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THE VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN - COMMAND AND CONTROL OF A SUCCESSFUL  
JOINT OPERATION

by

Jeffrey Harbeson  
LCDR, USN

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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## ABSTRACT

### THE VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN - Command and Control of a Successful Joint Operation

The Vicksburg campaign is an excellent example of a successful joint operation and a superb demonstration of the principles of war. This paper will explore the principle of unity of command and the joint command and control relationship present during the campaign. I will examine the extent to which well defined command and control contributed to successful joint operations in the Vicksburg Campaign. The argument is presented that this command and control arrangement was not clearly delineated at the beginning of the Civil War and was more of an evolutionary progression that combined chance opportunities, unique personalities and fortuitous incidents.

General Grant's utilization of key concepts as an operational commander will be explored to determine how joint command and control was structured by the operational commander. This command and control organization was developed to facilitate obtaining the strategic goal of securing the Mississippi River for the North and ultimately strangling the Confederacy.

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## INTRODUCTION

For every objective, seek unity of command and unity of effort<sup>1</sup>

The campaign to capture Vicksburg provides a clear illustration how the application of operational art and joint command and control were critical to the Union's success at Vicksburg and will be critical to any future battle. Although the Army and Navy cooperated throughout the Civil War, it was not until the two services were able to focus on a clear objective, under one operational commander, that they were able to attain a strategic goal.

The joint command and control structure and cooperation that matured during the Civil War can be traced to earlier conflicts. The results of the rudimentary lessons learned during the Mexican War and Second Seminole Wars were never written as doctrine, but, the importance of this early joint cooperation was not lost on the tactical commanders. Joint cooperation resulted in the success of the Union forces at Vicksburg and proved joint operations and unity of command had become the necessity. FM 100-5 states, unity of command means that all the forces are under one responsible commander...with the requisite authority to direct all forces in pursuit of a unified purpose.<sup>2</sup> This concept was realized by the tactical and operational commanders.

This paper will show how GEN Grant, as the operational commander, considered and answered the four key questions of

objective, sequence of actions, forces available and risk. These four areas were considered in depth then clearly resolved as he developed his successful campaign. The following discussion will illustrate how GEN Grant incorporated the concepts of center of gravity, decisive points, lines of operation and culmination. The combination of these concepts and the ultimate command and control arrangement devised by Grant produced the Union success during the Vicksburg campaign.

### HISTORY OF JOINT OPERATIONS

The Second Seminole War provided the first opportunity and offered a role for the Navy that was larger than any previous Indian War. This was largely due to the fact that the combat area was constrained on three sides by water. The most important lesson for the Navy was derived from the advantage of synergism of force when operating in close liaison with the Army. This was the first conflict in which the two services had the opportunity to cooperate together. Although there was no unified command, there were numerous instances of joint cooperation at the tactical level. LT Levi Powell's expedition into the Everglades typifies this cooperation as "[m]ore often than not, the army turned its vessels over to the Navy to operate, and the Navy loaned it's sailors and marines to the Army."<sup>3</sup> In fact, during more than half of the War, the Naval flotilla in Florida operated under

the direction of the Secretary of War.<sup>4</sup>

The Mexican War offered another opportunity to develop and implement joint procedures and operational guidance. The Vera Cruz expedition was perhaps the most successful example of joint cooperation during this conflict. The tactical commanders of both services developed a mutually supportive role out of necessity, rather than a result of formal direction. Commodores Perry and Conner were actively engaged with GEN Scott and assisted in planning such details as to selection of landing sites and in providing Naval guns and gun crews to help batter down the walls of Vera Cruz. Despite the close cooperation generated at the tactical levels of command, the upper echelon commanders were still facing discord with cooperation between the services. President Polk noted a lack of coordination between the services, such as Secretary of the Navy Mason's ignorance of the date of the projected landing in support of the Vera Cruz expedition.<sup>5</sup>

Joint operations prior to Vicksburg did occur during the Civil War period and during previous conflicts. GEN Grant was involved in several of these rudimentary joint operations and developed close ties with the Navy after realizing the benefits of cooperation among the two services. These friendships and working relationships originated at the tactical level and were instrumental in forging the alliances and cooperation that would later be needed during Vicksburg.



## UNION STRATEGY

At the onset of the Civil War, LT GEN Winfield Scott, Commanding General of the Army, conceived a two part plan to ensure victory over the South. The first step was to create a blockade around the South all the way from the Chesapeake Bay to the Rio Grand.<sup>6</sup> The next phase was to seize and control the Mississippi river with " coordinating forces " moving North from New Orleans and South from Cairo, Ill.<sup>7</sup> Scott's plan, called the " Anaconda plan ", was belittled by many Northerners and Southerners alike as the strategic importance of a western river was not understood by a vast majority of people in the Northeast.<sup>8</sup> Lincoln, an arbitrator, was far from critical of this plan and quietly assented to its validity.

Overall strategy and objectives during the Vicksburg campaign period appears to never have been formally stated from the President down to all the subordinate commanders. However, the importance of Vicksburg was realized by many at the strategic and operational levels. Porter became aware of Lincoln's overall strategy rather haphazardly during a visit to Washington to brief Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles on his proposal for seizing New Orleans. Secretary Welles took Porter to the White House to meet with Lincoln and present his proposal. Lincoln expanded the conference to include Scott's successor, GEN McClellan ( Commanding General ) and Secretary

of State Seward. Throughout the conference Porter noted that the President stated, " This should have been done sooner. The Mississippi is the backbone of the rebellion...This is a most important expedition, but we must be able to proceed at once toward Vicksburg."<sup>9</sup> This same visit also afforded Porter the opportunity to learn about GEN McClellan's plan to capture Vicksburg. This plan was approved by Lincoln and will be discussed later in this paper.

It is fortuitous for the Union that despite the lack of formal stated intentions from the strategic level, Grant had determined Vicksburg to be his operational objective.

#### STRATEGIC AND MILITARY BACKGROUND

In the fall of 1862 the North had settled on the strategy of capturing Vicksburg and regaining control of the full length of the Mississippi river to New Orleans. Many strategists thought the goal of capturing the " Gibraltar of the Confederacy" was more important than the goal of the Eastern Federal forces attempting to capture Richmond. Lincoln had stated during a strategy conference at the onset of the war, " see what a lot of land those fellows hold, of which Vicksburg is the key. The war can never be brought to a close until that key is in our pocket."<sup>10</sup> His insight into this strategic fact was no doubt shaped by his experiences growing up alongside the Mississippi. He was quick to realize that despite the strategic geographic advantages, Vicksburg

also was the conduit through which European arms, beef and produce flowed to the heart of the Confederacy sustaining the war effort."<sup>11</sup> This paper assumes the premise that Lincoln believed that from a strategic level, Vicksburg was a center of gravity for the Confederacy.

Lincoln's consuming desire for capturing Vicksburg ultimately created a conflict in unity of command that had potentially disastrous consequences. In Sept of 1862, MAJ GEN John A. McClernand, a General who served under GEN Grant, called on President Lincoln and presented his proposal for capturing Vicksburg. McClernand was a politician from Lincoln's home state with no prior military training or experience. Although not blessed with military acumen, he had far reaching political influence and had no trouble obtaining an audience with the President. His plan was to raise an army without drawing upon existing Union forces and proceed to Vicksburg and capture the city. Of course, McClernand would be the commander of this new force. Surprisingly, both Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton approved the plan and gave McClernand the authority to carry out this plan. The secret orders included the notation that the project " would be pushed forward with all possible dispatch, consistent with the other parts of the military service."<sup>12</sup>

The secret order violated the principle of unity of command in at least two instances. General in Chief of the Army, Major General Henry W. Halleck (GEN Grant's superior)

was not informed of this order. Secondly, Vicksburg was in Grant's theater of operations and it was known that Grant was planning an assault on the stronghold.

The only other person to be informed of McClernand's plan was RADM David Porter. Porter, who had been given command of the Mississippi squadron and was visiting Washington to brief Secretary Welles, learned McClernand would lead the assault on Vicksburg. Porter was perplexed since his experience had shown that either GEN Grant or Sherman were more competent to lead the assault. Lincoln was not deterred and told Porter to give his full cooperation to the project. Upon meeting McClernand, Porter was unimpressed and clearly saw the folly in believing this General was going to lead a successful campaign against Vicksburg.<sup>13</sup>

Lincoln also had selected GEN Nathaniel P. Banks as the new commander in the Department of the Gulf ( New Orleans area). Banks' top priority was to open the Mississippi river, however, no mention was made of Gen McClernand's approved plan to capture Vicksburg.<sup>14</sup>

In the summer of 1862, GEN Grant was known to Lincoln only through reports describing his actions on the battlefield. After Shiloh, the majority of these reports were unfavorable at best. GEN Halleck, Grant's superior as commander of all Federal forces in the Department of the West, was equally critical and had disparaged his battlefield performance. In fact, while serving under Halleck, Grant

found he was largely ignored or censured, prompting him to ask to be relieved from serving under Halleck.<sup>15</sup> It was only the convincing reassurances from his friend GEN Sherman, that kept him from resigning.

In July of 1862, Halleck was transferred to Washington, D. C. to become General in Chief of the Federal Army. Halleck drastically reduced Grants's department upon departure for Washington. However, in October 1862, GEN Grant was formally named Commander of the Department of Tennessee with jurisdiction along the entire Mississippi river. As the new commander of the West, Grant relayed to Halleck that his ambition was to go on the offensive and strike at the southern stronghold of Vicksburg.<sup>16</sup>

In summary, the strategic importance of capturing Vicksburg and securing the Mississippi river was acknowledged by President Lincoln and everyone down to the operational commander. Grant viewed the city as a center of gravity for the western region and would be the primary objective of his campaign. Grant's challenge would be to consolidate and strengthen his command and control organization to provide an efficient means to achieve his objective. Despite the vague guidance and direction provided, Grant was able to devise an operational campaign that would help achieve the Union's strategic goal.

## EARLY JOINT OPERATIONS IN THE VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN

Although the actual siege of Vicksburg lasted only 47 days, the first attempt to capture Vicksburg began more than a year prior to July 1863.

The first attempt was made in the summer of 1862 and involved Naval forces from New Orleans under command of Flag Officer Farragut and forces under Flag Officer Charles H. Davis from Cairo, ILL. Farragut arrived first at Vicksburg and quickly realized the heavily defended city had no intention of surrendering. He went back to New Orleans where he received a decisive order from President Lincoln directing his immediate return to Vicksburg. He returned to Vicksburg more prepared with troops and transport in addition to his fleet of mortar schooners and the added strength of Davis' gunboats. The Union forces bombarded the Vicksburg defenses without results. The city was scarcely damaged and despite the presence of Union forces on the river, Farragut faced a stalemate. In July, Farragut had written to the Navy department that he hoped "soon to have the pleasure of recording the combined attack by Army and Navy, for which we all so ardently long."<sup>17</sup> Realizing the prospects for a combined operation were diminishing, Farragut and Davis called off their assault and departed.

This first attack on Vicksburg is important from the joint command and control aspect in that a naval commander, Farragut, was ordered directly by the President to return

immediately to a site he had earlier withdrawn from.<sup>18</sup> Lincoln evidently had realized the validity of the "Anaconda plan" presented by GEN Scott in the early days of the war. In an effort to achieve his strategy, Lincoln was actually directing the tactical commanders of a single service without a corresponding directive to the Army commander. Besides bypassing the operational commanders there is no evidence to suggest the Army commanders were officially directed to devise a campaign to help attain the President's strategic goals.

This lack of a clearly defined strategic goal and an ambiguous command relationship among the Army and Navy served to thwart achieving the strategic objectives. At this junction of the Vicksburg campaign, Naval tactical commanders were realizing the importance of a combined joint operation. Porter, who commanded a mortar schooner squadron under Farragut noted, "ships cannot crawl up hills 300 feet high, and it is that part of Vicksburg which must be taken by the Army."<sup>19</sup>

October 1862 was significant with respect to a series of incidents which occurred that had an impact on the command and control organization and would, in turn, facilitate joint operations. First, Porter was now a Rear Admiral and commanded the entire Mississippi squadron. Second, the Mississippi squadron was transferred from the War Department, where it had been since inception, to the exclusive direction of Navy Department. Lastly, was the order from the Secretary

of War directing rival flotilla commanders, to " report for duty " to Porter.<sup>20</sup> These changes simplified the command relationship of the Mississippi squadron and made the squadron a cohesive force under Porter.

This change in command organization now placed RADM Porter in equal stature with GEN Grant. The new organization and Porter's revelation to Grant concerning GEN McClernands' ambitions led Grant to make his first attempt at capturing Vicksburg.

**NOVEMBER 1862:** Toward the end of 1862, Grant attempted to attack Vicksburg from the east ( rear ) despite the inherent risk to his lines of operation. GEN Sherman would be responsible for protecting Grants' right flank while proceeding down the river to attack Vicksburg from the north. Porter would assist by transporting Sherman's troops down the river to an appropriate landing site north of the city and would then provide naval bombardment to assist Sherman in his assault. Sherman's assault would provide the diversion for Grant to attack from the rear.

As Grant proceeded South to the heart of Mississippi, his thoughts were complicated by the nagging threat to the command of his forces. He demanded Halleck to explain GEN McClernand's role and whether he was to have a separate and independent command within Grant's. Halleck was surprised at this revelation and promptly wired back to Grant that " you have command of all troops sent to your department, and have



permission to fight the enemy where you please."<sup>21</sup>

Grant now had Halleck's firm support for command and authorization to direct his campaign. Grant decided to place McClernand as a corps commander under him, however, this order would wait until Grant rendezvoused with the rest of his army. Since McClernand was preoccupied with personal affairs and was not present with his new recruits, Sherman took command of the troops, joined up with Porter's fleet and proceeded down the river to Vicksburg.

This first attempt to capture Vicksburg resulted in failure as Grant's supply depot at Holly Springs was destroyed by Confederate cavalry forces. With his base of supplies decimated, he was forced to turn back to Memphis yet was unable to communicate his intended actions to his commanders.<sup>22</sup> Porter and Sherman proceeded to Vicksburg unaware of Grant's decision to abandon the expedition. Sherman was soundly repulsed at Vicksburg and despite the assistance from Porter's gunboats was unable to dent the Confederate defenses. By early January 1863 the first expedition was over.

**ARKANSAS POST:** Dejected and defeated, Sherman would suffer another humiliation in having to turn his army over to McClernand, his senior and successor. However, in an effort to redeem himself, Sherman proposed an attack with the assistance of Porter's gunboats against a Confederate fort known as Arkansas Post. McClernand liked the idea as well and

decided he would lead the Army himself in Grant's absence, since Grant was still returning from his failed attempt to get to the rear of Vicksburg. McClernand viewed the battle as an opportunity to usurp Grant and establish himself as head of the Army of the Mississippi. Porter, although initially supportive of Sherman's plan became abrupt, intransigent, and uncooperative over the thought of McClernand leading the expedition. It was only the convincing argument of GEN Sherman that allowed Porter to put aside his differences for the good of the common goal.<sup>23</sup> Porter acquiesced, but would command the gunboats himself.

The battle for Post of Arkansas was short lived and provides an excellent example of elementary joint operation and cooperation. Porter's gunboats bombarded the fort from the river and Sherman's troops assaulted the fort by land. The discourse erupted after the battle when McClernand wrote the after action report in which he heaped praise upon himself and according to Sherman "almost ignored the action of Porter's fleet altogether."<sup>24</sup> Porter and Sherman were equally distrustful and incensed and wrote Grant to urge him to take command in person. Grant came down from Memphis to observe the situation in person and realized that with the Army and Navy so distrustful of McClernand's ability to command, "nothing was left...but to assume the command myself."<sup>25</sup>

## GRANT TAKES COMMAND

Grant rejoined the Army and took command on 30 January 1863 and made McClernand a corps commander. Grant realized that if he remained in Memphis planning his next attack on Vicksburg while the field Army was located elsewhere, he would not be able to exercise the direct command and control required for this campaign. Despite McClernand's vehement objections, GEN Grant's command was firmly supported by everyone, including President Lincoln.<sup>26</sup>

Now at the end of January 1863 a single figure had emerged to bring unity of command and control for the operation. Prior to this the campaign for Vicksburg and the Mississippi Valley had been plagued by ambiguous direction conflicting personalities and frequent changes in command.

Now there was a single general whose control extended over both banks of the river, including a piece of Arkansas and Louisiana, who had the unqualified support of President Lincoln and General Halleck, the approval of Admiral Porter, and the undivided loyalty of General Sherman. And as Ulysses Grant saw it at the end of January 1863, the real work of the campaign and siege of Vicksburg now began...<sup>27</sup>

Over the next two and a half months, Grant would attempt four more separate amphibious operations directed against Vicksburg or by bypassing it completely. All were unconventional and were referred to by Grant as "experiments."<sup>28</sup> The argument can easily be made that these "experiments" were designed to occupy his troops with the chance of possibly succeeding, while allowing him time to

formulate his true plan of attack. Regardless of the plan, the theme of a joint operation directed by the operational commander was found in each plan.

At this stage of the war Grant, Sherman and Porter had developed a strong working relationship for each other and the capabilities each service could provide. This spirit of cooperation was the product of numerous smaller tactical engagements wherein each commander had demonstrated both ability and a willingness to cooperate.

Despite the failure of these four attempts, all attempts were personally directed by GEN Grant and reinforced the concept of combined joint cooperation.

**JANUARY 1863:** The first project involved cutting a canal across the peninsula in the bend in the Mississippi river directly in across from Vicksburg. If completed, the canal would allow Union forces to bypass the Vicksburg gun emplacements and enter the Mississippi south of the city. This project had been started earlier by Farragut and was held in abeyance until Lincoln directed the resumption of the canal project. Although Grant, Sherman and Porter remained skeptical at best of the canal project, they obediently complied with Grant's direction. An obvious example of the strategic commander directing the " how " of his operational commander.

The canal project ultimately was called off by Grant as the incessant rain caused the river to rise above a temporary

dam and flooded the canal.<sup>29</sup> (Figure 2)

**JANUARY 1863:** The next effort was lead by GEN McPherson and was similar to the first experiment in that it involved cutting an access canal from the Mississippi to Lake Providence which lay a mile inland from the river. The theory was that if the Union fleet could cut a channel to the lakes, then they could navigate down a series of rivers and waterways that led from the lakes to a point on the Mississippi river approximately 250 miles south of Vicksburg.<sup>30</sup> After a few months spent in futile effort floundering in cypress chocked swampland, Grant gave up on the experiment. (Figure 2)

**FEBRUARY 1863:** Grant next directed a combined army navy operation that would utilize a waterway called Yazoo pass. This waterway branched off the Mississippi and would allow the various forces to land north of Haynes Bluff and bypass the strong Confederate defenses facilitating an attack on Vicksburg from the east.

In this joint operation the navy transported the army troops south on the waterway until they faced Confederate guns controlling a narrow passage in the river. Unable to successfully sail past the concentrated gunfire from the shores, the Union forces conceded defeat and retraced their route along the Yazoo back to the Mississippi. (Figure 2)

**FEBRUARY 1863:** The final experiment sanctioned by Grant was devised by RADM Porter and would take place North of

Vicksburg in the southern end of the Yazoo river at an area known as Steeles Bayou route. The plan would take Porter's gunships on a tortuous ride along flooded streams that could support ships and ultimately arrive behind Vicksburg defenses to attack the rear of the city. This would be in concert with GEN Sherman's troops who would march to the proposed rendezvous - only 20 miles by land and 200 miles by water! The expedition came to a nearly disastrous end when Porter's gunboats were rendered dead in the water. The Confederates accomplished this tactic by placing impenetrable willow limbs in the river and fallen trees in the river astern his vessels. Porter never did reach his destination and GEN Sherman's arrival at the last moment saved Porter from the approaching Confederates and allowed the river boats to retrace their path through the flooded forests. (Figure 2)

Yet despite this fourth failure, these experiments by Grant, Sherman and Porter demonstrated continuing cooperation between the two services. Grant never criticized the failures and Porter's comment seems an appropriate summary. " One of those episodes of war ... but we gained a lot of experience which would serve us in the future."<sup>31</sup>

The other overlying theme is the importance of direct communications to support command and control. During the Civil War the communications circuits involved telegraph lines and personal hand delivered letters. These means of communication were unreliable at best and were hardly

conducive to enabling the operational commander to effectively respond to the changing environment. Without efficient communications, command and control can be quickly lost and disastrous consequences can result. This was evident during Grant's initial expedition in December 1862 to approach the rear of Vicksburg while Sherman and Porter conducted a simultaneous attack from the North of the city. With his supply line destroyed, Grant was forced to retreat with his army but was unable to inform Sherman and Porter who continued their assault without knowledge of Grant's predicament.

Porter's plight during Steeles Bayou expedition also illustrates the importance of instantaneous communications for any conflict. Rendered dead in the water in the backwater of the bayous and under fire by the Confederates, the only request for help he could send was via letter with a courier who attempted to find GEN Sherman. Luckily, Sherman did receive the request for help and arrived with his troops just in time to rescue Porter.

Then as now, effective communications are the key to any joint operation. All commanders involved in any operation need to talk with each other to coordinate and resolve differences. Interoperability between each service is essential in a constantly changing environment. The importance of this fact has been reaffirmed from the Civil War up through Desert Storm and is reinforced during present day operations in the Adriatic.

**FINAL ASSAULT:** In January 1863, Grant's headquarters were located on Porter's flagship on the Mississippi north of Vicksburg. This afforded Grant an excellent opportunity for daily face-to-face meetings with his subordinate commanders and to establish the unity of command and the command and control relationship among his subordinates. In an effort to refine his command and control organization, Grant restructured his subordinate commanders, and combined his forces by giving Sherman command of one Corps and McClernand command of another, thus placing them on the same level. This negated McClernand's seniority over Sherman and kept both subordinate to Grant.

Assembled at the mouth of the Yazoo above Vicksburg, Porter and Grant's staffs continued their exhaustive analysis and review of the operation to determine the actual plan of attack. By March 1863, after lengthy debate and discussion, Grant had decided to march the army to a point south of Vicksburg, and then ferry it across to the east bank of the Mississippi. Porter had consented to give Grant his full cooperation in executing the plan.<sup>32</sup> Porter's support was critical as Grant would need Porter's assistance to provide gun boats for protection and to ferry his troops across the river. Porter's fleet was the key. On 16 April 1863, Porter sent 8 gunboats down the Mississippi past the Vicksburg defenses. All 8 vessels made a relatively successful passage - none were sunk. The navy had proven it could support



Grant's operation and Grant, buoyed by the success, sent 6 more transports down the river a week later. Ultimately, it would be a combined joint attack on the city as Porter's gunboats and mortar schooners directed naval gunfire from the river supporting the army's assault from the land.

In reviewing Grant's plan, one must also consider Northern political climate in January 1863. Civilian morale was at the nadir. With the exception of the costly victory at Antietam, there had been no victories in the east and the Union was still reeling from the bloody defeat at Fredricksburg. Each of Grant's previous assaults on Vicksburg had ended in failure. These failures combined with the continued charges of incompetence at the battle of Shiloh led to calls for Grant's removal.

The original movement planned by Grant to go back to Memphis and advance through Central Mississippi to the rear of Vicksburg was reversed on orders from the War Department. Grant was directed to use the river as his main line of operation to preclude the appearance of a retreat. The Northern public wanted action from their commanders, and with increased calls for Grant's removal, he could not give the appearance of retreating from Vicksburg. Despite the harsh widespread criticism of Grant, Lincoln remained supportive.

South of Vicksburg, Grant later met with Porter and they revised the landing site. By the end of April Porter's transports and gun boats had ferried Grant's troops across the

river into Mississippi. (Figure 3)

At the end of April, when Grant's army was crossing the river under Porter's protection, other vessels from Porter's squadron were conducting a feint against the beaches and bluffs north of Vicksburg to confuse the Confederates into believing Grant's actions were only a deception and that the real attack would be from the north.

Grant identified the east bank of the river as a decisive point. Once his army was in Mississippi south of Vicksburg, Grant placed the Confederates on the defensive while he retained the advantage of maneuver. This allowed Grant to use exterior lines of operation to surround the city.

Grant would continue to the north and east, capturing Jackson, Miss where he turned west toward Vicksburg. In addition to capturing Jackson, he would also be involved in significant battles at Raymond, Champion Hill and Big Black River. By the end of May, Grant had arrived on the outskirts of the Vicksburg and dug in to begin his 47 day siege of the city. Grant, as the operational commander, then directed the coordinated siege that culminated on 04 July 1863 with Vicksburg's surrender. The culminating point for the city came after the relentless bombardment and paucity of food became too much for the defenders to endure. (Figure 4)

This 47 day siege demonstrated a refined level of close cooperation between the two services. The Navy provided naval bombardment on the city to compliment the Army's ground

assault. Joint cooperation was so harmonious that in some instances, naval guns were removed from some ships to assist the army in bombarding the fortifications in the rear of the city. Grant summarized the joint cooperation between the two services by stating: " The Navy under Porter was all it could be during the entire campaign [which]...could not have been made at all without such assistance. The most perfect harmony reigned between the two arms of the service."<sup>33</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The above discussion clearly shows that efficient joint cooperation in the absence of a formal command and control organization was a crucial factor if not the significant key in determining the success of the Vicksburg campaign.

Early attempts to capture Vicksburg were disorganized and lacked unity of effort. Although the Union had the forces to attack and capture Vicksburg, they lacked an operational commander who realized the capability of each service and how each could contribute toward the campaign.

GEN Grant was the operational commander with the vision to realize the merits of joint command and control and the value of unity of command. He brought this vision to fruition by building a strong relationship with GEN Sherman and ADM Porter. These three individuals were the leaders in establishing the unprecedented level of joint cooperation between the two services.

Although joint command and control and unity of effort between the services was crucial, GEN Grant's use of operational art in conducting his campaign illustrates Grant's consideration and application of many key concepts.

First and foremost was the objective. Grant clearly identified Vicksburg as his objective as early as the conclusion of the battle of Shiloh. Vicksburg was viewed as a center of gravity and from that point on, all efforts, battles and actions were conducted with the sole purpose of capturing

the city.

His sequence of actions to achieve his objective were unconventional, numerous and varied but had one common theme - joint cooperation. Grant's desire to get below Vicksburg to attack from the south would require moving not only his army but the naval fleet and transports as well. This would later be an important point because the navy would transport a portion of the army's supplies down the river, although in reality, Grant's army would subsist off the land in their march toward Vicksburg. This joint assistance demonstrated how Grant was committed to using all available forces and how all forces were inextricably linked to the success of the campaign.

All of Grant's experiments involved a certain degree of risk. His final plan was perhaps the greatest gamble considering his army would be operating in the heart of the south with no immediate means of reinforcement. Despite the inherent risks, Grant firmly believed that this course of action would offer the greatest opportunity for success.

Additionally, the significance of this historical case study for today's warfighter is twofold. First, clearly defined command and control will be the key to success of any future joint operation. This author believes that future ambiguous command and control, such as the organization that existed during the Dominican Republic intervention in 1965 will only preclude disaster. The command and control

structure established during the Gulf war, although superior to earlier U.S. military attempts at joint command and control should not be considered the pinnacle of efficiency. There is still much progress to be made in the area of interoperability and joint peacetime training.

Lastly, communications technology must be developed and disseminated to the operational and tactical commanders to allow operators and commanders to communicate quickly and effectively with their joint service counterparts. In today's high speed battle environment, the success of any mission or operation will ultimately depend on clear efficient command and control and unobstructed instantaneous communications.

APPENDIX I  
AREAS OF OPERATION

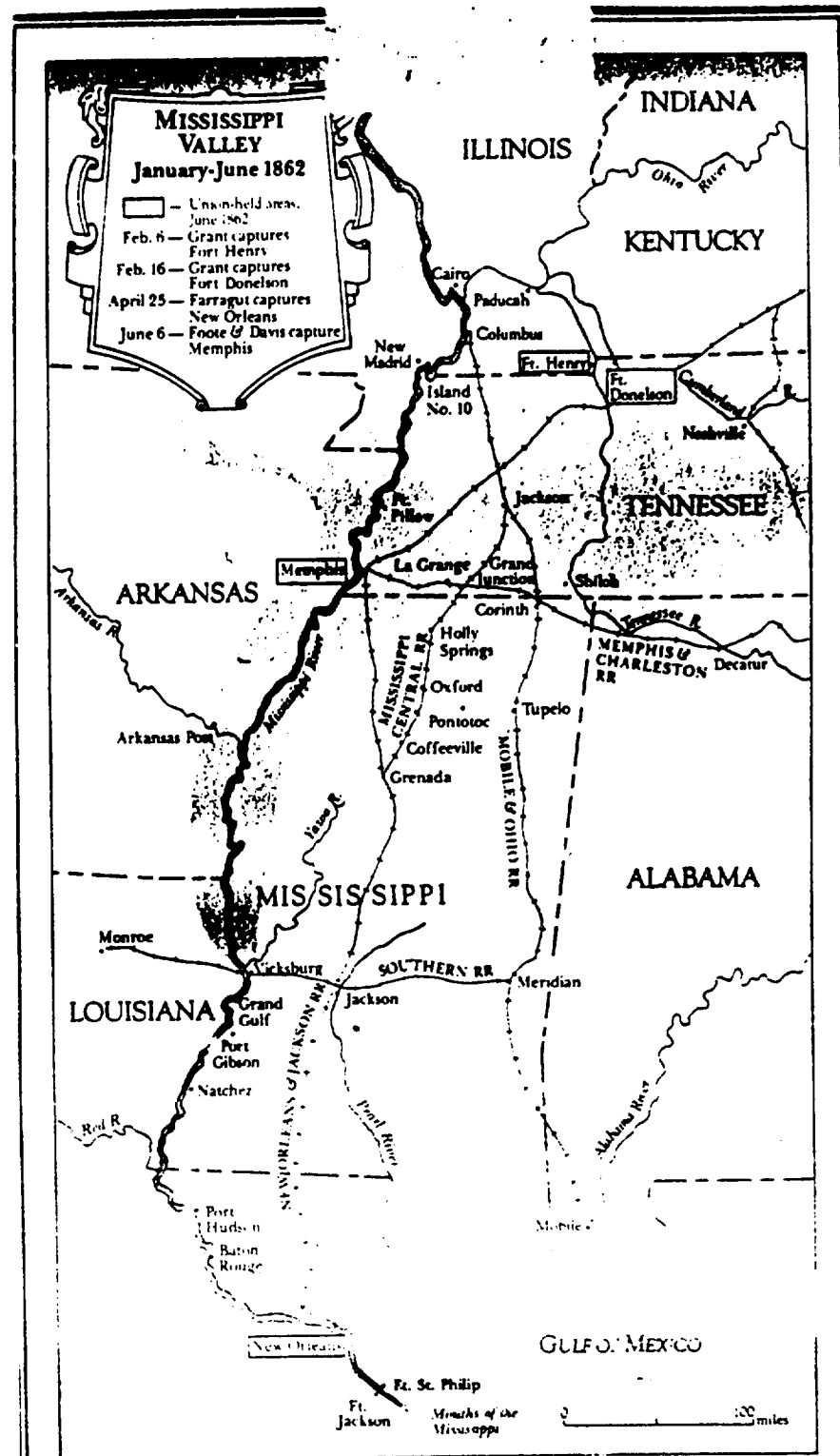




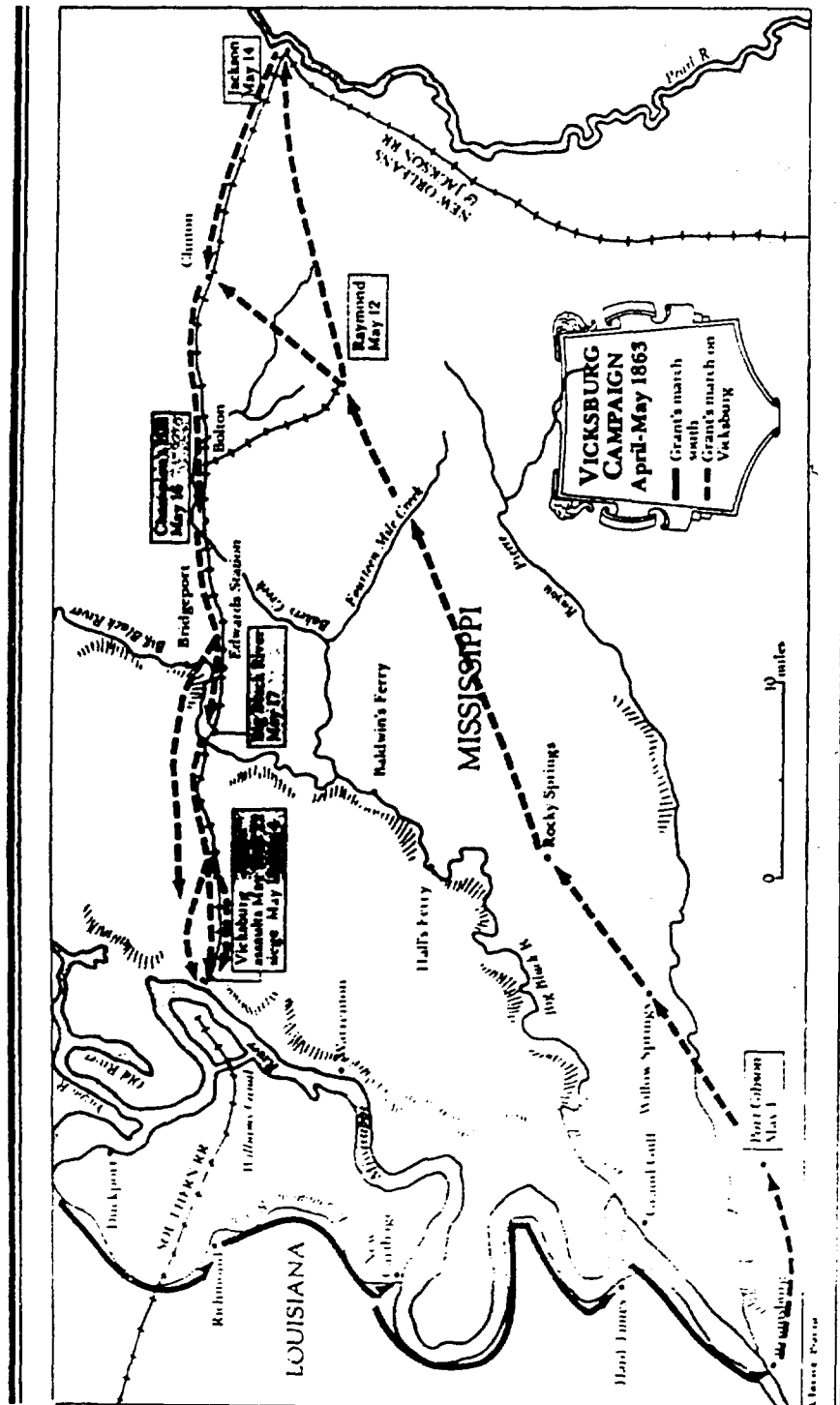
FIGURE 1  
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY  
January-June 1862

Source: Samuel Carter, The Final Fortress: The Campaign  
for Vicksburg 1862-1863 (New York: ST. Martin's Press, 1980).



FIGURE 3

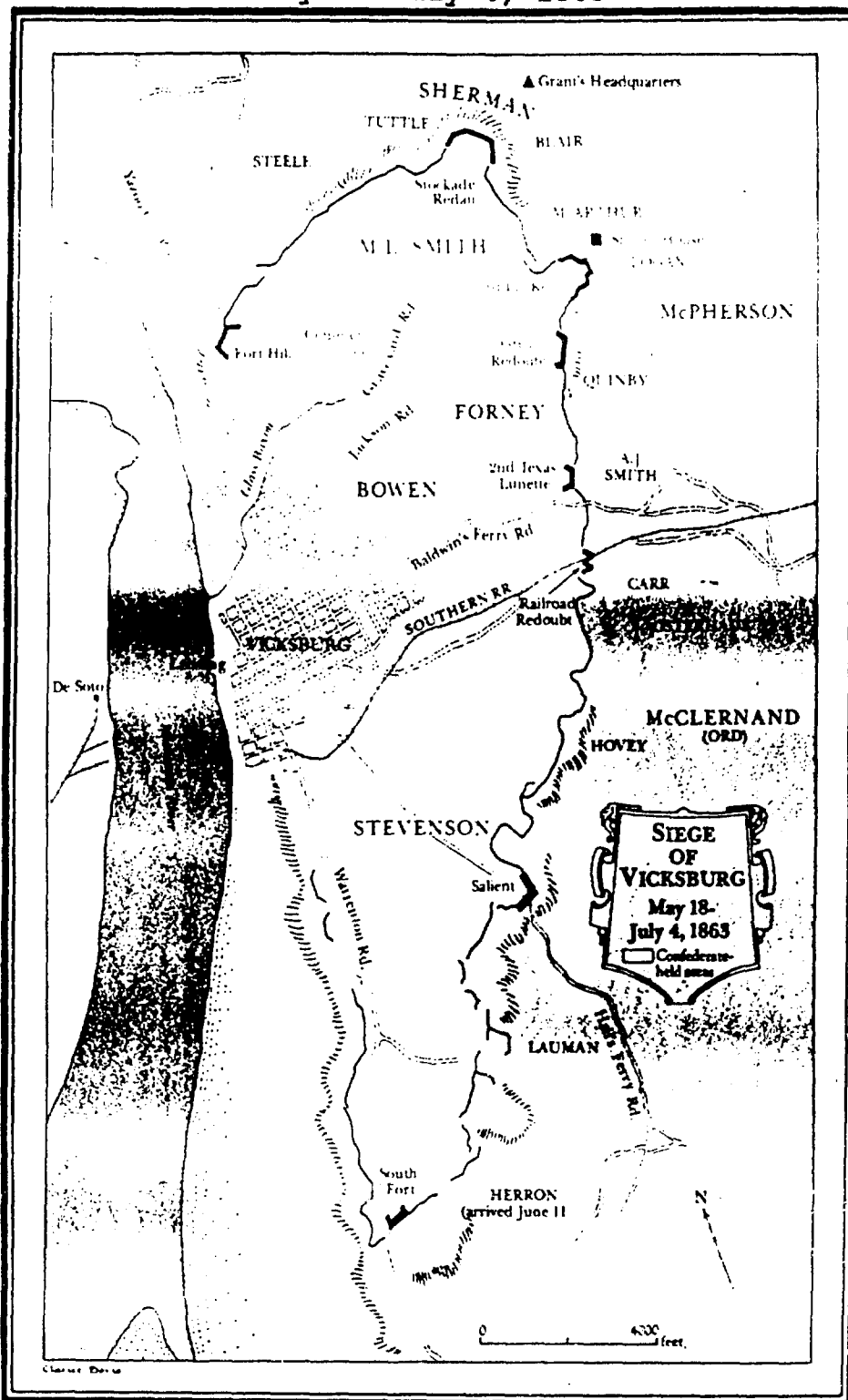
VICKSBURG CAMPAIGN  
April-May 1863



Source: Samuel Carter, The Final Fortress: The Campaign for Vicksburg 1862-1863 (New York: ST. Martin's Press, 1980).

FIGURE 4

SIEGE OF VICKSBURG  
May 18-July 4, 1863



Source: Samuel Carter, The Final Fortress: The Campaign for Vicksburg 1862-1863 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980).

## NOTES

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2. Ibid., p. 2-5.
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5. Jack K. Bauer, The Mexican War 1846-1848 (New York: McMillan Publishing, 1974), p. 237.
6. Brother Against Brother: Time-Life Books History of the Civil War (New York: St Remy Press, 1990), p. 230.
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8. Ibid.
9. Samuel Carter, The Final Fortress: The Campaign for Vicksburg 1862-1863 (New York: St Martin's Press, 1980), p. 7.
10. Richard Wheeler, The Siege of Vicksburg (New York: Crowell, 1978), p. 1.
11. Brother Against Brother: Time-Life Books History of the Civil War, p. 228.
12. Samuel Carter, p. 85.
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15. Ibid., p. 80.
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17. Battles and Leaders of the Civil War (New York: The Century Company, 1884), p. 557.
18. Brother Against Brother: Time-Life Books History of the Civil War, p. 228.
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25. Samuel Carter, p. 107.
26. Ibid.
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28. Ibid., p. 110.
29. Brother Against Brother: Time-Life Books History of the Civil War, p. 235.
30. Ibid.
31. Samuel Carter, p. 148.
32. Samuel Carter, p. 152.
33. Joint Pub 1, Joint Warfare of the U.S. Armed Forces (Washington: National University Press, 1991), p. 10.

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