

Shiloh

THE first impression is that this could not have been a battlefield. There are no fortifications or breastworks, only a vast area of gently rolling woodland with its hickories and oaks. At first there is little evidence that nearly a hundred thousand men fought here for the vital Pittsburgh Landing. Then you see scattered almost carelessly through the woods, cannon and plaques, marking unit positions during various times. Careless as the arrangement seems, you know that to some men, Iowans or Tennesseans, Ohioans or Mississippians, the arrangement was as vital as life itself.

You try to imagine how the noise must have been and how terrible the confusion, but this is hard now. Bloody Pond, the Hornets' Nest and Fraley's Field lie silent. The Cemetery is a geometry of simple white markers and green grass, and you note that most markers say only "Unknown."

It is almost sunset when you finally turn to leave. You remember only the rustle of the wind in the trees and the cawing of a crow somewhere. These sounds are the only ones that disturb the total peace of Shiloh.

— *William Kershner, S. Jr.*