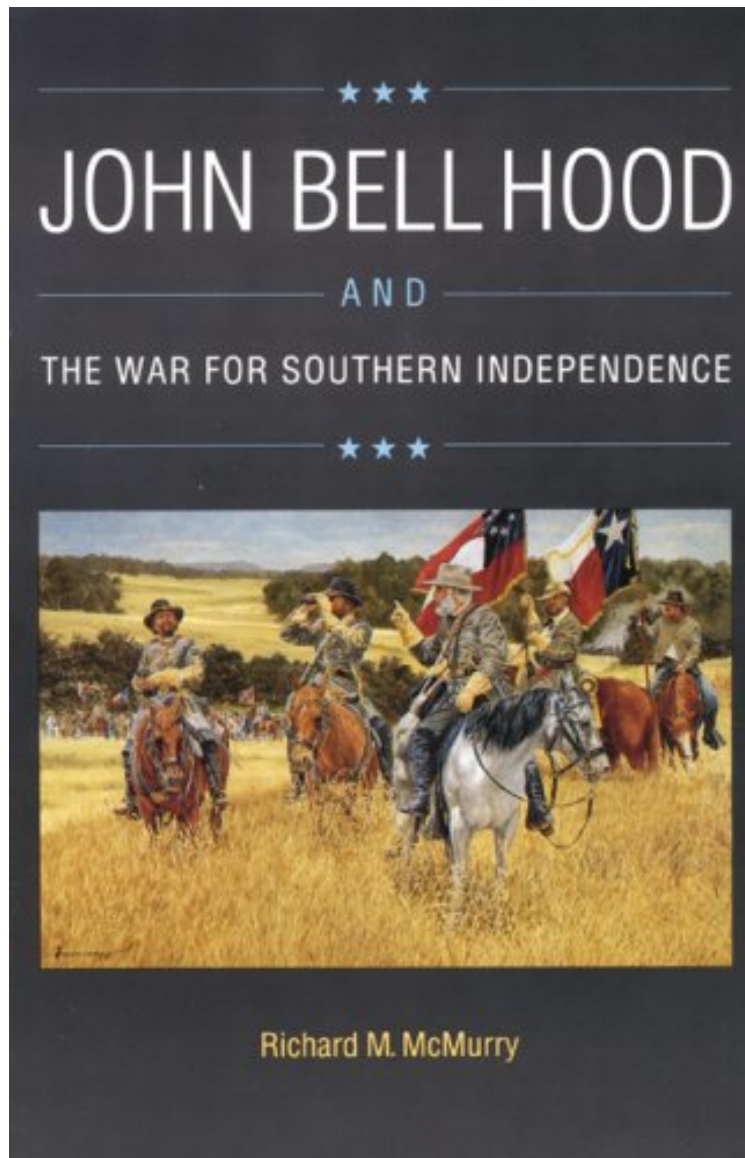


(Get free) John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence

## John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence

*Richard M. McMurry*

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**Richard M. McMurry : John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good serviceBy Terry DouglassThe service was great, the book was to short and I would give a 'C' at best.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One Helluva FighterBy Jedwin SmithOne of the prized books in my War Between the States collection. An excellent work!0 of 0 people found the

following review helpful. One of the South's most aggressive commandersBy Jonathan WellerRichard M. McMurry's John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence is a fairly well detailed and engaging telling of one of the South's most aggressive military leaders during the Civil War. Hood, whose military highlights were engagements at Gaines Mill and Antietam in 1862, is ultimately remembered moreso for his immense blunders as the Commander of the Army of the Tennessee in 1864-65. McMurry's work tries to display Hood in a new and less damning light, but all too often his work returns to the same old story of Hood's inadequacies. John Bell Hood's legacy as a bold and battle tested leader during the American Civil War can never be discredited by anyone. No matter your view of Hood or the Southern Confederacy at large, his courage and audacity during the Seven Days Battles and Antietam made him a legend to many in the old South. Hood's courage, however, is never what's been called into question by historians or Civil War buffs though; it was his tenure as a corps commander and overall commander of the Army of the Tennessee in 1864-65. While unqualified leadership was nothing new to the AOTT throughout its existence (Braxton Bragg anyone), Hood's debacles at Franklin and Nashville trumped even what that army had come to expect. The book vividly tells of Hoods early exploits and career, and does a wonderful job of describing the sheer tenacity that he operated with. It is when the author turns to Hood's post-Gettysburg career that the book runs into trouble. Hood was able to time-and-again prove himself a fearless and effective regimental, brigade and divisional commander in the early years of the war. However, his ascension to corps commander in the AOTT in 1864, and subsequent promotion to head the army painfully exposed his shortcomings in leading large numbers of men. It also never helped Hood's legacy that he outright betrayed the trust that Joseph E. Johnston had placed in him, and undertook an extensive political scheme to undermine Johnston and have him replaced. The problem for both Hood and the South, however, was that Hood was woefully lacking in his abilities to lead an army. Even Robert E. Lee expressed consternation at the prospect of Hood being elevated over Johnston when Jefferson Davis sought his advice on the matter. Davis, however, no fan of Johnston made the move anyways. This led to the eventual fall of Atlanta in September of 1864, and the debacles in both Franklin and Nashville in November and December respectively. McMurry tries to get the reader to form some fresh ideas of Hood's tenure as AOTT commander, but he really just undermines his own thesis that Hood was not as ineffective as many have alleged. The book never presents any information that allows the reader to change their opinion of Hood, and quite frankly does more to reinforce most already preconceived notions of the bold fighter. While I personally have never been a John Bell Hood fan, he was superb as a divisional commander and below in the war's early years. However, when given too much freedom and too many responsibilities, Hood was painfully lacking. The book does tell a wonderful story of John Bell Hood's career. While it tries to change the general conceptions of Hood after Gettysburg, it never is able to bring any information to light that would make the reader change their minds. In the end, Hood excelled when under a Lee, Jackson or Longstreet, but when he got out from under the thumb of a rational commander, he just wasn't prepared for that level of responsibility. Overall McMurry's book is definitely an interesting read for those who want to better understand Hood's career.

John Bell Hood, a native of Kentucky bred on romantic notions of the Old South and determined to model himself on Robert E. Lee, had a tragic military career, no less interesting for being calamitous. After conspicuous bravery in leading a Texas brigade, he rose in the ranks to become the youngest of the full generals of the Confederacy. The misfortune in store for Hood, a far better fighter than a strategist, illustrates the strain and risks of high command. One of the lasting images to come out of the Civil War is that of the one-legged General Hood strapped in his saddle, leading his men in a hopeless counter-offensive against Sherman's march on Atlanta. In this prize-winning book Richard M. McMurry spares no details of Hood's ultimate "complete and disastrous failure," but he is concerned to do justice to one of the most maligned and misunderstood figures in Civil War history.

"McMurry presents a terse, sharply focused portrait of the controversial [Hood] that never wanders from his subject or smothers him with superfluous battlefront details... His treatment of key turning points in the Texan's career is reasoned and thorough in its analysis."--Journal of Southern History. "McMurry is a fine campaign historian and excellent researcher. He chronicles the events of Hood's life well."--American Historical .From the Back CoverJohn Bell Hood, a native of Kentucky bred on romantic notions of the Old South and determined to model himself on Robert E. Lee, had a tragic military career, no less interesting for being calamitous. About the AuthorRichard M. McMurry is also the author of Two Great Rebel Armies: An Essay in Confederate Military History (1989).