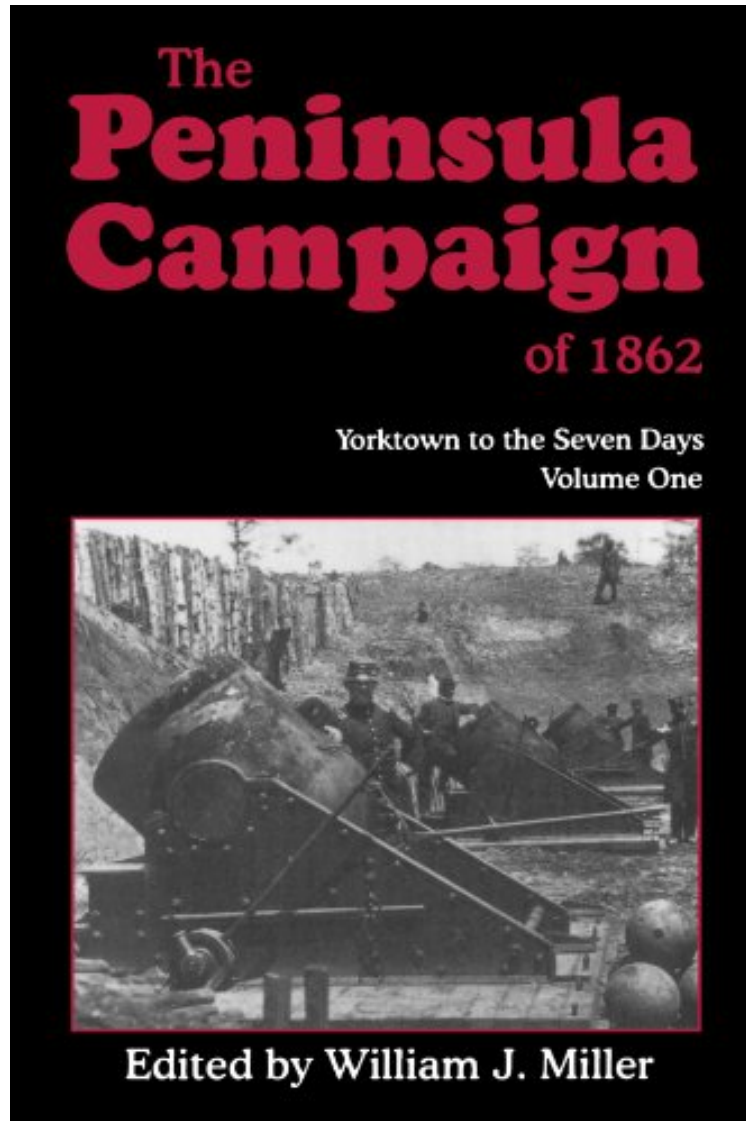


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The Peninsula Campaign Of 1862: Yorktown To The Seven Days, Vol. 1

William J. Miller

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4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A GOOD SOURCE TO ENHANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE CAMPAIGN By CTS 2631 This collection of six essays, edited by William J. Miller, will help expand anyones

knowledge of the 1862 Peninsula Campaign in Virginia during the American Civil War. The book will not stand alone as a history of the campaign, but explores six different topics relating to this momentous event in American history. The first essay, by Steven E. Woodworth, deals with the working relationship between the President of the Confederate States, Jefferson Davis, and Robert E. Lee, commander of the southern Army of Northern Virginia by showing that The Seven Days Battles (June 25 - July 1, 1862) fought east of Richmond changed that relationship. It details their interactions from Lee being promoted to army command due to the wounding of General Joseph E. Johnston at the Battle of Seven Pines (May 29 - June 1, 1862) to the Battle of Malvern Hill (July 1, 1862), last of The Seven Days Battles. These battles, the turning back of George B. McClellan's Union Army of the Potomac and the rescue of the Confederate capitol from imminent siege and occupation would make General Lee one of the few men Jefferson Davis ever deferred to in his lifetime. The next essay, by Richard A. Sauer, details the service of the Pennsylvania Reserves Division during the Peninsula Campaign. The units creation, organization, service prior to the Peninsula and its role in three of the Seven Days Battles (Mechanicsville June 26, Gaines' Mill June 27 and Glendale June 30th, 1862) is told with the help of three decent battle maps. The third essay, by Kevin Conley Ruffner, shows that the Confederacy in the spring of 1862 struggled just to have an army in the field for the defense of Richmond. Ruffner shows that the expiration of terms of service of the one year regiments the Confederacy had raised and bad reenlistment incentives (allowing troops to elect new officers and choose a different company, regiment and/or branch of the army to serve in) to induce the one year troops to reenlist for a further two years service left the existing units weaker and with inexperienced command structures. The addition of militiamen into the units of some states regiments to bring them up to strength and the beginning of the Conscription Act and their effects on Confederate formations during the spring of 1862 are also examined. The author makes a solid case showing that all this led to inexperience and inefficiency in the officer corps, and widespread discontent in the ranks that further complicated the Confederate defense of Richmond, led to higher casualty rates and was another factor leading to the inability of Robert E. Lee to destroy the Army of the Potomac during The Seven Days Battles. Edwin C. Bearss' essay details Confederate Brigadier General James Ewell Brown (Jeb) Stuart's ride around McClellan's Union Army of the Potomac (June 12-14, 1862). Well written, thoroughly researched and highly detailed this is the best history of Stuart's ride that I have ever seen! At over seventy pages length it is more like a short book and the three maps included in the text make it easy to follow and understand what happened. This essay by itself, detailing Stuart's movements and the Union's ineffective response, makes ownership of this volume worthwhile. The fifth essay, edited by Richard J. Sommers, presents the diary of Private Charles C. Perkins, 1st Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, from June 4-July 4, 1862. Perkins diary gives a great common soldiers view of the events that took place during the decisive month of the campaign for Richmond. The final essay, by William J. Miller the editor of this volume, is a helpful chronology of the campaign from early December 1861 when Union General George B. McClellan conceives the "Urbanna Plan", to August 26, 1862 when the Union II Corps departs Fort Monroe ending the Peninsula Campaign. It works as a tool to help the reader put all the parts of this massive campaign into the correct order. The book is not that long (221 pages total/ 205 main), has 8 decent maps, 17 illustrations and is easy to read. (For further essays on the subject I recommend volumes Two and Three of this series and "The Richmond Campaign Of 1862, the Peninsula the Seven Days edited by Gary W. Gallagher.) 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Two Stars By Evan B Humea mish mash of articles and diaries. I wanted a history of the Campaign.

George B. McClellan got closer to Richmond than any previous Union general by a bold amphibious landing, but lost his advantage due to his own indecision and Robert E. Lee's superior generalship. The essays in this volume on the campaign include ones by Steven E. Woodworth, Richard A. Sauer, Kevin C. Ruffner, Richard J. Sommers, Edwin C. Bearss, and William J. Miller