

2012 Shiloh After Action Report

Sirs,

It is my distinct honor to make the following report for the activities of the 2 Brigades, 4 Battalions of the Army of the Cumberland in and around Shiloh Church, Tennessee from March 30 to April 1.

The Army performed with great precision, dedication, and gallantry. I cannot thank my staff or the Brigade and Battalion commanders enough. They all acted in the best tradition of the Army by never questioning their orders or failing to act in the best interests of their commands. Their men were their first and last concerns, which is why they are all outstanding officers.

The actions we were involved commenced on the evening of the 30th. We were on the march when we encountered a sizable Rebel force. We became engaged and found ourselves in a very defensible position. The enemy kept up the pressure as we fell back.

I positioned the forces from Florida and Michigan in the woods to my left. They could not be seen. As the battle flowed to this spot, I had my Buglers sound attention to the hidden troops. At this time, they put down a devastating fire on the enemy forcing them to withdraw to the safety of their lines.

The morning of the 31st found the Army on the march down a sunken road when from hidden positions we were attacked. This action commenced at around 6:30 AM. Within minutes, my entire army was engaged on various parts of wooded area and open fields.

Because of a rain the night before and the heavy fire from both sides, I must report I did not know where all of my forces were. At a point in the action with Rebels on my front engaging, the troops from Florida I could see through the fog the entire 2nd Brigade to their rear. I later learned that they swept the field and woods in a giant circle pushing all to its front. The 1st Brigade was also engaged in heavy fighting on all sides but due to excellent leadership was able to defeat all they engaged. Once again, the enemy retired to safety.

The afternoon found us in a line on a sunken road behind split rail fence. Across the field, the enemy amassed their Artillery and began to lay a deadly fire on us. They then advanced on our position time and time again. It was strange, though, that at about 250 yards they could not muster the courage to come any closer on each advance. Being impatient and looking to bring the fight I ordered both Brigades forward to invite them to join in the fight. I must say they were splendid in maneuver and field presence. I did order their withdrawal because of the Artillery fire to their front and flanks. When back in position one final assault did occur resulting in the capture of the 14th Iowa. I do regret their loss to our ranks. They are all fine, gallant men who fight with honor.

We did retire to safety.

Sunday the 1st we were reinforced and advanced on the Rebel position. They fought with much more determination than the day before. The 2nd Brigade swept through two four-gun batteries with ease. The 1st Brigade came on the field in a column of Companies and went into line. It was beautiful to watch. They swept everything in their front. The 2nd brigade was heavily engaged with a large Rebel force but managed to push them the aside. The 1st Brigade did a left wheel and captured more Artillery and Infantry. The 2nd Brigade also did a left wheel and found they were behind a Battalion of Rebels, thus capturing all. Ending this action, we captured a total 23 guns and 14 stands of arms. This ended our actions for the 3 days.

I would be without trust and honor if I failed to mention the Artillery of the Army. They performed with great precision all three days. They supported our every move beginning with the fight of the 30th, both fights on the 31st and did deadly work on the 1st allowing us to claim the field in victory. I know their guns were accurate and many rounds were fired. They were exhausted at days end.

This concludes my report of the actions in and around Shiloh Church, Tennessee. For the 3-day engagement, we had 4 Infantry Battalions formed into 2 Brigades and 8 Guns with an effective force

for the 3 days of 485, by morning report. I, again, thank each and everyone for their hard work and professionalism. I look forward to our next time together. I could not ask for better-trained, more dedicated troops. To you I say HUZAZH!!!!!!!

Brigadier General Earl Zeckman, Commanding
Army of the Cumberland
Shiloh Church, Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee

Attest:
Major Keith G. Harrison
Assistant Adjutant General