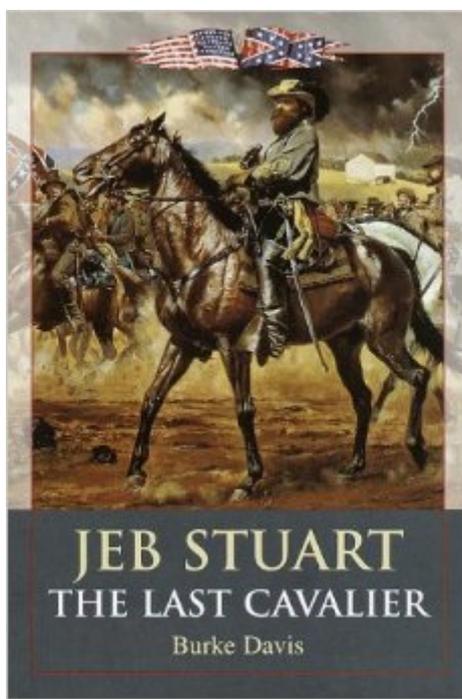


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Jeb Stuart: The Last Cavalier



Synopsis

From the author of *They Called Him Stonewall*. Definitive biography of the dashing Confederate general is history at its best: fascinating, colorful, provocative. Includes portraits of Stuart's early life, training at West Point, the fateful decision to side with the South and action-packed battle scenes. 7 maps. 8 pages of photos. 470 pages.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While there have been many biographies written about the life and career of the famed Confederate General James Ewell Brown (JEB) Stuart, this one, written by noted Civil War Historian Burke Davis ranks near, if not at the top. Davis, author of "The Civil War: Strange and Fascinating Facts" (used by this author in preparing my own book!), and of biographies of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, meticulously chronicled the Civil War career of Jeb Stuart. The book begins with a stirring account of John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry prior to the war, and Stuart's critical role in his eventual capture. The narrative grabs the reader's attention, and never lets go - even into the maelstrom of battle and Cavalry engagements. Stuart riding circles around McClellan during the Seven Day's Battles, his role in being Lee's eyes at Antietam and Fredericksburg, and his taking command of Stonewall Jackson's Corps when that great Confederate leader was mortally wounded at Chancellorsville. Then it all goes downhill from there. No, not the book, which does keep the reader enthralled to the grim end, but for Stuart and the Confederate Cavalry. Mistakes are made at Brandy Station, and shortly afterwards at Gettysburg, where Stuart encounters a Union Cavalry

General just as flamboyant as he - George Armstrong Custer. Other Union Cavalymen make their mark - Pleasanton, Buford, and finally Sheridan - as the worn and tattered Confederate Cavalry decline towards the bitter end and Stuart rides to meet Sheridan and Custer at a little hamlet called Yellow Tavern. Davis' narrative makes the reader feel as if he or she is indeed riding with Stuart - the smell of leather, of gunpowder and the sweat of the horses. The Rebel Yell and the fast gallop. Stuart's family is also given fine coverage, his devoted wife Flora, his hapless father-in-law, General Cooke, who remained loyal to the Union, and who was soundly thrashed by his own son-in-law! and his entourage, including the amazing Heros Von Boercke and banjo man Sam "Jine The Cavalry" Sweeney. It is all there.

While Burke Davis' book about Jeb Stuart is well written, and flows nicely, I felt shorted with the book. Davis spends much of the time talking about the staff surrounding Stuart, and the battles from a general standpoint. Insight into the personality of one of the most famous generals in US/CS history is limited to the letters he wrote to his wife, a source which allows for self service when presented independently of other opinions. There is very little to explain his eccentricity, his thoughts about battles, or the significance of his accomplishments. I enjoyed the book, but will definitely need to read other works about Stuart to get a feel for what the MAN was like.

This is the third civil war book by Burke Davis that I have read, and it is just as good as the others. Davis gives a complete and well researched account of the life of Jeb Stuart, but his main gift is that he can really tell a story. You will be interested from the beginning to the end, and in the process, you will realize that you have learned a thing or two.

The book starts out very well, establishing basic background and geographical history in a very easy to read anecdotal style. The remainder of the book essentially details General Stuart's exploits on and off the battlefield. You certainly get the impression that he was a dashing figure, but unfortunatley the author does not delve deeper into the man as much as I would have preferred. You get a sense for him as a Confederate soldier who cared very much about his duty, but not why he cared so much. I gave it four stars because it is a good read, and for the perspectives provided of many of the eastern battles and the cavalry's part in them.

Many biographies tend to be cold. They contain numerous facts strung together to make a coherent history of a human life. The Last Cavalier is an exception to this tendency. Burke Davis brings the

most dashing of Civil War generals to life with personal letters, comments from his contemporaries and a reluctance to let J.E.B. pass into history without a fight. It was a very good read and though I knew how J.E.B.'s career ended, as I neared the end of the book, I began to dread the outcome that had to come. It was then that I knew Davis had done his job of bringing The Last Cavalier back to life.

JEB! If you don't know him, you will after this....and you SHOULD if you have any interest in the Civil War. The book reads so well you could finish the 400+ pages in a weekend. I've become a Burke Davis fan after this. JEB Stuart could have easily been some character right out of a Hollywood movie, but he's not....he was REAL. Ride with the General, you won't regret it.

Jeb Stuart was a gentleman for his times, when individuals engaging in military matters could still exude a sense of honor and chivalry. He was a fine cavalry leader, and Gen. Lee came to depend on him for intelligence. I think his greatest moment came when he rode completely around Gen. McClellan's army in the Peninsula battles. But he failed Gen. Lee at Gettysburg, by not being where he should have been. He was definitely a showoff of sorts, and it came back to bite him at Gettysburg. This book gives the reader a good overview of Jeb Stuart's public life, and a bit of his private life as well. I certainly recommend it, as a fine addition to anyone's civil war library. JRV

This was a marvelous book, from the clean, crisp pages and the classic smell, to the multiple photographs which enhanced the reading. Not only was it a beautiful book in itself, but it was a revealing biography. Have you ever heard of the horse artillery? The song "jine the cavalry?" You'll find out about these- and the odd costume balls, one of which included a high ranking german officer dress as a farmer's bride- in this super book. I recommend it.

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