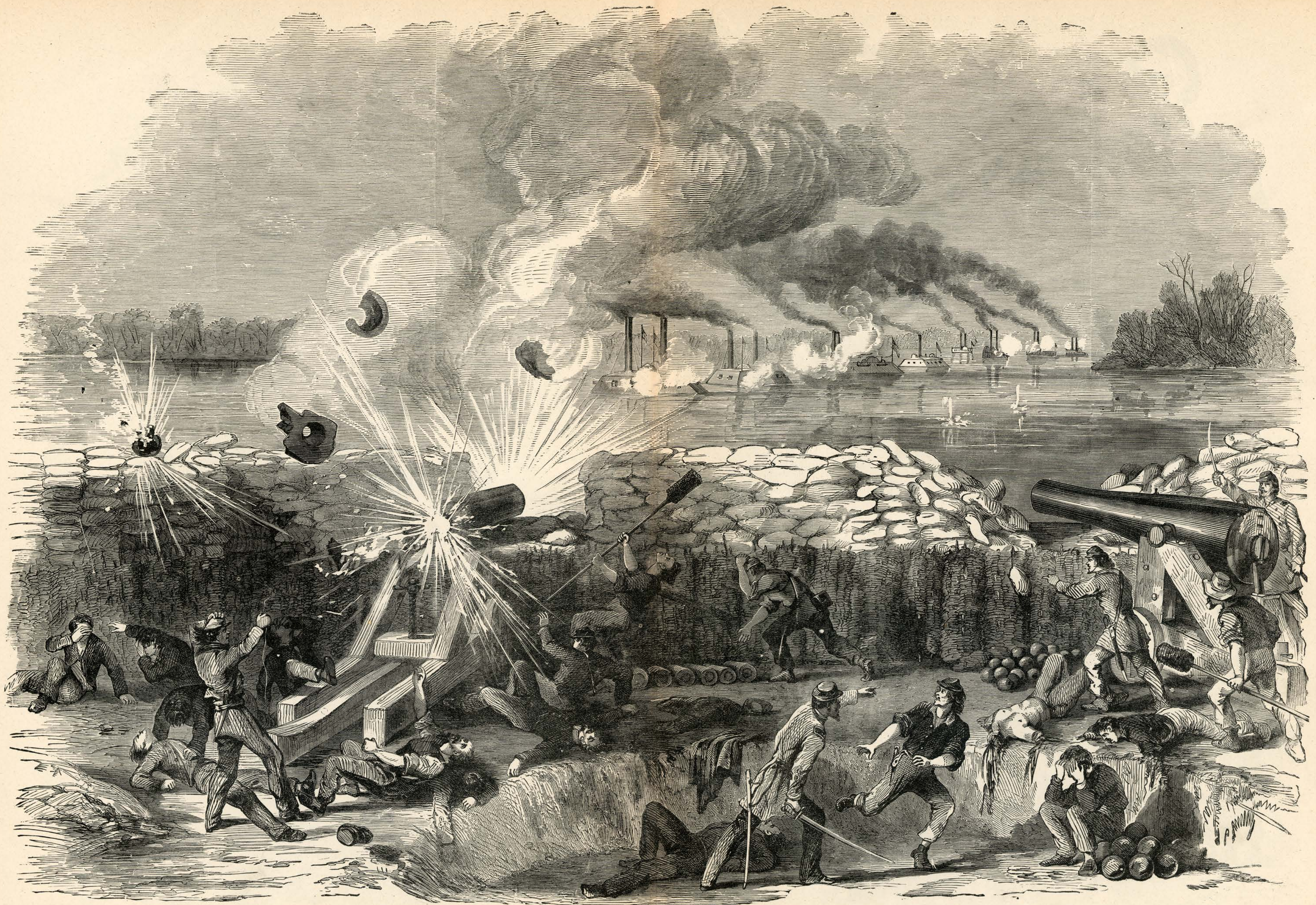




BURSTING OF A RIFLED 42-POUND GUN IN FORT HENRY DURING THE BOMBARDMENT.—FROM A SKETCH BY H. LOVIE.

Early in 1862 Commodore Foote, in command of the Federal flotilla, was sent up the Tennessee river to co-operate with General Grant in his movement against Forts Henry and Donelson. The former was on the Tennessee and the latter on the Cumberland, 63 miles northwest of Nashville. The flotilla arrived at Fort Henry before the land forces could be brought into position. A bombardment, however, was at once begun, and the Confederate works were unable to bear the dreadful horse-play of the cannonade. One of the incidents of the siege was the bursting of a great 42-pound rifled gun, which exploded on the firing and killed or wounded all the men of the battery, wrecking the embrasure and hurling huge fragments through the air. In the early period of the war such disasters were as novel as they were tragic and were noted with amazement. The taking of Fort Henry was the opening blow delivered in the southwest, and was followed up immediately by an attack on Fort Donelson and the capture of that stronghold, with fully ten thousand prisoners of war—an event which made known to the world the silent and unobtrusive hero who was to play such an important part in the history of the United States for the next fifteen years—General Ulysses S. Grant.