



## SPLITTING THE CONFEDERACY MAY-JULY 4, 1863



Lt. Gen. John Pemberton, Army of Mississippi

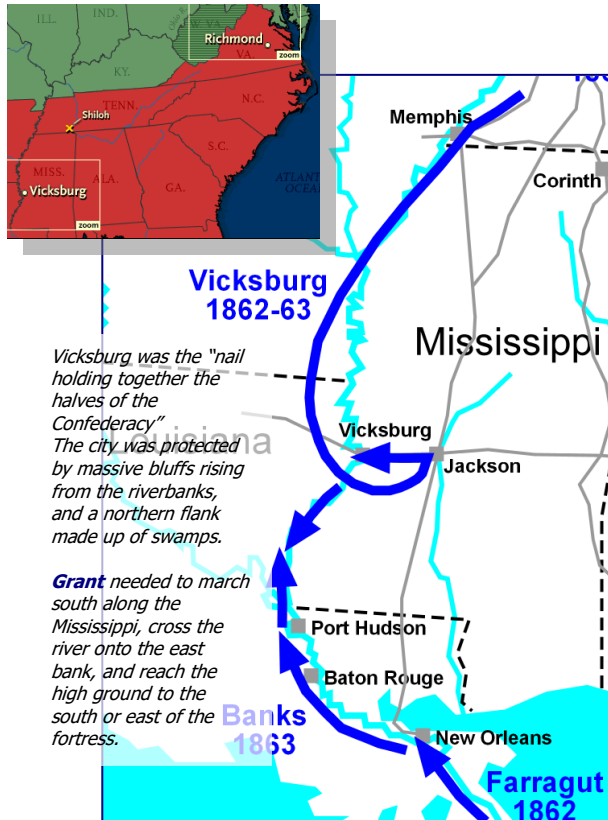


Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, Army of Tennessee

**Confederate Army**  
Strength: 30,000  
Casualties: 29,500 (surrendered)

**Union Army**  
Strength: 77,000  
Casualties: 4,860

### THE PRIZE

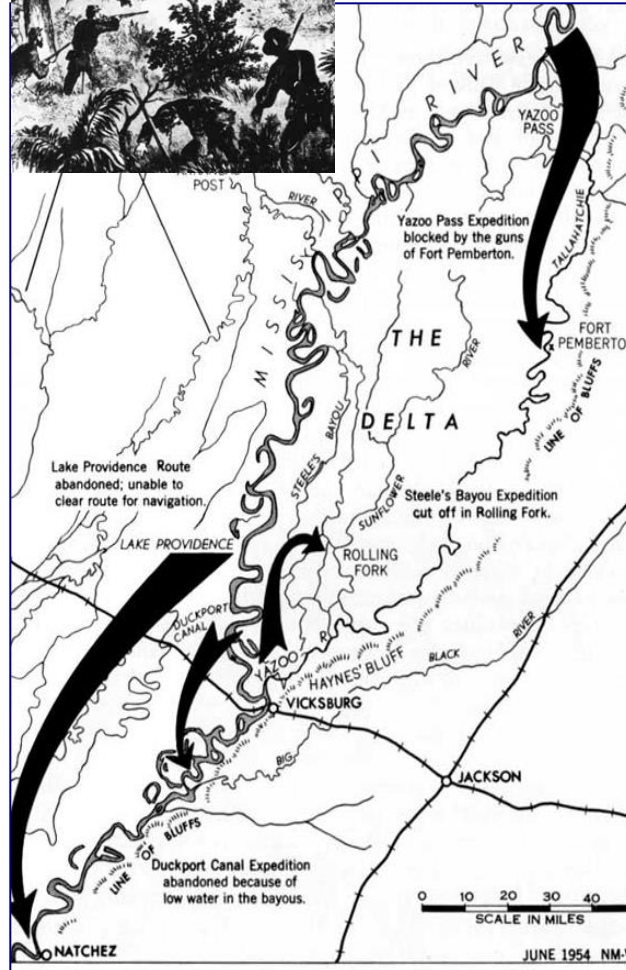


### Spring: Up the Yazoo, Down the Bayou

- Grant failed to reach Vicksburg in many roundabout ways, digging two canals and clearing a route through a lake.
- He sent an expedition through the Yazoo waterways north of Vicksburg.
- Grant's drive ran into a new fort that blasted back every attempt to take it.
- The Steels Bayou expedition was a similar tactic, aiming to cut through the swamps north of the city.
- The Confederates almost captured the Union boats by felling trees behind them as they wove through the river-bends.



Fighting in the swamps of the Bayou



### April 16: Running the Gauntlet

- Grant finally turned to Admiral Porter to do a direct run past the Vicksburg batteries, to get his army south of the city to undefended river-banks.
- On the night of April 16<sup>th</sup> the fleet steamed in single file down the river. Confederate lit tar barrels on the water to give them light, and Confederate gunners blasted at the ships.
- Broadsides from the fleet tore apart brick buildings in Vicksburg. Each boat was hit repeatedly, and "the shot went right through us," said Porter. Only one ship was sunk.
- Grant was able to get his army across the river on April 30<sup>th</sup>.



REAR-ADMIRAL PORTER'S FLOTTILLA  
ARRIVING BELOW VICKSBURG NIGHT OF April 16, 1863



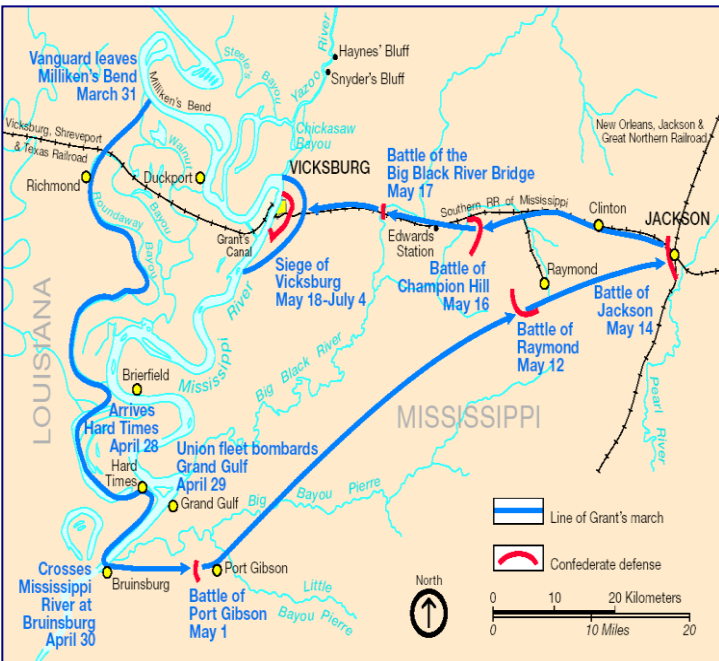
The warship *Wissahickon*, which ran the gauntlet.





## May 7: The Strike Inland

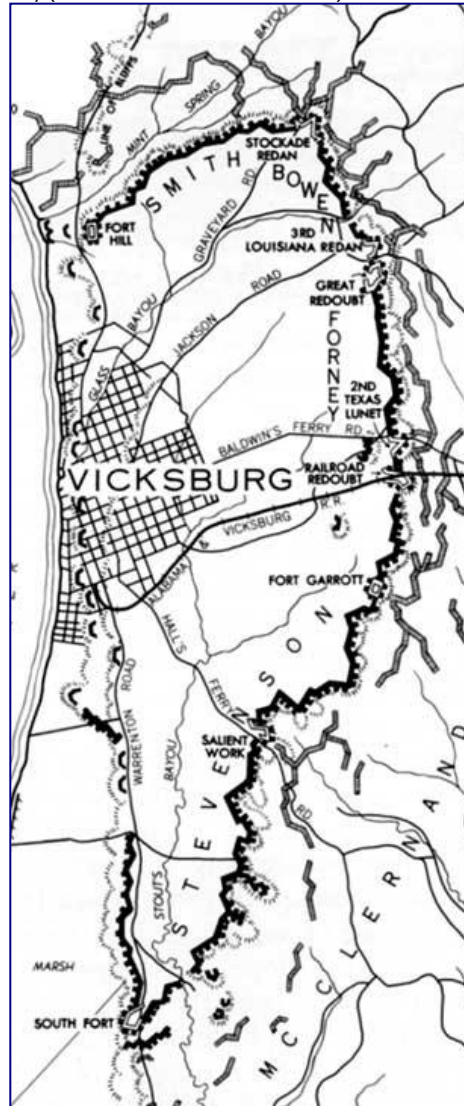
- By April 30 Grant's men were across the Mississippi, with
- Despite the fact that Vicksburg lay between Grant and his supply base, Grant said that he felt "a degree of relief scarcely ever equalled" at being able to come to grips with Pemberton.
- Pemberton was pinned to Vicksburg because of two successful Union feints: a ride by Col. Grierson's cavalry around the rear of the Confederate army, and a lunge at Vicksburg by Maj. Gen Sherman.
- Cutting himself off from his supply chain, Grant and Sherman confirmed that their army could be fed from the countryside.
- Grant marched inland fast with 45,000 men. He wanted to destroy the Confederate relieving force at Jackson, under Gen. Johnston.
- Fierce fighting at Port Gibson and Raymond failed to stop Grant's rush towards Jackson, which the 12,000 defenders abandoned to move north and link with a sortie from Vicksburg.
- Champion's Hill was the decisive result -- a battle of equal numbers, where the hill itself changed hands three times. Heavy federal attacks drove Pemberton back to Vicksburg.



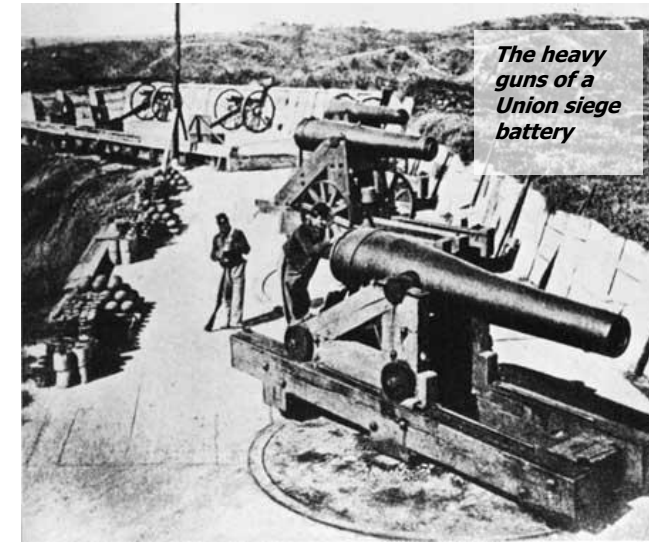
Union assault on Champion's Hill

## May 19: The Siege

- Vicksburg was surrounded by a nine-mile defensive line, with nine forts covering the approach roads. 20-foot-thick earth walls were topped by 128 artillery pieces, including 36 heavy siege guns. 30,000 Confederates faced 50,000 Union soldiers.
- On May 19<sup>th</sup> Grant unleashed a direct attack on the Vicksburg lines. Close-in fighting failed to breach the works. A larger assault on May 22<sup>nd</sup> was even more decisively beaten back.
- The two sides settled in to a siege
- For six weeks the city held out, under constant bombardment and worsening food shortages.
- On Jul 4<sup>th</sup>, the city capitulated. Though Grant said that the two sides fraternized afterwards, Vicksburg refused to celebrate July 4<sup>th</sup> for 81 years.
- For the second time Grant had captured an entire Confederate army (the first one was at Fort Donelson).



## CONSEQUENCES



The heavy guns of a Union siege battery

- Control of the Mississippi cut the Confederacy in half; Lincoln stated that "The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea."
- In 18 days since it crossed the Mississippi, the Union army achieved a spectacular string of five victories.
- Vicksburg was Grant's masterpiece: a campaign of speed, decision and nerve. Grant went on to become the head of all Union armies.
- Sherman's lesson about provisioning an army from the countryside was later the inspiration for his deadly "March" from Atlanta to the sea.



The Confederates dug bomb-proof shelters on the reverse side of their lines

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