



A WEDGE IN THE TOP OF THE CONFEDERACY APRIL 6/7, 1862



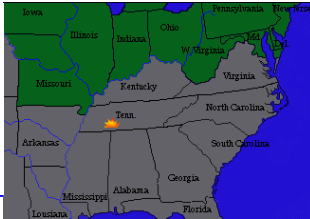
Gen. Albert Sydney Johnston, Army of the Mississippi, and his 2nd in command, G.T. Beauregard

Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, Army of West Tennessee

Confederate Army	Union Army
Strength: 44,700	Strength: 48,900-65,000
Casualties: 10,700	Casualties: 13,050

The Build-Up

Prior to Shiloh Grant had crushed the roof of the Confederacy by capturing two forts in Tennessee. He forced Johnston back into Mississippi. Grant was ordered to halt at Shiloh to allow Gen. Buell's Army of the Ohio to join him.



April: The Confederates Move North

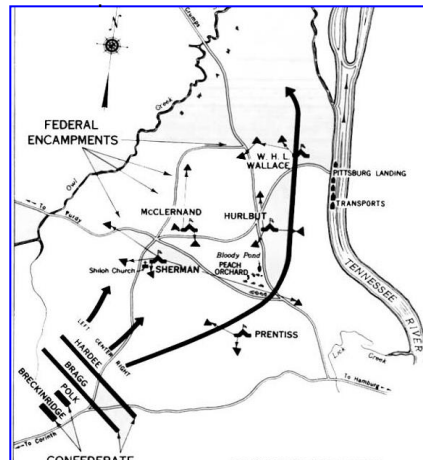


- Johnston concentrated his force of 55,000 at Corinth, just below the Tennessee border.
- Deciding to strike before Buell's army of 18,000 united with Grant's 48,000, Johnston marched the 20 miles north to Shiloh.
- Intending to strike on April 4th, Johnston was delayed for 48 hours, and Beauregard feared that the element of surprise had been lost.
- Johnston's men spent the entire night camped only two miles from their enemy.

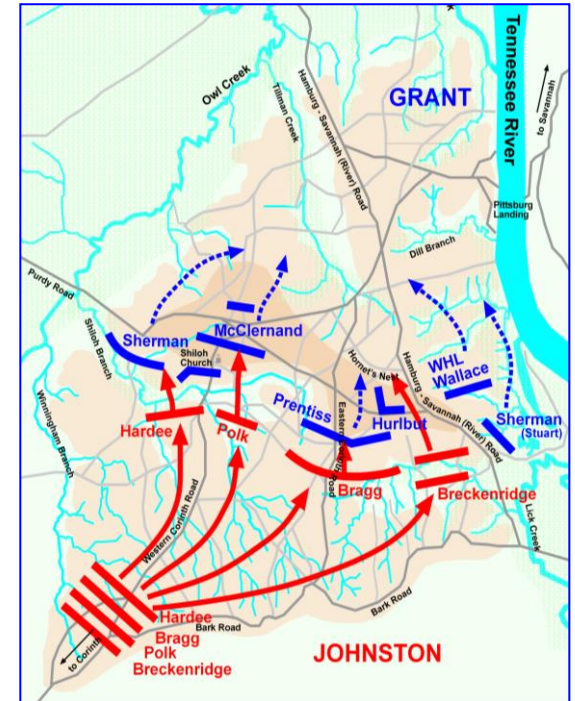
April 6, 6:00 a.m.: Shattered Dawn



- When they struck at dawn, they achieved total surprise, driving the Federals from their camp.
- Confusion of command hindered the Rebel assault: Johnston was trying to drive the Northern soldiers away from the Tennessee River into the swamps, while Beauregard was trying to drive them towards the river.



Johnston's battle plan was to sweep the Union army away from the river into the swamp. In the battle's chaos, it became a direct push to the river instead.



April 6, 9:00 a.m.: Hornet's Nest

- The Union army, containing far more battle-tested veterans than their foes, was able to rally.
- Divisions under Wallace and Prentice hung stubbornly onto a position called the "Hornet's Nest".
- The Union defenders beat off 11 attacks.
- With their flanks driven in and 50 Rebel cannon blasting their centre, the Union troops finally disintegrated -- but not before giving Grant seven hours to stabilize a new line at Pittsburgh Landing.



In the Hornet's Nest battle, Confederate commander Johnston received a leg wound that proved to be mortal. His loss deprived the Confederacy of one of its most effective generals.

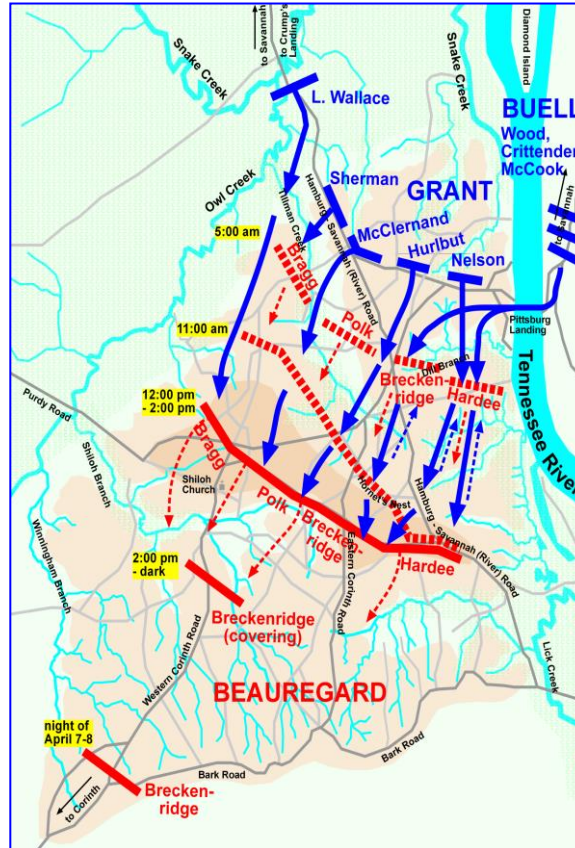
April 6, Night: Their backs to the river

- Pushed against the Tennessee River, the Union army re-grouped under the protection of their gun-boats.
- During the night, Gen Buell's 17,000 men crossed the river and went into line on the Union left. Fresh troops also took position on the right.
- In a campfire conference with Gen. Sherman, Grant agreed they had been roughly handled, but said "We'll lick 'em tomorrow though."



April 7: Turn Around

- Next morning Grant seized the initiative, with a force of 40,000 men against 30,000 Confederates.
- Beauregard was at first unaware that Grant had been reinforced, and tried to counterattack, but soon realized that he could not win and retired towards Corinth.
- A Union pursuit was halted by Col. Nathan Bedford Forrest



Consequences



- A Confederacy that held Kentucky and Tennessee formed a great compact mass. The permanent loss of these states due to the battle of Shiloh drove an enormous wedge that separated the states on the North Atlantic Ocean from the States on the Gulf of Mexico.
- The Union casualties of 13,000 men, added to Southern casualties of more than 10,000, made Shiloh the bloodiest battle of the war to-date. It represented more casualties than the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and the Mexican-American War put together.



These federal siege cannon formed Grant's last line of defence; had they not held, his army would have been destroyed.

"Shiloh" is a Hebrew word for "place of peace"; Shiloh Church gave its name to the bloodiest battle of the Civil War.



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