



Grant Invades Tennessee: The 1862 Battles for Forts Henry and Donelson (Modern War Studies (Hardcover))

Timothy B. Smith

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When General Ulysses S. Grant targeted Forts Henry and Donelson, he penetrated the Confederacy at one of its most vulnerable points, setting in motion events that would elevate his own status, demoralize the Confederate leadership and citizenry, and, significantly, tear the western Confederacy asunder. More to the point, the two battles of early 1862 opened the Tennessee River campaign that would prove critical to the ultimate Union victory in the Mississippi Valley. In *Grant Invades Tennessee*, award-winning Civil War historian Timothy B. Smith gives readers a battlefield view of the fight for Forts Henry and Donelson, as well as a critical wide-angle perspective on their broader meaning in the conduct and outcome of the war. The first comprehensive tactical treatment of these decisive battles, this book completes the trilogy of the Tennessee River campaign that Smith began in *Shiloh* and *Corinth 1862*, marking a milestone in Civil War history.

Whether detailing command-level decisions or using eye-witness anecdotes to describe events on the ground, walking readers through maps or pulling back for an assessment of strategy, this finely written work is equally sure on matters of combat and context. Beginning with Grant's decision to bypass the Confederates' better-defended sites on the Mississippi, Smith takes readers step-by-step through the battles: the employment of a flotilla of riverine war ships along with infantry and land-based artillery in subduing Fort Henry; the lesser effectiveness of this strategy against Donelson's much stronger defense, weaponry, and fighting forces; the surprise counteroffensive by the Confederates and the role of their commanders' incompetence and cowardice in foiling its success. Though casualties at the two forts fell far short of bloodier Civil War battles to come, the importance of these Union victories transcend battlefield statistics. *Grant Invades Tennessee* allows us, for the first time, to clearly see how and why.

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