

Chicago (CMS) Research Paper (Bishop)

The Massacre at Fort Pillow:
Holding Nathan Bedford Forrest Accountable

Title of paper.

Ned Bishop

Writer's name.

History 214
Professor Citro
March 22, XXXX

Title of course,
instructor's name,
and date.

Marginal annotations indicate *Chicago (CMS)-style formatting* and *effective writing*.

Source: Hacker/Sommers (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010, 2007).

This paper follows the style guidelines in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th ed. (2010).

Although Northern newspapers of the time no doubt exaggerated some of the Confederate atrocities at Fort Pillow, most modern sources agree that a massacre of Union troops took place there on April 12, 1864. It seems clear that Union soldiers, particularly black soldiers, were killed after they had stopped fighting or had surrendered or were being held prisoner. Less clear is the role played by Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest in leading his troops. Although we will never know whether Forrest directly ordered the massacre, evidence suggests that he was responsible for it.

Thesis asserts writer's main point.

What happened at Fort Pillow?

Headings help readers follow the organization.

Fort Pillow, Tennessee, which sat on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River, had been held by the Union for two years. It was garrisoned by 580 men, 292 of them from United States Colored Heavy and Light Artillery regiments, 285 from the white Thirteenth Tennessee Cavalry. Nathan Bedford Forrest commanded about 1,500 men.¹

Statistics are cited with an endnote.

The Confederates attacked Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864, and had virtually surrounded the fort by the time Forrest arrived on the battlefield. At 3:30 p.m., Forrest demanded the surrender of the Union forces, sending in a message of the sort he had used before: "The conduct of the officers and men garrisoning Fort Pillow has been such as to entitle them to being treated as prisoners of war. . . . Should my demand be refused, I cannot be responsible for the fate of your command."² Union Major William Bradford, who had replaced Major Booth, killed earlier by sharpshooters, asked for an hour to consider the demand. Forrest,

Quotation is cited with an endnote.

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worried that vessels in the river were bringing in more troops, “shortened the time to twenty minutes.”³ Bradford refused to surrender, and Forrest quickly ordered the attack.

The Confederates charged to the fort, scaled the parapet, and fired on the forces within. Victory came quickly, with the Union forces running toward the river or surrendering. Shelby Foote describes the scene like this:

Some kept going, right on into the river, where a number drowned and the swimmers became targets for marksmen on the bluff. Others, dropping their guns in terror, ran back toward the Confederates with their hands up, and of these some were spared as prisoners, while others were shot down in the act of surrender.⁴

In his own official report, Forrest makes no mention of the massacre. He does make much of the fact that the Union flag was not lowered by the Union forces, saying that if his own men had not taken down the flag, “few, if any, would have survived unhurt another volley.”⁵ However, as Jack Hurst points out and Forrest must have known, in this twenty-minute battle, “Federals running for their lives had little time to concern themselves with a flag.”⁶

The federal congressional report on Fort Pillow, which charged the Confederates with appalling atrocities, was strongly criticized by Southerners. Respected writer Shelby Foote, while agreeing that the report was “largely” fabrication, points out that the “casualty figures . . . indicated strongly that unnecessary killing had occurred.”⁷ In an important article, John Cimprich and Robert C. Mainfort Jr. argue that

Long quotation is set off from text by indenting. Quotation marks are omitted.

Writer uses a primary source as well as secondary sources.

Quotation is introduced with a signal phrase.

Bishop draws attention to an article that reprints primary sources.

Notes

First line of each note is indented ½".

Note number is not raised and is followed by a period.

Authors' names are not inverted.

Last name and title refer to an earlier note by the same author.

Writer cites an indirect source: words quoted in another source.

1. John Cimprich and Robert C. Mainfort Jr., eds., "Fort Pillow Revisited: New Evidence about an Old Controversy," *Civil War History* 28, no. 4 (1982): 293-94.
2. Quoted in Brian Steel Wills, *A Battle from the Start: The Life of Nathan Bedford Forrest* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 182.
3. Ibid., 183.
4. Shelby Foote, *The Civil War, a Narrative: Red River to Appomattox* (New York: Vintage, 1986), 110.
5. Nathan Bedford Forrest, "Report of Maj. Gen. Nathan B. Forrest, C. S. Army, Commanding Cavalry, of the Capture of Fort Pillow," *Shotgun's Home of the American Civil War*, accessed March 6, 2008, <http://www.civilwarhome.com/forrest.htm>.
6. Jack Hurst, *Nathan Bedford Forrest: A Biography* (New York: Knopf, 1993), 174.
7. Foote, *Civil War*, 111.
8. Cimprich and Mainfort, "Fort Pillow," 295.
9. Ibid., 305.
10. Ibid., 299.
11. Foote, *Civil War*, 110.
12. Quoted in Wills, *Battle from the Start*, 187.
13. Albert Castel, "The Fort Pillow Massacre: A Fresh Examination of the Evidence," *Civil War History* 4, no. 1 (1958): 44-45.
14. Cimprich and Mainfort, "Fort Pillow," 300.
15. Hurst, *Nathan Bedford Forrest*, 177.

Bibliography

Entries are alpha-
betized by authors'
last names.

^A Castel, Albert. "The Fort Pillow Massacre: A Fresh Examination of the Evidence." *Civil War History* 4, no. 1 (1958): 37-50.

Cimprich, John, and Robert C. Mainfort Jr., eds. "Fort Pillow Revisited: New Evidence about an Old Controversy." *Civil War History* 28, no. 4 (1982): 293-306.

First line of entry
is at left margin;
additional lines are
indented ½".

Cornish, Dudley Taylor. *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987.

Foote, Shelby. *The Civil War, a Narrative: Red River to Appomattox*. New York: Vintage, 1986.

Forrest, Nathan Bedford. "Report of Maj. Gen. Nathan B. Forrest, C. S. Army, Commanding Cavalry, of the Capture of Fort Pillow." Shotgun's Home of the American Civil War. Accessed March 6, 2008. <http://www.civilwarhome.com/forrest.htm>.

Entries are single-
spaced, with
double-spacing
between entries.
(Some instructors
may prefer double-
spacing
throughout.)

Hurst, Jack. *Nathan Bedford Forrest: A Biography*. New York: Knopf, 1993.

McPherson, James M. *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Wills, Brian Steel. *A Battle from the Start: The Life of Nathan Bedford Forrest*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.