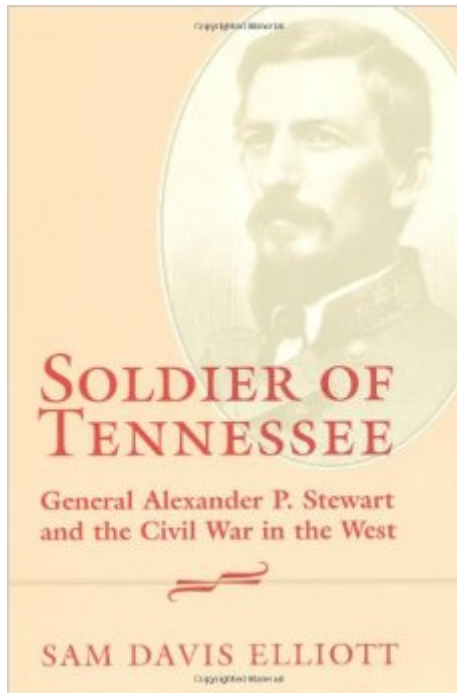


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Soldier Of Tennessee: General Alexander P. Stewart And The Civil War In The West



Synopsis

As one of the few higher-ranking officers in the Army of Tennessee to avoid controversy. General Alexander P. Stewart (1821-1908) was an outstanding but not outrageous leader. Consequently, he has garnered little attention from historians. In this masterly biography. Sam Davis Elliott traces the life of this undeservedly obscure general from his early years at West Point through his involvement in nearly all the battles fought by the Army of Tennessee to his postwar career as an educator and Civil War park commissioner. More than the story of one man, *Soldier of Tennessee* poignantly conveys the triumphs and failures of the Confederate effort in the West and a divided nation's efforts at reconciliation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It IS about time General Stewart gets some press. As stated in this wonderful book there are Colonels in Lee's army that are better known than this man who was one of the ranking generals in the Confederate army. At Franklin Stewart helped lead a far larger and more deadly charge than the famous July 4th, 1863 charge at Gettysburg, yet very few people know of him. As the campaigns of the Army of Tennessee begin to gain further study maybe this will change. This book should help a great deal. From his birth in Rogersville, Tennessee until his death in St. Louis Stewart always remained at heart a Tennessean and his dedication to his state led him into all of the major battles of the Army of Tennessee. Nobody who studies that army can do so without a study of "Old Straight". This book does a wonderful job of exploring the life, war experiences, and post-war work of

this deeply religious man. There are only two small problems with this work. First, Mr. Elliott sometimes goes a little far in defending Stewart. The picture he paints of the political strife in the Army of Tennessee is very clear but on occasion he goes a little out of his way to point out how little Stewart was involved in these political battles. It might be more to Stewart's credit if he had been a little more involved in trying to remove General Bragg before more damage could be done. The other problem is one faced by many writers dealing with war. Most readers get quickly lost as a writer begins to relate how this regiment was placed here and that regiment was placed there. Worse yet is the practice of describing an action in detail with terms like "Jones attacked on Smith's left which was countered by moving Brown.....".

Lieutenant General Alexander P. Stewart may well be the least known high ranking officer of the Civil War. {? Sam Cooper ?} A native of Tennessee who graduated from West Point, he left the Army to become a college professor in order to provide more income , and stability, for his family. When war came, there was no hesitation; Stewart followed the South, soon earned General's stars, and served with distinction from the early days to Joe Johnston's final surrender in North Carolina. Sam Elliott has given us a wonderful account of the campaigns of the Army of Tennessee, and General Stewart's part in them. Stewart remains unknown because he was a quiet man who did his job, and left the political infighting to others. During the Bragg debacle, he got along with both sides. Today, the E-Ring at the Pentagon is populated with men like Stewart, equally unknown, but indispensable. The Tennessee Campaign of fall, 1864, gets good coverage, including Stewart's participation at Spring Hill and Franklin. When the war ended, General Stewart rejoined the Union, and encouraged his men to do the same. Returning to Education, he had a distinguished tenure as Chancellor at Ole Miss. Many today are unaware of the debt we owe to Stewart, and some other leaders from both sides [prominently General Rosecrans].....the wonderful system of National Battlefield Parks was the result of their hard work. Beginning with Chickmauga, the system has spread and become a priceless treasure. This fine book closes with what is, for me, the most disturbing fate to befall any of the Confederacy's officers. I can not explain how a committed Christian, and a well grounded Calvinist, could do what he did. I have discussed this with the author, and he has no explanation, either.

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