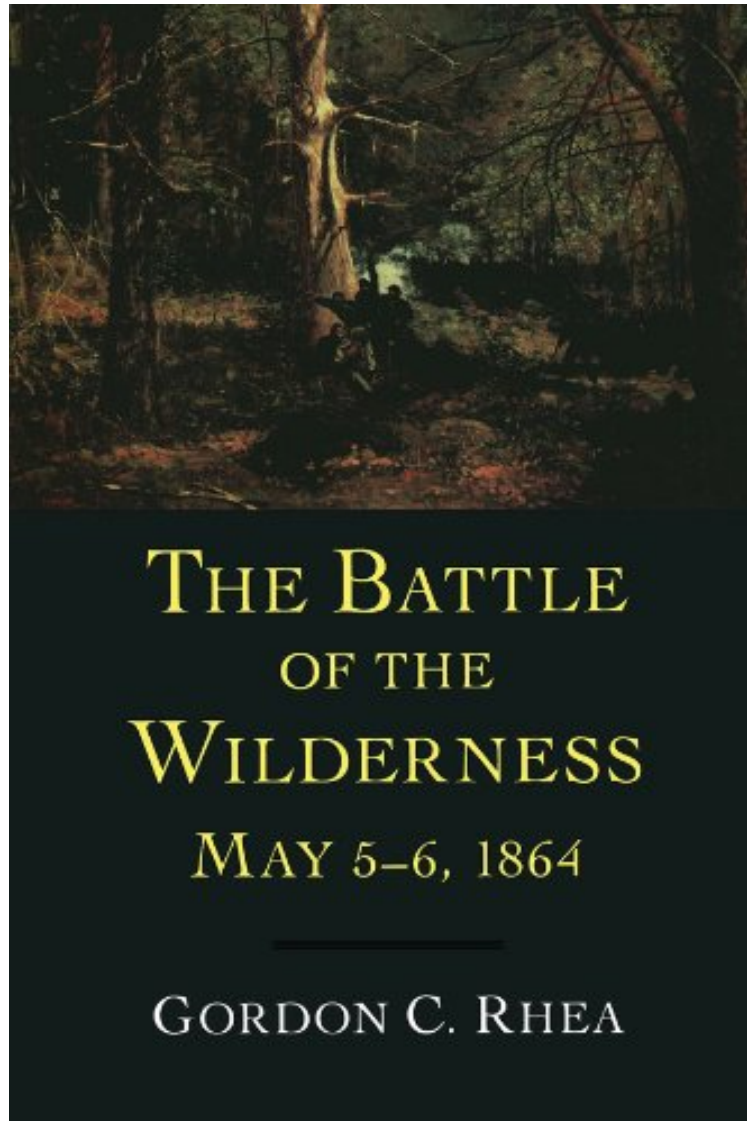


[Library ebook] The Battle of the Wilderness, May 5--6, 1864

The Battle of the Wilderness, May 5--6, 1864

Von Gordon C. Rhea

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Von Gordon C. Rhea : The Battle of the Wilderness, May 5--6, 1864 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Battle of the Wilderness, May 5--6, 1864:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An example of the dichotomy between history and literatureVon Art ChanceAs the dueling reviews of this book demonstrate, it is hard to find both good, hard history and good literature. Foote is beautiful and evocative on The Wilderness, but a bit shy of facts. Rhea is full of facts, but shy of style. I cannot say that I agree with all his

conclusions, but Rhea does make it graphically clear that the heretofore almost invincible Army of Northern Virginia met something it had never seen before, did not know how to deal with, and, yes, something of which it was afraid in The Wilderness.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Often eloquent, often strainedVon Ein KundeI must agree with the reader in VA when he states that Rhea often strains with his narrative. The research is thorough and the book is well organized. His storytelling is often eloquent but is also often awkward. On a personal note, as a Wisconsinite and a proud veteran of the WI Army National Guard's 57th "Iron Brigade"-the direct descendant of the Civil War Iron Brigade- I must take issue with his contention that the unit broke and ran in disorder. A relatively new account of the Iron Brigade's fight in the Wilderness, Sharon Eggleston Vipond's chapter "A New Kind of Murder" in "Giants in their tall black hats : essays on the Iron Brigade" edited by Alan T. Nolan and Sharon Eggleston Vipond sets the record straight. She successfully convinces that the brigade's hard core still existed and never broke in disorder. On the contrary, they captured many prisoners and several battle flags. It was the suspect reinforcements which had been attached to the brigade after they were decimated saving the army of the Potomac at Gettysburg who melted away that afternoon on the turnpike, leaving the hard core of veterans. The veterans retreated in good order with prisoners and captured flags. Routed men don't do that. Overall, good book.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Tangled in the WildernessVon Ein KundeThis book comes with recommendations of high praise - but unfortunately falls short of the mark. While Rhea demonstrates that he successfully surveyed the appropriate primary sources and has a grasp of the tactics (especially identifying and elucidating errors committed by officers in charge) and circumstances of complex troop movements and engagements in a very confused environment - no small feat - he also demonstrates deficiencies in story-telling and analysis. There is a great story to be told here, one of the beginning of the end of Lee's proud army as they face the first conflict in Grant's remorseless Overland Campaign. Shelby Foote tells it (in a much more concise fashion) with insight, emotion and the intensity of human drama - Rhea falls well short of that standard. Rhea fares better with discussions and descriptions of logistics and tactics - although he doesn't measure up to some of his contemporaries, for example Sears - but his real downfall is the conclusions he draws from his analysis. For example, Rhea makes the statement that Longstreet's delay in reaching the battlefield until the morning of the 6th was somehow the saving of Lee's army. This is absurd. If Longstreet (and for that matter Anderson's division of Hill's corps) had been up the night before, Lee's army would have been in place to vigorously repulse Hancock's attack, saving their energy, manpower and firepower for a devastating counter-attack (after the pattern of Second Manassas). As it was, when Hancock was out-flanked later in the day, Longstreet's troops were already exhausted from the counter-attack along the plank road (required to save two of Hill's divisions) and they lacked the organization and the energy to press their momentary advantage. Rhea writes well, but with much room for improvement. If this is the best we have to date, then we are still waiting for the definitive history of this important battle.

KurzbeschreibungFought in a tangled forest fringing the south bank of the Rapidan River, the Battle of the Wilderness marked the initial engagement in the climactic months of the Civil War in Virginia, and the first encounter between Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee. In an exciting narrative, Gordon C. Rhea provides the consummate recounting of that conflict of May 5 and 6, 1864, which ended with high casualties on both sides but no clear victor. With its balanced analysis of events and people, command structures and strategies, The Battle of the Wilderness is operational history as it should be written.Pressestimmen"Never before has there been such a finely detailed -- and objective -- rendering of this battle.... Future accounts of the Wilderness will stand on the shoulders of Rhea's book" -- Chicago Tribune"Both rich in colorful human incidents and provocative in its leadership assessments.... [Rhea's] book is now the first choice for anyone interested in understanding this critical battle." -- Blue and Gray"Through [Rhea's] well-constructed profiles of the Union corps commanders, we come to know the strengths and weaknesses of those who held the lives of thousands in their hands." -- Washington Times"Conventional military history at its best." -- London Times Literary SupplementThis is the latest entry in the new category of regiment-by-regiment accountings of major Civil War battles, products made possible not just by revived interest in the conflict but by the rise of a new generation of Civil War historians able to research with the aid of computer databases. It's a well-written, absorbing, though decidedly bloody tally of the opening battle of the 1864 campaign in Virginia. The Confederate Army of Northern Virginia extricated itself several times from the jaws of disaster, while the Union Army of the Potomac slogged to a tactical draw that was turned into a strategic victory by Grant's refusal to retreat. As portrayed in these pages, the battle reflects much credit on the soldiers and somewhat less on most of the generals but certainly deserves the full coverage this massive volume affords. This main selection of the History Book Club is indeed a valuable addition to Civil War collections.--Roland Green "Booklist "KurzbeschreibungFought in a tangled forest fringing the south bank of the Rapidan River, the Battle of the Wilderness marked the initial engagement in the climactic months of the Civil War in Virginia, and the first encounter between Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee. In an exciting narrative, Gordon C. Rhea provides the consummate recounting of that conflict of May 5 and 6, 1864, which ended with high casualties on

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