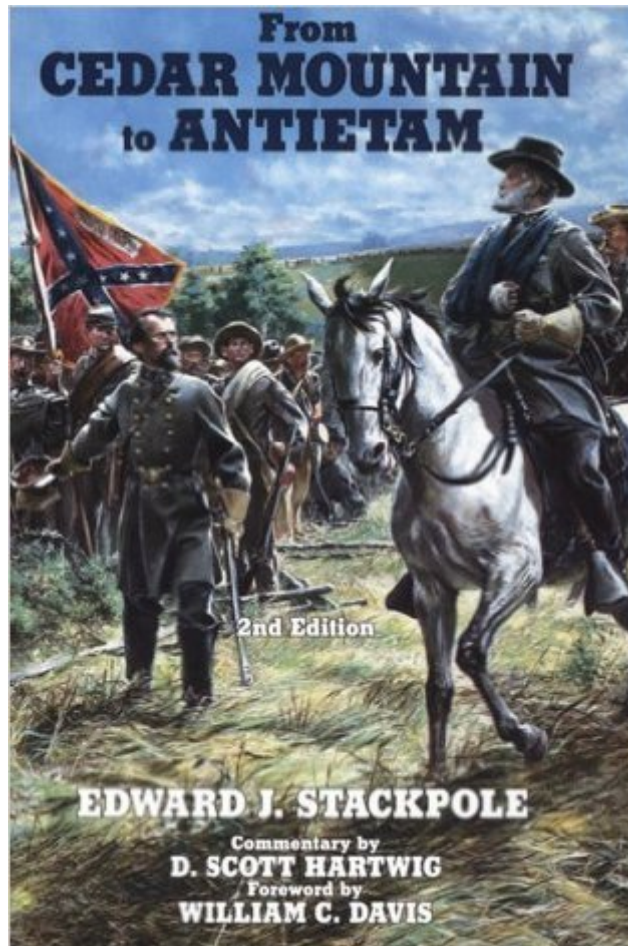


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From Cedar Mountain To Antietam (Stackpole)



Synopsis

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Customer Reviews

I've been a Civil War buff since I reached double-digits in age, and Edward J. Stackpole's *From Cedar Mountain to Antietam* was always my favorite Civil War book. I must have read it a dozen times as an adolescent and teenager, sinking my teeth into Stackpole's colorful retellings of the *War Between the States*. Revisiting it years later, I find a book that's still very well-written and entertaining, though not without flaws. Stackpole provides a combined depiction of the Second Bull Run and Antietam Campaigns, viewing them as two acts of the same story. John Pope's Army of Virginia, jerry-rigged together from the hodgepodge of commands defeated by Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley, is created after George McClellan's Peninsular Campaign fails. The aggressive Pope is completely outgeneralled by Confederate General Robert E. Lee, who boldly divides his army, outwits Pope and forces a battle before Pope can be reinforced, culminating in a crushing victory at Second Bull Run: Lee's most complete victory over a Union army. Seeking to retain the initiative, Lee invades Maryland, but his plans unravel when his campaign plans fall into McClellan's hands. This sets the stage for Antietam, the "bloodiest single day" in American history, where Lee tries to prevent his army's complete annihilation. Stackpole conceives his book at a strategic level, providing a broad overview of campaigns and battles rather than a detailed

ground-level view. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, as such books can easily become stale and obsessed with minutiae (looking at you, Stephen Sears). Stackpole instead provides a very readable general account that, while missing the "you are there" feeling of tactical depictions, gives a reader an easy understanding of the complicated battles in question.

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