sheeted over the space between the lines with lead. Rifle balls met in the air and fell to the ground welded together. At night it was common practice for the pickets on both sides to advance unarmed, and sitting together on the ground between the lines pass the night in chat, banter, and high discussion. A watch was always left in the lines, and when an officer on either side came along on his tour, warning was given, the conference ceased and the men on both sides slipped back to their places.[178]

FIGURE 12 VICKSBURG FROM THE RIVER



US Army Military History Institute

The siege of Vicksburg lasted until July 4, 1863. During this time Grant's Army grew to over 75,000 fully supplied soldiers while both the Confederate soldiers and civilians in Vicksburg wasted away. The newspaper in Vicksburg, printed on the back of wallpaper scraps, reported cheerfully about citizens eating mules and cats.

> We are indebted to Major Gillespie for a steak of Confederate beef, alias meat. We have tried it, and can assure our friends that if it is rendered necessary, they need have no scruples at eating the meat. It is sweet, savory, and tender, and so long as we have a mule left, we are satisfied our soldiers will be content to subsist on it.[179]

Mule meat was reserved for the Confederate soldiers. The citizens of Vicksburg had to look elsewhere for menu items. "Poor, defunct Thomas (a pet cat) was then prepared, not for the grave, but the pot, and several friends invited to partake of a nice rabbit...and the guests assisted in consuming the poor animal with a relish that did honor to their epicurean taste."[180]

General Johnston's relief attack never materialized because he was outnumbered and the weakened condition of the Confederates in Vicksburg would not allow them to attempt a breakout. In the end, Grant marched into Vicksburg and seized 31,000 prisoners, 170 cannon, and 60,000 rifles. It had been a long, brilliant, and joint campaign.

> I rode into Vicksburg with the troops, and went to the river to exchange congratulations with the navy upon our joint victory.[181] The navy under Porter was all it could be, during the entire campaign. Without its assistance the campaign could not have been successfully made with twice the number of men engaged. It could not have been made at all, in the way it was, with any number of men without such assistance. The most perfect harmony reigned between the two arms of the service.[182]

Unfortunately, that perfect harmony did not reach beyond the theater of operations. When word of the fall of Vicksburg reached Washington, there was great rejoicing and many congratulatory comments for the Army. However, Secretary Stanton was angry because Porter sent word of the victory to Secretary Welles before Grant could get a message to the War Department. Secretary Welles was angry because the War Department did not mention the Navy's role in the victory in the many speeches made.

> General Halleck never by scratch of his pen, or by a word from his mouth, ever awarded any credit to the Navy for anything.[183] Stanton denies him (Porter) any merit; speaks of him as a gas-bag, who makes a great fuss and claims credit that belongs to others.[184]

Given the animosities and politics behind the official coordinating authority granted to both Porter and Grant by their respective chains of command, it is even more remarkable that Vicksburg was a successful, joint campaign.

The successful campaign to capture Vicksburg was concluded just one day after the Confederate forces in the Eastern Theater were defeated at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The Confederacy was now reeling under twin disasters in both major theaters of war. Within twenty-four hours the tide of the war had dramatically shifted and the Union was now in a much more favorable strategic position.

The campaign to capture Vicksburg, Mississippi was one of the strategically most important events of the Civil War and central to deciding the future of the United States as a nation:

> The capture of Vicksburg, with its garrison, ordnance and ordnance stores, and the successful battles fought in reaching them, gave new spirit to the loyal people of the North. New hopes for the final success of the cause of the Union were inspired.[185]

The fact that the Vicksburg Campaign was fought as a joint operation makes the events of 1863 especially relevant today. The campaign to capture Vicksburg is one of the most daring in American military history. The commanders of both the Army and Naval forces were convinced that only by acting jointly could the campaign succeed. Today, the military forces of the United States are committed by law and by doctrine to operate jointly, with an integrated force of both active and reserve components. We can learn much from the commanders of 1863 about embracing the spirit of cooperation and teamwork needed to fight and win with such a joint force.

WORD COUNT: 24,881

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