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The Vicksburg Campaign commenced in the fall of 1862. Major General Ulysses S. Grant was tasked with the seemingly impossible goal of capturing the well defended city of Vicksburg, Mississippi. The odds were tremendously stacked against Grant. He did not have enough troops to follow the general military guideline of a 3 to 1 ratio when attacking an enemy in the defense, nor did the Vicksburg fortress provide favorable terrain for the attacker. He did not have superiority of numbers compared to other Union generals that fought against Confederate forces. Finally, he was fighting in a vast wilderness, where the people supported the enemy. Despite the odds against Grant to capture Vicksburg, he was successful by utilizing maneuver warfare, adhering to policy, maintaining unity of effort and exploiting logistics.

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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

TITLE:

The Vicksburg Campaign:
A Case Study on the Leadership and Actions of General U. S. Grant and How They Led to the Fall of Vicksburg

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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Executive Summary

Title: A Case Study on the Leadership and Actions of General U. S. Grant and How They Led to the Fall of Vicksburg

Author: Major Aaron T. Frazier, United States Marine Corps

Thesis: The leadership and actions of General U. S. Grant led to the fall of Vicksburg.

Discussion: The Vicksburg Campaign commenced in the fall of 1862. Major General Ulysses S. Grant was tasked with the seemingly impossible goal of capturing the well defended city of Vicksburg, Mississippi. The odds were tremendously stacked against Grant. He did not have enough troops to follow the general military guideline of a 3 to 1 ratio when attacking an enemy in the defense, nor did the Vicksburg fortress provide favorable terrain for the attacker. He did not have superiority of numbers compared to other Union generals that fought against Confederate forces. Finally, he was fighting in a vast wilderness, where the people supported the enemy. Despite the odds against Grant to capture Vicksburg, he was successful by utilizing maneuver warfare, adhering to policy, maintaining unity of effort and exploiting logistics.

Conclusion: Grant's adherence to policy, utilization of unity of effort, and the use of logistics, led to the fall of Vicksburg.

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Introduction

The Vicksburg Campaign commenced in the fall of 1862. Major General Ulysses S. Grant was tasked with the seemingly impossible goal of capturing the well defended city of Vicksburg, Mississippi. The odds were tremendously stacked against Grant. He did not have enough troops to follow the general military guideline of a 3 to 1 ratio when attacking an enemy in the defense, nor did the Vicksburg fortress provide favorable terrain for the attacker. He did not have superiority of numbers compared to other Union Generals that fought against Confederate forces. Finally, he was fighting in a vast wilderness, where the people supported the enemy. Despite the odds against Grant to capture Vicksburg, he was successful by utilizing maneuver warfare, adhering to policy, maintaining unity of effort and exploiting logistics.

The American Civil War began in 1861 with the secession of the Southern States and the attack on Fort Sumter. The Union and Confederate Armies were split between the Eastern and Western Theatres of operations. From 1861 to 1862, the Union in the east arguably had no victories and had four different commanders in two years. President Lincoln was losing political support for the war due to lack of success but found a glimmer of hope in the west. Unlike the Eastern Theater, the Western Theatre of operations was experiencing success with the seizure of Forts Henry and Donaldson and the Battle of Shiloh. President Lincoln's strategy for the West was to cut the Confederacy in two and take control of the Mississippi River. The most important city on the river was Vicksburg. Lincoln stated of Vicksburg, "We can take all the northern ports of the Confederacy, and they can defy us from Vicksburg. It means hog and

hominy without limit, fresh troops from all the states of the far South, and cotton country where they can raise the staple without interference."[1]

The President of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, also acknowledged the importance of the Western Theater.[2] Davis ordered General Joseph E. Johnston, returning from active duty after receiving a wound at Seven Pines in the Peninsula, to take command of the Western Theater.[3] Johnston was assigned as overall commander in the west and was directed to coordinate military actions of Generals Pemberton, Bragg, and Kirby Smith.[4] Under General Johnston was General Pemberton who was in charge of the defense of Vicksburg and had at his disposal 43,000 soldiers.[5]

Grant's strength at the time of the campaign consisted of roughly ninety-thousand men.[6] Of those ninety-thousand men, sixty-six thousand were tied down due to the Confederate's skillful placement of cavalry troops that threatened Federal lines of communication in western Tennessee.[7]

Maneuver Warfare

At first glance, the siege of Vicksburg and the subsequent surrender appears to have nothing to do with maneuver warfare. The siege appears to be the typical domination of a force with superior numbers and superior weapons with little thought to the art of maneuver. Upon closer examination, it becomes clear that Grant utilized maneuver warfare to enable his troops to achieve the success that led to the capitulation of Vicksburg.

Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1 (MCDP-1) defines maneuver warfare as a "warfighting philosophy that seeks to shatter the enemy's cohesion through a variety of rapid, focused, and unexpected actions which create a turbulent and rapidly deteriorating

situation with which the enemy cannot cope." [8] Rapidity of movement was at the heart of Grant's generalship as demonstrated during his Vicksburg Campaign.[9]

On 2 November 1862, General Grant moved his Army of the Tennessee south from Boliar, Tennessee, to capture Northwest Mississippi and reopen the Mississippi River.[10] The problem Grant confronted in taking Vicksburg was one that was shared by all other Federal commands.[11] He had to conquer and travel through vast enemy lands, inhabited by hostile people, supported by large and capable field armies.[12]

In his book, *On War*, Carl Von Clausewitz discusses the people in arms. Clausewitz examines the use of insurrection and paraphrased below are the five conditions he states are needed for an insurrection to occur.[13] War must be fought in the interior of a country. Fighting cannot be committed to one battle but many skirmishes to chip away at the enemy's exterior. The area of operations must be large. The country must have character that is suited for that type of war. The country must have rough terrain, rugged mountains and forests. These conditions were exactly what Grant was experiencing when attempting to conquer Vicksburg. Grant dealt with Confederate guerrilla bands that were attacking bridges, railroads, and logistic trains. [14] Grant lacked cavalry forces and resorted to using his regular troops to defend and repair his lines of communications.

Another problem Grant faced was limited access to Vicksburg. A simple study of a map showed that Vicksburg was only accessible by two avenues of approach: parallel to and east of the Mississippi River; or by water down the river itself.[15] (See map 1) Grant's first attempt to capture Vicksburg was an overland campaign. His plan involved two axes of advance which were to converge on the Vicksburg-Jackson region.[16] Grant

led a 45,000 man force from western Tennessee, while his subordinate, Major General William T. Sherman, conducted a river born expedition from Memphis to the Yazoo River.[17] These efforts were unsuccessful because Confederate cavalry, under Brigadier General Nathan B. Forrest and Major General Earl Van Dorn, raided Grant's extended lines of communication at several locations and forced him to give up the land campaign.[18]

Sherman's river-borne expedition fared worse than Grant's overland campaign. The Navy, commanded by Admiral Porter, did not want to advance up the Yazoo River because of the fear of torpedoes.[19] This left Sherman with no option but to march his troops through swampy and flooded terrain. The approach to the enemy was restricted by the Mississippi River on the right and Thompson's Lake on the left.[20] Sherman was surprised to see the strength of enemy formations defending his avenue of approach. He had no way of knowing that the garrison he was attacking was heavily reinforced by Pemberton's troops due to the fact that Grant had called off his operations. After a number of failed attacks, Sherman cancelled the expedition and ordered his troops back to the Yazoo River.(See Map 2)

During the final months of 1862 Grant made four unsuccessful attempts to turn the Confederate Army at Vicksburg in order to reach the high ground east of the city.[21]Many Generals would have stopped after two failed attempts to take Vicksburg and many more would not have even attempted to take Vicksburg due to its heavily and easily defended terrain, but General Grant was different. He knew that Vicksburg was the key to the Western Theater of operation. MCDP-1 states:

Maneuver warfare puts a premium on certain particular human skills and traits. It requires the temperament to cope with uncertainty. It requires flexibility of mind to deal

with fluid and disorderly situations. It requires a certain independence of mind, a willingness to act with initiative and boldness and exploitive mindset that takes full advantage of every opportunity, and the moral courage to accept responsibility for this type of behavior." [22]

These qualities formed the essence of Grant's personality and the generalship that helped his forces take Vicksburg.(See Map 2 and 3)

Grant stated in his memoirs that by January of 1863 the real work of the campaign and the siege of Vicksburg had begun.[23] The problem was to figure out how to secure a footing upon dry ground on the east side of the river from which troops could maneuver against Vicksburg.[24] Three options were discussed at Grant's headquarters boat moored at Milliken's Bend.[25] The first option was to conduct an amphibious assault across the Mississippi River and attack the Vicksburg bluffs;[26] the second option was to pull back forces to Memphis, Tennessee and then renew the drive southward via the Mississippi &Tennessee and Mississippi Central Railroads;[27]the third option entailed marching south past Vicksburg on the east side of the river and establish an advance base on the Louisiana shore, opposite Grand Gulf. The Federals would cross the Mississippi River and transfer their field of operations to the south and east of Vicksburg.[28](See Map 1)

Of the three options given, Grant chose the third that was full of danger and risk. Failure in this option would entail little less than total destruction of his forces but in Grant's mind the gamble justified the end.[29] Grant conceived a campaign that consisted of splitting his forces and utilizing Admiral Porter's fleet as both transports and naval gunfire support.

Under his command, Grant had three corps commanders who were tasked with taking Vicksburg: Major Generals Sherman, McClernand, and McPherson. Sherman's

corps protected the base of operations above Vicksburg, while the corps of McClernand and McPherson marched west of the Mississippi River to get below Vicksburg.[30]

MCDP-1 states that," In order to appear ambiguous and threatening, we should operate on axes that offer numerous courses of action, keeping the enemy unclear as to which we will choose." [31] This action was accomplished on the night of 16-17 April, when Porter ran the batteries of Vicksburg with eight gunboats and three transports.[32]Porter's ships allowed a means for Grant's troops to cross the Mississippi River below Vicksburg. Pemberton, who was lulled by the past three months of slow operations and distracted by Union diversions elsewhere, did not realize the magnitude of the threat posed by Grant splitting his forces.[33]

MCDP-1 states, "the aim is to render the enemy incapable of resisting effectively by shattering his moral, mental, and physical cohesion-his ability to fight as an effective, coordinated whole-rather that to destroy him physically through the incremental attrition of each of his components, which is generally more costly and time-consuming." [34] On 2 May, McClernand and McPherson's troops had maneuvered and outflanked Confederate positions on Grand Gulf. This action forced the Confederate defenders to withdraw, allowing Porter's sailors to promptly occupy Grand Gulf, which served as one of Grant's logistical bases.[35]

From 3 to 9 May, Grant's forces paused in an area between the Big Bayou Pierre and the Big Black River. This allowed for supply trains to catch up with his army and for Sherman's corps to join the main body south of Vicksburg. When Grant ordered offensive operations to resume, the axis of advance was in a northeasterly direction instead of straight at Vicksburg.[36] His goal was to capture the City of Jackson, which

served as a railroad link between Vicksburg and the rest of the Confederate forces in theatre.

The Union advance was met with little opposition, since Pemberton had chosen to pull most of his troops back for the direct defense of Vicksburg. On 14 May, Sherman and McPherson captured Jackson and drove out the Confederate rearguard.[37] Grant ordered Sherman to remain in Jackson and destroy its ability to be used as a railroad center and a manufacturer of military supplies.[38]

The fight that occurred on the western and southwestern avenues of approach to Jackson is not a battle to be remembered because of astute tactics, the great number of casualties or numbers engaged.[39] The battle for Jackson, however, was a major victory for Grant and his Vicksburg Campaign.[40] By turning his columns east and stealing a march on General Pemberton and the Vicksburg Confederates, Grant prevented the fortification of Johnston and Pemberton's forces.[41] Grant prevented the enemy from resisting effectively by destroying his ability to fight as an effective, coordinated whole. (See Map 4)

Grant's actions at Jackson were in stark contrast to how his general-in-chief, General Halleck, fought to take Corinth in 1862. Halleck advanced on Corinth spade first and his troops moved less than a mile a day.[42] Had Halleck been in charge of the operation to take Jackson, Johnston and Pemberton's armies probably could have reinforced each other and been a formidable force. Such an army in possession of Jackson and with railroads passing through for resupplies would have been a terrible threat to the Union Army.[43] Instead, with Grant's emphasis on maneuver and boldness,

he destroyed the enemy's ability to fight as a coordinated whole, by denying them the ability to reinforce and defeat him through attrition.

MCDP-1 states, "an important weapon in our arsenal is surprise, the combat value of which we have already recognized".[44] Grant utilized the weapon of surprise by his action in the vicinity of Champion Hill. Pemberton found himself exposed, uncertain whether he should fight a battle or turn back.[45] Grant opened the battle with 32,000 men converging from three different directions on Pemberton's 23,000 men.[46] Pemberton's men did not fare well and retreated to Vicksburg. (See Map 5)

By 22 May, Grant's forces had suffered two bloody repulses trying to attack the fortifications of Vicksburg. He came to the conclusion that the Confederate citadel could only be taken by a seige.[47] He kept the pressure on the Confederates and on 4 July Pemberton surrendered. The successful siege and fall of Vicksburg could not have been accomplished with a General who focused only on attrition. Grant's concept of operation was a key element that led him to a successful siege and seizure of Vicksburg. (See Map 6)

Grant's mindset of maneuver warfare did not come from studying icons like Napoleon or Alexander the Great. He did not pay attention to his West Point Professor, Dennis Hart Mahan, who taught a course on the "Science of War". Mahan held a view that military history is progressive: starting with Thucydides and ending with Napoleon Bonaparte who, according to Mahan, had perfected the science.[48] Later in life, Grant was referred to as Napoleon, which displeased him greatly. William S. McFeely stated in his biography of Grant, "perhaps he perceived in the small, controlled, frightening, foreign Bonaparte something too close to his own urges for comfort." Perhaps McFeely is

correct but Grant learned maneuver warfare not through study of great captains of history. Rather, he learned it through his experience in the Mexican War.

Grant's experience in the Mexican War molded him into becoming a true maneuverist. He learned how an army can thrive in unknown circumstances and make the best of them. In his memoirs Grant reflected on General Scott's success in the Mexican War:

> He invaded a populous country, penetrating two hundred and sixty miles into the interior, with a force at no time equal to one-half of that opposed to him; he was without a base; the enemy was always entrenched, always on the defensive; yet he won every battle, he captured the capital, and conquered the government. Credit is due to the troops engaged, it is true, but the plans and the strategy were the general's.[49]

Grant states in his memoirs, "I had been in all the engagements in Mexico that is possible for one person to be in." [50] This had given Grant valuable experience how to wage a successful war and how to utilize surprise, deception and flanking attacks-the essence of maneuver warfare. At the Battle of Cerro Gordo in April of 1847, the Federal Army had to conquer an enemy who defended a seemingly impenetrable fortress. Cerro Gordo had been selected by Santa Anna because it was on easily defended high ground.[51] The road to Cerro Gordo zigzagged around a high mountain and was defended by artillery at every point. Attack along the road seemed impossible.[52]General Scott ordered a reconnaissance of the mountainside supervised by Captain Robert E. Lee, Isaac I. Stevens, Z. B. Tower, G. W. Smith, George B. McClellan, and J. G. Forster; The reconnaissance party found a path that could flank the enemy and utilized a labor force to cut and lay a road. This was done without the knowledge of Santa Anna.

As Scott's troops began their attack on Cerro Gordo, Grant, who had been busy since dawn with the supply train, attempted to ride his horse up to the 4th Infantry's

position but was too late. The 4th Infantry was too far away so Grant joined a battery of 24- pounders commanded by Lieutenant George McClellan.[53]

Grant took up field glasses to help direct field artillery on the enemy. More importantly, he observed the battle as it took place and saw the benefits of good reconnaissance and flanking movements. The Mexicans were astonished as the battle commenced and quickly fled to the mountains. Grant states in his memoirs, "The surprise of the enemy was complete, the victory overwhelming: some three thousand prisoners fell into Scott's hands, also a large amount of ordnance and ordnance stores." [54]

Grant experienced first-hand the working of one of the best Generals in American History. Without a doubt, Grant used Scott's style of maneuver warfare when he engaged the Confederate troops during the battle of Vicksburg. Author Geoffrey Perret summarized Grant's experience with General Winfield Scott during the Mexican War:

> Grant did not care for the way Scott bore himself or for the way he referred to himself in the third person. Even so, Grant readily acknowledged that Scott had waged one of the most impressive campaigns in the annals of war. Outnumbered by as much as four to one, Scott had advanced more than two hundred mile into the enemy's heartland and captured his strongly defended capital. His troops had won every battle, met every challenge and tried to conduct the war with as much humanity as the mission allowed. It was a campaign worthy of comparison with Napoleon at his best.[55]

Unity of Effort

Grant understood the importance of unity of effort and understood that capturing Vicksburg could not be accomplished without it. Grant knew he needed the full support of all available army corps commanders, the Navy's Mississippi River Squadron, commanded by Flag Officer Porter, and the cooperation of General-in-Chief Henry W. Halleck.

The Union naval force that played a vital role in capturing Vicksburg began its existence as an Army organization called the Western Flotilla.[56] In 1861, the War Department began procuring combat vessels.[57] The U.S. Navy, which at first wanted little to do with the river operation, provided officers and some of the crews, but the Army owned the boats.[58] The first three commanders of the Western Flotilla were Navy officers but took their orders from the Army department commander.[59]

On 1 October 1862, the flotilla transferred from Army to Navy control.[60]This meant that Porter could essentially veto any plan that Grant came up with. Fortunately for Grant, there was never a request made to either Porter or any of his subordinates that was not promptly satisfied.[61]

Grant had been trying for months to get his troops on high, dry ground to assault Vicksburg. All attempts failed until his plan involved using Porter's Fleet. Grant asked Porter to run past 14 miles of batteries to get below Vicksburg in order to support operations in the south. Both Grant and Porter knew the imminent dangers involved but Porter accepted the plan as if it were his own. Without the assistance from the Navy, the campaign would not have been successful, even if the Union Army had twice the number of men engaged.[62]

Porter successfully steamed past the Vicksburg defenses and supported Grant's operations in the south. Porter's fleet bombarded enemy positions and ferried Grant's troops across the Mississippi River. This allowed for the seizure of key terrain. For the first time Grant had his troops on high, dry ground and was able to successfully assault his way to Vicksburg. Grant wrote about Porter's role in the taking of Vicksburg in his memoirs as follows, "It could not have been made at all, in the way it was, with any

number of men without such assistance. The most perfect harmony reigned between the two arms of the service." [63]

The absence of friction between the Army and the Navy was truly remarkable during the Vicksburg Campaign. Grant and Porter fought the most difficult of all the combined military and naval operations of the Civil War with little or no confrontations between the two.[64] It is impossible to account for the successful relationship that existed between the two except on the basis of the characters of the men themselves.[65] Both men were focused of the main objective. Both disdained red tape. Both were energetic in preparation for battle and knew how to use all their resources available. Their temperaments were congenial and each respected the other's professional ability.[66] At the end of the campaign each praised one another.

"To the army," wrote Porter, "do we owe immediate thanks of the capture of Vicksburg...The conception[of the investment] originated solely with General Grant...a mistake would have involved us in difficulty...So confident was I of the ability of General Grant to carry out his plans...that I never hesitated..."[67]

Grant wrote in his memoirs of Porter, "Among naval officers I have always placed Porter in the highest rank. I believe Porter to be as great an admiral as Lord Nelson."[68]

Grant's political maneuvering around Major General McClernand's desire to gain an independent command is another example of Grant utilizing unity of effort to help capture Vicksburg. McClernand was a politically appointed general who had high ambitions but little military experience and was unfit to be a senior commander. In a previous battle, his division had collapsed and run at Fort Donelson, requiring Grant to

restore order. It was this battle that led Grant to form the opinion that McClernand was incompetent.[69]

In September of 1862, McClernand had taken a long leave, which Grant was happy to approve.[70] McClernand traveled to Washington to convince President Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton to allow him to recruit fresh troops from Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana. McClernand wanted to take command of his newly recruited volunteer force and independently take Vicksburg in order to alter the course of the war and free up the Confederate stranglehold on the Mississippi River.

The President knew, as well as McClernarnd, the importance of restoring Federal control of the Mississippi River. He knew from the strategic point of view that the war in the West could not be won without Union forces securing the river.[71] In October, after consulting with Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and General–n-Chief Henry Halleck, President Lincoln decided to give McClernand the go ahead to raise a force and attack Vicksburg.

The War Department did not inform Grant of the decision to give McClernand authorization to raise his own force.[72] What Grant learned, he gleaned from the northern press and the Army rumor mill.[73] Grant saw the potential disaster of independent command and requested help from Halleck.

Grant and Halleck had had a rocky relationship up to this point. They approached the conduct of war very differently. Halleck was always cautious and never took risks, as evidenced by his actions to take Corinth. Grant, on the other hand, took risk and was always ready to attack the Confederates.

Along with personality differences, Halleck seemed not to trust Grant fully, possibly stemming from rumors that he drank too much, or that Grant lacked the military presence that a Regular Army Officer should display. From the start of their command relationship, Grant understood that a southward movement through Missouri was essential for Union victory but was unable to convince Halleck.[74] Halleck's mistrust of Grant emerged when Grant asked Halleck's permission to take and hold Fort Henry on the Tennessee. Grant recalled:

> I had known General Halleck but very slightly in the old army, not having met him either at West Point or during the Mexican War. I was received with so little cordiality that I perhaps stated the object of my visit with less clearness than I might have done, and I had not uttered many sentences before I was cut short as if my plan was preposterous. I returned to Cairo very much crestfallen.[75]

Another example of their strained relationship was demonstrated when, in March of 1862, Halleck accused Grant of not reporting troop strength accurately, and that Grant had gone to Nashville without authorization. Halleck dispatched his complaints to General McClellan, who at the time was General-in-Chief, and McClellan authorized Halleck to arrest Grant. In less than two weeks after Grant's victory at Donelson, the two leading generals in the Army placed Grant in virtual arrest and without a command.[76]

Both Grant and Halleck understood the negative consequences of McClernand having independent command. Historians have stressed the tension between Grant and Halleck, but in this instance, they worked seamlessly together to bring McClernand's command under Grant.[77] In November of 1862, Halleck wrote to Grant that Memphis will be made a depot for a joint military and naval expedition on Vicksburg.[78] Grant replied by asking Halleck if he should lie still while an expedition is fitted out from Memphis or should he push as far south as possible.[79] Halleck wrote back that Grant had

permission to fight and that he had command of all troops sent to his department.[80] That Halleck wrote nothing of McClernand should have raised suspicion but Grant got what he wanted and ran with it.[81] On December 8 he ordered Sherman to take charge of all troops on the Mississippi and move them down the river as soon as possible to the vicinity of Vicksburg.[82]

The Vicksburg Campaign would not have been successful if McClernand was able to retain his independent command. McClernand's assault on Vicksburg would have resulted in tactical disaster with strategic implications. President Lincoln would have been forced to end Grant's efforts to take Vicksburg, with the Union failing to cut the Confederacy in half. The resulting action from not taking Vicksburg could have fundamentally undermined Federal efforts in the Western Theatre of the Civil War.

Policy

Carl von Clausewitz states that, "War is a mere continuation of policy by other means."[83] Clausewitz understood that military operations must relate to the strategic goals of the political leaders appointed over the military. If a military leader is successful at the tactical and operational level but fails to achieve strategic goals, then he has failed to use his military force to its proper end.[84] General Taylor provides a good example of operations nesting with strategy during the Mexican War.

In 1834, American settlers outnumbered Mexicans four to one in Texas. Initially the Mexican government encouraged emigration from the United States but did not anticipate the size of the response.[85] In 1835, Mexican President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna introduced a unified national constitution that took away the autonomy of the American settlers in Texas. The settlers took part in an armed revolt against Santa Anna,

captured him and forced him to sign the Treaty of Velasco recognizing Texas's independence.

In the Spring of 1844, President John Tyler, a slave holder from Virginia, wanted to make his mark as President and began negotiations to annex Texas.[86] To make his negotiations credible, he ordered United States Army units to the Texas border.[87] Although the United States Senate defeated the Texas annexation treaty, the Mexican War eventually started because General Taylor's placement of the U. S. Army along the Mexican border that forced Mexico to start hostilities.

Grant viewed the war with Mexico as an unjust war and thought the reason for annexing Texas was to increase the number of slave holding states.[88] He wrote in his memoirs about the Mexican War, "For myself, I was bitterly opposed to the measure, and to this day regard the war, which resulted, as one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation." [89]

Grant was opposed to slavery. In 1855, Grant's wife Julia owned four slaves- two male and two female.[90] Grant made it known that he was opposed to slavery and it was his intention to set her slaves free.[91]

In the spring of 1858, Grant's father-in-law Colonel Dent, decided to leave his farm, which was called White Haven, and moved to the city of St. Louis, Missouri.[92] Colonel Dent rented the farm to Grant and his wife and Grant decided to raise crops to sell for a living. The circumstances are not clear, but sometime during Grant's last year at White Haven in 1859, he acquired one of his father-in-laws slaves named William Jones.[93] On March 29, 1859 he filed papers to emancipate Jones with the Saint Louis Circuit Court.[94] The freeing of Jones came at a time when Grant could barely feed his

family and showed how opposed he was to slavery. Able-bodied slaves sold for a thousand dollars or more, and Grant could have desperately used the money.[95]

Grant understood the policy and strategic goals of President Lincoln, which ultimately led to the successful campaign for Vicksburg. Grant was opposed to slavery and the secession of the Southern States which helped him focus all his attention and efforts to help win the Civil War. Grant, unlike General McClellan, did not need Lincoln to push him to fight. McClellan was completely different from Grant; McClellan had political ambitions, was not opposed to slavery where slavery already existed and was reluctant to take his troops into battle as demonstrated in the development of the Peninsula Campaign.[96]

The fall elections of 1862 had gone against the Republican party. Lincoln was up against what he called "fire in the rear," which was fed by lack of military victory.[97] In the east, heavy rains in January 1863, followed by snowstorms in February and March forced the demoralized Army of the Potomac into stagnation on the north side of the Rappahannock River.[98] Meanwhile, Grant's Army in the West failed to capture Vicksburg on four different occasions preventing Union control of the Mississippi River. Voluntary enlistments had declined drastically throughout the greater part of the North, and the draft had been ordered to fill up the ranks.[99] Additionally, the Peace Democrats, known as the Copperheads, thought the war was straying too far from merely repressing the rebellion and restoring the Union. They opposed legislation that reformed the banking system, emancipated the slaves, and curtailed civil liberties.[100] They also opposed the conscription law which authorized congressional districts to enroll men for a term of three years.[101]

In January of 1862, it was Grant's judgment not to make a backward movement from Vicksburg to Memphis as some of his generals had suggested. Grant knew that the movement would be viewed as yet another retreat of the Union Army in front of its Confederate foes. This perceived retreat would weaken Lincoln's political support to continue the draft, which in turn would have a detrimental effect on the strength of numbers in the Union Army. Grant came to the conclusion that there was nothing left to do but to go forward to a decisive victory.[102]

Grant understood the importance Lincoln placed on capturing Vicksburg to achieve military success. Lincoln stated of Vicksburg:

> See what a lot of land these fellows hold, of which Vicksburg is the key. Here is Red River, which will supply the Confederates with cattle and corn to feed their armies. There are the Arkansas and White Rivers, which can supply cattle and hog by the thousand. From Vicksburg these supplies can be distributed by rail all over the Confederacy.[103]

Grant understood the importance of taking Vicksburg to achieve Lincoln's strategic goals and he used all of his forces and energy to achieve that goal.

Additionally, Grant demonstrated his determination to achieve strategic success by the number of times he unsuccessfully tried to take Vicksburg. For months, he attempted to find ways to attack Vicksburg and failed on numerous occasions. Grant even attempted to dig a canal across DeSoto Point, the peninsula opposite Vicksburg, that had been started the previous summer.[104]

In the end, it was Grant's unwavering devotion to follow Lincoln's strategy that helped lead to the successful capture of Vicksburg. Grant understood that taking Vicksburg would result in the eventual collapse of the Confederate's ability to win the campaign in the Western Theatre.

Logistics

The last reason that led to Grant successfully capturing Vicksburg was his innovative use of logistics. Grant gained valuable experience in logistics when he served as a regimental quartermaster during the Mexican War. It was in the Mexican War that Grant learned that an army could travel long and torturous miles through enemy country, while foraging off the land.[105]

Grant also learned about the proper use of logistics from his experience as quarter master of the 4th Infantry during its relocation to California from the east coast. He was in charge of supplying and transporting both the infantry and their families during a six month trip through the Panama isthmus in the spring of 1852. Grant learned valuable lessons in the use of railroads, ships and pack mules in transporting hundreds of people over thousands of miles, which proved valuable during the Vicksburg Campaign.[106]

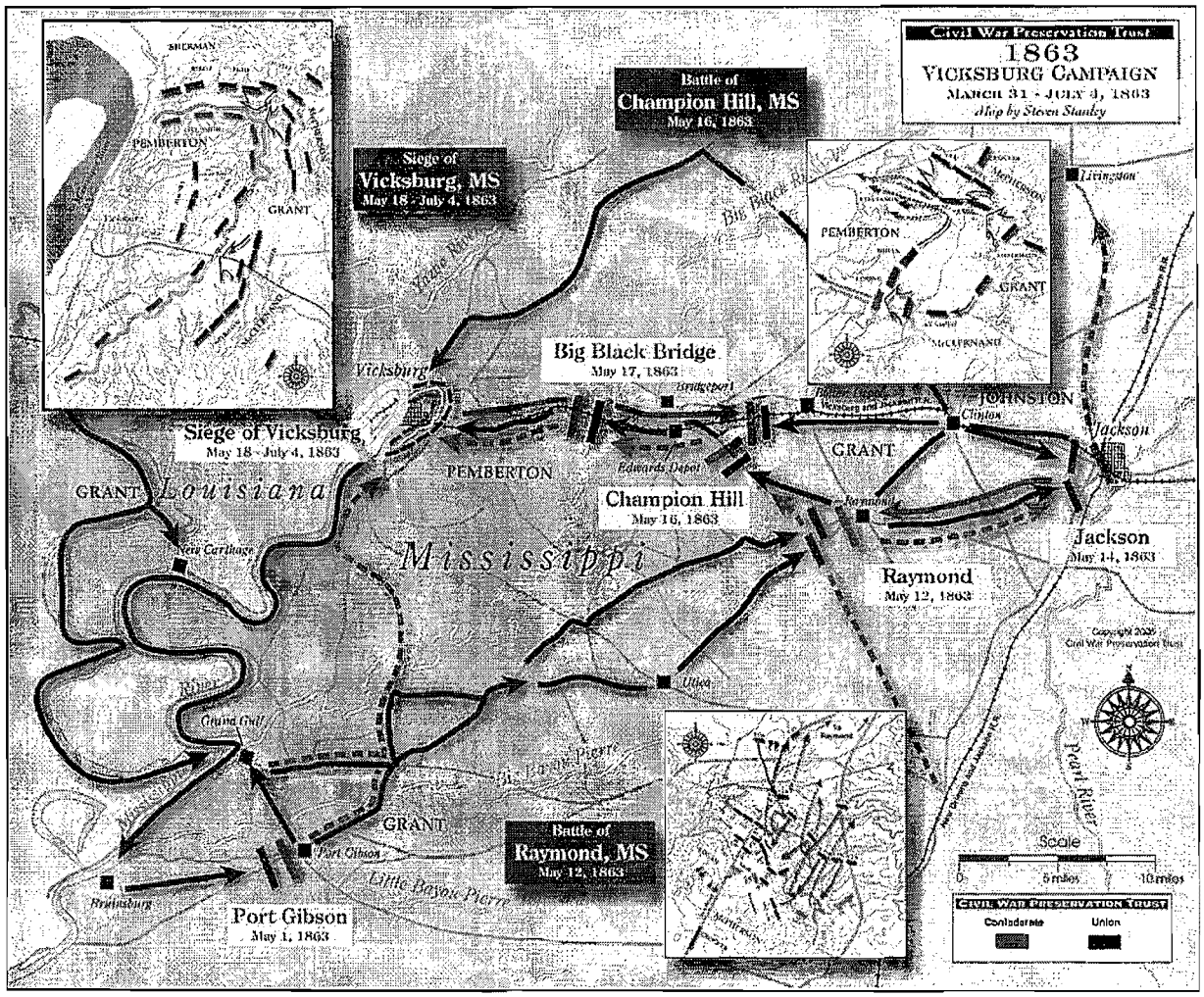
In December of 1862, the Confederate cavalry under Major General Earl Van Dorn destroyed Grant's forward supply depot at Holly Spring, Mississippi, and wrecked Grant's plans for an overland, railroad-centered attack.[107] Grant's answer to losing Holly Spring was to repeat General Winfield Scott's example of maneuver during the Mexican War by cutting loose from his base in Memphis to move south of Vicksburg.[108] Guided by the example of Pueblo, Grant knew his army could live off the Mississippi land long enough for his army to properly gain a foothold around Vicksburg.[109]

In addition to using unconventional means to supply his army, Grant established an impressive logistical system running from his depots in Cairo, Illinois, and Memphis, Tennessee, to his advanced bases at Lake Providence, Milliken's Bend and Young's Point.[110] He utilized army wagon trains, commercial boats and Navy ships to provide

resupply to federal positions north and south of Vicksburg. Grant's use of both conventional and unconventional logistical procedures was instrumental in the capture of Vicksburg.

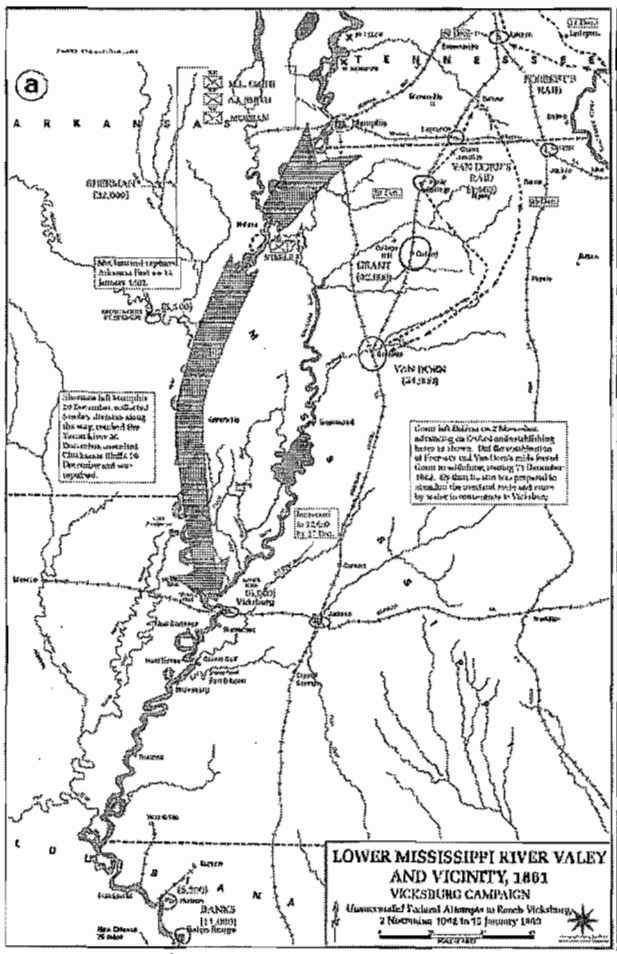
Conclusion

The capture of Vicksburg gave the North new hope after more than two years of bloody fighting. The Mississippi River was back in the hands of Union troops, while the Army of the Tennessee was united with the Army of the Gulf, completely dividing the Confederate States. The loss of Vicksburg and the Mississippi River meant the loss of the greatest line of communication the South had. Moreover, the strength of the Federal armies could then be directed against the eastern half of the Confederacy.[111] The Southern people viewed the loss of Vicksburg as a sign of the end.[112] Grant's adherence to policy, utilization of unity of effort, and the use of logistics, led to the fall of Vicksburg. The successful Vicksburg Campaign silenced Grant's critics and he began to achieve the recognition he deserved.[113] The importance of Vicksburg was summed up by Grant in his memoirs, "The fate of the Confederacy was sealed when Vicksburg fell. Much hard fighting was to be done afterwards and many precious live were to be sacrificed; but the morale was with the supporters of the Union ever after."[114]

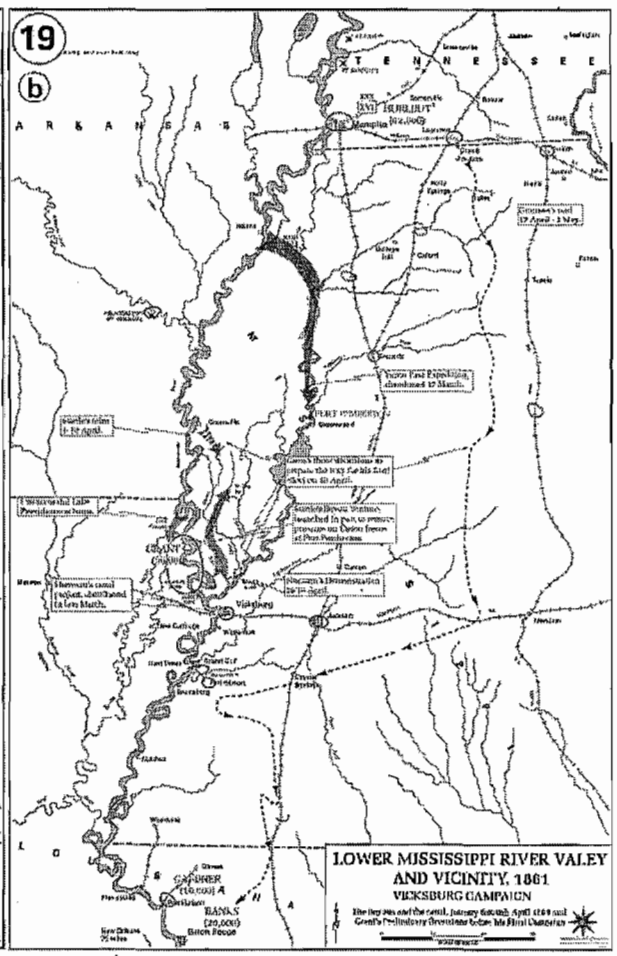


Map 1

Source: Civil War Preservation Trust copyright 2009

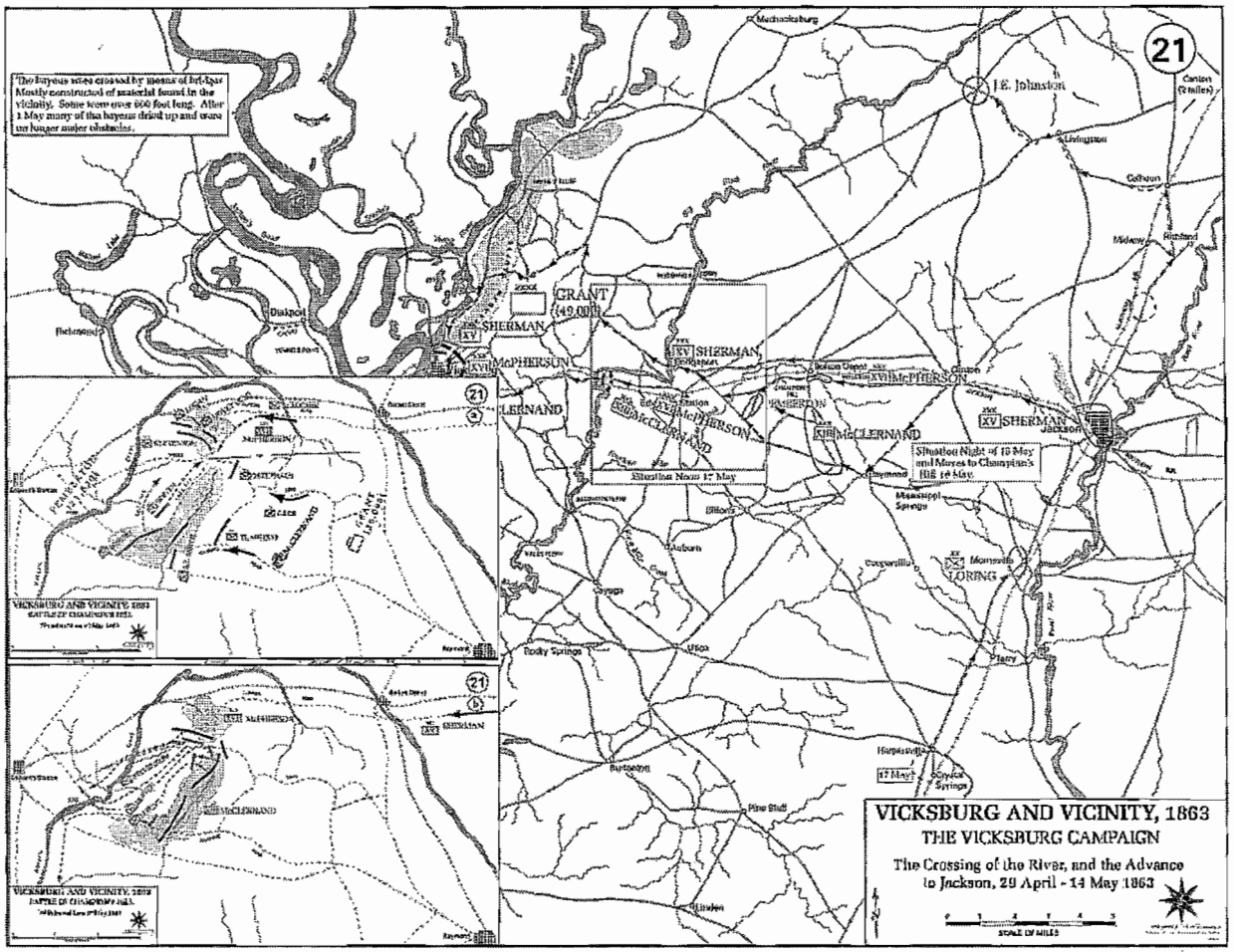


Map 2



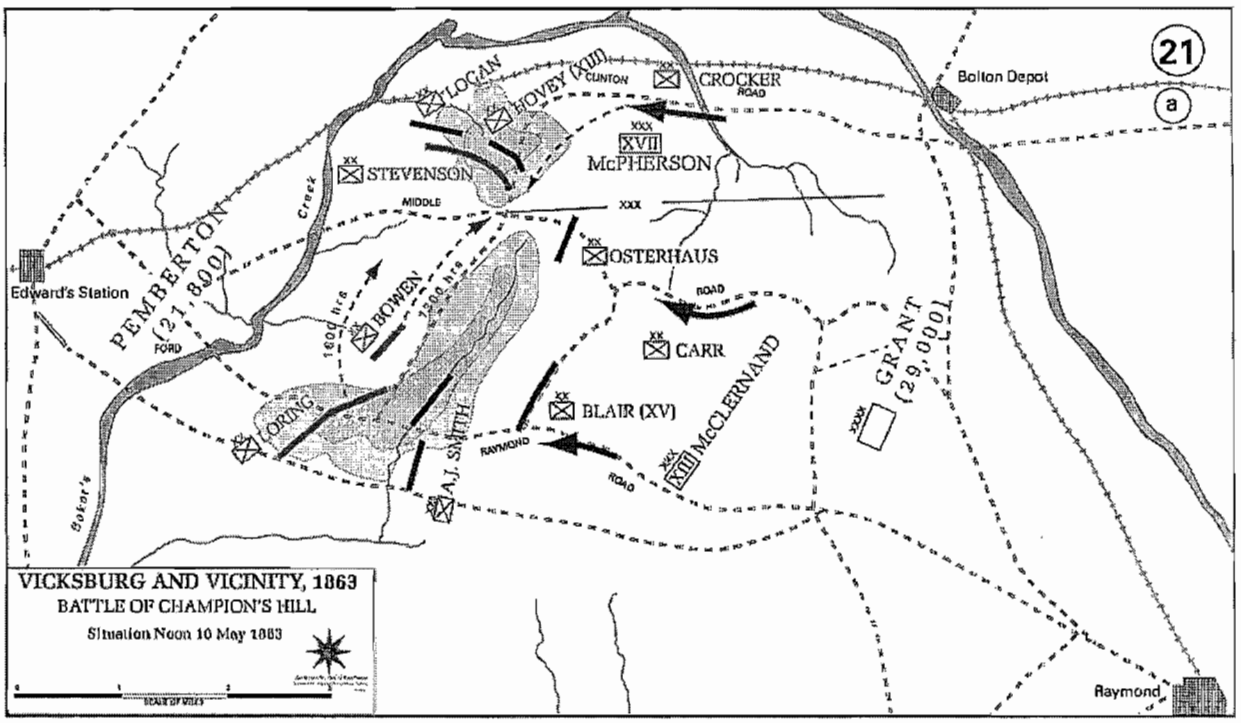
Map 3

Source: United States Military Academy



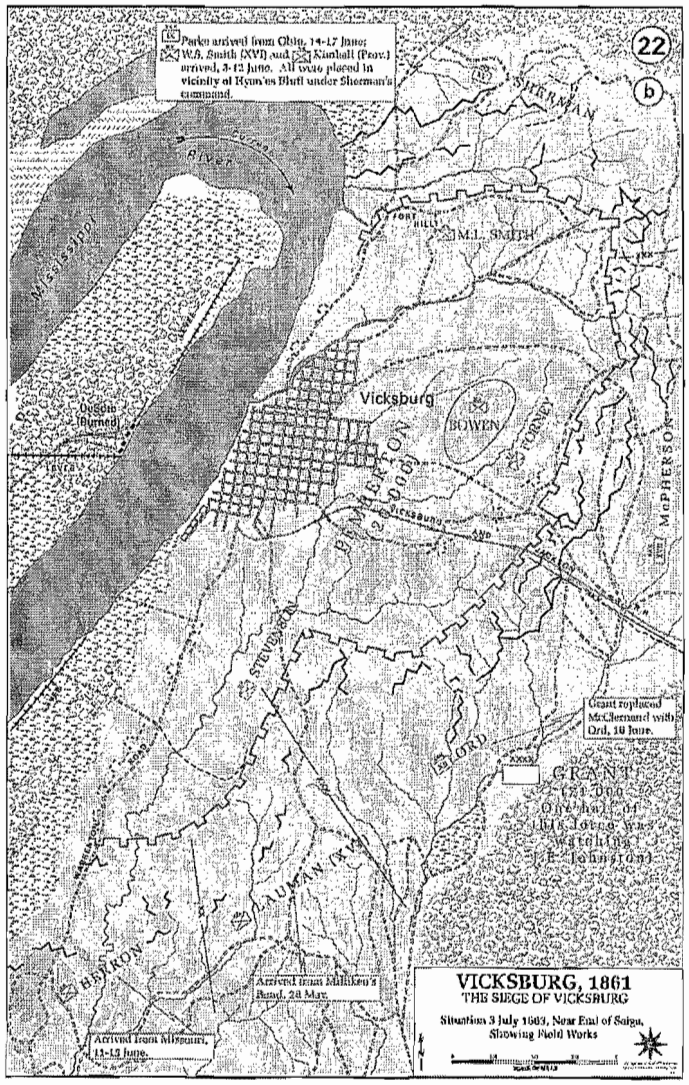
Map 4

Source: United States Military Academy



Map 5

Source: United States Military Academy



Map 6

Source: United States Military Academy

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