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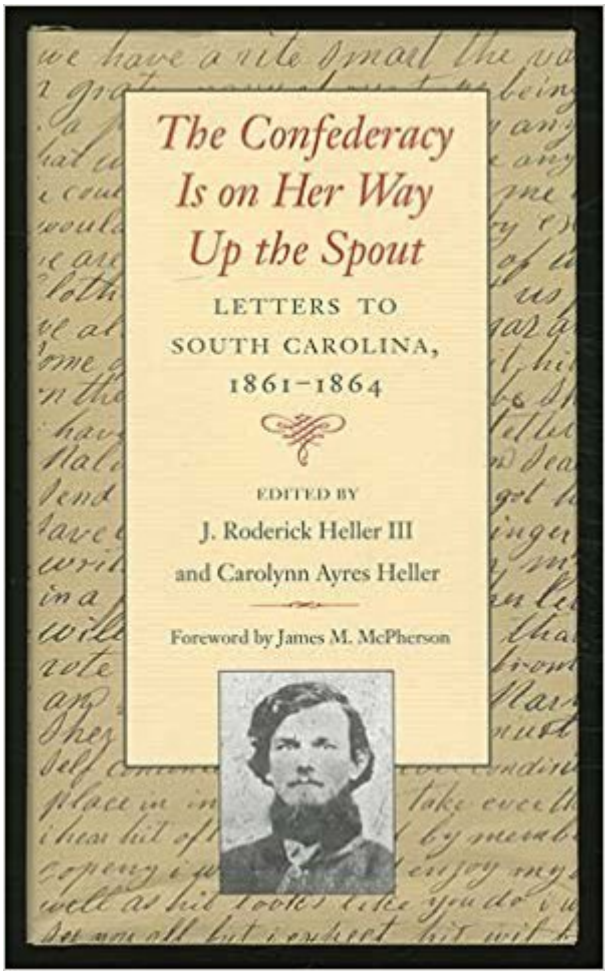
The Confederacy Is On Her Way Up The Spout: Letters To South Carolina, 1861-1864



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Synopsis

A collection of 33 letters from seven Confederate soldiers sent to Lucretia Caroline Barrett McMahan and her husband between 1861 and 1864. The letters are published with their original spelling and punctuation intact and illustrate the experiences of the common soldier of the Confederacy. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This volume gathers 33 letters sent to Lucretia Barrett McMahan and her husband by relatives and friends of the family who served as Confederate soldiers. The letters cover the course of the war and reflect the writers' changing attitudes in direct proportion to the changing prospects of the Confederacy. The editors have allowed this upcountry farm family to retain their eloquent Southern vernacular by retaining the original spelling. Interspersed throughout is just enough historical context to guide the reader. The extensive information about the Barrett family, their social sphere, and the region provides enough background to enhance the very regional flavor of the letters. Recommended.- David Lee Poremba, Detroit P.L.Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I designed this book years ago and I wanted a copy of my own.

"The Confederacy Is on Her Way Up the Spout: Letters To South Carolina, 1861-1864" edited by J. Roderick Heller III and Caroylynn Ayres Heller, (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998, 157 pages.) "The Confederacy Is on Her Way Up the Spout: Letters to South Carolina, 1861-1864," is

the letter sent home between 1861 to 1864 by soldiers of the 18th Georgia Infantry Regiment to their loved ones in Georgia and South Carolina. Seven soldiers in the regiment wrote letters that were chosen by the editors of this book that explain the excitement of going to war in 1861, the battles the soldiers of the 18th Georgia fought (emphasis on the early battles), everyday camp life, the weather, etc. The majorrity of the letters in the book are written by Milton Barrett and W. L. Barrett. In the letters the Barrett brothers described briefly the regiments participation in the battles from Eltham's Landing to Second Bull Run (Manassas). The Barrett's have an excellent prose in their writings and are descriptive in their observations of camp life, personality of their fellow soldiers and officers, and the mundanes of being a soldier between battle. 33 letters overall were written to loved ones and the letters over time written by the brothers illustrate the loss of "innocence" when they first enlisted, and over time, the harsh and cruel reality of war. These are sincere and spontaneous letters and their value is great because there is not many books written about the 18th Georgia and their illustrious history. In 1862, the regiment was transferred to the famed "Hood's Texas Brigade" as was Hampton's (SC) Legion. The 18th Georgia and Hampton's Legion soon earned the admiration from the solders of Texas due to their fierce tenacity in battle and their brave actions overall. After the war, the soldiers of the 18th Georgia and Hampton's Legion were always invited to the reunions and functions of the Hood's Texas Brigade Association. The 18th GA and Hampton's Legion was each called affectionately the "3rd Texas," which was an extremely honorable compliment by the soldiers of the 1st, 4th, and 5th Texas. After the battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg) in September of 1862, the regiment was transferred to Cobb's Georgia Brigade. The loss of the 18th Georgia and Hampton's Legion to other brigades was a sharp loss to the Texas Brigade. However, the Texas Brigade gained the hard-fighting regiment of the 3rd Arkansas Infantry Regiment.As I stated before, this is a valuable book because overall, very little is written of the 18th Georgia Infantry Regiment and their great history in the Army of Northern Virginia.. This book adds a definite addition to the history of Hood's Texas Brigade and the Army of Northern Virginia.

The value of this and similar primary sources to the specialist should be obvious. I did find that the way the letters were organized -- by year and then by writer -- was confusing. Perhaps it would be better to group all the letters by one author together.The amateur may be disappointed by the fact that, like many if not most Civil War primary sources, these letters describe rather little action. The editors have left idiosyncratic spellings as is, which I like, but which does make the material a little more difficult to read.

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