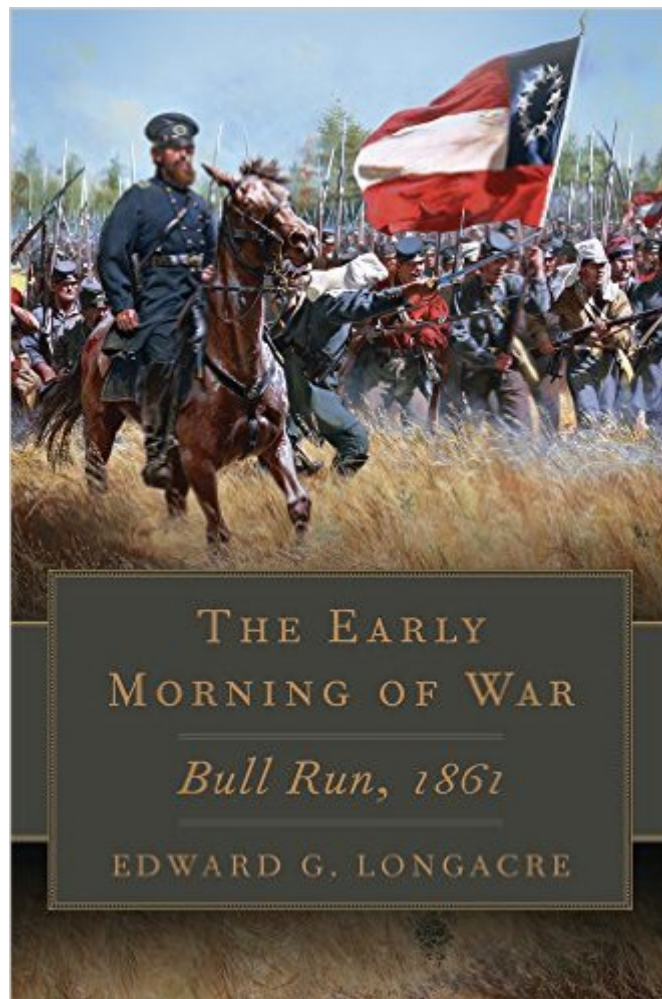


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The Early Morning Of War: Bull Run, 1861 (Campaigns And Commanders Series)



Synopsis

When Union and Confederate forces squared off along Bull Run on July 21, 1861, the Federals expected this first major military campaign would bring an early end to the Civil War. But when Confederate troops launched a strong counterattack, both sides realized the war would be longer and costlier than anticipated. First Bull Run, or First Manassas, set the stage for four years of bloody conflict that forever changed the political, social, and economic fabric of the nation. It also introduced the commanders, tactics, and weaponry that would define the American way of war through the turn of the twentieth century. This crucial campaign receives its most complete and comprehensive treatment in Edward G. Longacre's *The Early Morning of War*. A magisterial work by a veteran historian, *The Early Morning of War* blends narrative and analysis to convey the full scope of the campaign of First Bull Run—its drama and suspense as well as its practical and tactical underpinnings and ramifications. Also woven throughout are biographical sketches detailing the backgrounds and personalities of the leading commanders and other actors in the unfolding conflict. Longacre has combed previously unpublished primary sources, including correspondence, diaries, and memoirs of more than four hundred participants and observers, from ranking commanders to common soldiers and civilians affected by the fighting. In weighing all the evidence, Longacre finds correctives to long-held theories about campaign strategy and battle tactics and questions sacrosanct beliefs—such as whether the Manassas Gap Railroad was essential to the Confederate victory. Longacre shears away the myths and persuasively examines the long-term repercussions of the Union's defeat at Bull Run, while analyzing whether the Confederates really had a chance of ending the war in July 1861 by seizing Washington, D.C. Brilliant moves, avoidable blunders, accidents, historical forces, personal foibles: all are within Longacre's compass in this deftly written work that is sure to become the standard history of the first, critical campaign of the Civil War.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For those of us following the War's 150th observances now enmeshed in the dire, dark days of 1864, a book on First Manassas lightens the load. Strange to say, as warriors step onto the Plains to begin their fateful march through four years of cataclysmic violence, this battle paints a scene almost fresh and innocent compared to what was to come. We encounter men in obscure positions whose names soon rise to martial immortality, while others' promising journeys forever end here. In contrast with battles later in the War, one is struck in this narrative by the pervasive sense of hope--for glory, for victory and, depending on which side, for union or independence. Of course, such impressions arise from safe Sesquicentennial musings; the bullets and shells of First Manassas surely wounded and killed as lethally as those of Cold Harbor or Fort Fisher or Ezra Church, and Edward Longacre turns a story that is anything but light. This book takes us through the military, political, public, and individual perspectives leading up to, emerging during, and following First Bull Run. He details episodes skimmed over in other works; for example, the problem-ridden, haphazard rail transport of Johnston's force usually depicted as seamless. He fully explains Beauregard's plans and intentions as originally developed, quickly unraveled, then adapted by circumstance and happenstance. Myths surrounding the battle are examined; for example, the role of civilian spectators is clarified by revealing some delicious details (Congressmen who arrived armed as though to fight) and debunking other widely-held beliefs (the audience did not in fact impede the federal retreat). Matthew Brady could even be found among this Greek chorus of Manassas, but with no photos to show for it.

There have been a great plethora of books about the campaigns of Gettysburg, Antietam and Petersburg but when it comes to the first major land battle of Bull Run, or Manassas whichever you prefer, there are not so many options of scholarly work. In all honesty, many accounts of the Battle of Manassas, are portrayed in biographies of Stonewall Jackson without getting any treatment to itself whatsoever. Now, thanks to Edward G. Longacre, there is an in depth work about the campaign and people involved in the Battle of Manassas in 1861. What is accomplished in The

Early Morning of War, is what every Civil War enthusiast has wanted for some time: a comprehensive book on the first battle of the American Civil War. Edward G. Longacre is a retired United States Department of Defense Historian and has authored many books in his illustrious career. One of his most famous works, *The Cavalry at Gettysburg*, won the Fletcher Pratt Award. His biography of Wade Hampton III, *Gentleman and Soldier: A Biography of Wade Hampton III* won the Douglas Southall Freeman History Award. Among some of his other numerous works include *General Ulysses S. Grant, the Soldier and the Man* and *Lincoln's Cavalrymen: A History of the Mounted Forces of the Army of the Potomac (1861-1865)*. This book is the forty-sixth volume in the *Campaigns and Commanders* series printed by The University of Oklahoma Press. While the majority of this book focuses on the Bull Run Campaign, the book opens with a strong introduction on the four major players of the battle: Generals Beauregard, Johnston, McDowell and Patterson. Nowhere in the beginning of this book does Jackson get a proper introduction and that is one of the better parts of this book.

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