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Marching Masters: Slavery, Race, and the Confederate Army during the Civil War (A Nation Divided: Studies in the Civil War Era)

By Colin Edward Woodward



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Marching Masters: Slavery, Race, and the Confederate Army during the Civil War (A Nation Divided: Studies in the Civil War Era) By Colin Edward Woodward

The Confederate army went to war to defend a nation of slaveholding states, and although men rushed to recruiting stations for many reasons, they understood that the fundamental political issue at stake in the conflict was the future of slavery. Most Confederate soldiers were not slaveholders themselves, but they were products of the largest and most prosperous slaveholding civilization the world had ever seen, and they sought to maintain clear divisions between black and white, master and servant, free and slave.

In *Marching Masters* Colin Woodward explores not only the importance of slavery in the minds of Confederate soldiers but also its effects on military policy and decision making. Beyond showing how essential the defense of slavery was in motivating Confederate troops to fight, Woodward examines the Rebels' persistent belief in the need to defend slavery and deploy it militarily as the war raged on. Slavery proved essential to the Confederate war machine, and Rebels strove to protect it just as they did Southern cities, towns, and railroads. Slaves served by the tens of thousands in the Southern armies?never as soldiers, but as menial laborers who cooked meals, washed horses, and dug ditches. By following Rebel troops' continued adherence to notions of white supremacy into the Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras, the book carries the story beyond the Confederacy's surrender.

Drawing upon hundreds of soldiers' letters, diaries, and memoirs, *Marching Masters* combines the latest social and military history in its compelling examination of the last bloody years of slavery in the United States.



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Editorial Review

Review

Marching Masters makes a strong point that beliefs in slavery and racial difference outlived their natal institution, and that some of the most important repositories for those long-lasting ideas were those who soldiered for the Confederate nation. Crisply written and well argued, this is a very good and important book that opens up new understanding about the Confederate war and its aftermath.

(Susan Eva O'Donovan, University of Memphis, author of *Becoming Free in the Cotton South*)

Marching Masters is based on extensive research and contains substantial documentation of the attitudes and values of many Confederate soldiers. In effective prose, it adds to a new and growing body of scholarship that applies the approaches of new social history to military topics.

(Paul D. Escott, Wake Forest University, author of *"What Shall We Do with the Negro?": Lincoln, White Racism, and Civil War America*)

... [R]ichly researched, intellectually cogent and prolifically documented. By combining the skills of a historian with those of a sociologist, Woodward explains the symbiotic cultural relationship between slavery, race, and the Confederate Army.

(*America's Civil War*)

I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the political causes of the Civil War, African Americans in the Confederacy, the Confederacy's slave policy, or black-white relations in the South. This book should stand the test of time and become a primary reference source for those teaching the political dimensions of the Civil War.

(Charles H. Bogart *Civil War News Book Review*)

Woodward's careful research, intriguing insights, and brisk prose all combine to make *Marching Masters* an important contribution to scholarship on the Confederacy.

(*Civil War Book Review*)

Marching Masters contains several key insights that should encourage scholars of the Civil War to reconsider the role that Confederate armies played in protecting slavery.

(*Arkansas Historical Quarterly*)

About the Author

Colin Edward Woodward is Editor at the Lee Family Digital Archive at Stratford Hall in Virginia.

Users Review

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