



General James Longstreet: the Confederacy's most controversial soldier : a biography, Jeffrey D. Wert, Simon & Schuster, 1993, 0671709216, 9780671709211, 527 pages. General James Longstreet fought in nearly every campaign of the Civil War, from Manassas (the first battle of Bull Run) to Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chickamauga, Gettysburg, and was present at the surrender at Appomattox. Yet, he was largely held to blame for the Confederacy's defeat at Gettysburg. General James Longstreet sheds new light on the controversial commander and the man Robert E. Lee called "my old war horse."

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Lee's Tarnished Lieutenant James Longstreet and His Place in Southern History, William Garrett Piston, Mar 1, 1990, Biography & Autobiography, 252 pages. Reconstructing the military career of one of the Confederacy's most competent but also one of its most vilified corps commanders, this book reveals how Longstreet became, in

Second Manassas, 1862 Robert E. Lee's Greatest Victory, John P. Langellier, 2002, History, 96 pages. Osprey's examination of the culminating battle of the American Civil War (1861-1865). "There never was such a campaign, not even by Napoleon" wrote Confederate General Pender

The Mice Templar 1 The Prophecy, Bryan J. L. Glass, Michael Avon Oeming, Dec 3, 2008, , 256 pages. When rats attack his village, Karic, a young mouse, and his family escape, but after falling into a river he receives a prophecy that he will be the one to save his people by

General Lee's Army From Victory to Collapse, Joseph Glatthaar, Mar 24, 2009, History, 624 pages. A history of the Confederate troops under Robert E. Lee presents portraits of soldiers from all walks of life, offers insight into how the Confederacy conducted key operations

Return to Bull Run The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas, John J. Hennessy, Sep 1, 1999, History, 607 pages. "This comprehensively researched, well-written book represents the definitive account of Robert E. Lee's triumph over Union leader John Pope in the summer of 1862. . . . Lee's

Generals in Gray Lives of the Confederate Commanders, Ezra J. Warner, 2006, Biography & Autobiography, 420 pages. Given in memory of Lt. Charles Britton Hudson, CSA & Sgt. William Henry Harrison Edge, CSA by Eugene Edge III..

Wiregrass to Appomattox the untold story of the 50th Georgia Infantry Regiment, C.S.A., James W. Parrish, Dec 18, 2008, Biography & Autobiography, 404 pages. Wiregrass to Appomattox follows a regiment of Georgia confederates as they travel from the Wiregrass region to the seat of war in Virginia. The author, a great-great grandson

Stonewall Jackson the man, the soldier, the legend, James I. Robertson, Mar 1, 1997, Biography &

Autobiography, 950 pages. An in-depth portrait of Confederate General "Stonewall" Jackson traces his life from his humble beginnings, through his military career, to his untimely death in 1863

Nathan Bedford Forrest In Search of the Enigma, Eddy W. Davison, Daniel Foxx, 2007, Biography & Autobiography, 528 pages. The name Nathan Bedford Forrest stirs conflicting emotions among those acquainted with his history. Here he is presented as a man of many passions and abilities, a man who

Custer , Jeffrey D. Wert, Jun 10, 1997, Biography & Autobiography, 464 pages. Draws on previously overlooked documents to probe the puzzles that have continued to mark the legendary general's life and career.

Clashes of cavalry the Civil War careers of George Armstrong Custer and Jeb Stuart, Thom Hatch, Jul 1, 2001, Biography & Autobiography, 291 pages. An innovative approach to the lives of these two Civil War giants, depicting not only their individual lives and exploits, but also the role of each in specific battles..

From Manassas to Appomattox Memoirs of the Civil War in America, James Longstreet, Jan 1, 1992, History, 690 pages. General James Longstreet is one of the most controversial figures of the American Civil War. According to some, he was partially to blame for the Confederate defeat at

Chancellorsville, 1863 the souls of the brave, Ernest B. Furgurson, Oct 13, 1992, History, 405 pages. Drawing on new research, as well as period journals and diaries, this definitive study provides a detailed account of the battle of Chancellorsville and assesses the factors

General James Longstreet fought in nearly every campaign of the Civil War, from Manassas (the first battle of Bull Run) to Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chickamauga, Gettysburg, and was present at the surrender at Appomattox. Yet, he was largely held to blame for the Confederacy's defeat at Gettysburg. General James Longstreet sheds new light on the controversial commander and the man Robert E. Lee called "my old war horse."

This isn't the first biography to be written on Confederate General James Longstreet, but it's the best--and certainly the one that pays the most attention to Longstreet's performance as a military leader. Historian Jeffrey D. Wert aims to rehabilitate Longstreet's reputation, which traditionally has suffered in comparison to those of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson. Some Southern partisans have blamed Longstreet unfairly for the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg; Wert corrects the record here. He is not uncritical of Longstreet's record, but he rightly suggests that if Lee had followed Longstreet's advice, the battle's outcome might have been different.

The facts of history cannot be changed, however, and Wert musters them on these pages to advance a bold claim: "Longstreet, not Jackson, was the finest corps commander in the Army of Northern Virginia; in fact, he was arguably the best corps commander in the conflict on either side." Wert describes his subject as strategically aggressive, but tactically reserved. The bulk of the book appropriately focuses on the Civil War, but Wert also briefly delves into Longstreet's life before and after it. Most interestingly, it was framed by a friendship with Ulysses S. Grant, formed at West Point and continuing into old age. Longstreet even served in the Grant administration--an act that called into question his loyalty to the Lost Cause, and explains in part why Wert's biography is a welcome antidote to much of what has been written about this controversial figure. --John J. Miller

This is the most comprehensive military biography to date of the man Robert E. Lee called "my war horse." Wert (Mosby's Rangers) makes a strong case for James Longstreet (1821-1904) as the best corps commander on either side of the Civil War. A superb battle captain and a masterful tactician, he clearly recognized the limitations of the offensive under mid-19th century conditions. For Longstreet, Gettysburg in particular was not an opportunity, but a mistake. Wert argues convincingly that events vindicated Longstreet's opposition to Lee's insistence on repeatedly attacking the strong Union positions. Longstreet also recognized more clearly than most of his

Confederate contemporaries that war was not an absolute. He accepted the political consequences of military defeat; his reconciliation with the restored Union brought him the open contempt of irreconcilables like Jubal Early. The resulting controversies obscured Longstreet's military reputation. This work restores a balanced view of the career of one of America's great soldiers. Illustrations not seen by PW.

This biography tells the story of the rise and military career of the general Lee referred to as "my old warhorse." A superb fighter - perhaps the most tenacious of Lee's Corps commanders, Longstreet had a preference for the defense, or at least a defensive posture awaiting an opportunity to counter-punch. His one independent fighting command, against Burnside in East Tennessee, revealed that the General was best suited to Corps command under a Lee or other officer of strategic vision.

Yet Longstreet served his cause well. Unwilling to join in the deification of Lee after the war (and even criticizing him on some matters), Longstreet also became a Republican and accepted an appointment from his old pre-war friend (now president) U.S. Grant. These moves caused a significant anti-Longstreet backlash across the South -- which taints his reputation even to this day.

I must say that Wert does a good job of exploring the controversy over his reputation and examining the highlights of his career. The information in the book is significant, if less than thorough and somewhat unevenly presented. I also found the voice of the author too present in the reading -- something in the way the book is written doesn't allow it to reach it's own voice or a consistently even flow. I would give this four stars for the subject and facts and three stars for the quality of the writing.

Wert's biography of Longstreet is one of the most balanced and thoroughly researched books about any Civil War general that I have ever read. Wert presents in detail the many sides of Longstreet - and those with whom Longstreet served. From the first chapter Wert shows that Longstreet was a soldier to be both praised and criticized - and Wert does not hesitate to do either..... One of the many features that I liked was Wert's willingness to present many sides of an issue. Even when Wert later offers his personal opinion, the reader is made aware of evidence that would support the opposite opinion. Most refreshing in an author of military history!..... The book is packed with information and Wert obviously conducted very exhaustive research. Not the usual dry biography, I found it hard to put down each night. My only complaint with the book was that it was not longer - I longed for more..... This is a great work and most certainly a MUST read.

"General James Longstreet, The Confederacy's Most Controversial Soldier: A Biography" is a candid, fair and balanced portrait of a man who should, but doesn't, rank at the top of any list of the greatest American military leaders. James Longstreet's place in history has always been shrouded in controversy, much of it of his own making. In the decades since the Civil War, he has traditionally been blamed by historians for the Confederate army's loss at Gettysburg, and condemned for his service in the Grant administration as a traitor to the "Lost Cause."

Jeffrey D. Wert's able pen (he writes in a very clear, concise and easily comprehensible style) and obviously meticulous research presents Lee's "old war-horse" as a general possessed with great strategic vision, an outstanding ability to lead troops in the field, and with tactically conservative, yet sound, instincts. Longstreet's personal flaws - his inability to control his emotions and support his superiors when he disagreed with them, and his vindictiveness toward his subordinates when they disagreed with him - are also fully explored. The author's admiration for his subject is evident throughout this book. The overall portrait that emerges is favorable - a general beloved by his troops and depended upon for his wise counsel and military skills by his boss, General Robert E. Lee; but also a military leader capable of serious misjudgments both on the field of battle, and in his dealings with both his superiors and subordinates.

From his assumption of command during The Seven Days, Robert E. Lee had two formidable Lieutenants: James Longstreet and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. This troika wrought more havoc on the Army of the Potomac, defeated that army so often and in such detail that the Army of

Northern Virginia was thought to be invincible by everyone, North and South. The Army of Northern Virginia had made a habit of winning; the Army of the Potomac had made a habit of losing.

But Lee loses Jackson at Chancellorsville, a victim of Confederate friendly fire. It is at that moment most historians think the fortunes of the war changed. They are possibly correct. Jackson was an eclectic, prickly sort, who was totally committed to his enemy's destruction. He was an excellent tactician, drove his men to the extreme and had a habit of doing the unexpected. He was an offensive minded General, always seeking to attack. His loss was irreplaceable. So when it came time to again invade the North, the influence of Jackson within the command structure is missing.

James Longstreet has long been credited with Lee's loss at Gettysburg. After the war, as scapegoats for the South's loss were sought, Jubal Early rewrote the South's Gettysburg battle strategy, blaming Lee's loss at Gettysburg on Longstreet. Southern apologists were only too eager to adopt Longstreet as the reason the South lost the war. To be fair, no one else was offered up who made as much sense as Longstreet. Everyone agreed Lee could not be liable for his own decisions. And Jackson was dead. Today, looking back, Jackson would seem to be the most likely candidate, since he could not fight back, but after the Valley campaign, the Seven Days and his pivotal role in the Chancellorsville victory, he, like Lee, had been deified. And if someone besides Lee was to be blamed, it had to be someone of influence, someone within the inner circle. Longstreet was the only choice.

Jeffrey Wert combines logic, academic gumshoeing and a new historical perspective to prove that Longstreet is innocent of the charges. This is a well written, well researched book. You may not agree with Wert but you have to be impressed with the massive amount of evidence. One Southerner was not the equal of ten Yankees. Read more ›

General James Longstreet I actually knew very little about as history is not always kind to the survivors. General James Longstreet was without a doubt one of the most capable Corp Commanders who has ever served in any Army and after reading this book I think you will agree. While many in history have judged him harshly as they feel that he abandoned the South after the war in reality he simply did what had always done which was to be true to his convictions. We think of the Gallantry of Lee the...more General James Longstreet I actually knew very little about as history is not always kind to the survivors. General James Longstreet was without a doubt one of the most capable Corp Commanders who has ever served in any Army and after reading this book I think you will agree. While many in history have judged him harshly as they feel that he abandoned the South after the war in reality he simply did what had always done which was to be true to his convictions. We think of the Gallantry of Lee the boldness of Stone Wall Jackson but reading this book you learn that Longstreet was from beginning to end Lee's Old War horse and his most trusted commander through out the war.

"A significant. . .victim of the 'Lost Cause' interpretation of the conflict was James Longstreet. A crucial element of the myth was that the Confederacy nearly attained victory except for the mortal wounding of Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville and the defeat of Robert E. Lee's army at Gettysburg two months later. . . . The burden for Gettysburg fell on Longstreet. . . ."

This book lays out a nicely rendered biography of Longstreet. A series of helpful maps provides context throughout the work. The book takes a standard approach and provides detail on Longstreet's early life and career (his action in the Mexican War and his friendship with Ulysses Grant). The work chronicles his rise in the Confederate Army after war broke out. He went from commander of a small unit at First Manassas to division commander to corps commander in a fairly short period of time, matching Stonewall Jackson's rise in responsibility. Both had poor moments in the Peninsula Campaign; by the end of the Seven Days, Longstreet had grown considerably. By Second Manassas, Jackson and Longstreet were the two corps commanders in the Army of Northern Virginia and both performed well.

By that time, certain aspects of Longstreet's style became clear. At Second Manassas, he delayed attack until the situation was to his liking. Just slow? Or calculated to gain maximum effect against

the Union forces under General John Pope? Then Antietam, where Longstreet gained the nom de guerre of "My Old War Horse" from Lee.

Fredericksburg? The classic Longstreet-favored approach. Take a position and let the Yankees attack and lose large numbers of troops. Longstreet was convinced that the Confederacy could not fight long odds battles with fewer men than in the Union army. He missed Chancellorsville, while on a mission on the Peninsula. Then Gettysburg. Was he petulant and someone who undermined the Confederate effort and chances of victory? Or was he clear eyed, seeing the impending defeat? Wirt addresses this issue in a sensitive manner.

Later, we see Longstreet at his worst (feuding with Braxton Bragg and performing badly against the pathetic Ambrose Burnside at Knoxville) and at his best (his tour de force rolling up Winfield Scott Hancock's line at the Wilderness). With respect to the latter, as he was planning yet another movement against the Union army, he was shot by other Confederate troops.

Nonetheless, this book provides useful context for evaluating Longstreet. One fair conclusion is that he was one of the best corps commanders on either side (there were a lot of bad ones and some very good ones)--but one who also was far from perfect (again, note his performance under Braxton Bragg). A nice book for those wanting to know more about "The Confederacy's Most Controversial Soldier" (the book's subtitle). (less)

An excellent biography of General James Longstreet, Gen Lee's "old war horse" and commander of the First Corps. Longstreet was known as a superb tactician and battlefield commander who preferred a conservative defensive battle approach. Longstreet preferred to find and prepare defensible positions and let the Union forces come to him. His boss, Gen Lee, preferred the bold offensive approach, relying upon the superior morale and fighting ability of Southern soldiers to overcome their numerical di...more An excellent biography of General James Longstreet, Gen Lee's "old war horse" and commander of the First Corps. Longstreet was known as a superb tactician and battlefield commander who preferred a conservative defensive battle approach. Longstreet preferred to find and prepare defensible positions and let the Union forces come to him. His boss, Gen Lee, preferred the bold offensive approach, relying upon the superior morale and fighting ability of Southern soldiers to overcome their numerical disadvantage. This led to the debacle at Gettysburg which many see as the major turning point in the Civil War with Longstreet at first resisting the disastrous "Pickett's Charge" but finally complying with Gen Lee's order.

The Civil War era has always interested me. And I am always amazed on how much there is to learn about the war even after the many books I've read on it and the college courses I attended. This book just adds to the details, and quite well. This book on General James Longstreet (a Confederate General that was Lee's right-hand man and became quite the scapegoat after the Confederates lost) is great additi...more General James Longstreet: the Confederacy's Most Controversial Soldier by Jeffrey Wert

The author delves into the man and his time in remarkable detail. It is obvious the Wert did a lot of research. He is fair and just in his picture of Longstreet and has plenty of accurate information, all written in an interesting format that kept my attention. One must pay attention when reading this book. The author goes into quite the fine points when it comes to the battles that Longstreet was a part of. This is good, but if you're like me and your mind wanders a bit, you'll start getting confused (I went through a lot of "wait, so who was where and who won what?!" if the attention isn't fully there--this also goes for the large amount of names mentioned throughout the battle scenes. Luckily, the author does post maps of the battles for some extra reference for the easily confused (aka ME). I wish that the author would have focused on Longstreet more after her service in the military. I felt like even though Longstreet lived several decades after the end of the war and he dealt with a lot of backlash, there was little information and it was quickly bundled into the end. A good book if you're into the time period.

Wert is about as biased a writer and as shallow a historian as you can get. He says only positive things about his idols, and he buries six feet deep anything negative. With his rather feeble

biography of Jeb Stuart this is not a major problem--Stuart WAS a remarkable man--but with Longstreet it's a major distortion of the historical record. If you've done any research about Longstreet, you encounter the plain fact that Longstreet was what can only be euphemistically called a 'problematic subject...more Wert is about as biased a writer and as shallow a historian as you can get. He says only positive things about his idols, and he buries six feet deep anything negative. With his rather feeble biography of Jeb Stuart this is not a major problem--Stuart WAS a remarkable man--but with Longstreet it's a major distortion of the historical record. If you've done any research about Longstreet, you encounter the plain fact that Longstreet was what can only be euphemistically called a 'problematic subject.' Longstreet had a whole host of negative traits, and many of them did not benefit the Confederacy. Skip this biography.(less)

I'm embarrassed to admit that i am terrible at reading pure nonfiction, but I found this book to be easy to read, and written in such a way as to bring Longstreet more to life for me. Honestly, I didn't really see the bias, sure he author tries to paint a more realistic picture if GE highly revered figure of REL- but he also presents Longstreet in an unfavorable light as well. His description of longstreets attempt at politicking the general to be someone who was eager for promotion, but his pe...more

Jeffrey Wert provides a look at one of the fallen heroes of the confederacy in General James Longstreet. Longstreet has been accused of being the main reason for the Confederacy defeat at Gettysburg by not attacking early enough and of splintering the unity of the western army with his actions at Knoxville. Wert addresses all of these attacks in an effort to recast them towards their accusers. While at the end of the day there are many good points in this book it is not convincing enough to absol...more

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