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## The Life and Wars of Gideon J. Pillow (Civil War America)

*Nathaniel Cheairs Hughes Jr., Roy P. Stonesifer Jr.*  
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**Nathaniel Cheairs Hughes Jr., Roy P. Stonesifer Jr. : The Life and Wars of Gideon J. Pillow (Civil War America)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Life and Wars of Gideon J. Pillow (Civil War America):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The black sheep of the Confederate commandBy Captain KI am endlessly fascinated by the rough-and-tumble politics of America's 19th century and the colorful, sometimes absurd characters who rose to prominence. And, as a Civil War buff, I enjoy reading about the various commanders both great and small. Among the books in my ever-growing collection this is a true delight. Pillow was a wealthy lawyer and planter who knew the right people in high places and finagled commands of great responsibility in both the Mexican and Civil Wars despite lacking military training or, apparently, common sense. Yet he was recklessly brave and his men - some of them - and his public - most of it - adored him. Every page of this highly readable biography is packed with documented facts that boggle the mind, such that a certain level of wryness in the prose style is unavoidable. But this is far more than a "gee whiz" account, as the authors find evidence to dispel some of the worst disasters for which Pillow has been blamed, especially the surrender of Ft. Donelson in 1862. A self-promoter, brown-noser, and back-stabber he may have been, and it came back to haunt him even when he may not have deserved it. You will probably be most amazed to think Gideon Pillow had as good a chance to be President as some who made it, like Zachary Taylor or Franklin Pierce.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A man you loved to hate.By R. Scott PearsonPillow was a key player in the early stages of the war but very few people know his story. This book offers a very good insight to the vain Pillow, the man, politician and General. He is also an example of never giving up. He lost

a lot during the war but never really believed he was "wrong." A good book to read. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Life and Wars of Gideon J. Pillow* By Jonathan J. Long Fascinating book!! Sheds new insight on a relatively unknown Civil War General, as well as other aspects of life in Southern Nineteenth Century America. Painstakingly researched.

Commonly portrayed in Civil War literature as a bungling general who disgraced himself at Fort Donelson, Gideon Johnson Pillow (1806-78) is one of the most controversial military figures of nineteenth-century America. In this first full-length biography, Nat Hughes and Roy Stonesifer take a fresh look at Pillow, calling attention to his prominent role in many of the major conflicts of his day. Pillow was one of Tennessee's wealthiest planters and lawyers as well as an influential broker in national politics. His friendship with fellow Tennessean James K. Polk brought Pillow a generalship in the Mexican War, where he served under Winfield Scott and Zachary Taylor and antagonized the military establishment with his recklessness and self-promotion. Following the war, Pillow attempted to capitalize on his notoriety as the "hero of Chapultepec" by reentering Democratic party politics. Despite his efforts on behalf of Franklin Pierce, he was unsuccessful in his bid for the vice presidency and the Senate. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Pillow again sought the public stage. His organization of what would become the Army of Tennessee placed him at the forefront of the Confederate war effort. But he was bested by Ulysses S. Grant at Belmont and then suffered disaster at Fort Donelson. Following these defeats, he spent the remainder of the war directing Confederate conscription in the West and leading Confederate cavalry forces. As a result of his role at Fort Donelson, Pillow has been dismissed as a political general with destructive military ambitions. Hughes and Stonesifer argue that such a judgment fails to consider the many contributions made by the dynamic planter-lawyer. They point out Pillow's organizational abilities (evidenced before and after Donelson), his standing with distinguished peers such as Joseph Johnston and Braxton Bragg, and his continuing service as an infantry and cavalry leader.

About the Author Nathaniel Cheairs Hughes Jr. is the author or editor of twenty books relating to the American Civil War, including *Refugitta of Richmond*; *Brigadier General Tyree H. Bell, C.S.A.: Forrest's Fighting Lieutenant*; and *Yale's Confederates*. The late Roy P. Stonesifer Jr. was a professor of history at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania.