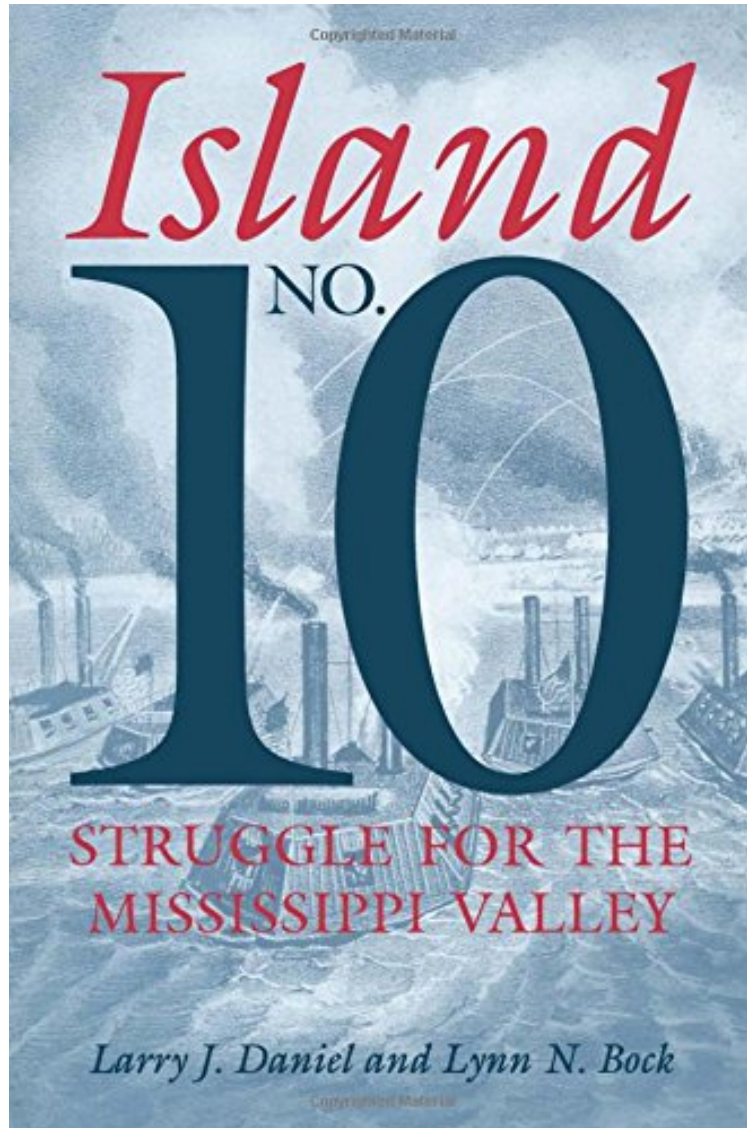


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Island No. 10: Struggle for the Mississippi Valley

Larry J. Daniel, Lynn N. Bock
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Larry J. Daniel, Lynn N. Bock : Island No. 10: Struggle for the Mississippi Valley before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Island No. 10: Struggle for the Mississippi Valley:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Notable for a Number of ReasonsBy KJAGThis book covers not only Island#10, but also the nearby/adjoining river defenses at New Madrid and Point Pleasant on the Missouri shore (captured by Pope's Army), and batteries along the Tennessee shoreline across from Island #10 and below it (neutralized by Union Gunboats). The batteries on Island#10, which were the most significant threat to Union ships, were surrendered once gunboats passed the island thus enabling thousands of Union troops to safely cross the river

below the island, thereby flanking it (the island was not heavily garrisoned and defended only facing the river). Like Fort Henry on the Tennessee River and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland, the batteries on and around Island #10 presented the Confederate forces their most forward (and most substantial) defensive position on the Mississippi River (Columbus, KY was initially, but was abandoned without a fight once the position was turned by Grant's Army). What is also notable about this battle was that this defensive position had more heavy canon than even Vicksburg subsequently had. Furthermore, this siege/battle provided valuable lessons for the Union that were incorporated in subsequent ones, notably Vicksburg, e.g., understanding that ironclads could effectively run past heavy shore batteries, the limitations of mortars, and the effective application of joint Navy/Army operations. The defeat created panic and had negative effects on morale in the South, and highlighted the shortcomings of static river defenses as the predominant Confederate strategy to block Union use of the river to ferry troops and supplies, and keeping it open for its own use. Finally, this defeat resulted in at least 4,000 confederate forces captured with no more than 25 total casualties for the Union, as well as the loss of dozens of Confederate artillery pieces. No Union gunboats were lost. This book is well-researched, structured, and easy to read and comprehend. The paperback is also larger than normal, and so is the text. Good maps, photos, and illustrations are generously provided in appropriate locations throughout.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The Forgotten Campaign Revealed By CTS 2631 Until I read this book the campaign for Island Number 10 was always a side show to whatever other campaign I was reading about. This short volume by Larry J. Daniel and Lynn N. Bock describes in detail the Union Campaign to open the upper Mississippi in early 1862. The overland campaign led by Union General John Pope to capture New Madrid, Missouri, downriver from Island Number 10, and Flag Officer Andrew Foote's naval campaign to lay siege to the Island are thoroughly explained without getting too bogged down in the details, as well as the final combined push to capture the Confederate forts and garrison. The history is told from both sides of the campaign with equal attention to the leaders, soldiers and sailors, and civilians on both sides. I liked the writing style and it was easy to keep track of all the action and principal players. This is the only volume I could find on this campaign and I was not disappointed. I enjoyed reading it, learned a lot of things I didn't know and got a better understanding of things I wasn't too sure about. (like how John Pope got so much notoriety that he ended up getting shipped to Virginia to command a Union army that got thrashed by Lee) The maps are good. Lots of pictures and illustrations. This is a must have volume for understanding one of the opening moves in the campaign to open the Mississippi. Highly recommended.

17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Real Information at last By James W. Durney Island No. 10 is always there but never really part of the story. It happens off to the East if you are reading about the Trans-Mississippi. It happens off the West when you are reading a book on Shiloh. When you read about Forts Henry Donelson, they clear the way for it to happen and it had to happen to allow the Vicksburg Campaign. If you read about the 1862 campaigns in Virginia, Island No. 10 makes Pope into McClellan's chief rival. Setting up all the questions about Second Manassas and did or did not the AOP with hold troops allowing Pope to be defeated. In 1862, Island No. 10 is one event that seems to be included in every story but is not important enough to be a story. We all know about it but we lack knowledge of the campaign falling into the always there but never central to the story. With no large battles or star players, it is easy to see how this happened. Pope's reputation is destroyed in six months and Foote dies within a year canceling the Union leaders. The Confederacy never commits a major player to the defense of the island. After surrendering, reputations destroyed; captured and imprisoned the commanders are relegated to minor positions when exchanged. This small book covers the actions of both sides as they struggle for control of a critical position on the Mississippi River. Island No. 10 is the tenth island south of the Ohio River and a key defensive position in stopping the northern advance from Cairo. Generals Polk, AS Johnston and Beauregard all had other things on their mind and the island was never a primary position. We are given an excellent but concise understand of the "bigger issues" caused this to happen. When Union General Pope took New Madrid, he cut the position off from most river traffic. Flag Officer Andrew Foote with ironclads and mortar ships launched a prolonged bombardment. Each side builds and abandons positions on the river, conducts raids and endures the boredom of siege operations. The reader gets a good understand of the move counter move of constant action. The book's maps keep the positions clear, while photos and illustrations give us the feel of history unfolding. The infighting between the armies and navies is a piece of ACW history seldom seen. The Confederate commander would not risk his ships wanting to save his ships for use in defending New Orleans. The Union commander was convinced his ironclads were all that stopped Confederate control of the Mississippi. The Confederate ships fled as Pope tightens control below the island and Foote faced with increasing pressure and near mutiny allowed a couple of ironclads to run past the defenses. The Union City series ironclads, weak by later standards, were the decisive weapon in 1862. We see that here, as they are able to defeat anything the CSA can throw at them. Reading this book, helps us to understand the CSA's withdrawal to Corinth and the thinking behind the attack at Shiloh. Larry J. Daniel is one of our better authors and Lynn Bock complements his style producing a readable informative book that is fun to read.

By February 1862 Confederate forces in Kentucky and Tennessee were falling back in disorder. Fort Henry on the Tennessee River and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River fell to combined land and naval forces under Brigadier

General Ulysses S. Grant and Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote. These losses necessitated the abandonment of the Rebel stronghold of Columbus, Kentucky. The entire upper Mississippi Valley lay open to Federal invasion. Toward that end, a new Union army under Major General John Pope began organizing at Commerce, Missouri. Confederate Major General John P. McCown was sent to plug the breach by fortifying Island No. 10, a one-mile-long island positioned in a bend in the Mississippi River that straddled the boundaries of Tennessee, Missouri, and Kentucky. Pope's army had to be held in check long enough for the main Confederate force, under generals Albert Sidney Johnston and P. G. T. Beauregard, to concentrate and launch a counterattack against Grant's advancing army. The ensuing campaign at Island No. 10 created the first extensive siege of the Civil War. The ultimate capture of the garrison resulted in a new army command for Pope in Virginia. As for the Confederates, the campaign pointed to a faulty western strategy. Simply to concede the rivers and their adjoining cities to the Federal navy was politically unacceptable. Garrison after garrison was captured, however, in the attempt to defend the rivers to the last extremity. Between February 1862 and July 1863 the Confederates lost 64,400 troops, some nine divisions, in defending the rivers. This strategy was a significant contributing factor for Confederate defeat in the West.

"A major new study that highlights one of the opening campaigns for control of the Mississippi Valley, and indispensable for understanding Union army-navy operations in the West."