After the successful Union victory at Fort Henry, General Ulysses S. Grant decided to move his army of 24,531 on toward Fort Donelson, Tennessee where there was a Confederate military presence of slightly over 16,000 at least, under the command of General James B. Floyd (also former United States Secretary of War under President James Buchanan). On February 11th, 1862 Grant tested the grounds on a clear day then started surrounding the Fort, on the 13th Grant attacked with no success at all so he called for reinforcements from Fort Smith under General Lew Wallace. Both armies were entrenched and the Confederates had been reinforced and restocked with weapons and later that night rain and snow fell heavily causing conditions to get even worse.

The following day General Lew Wallace arrived with additional reinforcements from Fort Smith along the Cumberland River with the USS Carondelet an Iron clad from a Union Navy Flotilla under Flag Officer William H. foote which started firing from long distance at Fort Donelson and took out one of it's heavy artillery guns. After several days of fighting and Union gains and an attempted breakout attack Confederate General James B Floyd along with his second in command Gideon J. Pillow who escaped the battlefield relinquished their duties to General Simon Bolivar Buckner who surrendered the fort over to General Grant on February 16th. In the end the Union had 2,691 casualties and the Confederates took 13,846 casualties along with General Buckner being captured by Union troops, the significance of the battle was that the Union captured a key Confederate Fort deep in Southern territory and the Confederates lost access to Kentucky (which also gave the U.S. Navy free and quicker mobility down the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers), along with General Grant getting a promotion from Bigadier General to Major General from President Abraham Lincoln.

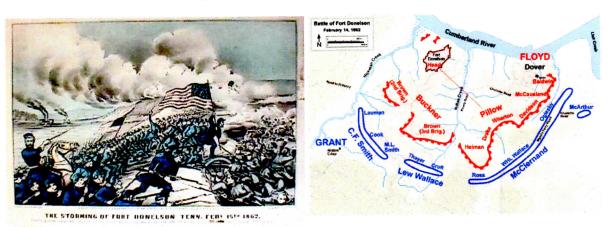


Exhibit3-P31

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