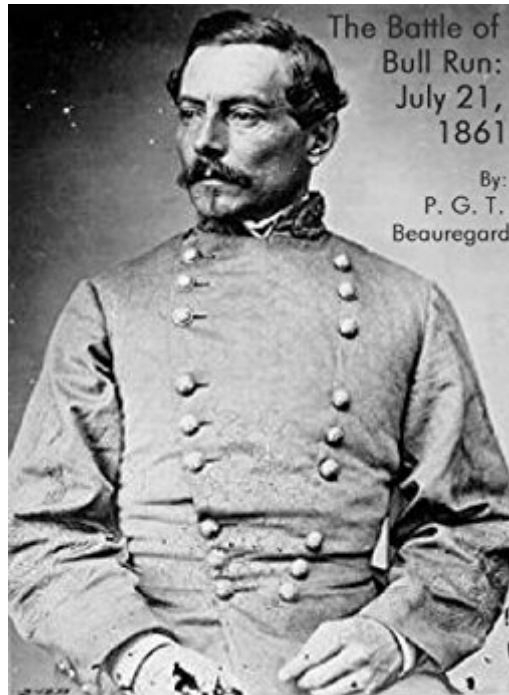




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The Battle Of Bull Run: July 21, 1861 [Annotated]



Synopsis

An article excerpted from "The Century" magazine, 1884; pages 80-106. "The Confederate commanding General's firsthand account and personal description of this early and significant battle of the War Between the States. It also includes a section designated "Subsequent Relations of Mr. [Jefferson] Davis and the Writer." Here one meets with many soon-to-become-famous names of Federal and Confederate personalities. Beauregard's personal philosophy regarding Confederate military and political strategies which he had advised and believed should have been used to ensure victory for the Southern cause are also discussed. "The Federal attack, already thus greatly favored, and encouraged, moreover, by the rout of General Bee's advanced line, failed for two reasons: their forces were not handled with concert of masses (a fault often made later on both sides), and the individual action of the Confederate troops was superior, notwithstanding inferiority in numbers, arms, and equipments, and for a very palpable reason. That one army was fighting for union and the other for disunion is a political expression; the actual fact on the battle-field, in the face of cannon and musket, was that the Federal troops came as invaders, and the Southern troops stood as defenders of their homes, and further than this we need not go." (p. 102) "As a military question, it was in no sense a civil war, but a war between two countries for conquest on one side, for self-preservation on the other." (p. 104) "If that which was accepted as a last defensive resort against an overwhelming aggressive army had been used in an enterprising offensive against that same army while yet in the raw, the same venture had been made at less general risk, less cost of valuable lives, and with immeasurably greater certain results. The Federal Army of the Potomac would have had no chance meanwhile to become tempered to that magnificent military machine which, through all its defeats and losses, remained sound, and was stronger, with its readily assimilating new strength, at the end of the war than ever before; the pressure would have been lifted from Kentucky and Missouri, and we should have maintained what is called an active defensive warfare, that is, taken and kept the offensive against the enemy, enforcing peace. No people ever warred for independence with more relative advantages than the Confederates; and if, as a military question, they must have failed, then no country must aim at freedom by means of war." (p.104)

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Customer Reviews

For a good technical description of First Manassas, this is a book worth reading. General Beauregard, hero of Ft. Sumter and Manassas, but out of sorts with President Jefferson Davis, writes a good technical narrative of the battle, it's ebb and flow, troop movements, General "Stonewall" Jackson's arrival on the scene, etc. I personally took his writing with a grain of salt. What you see when researching a subject, the higher the author is (in this case a general officer of the Confederate army) the more justification you will find. In other words, justifying the decisions they made and presenting an argument as to why. Not the truth, but a shade of it. For example, there is an ongoing controversy among historians about why the Confederate army did not follow up their victory at Manassas by attacking and investing Washington City. Beauregard claims to have wanted to make such a move; but Davis did not approve it. Then you read about Davis wanting to make a move on Washington, but Beauregard demurring. So the truth of the matter is lost to time, it appears. And based upon my own research into the Civil War, Washington at the beginning of the war was ripe for the taking. How different the outcome of the war might have been if the Confederate army had followed up their victory at Manassas with the capture the capital of the North. Beauregard was critical of President Davis' war strategy, that is defense-first, and made known his views publicly. He was very popular in the South, if not a competent officer, and Davis

was likely jealous of his popularity. So why only three stars? It's a digital reproduction, and until that technology improves, three stars is the highest this reviewer will give to a book. Why? Because the reader must wade through a lot of typos and other weird characters when reading the book. But the book itself was a very interesting read, and I would recommend it highly.

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