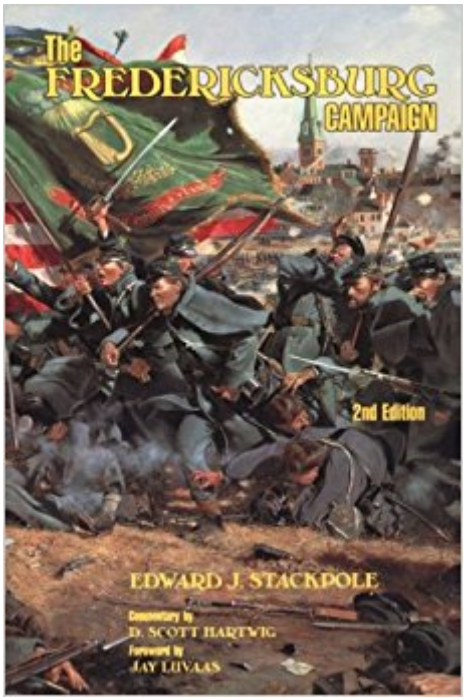
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The Fredericksburg Campaign: Drama On The Rappahannock, 2nd Edition



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Synopsis

The Army of the Potomac’s defeat by General Lee. A classic reference.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gen. Edward J. Stackpole, a graduate of Yale University, served with the 28th Division in World War I and as a major general during World War II. His other works on the Civil War include They Met at Gettysburg.

Solid analysis of the campaign. Good research, plenty of maps. The pictures don’t look good on this digital format. Last chapter is good summation.

Comprehensive tactical information.Great book. A must have for the civil war buff.The included maps are basic and could be Improved.

Very readable book. Well written and researched work. A must for specialists in the American Civil War be they historians, re-enactors or war gamers.

I am sorry to say that after much excitment in finally receiving my copy of this book I was bitterly disappointed in the end. In fact I did not finish reading this book but I put it away half way through it. I really wanted to get to the fighting and to learn why this battle (disaster) took place. I wanted to

read about the courage of those Union troops attacking the postions on the heights above the town, I wanted to read about the Angel of Marye's Heights but I couldn't, I just found it too hard to continue reading. The book didn't draw me it from the start, the narrative had no warmth to it.

General Stackpole's The Fredericksburg Campaign is a solid work that serves as a good departure point for further study of the campaign, and I will relate some of the book's strongpoints and weaknesses.Since there is no other campaign history of Fredericksburg written in the 20th century (there is in fact only one other, written in 1882) which makes Stackpole's book invaluable in and of itself. The major historians, Catton, Foote, and McPherson do not devote more than a few chapters to the subject. While Catton devotes portion of a book, but it is unsatisfactory as a campaign history. Gary Gallagher has recently edited a book of essays of various elements of the battle but again, it is not a campaign history.The focused scope of the book allows it to discuss the aspects of the campaign and battle in great detail, which is another strongpoint. Also, I greatly appreciated the numerous maps; it enabled me to see the flow of battle and the importance of geography.The book's only one major weakness is its concluding analysis. General Stackpole comes to to simple of a conclusion, although it is understandable given his military background he is disgusted with the apparently wanton waste of human life at Fredericksburg. General Stackpole's concluding analysis compels one to look further, to gain a broader perspective, and this is where I would suggest Gallagher's book as well as Jay Luvaas' Battlefield Guide to Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. Stackpole provides a great foundation upon which further study will build.I gave the book a rating of "8". Five points came simply because it is the only modern campaign history; that by itself makes it worthwhile reading. Two points came from the solid historical work; he makes good use of primary sources throughout and his analysis of the battle is sound. One point came from the maps, which again were quite useful and accurately detailed. I cannot give Stackpole higher due to his conclusions but this in no way should deter a! nyone from reading it. It is well-written (not in the sense of McPherson) and is an easy read. Stackpole doesn't answer every question, but he makes you want to delve deeper, which is the mark of a valuable book.

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