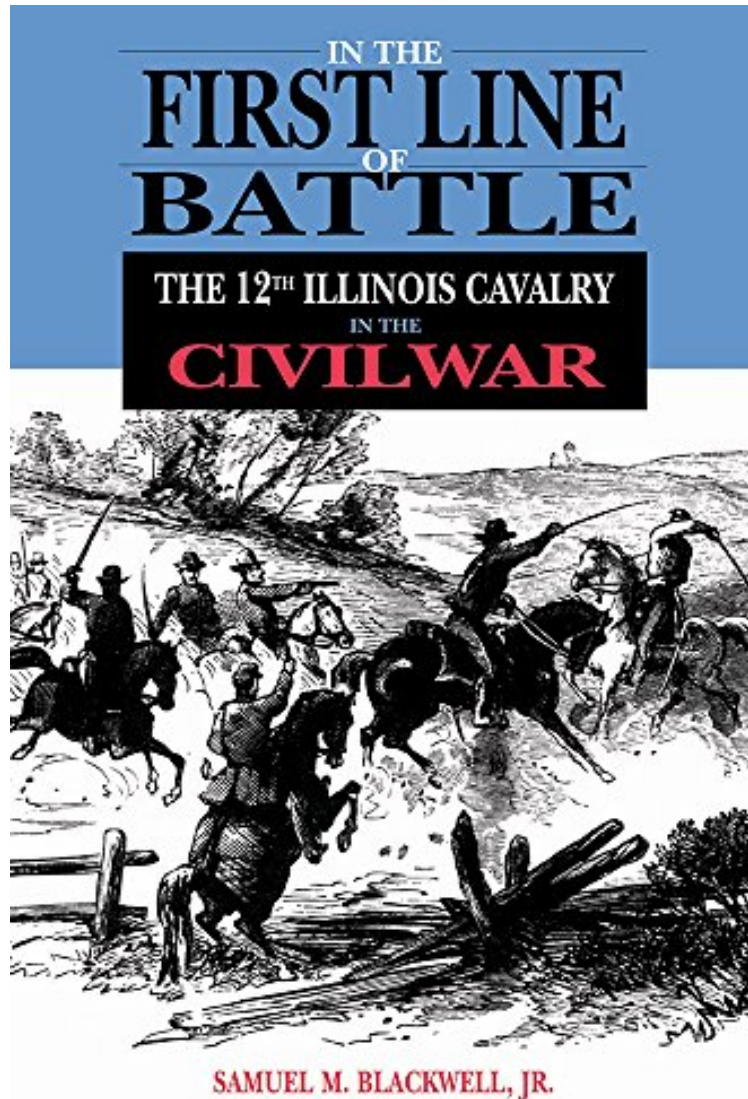


[Mobile pdf] In the First Line of Battle: The 12th Illinois Cavalry in the Civil War

In the First Line of Battle: The 12th Illinois Cavalry in the Civil War

Samuel M. Blackwell Jr.

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Samuel M. Blackwell Jr. : In the First Line of Battle: The 12th Illinois Cavalry in the Civil War before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In the First Line of Battle: The 12th Illinois Cavalry in the Civil War:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Superb regimental history By Clark B. Timmins I guess any review would have to start by pointing out that if you want to read about the 12th Ill Cav then this is pretty much your only

option. Otherwise, you'll be getting bits and pieces from standard library crawls and you'll be going all over the country to do it. Here, it's all put together into a cohesive narrative that covers the topic admirably. The book stays on track--doesn't try to be more than what it is--and reads like the exciting history it is. The assumption is the reader will be familiar enough with broad Civil War facts and history that this account will expand it, not explain it. Instead, the space is devoted to the history of the unit; how it was recruited, how it was handled, where it went, and what it did. I have a favorite old ancestor that served in the 12th Ill Cav. He's not noted in the book by name but I have compared his National Archives service record (and personal statements) to the actions described in the book and found they line up perfectly--some of the specific small-scale actions noted in the book involved my ancestor. That makes for a pretty thrilling read, for sure. Good index, good writing, good physical quality. I really enjoyed it--highly recommended. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The History is in the Details By Sherman Peabody I am not as taken with this book as the above reviewers. First, the author can't seem to grasp how the regiment was organized. He states that it started out as an 8 company battalion early in 1862 while Dyer's "Compendium" indicates that it began as 6 companies with three existing companies added when the unit reached Virginia. Blackwell has 8 companies as A thru K (meaning 10 companies) and also says the unit had the more normal 12 company organization by the summer of 1862 (whereas the records show three additional companies being raised in the winter of 1863-64.) If he is confused, he has also confused me. Not to nitpick, but there are many other details that he has wrong. Did the 12th Corps really have 40,000 men present in December 1862? Yikes. Did the 12th Corps back away from the Battle of Fredericksburg? No, it never got there. Did troopers really seal their Colt revolver's bullets with animal fat in combat but not do this to their Remington revolvers? Must be an Illinois trick. I don't want to be unfair to what is basically an average modern regimental history about an interesting unit, but boy could this manuscript have used a good editor. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Contributions of Illinois Cavalry in Civil War By Carolyn M Mann Brand new book in excellent condition. Especially pleased the dust cover is flawless! Used an edition from the library in earlier research. My great grandfather served in the 12th Illinois Cavalry, so I am delighted to re-live the unit's history through this volume, and to have this volume in my personal library.

From its first major engagement at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, to the campaigns against Confederates in the swamps of occupied Louisiana, the 12th Illinois Volunteer Cavalry fought more than twenty battles in three theaters of combat. So great was the regiment's contribution to the Union victory that a monument at Gettysburg honors the unit for its place "in the first line of battle." The campaigns of the 12th Illinois reflect the larger shape of the war. In 1862 and early 1863, the 12th Illinois defended Union supply lines against the lightning raids of J. E. B. Stuart's Confederate Cavalry in Virginia and Maryland. In 1863, it helped to turn back the tide of the Confederate advance at Gettysburg. And in 1864-1865 the unit went on the offensive and raided deep into the Southern heartland as the Union pursued a strategy of "hard war." Drawing upon firsthand accounts from letters, diaries, memoirs, and official service records, Blackwell brings the soldiers of the 12th Illinois to life. As with other militia units in the heady first months of the war, the 12th Illinois assembled quickly, and its officers had at best only rudimentary military training. They were little prepared for the rigors of leading men into war or coping with desertions and horrific casualties. In the First Line of Battle tells the story of how the 12th Illinois Cavalry came through the war with its colors intact. Tracking the regiment from its first muster early in 1862 through its service in Texas during Reconstruction, Blackwell shows readers the war as it was lived by men who fought across the length and breadth of the Confederacy. Tracing the path of the 12th Illinois, he sheds new light on the role of the Union cavalry in the Civil War.

"A genuine contribution to the history of the Union cavalry."—Michigan Historical "Blackwell's research and care of the subject is great.... One realizes and appreciates the efforts of the real-life men in the glorious, mundane, and fearful aspects of the war"—Journal of Illinois History