

Shiloh and the Western Campaign of 1862. By O. Edward Cunningham with Gary D. Joiner and Timothy B. Smith editors. New York: Savas Beatie, 2007. Pp. 476 paperback \$24.95.

As 1862 began the Confederacy had won the first great battle of the War for Southern Independence – First Bull Run or Manassas Junction. The military situation seemed favorable for the Confederacy. However, events that would take place in February, March, and early April would greatly imperil the South's march toward independence. In O. Edward Cunningham's *Shiloh And The Western Campaign of 1862*, Dr. Cunningham goes into great detail concerning the Forts Henry and Donelson campaigns and the Battle of Shiloh – events that shifted the pendulum in favor of the North.

First Fort Henry on the Tennessee River had to be taken. It was on February 6 by Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote's seven gunboats – four ironclads and three woodclads and without the aid of General Grant's infantry. The story would be different at Fort Donelson. On February 14 Foote tried to take Fort Donelson but was badly defeated. It was now up to Grant and his 29,000 troops. General John B. Floyd, the Confederate

commander, had approximately 16,000 men. Grant invested the Confederate works. After some severe fighting on February 14-15, General Floyd made the decision to surrender. Some 12,000 or so Confederate troops plus their equipment fell into Union hands. The Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers were now in Union possession, and the Confederate heartland could be penetrated. General Johnston's greatest mistakes were not taking personal command at Donelson and bringing the Bowling Green garrison with him. Had he done so, it is conceivable that Grant would have been defeated and his career ruined.

Union forces were soon moved up the Tennessee River to Pittsburg Landing – some 40,000. At this point in time Grant and his men were overconfident. They did not believe the Confederates would launch a massive attack on their position. Most of Johnston's army was soon concentrated at Corinth, Mississippi. Johnston was planning a surprise attack on Grant in the Shiloh-Pittsburg Landing area as Cunningham has pointed out. For this purpose Johnston's army was reinforced by troops from Pensacola, Florida and Mobile, Alabama that were led by General Braxton Bragg and by others from New Orleans under the command of General Mansfield Lovell.

The Confederate attack on Sunday morning, April 6, did catch the Union army by surprise. During the first few hours of fighting, Grant's army was pushed from one position after another all along the battle line. Perhaps the most severe fighting took place at the Hornet's Nest where the Confederate advance was halted for several hours. By the time the Hornet's Nest and Peach Orchard had been taken, General Johnston had been shot and bled to death. General P.G. T. Beauregard now assumed command of the army, and he called off the fighting, believing Grant's army was almost defeated. He would finish the job the next day.

That would not be the case. General Don Carlos Buel and his army of some 30,000 men had arrived late on April 6. That night they were transported across the Tennessee River and put in battle position. The next day, with great superiority in numbers, the Confederate army was pushed back to the Shiloh church area and then retreated back to Corinth. Roughly 11,000 Confederate and 13,000 Union soldiers had become casualties of war. Shiloh was a great strategic victory for the Union. It really brought Grant into prominence – the man that would ultimately lead the Union to victory in this the most horrible war in the nation's history in terms

of those who made the supreme sacrifice – some 620,000 boys in blue and gray.

Shiloh And The Western Campaign of 1862 is the dissertation that O. Edward Cunningham wrote in the 1960s under the direction of T. Harry Williams at Louisiana State University. It unearths a great many personal accounts and untapped sources and is without doubt one of the best treatments of the Shiloh campaign that has ever been written. Civil War historians Gary D. Joiner and Timothy B. Smith deserve much credit for resurrecting this long dormant PhD dissertation with their editing, new maps, updated citations, observations, and etc. This work is highly recommended for all who are interested in the War Between the States and battle history.

Review by Lonnie E. Maness, PhD, Professor Emeritus of History, University of Tennessee at Martin.