

The Civil War

Section 3



MAIN IDEAS

1. Union strategy in the West centered on control of the Mississippi River.
2. Confederate and Union troops struggled for dominance in the Far West.

Key Terms and People

Ulysses S. Grant Union general whose troops won several important battles on southern soil

Battle of Shiloh battle in which Union troops gained greater control of the Mississippi River valley

David Farragut naval leader who helped the Union take control of New Orleans

Siege of Vicksburg six-week blockade of Vicksburg that starved the city into surrender

Section Summary

UNION STRATEGY IN THE WEST

In February 1862 General **Ulysses S. Grant** led a Union army into Tennessee. He was headed toward the Mississippi River to capture outposts that would separate the eastern Confederacy from its western, food-supplying states. On the way Grant and his forces took both Fort Henry and Fort Donelson.

Near Shiloh Church, Grant halted his troops to wait for more soldiers to arrive. Although Grant was aware of Confederate troops in the area, he was caught by surprise when they attacked on April 6. During the two-day **Battle of Shiloh**, each side lost and gained ground. Union reinforcements arrived and helped push the Confederates into retreating. This win helped the Union control part of the Mississippi River valley.

To control the Mississippi River, the Union had to first deal with New Orleans, the south's largest city and the valuable port near the mouth of the Mississippi River. However, two forts guarded New Orleans from the south.

Union Admiral **David Farragut** solved that problem by racing past the two forts in the darkness

Why did the Union consider control of the Mississippi River critical?

How do you know that Fort Henry and Fort Donelson were Confederate forts?

How was New Orleans captured?

Section 3, *continued*

before dawn on April 24, 1862. Within days New Orleans fell to the Union troops. Farragut continued north, taking more cities, until he reached Vicksburg, Mississippi.

The geography of Vicksburg allowed Confederate General John C. Pemberton to stop any attempt to attack the city. So, instead of trying to attack Vicksburg directly, General Grant cut the city off and shelled it repeatedly. The **Siege of Vicksburg** lasted about six weeks before hunger forced the Confederates to surrender. The Mississippi River was now under Union control.

Why was Vicksburg difficult to capture?

Why did the siege of Vicksburg succeed when attacks on Vicksburg had failed?

STRUGGLE FOR THE FAR WEST

Fighting also broke out in the southwest, as the Confederates tried to take control there. Defeats in Arizona and at Glorieta Pass stopped Confederates from taking lands in the West. Confederate-Union conflicts in Missouri also ended with a Confederate defeat, despite aid from the Cherokee. Attacks on Union forts and raids on towns forced the Union commanders to keep valuable troops stationed in the western states and territories.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Analyze Write a paragraph analyzing why the Union wanted to control the West.