

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume LI, Battlefield Tour Number

Chicago, Illinois

May 2-5, 1991

41st Annual Battlefield Tour Shiloh and Northern Mississippi

The Tour

Our 41st Annual Battlefield Tour will take us to Shiloh and the surrounding area for an in-depth study of the 1862 campaigns for control of that part of the Mississippi Valley. Shiloh was the main battle of the campaign, and was the first of the war's major battles. In casualties it was comparable to Waterloo; but it was only a harbinger of what was to come.

The battlefield was set aside and marked by veterans of the fighting. It is one of the best preserved of our battlefields, and is free from the incursions of modern development.

The immediate object of the campaign was Corinth, Mississippi, where the Memphis & Charleston and Mobile & Ohio railroads crossed. Corinth sustained a siege following the battle at Shiloh, and was the scene of a two-day battle in October as Confederate forces sought to recapture the town.

Corinth has been the object of increased attention in recent years. It was selected as a priority site last summer by the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to the recent legislation directed at preserving endangered battlefield sites. The people of the Corinth area have supported the preservation effort, and the surviving sites and works in and around Corinth were the subjects of a study by Department of the Interior personnel last fall. We will be among the first recipients of the results of their work.

The area also saw important action in the campaigns for Vicksburg, and as part of the 1864 campaign in the West. We will visit sites associated with those campaigns, including Brice's Crossroads, scene of Forrest's most tactically brilliant victory.

Other area Civil War sites include an October, 1862 battlefield south of Pocahtontas, Tennessee, that has been inaccessible for many years. Several local individuals have been working to clear access to the site. If they are successful, we will be the first group to visit the site.

Our main guide will once again be Ed Bearss, chief research historian of the National Park Service. Mr. Bearss spent many years of his illustrious career in the Shiloh/Northern Mississippi area. Also joining us will be Wiley Sword, whose book *Shiloh: Bloody April* will remain the premier study of the battle for years to come.

The tour will end on Sunday in Memphis. Plan on bringing your bags aboard the bus on Sunday morning. A bus will take those going there to the Memphis airport; you can make plans to return home after 2:00 p.m.

Our headquarters will be at the Holiday Inn, Corinth,



Cost of Tour:

\$299 per person, double occupancy, or \$399, single occupancy. Please note that non-members must add \$25 to the prices listed. Please indicate the person with whom you wish to share a room. Transportation to and from Corinth, Mississippi is not included.

Includes: Motel room, all lunches and dinners (breakfasts are on your own), bus transportation in the field, tour kits and badges, group service tips, admission fees, refreshments on buses and a non-refundable \$25 registration fee per person.

For variations: Portions of the tour, joining enroute, individual meetings, meals or rooms, write or phone Registrar Joan Carlson, 1636 Wadham Place, Wheaton, IL 60187, (708) 462-0056.

Local CWRT groups and others joining in lunches and dinners, please make reservations through the registrar so that caterers can be notified of the number for which to prepare and so payment can be made.

Cost of Pre-Tour: \$55 per person. Price includes bus transportation from Nashville to Corinth on Wednesday and back to Nashville on Sunday afternoon, admission fees, refreshments on bus, lunch and dinner on Wednesday. It does **not** include lodging on Tuesday evening.

Special Note on Prices

Because of the current situation in the Middle East, fuel prices are volatile, and we could be charged a fuel surcharge if the price of fuel substantially increases. Rather than build in an additional charge that we hope will not be needed, we have decided that, should there be a fuel surcharge, we will ask each participant for an additional payment, which we would not expect to exceed \$10.



Mississippi (601) 286-6071. Your accommodations will be waiting for you on Wednesday evening.

Transportation

We have arranged for a bus from the Memphis airport to Corinth on Wednesday evening. The cost will be \$25 per person. **If you wish to take this bus, you must take a**

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THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

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flight that will arrive in Memphis no later than 8:40 p.m. on Wednesday, May 1, 1991. Please see the Registration Form for more information, and to reserve space.

Pre-Tour

For those who just cannot wait, we will have a pre-tour on Wednesday, May 1, 1991. We will start in Nashville, and wind up in Corinth Wednesday evening. The bus will take pre-tour participants back to Nashville on Sunday afternoon, at the conclusion of the tour.

Wiley Sword has written a new book, an in-depth study of the 1864 Tennessee campaign, which should be available in April, 1991. He will lead us on a tour of sites associated with that campaign, sharing with us his research and interpretations at Nashville, Franklin, Spring Hill, and Columbia. We will then follow Buell's 1862 route to Savannah, Tennessee, where we will have dinner.

We will begin the pre-tour on Wednesday, May 1, 1991 at 8:00 a.m., at the Days Inn - Airport, 2345 Atrium Way (off Briley Parkway), Nashville, TN 37210. **Please**

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Shiloh

April 6-7, 1862

In the fall of 1861, General Albert Sidney Johnston was the highest ranking field general in the Confederacy. President Davis appointed him to command in the west. His defensive line extended across the State of Kentucky. His army was vastly outnumbered and ill-equipped; so he maintained his position mostly by bluff. But early in 1862 his bluff was called. First, his right flank was swept away when his forces under General Zollicoffer were badly beaten at Mill Springs on January 19; then the unknown General Ulysses S. Grant took Fort Henry (which guarded the Tennessee River) and Fort Donelson (which guarded the Cumberland). Since the Federal fleet of gunboats gave the Union control of the rivers, they could quickly move their numerically superior armies by water up either river. Johnston therefore had no choice but to fall back behind the line of the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers.

President Lincoln gave General Henry Wager Halleck virtual control of all Federal operations West of the Alleghenies. He ordered Buell, with 20,000 men, to join Grant, who had about 40,000, at Savannah, Tennessee. Halleck planned to use this combined force to move southward against Corinth, Mississippi. Corinth was the railroad crossroads of the Confederate west, and Halleck predicted that taking Corinth would be "the decisive movement" that would end the war.

Grant remained at Savannah, awaiting Buell's Army of the Ohio, which had been held up at Columbia, Tennessee by Johnston's cavalry. But Grant sent his men to the West side of the Tennessee River. The 3rd division, under Lew Wallace, was at Crumps Landing. About four miles to the south, five more divisions, under Generals William T. Sherman, John A. McClernand, W. H. L. (Will) Wallace, Stephen A. Hurlbut and Benjamin M. Prentiss, camped near Pittsburg Landing, around a small Methodist Church called "Shiloh," which is Hebrew for "place of peace."

Meanwhile, Johnston had concentrated his forces at Corinth, only 12 miles south. General Pierce Gustave Toussaint Beauregard was second in command. Their 40,000 men were now the Army of the Mississippi: four corps led by Generals Leonidas Polk, Braxton Bragg, William J. Hardee and John C. Breckinridge.

It was evident to everyone in Corinth and in Richmond that they should attack, and try to destroy, Grant's army at Pittsburg Landing before Buell could get there. Success would leave Buell exposed, and win back west Tennessee and Kentucky. So the Confederates left Corinth on April 3, hoping to surprise the Federals.

What was evident to the Confederates was not even considered a serious possibility by Grant or Sherman. They sent out a few pickets, dug no fortifications and made no defensive plans. Johnston's attack was launched at dawn on Sunday, April 6, 1862. It is still the most successful surprise attack on American forces in history, other than Pearl Harbor.

Because of the river to the east, and deep, water-filled ravines that nearly surrounded the Federal camp site, there were only two ways that an army could get in or out of the area. One was to the southwest, through which Johnston's army was attacking; the other was Pittsburg Landing, at the northeast corner of the Federal camp ground.

It appears that Johnston's tactical plan was to push the Federals back from the 'southwest entrance,' and then push up his right, near the river, and take the landing, cutting Grant's army off from reinforcement, supplies or retreat.

His troop disposition was ill-suited to the push up the right, but did succeed in pushing Sherman and Prentiss well back, virtually destroying Prentiss' division in the bargain.

On the Federal right (Confederate left), McClernand came up to help Sherman. Nearer the river, Will Wallace and Hurlbut set up a defensive position along a farm lane that came to be known as the "Hornet's Nest," blocking Johnston's drive towards the landing. They were joined by Prentiss and the survivors of his division that were still willing to fight. Throughout the morning and afternoon, various Confederate units launched costly and unsuccessful frontal attacks against the Hornet's Nest.

At about 2 p.m., Johnston personally directed an assault that swept away the far right of the Hornet's Nest line. The road to the landing was open. Johnston sent staff members to gather the Confederate troops in the area; but when they returned, they found him collapsed in the saddle. By about 2:30, Johnston was dead. Whether he would have sent his troops to take the landing, by-passing the Hornet's Nest, had he lived another half hour—and what effect that would have had on the battle and on history—are among the unanswerable questions of Shiloh.

With Johnston's death, Beauregard was in over-all command; but he was in the rear, and Bragg was in command on the spot. He used the troops for additional frontal assaults on the Hornet's Nest. It was not until after 5:00 p.m. that the Confederates managed to surround the Union position. They poured in from all sides; Will Wallace was mortally wounded; Prentiss and 2,200 Federal soldiers were captured.

But Grant had used the afternoon to prepare new defenses at the landing. He put every piece of artillery he could get his hands on in front of the landing; the Federal guns extended for nearly half a mile. Remnants of Hurlbut's and Will Wallace's infantry were in line fronting south, with McClernand and Sherman bent back to the north. Thousands of Federal troops were crowding the landing or in the woods, unwilling to fight further. Confederate commanders at the front were desperately trying to organize an assault on Grant's last line before darkness fell, when they received an order from General Beauregard that would become one of the most controversial of the war. The order was to stop the fighting. Beauregard had received a report from one of his cavalry commanders (Ben Hardin Helm, who was Abraham Lincoln's brother-in-law) that Buell was heading for northern Alabama; Beauregard therefore felt they could finish Grant's army the next day.

In fact, Buell was then at Pittsburg Landing. Throughout the night, Buell's troops were ferried across the river. By early morning, most of Nelson's, Crittenden's and McCook's divisions were across.

Grant had reinforcements of his own. He had ordered Lew Wallace to reinforce the army that morning, but Wallace did not arrive until after nightfall. Grant would later accuse Wallace of neglect in his march; but he was happy to see Wallace's division that night.

Darkness brought a sense of relief to the Federal army. They had survived. The night turned cold; the heavens opened with a thunderstorm. Lightening flashed quick and gruesome images of the dead and wounded; the living were soaked by a driving rain. Two Federal gunboats fired shells randomly at 15 minute intervals through the night. They kept men of both sides awake and spread terror through the wounded lying on the field, but did little damage to the Confederate army.

The Confederates' attack on Sunday morning had suc-

Tour Schedule

Variations will be announced on tour. Times approximate.

Thursday, May 2, 1991

Breakfast on your own, as on each day of tour.

8:00 a.m.—Board buses

Morning—Siege of Corinth (May, 1862); Battle of Corinth (October, 1862)

Lunch in Tupelo, Mississippi

Afternoon—Stop at Tupelo National Battlefield; Battle of Brice's Crossroads

5:30 p.m.—Return to Hotel

6:30 p.m.—Command Post

7:30 p.m.—Dinner. Speaker, Ed Bearss

Friday, May 3, 1991

8:00 a.m.—Board buses

8:15 a.m.—Bragg's headquarters (Curlee House), Corinth

9:30 a.m.—Mickey's: Confederate deployment

Balance of day—Shiloh: first day's battle

5:30 p.m.—Return to Hotel

6:30 p.m.—Command Post

7:30 p.m.—Dinner. Speaker, Wiley Sword on "Albert Sidney Johnston—How Good A General?"

Saturday, May 4, 1991

8:00 a.m.—Board buses

8:30 a.m.—Lew Wallace's march

9:30 a.m.—Savannah, Tennessee: Grant's headquarters (Cherry Mansion); arrival of the Army of the Ohio

Balance of day—Shiloh: second day's battle, and pursuit

5:30 p.m.—Return to Hotel

Fun Night—A Tennessee barbecue (with live music, fun and surprises), at Shiloh Church grounds


Sunday, May 5, 1991

8:00 a.m.—Board buses for trip to Memphis, and tour of sites on the way.

11:00 a.m.—The Civil War in Memphis

12:30 p.m.—Lunch in Memphis

1:30 p.m.—Tour concludes in Memphis


ceeded because Grant and Sherman had not taken elementary precautions. Incredibly, though he was in the very presence of a hostile force, Beauregard did the same thing on Sunday night. He did not gather his troops together; nor did he even try to keep a watch on what his opponent was doing.

Only Forrest remained vigilant. He learned of Buell's arrival, and rode to urge either a night attack or immediate withdrawal. But Beauregard was nowhere to be found. He therefore did not know of the arrivals of Buell and Wallace; the Federal counterattack would find the Confederates unprepared.

It came at about 6:30 a.m. Grant's survivors advanced cautiously on the Federal right. On the Federal left, Buell's troops fought the Confederate infantry that had taken the Hornet's Nest. The Confederates fought back tenaciously, and much of the fighting was hand-to-hand. But Buell and Wallace had given the Federals over 22,500 fresh soldiers; ultimately, they made the difference.

Beauregard still hoped to save the victory. At about 2 p.m., he personally led his last relatively fresh brigade in a final effort to drive in the Federal line. Supported by several

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Armchair Generalship

by Marshall D. Krolick



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Henry, Robert S., *As They Saw Forrest; "First With the Most" Forrest*.

Horn, Stanley, *The Army of Tennessee*.

Johnson, Robert U. and Clarence C. Buel, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*.

Jones, Archer, *Confederate Strategy from Shiloh to Vicksburg*.

Jordan, Thomas P. and J.P. Pryor, *Campaigns of Lieut. Gen. N.B. Forrest*.

Kitchens, Ben Earl, *Rosecrans Meets Price*.

Lamers, William M., *The Edge of Glory, A Biography of General William S. Rosecrans*.

Lewis, Lloyd, *Sherman, Fighting Prophet*.

Lytle, Andrew N., *Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company*.

McDonough, James L., *Shiloh—In Hell Before Night*.

Martin, David G., *The Shiloh Campaign*.

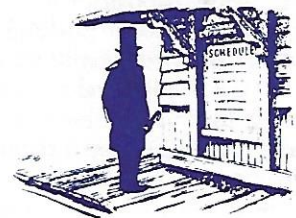
Rogge, Robert E., "Devil at the Crossroads," *America's Civil War*, Sept., 1990.

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BULLETIN BOARD



On the Tour: Please be prompt in boarding the buses at the appropriate time each morning to allow maximum time for touring. A bus marshal will be on each bus to help you. If you plan a side excursion, or for any other reason will not be on the bus, you must notify your bus marshal so that buses are not detained waiting for you.

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other regiments, they attacked McCook's division. McCook was pushed back—but a fresh Union brigade came into action, and the Federal line held. It was becoming apparent that the Confederate army was about to dissolve; they simply could not cope with the fresh Federal troops that kept arriving, all day long. For a few moments, Beauregard sat quietly and thought of how close they had come. He then accepted reality, and ordered the retreat.

The Battle of Shiloh was over. It had produced nearly 25,000 casualties—the same as at Waterloo, and more than in all prior American wars, combined. It would be an understatement to say that it shocked the country; the people of neither north nor south were ready for anything like this. But it caused neither side to think of quitting. It would be a long war, after all. And it would be fought to the finish.

Shiloh is today again a place of peace; of calm, natural beauty. We hope that you will come and explore it with us.

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note that accommodations on Tuesday night are NOT included in the pre-tour. You will have to make arrangements for your accommodations on your own. We have arranged for a special rate for participants who wish to stay at the Days Inn on Tuesday night (\$46 single/\$50 double); if you wish to stay there, call the Days Inn at (615) 885-2372, identify yourself as being with The Civil War Round Table and make your reservations. The Days Inn will provide free transportation from the Nashville airport.

Again, the bus will take pre-tour participants back to Nashville on Sunday afternoon, at the conclusion of the tour. We should reach Nashville by about 5:30 p.m.

Finally, if you wish to drive on the pre-tour (rather than be on the bus), please let the registrar know (as soon as possible, so we can plan properly); we will have a copy of the specific routes for you on Wednesday morning.

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