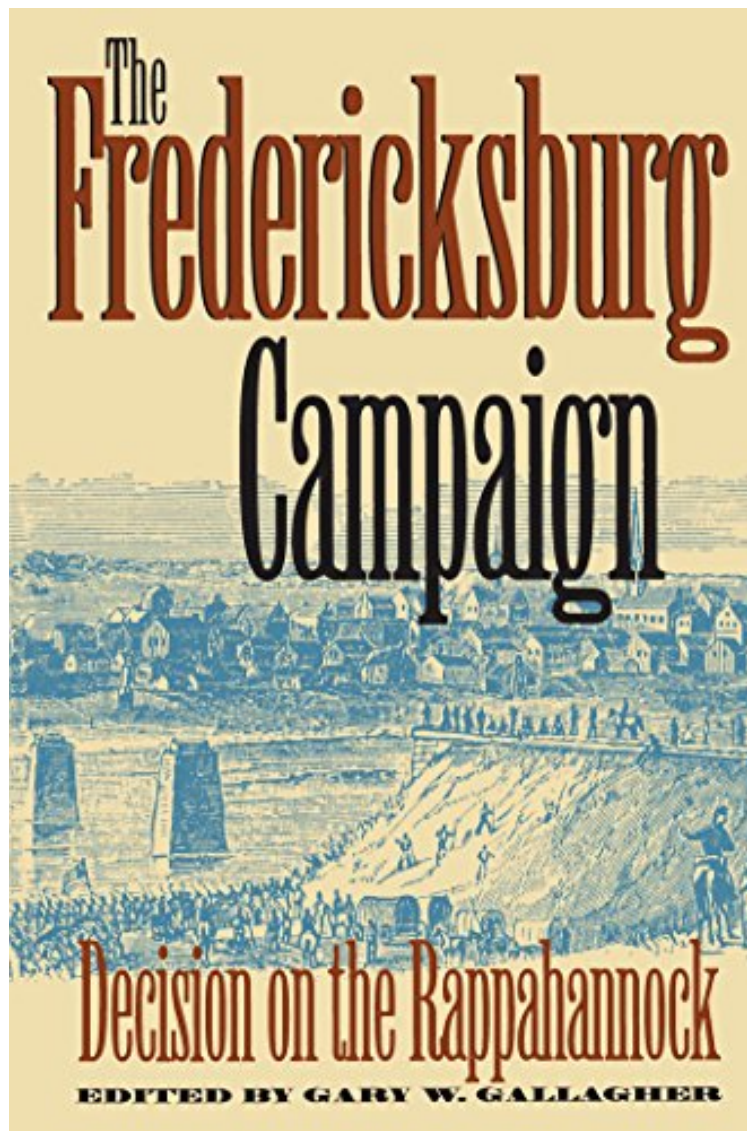


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## The Fredericksburg Campaign: Decision on the Rappahannock (Military Campaigns of the Civil War)

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#2221981 in Books 2008-02-25 2008-02-25 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.10 x .64 x 6.10l, .83 #File Name: 0807858951256 pages | File size: 26.Mb

**From Brand :** The Fredericksburg Campaign: Decision on the Rappahannock (Military Campaigns of the Civil War) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fredericksburg Campaign: Decision on the Rappahannock (Military Campaigns of the Civil War):

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A Fresh ExaminationBy Kerry WaltersIn collaboration with the

University of North Carolina Press, Gary Gallagher has produced an amazingly insightful series of anthologies on various aspects of the American Civil War. This collection is one of the best. Its value is nicely summed up by a comment in the Introduction (p. xi): "Far from exhausted topics open only to increasingly minute dissection of tactical movements, the activities of Union and Confederate armies invite serious scrutiny by historians interested in a range of issues." Thank goodness that this new and refreshing way of examining the Civil War is moving us beyond an earlier romanticized guns-'n'-glory focus. All of the essays in *The Fredericksburg Campaign* are quite good. But for my money, the three best ones--and the ones that dramatically represent the new approach championed by Gallagher--are written by George Rable, William Blair, and Gallagher himself. All three might be seen as trying to make sense of that odd cry of exultation attributed to Lee after the massacre at Marye's Heights: "It is well that war is so terrible! We should grow too fond of it!" Rable reminds us that the carnage from the vantage point of the soldier on the ground was nothing to crow about, and that even a momentary battlefield thrill is far outshadowed by the terrible reality of slaughtered men, wounds, amputations, sepsis, psychological trauma, and shattered morale. Blair's essay, which deals with the effects of the shelling and routing of their town on Fredericksburg civilians, brings home the lesson that neither is there nothing in war to grow fond of from the noncombatant's perspective. Too often, military historians tend to overlook what today is fashionably referred to as "collateral damage." But in the Civil War, and especially in Virginia, civilians suffered horribly during and for years after the war. Finally, Gallagher's essay points out that the famous Lee quote needs to be taken in context. Lee himself seems to have been extremely depressed by the Fredericksburg battle. The slaughter of Federal troops stopped the drive to Richmond, but it really gained the Confederacy (in Lee's estimation) no strategic advantage, and it hazarded artificially elevating Confederate self-confidence. Interestingly, Gallagher points out that Lee felt similarly about Chancellorsville: a "victory" that ultimately brought no advantage to the South. All in all, an excellent collection of essays. Highly recommended.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Two Stars  
By Geoff Blankenmeyer  
Not what I was looking for but that is on me. Check Table of Contents before ordering.  
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good stories of how the soldiers viewed the battle and state of the army. Interesting insight into back room politics. Overall good read.  
By Richard McMillan  
Good stories of how the soldiers viewed the battle and the state of the army. Overall good read. Would buy again

"It is well this is so terrible! We should grow too fond of it," said General Robert E. Lee as he watched his troops repulse the Union attack at Fredericksburg on 13 December 1863. This collection of seven original essays by leading Civil War historians reinterprets the bloody Fredericksburg campaign and places it within a broader social and political context. By analyzing the battle's antecedents as well as its aftermath, the contributors challenge some long-held assumptions about the engagement and clarify our picture of the war as a whole. The book begins with revisionist assessments of the leadership of Ambrose Burnside and Robert E. Lee and a portrait of the conduct and attitudes of one group of northern troops who participated in the failed assaults at Marye's Heights. Subsequent essays examine how both armies reacted to the battle and how the northern and southern homefronts responded to news of the carnage at Fredericksburg. A final chapter explores the impact of the battle on the residents of the Fredericksburg area and assesses changing Union attitudes about the treatment of Confederate civilians. The contributors are William Marvel, Alan T. Nolan, Carol Reardon, Gary W. Gallagher, A. Wilson Greene, George C. Rable, and William A. Blair.

Overall, the essays are lively, interesting, and challenging, in the long tradition of historical revisionism. Civil War enthusiasts will no doubt be stimulated by the debate over whether Burnside was inept, betrayed, disobeyed, or done in by the weather. Lee watchers will be captivated over whether defense or offense was the real Lee.--*H-CivWar*  
This book will intrigue students and draw their attention to often-neglected dimensions of the Civil War.--*History: s of New Books*  
Collectively, the excellent essays challenge old assumptions about the campaign, introduce aspects of the battle and its aftermath that have received scant attention, and view military events within the framework of broader social and political issues. The fact that no fewer than three of the essays focus on civilians rather than soldiers suggests the freshness of this new approach to campaign history.--*Newsletter of the Society of Civil War Historians*  
The essays in this volume . . . represent significant contributions on the subject from some of the most respected scholars in the field.--*Military History of the West*  
Sometimes controversial, always stimulating, *The Fredericksburg Campaign* is a 'cutting-edge' volume that will enlighten and please students of the Civil War. Indeed, one can hardly wait for Gallagher's next book.--*Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*  
Each of the pieces is well researched and well written, and the authors have presented their theses clearly. Well-drawn maps assist the reader in following the battle events. . . . Gallagher's book will be fun for Civil War scholars and enthusiasts. The authors have presented clearly written essays packed with ideas.--*Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*  
[A] fine collection of essays. . . . This is a book well worth reading.--*Blue and Gray*  
The new perspectives contained in this volume are almost all fresh and provocative and based upon admirable scholarship. No study of the war in the Eastern Theater will be complete without this volume.--*Civil War Regiments*  
Some of the most important and innovative scholarship on Civil War battles and their political and social impact has appeared in the volumes of the *Military Campaigns of the Civil War*

series. I strongly recommend these essays to everyone who is interested in the latest findings and interpretations.--  
James M. McPherson, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Era of the Civil War*[This] collection is imaginative, bold, sometimes controversial, but always crisply written and powerfully argued. . . . Will be a welcome addition to the book collection of Civil War enthusiasts, both professional and amateur, everywhere.--  
Joseph T. Glatthaar, University of HoustonAbout the AuthorGary W. Gallagher is John L. Nau III Professor of History at the University of Virginia and author or editor of numerous books, including *Lee and His Army in Confederate History* and *The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864* (both from the University of North Carolina Press).