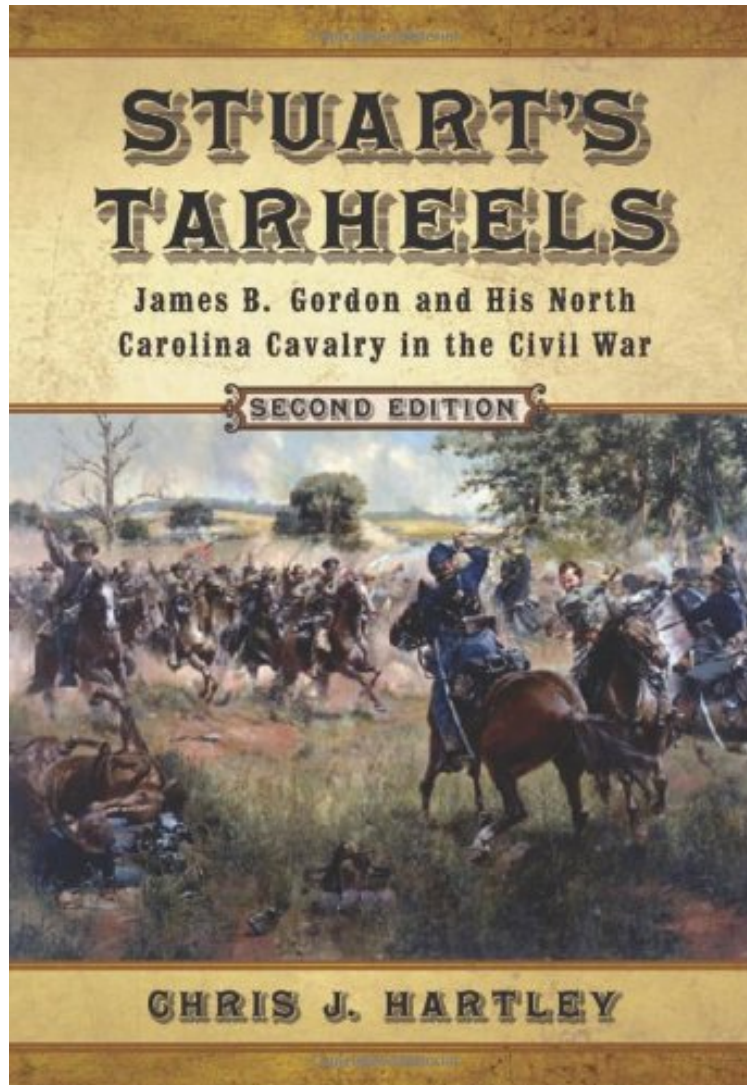


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Stuart's Tarheels: James B. Gordon and His North Carolina Cavalry in the Civil War, 2d ed.

Chris J. Hartley

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Chris J. Hartley : Stuart's Tarheels: James B. Gordon and His North Carolina Cavalry in the Civil War, 2d ed. before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stuart's Tarheels: James B. Gordon and His North Carolina Cavalry in the Civil War, 2d ed.:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Forgotten CommanderBy BookwormLet me say right away, I really enjoyed reading this book. Well researched on a subject that has not been much written about. Gen. James Byron Gordon is a forgotten commander. But his life is one that is worthy of remembering, and reading Mr. Hartley's

book makes him live again. I highly recommend this book. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Well worth reading

By M. A. Ramos

In this, the second edition of Chris Hartley's book originally published in 1996, we find an updated version of this biography. This edition, like the first, is well-researched and very detailed using the wealth of original documentation the author was able to find. The main subject of this book is James B. Gordon of North Carolina. The author begins with James Gordon's family history and his life before the American Civil War and gives the reader a glimpse of the man that we will be following. James B. Gordon was a successful business man and farmer who did his duty when North Carolina was not allowed to maintain neutrality in the war between the states. As he starts his military career in North Carolina Regulars we can see his dedication to his men as he uses his own funds when able to supply them. We also see his self-reasoning that made him seek transfer to what would become the 1st Cavalry of North Carolina leaving behind the infantry unit he helped to establish. His rapid rise to command of all North Carolina cavalymen in the Army of Northern Virginia is well chronicled. The author covers such details of the units formation as the acquisition and disbursement of supplies, drills and even days off rest. This level of detail will be used in the rest of the book as read detail actions of minor skirmishes and battles that took place on the periphery of more well known engagements and therefore are often overlooked. The author at times is able to detail engagements down to the company level and at other times leaves out details on battles where Gordon's participation was critical. The author does provide the reader with some maps he has drawn himself. But at times his detail narrative of engagements or maneuverings, though well written, are not identifiable on the maps he has drawn. The book could have used more time in the hands of a diligent editor as some references to his family is confusing as is the addition of the author's own opinion which should be foot noted or not included at all in a book considered a history book. A good one-third of the book has a detailed roster of the 9th Regiment North Carolina State Troops. Or as we know them; 1st North Carolina Cavalry Regiment. This roster alone is an amazing feat. The author has given the reader an enjoyable read that takes us into the life of James B. Gordon and through him a glimpse of North Carolina's cavalry. A book that is easy to read and informative. If you have any interest at all in the part of U.S. history I do recommend this book.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An enjoyable and informative read

By Doc Wood

James B. Gordon was a North Carolinian who formed a regiment at the beginning of the American Civil War--without any military experience whatsoever--and rose to command of the entire North Carolina battalion before his death. Wounded at Yellow Tavern on May 11, 1864, Gordon developed an infection and died a few days later. Hartley first published this biography fifteen years ago: This is the second edition, issued in 2011, and this reviewer received a free copy through LibraryThing's Early Reviewer program. In it, Hartley describes a pro-secession slave-owner, successful farmer, and businessman who, as he saw it, took up arms to defend his country. Well-researched and very detailed, the book includes maps drawn by Hartley himself. Over 140 of the book's 435 pages are devoted to a roster of Gordon's own 1st Cavalry, which Hartley also compiled himself--and the roster is an impressive accomplishment in its own right. One of the book's strengths is Hartley's detailed battle descriptions, some of the best in print. Hartley's maps also are better than many in the Civil War canon, but he can spend several paragraphs describing events at locations that are not marked on the map, which is frustrating. There are stylistic and editorial problems: Hartley's writing voice is Victorian, which is to say he is wordy, redundant, and overly fond of dramatic foreshadowing. Generally he writes from the Rebel point of view, but there are places in the text where he briefly refers to the Confederates as "the enemy", lending additional confusion to already bewildering battlefield scenes. A couple of times he uses "ancestor" for "descendant", which makes sorting complex Southern genealogies even more difficult than normal. He occasionally ventures guesses as to what people "might" have been thinking or feeling. There are 26 pages of notes, however, so otherwise the book is meticulously sourced. On the whole, it's an enjoyable book --an entertaining as well as an informative read. Hartley brings Gordon to life, portraying an engaging and sympathetic historical figure who, if it weren't for this book, we would probably never have heard of.

When Confederate Major General J.E.B. Stuart said "North Carolina has done nobly in this army," he had one of his own men to thank: Brigadier General James Byron Gordon. A protege of Stuart, Gordon was the consummate nineteenth-century landowner, politician, and businessman. Despite a lack of military training, he rose rapidly through the ranks and, as the commander of all North Carolina cavalymen in the Army of Northern Virginia, he helped bring unparalleled success to Stuart's famed Confederate cavalry. This updated biography, originally published in 1996, chronicles Gordon's early life and military career and, through his men, takes a fresh look at the vaunted Army of Northern Virginia--its battles, controversies, and troops. This second edition includes additional source material that has come to light and a roster of Gordon's 1st North Carolina Cavalry.

From first edition: "impressively researched...a rich panoply of sources...an intelligently written narrative...notes, bibliography, and index all deliver precisely what the book's users will need" --In Taller Cotton.

About the Author

Chris J. Hartley is an award-winning author of two books and a number of articles and is a frequent speaker on the Civil War. He lives in Pfafftown, North Carolina.