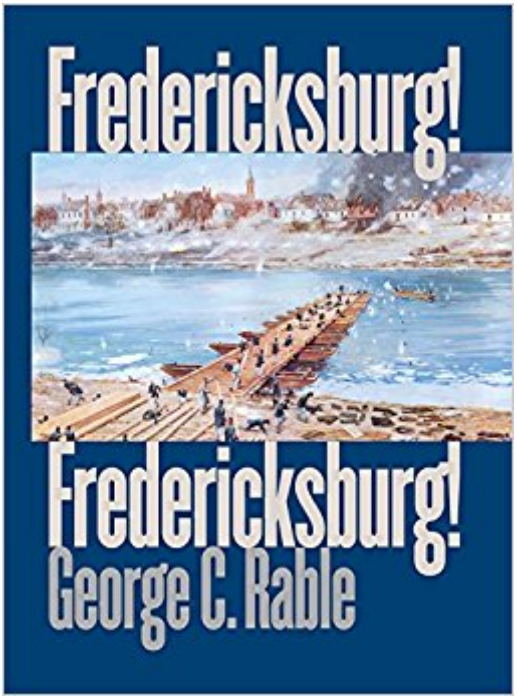
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Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg!



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Synopsis

During the battle of Gettysburg, as Union troops along Cemetery Ridge rebuffed Pickett's Charge, they were heard to shout, "Give them Fredericksburg!" Their cries reverberated from a clash that, although fought some six months earlier, clearly loomed large in the minds of Civil War soldiers. Fought on December 13, 1862, the battle of Fredericksburg ended in a stunning defeat for the Union. Confederate general Robert E. Lee suffered roughly 5,000 casualties but inflicted more than twice that many losses--nearly 13,000--on his opponent, General Ambrose Burnside. As news of the Union loss traveled north, it spread a wave of public despair that extended all the way to President Lincoln. In the beleaguered Confederacy, the southern victory bolstered flagging hopes, as Lee and his men began to take on an aura of invincibility. George Rable offers a gripping account of the battle of Fredericksburg and places the campaign within its broader political, social, and military context. Blending battlefield and home front history, he not only addresses questions of strategy and tactics but also explores material conditions in camp, the rhythms and disruptions of military life, and the enduring effects of the carnage on survivors--both civilian and military--on both sides.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A surprisingly easy read because Rable never assumes the reader already knows about army life.--Washington PostA very balanced, readable, and thought-provoking account. . . . The author never loses sight of the common soldier--the evocative text is filled with first-person descriptions of life in the camp, on the march, in battle, or in field hospitals. It captures the bravery, ineptitude, and

heartache of soldiers and generals alike.--Blue & Gray MagazineMasterful . . . . By successfully synthesizing recent scholarship and plowing new ground as well, this book takes its place as the best volume published thus far in the Littlefield History of the Civil War Era.--American Historical ReviewRable has written a new kind of battle history that melds many different types of history into one, all-inclusive narrative. Rable is one of the most versatile Civil War historians in the field today.--Civil War HistoryRable provides an excellent account of the events leading up to the battle. . . . A very enjoyable read. Well researched, written, illustrated, and with good maps, it is a rich tapestry of a sometimes overlooked campaign.--Confederate VeteranThe very best study of the horrific bloodbath known as the Battle of Fredericksburg.--The Lone Star Book ReviewEvery major Civil War battle deserves at least one big book. . . . Rable has produced the Battle of Fredericksburg's big book. . . . His study of Fredericksburg surely represents a microcosm of the entire Civil War. . . . Rable's study of the Battle of Fredericksburg achieves what few other battle histories accomplish: those looking for a battle-oriented account will not be disappointed and those who are more interested in the social and political factors surrounding the battle also will be pleased.--Georgia Historical QuarterlySkillfully done. . . . The pace of the story is fast . . . much like the battle itself. . . . One of the most interesting renditions of any battle.--Civil War NewsRable's recounting of the campaign deserves special notice, now more than ever, because it conveys much more than simply a tale of combat. . . . What Rable succeeds in doing, in spectacular fashion, is to offer us an intensely human account of a single campaign. . . . He has drawn upon the large literature on this subject and grounded it in a specific context. . . . The result is the most detailed study to date about a soldier's experience grounded in a single battle.--H-Civil WarExhaustively researched and very well written, Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg! is the definitive history of the battle. Buffs and scholars who may wish to discount Fredericksburg's significance will have to acknowledge the strong arguments Rable presents. The book deserves to be in everyone's Civil War library.--Journal of American History[This book] sets a new standard for Civil War historians who write about military campaigns. George C. Rable provides not just an account of a horrific battle, but how it changed the course of the war for both sides and the men who fought in its ranks.--Civil War Book ReviewAn expansive narrative that includes a wide range of voices across half a decade.--Journal of Illinois HistoryAn excellent book: extensively researched, clearly written, judiciously interpreted. From war front to home front, from newspaper office to the halls of Congress, Rable fuses the 'old' and 'new' military histories to relate more about what Fredericksburg meant than we have ever known before.--Journal of Southern HistoryRable's fine volume will be the standard study of Fredericksburg for a long time to come.--Journal of Military

History

This remarkable study is a monumental achievement in modern scholarship on the American Civil War. Until now, the decisive turn of events at Fredericksburg, a disastrous setback for the Union cause and a glorious triumph for Lee’s army and the Confederacy, has received only sporadic and limited scrutiny from historians. In a sweeping narrative riddled with illuminating details, previously unknown information, and extremely valuable analysis, Rable has succeeded brilliantly in giving Fredericksburg the attention it deserves.--T. Michael Parrish, author of Richard Taylor: Soldier Prince of Dixie

Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg! is an excellent overall view of the post Antietam actions of both the Federal and Confederate armies as they maneuvered to and ultimately confronted each other at the important but little publicized Civil War battle of Fredericksburg. George Rable has combined a fairly detailed battle summary along with an enormous amount of "everyday soldier" feeling to give an accurate as well as highly readable account of this predecessor to the bloody battle at Chancellorsville. The story starts with the Union troops stalled at Warrenton Va. following the delayed pursuit of the Rebel army after the monolithic battle at Antietam. Abraham Lincoln, finally resigned to the fact that George McClellan will not agressively fight Robert E. Lee, appoints the ambivalent Ambrose Burnside to command the Federal forces. After Burnside reluctantly agrees to the post (he’s refused command twice before) he marches his troops with lightening quickness to Falmouth with the idea of crossing the Rappahannock River to Fredericksburg and ultimately to Richmond to capture the Rebel capital. Upon arrival at Falmouth, however, he discovers that the War Department has forgotten to provide bridge material for the river crossing and he’s forced to wait...giving Lee valuable time to countermarch and entrench his troops outside Fredericksburg. Rable then takes an opportunity to really describe Union and Confederate camp life...the reader gets many first hand accounts of the incredibly horrible conditions there (this camp has been called the Valley Forge of the Civil War) and how the troops ultimately prepared for the coming battle. Rable’s battle and tactics descriptions of the engagements at Prospect Hill (south of town) and the incredible encounters at the stone wall at the base of Marye’s Heights are concise and expository...clearly, this confrontation was a major mistake for the Union. Rable then carries that thought further by explaining Burnside’s stubborness and reluctance to change his plans in the face of defeat. The result is one of the Civil War’s most sensless slaughters and the final downfall for Burnside. The book ends with the demoralized Union forces again encamped at Falmouth (following

the ridiculous "Mud March"...Burnside's last ditch attempt at redemption for his army) and a new leader (Joe Hooker) ready to assume command. In the final analysis, Rable's book is well balanced with enough battle detail to satisfy the military historian while at the same time, a lot of "everyday" soldier context to make this an excellent addition to any Civil War library. I would recommend this book highly.

Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg! by George Rable is an excellent overview of an often overlooked campaign. Mr Rable's book, while not a military history, is a wonderfully writeen and easy to read book on the Fredericksburg Campaign. It starts off with Burnside replacing McClellan and ends with Burnside's dismissal after the infamous Mud March. If you want a great overall read on the entire campaign this book is for you. If you want a miltary history of the campaign then I would suggest Francis O'Reilly's Fredericksburg Campaign: Winter War on the Rappahannock. O'Reilly's book is almost a minute by minute, blow by blow of the battle, while Rable's is a remarkable overview of the entire campaign from beginning to bitter end. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the campaign and I would suggest O'Reilly's with this one by Mr Rable.

After the brilliant and almost complete book of Francis Augustin O'Reilly, it's very good to have something to compare in the same matter. I like the George C. Rable research.

This is an awsome book. Very informative. What a pointless sacrifice of life. This book will answer any questions you may have about the battle of Fredericksburg. A great read.

Great book and in great shape!!!...

Fredericksburg! Frederickburg! is a classic battle study and at the same time a great overview of life during the Civil War both before and after this epic struggle [come] slaughter.Rable paints a fascinating picture of life in the warring armies immediately before and after Fredericksburg, describing in intimate detail the horrors, struggles, and mundanity of army life. Concentrating mainly on the Army of the Potomac, Rable shows that in late 1862 victory was anything but certain for the North, and after this monumental battle it seemed as if the United States itself was in danger of breaking into not just two but many different countries. The presentation of life in camp, on the march, and in battle gives the reader an in-depth look at the foot soldier and his struggle to survive not only on the battlefield but in conditions in which we would not let animals exist

today.Meticulously and painstakingly researched, Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg! is a fantastic read not only for the serious Civil War historian but for the casual reader as well. Rable's prose is as good or better than anything McPherson or Oates can offer, and flows from chapter to chapter effortlessly. I highly recommend this work as an excellent addition to any Civil War library.

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