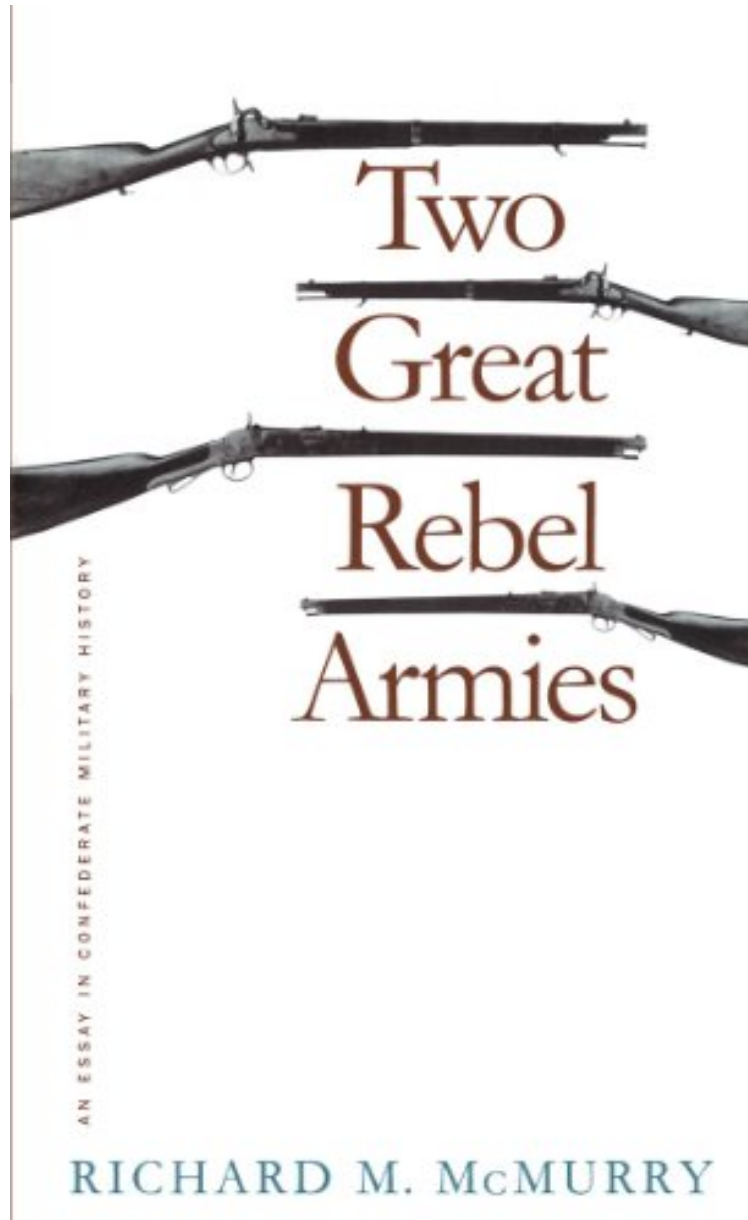


[Free pdf] Two Great Rebel Armies: An Essay in Confederate Military History (Civil War America)

Two Great Rebel Armies: An Essay in Confederate Military History (Civil War America)

Von Richard M. McMurry

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Produktinformation Veröffentlicht am: 2014-02-01Erscheinungsdatum: 2014-02-01File Name: B00ZVESY44
| File size: 44.Mb

Von Richard M. McMurry : Two Great Rebel Armies: An Essay in Confederate Military History (Civil War America) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Two Great Rebel Armies: An Essay in Confederate Military History (Civil War America):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Ground-breaking insights but weak premiseVon Michael R. BrasherRichard M. McMurry's "Two Great Rebel Armies" addresses the differences between the Army of Northern Virginia (and its successes) and the Army of Tennessee (and its failures). McMurry argues that not only did the Army of Northern Virginia have a better upper-level command structure (a point with which few historians would disagree), but also that the basic "building blocks" that comprised the armies - the men themselves and their company and regimental organizations and officers - were of higher quality in the Army of Northern Virginia. McMurry primarily concentrates on the differences in quality of the common soldiers and small unit organizations of the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of Tennessee. McMurry argues that West Point or military school educations, militia backgrounds, and prior military experience were seen in a larger percentage of the officers and NCO's comprising Lee's army compared with the Army of Tennessee. These factors would, according to McMurry, make the Army of Northern Virginia the more militarily effective force and thus help explain its success relative to the Army of Tennessee. By inference, he also suggests that because the units sent to Virginia were for the most part organized earlier than those that were made part of the Army of Tennessee, those men with the most experience, training and enthusiasm would be more likely to end up with the first-formed units and therefore would be sent to the Army of Northern Virginia. Thus Lee's army was successful; the Army of Tennessee was not. McMurry's "Two Great Rebel Armies," while raising some very interesting perspectives for further investigation, operates however, from something of a false premise with respect to his central theme. A statistical analysis of the battle results (which McMurry did not bother to perform) of both the Army of Tennessee and the Army of Northern Virginia clearly shows that they were very comparable from the standpoint of the important "measures of merit" relating to tactical battlefield performance - at least up until John Bell Hood took the reins of the Army of Tennessee in July, 1864. Additional statistical analysis indeed shows, as McMurry claims, that the Army of Northern Virginia possessed a larger percentage of officers with prior military experience and/or educations, and that the average regiment sent to Virginia was organized several months prior to the average regiment in the Army of Tennessee. McMurry infers from this information that the Army of Northern Virginia was made up of better basic "material" than the Army of Tennessee (the best qualified and most enthusiastic volunteers would have presumably joined the first units sent to the theater of war) and this helps explain why the Army of Northern Virginia was a "winner" and the Army of Tennessee a "loser." As noted earlier, the distinction of winner or loser is not discernible from the battle statistics comparisons, so McMurry is basing his categorizations on very subjective arguments, although these classifications have generally been accepted by past historians. In fact, there seems to be little correlation of tactical battlefield performance statistics with the final declaration of the "winner" or "loser" of a Civil War battle. Additionally, the author makes some serious mistakes in trying to drive home the distinction of winner and loser with respect to the Army of Northern Virginia and Army of Tennessee. For example, McMurry claims that the Army of Northern Virginia *never* [emphasis added] waged a major campaign in which its strength exceeded that of its enemy, while the western forces enjoyed that advantage on at least six crucial occasions (the association of the Army of Tennessee with at least a couple of these battles is tenuous, at best). McMurry can easily be shown to be wrong on both assertions. Despite these flaws however, "Two Great Rebel Armies" clearly breaks new ground in the age-old debate on the comparative merits of Confederacy's two main armies - the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of Tennessee.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Success and Failure in the Confederate CauseVon Ein KundeStudents of the American Civil War have long pondered the root causes of the illustrious successes of the Army of Northern Virginia in comparison to the miserable failures of the Army of Tennessee. For some, the answer is as simple as Robert E. Lee vs. Braxton Bragg (the comparison between the two is so compelling as to almost stifle further analysis). Fortunately, Dr. McMurry has delved into the subject with academic discipline and presented his results in this concise, convincing study - which, since its publication, has become a standard reference for later ACW histories from the academic community. Superior leadership - from the commanding general on down through the command structure, including experience, discipline and motivation of the regimental and company officers and their soldiers - was certainly a very large factor, but by no means the only important factor. The infrastructure of war (railroads, supply lines, communications) in the west was inferior for troop movements in a large area which was primarily still wilderness. Key areas in the west (Tennessee, Kentucky) were indefensible due to the existence of penetrating rivers - exploited by Federal naval gunboat superiority. Federal efforts in the west were much more organized, supplied and led (at least later in the war) than their Confederate counterparts. Dr. McMurry applies the academic method in presenting the appropriate statistics to support his conclusions. The final analysis by McMurry is persuasive: the South adopted a strategy of trading land for time in the west (where the war could not be won, but was eventually lost) for an opportunity to try and win the war in the east (where relative advantages and the best opportunities existed). This strategy seems to have been the South's best chance for victory in a war heavily weighted against them (in terms of military resources) from the outset. There is also a very interesting appendix which presents McMurry's views on the "Lee bashing" fad - initiated by Thomas Connelly, of late supported by Alan Nolan in his ridiculous "Lee Considered". Again, the disciplined academic view is the most persuasive in these arguments.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. One side or another?Von ScottThe title definately underscores how

masterful Mr. McMurray has been in detailing the main differences between the Army of Northern Virginia and The Army of Tennessee. From the basics of command on through key strategy and deployment, both armies are beautifully dissected by McMurray's research, mirrored with an easy to understand style of writing. This book not only discusses how important the upper command structures were to both armies but how the various infrastructures such as railroads, food supply, communication and weapons production differed from east to west. This book can be summed up as an impressive literary study of the two great armies. It sheds light on the many differences as well as similarities and gives the reader new insight into the complex study of military history. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in an intense study of both armies. Well done Mr. McMurray!

Kurzbeschreibung Richard McMurry compares the two largest Confederate armies, assessing why Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was more successful than the Army of Tennessee. His bold conclusion is that Lee's army was a better army--not just one with a better high command. "Sheds new light on how the South lost the Civil War.--American Historical "McMurry's mastery of the literature is impressive, and his clear and succinct writing style is a pleasure to read. . . . Comparison of the two great rebel armies offers valuable insights into the difficulties of the South's military situation.--Maryland Historian Pressestimmen Indispensable for all future studies of Confederate military history." "Choice" "Sheds new light on how the South lost the Civil War." "American Historical " " " "Two Great Rebel Armies" is that rare treat, a scholarly book that makes for enjoyable reading." "Ohio History" " " " "McMurry's mastery of the literature is impressive, and his clear and succinct writing style is a pleasure to read." "Maryland Historian" " " " "Two Great Rebel Armies" is that rare treat, a scholarly book that makes for enjoyable reading." "Ohio History" "McMurry's mastery of the literature is impressive, and his clear and succinct writing style is a pleasure to read." "Maryland Historian" Kurzbeschreibung Richard McMurry compares the two largest Confederate armies, assessing why Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was more successful than the Army of Tennessee. His bold conclusion is that Lee's army was a better army--not just one with a better high command. "Sheds new light on how the South lost the Civil War.--American Historical "McMurry's mastery of the literature is impressive, and his clear and succinct writing style is a pleasure to read. . . . Comparison of the two great rebel armies offers valuable insights into the difficulties of the South's military situation.--Maryland Historian