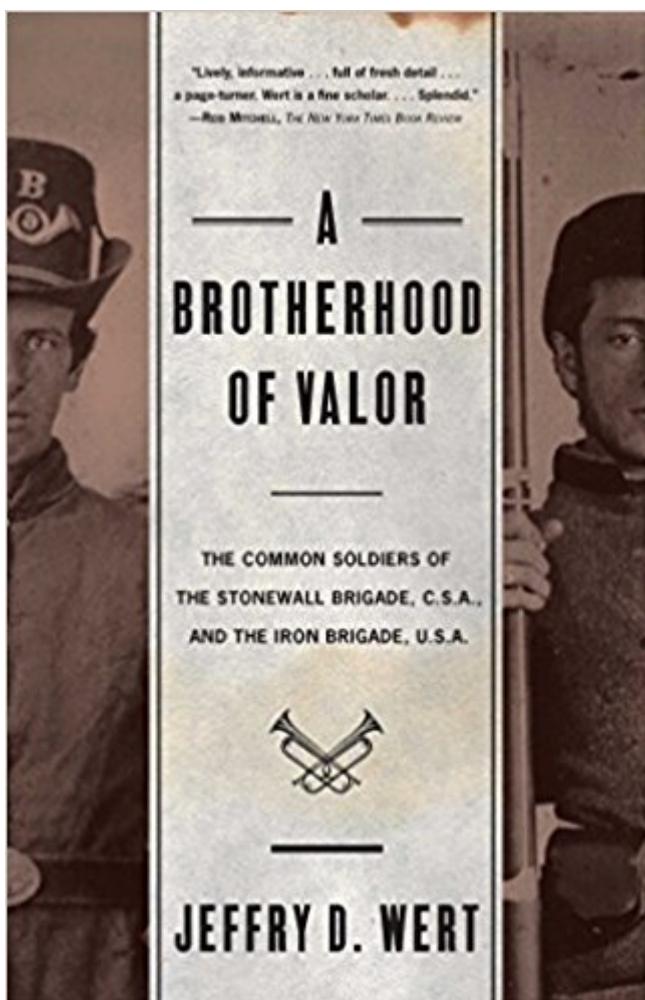


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# A Brotherhood Of Valor: The Common Soldiers Of The Stonewall Brigade, C. S. A. And The Iron Brigade, U. S. A.



## Synopsis

This unusual and moving chronicle covers some of the most important battles of the Civil War -- Sharpsburg (Antietam), Gettysburg, and Chancellorsville -- through the stories of the two brigades who confronted each other on the bloody fields of battle. Drawing on original source material, Jeffry Wert reconstructs the drama and terrors of war through the eyes of the ordinary men who became members of two of the most respected fighting units of their respective armies, the Stonewall Brigade of the Confederacy and the Iron Brigade of the Union. There are tales of grueling marches and almost unbearable deprivations; eyewitness accounts of ferocious fighting and devastating losses on both sides; and portraits of acts of courage and valor performed by soldiers and officers who, despite the difficulties they faced, remained dedicated to the cause for which they were fighting.

## Book Information

Paperback: 416 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster; 1st Touchstone Book edition (March 14, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0684862441

ISBN-13: 978-0684862446

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.1 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 23 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,142,144 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #104 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Regimental Histories #281 in Books > History > Military > Regiments #735 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Confederacy

## Customer Reviews

Confederate General Thomas J. Jackson was arguably the greatest commander of the Civil War. Yet "Stonewall" Jackson owed much of his success to the troops who served under him. He eagerly gave them their due: "You cannot praise these men of my brigade too much; they have fought, marched, and endured more than I even thought they would." The Stonewall Brigade, composed mainly of Virginians from the Shenandoah Valley, proved its mettle at First Manassas and never let up--even after its esteemed leader was shot down at Chancellorsville. Their equally elite counterparts in the Army of the Potomac were known as the Iron Brigade, hardy westerners drawn from Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan. By focusing on these two groups, historian Jeffry Wert

retells the story of the Civil War's eastern theater as it was experienced by these ordinary men from North and South. His battle descriptions are riveting, especially when he covers Antietam: Three times the Georgians charged towards the guns, and three times they were repelled. Union infantry west of the battery ripped apart the attacker's flank, and the artillerists unleashed more canister.... Finally, the Georgians could withstand the punishment no longer, and as more Union infantry piled into the Cornfield, Hood's wrecked division retreated towards West Woods and Dunker Church. When asked later where his command was, Hood replied, "Dead on the field." But the book is perhaps most notable for the way in which it describes the everyday hardships befalling each side. They often lacked food, shoes, blankets, and other military necessities. When the war began, the men believed deeply in their conflicting causes. Before it was over, writes Wert, "the war itself became their common enemy." Wert is slowly but surely gaining a reputation as one of the finest popular historians writing about the Civil War; *A Brotherhood of Valor* will undoubtedly advance his claim. --John J. Miller --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

It's Wert's good fortune?and ours?that the two most interesting Confederate and Union units left such wonderful paper trails. Wert (Custer, etc.) takes full advantage of this and delivers a first-rate book about the two most renowned infantry commands of the Civil War, which confronted each other at Manassas (Bull Run), Fredericksburg, Antietam, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Through skillful use of period letters, diaries and action reports, Wert paints a vivid portrait of the Confederate and Union soldiers who bled together across the killing grounds of Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. Particularly appealing is the way this volume allows readers soldier's-eye views from both sides of key battles. A good example of this is when we learn that the Union line that appeared so formidable to frightened young Confederates in the cornfield at Antietam was in fact a confused mix of equally terrified, equally young men in blue, unsure of their strategy and?at that moment?unsure of their commanders as well. In addition to being brave, the men of the Stonewall and Iron brigades were eloquent and prolific writers. Armed with a wealth of first-person accounts, Wert often (and wisely) steps back, allowing the soldiers to tell their own stories as no one else can. Agent, Robert Gottlieb at the William Morris Agency. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

*Brotherhood of valor* was an excellent book that describes the history of the two most famous brigades in the Civil War. Although both brigades probably never fought each other in the war, they were the best at what they did. The Stonewall Brigade, with a strength of almost 3000 men, fought

under Jackson and earned their widespread reputation at Bull Run, when they stood like a "stone wall." But desertions plagued this brigade during the Shenandoah Campaign of 1862 to just a fragment of its former self, and sadly at Antietam, the Stonewall Brigade numbered barely more than 150 men in all five Virginia regiments, but fought valiantly ever still. The brigade would soon have its numbers go up, just to plunge down again in further desertions and casualty lists, and by the end of the war, the former brigade had barely 210 men remaining. The brigade itself, had been destroyed as an effective fighting force in the slaughter of Spotsylvania Court House on May 10-12, 1864, and was itself portioned out as a "single" regiment in the 1864 Shenandoah Campaign, but the Stonewall Brigade's numbers were pathetically low as a result, even as it claimed the honor of being the first Confederate unit to stack its arms at Appomattox. The Iron Brigade served in the Union Army, and had four regiments as a start, just to have a fifth join them sometime in 1862. They never backed down from a fight, thereby earning their name and heroic reputations after suffering high losses at Second Bull Run, but having held their ground against higher Confederate numbers. Finally, in the Battle of Gettysburg in July, 1863, the Brigade met their match against an eager opponent on the first day of the campaign, and their numbers were devastated...by mainly a SINGLE regiment...General Lee's biggest in the ranks...the 880 men of the 26th North Carolina who also lost great numbers of their men in the result, including their colonel and lieutenant-colonel. The Iron Brigade after this battle happened to boost their numbers up, but many of the men fled in the Wilderness campaign of 1864 and the brigade was disbanded that fall when the enlistments of most of their regiments expired. But the history of both brigades is amazing, and is a must-read!

I really enjoyed this book. It was a strange occurrence that the two most famous brigades of the Civil War faced each other so many times and traded victories often. Wert did detail a lot of history and made a lot of documentation that made this book a good one for historians. Like so many things in life when both brigades dwindled and were used up, they passed into history with very little fanfare which is a shame. Both Lee and Grant allowed this to happen and it was a shame. What I particularly liked was that Wert would shift from side to side as he was telling the story so you got a different perspective as the battle was happening. If you are an amateur historian read it you'll like it.

I hardly ever write a review on any thing but WOW! This book is by far the best book I have ever read on Civil War units. I had it read less than a week after I got it I couldn't put it down! Reading this book was almost at times like being there and at times made me feel like one in the book watching his comrades go down! This book is really well written and easy to follow and the research

that had to go into this book to find all the information on the various regiments and soldiers must have been incrediable. This book has really nice maps to go along with content and does a really nice job of going back and forth between the two brigades without confusing you. Hats off to Jeffery D. Wert for doing an excellent job on this book! So if you enjoy reading a Civil War book about certain units,or any Civil War book for that matter I highly recommend this book! You won't be disappointed!

I re-enact as a sergeant in Company "E", Bragg's Rifles, 6th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry (the Calicoboy). Other than Nolan's book on the Iron Brigade, Wert's book is the best on the entire history of the Iron Brigade. I have also studied the history of the Stonewall brigade. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who is a serious scholar of the Civil War. Those d\*\*n "black hats" gave as well as they got at Brawner's Farm. Considering that they were rookies, they handed out a pretty good lickin'. Even Stonewall Jackson said it was the worst he had been in. After the battle, the Black Hats gave out three loud huzzahs. There was no answer from the sesesh.

The book presents a wonderful picture about the common soldier during the Civil War. This is the second book that I read by Jeffrey Wert and they are both captivating books about the Civil War.

This is a pretty good book but it seems to be filled with a number of minor errors. Here are some I noticed: -2nd WVI Co. C is listed as the "Grant County Guards" (actually the Grant County Greys) -it's implied that 2nd WVI received Springfield rifles in Feb 1862; they actually received Lorenz rifles which they kept through Gettysburg. -An anecdote about Gibbon and his requiring the men to wear gaiters says he lifted this requirement after he found his horse outfitted with the gaiters one morning; actually the requirement stayed but the gaiters mostly disappeared once the men went on the march. Some of the men were still wearing them at Gettysburg however. I think the problem is that the author relied on previous historians' work rather than first-hand accounts for a lot of his information. Again these are minor errors, but the kind of stuff that will drive a Civil War buff or reenactor crazy! In the author's favor, the book is extensively footnoted so it's easy to figure out where his info (or misinformation) came from. Apart from the errors, a lot of quotes from the soldiers are snippets; partial sentences, etc. I would have been happier with longer first-person passages. The idea of comparing the 2 brigades is a great one but there are probably better and more accurate histories of each brigade separately.

Typical combat memoir.

Jeffery D. Wert's capture of events of our Civil War is it's usual caliber. He tells the story like few other Civil War authors do and remains my favorite author.

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